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'I represent a country that wants peace.'
Compassionate leadership in Maia Sandu's address
on the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly[1]

Abstract: The paper discusses the case study of Moldovan President Maia Sandu's speech in the general debate during the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2022 in the context of the war in Ukraine. It considers compassionate leadership as a communicative strategy in political crisis management and investigates the congruency between the contents of narrative and nonverbal immediacy as its measure in political communication. The presented study is based on data collected with a content analysis of the address and the automated coding of facial expressiveness with FaceReader 9 (Noldus IT) in the recording of Sandu's speech. The timeline analysis compared the narrative with the intensity of neutrality, basic emotions, sympathy, pain, attention, emotional arousal, valence, and the RPPG-estimated heart rate, describing displayed emotionality, motivation, and physiological stress. The standardized results suggest increased nonverbal signaling of emotions, oriented towards surprise, considered a substitute expression of compassionate responsiveness, sympathy, and sadness, while violent emotions (anger, disgust, and contempt) were marginalized. Moreover, the analysis provided evidence of the consistent, verbal, and nonverbal presence of core assets of compassionate leadership in Sandu's address to the UN General Assembly.

Key words: nonverbal communication, sympathy, surprise, compassion, political communication, public speaking

Febuary 24, 2022, and the full-scale Russian aggression in Ukraine transformed European political and security landscapes, strengthening European alliances and accelerating regional integration. The war repositioned the role of Ukraine's neighbors in international affairs, increasing their political significance. EU member-states adopted distinctive strategies. Poland has become a primary hub for Ukrainian military, economic, and humanitarian supplies. Romanian remained cautious, declaring political support but reducing its military and financial contribution. Slovakia balanced its involvement in the conflict under the pressure of pro-Russian public opinion, while the Hungarian government distanced itself from Volodymyr Zelensky's leadership but supported the humanitarian action. Authoritarian Belarus offered its military infrastructure to the Russian army and justified the aggression, proliferating Russia's narrative. In that context, the pro-Ukrainian position of post-Soviet Moldova was critical for Western interests and strategies, considering its location and the Russian military presence in Transnistria (Parmentier, 2022).

Kremlin targeted the Moldovan democratic government with diversified measures of the hybrid war: disinformation, Russia-sponsored protests, pricing of energy resources, and inflation, fueling social frustration and dissatisfaction among citizens. The unambiguous pro-Western orientation and the cordial political alliance with Ukraine made governing *Partidul Acţiune şi Solidaritate* (PAS, Party of Action and Solidarity) and its leader President Maia Sandu aims of Russian plans to overthrow the democratic government of Moldova and replace it with pro-Kremlin politicians. Numerous violent incidents, Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov's threats to the Moldovan government, and Ukrainian disclosed information about a planned pro-Russian coup in Chisinau increased the pressure on President Sandu and PAS. At the same time, the economic consequences of the war harmed the country's development (Locoman, 2023). Besides its vulnerability and self-declared in 1994 neutral status, Moldova continues a shift toward the European community and advocates Ukrainian territorial integrity, aligning with Western powers. Granting the EU candidate status to Moldova and Ukraine on June 23, 2022, proved that the West recognized their new role in regional politics and responded to their political aspirations (Allison, 2022). US President Joe Biden's invitation of Sandu to the meeting in Warsaw in February 2023 and the recent hosting of the European Political Community summit in Bulboaca illustrated the growing importance of Moldova.

Links between Moldovan and Ukrainian political orientations were noticeable before the full-scale Russian aggression. Similar to Zelensky and his party, *Sluha Narodu*, Sandu and PAS emphasized their European ambitions; in 2016, the Constituting Congress of PAS proclaimed that its "main objective is to build the European Republic of Moldova, not by statements but by real change" (p. 22). Its attitude towards the war in Ukraine tested the credibility of the Moldovan democratic movement and Sandu's political leadership, offering an opportunity to prove commitment to European values. The shifting position of Moldova in regional politics and the successful campaign for receiving EU candidate status placed Sandu in the spotlight (Cimpoesu, 2023), motivating research interest in her political communication and crisis management style. Furthermore, concluding their analysis, Mock and Ciloci (2022) suggested that she "has shown that […] compassion, resoluteness, and acceptance of others coupled with […] appropriate education, experience, and trust […] demonstrated through […] establishing and promoting a vision of the future can make a country sustainable under times of hardship" (p. 27), drawing another parallel between Sandu and Zelensky.

