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**Bachelor's thesis**

**LANGUAGE PROFILE OF BORIS JOHNSON**

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«Допущено до захисту»

Протокол засідання кафедри англійської філології  
та міжкультурної комунікації

Протокол № 10 від 27.05.2024

Зав. кафедри \_\_\_\_\_ д. філол. н., проф. Алла БЄЛОВА

**KYIV – 2024**

## Abstract

This thesis examines the linguistic profile of British politician Boris Johnson and the linguistic features of his speeches and media publications. The study was conducted through an analysis of the lexical, stylistic and sociolinguistic aspects of the politician's speech based on his addresses, articles and interviews from 2016 to 2024 years.

The first chapter explores the theoretical foundations of the concepts of political discourse and linguistic profile, the means of linguistic influence and manipulation in political discourse as well as Boris Johnson's role in contemporary British political discourse. The second chapter provides a practical analysis of the distinctive linguistic features of Boris Johnson's language profile, including lexical, grammatical and stylistic analysis of his statements, and identifies the semantic and sociolinguistic features of his addresses, publications and interviews.

The results of the study show that Boris Johnson's language profile is multifaceted, dynamic and unconventional. He aptly uses evaluative vocabulary, collective nouns, pronouns, various syntactic structures, figurative language (metaphors, hyperbole, repetition), and rhetorical devices (euphemisms, dysphemisms, framing, agenda-setting, presuppositions, implicatures, hedging) to influence the audience. Over time, his rhetoric has become more confident, with increased use of intertextuality, allusions and rhetorical devices.

*Keywords: Boris Johnson, political discourse, linguistic profile, lexical features, grammatical features, stylistic devices, semantics, sociolinguistics.*

## Анотація

У роботі розглянуто мовний профіль британського політика Бориса Джонсона та лінгвістичні особливості його промов та публікацій у ЗМІ. Дослідження проведене шляхом аналізу лексичних, стилістичних і соціолінгвістичних аспектів мовлення політика на матеріалі його виступів, статей та інтерв'ю за період з 2016 по 2024 рік.

У першому розділі вивчаються теоретичні основи понять політичного дискурсу та мовного профілю, засоби мовного впливу та маніпулювання в політичному дискурсі, а також роль Бориса Джонсона в сучасному британському політичному дискурсі. У другому розділі проводиться практичний аналіз лінгвістичних рис мовного профілю Бориса Джонсона, зокрема лексичний, граматичний і стилістичний аналіз його звернень, а також визначаються семантичні та соціолінгвістичні особливості його промов, публікацій та інтерв'ю.

Результати дослідження показують, що мовний профіль Бориса Джонсона є багатограним, динамічним і нестандартним. Він влучно використовує оціночну лексику, збірні іменники, займенники, різні синтаксичні структури, фігуративну мову (метафори, гіперболи, повтори), а також риторичні прийоми (евфемізми, дисфемізми, фреймінг, теорію порядку денного, пресупозиції, імплікатури, хеджинг) для впливу на аудиторію. З часом його риторика набула більшої впевненості, посилилось використання інтертекстуальності, алюзій та риторичних прийомів.

*Ключові слова: Борис Джонсон, політичний дискурс, мовний профіль, лексичні особливості, граматичні особливості, стилістичні прийоми, семантика, соціолінгвістика.*

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## INTRODUCTION

**The relevance of the research topic.** In the modern political landscape, the power of language in shaping public opinion and influencing political discourse is undeniable. Political speeches are not merely expressions of ideas. They serve as tools for persuasion, motivation and the projection of political identity. As people actively engage with political content through media platforms, examining language profiles becomes crucial for a nuanced understanding of the persuasive strategies prominent political figures employ.

Boris Johnson stands as one of the leading political figures in contemporary British politics. His roles as the Mayor of London (2008–2016), the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (2016–2018) and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (2019–2022) placed him at the forefront of public attention. His speeches have become a subject of widespread consumption and discussion. The analysis of Boris Johnson's language profile provides an opportunity to reveal the linguistic elements contributing to his political charisma and strong impact.

Johnson's transition from journalist to politician demonstrates the dynamic nature of his language profile. His speeches are characterised by various references, metaphors and allusions to history and literature. He sometimes employs humorous remarks, sarcasm and exaggeration to deflect criticism [23]. Straightforwardness and controversial content have always been among the most distinctive features of his manner of speech. All these peculiarities not only capture public attention but also pose challenges in interpretation.

This thesis aims to dissect the linguistic elements the politician uses and offer insights into how Johnson covers complex topics. The study will analyse speeches published on the BBC News, The Telegraph, European Pravda and GOV.UK websites, as well as audiovisual materials published on the BBC and The Sun channels.

The **object** of our research is Boris Johnson's language profile as well as the linguistic and sociolinguistic elements that define his speeches and influence public opinion.

The **subject** of the study encompasses the linguistic, semantic and sociolinguistic features as well as specific features of Boris Johnson's language profile, based on his speeches and publications in written and audiovisual mass media.

The **purpose** of the study is to analyse and investigate Boris Johnson's language profile and provide valuable insights into his language and rhetoric.

According to the purpose of the work, the following **tasks** of research are defined:

- To scrutinise the concept and structure of language profile in politics as well as methods of creating an attractive profile and its influence on public opinion;
- To study the personality of Boris Johnson and his role in political discourse;
- To research the language profile of Boris Johnson and pinpoint the distinguishing linguistic and stylistic features of his speeches and mass media publications;
- To analyse written and audiovisual publications.

**Research methods** that were used for the implementation of the assigned tasks include:

- Theoretical methods, such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalisation, classification, analysis of literature and information from textual and audiovisual sources on the research topic;
- Practical methods, such as lexical, stylistic and sociolinguistic analysis of speeches, articles, video and audio materials, followed by meaningful interpretation of materials. Comparison of speeches and mass media materials.

**Research Materials.** Primary research materials include a collection of Boris Johnson's speeches and materials published in the mass media, serving as the basis for linguistic analysis and interpretation.

**The practical significance of the study.** The study contributes to a deeper understanding of the language profile and rhetoric of Boris Johnson in politics. Besides, it emphasises its significance for shaping public opinion and political decision-making. The results of the study can be used by political analysts, political linguists and journalists for studying the role and impact of Boris Johnson's speeches and published

materials, as well as by universities for introducing into the program certain disciplines aimed at studying the political discourse features and political rhetoric in different cultures and countries.

**Structure of the work.** The thesis comprises an introduction, two chapters, conclusions and a bibliography together with Internet resources. The volume of the work is 40 pages.

## **CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING OF LANGUAGE PROFILE IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE**

### **1.1. The concept of political discourse and language profile**

In the 21st century, the relationship between politics and language has become increasingly complex and influential. Our era is marked by increasing globalisation, multiculturalism and multilingualism. So, the significance of political discourse has come to the forefront.

Talking about the notion of discourse, we should mention that it is a reflection of the socio-political life of the country, carrying elements of its culture, common, national specific and cultural values. Nowadays, representatives of various professions and scientific disciplines, as well as the widest masses of citizens, show interest in studying political discourse. In this regard, various issues related to the functioning of language in the political sphere are considered. The analysis of political discourse, as well as language profiles of politicians, allows identifying concepts and conceptual oppositions that are relevant for a certain stage of societal life, studying communication tactics and strategies and determining universal and nationally specific features of political discourse.

The concept of "discourse" owes its emergence to Zellig Harris, who introduced the distributional method and, based on it, considered discourse as an expression, a supra-phrasal unity in the context of other units and the situation associated with them. Now, discourse is called an "immersed in life" text, which is studied along with those

"forms of life" that shape it [17]: interviews, reports, scientific theories, conferences, conversations and so on.

From the perspective of modern approaches, "discourse" is a complex communicative phenomenon that includes, apart from the text, also extralinguistic factors: knowledge of the world, thoughts, attitudes and goals of the recipient necessary for understanding the text. The concept of "discourse" is characterised by parameters of completeness, integrity, coherence, i.e., all the properties of the text; it is considered simultaneously as a process and as a result in the form of a fixed text. A significant feature of discourse, understood in a broad sense, is its correlation with specific participants of the act (speaker and listener), as well as with the communicative intention of the speaker to influence the listener in a certain way.

The foundations of the political discourse were laid by representatives of the Cambridge and Oxford philosophical schools in the 1950s through the analysis of the linguistic context of public opinion. Many studies have been devoted to the study of discourse, the authors of which interpret this phenomenon in such diverse scientific systems that the term "discourse" itself has become broader than the term "speech".

In terms of political discourse, we should understand that no political regime can exist without communication. Language is necessary for persuasion, providing information, giving orders, etc. The specificity of politics, unlike other spheres of human activity, lies mainly in its discursive nature: most political actions are inherently verbal actions. Therefore, it is not surprising that a number of scholars consider political activity as verbal. According to E. Sheigal, the language of politics, political communication and political discourse are terms that are mostly interconnected. She identifies the terms "political discourse" and "political communication" and considers the language of politics as a structured set of signs that form the semiotic space of political discourse. Within linguistic research, E. Sheigal distinguishes three approaches to studying political discourse:

1. Descriptive approach focusing on classical rhetoric analysis techniques of public speeches;

2. Critical approach aimed at critically studying social morality expressed in language or discourse, viewing language as a means of power and social control;
3. Cognitive approach allows for transitioning from describing discourse units and structures to modelling the structures of consciousness of political communication participants [4].

It should be noted that within the descriptive approach, the researcher remains a neutral, independent expert, while the critical analysis is characterised by a certain subjectivity on the part of the researcher: he openly takes the side of those who have lost power and the oppressed ones.

E. Sheigal, considering the function of political discourse, argues that its main function is instrumental – the struggle for power, its seizure and preservation. This function is global in relation to language, as the communicative function encompasses language as a whole. The aforementioned function manifests itself in mobilising actions, stimulating their implementation in the form of direct appeals, slogans, calls, legislative acts; on the other hand, creating the corresponding emotional mood (hope, pride in the country, confidence, hostility, hatred). Verbal acts also stimulate corresponding actions, for instance, by threatening to use force, a strike can be stopped. The most important stimuli for political activity are such verbal acts as expressions of support and trust.

Doris Graber, in her work, identifies the following functions of political discourse:

1. Information dissemination, which is no less important in political discourse in relation to the people;
2. Agenda setting. The essence of this function lies in controlling the dissemination of information;
3. Projection into the future and the past, which involves forecasting future policy by analysing positive or negative past experiences [21].

Many linguists studying political discourse also highlight the function of constructing linguistic reality. Norman Fairclough calls this function creative, characterising it as a situation where linguistic essence is primary to non-linguistic.

It is worth noting that linguistic reality can manifest itself in two ways: totalitarian and democratic. Totalitarian-political discourse, by certain parameters, resembles religious discourse. Another aspect of such manifestation is the perception of a political leader, a leader, as a deity endowed with supernatural abilities. Thus, the most essential function of political discourse is the function of political propaganda, persuasion and influence.

In this context, we can speak of the undeniable importance of politicians' language profiles. The exploration of politicians' language has been caused by the prevailing anthropocentric paradigm in modern science, which has placed humans at the centre of analysis. According to I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay, this means that language is analysed in a person or a person in a language [6]. Early inquiries into this phenomenon trace back to ancient Greece and Rome. There existed a need to understand the strategies employed by outstanding orators in their speeches, as well as the rhetorical methods they used for effective public speaking.

With the emergence of digital communication platforms and social media, political discourse has reached wider audiences and is evolving at a rapid pace. In modern politics, language plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, mobilising supporters and constructing narratives that define political agendas.

Politicians and political entities utilise the power of language through various mediums, including speeches, interviews, debates and online communication channels. From this arises the notion of a language profile.

A language profile comprises a set of linguistic features that characterises a speaker or a group of speakers. It may encompass elements like vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation, style, manner of speech and register. A language profile can mirror one's identity, culture, education and social status.

Within a certain discourse, language profile encompasses the following levels:

1. Sociopsycholinguistic level of the language profile – biological, social, psychological characteristics; hobbies and personal interests;
2. Lexical level of the language profile – description and analysis of all system-language levels;

3. Cultural level of the language profile – peculiarities of communicative behaviour, consideration of the addressee factor, peculiarities of lexicon.

Linguistic analysis of a language profile involves studying various aspects of one's language and manner of speech. The language profile typically includes information about the structural and functional attributes of the language, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. It may also contain metadata such as the number of speakers, geographical location, language code and literacy level.

In politics, the language profile of a politician aids in understanding the unique ways in which this politician communicates, influences and persuades the audience, as well as his or her influence on shaping both domestic and international political perceptions.

According to the British linguist Paul Chilton, analysing the language profile in political discourse is multifaceted. The key elements of such analysis include:

- **Phonetic characteristics:** This includes studying sounds and their production, which in political discourse is used to convey confidence, authority, or sympathy.
- **Intonational characteristics:** The melody and pitch of speech. They affect the emotional impact of a message. Rising intonation can indicate a question or uncertainty, while falling intonation can signify a conclusion or strong assertion.
- **Speech tempo and rhythm:** How fast or slow a politician speaks influences audience perception. A fast speech tempo conveys urgency or passion, while a slower tempo – highlights attention or gives the audience time to perceive complex information.
- **Pauses and emphasis:** Strategic pauses create tension or emphasise importance. Highlighting certain words signals what the speaker wants the audience to focus on.
- **Lexical choice.** This shapes the image of the audience. Politicians often select words that resonate with the values and beliefs of the audience.

- Figurative language: Metaphors, metonymies and other figures of speech. They are powerful tools in political rhetoric.
- Manipulative and pragmalinguistic aspects: Politicians often use language to manipulate public opinion or achieve specific pragmatic effects. This involves appealing to emotions, using euphemisms to soften the consequences of controversial policies, or asking rhetorical questions [29].
- Emotive and evaluative lexicon: Choosing emotionally charged words influences the audience's attitude towards the topic.
- Ethnocultural elements: Language reflects the cultural background and identity of a politician, which influences the way he or she interacts with the audience on a cultural level [12].

The goal of the analysis is to understand the features of the language and how it fits into the broader context of linguistic diversity. It can be used to compare languages, track language changes over time, or for theoretical research in the field of linguistics. Essentially, it is a method of systematically studying and documenting the unique features and patterns of a language.

Based on the definitions and classifications outlined above, we can summarise that the analysis of a politician's language profile consists of three important components: the first – sociolinguistic, which includes personal characteristics, psychological and social features; the second – lexical, which encompasses linguistic means of a politician's speech; and the third – cultural, determining the cultural background, communicative behaviour, as well as the strategies and techniques used to achieve certain goals.

