

The Linguistics of Charisma

Petlyuchenko, N. (2024). *The linguistics of charisma*. Frank & Timme.

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Political discourse, which is a reflection of the socio-political life of a country, contains elements of its culture, and also reflects the features of the national character, general and national-specific cultural values, and aims to gain and maintain political power (Peterlicean & Berariu, 2016). The main functions of political discourse are informative, instrumental, prognostic, normative, legitimating, persuasive, and political propaganda. Presidents and Prime Ministers of different countries, as well as outstanding politicians, have always attracted the attention of journalists and scholars. Some studies focus on definite political figures: Boris Johnson (Crabtree, 2022); Ukrainian president Zelensky (Bell, 2023; Wolf, 2022); Russian and Ukrainian presidents (Potapenko & Izotova, 2021); Ukrainian and Slovak presidents (Stashko et al., 2020); American presidents (Slamková, 2024; Uberman, 2022); American and Ukrainian presidents (Zabuzhanska & Yamchynska, 2022). Other interesting studies highlight prosody of the viewpoint in political discourse (Alexiyevets, 2017); elections in Malaysia reflected in media (Nizam et al., 2022); perception of Polish female leaders (Turska-Kawa & Olszanecka-Marmola, 2016).

This short review shows that political discourse has been thoroughly investigated. Notwithstanding this, there are some interesting topics which need further research. One of them is charisma in political discourse (Berger et al., 2019; Petlyuchenko & Chernyakova, 2019; Rosenberg & Hirschberg, 2009).

The book by Nataliya Petlyuchenko, professor at the A. V. Nezhdanova Odesa National Academy of Music (Ukraine) and visiting scholar at the Technical University of Dresden (Germany), *The Linguistics of Charisma*, published by Frank & Timme, offers an insightful exploration of the complex interplay between language and charisma, particularly within the realm of political discourse. This 216-page scholarly work delves into the linguistic foundations of charisma through a detailed analysis of various public figures across different countries and historical periods. The book opens with a comprehensive introduction that sets the stage for a deep dive into the theory of charisma. The foundational chapters meticulously trace the concept's historical evolution, providing a robust theoretical framework. The author draws on dictionary definitions and historical chronologies to delineate charisma's multifaceted nature – ranging from divine grace to a performative spectacle.

The subsequent chapters are organized thematically and geographically, offering case studies of charismatic leaders from Germany, France, Great Britain, the United States, and Ukraine. Each chapter delves into the unique linguistic styles and rhetorical strategies employed by such figures as Helmut Schmidt, Angela Merkel, Charles de Gaulle, Margaret Thatcher, John F. Kennedy, Donald Trump, Volodymyr Zelensky and other well-known politicians, 20 in total, proportionally representing different countries: Germany – 5, France – 3, Great Britain – 3, the USA – 3, Ukraine – 6. Professor Petlyuchenko devotes a special paragraph to charismatic Ukrainian women who have become known during Russian-Ukrainian war. The detailed analysis of each personality not only highlights the diversity of charismatic expression but also uncovers common linguistic threads that transcend cultural boundaries.

The author presents charisma as both an inspiring force and a potential tool for manipulation. This dual nature is evident in the linguistic strategies that charismatic leaders use – from inspiring speeches that mobilize masses to more aggressive and sometimes toxic rhetoric designed to dominate opponents (for more see Petlyuchenko et al. 2021). One of the book's significant contributions is its identification of specific linguistic indicators of charisma. These include the use of mythologemes, appellativeness, and expressiveness. The text provides a nuanced

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examination of how these elements are manifested in various cultural contexts, adding depth to our understanding of charismatic communication.

A standout feature of this work is the author's methodological approach. She employs both qualitative and quantitative methods, including perceptual identification experiments and computational analyses, to measure and index charisma. This rigorous approach not only lends credibility to her findings but also offers a valuable toolkit for future research in charisma studies and political discourse.

The case studies are particularly compelling, providing vivid illustrations of the theoretical concepts discussed. For instance, the analysis of Angela Merkel's "everyday charisma" contrasts sharply with the "iron charisma" of Margaret Thatcher, highlighting the diverse ways charisma can be embodied and perceived. Similarly, the comparison between John F. Kennedy's inspirational rhetoric and Donald Trump's showmanship underscores the evolving nature of political charisma in response to media and cultural shifts. In the Ukrainian context, the author examines figures like Yulia Tymoshenko and Volodymyr Zelensky and offers a unique perspective on how charisma functions in post-Soviet Ukrainian political discourse. The discussion of Zelensky's transition from entertainer to political leader is particularly illuminating, showcasing how charisma can be recontextualized and leveraged in different roles. In her concluding chapters, Nataliya Petlyuchenko synthesizes her findings, offering insightful reflections on the future of charisma in political communication. Her work underscores the enduring relevance of charisma in contemporary politics and its potential for both positive and negative outcomes.