The transformative role of Sandu's leadership in democratic Moldova and the nation's complex political environment inspired an interest in her communicative performance and her narrative approach to legitimizing pro-Ukrainian and pro-Western positions in international relations. PAS faced a multi-level crisis; thus, its commitment to supporting Ukrainians was risky as Russia-sponsored opposition highlighted the costs of the government's decisions. The humanitarian crisis increased political, security, and economic problems as Moldova accepted almost 160,000 Ukrainian refugees (approx. 6% of its population), more than Slovakia or Romania (OPORA, 2023). Therefore, it is crucial to understand how Sandu addressed these threats and advocated her political decisions (Fleeson, 2023); thus, her political communication offers a case for descriptive political science focused on understanding rather than explaining political decision-making and crisis leadership (see Gerring, 2012; Keohane, 2009).

There are additional research motivations that inspired the research presented in the paper. Nossel and Vinjamuri (2022) marked the political significance of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly as the first in-person gathering of international leaders after the pandemic and the area for a debate between clashing narratives on the war in Ukraine. With the Ukrainian President absent from the summit, the Free World required genuine political voices to advocate the Western perspective on the conflict and persuade neutral countries to take a stance. The second day's morning session of the general debate included a determined address delivered by President Biden, criticizing "the use of violence and war to conquer nations or expand borders through bloodshed." President Sandu's emotional speech followed it, offering the international audience a different reason for the pro-Ukrainian alliance as a natural consequence of choosing "democracy over autocracy, liberty over oppression, peace over war, and prosperity over poverty."

In his address, the American leader primarily targeted global and middle powers. At the same time, the Moldovan President motivated the Western involvement in Ukraine from the perspective of the developing nation experiencing the war's consequences. Representing the county with a GDP *per capita* similar to Egypt, Ghana, India, Nicaragua, Nigeria, or Vietnam, her voice was more trustworthy and convincing than Western leaders' statements to neutral and nonaligned states, as Moldova was the only developing nation unambiguously advocating global support for Ukraine. Sandu's position was critical for inhibiting the deepening of political divisions in the United Nations as developing countries distanced themselves from the US-led pro-Ukrainian alliance (Nossel, Vinjamuri, 2022). Moreover, it was presented in the critical moment of shifting the international debate from the paralyzed UN Security Council to the General Assembly, recently becoming a prime area for global discussions (Nanda, 2023; Gramer, Rathl, 2022).

Finally, an additional inspiration for the research was the conclusion of AlAfnan and Oshchepkova's (2022, p. 97) analysis of the speech delivered by the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, during the Assembly's Emergency Special Session on Ukraine in February 2022. They noticed that choosing words and labels defines a narrative landscape for political debate, outlining the limitations of political persuasion. This paper expands their approach, investigating Sandu's address as a case study of the significance of both verbal and nonverbal delivery in a broader context of compassionate leadership, communicative immediacy, and crisis management. Therefore, it studies a political narrative, comparing its construction with emotional expressiveness and considering its congruency.

Research Framework and Methodology

Mock and Ciloci (2022, p. 27) considered President Sandu's way of dealing with the war in Ukraine and its international consequences as an example of compassionate leadership. In their definition, Hougaard and Carter (2022, p. 6–7) associated it with courage, openness, presence, and transparency, suggesting its influence on trust and perceived safety. Their remarks mirrored previous studies on compassionate leadership. Shuck et al. (2019, pp. 558–559) listed **accountability, authenticity, dignity, empathy, integrity, and presence** in their broad description. Moreover, Boyatzis, Smith, and Blaize

(2006) considered the quality of relationships with others and decreased self-preoccupation as essential for leaders, emphasizing genuine emotionality as their critical asset. Thus, compassionate leadership determines *outstanding* performance in crisis management, making leaders *change catalysts* (Boyatzis, 2009) and establishing conditions for social mobilization and change (Boyatzis, 2008).