The language profile is studied from multiple angles, including psychological, social and linguistic. The analysis of a politician's language profile can help identify and analyse their unique style of presenting thoughts and conveying information, as well as the features of their use of language means and communicative strategies.

## **1.2. Linguistic means of influence and manipulation in political discourse**

Political discourse is a powerful arena where language becomes a strategic tool for shaping opinions, swaying public sentiment and advancing political agendas. According to M. Didenko, the defining feature of communication in politics is its orientation towards the addressee in order to prompt the audience to a socio-political reaction. Participants in political communication typically represent certain socio-political positions and information exchange occurs with a sufficiently pronounced pragmatic orientation, meaning the communicative process in politics always has an intentional character [33]. To achieve the set goal, careful selection and organisation of linguistic means at various levels by the addresser are necessary [1].

The final link in communication and the object of speech influence in political discourse is always the addressee. The addresser consciously constructs their message according to the conceptual and emotional-evaluative model of the addressee, which determines the choice of specific linguistic means and the construction of discourse as a whole. Shaping discourse taking into account the socio-psychological model of the addressee contributes to the adequate perception of information by the addressee. This means that the discourse fulfils its communicative task. However, the main task of political discourse is to persuade the audience of the correctness of a certain position, impose its opinion and achieve certain actions from the addressee.

Therefore, in order to implement a certain intention, the addresser of political discourse must foresee the recipient's reaction to their words. This allows the addresser to construct discourse in such a way as to evoke the "proper" or advantageous reaction from people. When working on the text of a speech, an experienced politician has to carefully consider its structure and linguistic content. According to N. Karpchuk, in order to achieve the communicative effect, the politician-addresser, formulating a specific statement, must simultaneously address issues of constructing a model of the addressee, modelling their own relationship with the addressee and predicting their reactions [2].

One of the manifestations of political discourse is a political speech, which is considered an informative-persuasive type of text. A political speech aims to depict certain events, ideas, beliefs and values while simultaneously influencing the emotions and consciousness of the audience. In order to persuade the audience, the texts of political speeches are usually structured according to the rules of ancient rhetoric and its basic components – ethos, pathos and logos. Ethos reflects the personal characteristics of the speaker and embodies self-representation. Pathos is associated with influencing the emotions, judgments and needs of the audience. Logos involves linguistic units and structures through which the speaker achieves the desired influence on the audience.

To influence the addressee, a politician in their discourse uses a multitude of techniques at various levels of language. This can include specific intonation to capture the audience's attention, violations of tense agreement rules to emphasise a necessary aspect, carefully selected vocabulary to evoke a corresponding reaction from the listeners. To achieve illocutionary goals (conveying information to the addressee) and perlocutionary effects (prompting the addressee to certain actions) in political discourse at the lexical level, neutral vocabulary (e.g., world, effect, person), literary vocabulary (e.g., challenges, to emphasise, to neglect), terms (e.g., liberalism, left-wing, monopoly) and nomenclature vocabulary (e.g, Civil Code, Department for Business and Trade (DBT)) are used.

Political manipulation is often used as a powerful tool of influence. According to Teun van Dijk, manipulation "not only involves power, but specifically abuse of power, that is, domination." [14] The means of political manipulation can be classified according to various criteria, for instance:

- According to their compatibility with current legislation, they are divided into those regulated by law and those that go beyond legal norms.
- According to the method of influencing: direct and covert.
- According to functions: agitation (call to action), PR (maintaining public relations) and others.
- According to form: provocative, agitation, economic, administrative.

- According to content orientation: advertising and anti-advertising.
- According to the level of influence on interpersonal, group and mass levels.
- According to information carriers: printed, electronic, outdoor and others.

The function of language influence in political discourse is realised through several language strategies. Thus, researcher E. Sheigal suggests distinguishing the following strategies:

- Strategy of veiling, obscuring undesirable information – allows to dim, make less obvious unpleasant facts;
- Strategy of mystification – hides the truth, deliberate deception;
- Strategy of anonymity (depersonalization) as a method of avoiding responsibility [4].

Linguists also include in the widely used manipulation strategies:

- Strategy of reification – constructing the enemy's image;
- Strategy of delegitimization – destroying the opponent's image;
- Strategy of amalgamation – addressing from the position of "we" (emphasising the addresser's desire for unity).

A special place in political discourse is occupied by colloquial vocabulary. According to M. Didenko, a speaker consciously adapts to the style of spoken language since colloquial elements influence the addressee and sometimes evoke reactions that are impossible when using only literary-normative units [1]. They make communication informal and unofficial. In this way, political speech resembles conversation, making it easier for politicians to influence their listeners. Additionally, colloquial words help politicians better express their thoughts, provide necessary evaluations and convey various emotional states.

Key words and slogans are also essential elements in political discourse. They are characterised by brevity, simplicity, certain semantic ambiguity and emotionality. The main task of slogans and key words is to quickly evoke the expected reaction (association) from the addressee.

Furthermore, in political discourse, neologisms, euphemisms, foreign words, metaphors and idiomatic expressions are actively used. Neologisms are used to create

an expressive-emotional background. Politicians can fill neologisms with necessary rational and emotional content. Neologisms are often used to describe uncomfortable concepts. In such cases they are close to euphemisms in their function. We should also note that a politician who effectively uses neologisms is usually considered a creative, educated personality. This contributes to the construction of a positive image of the politician and enhances their influence on the masses.

In political discourse, there are many figures of omission and rephrasing, including euphemisms, which are used to soften unpleasant messages and convince the electorate or representatives of the opposition. Political euphemisms help change the audience's perception of the facts and events that may cause antipathy. They focus attention on unimportant details, pushing the main points to the background. Euphemization in political discourse is most often observed in such aspects as the activities and private lives of politicians and their entourage, the economic and political activities of the authorities and political parties, elections, military campaigns, means of attack and defence, terrorist or anti-terrorist campaigns, coverage of negotiations, summits in the media, espionage and so on. In general, political euphemisms belong to the means of semantic manipulation, the purpose of which is to shape the worldview of the recipient, influence their consciousness and manage behaviour [22].

Euphemisms are closely linked with the phenomenon of different organisation of the semantics of information, that is, the different naming of the same concepts by politicians from different parties. From their lips, these concepts can sound different, each politician fills these terms with their own content. The technique of creating ambiguity of the most important political concepts is used to manipulate the consciousness of the addressee and subordinate their views to the system of views of the addresser. Foreign words can also be euphemisms. They allow the politician to use various nuances of concepts, evoke the necessary emotions in the addressee, appeal to them linguistically and avoid tautology.

To influence the addressee, political metaphor is often used. It makes the text easier to perceive, more interesting and attracts the addressee's attention with the unusualness of the combinations. Political metaphor is one of the strongest means of

influencing the political consciousness of society. It serves to change the existing political worldview of the recipient, encourages them to take certain actions and forms the emotional state that the addresser needs. In addition, metaphor can divert the addressee's attention from the weaknesses in the system of argumentation.

The manipulation of public consciousness through language leads to the fact that the ideological connotations of certain words distort their meaning. Lexical-semantic fluctuations in the meaning of words are usually manifested in such models as: an old word – a new meaning, an old meaning – a new word, paraphrase, substitution of concepts, vagueness of meanings, semantic contamination. According to K. Serazhym, in order to influence the addressee, politicians consciously use the following properties of language:

- the mobility of the semantic structure of the word;
- the difficulty of delineating connotation from direct denotative meanings;
- the variability of denotative and connotative meanings of the same linguistic signs under the influence of social factors;
- the multicomponent nature of lexical and pragmatic meaning;
- the existence of cognitive and communicative, objective and subjective features in meaning;
- synonymous and associative connections of words;
- the modality of the statement;
- the evaluativeness of semantics [3].

In terms of the syntactic level of political discourse, politicians prefer simple sentences. By doing so, they make it easier for their audience to perceive information. In the case of complex sentences, they either have the character of a formally simple sentence, or the main clause does not carry a significant informational load. Such sentences create the appearance of reasoning with a subsequent conclusion and have an appellative, affirmative character. Incomplete sentences are quite frequent. They are mostly filled with associatively acting visual elements that enhance their emotional potential, give the text more dynamism and greater expressiveness.

In political discourse, interrogative and conditional sentences are widely used. At the same time, interrogative sentences can be used as rhetorical questions that remain unanswered. In another case, the politician can immediately answer the question asked, letting the addressee understand that they are like-minded. As for conditional sentences, they are based on the system of argumentation and have a modal meaning in the context of this discourse.

Among the stylistic figures at the syntactic level in political discourse, parallel constructions and repetitions are distinguished. These figures improve the overall expression, creating a special rhythm of a semantic fragment and are a means of emphasising the most important, meaningful elements of the speech. They strengthen the impact of the speech on the addressee. In addition, frequent repetitions are an effective means of convincing the addressee of the correctness of certain actions by the authorities [25].

An effective syntactic-stylistic technique in political discourse is the use of parallel syntactic constructions, which actively influence the listener through a clear syntactic and intonational rhythm. Some politicians use unexpected pauses within a single syntagm in the most important parts of the statement. This shifts the emphasis to the semantic centre, which is highlighted by the pause. Pauses are most often used at the beginning and end of political statements, as the introduction and conclusion are the most important in political discourse.

The frequent use of modal verbs in political discourse is explained by their ability to present statements as justified, necessary, possible and to regulate the modality of the entire statement. They prepare the consciousness of the addressee, signalling the intentions, wishes and demands of the politician. The largest number of modal verbs is used in party and election speeches.

Studies of political discourse also indicate that politicians widely use grammatical tense to influence the addressee. In order for a leader to gain the trust of the electorate, they must build an emotional, expressive discourse. That is why the speaker often violates the rules of tense agreement.

In terms of politics, the use of pronominal forms becomes of particular importance, which is often associated with evaluation. The forms of the first-person plural allow a politician to address various population groups and create a sense of community in them. When talking about "we", "our group", politicians use only a positive connotation. The form of the first-person singular is characteristic of politicians who already hold a high position, as well as for election speeches, since the candidate wants to form the image of a strong, decisive and reform-minded politician. By using the pronoun "I", he demonstrates that he is a leader who is capable of taking a certain leadership position. In addition to lexical-semantic and structural-morphological means, intonational means play a large role in influencing the addressee. In order to convince the audience, the speaker must attract the attention of the listeners with the power and volume of their voice, tune them to their rhythms and lead them through emotional ups and downs. Moreover, there is an opinion that tuning to a certain rhythm and changing the rhythm in the dynamics of the text not only attract attention to the speech and facilitate its perception, but are one of the strongest means of emotional influence on the listeners.

Quite often, comic elements are used in political discourse. The socio-political role of such elements lies in arousing interest in politics as a whole and its representatives in particular. The use of comic elements is the most effective during periods of crisis, changes in the country's course, election campaigns and transitional periods.

At the same time, there is an opinion that the effectiveness of political speeches is quite low when politicians overload their speech with bureaucratic language, technical terms, excessive literary language, jargon, as well as due to the politician's lack of knowledge of the dialect of the locality where their speech takes place [9]. All these elements complicate the audience's perception of the text and prevent live contact between the politician and the audience.

Overall, based on the abovementioned, it is obvious that the language plays a strategic role in political discourse, where communication is oriented towards prompting a specific socio-political reaction from the audience. Political speech, as one

of the manifestations of political discourse, usually contains the basic components of ancient rhetoric – ethos, pathos and logos – to persuade the audience. Politicians carefully construct their messages by selecting and organising linguistic means to align with the conceptual and emotional-evaluative model of the addressee. This allows them to evoke the "proper" or advantageous reaction and achieve their communicative goals of persuading, imposing opinions and prompting certain actions.

Politicians employ a variety of manipulative techniques at different linguistic levels. At the lexical level, they use neutral, literary, technical and emotive vocabulary to shape perceptions. Strategies like veiling, mystification and delegitimization are used to influence and control information. Colloquial language, slogans, neologisms and metaphors are also used to make communication more impactful.

Syntactically, simple sentences, interrogatives, conditionals and parallel structures are used to create rhythmic appeals. Tense shifts and pronoun usage convey intended attitudes and relationships. Intonation, pauses and comic elements are additional tools for emotional influence. The strategic deployment of language allows politicians to construct favourable discourses, manage public consciousness and achieve their goals.

### **1.3. Introduction to Boris Johnson personality and his role in political discourse**

Boris Johnson has been a central figure in British politics for over a decade. He is well known for his authentic personality and polarising political views. Johnson's brash, charismatic and often unconventional approach drew both support and criticism from the British public and political establishment. Johnson's political career has been marked by controversy, leadership challenges and a unique approach to governance.

Boris Johnson was born on June 19, 1964, in New York, where his father was working at that time, but soon the family returned to London, where his mother was finishing her studies at Oxford. In the family of Stanley Johnson, who was a former

Member of the European Parliament and a worker at the European Commission and the World Bank, there were four children. Boris was the eldest.

Boris Johnson received his primary education at the European School in Brussels. After moving to the United Kingdom, he continued his studies at a preparatory school in East Sussex and then at Eton College. From 1983 to 1984, he studied classical literature at the University of Oxford, where he was elected president of the student union.

Boris Johnson began his journalistic career as a trainee correspondent at The Times but worked there for only one year. He was dismissed from the newspaper for falsifying a quote from his godfather, Colin Lucas, who later became the vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford.

For a period, Johnson worked at the Wolverhampton Express & Star newspaper and in 1987 he was hired by The Daily Telegraph. In Brussels, he worked as a correspondent and assistant editor at The Daily Telegraph from 1989 to 1999. From 1994 to 1995, Johnson also worked as a political columnist at The Spectator newspaper and from 1999 to 2005, he was its editor.

In 1997, Johnson actively participated in the country's political life by running as a candidate in the Clevedon South constituency parliamentary elections but was defeated. However, by 2001, he managed to be elected to the House of Commons from the Henley-on-Thames constituency.

In 2004, he was appointed Shadow Minister for Culture in the opposition shadow cabinet. Following an intensive party campaign in November 2003, Johnson was appointed Vice-President of the Conservative Party of Great Britain.

After the election of the new leader of the Conservative Party, David Cameron, Johnson served as Shadow Minister for Education in the opposition shadow cabinet from 2005 to 2007.

From 2008 to 2016, he served as the Mayor of London, representing the Conservative Party. He was re-elected in May 2012.

In 2015, he was re-elected as a member of the House of Commons of the British Parliament from the Uxbridge and South Ruislip constituency in Greater London. For

a year, he continued to perform the duties of Mayor of London, combining the two positions.

In 2016, during the preparation and conduct of the referendum on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, he was an active supporter of Brexit.

