MEDIA PSYCHOLOGY IN CONTEMPOPARY
ENGLISH MEDIA DISCOURSE

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Media psychology is a study of human behavior, feelings, thoughts and ideas that are influenced by media. This branch of psychology, that considers personality in the context of interaction with modern means of communication, researches the constantly developing relationship between people and the media from a psychological point of view.

The research has been carried out with the aim to prove that media psychology is a tool of linguistic representation of emotion in media discourse. This suggests an examination of how psychological principles apply to the study and analysis of language in the modern media context. The article also aims to reveal the linguistic features of positioning the subjects of discourse in the situation of risk and to formulate the principles of ecological representation of potentially traumatic information in the English-language media discourse. The focus has been placed on the issues that affect people's ability to resist negative effects of media.

The research is grounded in an integrated approach, which involves contextual analysis of English media discourse and considers both generation and reception contexts. It also highlights a psychological perspective, exploring its impact on individual consciousness, studying the mechanisms of discourse generation and perception, and emphasizing its individual and personalized aspects.

The article examines diverse communicative goals in the context of media psychology, particularly highlighting how media influences our understanding and actions during crises or traumatic events. The communicative intentions could perform different functions through language. For instance, informative intention seeks to educate, while

expressive intention evokes emotional responses. Persuasive intention aims to sway beliefs or behaviors, directive intention guides or instructs, and performative intention fosters a change through speech. The authors emphasize the crucial role of grasping these communicative intentions in order to prove ethical media discourse. The further in-depth interdisciplinary research on the interactions between media discourse and people's psychology is suggested to foster better understanding and and the ability to manage media impact on society.

Key words: *media discourse, media psychology, social behavior, psychological factors, communicative intention, psychology of mass communication.*

РОЛЬ МЕДІАПСИХОЛОГІЇ
У СУЧАСНОМУ АНГЛОМОВНОМУ МЕДІАДИСКУРСІ

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Медіапсихологія – це дослідження людської поведінки, почуттів та думок, на які впливають засоби масової комунікації. Це галузь психології, яка розглядає особистість у контексті взаємодії із сучасними засобами комунікації, досліджує з психологічного погляду стосунки між людьми та ЗМІ, що постійно розвиваються.

Дослідження проведено з метою довести, що медіапсихологія є інструментом мовної репрезентації емоцій у медіадискурсі. Автори прагнуть перевірити, як психологічні принципи застосовуються до вивчення та аналізу мови в сучасному медіаконтексті. У даному дослідженні зроблено спробу розкрити лінгвістичні особливості позиціонування суб'єктів дискурсивної діяльності у предметній ситуації ризику та сформулювати принципи екологічного подання потенційно травматичної інформації на матеріалі англомовного медіадискурсу. Основну увагу зосереджено на проблемах, які впливають на здатність людей протистояти негативному впливу ЗМІ.

Теоретичним підґрунтям дослідження став інтегрований підхід: контекстуальний аналіз медіадискурсу, у якому враховуються контексти породження дискурсу та рецепції, та психологічний підхід, який вивчає вплив на свідомість індивідуума, розглядає механізми породження та сприйняття медіадискурсу та акцентує увагу на його індивідуальній природі та персоніфікації.

У статті розглядаються різноманітні комунікативні цілі в контексті медіапсихології, зокрема підкреслюється, як медіа впливають на наше розуміння та дії під час криз або травматичних подій. За допомогою мови комунікативні наміри можуть сприяти виконанню різних функцій. Наприклад, інформативна інтенція спрямована на навчання, тоді як експресивна інтенція викликає емоційні реакції. Інтенція переконання має на меті вплинути на поведінку, директивна інтенція спрямовує чи інструктує, а перформативна спонукає до змін. Автори підкреслюють важливість розуміння цих комунікативних намірів для сприяння створенню етичного медіадискурсу. Пропонується подальше поглиблене міждисциплінарне дослідження взаємодій між медіадискурсом і психологією споживачів медіадискурсу задля розширення можливостей краще розуміти та керувати впливом медіа на суспільство.

Ключові слова: медіадискурс, медіапсихологія, соціальна поведінка, психологічні чинники, комунікативна інтенція, психологія масової комунікації.

Media psychology is a relatively new field, the subject of which is the identification and description of the main components of media culture: media literacy, media education; media awareness, study of psychological phenomena of information perception by a person.

It tries to find out whether the exposure to media portrayals of violence increases aggression, in what way portrayals of gender roles affect children's understanding of what it means to be a woman, a man, or a member of the opposite sex, and how media messages can persuade someone to donate to charity, how stories affect our sense of self, and why we laugh and cry at movies, TV shows and podcasts. All these factors are very important subjects for research in media psychology.

The fast expanding world of media technologies offers many opportunities for the application of media psychology in a wide variety of industries, from entertainment and education to health care and politics since it influences human emotions, behavior, cognitive process and attitude to individuals and societies.