However, leadership performance is not merely dependent on a proliferated narrative because nonverbal communication influences a speaker's persuasiveness and credibility, contributing to the audience's assessments of charisma, credibility, sociability, sympathy, trustworthiness, and reliability, as well as judgments of character, competence, care, or self-control (Burgoon et al., 1990, pp. 161–162; Remland, 1994, pp. 139–140). Genuine nonverbal behavior reinforces verbal communication and impacts core assets of credibility – authenticity, reliability, trustworthiness, and attractiveness (Sundaram, Webster, 2000, p. 388; Wawrzyński, 2021, pp. 216–217). Sincere emotionality bonds politicians with their audiences and legitimizes their leadership styles. Boussalis and Coan (2021) showed that nonverbal behavior translates credibility into political support, commitment, and motivation. Moreover, Dowell and Berman (2013) explained that body language also informs evaluations of the speaker's empathy and alliance. Therefore, confident performance and nonverbal immediacy provide a platform for compassionate leaders to express their accountability, authenticity, courage, dignity, empathy, integrity, openness, and presence.

The paper investigates Maia Sandu's statement delivered in the general debate of the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly on September 21, 2022, as the case study of compassionate leadership in political crisis management. The downloaded speech recording lasted 11 minutes and 30 seconds, while the address covered 11 minutes and 3 seconds. The Administration of the Moldovan Presidency published its official transcript on its website (Sandu, 2022). She delivered the speech in English, which included 1280 words.

The research design considered nonverbal expressions of emotions and neutrality as critical to the speaker's perceived credibility, trustworthiness, and empathy and the audience's positive judgments (Bucy et al., 2020; Haim, Jungblut, 2021; Jorna et al., 2021). Therefore, the study applied Paul Ekman's theory of basic emotions and the Facial Action Coding System, associating muscle action units with distinctive emotions (Ekman, Friesen, 2003; Ekman et al., 2002). It measures the intensity of facial signals of neutrality, happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust, and contempt as universal human nonverbal expressions (Ekman, 1999). However, in addition to the original approach, the paper also discusses sympathy and pain, introduced to the theory of basic emotions by Keltner, Sauter, Tracy, and Cowen (2019).

In the case study, I used an automated coding system FaceReader 9 (Noldus IT), which has at least 88% accuracy in facial expressions recognition (Lewinski et al., 2014) and 75% accuracy in heart rate estimation (Benedetto et al., 2019). The software analyzes signals of neutrality and emotions, custom expressions (in this case, sympathy and pain), emotional valence, arousal, and estimated heart rate, offering a detailed perspective of the emotional state. The valence labels an emotional vector of experience, arousal predicts mobilization, while estimated heart rate identifies physiological stress (Wawrzyński, Marszałek-Kawa, 2023, pp. 170–171). The automated coding increased the precision of the analysis;

30 frames per second rate resulted in 20702 analyzed frames and data exported with calculations for each 1/10 second of Sandu's speech. The statistical analysis of collected data provided a detailed insight into the dynamics of emotional communication and facilitated comparison with the results of the narrative content analysis.

Therefore, the case study recognizes the contents of the Moldovan President's address as an independent variable. On the other hand, it included dependent variables coded with the FaceReader software: the expressiveness of neutrality, sadness, anger, disgust, contempt, fear, surprise, and happiness, custom expressions of sympathy and pain, attention, emotional valence, arousal, and RPPG-estimated heart rate. The standard of collected audiovisual material met the optimal conditions for automated analysis of high-resolution video files, restrained body movements, and portrait shots (Skiendziel et al., 2019).

Results

Contents of Sandu's statement. The official transcript was divided into 40 paragraphs, with more than half of them discussing the war in Ukraine and its international consequences. The address included 64 sentences with an average length of twenty words. The editors highlighted two parts of the Moldovan President's speech – the call for "complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian troops" from Transnistria and the statement, "Moldova is pressing ahead with our reform agenda. We are building a stronger and more democratic state," identifying them as Sandu's core message for an international audience.