On July 13, 2016, he was appointed Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs in Theresa May's government.

On July 9, 2018, Boris Johnson resigned as Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs due to disagreement with Prime Minister Theresa May's position on Brexit.

In 2019, when Theresa May acknowledged failure in constructing a plan for Britain's exit from the European Union and announced her resignation, Johnson decided to run for the position of Prime Minister. On July 23, 2019, Boris Johnson was elected as the new leader of the Conservative Party. On July 24, 2019, Boris Johnson officially assumed the office of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

On December 13, 2019, Boris Johnson's Conservative Party received 364 votes, improving its result by 47 seats. Their main competitor, the Labour Party, lost 59 seats and received 203 votes [15].

More than three years after the referendum, on January 31, 2020, the United Kingdom officially exited the European Union. Britain was a member of the EU for 47 years.

Boris Johnson strongly condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine. On March 6, 2022, he stated that world leaders must make every effort to ensure that Russia's horrific invasion of Ukraine ceases. "Putin must fail and must be seen to fail in this act of aggression. It is not future historians but the people of Ukraine who will be our judge," said Johnson in the New York Times article.

On April 27, Johnson stated that if Russia uses weapons of mass destruction against Ukraine, Britain may retaliate with a nuclear strike. On May 8, the head of the British government announced that Britain would provide Ukraine with additional military support of \$1.6 billion. Later, Boris Johnson proposed to Zelensky that an

alternative EU alliance, led by Britain, be created to counter Russia. It would also include Estonia, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania [32].

On July 7, 2022, Boris Johnson resigned but continued to perform his duties until the election of a new head of government and leader of the Conservative Party. On September 5, before his resignation, Johnson called to provide vital support to Ukraine in its war against Russia. On September 6, Queen Elizabeth II accepted Boris Johnson's resignation and appointed Liz Truss as the new Prime Minister [40].

Boris Johnson has played a major role in British political discourse, especially as the former Mayor of London and Prime Minister. Johnson positioned himself as a leading voice advocating for Brexit during the 2016 referendum. Johnson argued that leaving the EU would allow the UK to "take back control" of its laws, borders and money [24]. As Prime Minister from 2019 to 2022, delivering Brexit became one of Johnson's central goals. He pushed through the Brexit withdrawal agreement after years of political deadlock. However, the process was quite controversial, straining relations between the UK and EU.

Some people believed Johnson's strong support for Brexit was just an opportunistic move – a way for him to become more popular with certain voters. Critics said he exaggerated the potential benefits of Britain leaving the EU in order to advance his own political career and ambitions. Nonetheless, his support for Brexit resonated with a number of Britons unsatisfied with the EU [7].

Some research indicates that certain right-leaning newspapers portrayed Johnson as embodying an uncritical, nationalistic and nostalgic vision of Britain's past glories. This helped him appeal to voters with strong national pride, even without using specific language. Such an association with Britain's historical achievements became a notable part of his political image.

Naturally, Boris Johnson's rise to power and the post of Prime Minister have been marked by a distinctive oratorical style. According to British political researchers, at the core of Johnson's language profile lies his integration of persuasive appeals to both reason (logos) and emotion (pathos). In other words, his speeches blend logical

policy arguments with emotionally resonant language, usually aimed at evoking patriotism, confidence and a sense of national pride.

Johnson often turns to ethos in order to establish credibility and present himself as a trusted authority figure through deliberate rhetorical choices. His frequent use of the pronoun "we" creates a sense of unity and collective identity with his audience. By constructing this "us vs. them" dynamic [34], Johnson effectively positions himself as a leader who pays attention to the interests and values of the British people. Additionally, he sometimes refers to the British historical achievements and values. This also strengthens the projection of ethos and his influence on people.

The emotional power of Johnson's speeches is conditioned by his use of figurative language, in particular, metaphors. For instance, in one of his speeches in the year 2020, he metaphorically described the coronavirus as an "unexpected and invisible mugger" and personified the virus as a physical assailant. He did this since metaphors can translate complex or abstract concepts into easily understandable images. These cognitive associations are key to Johnson's ability to shape narratives in his favour.

Humor also plays an important role as a rhetorical strategy, which allows Johnson to connect with audiences on a more personal level and display a sympathetic persona. He adds levity and folksiness to his speeches through jokes, humorous anecdotes and casual language. All these make his rhetorical style accessible and "relatable" to ordinary citizens, contrasting with the speeches of many of his opponents. For example, Johnson sometimes gives playful nicknames to political figures. Once, he called Michael Gove (British politician, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations [38]) – "John Bon Gove" after a viral dancing video [13]. Johnson's humour undeniably engages the audience and makes the content of his speeches more memorable.

Johnson's strong delivery of speeches complements the substance of his arguments. His fast speaking pace, emphatic tone and animated gestures give his speeches urgency and passionate conviction. This can be very persuasive. Stylistic elements like speaking directly to the audience create a sense of personal connection.

However, Johnson has been repeatedly criticised for sometimes coming across as overly aggressive or dismissive of other viewpoints.

This approach matches Johnson's tendency to use confrontational and polarising rhetoric, which divides people into opposing camps. He often uses simplistic arguments and personal attacks on opponents to strengthen support from his base. While effective in energising his supporters, this kind of discourse can sometimes be considered as a factor undermining democratic debate and creating social divisions.

In matters such as Brexit, Johnson has demonstrated proficiency in promoting straightforward, emotionally resonant narratives. He framed this issue as a patriotic "recaptured sovereignty" from European overreach. In such a way, he diverted attention from Brexit's potential economic risks, emphasising instead a compelling vision of renewed national independence and global leadership. This is a clear illustration of the strategic use of language by Boris Johnson to favour particular ideological perspectives in political decision-making.

Moreover, Johnson's heavy reliance on patriotic symbols and British cultural touchstones represents his effort to align with nationalist populist ideologies. His rhetoric often features the Union Jack, references Britain's illustrious history and mentions key cultural institutions, weaving his policy agenda into ingrained notions of British identity. Some political scientists believe that such symbolic politics can effectively mobilise segments of the electorate.

At the same time, Johnson has proven capable of contextuality. He adjusts his rhetorical style according to the political situation and context. Where circumstances demand a more measured approach, Johnson's speeches can take on a more formal, reasoned tenor with a focus on policy specifics. This rhetorical flexibility allows him to maintain his ideological coherence while effectively responding to the demands of leadership.

However, despite Johnson's skill as a speaker, his communication style has faced significant criticism. Some analysts argue that he often introduces ambiguity and equivocation into his speeches by using vague language, indirect arguments and logical omissions. From a linguistic perspective, instances where Johnson has offered indirect

or non-apologies that lack clear "propositional content" illustrate how carefully constructed rhetoric can be used to obscure intentions.

Moreover, there are concerns that Johnson's blending of persuasive tactics, symbolic politics and ideological framing can undermine the deliberative ideals of democratic discourse. His oratorical style holds the potential to diminish productive dialogue and social cohesion, as he privileges emotionally resonant narratives over factual substance and polarises rhetoric over nuanced debate. Consequently, Johnson's rhetoric could widen societal rifts.

Nonetheless, Boris Johnson's rhetorical impact on British political discourse is indisputable. His speeches are examples of how language can be artfully used as an instrument of power – one that shapes narratives, frames the ideological debate and defines the symbolic boundaries of political identities and communities. Through a masterful fusion of emotion and logic, Johnson uses cultural symbols and incorporates elements of popular oratory, such as humour and directness, to create a distinctive language profile [5].

### **Conclusion to the first chapter**

In the 21st century, political discourse has gained immense significance due to increasing globalisation, multiculturalism and multilingualism. It reflects a country's socio-political life, culture and values, attracting interest from various professions and citizens. Analysing political discourse and politicians' language profiles allows us to identify relevant communication tactics and strategies employed by politicians to influence their audience, as well as to identify universal or culturally specific features of their political rhetoric.

The term "discourse" is defined as a complex communicative phenomenon comprising extralinguistic factors like worldviews, attitudes and speaker-listener intentions. It is characterised by coherence and the aim to influence the audience.

Political discourse extends far beyond the text and encompasses extralinguistic factors like speaker intentions, audience beliefs and sociopolitical contexts. The language used by politicians is understood as an instrument to gain power, influence public opinion and prompt specific socio-political reactions from the audience. Careful linguistic choices at various levels allow politicians to construct discourses consistent with the conceptual models and emotional perspectives of the intended audience.

A wide array of rhetorical strategies and language manipulations are employed in political discourse to achieve persuasive goals. These include lexical tactics like metaphors, neologisms and emotive vocabulary, as well as syntactic devices such as rhetorical questions, parallelisms and strategic use of personal pronouns. Furthermore, politicians use intonation, comic elements and violations of grammatical rules to achieve maximum rhetorical impact. The strategic combination of persuasive appeals to logos, pathos and authority is vital.

As a prominent figure in British political discourse, Boris Johnson is renowned for his distinctive rhetorical style. He artfully blends persuasive argumentation with emotive language, evoking patriotism and confidence. Johnson's language profile includes the use of ethos-driven rhetorical choices like first-person plural pronouns and cultural references to foster collective identity with his audience. Metaphors and humour allow him to simplify complex topics and connect with people on a personal level.

However, Johnson's linguistic skillfulness and inclination toward ideological framing provoke criticism over undermining democratic deliberation through ambiguity, polarising 'us vs them' narratives and potential hiding of facts behind fancy rhetorical tricks. There are concerns that his symbolic politics and emotive rhetoric, while impactful, may diminish social cohesion and reasoned debate.

In essence, the theoretical overview of Boris Johnson's language profile demonstrates how the strategic use of various linguistic elements can construct influential political discourses that are close to audiences yet remain a subject of criticism.

## **CHAPTER 2. PRACTICAL ANALYSIS OF BORIS JOHNSON'S LANGUAGE PROFILE**

### **2.1. Distinguishing linguistic features of Boris Johnson's language profile**

In this chapter one article and one speech by Boris Johnson will be analysed from various viewpoints to study the linguistic features that define his communication style. It delves into the lexical choices and stylistic elements he employs in his speeches.

As we have already said in the theoretical part, in his speeches, Boris Johnson actively uses rhetorical devices (such as metaphors, humour, analogies, etc.), inclusive language (e.g., "we") to build collective identity, symbols and cultural/historical references, strategies of framing narratives and ideological perspectives through language.

Based on this knowledge and applying practical methods, such as lexical and stylistic analysis, in the first subchapter, we will dwell on lexical aspects of Boris Johnson's statements, his vocabulary choices and terminology, patterns in word selections, pronouns and so on.

In the second subchapter, we will examine the grammatical side of Boris Johnson's addresses: sentence structures, prepositions and conjunctions, verb tenses and aspects, etc.

In the third subchapter, we will emphasise the stylistic elements, such as their tone and style, delivery techniques and rhetorical devices Johnson employs, as well as persuasive strategies he uses.

#### **2.1.1. Lexical aspect of Boris Johnson's statements**

In this subchapter, we will analyse the vocabulary and word choices present in Boris Johnson's addresses based on the examples. Our focus will be on two key statements. These include Johnson's 2016 article about Brexit and his first 2019 speech as a Prime Minister of the UK.

We will closely examine the words and phrases used across these speeches to identify patterns and potential shifts in Johnson's language profile over time. The analysis will explore the terms he selects, their possible meanings or implications, patterns in word selections, pronouns, as well as how his vocabulary contributes to the overall messages conveyed. We will consider how his word choices may reflect ideological perspectives or adapt to different contexts and political situations. Among the goals of this subchapter is also shedding light on Johnson's strategic use of language to shape narratives and discourses.

During the lexical analysis, we will focus mainly on analysing parts of speech such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and pronouns. Since we are dealing with political speeches, these are the parts that carry the largest lexical and semantic message and will allow us to adequately analyse all the addresses.

**Article for The Telegraph (2016): Boris Johnson exclusive: There is only one way to get the change we want – vote to leave the EU**

In this article, Boris Johnson argues strongly for Britain to leave the European Union, saying that the EU has changed into a political force that is taking away UK power. He criticises EU attempts at closer unity. *"We should remember that this federalist vision is not an ignoble idea,"* [41] he says . Johnson portrays the EU as taking more control through laws that are hard to undo, slowly removing democratic accountability. While economic risks exist, he is hopeful about Britain's chances outside the EU's rules. Eventually, Johnson views the Brexit vote as a key chance to regain self-rule by separating the UK from the EU's "supranational elements" [41].

Johnson employs numerous nouns with evaluative meanings to frame his perspective. He uses nouns like "contributor" (*"Europe – the home of the greatest and richest culture in the world, to which Britain is and will be an eternal contributor..."* [41]) and "motives" (*"It was born of the highest motives – to keep the peace in Europe."* [41]) with positive connotations when referring to European cultural background. However, he also uses negatively charged nouns such as "colonisation" (*"We are seeing a slow and invisible process of legal colonisation, as the EU infiltrates just*

*about every area of public policy.*" [41]), "alienation" (*"We are seeing an alienation of the people from the power they should hold and I am sure this is contributing to the sense of disengagement..."* [41]) and "apathy" (*"...the apathy, the view that politicians are "all the same" and can change nothing and to the rise of extremist parties."* [41]) to criticise the EU's perceived encroachment on British sovereignty.

In terms of connotations, there are more nouns with negative connotations than with positive ones since this article is rather provocative and argumentative. Positive nouns include "success" (*"Now is the time to spearhead the success of those products and services not just in Europe, but in growth markets beyond."* [41]), "democracy" (*"Democracy matters..."* [41]), "power" (*"...parliamentary democracy – the way the people express their power."* [41]) and others. Negative nouns encompass "barriers" (*"...officials (many of them British) trying to break down barriers to trade with a new procedure – agreed by Margaret Thatcher..."* [41]), "federalism" (*"A vote to Remain will be taken in Brussels as a green light for more federalism and for the erosion of democracy."* [41]), "tensions" (*"...a risk that a vote to Leave the EU, as it currently stands, will cause fresh tensions in the union between England and Scotland."* [41]), etc.

It is notable that Johnson employs collective nouns to represent and criticise EU governance bodies like the Commission, Parliament and institutions, which he portrays as undermining British sovereignty. Collectives like "population" and "public" refer to UK citizens, he argues, who are losing democratic accountability to those EU entities. The collective nouns create an "us vs. them" divide. They enable Johnson to depict the British public as separate from the domineering EU collectivities pushing undesired integration.

He also uses a lot of proper nouns throughout the text, such as: people: "David Cameron", "Margaret Thatcher", "Tony Blair" and others; places: "Brussels", "Britain", "England", "Europe" etc.; organisations and institutions: "European Union", "European Court of Justice", "House of Commons" etc.; treaties/agreements: "Maastricht Treaty", "Amsterdam Treaty" etc.