I have no doubt that *The Linguistics of Charisma* as a thought-provoking and meticulously researched book will be of great interest to scholars, PhD students and students who are interested in linguistics, media linguistics, political discourse, and media studies. The author's interdisciplinary approach and her ability to weave complex theoretical insights with practical examples make this book a valuable contribution to the field. Whether for academic purposes or general interest in the dynamics of political charisma, this work offers a rich and engaging read.

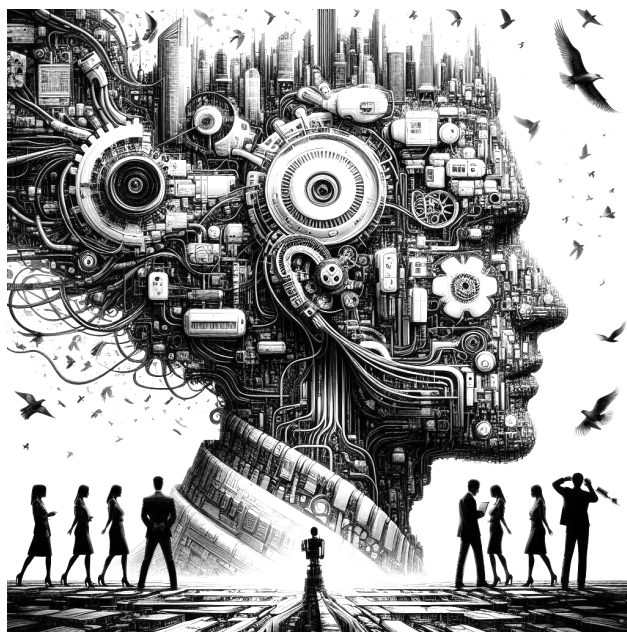
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Korean Drama: From Korean TV to Worldwide Popularity

Francistyová, B., & Novanská Škripčová, L. (2024). *Korean drama: From Korean TV to worldwide popularity*. Wolters Kluwer.

Lenka Rusňáková

South Korean drama, abbreviated as K-drama, has become an object of interest not only for the global media market but also for many scholars in the 21st century. In particular, the means by which the production mechanisms and narrative structures associated with K-drama, originally understood as a South Korean television format, have been established in the sphere of globalized media culture, have resonated. In order to provide a comprehensive analysis of this genre, including an assessment of its evolution, iconography, specific narrative structures, globalization and glocalization (country-specific) tendencies, or cultural significance, the authors B. Francistyová and L. Novanská Škripčová introduce the monograph titled *Korean Drama: From Korean TV to Worldwide Popularity*.

The discussion of K-drama as a Korean serial television production, a marketing brand, and/or a distinct genre of television production, offers new approaches to examining this phenomenon, which differs in many ways in its nature from the production of other countries. In order to frame the research problem more precisely, the authors of the monograph focus on the reflection of K-drama as a specific South Korean television genre. They correctly define it as an episodic work, a so-called miniseries/mini-serial, with specific formal and content characteristics, which are further analyzed and identified in the text using examples of several audiovisual works of this genre classification.

The migration of media audiences to digital and social media platforms, as well as the influence of streaming services on the marketing, production and distribution strategies of South Korean production, have changed the overall nature of this formerly local television product. For this reason, this publication describes the contemporary nature of K-dramas and offers an excursus into the issue of the transformation of a country's media product into a mainstream work (the suffix "K-" itself has become a kind of quality mark). At the same time, K-dramas are quite often adapted into the production strategies of other countries that seek to incorporate South Korean themes, motifs and associated narrative elements into their own cultural traditions. We can see that the globalization and glocalization tendencies of South Korean production are becoming a particularly interesting and relevant subject for academic research. We therefore consider the monograph *Korean drama: From Korean TV to worldwide popularity* to be a timely, comprehensively produced work, enriching the existing theoretical knowledge of South Korean television production with additional insights and new information. Together, these provide a basis for future research into the issues described.