Table 1

**The narrative construction of President Sandu's address to the UN GA
(September 21, 2022).**

Topic	Sentences	Words	Core message
The European orientation of Moldova	7 | (1–7)	170	Moldova hopes to join the EU as its choice of democracy, liberty, peace, and prosperity.
The War in Ukraine	15 (8–22)	320	Moldova condemns the Russian aggression and supports Ukrainian independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Supporting Ukraine is a moral duty of all who wants peace.
The humanitarian crisis	8 (23–30)	158	Moldovans responded to the war in Ukraine with an unprecedented solidarity with refugees.
The Russian military presence in Transnistria	6 (31–37)	178	The Russian military presence in Moldova must end immediately with a complete and unconditional withdrawal.
The energy crisis	8 (38–45)	154	Russian hybrid warfare caused the energy crisis, proving the necessity of energy transformation.
Anti-corruption policy	7 (46–52)	96	Fighting domestic corruption requires better international instruments.
Reforms in Moldova	9 (53–61)	184	The Moldovan government is focused, persistent, and relentless in pressing ahead with the reform agenda.
Conclusion	3 (62–64)	84	In the face of man-made human suffering and economic adversity, the countries of the world must stand together once again.

Source: Maia Sandu's (2022) statement during the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly.

Table 1 presents the narrative organization of the contents of Sandu's speech delivered to the UN General Assembly. It discussed two main issues: the full-scale Russian aggression on Ukraine and the PAS government's agenda of reforms and consolidation of democracy in Moldova. In the introduction, she emphasized the historical significance of granting her country the EU candidate status in June 2022, reminding that the European integration was a successful peace initiative that stopped "the cycle of wars that tormented our continent for centuries." Sandu contrasted it with Russia's unprovoked invasion of democratic Ukraine, causing the death of thousands of innocent civilians and the migration of millions of refugees. Moreover, the Moldovan President noticed the war's global consequences and that the Russian aggression "has shattered global security, triggered a European energy crisis, global food shortages, and an economic downturn." The unambiguous Russian responsibility and expressed respect for Ukrainian courage and resilience motivated her to label supporting Kyiv as the international community's *moral duty*. She clarified that peace might be restored only if Ukraine's freedom is protected and justice is served.

The statement on the war in Ukraine helped Sandu discuss Moldova's contemporary political challenges. She expressed her gratitude to Moldovans who sheltered Ukrainian refugees in their homes and to the international community for addressing the European humanitarian crisis. The Russian aggression was an opportunity to remind global leaders about the frozen conflict in Transnistria and the Russian military presence in Moldova, calling for "the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian troops." The Moldovan President explained that military aggression is just one of the tools used by the Kremlin to destabilize democratic nations. She said:

> As we strive to maintain peace, our economy and society are bearing the brunt of Russia's war against Ukraine. Our resources are strained, investments have slowed, […] trade and transport routes are disrupted, and inflation is nearing 35 percent. In addition, we are facing a wide spectrum of hybrid threats, from disinformation and propaganda to cyber-attacks and energy pressures. The abnormally high prices for natural gas and Russia's attempts to weaponize gas and oil supplies to Europe have triggered an unprecedented energy crisis. We are one of the most vulnerable countries. […] But this only makes us more determined to diversify our energy resources and decrease dependence on fossil fuels (Sandu, 2022).

In her narrative, Sandu bridged the war, the energy crisis, and the reform agenda in Moldova with climate change and renewable energy resources, addressing critical issues discussed during the gathering. Emphasizing the significance of global action against climate change, the Moldovan President suggested that fighting corruption also requires joint initiatives and sanction regimes. The anti-corruption policy served as the first example of the PAS government's commitment to the development of Moldova and the consolidation of its democracy, followed by a list of other political priorities. For Sandu, acknowledging political, security, economic, and social challenges was not a motivation for indifference; she concluded her speech with a determined call for international unity and cooperation to build an environment of freedom, peace, democracy, and respect for human lives. The direct message to global leaders ended Sandu's emotional and compassionate address, targeting pro-Ukrainian audiences and nations distancing themselves from Ukraine's conflict.