As to adjectives, in political discourse, they shape language profiles. Analysing adjective usage can show the ideological leanings, biases and overarching narrative a politician aims to construct through language choices.

Let us look closer at degrees of comparison. There are several examples of comparatives like "more federalist", "much smaller", "better jobs, better housing, better health" [41] and others. The superlative degree is used less often, with examples like "the greatest and richest culture", the "biggest empire", "most valuable export" [41], etc. There are more comparative adjectives than superlatives. This may be because Johnson frequently compares the EU's current state to its past or makes direct comparisons between the EU's and British interests/capabilities.

There are also several adjective-noun collocations. These include "legal colonisation", "fundamental rights", "single market", "federalist vision", "European history", "harmonious relationship", "democratic accountability" [41] and so on. Such collocations allow Johnson to concisely capture key concepts central to his arguments.

Talking about the functions of adjectives in this article, we should note that they frequently serve evaluative/judging functions, for instance, "comical", describing early EU efforts at harmonisation ("*The efforts at harmonisation were occasionally comical...*" [41]), "ludicrous", giving an example of EU regulation ("*Sometimes these EU rules sound simply ludicrous, like the rule that you can't recycle a teabag, or that children under eight cannot blow up balloons...*" [41]), "fertile", praising the UK manufacturing sector ("*...we still have a dizzyingly fertile manufacturing sector.*" [41]) and descriptive functions, like "new palaces", "cobbled streets" ("*...new Euro palaces of glass and steel now loom over the little cobbled streets in the heart of the Belgian capital.*" [41]). The most common function is undoubtedly the evaluative. Johnson uses predominantly negative evaluations when talking about the EU system and policies, like "comical", "infuriating" ("*Sometimes they (EU rules) can be truly infuriating...*" [41]), etc. and positive when referring to the UK, like "fertile", "heroic" ("*...heroic intellectual labour by Oliver Letwin...*" [41]), etc. He uses such adjectives mainly to appraise the EU negatively and justify his Eurosceptic position.

Verbs can tell us a lot in the political context. They help understand the author's rhetorical strategies, ideological stances and depictions of events, processes and relationships.

In terms of verb types in this article, the most notable and frequently used type is action words, such as "change", "achieve", "represent", "extricate", etc. This prevalence of action verbs corresponds to Johnson's argument that the EU has actively undermined British sovereignty through its expansionist actions and policies over time. Stative verbs like "is", "has", "remains" are also common when making statements about the EU's current condition or Britain's position.

As to verb connotations, negative connotation verbs criticising the EU are common throughout the article. The examples include "to infiltrate" ("*...the EU infiltrates just about every area of public policy.*" [41]), "to overrule" ("*As new countries have joined, we have seen a hurried expansion in the areas for Qualified Majority Voting, so that Britain can be overruled more and more often.*" [41]), etc. Such verbs strengthen Johnson's portrayal of the EU as an increasingly dominating force. However, some positive verbs like "achieve" ("*David Cameron has done his very best and he has achieved more than many expected. There is some useful language about stopping "ever-closer union" from applying to the UK, about protecting the euro outs from the euro ins and about competition and deregulation.*" [41]), "deliver" ("*...get on and unite around David Cameron – continuing to deliver better jobs, better housing, better health, education and a better quality of life...*" [41]) cast Britain in a favourable light [30]. Most of the verbs have the neutral connotation ("to remember", "to see", "to think", etc).

Besides, there are frequent cases of using phrasal verbs and collocations in the text, such as "carry out", "kick out", "opt out", "break down barriers", "strike a deal" [41] and others. They help to create a more engaging tone by using familiar and expressive phrases that resonate with readers.

Pronouns in political discourse reveal underlying group identities, power dynamics and rhetorical strategies. Contrasting "we" versus "them" personal pronouns construct in-group and out-group divides. How broadly "we" is used signals the

inclusion or exclusion of the audience [19]. Using third-person plural pronouns distances the speaker from an entity. Strategic pronoun usage can deflect responsibility, assert dominance hierarchies, or obfuscate agency.

In the context of pronouns in this article, we can say that the most frequently used types are third-person plural pronouns like "they", "them", "their", for example, *"...all EU history shows that they only really listen to a population when it says No."* [41] First-person plural "we", "our", "us" is common as well. Johnson favours using "we/our/us" pronouns when representing the British perspective and interests (*"We have given so much to the world, in ideas and culture..."* [41]), while *"they/them/their"* is used almost exclusively for the EU side (*"They want to create a truly federal union."* [41]). This pattern demonstrates an "us vs. them" dynamic, it is especially clear in the sentences like *"...they have an ideal that we do not share."* [41] This indicates an active usage by Boris Johnson of such manipulation strategies as strategy of amalgamation ("we") and strategy of reification ("they").

There are much fewer instances of single third-person pronouns like *"it"*. First-person pronouns outnumber singular third-person pronouns, as Johnson prefers adopting a collective national voice over impersonal singular pronoun references.

There are several instances of indefinite pronouns used in Boris Johnson's article ("someone" (*"...refer all decisions to someone else..."* [41]), "everyone" (*"There is no reason (if everyone is sensible) why that should happen now..."* [41]). These pronouns serve to make generalisations and emphasise the collective nature of certain actions, opinions, or consequences. There are several cases of using demonstrative pronouns (e.g., "that", "this") as well as other types of pronouns, but they are not frequent and do not convey any information in terms of this paper.

From the point of view of pronoun connotations, the consistent use of "they/them/their" to refer to the EU supplies a distancing effect and out-group connotation. It pictures the EU as a disconnected "other"; consequently, we can consider this connotation to be negative. Conversely, the repeated "we/our/us" lends warmth and in-group belonging when Johnson portrays the viewpoint of the British public, so we can say that these pronouns have a positive connotation.

The lexical analysis reveals Boris Johnson's strategic use of language to influence public opinion. The frequently used lexical patterns include employing evaluative words, collective nouns and pronouns to create an "us vs. them" narrative and frame the EU as a threat. This language profile demonstrates Johnson's persuasive style in convincing readers to support his Brexit position.

### **BBC (2019): Boris Johnson: First speech as PM**

In his election victory speech as Prime Minister, Boris Johnson outlines his vision for the United Kingdom. He focuses on delivering Brexit by October 31st and investing in public services such as healthcare, education and infrastructure. Johnson encourages the nation to seize the opportunities that lie ahead, dismissing the concerns of those who doubt Britain's ability to prosper outside the European Union and promises to work tirelessly to unite and lead the country forward.

In his first speech as Prime Minister, Boris Johnson employs a range of nouns to convey his message and set the tone for his premiership. He uses evaluative nouns such as "fortitude", "patience" and "sense of public service" to praise his predecessor (*"I pay tribute to the fortitude and patience of my predecessor and her deep sense of public service."* [44]), while nouns like "pessimists" (*"But in spite of all her efforts, it has become clear that there are pessimists at home and abroad who think that after three years of indecision, that this country has become a prisoner to the old arguments of 2016 and that in this home of democracy we are incapable of honouring a basic democratic mandate."* [44]), "doubters", "doomsters" and "gloomsters" (*"The doubters, the doomsters, the gloomsters – they are going to get it wrong again."* [44]) are used to criticise those who lack faith in Britain's ability to deliver Brexit.

Johnson's word choice is marked by a predominance of nouns with positive connotations, such as "democracy" (*"...we are going to restore trust in our democracy..."* [44]), "opportunities" (*"And we will do a new deal, a better deal that will maximise the opportunities of Brexit..."* [44]), "confidence" (*"I have every confidence that in 99 days' time we will have cracked it."* [44]) and "determination" (*"Do not underestimate our powers of organisation and our determination"* [44]).

These words are used to inspire and unite the nation behind his vision for a post-Brexit Britain. In contrast, there are fewer nouns with negative connotations, such as "crisis" (*"And so I am announcing now – on the steps of Downing Street – that we will fix the crisis in social care once and for all."* [44]) and "difficulties" (*"And to all those who continue to prophesy disaster, I say yes - there will be difficulties..."* [44]), which are used to acknowledge the challenges ahead.

Boris Johnson uses collective nouns in his speech to create a sense of unity and shared purpose. He refers to "the British people", "the people" and "the awesome foursome" (referring to the four nations that comprise the UK), "a great team", like in the case of *"Brexit was a fundamental decision by the British people that they wanted their laws made by people that they can elect and they can remove from office,"* [44] to emphasise the common goals of the public and the four nations of the UK. These collective nouns help bring people together behind Johnson's vision for the country. The use of "the forgotten people" (*"And that means uniting our country, answering at last the plea of the forgotten people and the left-behind towns by physically and literally renewing the ties that bind us together."* [44]) draws attention to a group who feel unrepresented.

Johnson uses proper nouns throughout the text, such as: people "Her Majesty the Queen"; places: "Downing Street", "Scotland", "United Kingdom (UK)", "Brussels" etc.; organisations: "European Union (EU)" [44]. They provide specific context and references within the speech. However, what is notable, there are much fewer proper nouns in this speech than in his 2016 article for The Telegraph, especially in terms of specific categories, like people, organisations and treaties/agreements.

In this Boris Johnson's speech, adjectives play a crucial role in conveying his message and engaging the audience. Regarding degrees of comparison, there are a few instances of comparative and superlative adjectives. For instance, "better deal", "higher wages" and "higher living wage" [44] are comparative adjectives used to highlight the improvements Johnson aims to achieve. The superlative adjective "the most common form of blindness" [44] is used only once in the context of emphasising the high level of British medicine, so it doesn't play a significant role in this speech.

The speech contains numerous adjectives with positive connotations, such as "extraordinary" ("*Let's start now to liberate the UK's extraordinary bioscience...*" [44]), "fantastic" ("*So that with safer streets and better education and fantastic new road (...) we level up across Britain with higher wages...*" [44]), "superb" ("*My job is to make sure your kids get a superb education*" [44]) and others. These adjectives help create a sense of enthusiasm and confidence in the UK's potential. Negative adjectives, like "anti-democratic" ("*...we can do a deal without checks at the Irish border, because we refuse under any circumstances to have such checks and yet without that anti-democratic backstop.*" [44]), are used to address potential obstacles, but without excessive accentuation on them. The predominance of positive adjectives reflects Johnson's intention to inspire and unite the nation.

The most frequently observed functions of adjectives in the speech are descriptive and evaluative. Descriptive adjectives, such as "new", "warm", "close" etc. help to create an engaging description of Johnson's vision for the UK's future – "*European friends - as warm and as close and as affectionate as possible. And the first step is to repeat unequivocally our guarantee to the 3.2 million EU nationals now living and working among us...*" [44]. Evaluative adjectives like "extraordinary", "fantastic", "amazing", ("*...our amazing food and farming sector will be ready and waiting to continue selling ever more...*" [44]) and so on, are used to express Johnson's judgement and opinions, encouraging the audience to share his perspective. The emphatic function is also present, expressed by adjectives like "own" and "very", like in the example "*We close the opportunity gap, giving millions of young people the chance to own their own homes...*" [44] but it is minor in this speech.

As to verbs in the speech, Johnson uses a significant number of action verbs throughout his speech to convey. He uses them mainly to convey a sense of progress and to emphasise the specific steps he plans to take to address the country's challenges and seize new opportunities. Examples include "deliver", "restore", "fulfil", "develop", "fix", "unleash", "liberate" and "promote", for instance, "*...we are going to restore trust in our democracy...*" [44] or "*And we will do a new deal, a better deal that will*

*maximise the opportunities of Brexit while allowing us to develop a new and exciting partnership...*" [44].

In contrast, we can notice that Johnson employs stative verbs less frequently than action ones ("*We know the enormous strengths...*", "*...the change I want to see.*" [44]), especially compared to his article of 2016. In this speech, stative verbs help convey Johnson's assessment of the current situation and his beliefs about the future. But such rare usage is a deliberate choice since by emphasising action verbs, Johnson can influence the audience more effectively.

The verbs in the speech generally have positive connotations. They reflect Johnson's optimistic and ambitious vision for the country. Verbs like "restore", "fulfil" ("*...we are going to restore trust in our democracy and we are going to fulfil the repeated promises of Parliament to the people...*" [44]), "maximise", "develop" ("*And we will do a new deal, a better deal that will maximise the opportunities of Brexit while allowing us to develop a new and exciting partnership*" [44]) and others all contribute to a sense of progress and opportunity. Additionally, such verbs reassure Britons that they have made the right choice.

There are several notable verb collocations and phrasal verbs in this speech, which help to create a vivid and memorable language profile of Boris Johnson. For example: "pay tribute to", "bet against", "level up", "close the opportunity gap", "lift out" [44], etc. All these verb collocations add depth and nuance to Johnson's message. Consequently, his speech becomes more engaging and persuasive.

In terms of pronouns, Boris Johnson uses various types of pronouns to create a sense of unity and convey his message effectively. The most frequently used pronoun types in the speech are personal pronouns, particularly "I", "we" and "you". Johnson uses "I" to express his leadership ("*And though I am today building a great team of men and women, I will take personal responsibility for the change I want to see.*" [44]), while he employs the manipulation strategy of amalgamation and "we" pronoun to create a sense of unity and shared purpose with the audience ("*Because it is time we unleashed the productive power not just of London and the South East, but of every corner of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.*" [44]). Notably, he also uses

the "you" pronoun ("*...my job is to serve you, the people*" [44]). This strategic use allows him to directly address his listeners and draw a kind of dividing line between him as a leader and his audience as the people who have chosen him to follow. Compared to his 2016 article, we can see a significant change in his use of personal pronouns along with an increase in the frequency of their use.

Possessive pronouns, such as "our", "its" and "their", demonstrative pronouns, such as "those", "this" and "that" and some other types of pronouns are used as well but much more rarely than personal ones, so they do not play a significant role in the context of informational and emotional message of the speech.

The use of "we" is particularly interesting, as it is used both inclusively and exclusively. When Johnson says, "*...we are going to restore trust in our democracy,*" [44] he is using "we" inclusively to refer to himself and the audience as a united entity. However, when he says, "*...we politicians need to remember, it is that the people are our bosses,*" [44] he is using "we" exclusively to refer to himself and other politicians, distancing them from the general public.

There are a few instances of indefinite pronouns, such as "anyone", "everyone", "somebody", "nobody", "nothing", "all" ("*Everyone knows the values that flag represents.*" [44]). The occasional use of indefinite pronouns serves to make broad statements or generalisations that can help to reinforce Johnson's message. For example, when he says, "*to all those who say we cannot be ready,*" he is challenging a general group of sceptics and doubters, which helps to emphasise his own confidence.