In the first and second chapters, entitled "K-dramas as a part of Korean television production" and "K-drama, its types and subgenres", the authors define K-drama in its three basic contexts and point out the ambiguous understanding of the term by the professional and general public. The assessment of the current state of the topic is supported by many relevant sources. These refer, among others, to several categories of Korean television episodic works and their intertwining with K-dramas. The authors of the text convincingly defend the idea that K-drama should be considered as a separate (television) genre, due to its focus on episodic works with a specific plot and a clearly planned story, usually told only through a limited number of episodes. They refer to K-drama as a specific television miniserial (or television miniseries), which they suggest is divided into three basic sub-genres, classified according to the more dominant elements or settings in which the story takes place.

"K-dramas and their narrative structures" is a chapter building on the previous two parts of the monograph. In this textual passage, the narrative (content) elements typical for K-dramas are identified and evaluated. The authors pay special attention to the description of narrative structures, motifs representing elements of neo-Confucianism

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(e.g., family, respect for authority, and sexual ethics), plots, tropes or main and secondary characters of audiovisual works of this genre. In particular, they underline the stereotypical and cliché nature of the four-act dramaturgical structure typical of South Korean productions. The information and illustrative case studies provided (e.g., an assessment of romantic comedies of the K-drama genre through the four-act model) enrich the existing knowledge of different approaches to the dramaturgical construction of narrative (e.g., through Aristotle's drama structure, the American three-act structure, etc.).

The final two chapters ("Sociocultural contexts of K-dramas and their remakes" and "The impact of streaming platforms on Korean television production") highlight the popularity of K-dramas in geopolitically proximate countries before the global diffusion of these narratives to the Western world. In particular, they draw attention to the mainstream success of Hallyu, a cultural phenomenon representing the global popularity of South Korean pop culture. Expanding on this text, the authors argue that the convergence of South Korean audiovisual production and the strengthening of the aforementioned phenomenon are contingent on the development of social media and online streaming platforms. This is because they have made these contents accessible to international, mainstream media audiences. One cannot disagree with the assertion that Netflix and other available global internet-distributed television platforms (e.g., Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, Max, and Apple TV+) have played (and continue to play) an important role in the process of the proliferation of K-drama in Western markets. It was Netflix that became the largest distributor of South Korean productions and 'caused' them to expand worldwide, responding to the growing interest of global media audiences in South Korean television production. An assessment of the creation of various adaptations or remakes of K-dramas to create many "offshoots" of South Korean media products complements the text with further scholarly considerations and several analytical but reader-appealing data treatments (e.g. a reflection on successful South Korean audiovisual products and their narrative structures). Also of interest is the question of whether and to what extent the involvement of other streaming platforms in the production of South Korean television series reflects the interest of media audiences, and whether the audiovisual works we see on streaming platforms today that are regarded as 'originals' can be labelled as K-dramas, or whether this is merely the sophisticated marketing of global production and distribution companies.

The monograph, with its comprehensive view of the phenomenon of South Korean television dramas, especially in relation to miniseries/mini-series, successfully assesses the significance of these products in terms of global media markets and online streaming platforms, thus fulfilling its main objective. Although the publication is primarily aimed at academics and researchers specializing in media and communication studies, it is also suitable for professionals working in the media (television) industry, as well as fans of these products who are interested in learning more about the genre. The text's focus on wide-ranging target audiences is a significant strength of the reviewed monograph. We see the discourse on the globalization and glocalization tendencies of South Korean television production – as an interesting alternative to media products of other nations – as an important part of media production and media-communication studies. This is because the "K" brand and its products are an undeniable part of popular culture or the global media market and its offerings. Digital technologies and IDTV streaming platforms, which have been able to effectively expand South Korean cultural products around the world and ensure their global success, have made South Korean (pop)culture a fascinating phenomenon possessing elements of cultural imperialism. We therefore agree with the authors' final assertion that, given the current state of the platformization and globalization of this content, it is more than likely that K-drama's greatest popularity in Western culture is yet to come.

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Digitalisation as the Tsunami of a New Civilization

Pravdová, H., Hudíková, Z., & Macák, M. (2024). *Digitalisation as the tsunami of a new civilization: Industries, digital games, players*. Wolters Kluwer.

Olga Dúbravská

The monograph *Digitalisation as the tsunami of a new civilization: Industries, digital games, players*, authored by Hana Pravdová, Zora Hudíková, and Miroslav Macák, is an exceptionally ambitious work that seeks to explore and analytically interpret key phenomena shaping the contemporary digital civilisation. The publication builds upon the previous research outputs of authors who are well-established professionals in the field. In terms of scope, interdisciplinary breadth, and precision of execution, the monograph represents a significant contribution to scholarly discourse in the domain of media and communication studies. Rather than offering a mere descriptive account of digital games as cultural products, the authors conceptualise them as meaning-generating and transformational phenomena that both reflect and shape civilisational shifts, economic structures, and the psychological mechanisms of late modernity. A crucial dimension of the work lies in its integration of theory and praxis: the authors write not only from the perspective of academic observers, but also critically reflect real-world changes within industry and society.