Facial expressiveness of emotions. The FaceReader analysis showed that Sandu delivered her address with increased emotional expressiveness. The arousal was moderate, scoring an average of 40.91%, while the estimated heart rate suggested a lack of physiological stress (M = 50.5 bpm, the highest value: 79 bpm). The emotional dynamics oriented toward negativity with an average valence of –.0552. Neutrality expressions were significantly reduced, representing only 59.25% of coded facial signals (generally, neutrality covers 80–90% of politicians’ facial expressiveness). The leading emotion was a **surprise**, responsible for 27.5% of identified nonverbal cues, an emotion often increased in high-profile speeches delivered in non-native languages. Sadness was noticeable in Sandu’s address, covering 6.24% of all expressions and reaching 44% in its most pronounced signal (11:51.90).

Table 2

The general scores of facial expressiveness in Maia Sandu’s address to the UN GA

	Neutrality, %	Sadness, %	Anger, %	Disgust, %	Contempt, %	Fear, %	Surprise, %	Happiness, %	Sympathy, %	Valence (–1; 1)	Arousal, %	Hearth rate, bpm
Average	59.25	6.24	1.58	.43	.15	3.03	27.50	1.83	13.70	–.0552	40.91	50.53
Maximum	87.43	44.32	7.84	17.23	4.20	16.31	78.53	20.49	33.50	.1333	94.84	79
Minimum	13.13	.29	.16	.00	.00	.15	.22	.08	1.75	–.4238	6.78	33
SD	.15	.04	.01	.01	.00	.02	.16	.02	.06	.05	.17	8.36

Source: FaceReader 9 (Noldus IT), general model, 30 fps, standardized for 1/10 s.

Table 2 presents the general results of the facial expressions analysis, suggesting that other emotions had limited significance. However, happiness, disgust, and fear were visibly displayed in individual signals, while anger was slightly represented in facial expressiveness. Disgust and contempt subtly contributed to the emotional dynamics, representing less than 1% of coded signals; in general, violent emotions (anger, disgust, and contempt) were limited in the Moldovan President’s nonverbal delivery, covering only 5% of identified emotional cues (and 2% of all expressions). Signals of sympathy were more critical, scoring an average of 13.70%. Attention was relatively stable, with an average result of 92.15%, while expressions of pain were not identified in the analyzed contents.

The dominant role of surprise in emotional dynamics inspired further investigation of its relationships with other variables. Pronounced surprise intensified arousal (F = 124.41, p < .001) and physiological stress (F = 25.67, p < .001), promoting emotional negativity in valence (F = 543.92, p < .001). The regression analysis identified its positive relation with sympathy (F = 851.67, p < .001) and sadness intensity (F = 108.45, p < .001). On the other hand, signals of surprise decreased neutrality and the presence of happiness, fear, and violent emotions of anger, disgust, and contempt. The results suggest that surprise corresponded with controlling (but not anxious) anticipation and was displayed to balance expressions of sadness and sympathy. Therefore, its more pronounced presence was related to Sandu’s compassionate responsiveness, becoming the

substitutive expression. Its high flexibility proves that the surprise was her way of increasing nonverbal immediacy while Sandu controlled the intensity of her sadness.

Sympathy had similar characteristics to surprise. It intensified arousal (F = 685.36, p < .001), increased the estimated heart rate (F = 31.54, p < .001), and inspired negativity in emotional dynamics (F = 64.06, p < .001). The pronounced sympathy reduced neutrality and decreased the intensity of happiness, disgust, and contempt; however, it promoted intensified not only sadness and surprise but also anger and fear. It suggests that sympathy played a dual role, helping Sandu to communicate her compassion and to regulate stressful fight-or-flight responses. This regulative role was not present in the case of surprise, supporting the interpretation of surprise as a substitutive and controlling expression.