The pronouns in the speech generally have positive connotations, as they are used to convey a sense of togetherness and shared values. Johnson's wise use of pronouns contributes to his general language profile. By using pronouns to convey unity, leadership and shared values, Johnson effectively expresses his vision for the country and seeks to rally support for his premiership.

In his first speech as Prime Minister, Boris Johnson uses lexical choices to inspire and unite the nation. He predominantly employs nouns, adjectives and verbs with positive connotations to convey his optimistic vision for post-Brexit Britain. Through personal pronouns like "we" and "you" Johnson fosters a sense of unity and

shared purpose with his audience. This contrasts with his more divisive language in the 2016 article, reflecting his new role as a unifying leader.

These two statements by Boris Johnson – the article (2016) and the speech (2019) – demonstrate a noticeable change in his lexical choices due to his transition to the more responsible position of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

In the 2016 article, Johnson employs a more provocative and argumentative tone, using negatively charged nouns and adjectives to criticise the EU's perceived encroachment on British sovereignty. He creates an "us vs. them" divide through amalgamation and reification strategies, portraying the British public as separate from the domineering EU entities pushing undesired integration.

In contrast, Johnson's 2019 speech as Prime Minister adopts a more unifying and optimistic tone. He uses predominantly positive nouns, adjectives and verbs to inspire and unite the nation behind his vision for a post-Brexit Britain. Johnson employs collective nouns and the strategy of amalgamation to create a sense of shared purpose and uses personal pronouns like "we" and "you" to strengthen a connection with his audience.

The shift in Johnson's lexical choices between 2016 and 2019 is attributed to his changing role and political objectives. In 2016, as a leading figure in the Leave campaign, Johnson sought to persuade the public to support Brexit by emphasising the negative aspects of EU membership. However, in 2019, as the newly appointed Prime Minister, Johnson aimed to unite the country and project confidence in Britain's ability to thrive outside the EU.

In both instances, Johnson demonstrates a wise use of language to influence public opinion and advance his political agenda. The evolution of his lexical choices shows his ability to adapt his language to suit his changing roles and objectives.

### **2.1.2. Grammatical specificity of Boris Johnson's statements**

In this subchapter, we will delve into the grammatical choices of Boris Johnson's speeches, focusing on his two statements we have selected for the linguistic analysis. We aim to uncover the unique grammatical features that characterise Johnson's rhetorical style and contribute to his effectiveness as a communicator.

Our analysis will encompass several key aspects of Johnson's language use. First, we will investigate the sentence structures used in these texts to explore the level of clarity and complexity of his messages.

Then, we will examine the grammatical voice, verb tenses and aspects employed by Johnson. We will also consider the verb moods and modals present in his speeches, as they may offer valuable information about his attitudes, intentions and the degree of certainty he expresses.

Finally, we will analyse the transitional words and phrases, as well as how he uses them to link his ideas and guide his audience through his arguments. Ultimately, we can better evaluate the coherence and persuasiveness of his speeches.

### **Article for The Telegraph (2016): Boris Johnson exclusive: There is only one way to get the change we want – vote to leave the EU**

In this article arguing for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, Boris Johnson uses a diverse range of parts of speech to convey his message effectively. Nouns and verbs are prevalent throughout the text – nouns are used approximately 510 times and verbs – approximately 480 times. Adjectives (approx. 440 times) and personal pronouns (approx. 60 times) are used less frequently. As an opinion piece, the article aims to persuade readers to support the UK's exit from the EU. Johnson uses nouns most often to clearly identify the main points of his argument, making it easier for the audience to follow his reasoning. Besides, nouns help to provide clarity and specificity in writing.

Johnson predominantly uses the active voice rather than the passive one as this helps him to create a sense of directness and clarity ("*We have given so much to the world...*", "*I would hope they would see a vote to leave as a challenge.*" [41]). We can consider the usage of active voice as a strategy of influence, as it is preferable in

opinion articles for more reader engagement. However, there are a few instances where Johnson employs the passive voice ("*The efforts at harmonisation were occasionally comical...*", "*We will be told that a Brexit would embolden Putin.*" [41]). In these cases, the passive voice is strategically used for distancing. We can say that in such a way, he employs the manipulation strategy of anonymity (depersonalisation), creating a vision of the collective agent responsible for the actions.

The text comprises a mix of simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences. The article starts with several simple sentences: "*I am a European. I lived many years in Brussels. I rather love the old place.*" [41] Johnson uses simple sentences to set the article in a simple, friendly and even a little informal tone. Complex and compound-complex sentences, such as "*It is unstoppable and it is irreversible – since it can only be repealed by the EU itself,*" [41] are used more frequently to convey intricate ideas and relationships between concepts. These sentences allow Johnson to express his thoughts in a more nuanced manner. Compound sentences, like "*The efforts at harmonisation were occasionally comical and I informed readers about euro-condoms and the great war against the British prawn cocktail flavour crisp,*" [41] are used less frequently to join related ideas and show contrast. The varying sentence structures help maintain reader engagement and create a persuasive flow.

Regarding verb tenses and aspects, the Present Simple tense is used most often to discuss current facts and ongoing situations related to the EU and UK, as in "*Democracy matters; and I find it deeply worrying that the Greeks are effectively being told what to do with their budgets and public spending, in spite of huge suffering among the population.*" [41]

There were a few instances of Past Simple, Present Perfect, Future Simple and Present Continuous tenses. What is noticeable is that Boris Johnson uses the Present Continuous tense with the stative verb "see" ("*We are seeing a slow and invisible process of legal colonisation, as the EU infiltrates just about every area of public policy.*" [41]). While "see" is not commonly used in continuous tenses, in this case, it is used to emphasise the ongoing, gradual nature of the process he is describing.

Simple tenses, particularly the Present Simple and Past Simple, are commonly used in articles to highlight current events and facts (e.g., *"And it is important to remember: it isn't we in this country who have changed. It is the European Union."* [41]). Moreover, authors often use them to make the text easier to process and understand, consequently such text becomes more engaging. Such a tense choice emphasises the urgency and relevance of the matter.

Boris Johnson used several verb moods in his article. While the indicative mood dominates, Johnson uses the imperative mood a few times for emphatic commands: "Let's be frank", "Never forget", "Ask how much", etc., like in the case of *"Ask how much EU legislation the Commission has actually taken back under its various programmes for streamlining bureaucracy."* [41] He uses an imperative mood to set a direct tone when urging readers to consider certain perspectives. There are also a few examples of using a subjunctive mood (e.g., *"If the "Leave" side wins, it will indeed be necessary to negotiate a large number of trade deals at great speed."* [41]), which are used to describe hypothetical scenarios, conditions and outcomes related to Brexit.

Verb modals frequently appear in the text (such as "can", "cannot", "will", "would", "should", "may"), for instance, *"It is good, and right, but it cannot stop the machine; at best it can put a temporary and occasional spoke in the ratchet."* [41] Johnson employs them to express abilities, predictions, obligations and hypothetical scenarios relating to Brexit and to describe the current relations between the UK and the EU: "Britain can be overruled", "it can only be repealed by the EU itself" [41].

In addition, the politician strategically uses transitional words and phrases to link ideas and create coherence in the text. Examples include "and", "but", "therefore", "because", "on the other hand", "above all", etc. These transitional words show addition, contrast, cause-effect relationships and emphasis. They guide the reader through the arguments and make the text more cohesive. For instance, *"There is an excellent forthcoming Bill that will assert the sovereignty of Parliament, the fruit of heroic intellectual labour by Oliver Letwin, which may well exercise a chilling effect on some of the more federalist flights of fancy of the court and the Commission. It is good and right, but it cannot stop the machine; at best it can put a temporary and*

*occasional spoke in the ratchet.*" [41] The use of "but" in this sentence highlights the limitations of the proposed Bill, reinforcing Johnson's main argument that leaving the EU is the only viable option for the UK.

Johnson's precise use of grammar, including carefully chosen parts of speech, varied sentence structures, verb tenses and transitional words and phrases, contributes to the persuasive nature of his rhetoric. With the help of these grammatical tools, he effectively conveys his arguments and engages the readers.

Johnson demonstrates a high level of confidence, but at the same time, sometimes his expressions are quite straightforward. In most cases, such directness is not typical of diplomats and politicians, however it is typical of journalists. His unique manner of presenting the information makes him stand out from other politicians.

### **BBC (2019): Boris Johnson: First speech as PM**

In Boris Johnson's first speech as the UK's new Prime Minister, various parts of speech are employed to convey his message effectively. Nouns and verbs are the most prevalent throughout the text, with nouns being used approximately 440 times and verbs around 430 times. Adjectives (approx. 320 times) and personal pronouns (approx. 90 times) are used less frequently. The heavy use of nouns helps Johnson to clearly identify the main points of his speech. This makes it easier for the audience to follow his ideas. Verbs are essential for expressing actions and intentions. This is crucial in a speech outlining his plans as the new Prime Minister.

In Johnson's speech, there are simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences. Simple sentences, such as *"The time has come to act, to take decisions, to give strong leadership and to change this country for the better,"* [44] are used to make clear, direct statements.

Compound sentences, like *"The people who bet against Britain are going to lose their shirts, because we are going to restore trust in our democracy and we are going to fulfil the repeated promises of Parliament to the people and come out of the EU on October 31, no ifs or buts,"* [44] are used to join related ideas and show contrast. Complex and compound-complex sentences, such as *"And though I am today building*

*a great team of men and women, I will take personal responsibility for the change I want to see,"* [44] are employed to express more intricate ideas and relationships between concepts. The varied sentence structures help maintain listener engagement and create a persuasive flow.

Regarding verb tenses and aspects, the Present Simple tense dominates the speech as Johnson discusses current facts, intentions and future plans. For example, *"My job is to make your streets safer – and we are going to begin with another 20,000 police on the streets and we start recruiting forthwith."* [44] The Future Simple tense is also used frequently to describe upcoming actions and goals, such as *"We will do a new deal, a better deal that will maximise the opportunities of Brexit."* [44] The prevalence of Present Simple and Future Simple tenses emphasises the immediacy of Johnson's plans and his strong commitment to taking action.

The politician actively uses the active voice, as it helps him to create a sense of directness and decisiveness. For example, *"I will take personal responsibility for the change I want to see,"* [44] or *"...we will do a new deal"* [44] etc. There are only a few instances of passive voice in Boris Johnson's speech, like in the case of *"And let me stress that there is a vital sense in which those preparations cannot be wasted."* [44] Notably he used passive constructions much more frequently in his 2016 article. And since politicians often use passive as a manipulation strategy of anonymity to absolve themselves of some responsibility, we can say that Johnson is aware of the responsibility for the fate and history of the country that he bears. In the case of this speech, the predominant use of active voice can be considered a strategy of influence, as using the active voice makes statements more memorable and impactful – they are perceived much easier by the listeners.

There are instances of imperative mood in the speech. This mood is used to urge the audience to take urgent action. For instance, *"...let us begin work now to create free ports..."* and *"...let's start now on those free trade deals."* [44] These imperative verbs encourage the audience to support Johnson's vision. However, the indicative mood is used most frequently as Johnson describes the current state of affairs, presents his plans for the future and expresses his opinions about various issues, e.g., *"We in this*

*government will work flat out to give this country the leadership it deserves and that work begins now.*" [44] There are no instances of subjunctive mood in the speech, unlike his 2016 article. Its absence might be because Johnson, as a Prime Minister, aims to convey a sense of certainty and confidence.

Modal verbs are used throughout the speech to express possibility, intention and determination. For instance, "*...we can do a deal without checks at the Irish border*", "*...we must now respect that decision*" [44], etc. The use of modal verbs of ability and obligation helps to convey Johnson's confidence in his plans. and his commitment to delivering on his promises. Through such strong modal words, we understand that Johnson has a pretty clear vision for the UK's future and is willing to do whatever it takes for the well-being of this country.

Additionally, the politician uses various transitional words and phrases to link ideas and create coherence in his speech. The most frequently used transitional words include "and," "because," "but," and "so." For instance, "*And though I am today building a great team of men and women, I will take personal responsibility for the change I want to see.*" [44] These transitional words help to connect thoughts, show contrast and indicate cause-effect relationships. Thanks to them, the speech becomes more cohesive and easier to follow.

Boris Johnson's deliberate use of grammar in his first speech as Prime Minister enhances the clarity and impact of his message. The high number of nouns and verbs, combined with varied sentence structures, helps to effectively convey his ideas and plans. The frequent use of Present Simple and Future Simple tenses emphasises his commitment to immediate action and future objectives. Active voice and imperative mood create a sense of directness and urgency, while modal verbs express his absolute confidence in his words. Such grammatical choices allow Johnson to effectively communicate his vision for the United Kingdom and persuade his audience.

The grammatical analysis of these two Boris Johnson's statements reveals some of the distinct patterns and strategies that contribute to his effectiveness as a communicator. In the 2016 article, Johnson uses a more diverse range of grammatical

tools, including passive voice, subjunctive mood and a higher frequency of complex and compound-complex sentences. These choices allow him to express nuanced ideas, hypothetical scenarios and create a sense of distance when necessary. As a journalist, his style is straightforward and direct. He aims to persuade readers to support the UK's exit from the EU.

In contrast, Johnson's first speech as Prime Minister in 2019 demonstrates a slight change in his grammatical choices. He predominantly uses active voice, simple and compound sentences and the imperative mood. These elements create a sense of decisiveness and urgency. This corresponds to his new role of Prime Minister and the importance of conveying leadership. The absence of subjunctive mood and the reduced use of passive voice demonstrates his willingness to take responsibility and present a clear vision for the country's future. Both his article and speech use modal verbs and transitional words to create coherence and smoothly guide the audience through his arguments.

In terms of manipulation strategies, Johnson employs depersonalisation through passive voice in the 2016 article, creating a sense of collective responsibility. In the 2019 speech, his predominant use of active voice serves as an influence strategy, making his statements more memorable and impactful. The imperative mood in both speeches urges the audience to consider certain perspectives and take action.

Overall, Boris Johnson's grammatical choices show his ability to employ grammar thoughtfully, with a special attention paid to the voice, tense and sentence types. And this helps him convey his arguments, engages his audience and establishes himself as a persuasive communicator.

### **2.1.3. Stylistic elements in Boris Johnson's statements**

In this subchapter, we will explore the stylistic elements in Boris Johnson's speeches, focusing on the two statements selected for our linguistic analysis. The analysis will investigate the tone and style of his speeches, as well as the delivery techniques he employs to engage and persuade his audience. Additionally, we will

delve into the rhetorical devices and the persuasive strategies used by Johnson to influence his listeners. Our focus will be on diction, syntax, tone, rhetorical devices, structure and organisation, and the context of his addresses.