The monograph is constructed within an interdisciplinary framework, combining insights from civilisational philosophy, media studies, psychology, game studies, and cultural theory. Its theoretical foundations are articulated extensively yet cohesively. The authors engage with and interpret key thinkers such as Samuel P. Huntington, Francis Fukuyama, Norbert Elias, Oswald Spengler, Charles Darwin, and Edward B. Tylor, thereby constructing a dense referential framework that is meaningfully woven into the book's own analytical narrative. The opening section of the monograph offers a detailed cultural-historical excursion into the evolution of civilisations, their origins, and determining factors. Particularly notable is the analysis of "technological determinism", which is not presented as a linear model of progress but as a complex interplay between technology, power, and culture. In line with the Toronto School (McLuhan, Innis), digital technology is interpreted as a communicative form that reflexively shapes societal and individual consciousness.

The authors trace historical development from feudal structures to the digital society of today, paying specific attention to the idea of civilisation as power and normative narrative. This conceptualisation demonstrates that the history of civilisations cannot be understood solely through economic or political development but must be viewed as the production of symbolic orders that define what is culturally acceptable, morally binding, and socially valued. From this perspective, digital media – and digital games in particular – become carriers of civilisational energy. They are not merely entertainment but serve as media capable of generating norms, identities, and interpretative frameworks of reality.

The second part of the monograph, focusing on the development and contemporary state of the gaming industry, is rich in information, well-structured, and strikingly current. The authors map the genealogy of the game industry from early experimental forms of digital entertainment to established global ecosystems. They devote attention to various platforms – consoles, PC, mobile devices – as well as to the market strategies of specific companies. Technological development is contextualised within cultural paradigms of different regions (Japan, the US, Europe) and how these paradigms are inscribed into game narratives, aesthetics, and mechanics. For media and communication studies, the analysis of digital distribution platforms (Steam, Epic Games Store, PlayStation Store), which redefine the relationship between producer and recipient, seems to be especially beneficial. The authors make

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it clear that distribution platforms are not merely transmission channels but complex communicative environments in which relationships, communities, and cultural practices are forged.

The section addressing monetisation models is equally important. The authors thoroughly explore phenomena such as loot boxes, microtransactions, the freemium model, and seasonal passes. These economic mechanisms are approached not from a moralistic perspective but through analytical lenses – as new forms of the economisation of attention and user participation. Importantly, the authors do not omit the ethical dimension of these developments, particularly concerning underage players and their susceptibility to psychological strategies embedded in game design. A crucial insight lies in the identification of the intersection between game design and behavioural psychology – the so-called “dark patterns” – which prompt players to repeatedly spend money and return to the game via reward systems and mechanisms of partial satisfaction.

The third section of the publication discusses the psychology of games and players. Drawing upon Johan Huizinga’s *Homo Ludens*, the authors interpret play as a fundamental anthropological constant through which human beings not only relax but primarily engage in exploration, testing, and internalisation of meanings. They analyse the function of games in childhood, adulthood, and old age, thereby emphasising their developmental and existential grounding. The discussion on the cognitive and emotional preconditions for successful gameplay is quite compelling as well, since attention, perception, memory, thought, and emotion are presented as key psychological functions underpinning player performance. The authors do not shy away from addressing the theme of the “emotionally intelligent player” – an individual aware not only of game rules but also of their own reactions, frustrations, achievements, and capacity for collaboration. It is also necessary to mention the nuanced perspective on violence in games, which the authors resist simplifying, instead situating it within broader frameworks of motivation, identification, and symbolic interaction.

The authors also explore game worlds as platforms for social interaction. Given the rise of multiplayer gaming, attention is paid to group decision-making, “groupthink,” and community identity. Digital games are not mere distractions – they are integral to player identity, serving as spaces where language, reasoning, communication, and relational coding are exercised. This aspect of the monograph deserves particular attention, as it repositions digital games from the realm of individual entertainment into that of media-mediated cultural socialisation.

A major strength of the publication lies in its ability to connect analytical exposition with pressing social questions. The authors convincingly demonstrate that digital games represent not only a new cultural language but also a challenge to the social sciences. Their study necessitates new methodological frameworks, revised concepts of the recipient, of media, and of communication. In this regard, the monograph intersects with debates on postmediality, participatory culture (Jenkins), the prosumer (Toffler), and the gamification of everyday life. These concepts are implicitly present throughout the text, although they could be further elaborated – this, however, does not diminish the overall quality of the argumentation.