The timeline analysis provided interesting observations on changing emotional dynamics of nonverbal delivery. Arousal was reduced with time (F = 732.99, p < .001), and negativity intensified in valence (F = 190.02, p < .001), while it did not significantly influence the estimated heart rate. Surprise, considered a substitutive expression of compassionate responsiveness, was more pronounced in the earlier parts of the address (F = 9.19, p = .002), but the pattern was weaker than in the case of sympathy (F = 129.06, p < .001). The opening paragraphs tended to be delivered more emotionally, as the neutrality increased with time (F = 36.05, p < .001). At the same time, further paragraphs involved more intense signals of sadness (F = 8.29, p = .004) and anger (F = 15.80, p < .001), while fear, disgust, contempt, and happiness were limited. Thus, it seems that the emotional signaling mirrored the narrative organization of Sandu's speech.

Table 3 compares the narrative timeline of the speech with scores for neutrality, basic emotions, and sympathy. The average neutrality was reduced in sections discussing the humanitarian crisis and the anti-corruption policy of the Moldovan government. The first case involved a more pronounced signaling of surprise, fear, and sympathy and slightly more visible smiling. The second issue inspired more sadness and surprise. Sadness also increased in paragraphs discussing the Russian military presence in Transnistria and concluding remarks. Anger and disgust reached the highest scores when Sandu considered the energy crisis and Russia's hybrid warfare against democratic Moldova. Fear intensified in parts of the speech related to the war in Ukraine and its consequences, corresponding with more visible signals of sympathy and confirming their significant relationship suggested in regression analysis (F = 165.90, p < .001). Finally, happiness increased when the Moldovan President expressed their gratitude to European partners, emphasizing the nation's pro-European orientation and enjoying Moldova's EU candidates status granted in June 2022.

The general results, relations between variables, timeline analysis, and the comparison of narrative and nonverbal data portray the complexity of Sandu's compassionate leadership and crisis management presented in her address to the UN General Assembly. Her empathetic response to the war in Ukraine and refugees seeking shelter in neighboring countries was emphasized in the narrative and legitimized by her genuine emotional expressiveness (oriented to a triad of surprise, sympathy, and sadness). Moreover, the Moldovan President's delivery had significantly limited signals of violence and aggressiveness, with a marginal intensity of disgust and contempt. Fear and happiness were nonverbal indicators of authenticity and openness, confirming verbally expressed concerns and gratitude.

Table 3

The emotional dynamics of nonverbal signaling in President Sandu's address to the UN GA, considering topics covered in the speech

Topic	Neutrality, %	Sadness, %	Anger, %	Disgust, %	Contempt, %	Fear, %	Surprise, %	Happiness, %	Sympathy, %
The European orientation of Moldova	58.07	6.25	1.61	.50	.15	2.65	26.90	<u>3.87</u>	13.35
The War in Ukraine	60.46	5.94	1.45	.30	<u>.19</u>	3.04	26.70	1.91	14.25
The humanitarian crisis	53.13	6.26	1.50	.22	.11	<u>3.82</u>	<u>32.82</u>	2.15	<u>18.71</u>
The Russian military presence in Transnistria	58.70	7.07	1.54	.24	.17	2.91	28.33	1.04	13.36
The energy crisis	60.16	4.62	<u>1.81</u>	<u>1.44</u>	.12	3.75	26.95	1.15	13.01
Anti-corruption policy	57.49	<u>7.29</u>	1.41	.23	.14	2.55	29.11	1.78	12.90
Reforms in Moldova	61.97	6.09	1.73	.26	.10	2.42	26.33	1.10	10.81
Conclusion	<u>65.50</u>	7.25	1.66	.23	.15	3.22	20.58	1.41	12.68
Full speech	59.25	6.24	1.58	.43	.15	3.03	27.50	1.83	13.70

The highest scores are underlined.

Source: FaceReader 9 (Noldus IT), general model, 30 fps, standardized for 1/10 s.

Conclusion

In national politics, Maia Sandu maintains an image of a determined but compassionate stateswoman, managing crises in a competent and caring manner. In her address delivered to international leaders during the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2022, she tried to transform this brand and use it to justify global support for Ukraine. The Moldovan President's narrative contrasted with previous statements of Western leaders, including Joe Biden's address in the same session on September 21, as she discussed the pro-Ukrainian alliance from the perspective of a developing nation struggling with the social and economic consequences of the conflict. Therefore, Sandu's speech was critical for reframing the war and addressing the hesitations of neutral and nonaligned countries.