By analysing these stylistic elements, we aim to identify and examine the key stylistic features that define Johnson's unique oratorical style and contribute to his effectiveness as a public speaker.

The stylistic aspect is essential in constructing a language profile of a politician, as it is through the style of presentation that politicians tend to exert the greatest influence on their listeners.

### **Article for The Telegraph (2016): Boris Johnson exclusive: There is only one way to get the change we want – vote to leave the EU**

In his article, Boris Johnson uses various stylistic devices to persuade the reader and reinforce his stance on the issue. Johnson uses predominantly semi-formal style throughout the article, with occasional instances of informal language. For example, he uses the colloquial expression "the mind boggles" ("*These are not fundamental rights as we normally understand them, and the mind boggles as to how they will be enforced.*" [41]) meaning that something is difficult to comprehend or imagine. We consider his article to be written in semi-formal style, due to his frequent use of personal pronouns, somewhat loose structure and the use of rhetorical questions and emphatic statements, which is more common in a semi-formal style.

The syntax of this article is characterised by mostly declarative sentences, there are only a few instances of interrogative ("*Why should that be impossible?*") and imperative ("*Never forget that if it were down to Jeremy Corbyn and the so-called People's Party, the people would be completely frozen out.*" [41]) sentences. Johnson asks rhetorical questions such as "*Are we really unable to do trade deals?*" [41] to engage people and challenge the notion that the UK is incapable of functioning independently outside the EU.

Johnson's tone throughout the article is assertive and confident. We see that he has a strong belief in the UK's ability to flourish outside the EU. He adopts a slightly

sarcastic tone when discussing the EU's regulations, such as the "euro-condoms" and the "great war against the British prawn cocktail flavour crisp" (*"The efforts at harmonisation were occasionally comical, and I informed readers about euro-condoms and the great war against the British prawn cocktail flavour crisp."* [41]) to underscore the absurdity of some EU policies.

In addition, Johnson employs figurative language to make his points more vivid and memorable. He actively uses repetitions, as seen in the sentence *"We will hear a lot in the coming weeks about the risks of this option; the risk to the economy, the risk to the City of London, and so on."* [41] Thanks to this stylistic device he emphasises what the EU will say about the potential dangers of such a decision, which he later dismisses as exaggerated. He uses metaphors, such as likening EU law to a ratchet "clicking only forwards" (*"That is why EU law is likened to a ratchet, clicking only forwards."* [41]) to illustrate the irreversible nature of EU legislation. Additionally, he personifies the EU as "Nanny in Brussels" [11] in the sentence *"We have become so used to Nanny in Brussels that we have become infantilised, incapable of imagining an independent future,"* [41] suggesting that the UK has become overly dependent on the EU and has lost its ability to make decisions independently.

Johnson's tone throughout the article is assertive and confident. We see that he has a strong belief in the UK's ability to flourish outside the EU. He adopts a slightly sarcastic tone when discussing the EU's regulations, such as the "euro-condoms" and the "great war against the British prawn cocktail flavour crisp" (*"The efforts at harmonisation were occasionally comical, and I informed readers about euro-condoms and the great war against the British prawn cocktail flavour crisp."* [41]) to underscore the absurdity of some EU policies. Rarely the politician uses hyperboles, like in the case of *"We have spent 500 years trying to stop continental European powers uniting against us."* [41] History says that the United Kingdom indeed has a long-standing foreign policy tradition of working to maintain a balance of power in Europe, aiming to prevent any single nation from gaining a dominant position on the continent. However, this approach can be traced back to the early 18th century, after the Kingdom of Great Britain was established through the union of England and Scotland in 1707

[36]. Hence, "500 years" turns out to be an exaggeration and may be considered as a hyperbole.

Johnson's article follows a clear but somewhat fluid structure. He moves from one idea to the next as they occur to him. These transitions are often based on loose associations rather than strict logic, and there isn't always a clear signposting of the structure. Throughout the piece, he appeals to ethos by highlighting his personal experience living in Brussels and his knowledge of the EU's inner workings, which represents him as a credible informant. He also appeals to pathos by evoking a sense of pride in the UK's history and its potential for future success. This can be considered as a manipulative strategy, since he uses the readers' emotions to convince them in his rightness and to win their support.

In terms of context, it is essential to note that the article was written in 2016. At the time, Boris Johnson was a key figure in the Brexit campaign. As the Mayor of London, his decision to support the Leave campaign after much deliberation became a turning point in the debate. Johnson called for a new UK-EU relationship focused on trade and cooperation with less supranational oversight. He challenged Prime Minister David Cameron's plea to remain in the EU and bolstered the Leave campaign's momentum.

All things considered, Boris Johnson's first speech as Prime Minister is a rhetorically sophisticated address. It aims to unite the country, establish his leadership, and provide a clear vision for the UK's future. He employs a persuasive, semi-formal style, using rhetorical questions, repetition, metaphors, and appeals to emotion to argue for leaving the EU. Johnson's assertive tone and occasional sarcasm aim to dismiss EU regulations as absurd. We should note his penchant for irony and sarcasm, as well as the directness of his thoughts. These traits are among the most recognisable in his language profile.

### **BBC (2019): Boris Johnson: First speech as PM**

In his first speech as Prime Minister, Boris Johnson employs a range of stylistic devices to rally support for his vision of the UK's future.

Despite the speech addressing serious political issues and using mostly sophisticated language, we classify it to be delivered in a semi-formal style. There are occasional colloquial expressions like "the buck stops here", which means taking ultimate responsibility for something and "betting against the pluck and nerve" [44], which in this context means doubting or underestimating some qualities. Additionally, he uses personal pronouns like "I" and "we" throughout the speech, which is more common in a semi-formal style.

The politician uses emotive language to evoke a sense of pride and optimism, with phrases such as "the awesome foursome" (*"Because it is time we unleashed the productive power not just of London and the South East, but of every corner of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The awesome foursome that are incarnated in that red, white, and blue flag..."* [44]) and "generous in temper and engaged with the world" (*"To recover our natural and historic role as an enterprising, outward-looking and truly global Britain, generous in temper and engaged with the world."* [44]). Such language aims to unite the country and instil confidence in his leadership.

The syntax of the speech is characterised by a mix of declarative and imperative sentences. Johnson makes bold statements, such as *"...we will come out of the EU on October 31,"* and issues direct calls to action, like *"let us begin work now to create free ports."* [44] Notably, his 2019 speech has many more imperative sentences than the 2016 article, indicating an increase in his level of persuasiveness and responsibility. He does not use rhetorical questions in his speech, which shows his urge to make it more formal.

The overall tone of the speech is optimistic and confident, with Johnson expressing his belief in the UK's potential. However, there are also moments of defiance and confrontation, particularly when addressing critics and the EU. Johnson's attitude towards these groups is unyielding, as evidenced by his statement, *"...we refuse under any circumstances to have such checks and yet without that anti-democratic backstop."* [44]

Throughout the speech, Johnson employs figurative language to emphasise his points and create memorable images. He uses metaphors, such as "lose their shirts" (*"The people who bet against Britain are going to lose their shirts."* [44]) meaning to lose everything and "change the record" (*"And after three years of unfounded self-doubt, it is time to change the record."* [44]) meaning to change the mind or discuss something else. These metaphors and figurative expressions are used to make the speech more engaging, to simplify complex ideas, and to evoke a sense of shared identity in the audience.

He also uses hyperbole, claiming that *"...no one in the last few centuries has succeeded in betting against the pluck and nerve and ambition of this country,"* [44] to bolster national pride and confidence, although in fact this is unproven information and he doesn't know if actually no one has succeeded. Besides, he uses hyperbole and metaphor at the same time, drawing a parallel between people and bosses in the sentence *"Because if there is one point we politicians need to remember, it is that the people are our bosses."* [44] In a literal sense, the people are not the direct employers or supervisors of politicians. In a representative democracy, politicians are elected by the people to represent their interests and make decisions on their behalf, but the relationship is not exactly the same as that of an employee and employer. However, by using such a phrase, he emphasises the idea that politicians are accountable to the public and that their authority derives from the consent of the governed.

Repetitions are used extensively throughout the speech to emphasise some of the important points. They also create a sense of rhythm and consequently make the message more memorable. Anaphora is used several times, in particular, *"My job is to make your streets safer... My job is to make sure you don't have to wait 3 weeks to see your GP... My job is to protect you or your parents or grandparents from the fear of having to sell your home to pay for the costs of care... My job is to make sure your kids get a superb education..."* [44] He also employs anaphora with the invocation "let's": *"Let's start now to liberate the UK's extraordinary bioscience sector from anti-genetic modification rules... Let's develop the blight-resistant crops that will feed the world... Let's get going now on our own position navigation and timing satellite and earth*

*observation systems...*" [44] In these two cases, anaphora becomes an extremely powerful tool of influence. By using repetition specifically at the beginning of the sentences, Johnson attracts the most attention from the audience by emphasising what he is taking responsibility for as Prime Minister and encouraging people to help him implement his plans. And in the case of "Let's", he makes the ordinary people feel like people who can and should have a say in the fate of their country.

Furthermore, the phrase *"Never mind the backstop – the buck stops here,"* [44] can be seen as a form of pun, specifically a homophonic pun, where words with similar sounds but different meanings are used to create a specific rhetorical effect. In this case, the pun relies on the similar sounds of "backstop" and "buck stops." The "backstop" refers to a controversial provision in the Brexit negotiations related to the Irish border, while the phrase "the buck stops here" means taking ultimate responsibility for something. The politician creates a clever wordplay that downplays the importance of the backstop issue, suggesting that it's not the most crucial concern, and creates a memorable and quotable phrase.

Johnson's speech is well-structured with a greeting at the beginning of his speech. He pays tribute to his predecessor and acknowledges the challenges facing the country. The body of the speech outlines his priorities and vision for the UK, covering topics such as policing, healthcare, education, and infrastructure. The conclusion reiterates his commitment to delivering Brexit and his belief in the country's potential. At the very end, he expresses his gratitude to the people.

Throughout the speech, Johnson appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos. He establishes his credibility (ethos) by accepting the Queen's invitation to form a government and by taking personal responsibility for the change he wants to see *"I have just been to see Her Majesty the Queen who has invited me to form a government and I have accepted."* [44] Apart from this, he appeals to emotions (pathos) by evoking a sense of national pride, using phrases like *"And though the Queen has just honoured me with this extraordinary office of state my job is to serve you, the people"* [44] and *"We in this government will work flat out to give this country the leadership it deserves"*

[44]. Finally, he appeals to logic (logos) by outlining his plans for the country and the potential benefits of Brexit.

In terms of context, it is essential to note that Johnson's speech comes at a critical juncture in the Brexit process. With the October 31 deadline approaching and no deal in sight, Johnson's government faces significant challenges in delivering on the referendum result. His speech aims to unite the country behind his leadership and provide a clear vision for the UK's future outside the EU.

On the whole, in his first speech as Prime Minister in 2019, Boris Johnson uses mainly semi-formal style, he actively turns to emotive language, metaphors, and repetition to rally support for his vision of the UK's future. He periodically uses imperative sentences to issue calls to action. We can note the evolution of Boris Johnson's style compared to his 2016 article. He began to use much more strategies of influence and manipulation, as well as to actively turn to the emotional component of his audience. The repetitions in his speech deserve special attention, as they help him to achieve the desired effect. We should also note his use of colloquial phrases, which signals his desire to be "closer to the people".

To sum up, the analysis of Boris Johnson's speeches reveals several important stylistic elements that contribute to his language profile. Johnson employs a predominantly semi-formal style, characterised by the use of personal pronouns, rhetorical questions, and sometimes colloquial expression. Such style allows him to connect with his audience on a more personal level.

Johnson's speeches are marked by assertive and confident tones. He skillfully uses figurative language, such as metaphors, hyperboles, and repetitions, to make his points more memorable.

Throughout his speeches, Johnson appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos to establish his credibility, evoke emotions, and present logical arguments. He employs a mix of declarative and imperative sentences to express his strong opinions and urge his audience to take specific actions.

Over time, Johnson's style has evolved to include more strategies of influence and manipulation, as well as a greater emphasis on the emotional component of his audience. His use of repetition, particularly anaphora, has become a powerful tool for emphasising key points and creating a sense of rhythm.

Overall, Boris Johnson's speeches demonstrate an authentic blend of stylistic elements that makes him an effective public speaker. This complements his compelling language profile that engages and influences his audience.

## **2.2. Distinguishing semantic and sociolinguistic features of Boris Johnson's statements**

This subchapter aims to analyse the semantic and sociolinguistic features of Boris Johnson's speeches. We will examine such aspects as euphemisms, dysphemisms, framing, agenda-setting, presuppositions, implicatures, hedging, intertextuality, and allusions [20]. This is expected to provide us valuable information about Johnson's rhetorical strategies and their impact on his audience. Using semantic and sociolinguistic tools, politicians can influence people's views through the lens of society, geopolitical context and culture. This is true for Boris Johnson's speeches as well. The investigation of engagement techniques Boris Johnson will help us understand how exactly he establishes rapport with his listeners and maintains his authority as a political figure.

We will analyse the semantic and sociolinguistic components of his language profile based on his three speeches from different years, namely Election Victory Speech (2019), Address on the Russian Invasion of Ukraine (2022) and Farewell Speech as UK Prime Minister (2022). We will also take into account his 2018 article for The Telegraph "The rest of the world believes in Britain. It's time that we did too" and his 2024 interview with the European Pravda media outlet.

To start with, a notable aspect of Johnson's language is his use of euphemisms and dysphemisms to shape the perception of certain concepts or actions. He uses

euphemisms mostly to refer to political and geopolitical negative phenomena, as well as to soften the psychological effect of his words and to give people hope for the best. One of the examples is "big, big power struggle" in his 2024 interview with the European Pravda media outlet (*"I think it's not a world war in the sense of the 1914-18 and 1939-45 World Wars with mass mobilisation of people in the West... But it's a big, big power struggle."* [49]). He uses this phrase to describe the war which has broken out on the territory of Ukraine, making it sound like a strategic competition rather than a full-scale war. In his address about a Russian invasion on 24 February 2022, he uses a very nice metaphorical phrase: "Flame of freedom burns low" (*"And if the months ahead are grim, and the flame of freedom burns low, I know that it will blaze bright again in Ukraine."* [45]). At that time the world does not yet know how events will develop, but most countries do not believe in the victory of Ukraine and the soon end of the war, so in order not to say that Ukraine has bad prospects, he uses this phrase and the audience perceives it psychologically easier, because the first word that is perceived by the brain of his listeners is exactly "freedom". In this way he both gives hope to the Ukrainian people and signals to the Western countries that Ukraine is not so hopeless and it makes sense to provide it with arms assistance as soon as possible.