In conclusion, *Digitalisation as the tsunami of a new civilization: Industries, digital games, players* is a remarkable scholarly work that merits attention from both academic and expert communities. It is a text that not only informs but shapes discourse. Its significance lies not merely in its content but also in its method – in the ability to combine a civilisational overview with detailed knowledge of specific phenomena. For communication studies, it represents a book that may serve as both a methodological and thematic reference point. Given its complexity and scholarly thoroughness, it is an apt resource for teaching, research, and critical reflection on digital culture.

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Academic Research in Marketing Communication Practice: Luxury or Necessity?

Tamás Darázs

Academic research in marketing communication is often perceived as theoretical and far removed from the real business environment, with the prevailing perception that market dynamics and ever-changing trends require quick decisions based on experience rather than scientific analysis. In marketing communication and digital marketing, academics are often faced with the perception that while their findings are interesting, academic research is less relevant to practice. Companies work dynamically, adapt quickly to trends and often do not have the time or budget for systematic analysis. This text seeks to show that this attitude is probably mistaken. This is evidenced by a number of research studies conducted in the NEUROLAB at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at UCM in Trnava, where academia is directly linked to the needs of marketing practice. Research helps not only academics but also companies to better understand consumer reactions, to optimise advertising campaigns and to understand how decision-making processes influence the effectiveness of communication. It is a practical link between academic research and commercial applications where scientific knowledge directly influences marketing decisions.

One of the most recent demonstration projects was research carried out at the research facility at the initiative of ETARGET SE, a company specialising in digital advertising in Central and Southern Europe. The company approached the research team to scientifically test its new advertising formats as it plans to expand into Western markets. The research focused on comparing static and interactive banners through advanced neuromarketing methods. A combination of eye-tracking, emotional response analysis and questionnaire research was used to determine exactly how users react to different types of ad formats. The research involved 25 respondents aged 20 – 24 who were divided into two experimental groups: one exposed to static banners and the other to interactive banners.

Static banners attracted attention faster, while interactive banners were able to hold attention longer. On mobile devices, interactive banners showed longer visual exploration times. The emotion analysis showed that interactive banners elicited higher levels of emotional engagement, with the best results on mobile platforms. Users showed 5.42% of active engagement time for interactive banners versus 1.05% for static banners. The questionnaire survey showed that interactive banners were perceived as more visually appealing and memorable, while static banners were considered less distracting, which may be advantageous for single message ads.

The findings of the eye-tracking analysis suggested that static banners were more effective at immediately capturing attention on initial viewing, while interactive banners prompted users to engage in deeper visual exploration. The average visual exploration time for interactive banners was higher than for static formats.

The private company initially wanted to test whether its new advertising formats were actually more effective compared to conventional solutions. The research not only confirmed their advantages, but also identified certain shortcomings. Based on the data obtained, an approach was designed that allows an optimal combination of static and interactive banners according to consumer behaviour. This approach can further increase the effectiveness of campaigns and ensure that ad formats are better adapted to the specifics of the target platform.

The experience of these studies shows that academic institutions are not isolated from practice, but on the contrary, can be an active part of it, helping companies to make decisions based on hard data instead of intuition. Collaboration between universities and practice brings benefits to both sides – companies receive science-based recommendations to improve marketing communications and academia obtains real data for further research. In the

future, such a link will be even more important. With the growing influence of AI in marketing analytics, new opportunities are opening up for consumer behaviour modelling, predictive analytics and automated campaign testing. It is university labs and researchers that can be important partners for companies seeking objective and empirically validated solutions for their marketing strategies.

Marketing communication is a field that is constantly changing and adapting to new trends. To stay competitive, companies need to rely on quality data and analytics. It is the collaboration with academic institutions that provides companies with valuable insights to help them optimise their marketing activities. The study showed that scientific methods can effectively support marketing decisions and contribute to the creation of quality marketing communications. It is therefore important that the cooperation between research and practice is further developed and that academic knowledge is increasingly translated into real business environments. This model of cooperation is not only beneficial but also crucial for innovation and competitiveness in the field of marketing communication. Academic research and marketing practice do not have to stand at opposite poles – on the contrary, their synergy offers companies a competitive advantage based on accurate data, enabling not only more effective communication but also better strategic decisions in the dynamic digital marketing environment.

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