Her address included emotional testimony explaining Moldovan's support for the invaded neighbor, emphasizing accountability, courage, dignity, and integrity, core assets of compassionate leadership. Moreover, Sandu's nonverbal delivery was emotional but confident, proving her immediate communication style and displaying her authenticity, empathy, and openness. She expressed visible signals of compassion, increasing their intensity when discussing the fate of Ukrainian refugees and international humanitarian action. Furthermore, she expressed sadness, fear, and happiness to strengthen her message regarding concerns, threats, and successes. However, the speech's ending revealed some limited hope for realizing the promoted agenda, with a subtle smile replaced with a pronounced expression of sadness in the last three seconds. It suggests that the Moldovan President was aware that her emotional address might face limits of political persuasion, even if she genuinely trusted her message's correctness.

The FaceReader analysis showed that the dominant emotion was surprise, which seems to be an unexpected result of the case study. It is hard to determine whether Sandu consciously controlled signals of other basic emotions and redirected her emotionality to this relatively neutral expression or she revealed surprise as a controlling and anticipatory nonverbal behavior. Statistical analysis suggests that it corresponded with intensified sadness and sympathy; thus, it might be considered a substitutive signal of repressed emotions. I noticed this use of surprise in previous investigations of nonverbal expressiveness in political communication, reflecting the perceived inadequacy of more pronounced signals of sadness, anger, fear, or happiness.

This hypothesis might explain Sandu's orientation to surprise in emotional delivery as a behavior that provides some relief for controlled emotionality. Compassionate leadership is associated with reduced intensity of violent emotions in nonverbal communication; thus, if positivity is inappropriate and smiling might undermine persuasion, the speaker has limited options to express nonverbal immediacy. In the analyzed case study of the Moldovan President, she showed more pronounced surprise and sympathy as an alternative signal of compassionate responsiveness, reducing the presence of sadness or fear.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization (Konceptualizacja): Patryk Wawrzyński

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„Reprezentuję kraj, który pragnie pokoju". Przywództwo oparte na współczuciu w wystąpieniu Mai Sandu na 77. Sesji Zgromadzenia Ogólnego ONZ

Streszczenie

Artykuł przedstawia studium przypadku wystąpienia Prezydent Mołdawii Mai Sandu w czasie debaty na 77. Sesji Zgromadzenia Ogólnego Narodów Zjednoczonych we wrześniu 2022 roku w kontekście wojny w Ukrainie. Podejmuje się zagadnienie przywództwa opartego na współczuciu jako strategii komunikacyjnej zarządzania kryzysem politycznym, badając spójność treści narracji i bezpośredniości niewerbalnej jako jego wyznacznika w komunikacji politycznej. Badanie wykorzystuje dane zgromadzone w analizie treści wystąpienia i automatycznym kodowaniu ekspresji mimicznych z użyciem systemu FaceReader 9 (Noldus IT) do analizy nagrania wypowiedzi Sandu. Analiza linii czasowej pozwoliła porównać opowieść z intensywnością neutralności, emocji podstawowych, sympatii, bólu, uwagi, pobudzenia emocjonalnego, wektora emocjonalnego oraz estymacji tętna (RPPG), dokładnie opisując ujawnione sygnały odczuwanych emocji, motywacji i stresu fizjologicznego. Ustandaryzowane wyniki wskazują na podwyższoną sygnalizację emocji, zorientowaną na zaskoczenie – uznane za zastępczą ekspresję dla współczucia – sympatię i smutek, podczas gdy emocje przemocowe (gniew, obrzydzenie i pogarda) były ograniczone. Ponadto, analiza dostarczyła dowodów na spójną, werbalną i niewerbalną, obecność w wystąpieniu Sandu kluczowych zasobów przywództwa opartego na współczuciu.

Słowa kluczowe: komunikacja niewerbalna, sympatia, zaskoczenie, współczucie, komunikacja polityczna, wystąpienia publiczne