Johnson actively uses dysphemisms in relation to categories of people and politicians whose opinion does not coincide with his one, as well as in relation to Russia and everything connected with it, as it has started armed aggression against Ukraine. For instance, in his first speech as a Prime Minister, Johnson uses the dysphemisms "doubters," "doomsters," and "gloomsters" (*"The doubters, the doomsters, the gloomsters – they are going to get it wrong again."* [44]) to describe those who oppose or criticise Brexit, but in fact people do not have to have the same view on Brexit as he does, so in this case he replaces the relatively neutral term "opponent" with harsher words to increase their effect and impact on the audience. Besides, in his latest speeches and interviews he actively uses dysphemisms regarding the personality of the Russian president Vladimir Putin, one of the examples is "Russian dictator" (*"I don't believe that the Russian dictator will ever subdue the national feeling of the Ukrainians and their passionate belief that their country should be free."* [45]). Despite the fact that

nowadays, when there is a war on the territory of Ukraine, this person is associated with aggression and cruelty, originally the term "president" has a neutral connotation, so we may well consider such a substitution as a dysphemism. Such a negative expression emphasises Putin's authoritarian rule and lack of democratic legitimacy.

Framing, which is manifested through making certain issues of a perceived reality more salient in a communication context [37], and agenda-setting, which is characterised by the direction of public opinion towards specific issues [35], are central to Johnson's semantic strategy. In his first speech as a Prime Minister, he frames Brexit as the main issue, emphasising the need to "get Brexit done" and presenting himself and his strategies as the solution to the problem [26]. This problem-solution framing [18] positions Johnson as the leader capable of delivering on the will of the people. Similarly, in his 2022 farewell speech, Johnson focuses on his achievements, such as the UK's response to the COVID-19 pandemic [16] and support for Ukraine, while downplaying the scandals that led to his resignation [27], like the Partygate scandal [8]. Therefore we see that he selectively emphasises certain aspects and ignores others, setting the agenda and completely controlling the narrative.

Johnson frequently employs presuppositions and implicatures to subtly influence the audience's beliefs and opinions. For example, in his 2019 speech he states "*We are going to restore trust in our democracy*" [44], which presupposes that trust in British democracy has been lost. In this very speech he uses an implicature: "*We will do a new deal, a better deal*" [44], which implies that the previous deal regarding Brexit negotiated by Theresa May was flawed, and that Johnson will secure a superior agreement. The same goes for his 2024 interview, he states, "*Defeat by Putin is not in Trump's interests,*" [49] presupposing that Trump has interests aligned with Putin and implying a connection between the two leaders. This statement invites the audience to question Trump's motives without explicitly accusing him of wrongdoing. Boris Johnson uses presuppositions and implicatures most frequently in his 2019 speech as Prime Minister. This signals that he wants to achieve maximum rhetorical effect and show that he is different from his predecessors for the better. Consequently, we can

conclude that for him this speech is much more responsible than the others we have taken to analyse.

Hedging, which is a way of avoiding giving a direct answer or opinion [10], is another semantic feature present in Johnson's language, particularly when discussing sensitive or controversial topics. Most frequently he uses hedging in his addresses connected with Ukraine, as he is talking about war, and it is important to be careful with every word. For instance, in his address on the Russian Invasion of Ukraine (2022), he states: *"And if the months ahead are grim, and the flame of freedom burns low, I know that it will blaze bright again in Ukraine."* [45] Here, Johnson uses conditional language ("if") to hedge his prediction about Ukraine's future, acknowledging the potential difficulties while still expressing confidence in Ukraine's resilience. The same goes for his 2024 interview, when asked about Timothy Snyder's view on the interconnected nature of global conflicts, Johnson uses hedging to express partial agreement without fully endorsing the perspective: *"I think there's a lot of truth in that."* [49] He often uses "I think", "I believe" etc. to make his answer allegedly more subjective and therefore not universal. Besides, he actively uses conditionals and modal verbs like in case of *"He could try something. He will be more likely to try that if he succeeds in Ukraine."* [49] In this instance, Johnson uses conditional language and modal verbs ("could," "will be") to hedge his speculation about Putin's potential actions, avoiding a firm prediction.

Johnson's addresses and articles also exhibit intertextuality and allusions to historical events, famous figures, and shared cultural experiences. For example in his 2018 article he writes: *"It was time, I told the crowd – some of them hanging over the galleries like a scene from The Shawshank Redemption – for Global Britain. And by Global Britain, I meant a country that was more open, more outward-looking, more engaged with the world than ever before."* [42] Johnson's vision of "Global Britain" alludes to the country's historical role as a global power, particularly during the British Empire's height in the 19th and early 20th centuries. And in his 2022 address on the Russian invasion, Johnson compares the situation to the "darkest hours of European history," [42] drawing parallels to World War II and the fight against fascism. These

allusions create a sense of connection with the audience by tapping into shared knowledge and values. In his political speeches of recent years, he has used such references and allusions with increasing frequency. This not only demonstrates his knowledge of the historical and geopolitical context, but also shows that he respects and remembers history, so that in our time he can avoid the mistakes of the past or, on the contrary, act like great historical figures for the global good.

As Johnson's political authority grew, particularly during his tenure as Prime Minister, his language became more assertive and confident. His first speech as a Prime Minister showcases a bold vision for the country, with statements like "*we are going to unite and level up*" and "*we will unleash the potential of the whole United Kingdom.*" [43] This assertiveness is even more evident in his 2022 address on Ukraine, where he declares, "*Putin must fail, and Ukraine must succeed.*" [47]

The context in which Johnson's speeches and articles are delivered significantly influences his rhetoric and semantic choices. During the Brexit negotiations in 2018, his language aimed to rally support for a hard Brexit and boost national confidence. As Prime Minister, his speech focused on uniting the country and delivering on his campaign promises (it is exactly the concept of "unity" that Johnson resorts to most often). The Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 required a strong condemnation of Russia's actions and a demonstration of solidarity with Ukraine. His latest addresses showed a shift towards reflection on his achievements and legacy-building.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Boris Johnson's speeches and public addresses demonstrate a range of strategies and features that contribute to his ability to connect with and influence his audience.

Throughout the provided texts, Johnson employs various speech acts to achieve specific effects. For example, in his 2018 article, he uses assertives (statements of fact) to present his vision of a "Global Britain" as a reality, such as "*Global Britain is not a vainglorious dream, but a reality that underlines our tremendous potential.*" [42] These assertives aim to persuade the audience of the credibility and feasibility of his ideas. And in his first speech as a Prime Minister, Johnson employs commissives (promises or commitments) to outline his government's plans and generate trust, such as "*We will*

*fix the crisis in social care once and for all with a clear plan we have prepared."* [44] They position him as a leader with solutions and a clear vision for the future. In this very speech he uses directives (commands or requests) to urge action, such as *"Let us begin work now to create free ports that will drive growth and thousands of high-skilled jobs in left-behind areas."* [44]

Johnson uses both positive and negative politeness strategies to build rapport and maintain his authority. For instance, he uses positive politeness in his 2022 farewell speech: *"And I'm proud to have discharged the promises I made my party when you were kind enough to choose me, winning the biggest share of the vote in the last 40 years, the biggest share of the vote since 1979."* [46] Johnson thanks his party and acknowledges its support, and this demonstrates his appreciation and the sense of shared achievement. On the contrary, his words regarding his party in the 2019 speech can be considered as a negative politeness: *"And though I am today building a great team of men and women, I will take personal responsibility for the change I want to see."* [44] Johnson asserts his leadership, but at the same time he downplays the importance and influence of his team, which can be seen as negative politeness.

There are several phonological peculiarities in Johnson's addresses that set him apart from other politicians. Johnson's accent is a standard upper-class British accent, often associated with the South-Eastern regions of England. His use of intonation usually conveys confidence and authority. He often places stress on certain words for emphasis. His speeches can be described as highly rhythmic. He mainly achieves this through the use of pauses and emphases. However, his addresses are sometimes referred to as forceful, with a speech rate of about 150 words per minute. Such a style can be perceived by the audience as aggressive and negatively affect its reaction to his message. There is an interrelation between the personality (how personal the address is for him) and context of his speech and the dynamics of his utterance. Like any human being, he is subject to emotions, and since he has a rather extensive and provocative experience in the field of journalism, he sometimes has difficulties with hiding emotions that are personal to him. Thus his first speech as Prime Minister [43] and the

farewell speech [48] are more dynamic than, for example, his speech on the Russian invasion of Ukraine [47].

Johnson employs various strategies to engage and influence his audience. He uses rhetorical devices, such as "the rule of three" [39], to make his points more memorable and impactful. For example, in his 2019 election victory speech, he refers to "the doubters, the doomsters, the gloomsters," [44] creating a catchy and persuasive phrase. He employs storytelling and humour to create a personal connection with the audience, as seen in his 2018 article when he describes his first day as foreign secretary in the Durbar Court. (*"It was almost exactly two years ago that I went into the Durbar Court in the Foreign Office. It was my first day as foreign secretary, and I stood within that vast marble atrium adorned with the busts of explorers, and I announced a vision..."* [42])

To sum up, the analysis of Boris Johnson's speeches reveals a dynamic language profile that has evolved over time. As his political authority grew, particularly during his tenure as Prime Minister, Johnson's rhetoric became more assertive, with increased use of intertextuality, allusions, and rhetorical devices. He consistently employed euphemisms, dysphemisms, framing, agenda-setting, presuppositions, and implicatures to shape public perception and influence opinion. Moreover, his sociolinguistic strategies, such as speech acts, politeness, and audience engagement techniques, contributes to his ability to connect with listeners and maintain authority.

### **Conclusion to the second chapter**

In conclusion, the comprehensive analysis of Boris Johnson's language profile, based on a selection of his speeches, articles, and interviews from 2016 to 2024 years, has revealed that he has a multifaceted and dynamic rhetorical style that has developed alongside his political career. The examination of the lexical, grammatical, stylistic, semantic, and sociolinguistic features of his language disclosed the various strategies and techniques Johnson employs to engage, persuade, and influence his audience.

The lexical analysis has shown that Johnson strategically uses evaluative words, collective nouns, and pronouns to create a sense of unity and shared purpose. His vocabulary choices have shifted from creating an "us vs. them" divide in his 2016 article on Brexit to a more unifying and optimistic tone in his 2019 speech as Prime Minister. He actively uses amalgamation and reification strategies.

The grammatical analysis has demonstrated that Johnson uses diverse sentence structures, predominantly active voice. However, he aptly employs the manipulation strategy of anonymity through the use of passive voice. Sometimes he turns to an imperative mood to engage the audience even more and convey directness. Over time, Johnson's grammatical choices have evolved to include more strategies of influence and manipulation connected with his increasing political responsibility.

The stylistic analysis has highlighted Johnson's predominantly semi-formal style, characterised by personal pronouns, rhetorical questions, and occasional colloquial expressions. His speeches are marked by assertive and confident tones as well as by figurative language, such as metaphors, hyperboles, and repetitions, which he exploits as a tool for emphasising key points, creating a sense of rhythm and influencing people. Johnson's use of ethos, pathos, and logos appeals make him an effective and confident public speaker.

The semantic and sociolinguistic analysis has revealed Johnson's use of such influence and manipulation tools as euphemisms, dysphemisms, framing, agenda-setting, presuppositions, implicatures, and hedging. His speeches and articles exhibit intertextuality and allusions to historical events, famous figures, and shared cultural experiences. The use of references and allusions are rather typical for politicians, as it helps them create a sense of strong connection with people. Johnson's sociolinguistic strategies, such as resorting to speech act theory, both positive and negative politeness, and audience engagement techniques, have contributed to his ability to connect with listeners and maintain authority.

Throughout the analysed period, Johnson's language profile has undergone notable changes. As his political authority grew, particularly during his post as Prime Minister, his rhetoric became more assertive, confident and emotional, with increased

use of intertextuality, allusions, and rhetorical devices. Consequently, we can conclude that the context in which his speeches were delivered significantly influenced his semantic choices and rhetorical strategies. Regarding the manner of message presentation by Johnson we can say that it is rather emotive, sometimes excessively, characterised by high rhythmicity, but at times can be regarded as aggressive.

On the example of Boris Johnson addresses, articles and interviews, we can see how important is a role language and speech construction plays in politics. It not only helps politicians to effectively communicate their visions and thoughts, but also has a significant influence on the formation of public opinion, which in turn can influence, and in Boris Johnson's case has influenced (Brexit), the historical development of a country or group of countries

## CONCLUSION

In the modern political landscape, the power of language in shaping public opinion and influencing political discourse is undeniable. Political speeches serve as tools for persuasion, motivation, and the projection of political identity. Since people actively engage with political content through media platforms, examining language profiles becomes crucial for understanding the persuasive strategies employed by prominent political figures.

The first chapter provided a strong foundation for understanding the concept of "language profile" and its importance within the political discourse, based on the scholarly contributions of E. Sheigal, I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay, Paul Chilton, M. Didenko, N. Karpchuk and K. Serazhym.

The theoretical part of this study laid the groundwork by delving into the peculiarities of the language profile of a politician. We have figured out that it comprises a set of linguistic features that characterise the politician's manner of speech, including elements such as vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation, style, and register. It mirrors his identity, culture, education, and social status. In political discourse, a

language profile aids in understanding the unique ways in which a politician communicates, influences, and persuades the audience, shaping both domestic and international political perceptions.

We have pinpointed that Boris Johnson, as one of the leading figures in contemporary British politics, has been at the forefront of public attention, since he occupied the senior positions of Mayor of London, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Consequently, his speeches have become a subject of widespread consumption and discussion, and it's largely because of the linguistic elements he wisely uses in his addresses, articles and interviews.

The practical research of Boris Johnson's language profile carried out in the second chapter revealed his integration of persuasive appeals to reason (logos) and emotion (pathos). His speeches blend logical policy arguments with emotionally resonant language, often aimed at evoking patriotism, confidence, and a sense of national pride. Johnson employs ethos to establish credibility and present himself as a trusted authority figure through deliberate rhetorical choices, such as the use of the pronoun "we" to create a sense of unity and collective identity with his audience.

We have found out that the emotional power of Johnson's speeches is further increased by his use of figurative language, particularly metaphors, periodical hyperboles and repetitions. He translates complex or abstract concepts into easily understandable images, which are key to his ability to shape narratives in his favour. Humour plays a significant role in his rhetorical strategy, allowing him to connect with audiences on a more personal level and display a sympathetic persona.

From the lexical point of view, we have noticed that in his earlier speeches and articles, he used more provocative and argumentative language, using negatively charged nouns and adjectives to criticise the European Union policy. However, as Prime Minister, Johnson adopted a more unifying and optimistic tone, using predominantly positive nouns, adjectives, and verbs to inspire and unite the nation behind his vision for a post-Brexit Britain.

Grammatically, Johnson uses various types of sentences, giving preference to complex and compound-complex sentences. He predominantly employs active voice to create a sense of directness and decisiveness, with occasional cases of passive voice as a manipulation strategy of anonymity. The use of imperative mood in his speeches serves to issue calls to action and engage the audience further.

From a stylistic perspective, Johnson's language profile is marked by a semi-formal style, assertive and confident tones and the use of figurative language. He employs repetition, particularly anaphora, as a tool for emphasising key points and creating a sense of rhythm. His speeches demonstrate a blend of rhetorical devices, such as the rule of three, storytelling, and humour, to make his arguments more memorable and impactful.

Semantically and sociolinguistically, Johnson's language profile reveals his use of euphemisms, dysphemisms, framing, agenda-setting, presuppositions, implicatures and hedging to shape public perception and influence opinion. His speeches exhibit intertextuality and allusions to historical events, famous figures, and shared cultural experiences. Johnson's sociolinguistic strategies, such as speech acts, politeness and audience engagement techniques make him a powerful speaker on the political arena.

In conclusion, we can say that Boris Johnson's language profile is far from a standard political language profile while still charismatic and extremely impactful. It is largely influenced by the politician's journalistic experience. He expresses his thoughts more freely than standard politicians, because of which his speeches do not always meet all the diplomatic requirements. In terms of language, he knows how to use it in a way that maximises its impact on people. Johnson's statements are not characterised by a high level of scandalousness, and judging by his references to history and famous personalities, we can conclude that he is a highly educated person. The politician does not overuse manipulative strategies, aptly introducing them at appropriate moments in his speeches instead. Johnson's most commonly used manipulation strategy is the strategy of amalgamation. The concept of nationwide unification is a concept he exploits most often and it demonstrates a rather high level of effectiveness.

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## SUMMARY

The Bachelor's thesis "Language profile of Boris Johnson" is devoted to the research of the language profile of the prominent British politician Boris Johnson. The work reveals verbal means in the speeches and articles of this prominent British politician that form his distinct language profile: he wisely uses lexical, grammatical, stylistic, semantic and sociolinguistic elements to achieve certain communicative aims and influence the audience.

The relevance of the research is conditioned by the people's increasing engagement with the political content through media and social media platforms. Examining language profiles becomes crucial for a nuanced understanding of the persuasive strategies prominent political figures employ to influence and manipulate public opinion. The processes of changes in the British government are significantly driven by people who are influenced by politicians' actions and, more importantly, by their addresses. The detailed analysis of the development of Boris Johnson's role in the political discourse helps describe and define the peculiarities of his language profile, identify strategies of influence and understand how his language has developed over time in response to his changing roles and political context.

The object of the research is Boris Johnson's speeches and articles which contain linguistic characteristics that are peculiar to him as a political leader and help to build up his unique profile.

The aim of the research is to analyse and investigate Boris Johnson's language profile in depth and provide valuable insights into his language use and rhetoric.

The following tasks were outlined:

- to scrutinise the concept and structure of language profile in politics as well as methods of creating an attractive profile and its influence on public opinion;
- to study the personality of Boris Johnson and his significant role in political discourse;
- to research the language profile of Boris Johnson and pinpoint the distinguishing linguistic and stylistic features of his speeches and mass media publications;

- to analyse written and audiovisual publications across different stages of his political career.

The research is based on the speeches, articles and interviews of Boris Johnson. The materials from 2016 to 2024 were carefully selected to provide a representative sample of his language use over time.

The research paper consists of an introduction, two chapters, conclusions and a list of references. The total number of pages is 78.

The first chapter is dedicated to the theoretical overview of Boris Johnson's language profile. It presents the concept of political discourse and language profile, highlighting their importance in the modern political landscape. Political discourse reflects a country's socio-political life, culture and values. Analysing political discourse and politicians' language profiles allows researchers to identify relevant communication tactics and strategies employed by politicians to influence their audience. The concept of a "language profile" comprises a set of linguistic features that characterises the speaker, including elements like vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation, style, manner of speech and register. It may mirror one's identity, culture, education and social status. The mechanisms of influence in political discourse are studied by various disciplines, including sociology, psychology, behavioural studies and linguistics. For linguistics, the primary interest lies in linguistic mechanisms of influence, namely verbal and non-verbal mechanisms. The choice of communicative strategies and tactics is driven by the context of communication and the specific intentions of the politician. Depending on the effect they want to achieve, various linguistic means (semantic, lexical) are carefully chosen. In addition, the theoretical part provides a brief overview of Boris Johnson's biography in order to further understand the relationship between the context of his life and the nature of his addresses and publications.

The second chapter is devoted to the practical analysis of Boris Johnson's language profile. The lexical analysis reveals Boris Johnson's strategic use of language to influence public opinion. The frequently used lexical patterns include evaluative words, collective nouns and pronouns to create an "us vs. them" narrative (reification

strategy) or, on contrary, unite people (amalgamation strategy) and frame certain phenomena in a positive or negative way, depending on his rhetorical goals. Johnson's grammatical choices demonstrate his ability to employ grammar thoughtfully, with special attention paid to voice, tense and sentence types. These choices help him to effectively convey his arguments, engage his audience and establish himself as a persuasive communicator. In terms of stylistics, Johnson skillfully appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos throughout his speeches to establish his credibility, evoke emotions, and present logical arguments. Johnson predominantly uses semi-formal style, characterised by personal pronouns, rhetorical questions, and occasional colloquial expressions. His speeches are marked by assertive and confident tones and by figurative language, such as metaphors, hyperboles, and repetitions. Over time, Johnson's style has evolved to include more strategies of influence and manipulation as well as a greater emphasis on the emotional component of his audience.

The semantic and sociolinguistic analysis of Boris Johnson's speeches reveals a range of linguistic devices he constantly uses in his addresses and publications, such as euphemisms, dysphemisms, framing, agenda-setting, presuppositions, and implicatures to shape public perception and influence people's opinion on key issues. His speeches and articles exhibit a high degree of intertextuality and allusions to historical events, famous figures and shared cultural experiences, which serve to create a sense of connection with his audience and tap into their existing knowledge and values. Johnson's sociolinguistic strategies, such as his use of speech acts, both positive and negative politeness, and various audience engagement techniques, contribute to his ability to connect with listeners and maintain authority.

To sum up, the comprehensive analysis of Boris Johnson's language profile, based on carefully selected samples of his speeches, articles, and interviews from 2016 to 2024, has revealed that he possesses a multifaceted and dynamic rhetorical style that has developed alongside his political career. Throughout the analysed period, Johnson's language profile has undergone notable changes. As his political authority grew, particularly during his tenure as Prime Minister, his rhetoric became more assertive, confident and emotionally charged, with increased use of intertextuality, allusions, and

powerful rhetorical devices. These changes reflect his ability to adapt his language to suit his roles and the shifting political landscapes in which he operates.

We should note that the research conducted in this Bachelor's thesis, while extensive, does not exhaust all aspects of the considered topic. Subsequent avenues of investigation may consist of an even broader analysis of Boris Johnson's linguistic characteristics, as well as the development of complex language portraits of him over a longer period of time. Such further research would contribute to an even more comprehensive understanding of Johnson's language profile and its impact on British political discourse.

## РЕЗЮМЕ

Бакалаврська робота на тему "Мовний портрет Бориса Джонсона" присвячена дослідженню мовного портрету відомого британського політика Бориса Джонсона. Робота розкриває вербальні засоби у промовах і статтях цього видатного британського політика, які формують його особливий мовний портрет: він майстерно використовує лексичні, граматичні, стилістичні, семантичні та соціолінгвістичні елементи для досягнення певних комунікативних цілей і впливу на аудиторію.

Актуальність дослідження зумовлена зростаючою залученістю людей до політичного контенту через медіа-платформи та соцмережі. Вивчення мовних профілів набуває вирішального значення для всебічного розуміння стратегій переконання, які використовують відомі політичні діячі, щоб впливати на громадську думку та маніпулювати нею. Процеси змін у британському уряді значною мірою залежать від людей, на яких впливають слова та дії політиків. Детальний аналіз розвитку ролі Бориса Джонсона в політичному дискурсі допомагає описати та визначити особливості його мовного портрету, виявити стратегії впливу та зрозуміти, як його мова розвивалася з часом у відповідь на зміну посад і політичного контексту.

Об'єктом дослідження є промови та статті Бориса Джонсона, які містять лінгвістичні характеристики, притаманні йому як політичному лідеру, і допомагають сформувати його унікальний мовний профіль.

Метою дослідження є детальний аналіз та вивчення мовного портрету Бориса Джонсона, а також визначення особливостей його використання мови та риторики.

В рамках дослідження були поставлені наступні завдання:

- зрозуміти концепцію та структуру мовного профілю в політиці, а також методи створення привабливого профілю та його вплив на громадську думку;
- дослідити особистість Бориса Джонсона та його роль у політичному дискурсі;
- дослідити мовний портрет Бориса Джонсона та визначити характерні лінгвістичні та стилістичні особливості його виступів і публікацій у ЗМІ;
- проаналізувати письмові та аудіовізуальні публікації на різних етапах його політичної кар'єри.

Дослідження ґрунтується на промовах, статтях та інтерв'ю Бориса Джонсона. Матеріали з 2016 по 2024 рік були ретельно відібрані, аби забезпечити репрезентативну вибірку його використання мови на різних етапах його діяльності.

Дослідницька робота складається зі вступу, двох розділів, висновків і списку літератури. Загальна кількість сторінок – 78.

Перший розділ присвячений теоретичному огляду мовного портрету Бориса Джонсона. У ньому представлені поняття політичного дискурсу та мовного портрету, підкреслюється їх важливість у сучасному політичному просторі. Політичний дискурс відображає соціально-політичне життя, культуру та цінності країни. Завдяки аналізу політичного дискурсу та мовних портретів політиків, дослідники можуть виявити відповідні комунікативні тактики та стратегії, які використовуються політиками для впливу на свою аудиторію. Поняття "мовного портрета" включає в себе набір лінгвістичних особливостей,

які характеризують мовця, включаючи такі елементи, як лексика, синтаксис, вимова, стиль, манера мовлення та регістр. Він може відображати ідентичність, культуру, освіту та соціальний статус людини. Механізми впливу в політичному дискурсі вивчаються різними дисциплінами, включаючи соціологію, психологію, дослідження поведінки та лінгвістику. Для лінгвістики основний інтерес становлять лінгвістичні механізми впливу, а саме вербальні та невербальні механізми. Вибір комунікативних стратегій і тактик обумовлений контекстом спілкування та конкретними намірами політика. Залежно від ефекту, якого він хоче досягти, ретельно вибираються різні лінгвістичні засоби (семантичні, лексичні). Крім того, у теоретичній частині надається короткий огляд біографії Бориса Джонсона, який допомагає надалі зрозуміти взаємозв'язок між контекстом його життя та характером його звернень і публікацій.

Другий розділ присвячений практичному аналізу мовного портрету Бориса Джонсона. Лексичний аналіз показує, що Борис Джонсон стратегічно викристовує мову для впливу на громадську думку. Часто вживані лексичні моделі включають оціночні слова, колективні іменники та займенники для створення наративу "ми проти них" (стратегія реіфікації) або, навпаки, об'єднання людей (стратегія амальгамації) та репрезентації певних явищ у позитивному чи негативному ключі залежно від його риторичних цілей. З граматичної точки зору, Джонсон вдумливо застосовує граматичні конструкції, приділяючи особливу увагу способу, часу та типам речень. Завдяки такому влучному використанню граматики, Джонсон може ефективно доносити свої аргументи, залучати аудиторію та демонструвати себе як переконливого комунікатора. З точки зору стилістики, Джонсон майстерно звертається до етосу, пафосу та логосу у своїх промовах. Таким чином він встановлює довіру, викликає емоційний відгук з боку слухачів та логічно представляє свою точку зору. Джонсон переважно використовує напівформальний стиль, що характеризується особовими займенниками, риторичними запитаннями та наявністю розмовних виразів. Його промови відзначаються образною мовою, яка включає використання метафор, гіпербол та повторень. З часом стиль Джонсона

став характеризуватися частішим використанням стратегій впливу та маніпулювання, а також ще більшим акцентом на емоційній складовій його аудиторії.

Семантичний і соціолінгвістичний розбір промов Бориса Джонсона виявляє низку лінгвістичних прийомів, які він постійно використовує у своїх зверненнях і публікаціях. Серед них евфемізми, дисфемізми, фреймінг, теорія порядку денного, пресупозиції та імплікатури, які впливають на формування громадської думки та суспільного порядку денного. Його промови та статті демонструють високий ступінь інтертекстуальності. Політик періодично звертається до алюзій на історичні події, відомих діячів і загальний культурний досвід. Такий прийом дозволяє йому створити міцний зв'язок з його аудиторією. Соціолінгвістичні стратегії Джонсона, такі як його використання мовленнєвих актів, позитивної та негативної ввічливості, а також різних методів залучення аудиторії, сприяють його здатності спілкуватися зі слухачами та підтримувати свій авторитет.

Підсумовуючи, аналіз мовного портрету Бориса Джонсона виявив, що він володіє складним і динамічним риторичним стилем, який розвивається паралельно з його політичною кар'єрою. Протягом аналізованого періоду мовний портрет Джонсона зазнав помітних змін. У міру зростання його політичного авторитету, особливо під час перебування на посаді прем'єр-міністра, його риторика стала більш наполегливою, впевненою та емоційно зарядженою, зі збільшенням використання інтертекстуальності, алюзій і потужних риторичних прийомів. Таким чином Джонсон демонструє високу здатність адаптувати свою мову відповідно до посад і мінливої політичної сцени.

Слід зазначити, що дослідження, проведене в рамках цієї бакалаврської роботи не вичерпує всіх аспектів розглянутої теми. Подальші напрямки дослідження можуть полягати у ширшому аналізі мовних характеристик Бориса Джонсона, а також у вивченні його складних мовних портретів протягом тривалішого періоду часу. Подібне дослідження сприяло б всебічному

розумінню мовного портрету Джонсона та його впливу на британський політичний дискурс.