The cultural space of modern man is under the significant influence of information media. Effective interaction with the information space and the formation of psychological resistance to socially harmful information is a necessary solution in the conditions of personality formation.

Media psychology appeared more than a century ago. Psychologists began to study how the media affects children when television became widespread in the 1950s. However, media psychology was not recognized as an official field of psychology until 1986. Since then, the field continues to expand: several scientific journals specifically devoted to media psychology have appeared, additional books have been published that

fully or partially cover this area of research, and the number of universities devoted to the field has also increased studies and research.

There are numerous articles, books, research papers that study different facets of media psychology. The book «Media Psychology 101» by Christopher J. Ferguson provides key concepts and theories in media psychology, covering topics such as media violence, effects of advertising, social media, and the influence of technology on behavior [1]. Jennings Bryant and Mary Beth Oliver [2] offer a comprehensive overview of various theories and research on media effects, including how media shapes perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. David Giles covers a range of topics within media psychology, discussing media consumption, effects on behavior, cognition, emotions, and the role of media in shaping attitudes and beliefs [3]. Academic journals such as Media Psychology, Journal of Media Psychology, and Media Psychology Review regularly publish research articles, studies, and reviews on various aspects of media psychology. In her work, Petrunko emphasizes that aggression in the media environment appears as a psychological phenomenon that potentially activates manifestations of aggression (media aggression) in media consumers directed towards causing physical harm to oneself and others. Therefore, the attitude towards media aggression cannot be valueless; on the contrary, it is always evaluative, and the quality of these assessments determines existing social, cultural-ethical, and other norms in society [4, p. 41]. In their monograph «Media Psychology: at the Intersection of Information and Educational Spaces,» Barishpolets and Voznesenska identify a significant meaningful component of media psychology as the dialogical nature of discourse, which involves «building a balance of interpretations, shifting the 'gravitational field' of media psychological thinking precisely towards interpretations» that can be diverse and contradictory. Thus, a balance between these facets of reality must be ensured [5, p. 27]. It's worth considering the socio-cognitive approach to discourse analysis proposed by T.A. van Dijk, which emphasizes the necessity of considering the inseparable unity of three entities in studying ideology: cognition, society, and discourse [6, p. 124].

These resources and many others contribute to the growing body of literature and research in the field of media psychology, offering insights into how media influences individuals, society, and human behavior in general.

The research aims to uncover certain linguistic features of media discourse where the subjects are involved in situations of risk, particularly those that have the potential to be traumatic. The attempt has been made to formulate the principles which can guide the ethical and responsible representation of potentially traumatic information in English-language media discourse. Finding out media psychological effects is decisive in understanding their impact on mental health and social behavior.

The relevance of the work comes out of the fact that media are becoming more and more important today and it's crucial to learn how to maximize their positives and minimize their negatives impact on the public.

The theoretical basis of the research is an integrated approach: a contextual analysis of media discourse, which takes into account the contexts of discourse generation and

reception, and a psychological approach that studies the impact on the individual's consciousness, examines the mechanisms of media discourse generation and perception, and focuses on its individual nature and personification.

Today the English-speaking media are full of messages related to crisis and conflict situations. No doubt, the role of the media in providing people's awareness is of greatest importance. While supplying information to public they can cause trauma along with mental health issues. The media are saturated with bad news like a terrorist attack, attempted military coups with a lot of victims, train collisions, seizures of hostages, murder of policemen, bomb explosions – such events happen regularly. This stream of cruelty in the media raises questions: what is happening to us under the influence of negative news? Does it have a hidden influence on us or does it go unnoticed? Researchers agree that constant consumption of cruelty cannot help but affect a person. The negative effect of regularly observing other people's injuries is widespread and known as "indirect traumatization".

Psychological reactions associated with contact with violence, accidents, suffering people, abuse, natural disasters, warfare overwhelm an individual's ability to cope effectively fostering a growing sense of vulnerability, anxiety and helplessness.

Psychotraumatization can cause emotional, behavioral and cognitive responses leading to acute stress or different trauma related disorders. Consider the example:

He later saw up to ten Hamas fighters beating and raping a woman as she begged them to kill her [7, p. 1]. In this message we read about the incredible cruelty, inhuman suffering that befell the unfortunate woman. The sentence intends to convey a sense of concern, compassion, deep sympathy or attention towards the situation in the region. It highlights the vulnerability of victims, potentially aiming to evoke empathy from the audience. The expressive intention behind this statement seems to be to draw attention to the plight of these individuals who were in a difficult or precarious situation in the place of the conflict and to highlight efforts being made to help and support them.

 Potentially traumatic information in English-language media discourse refers to content that has the potential to cause distress, anxiety, or trauma to individuals exposed to it. This information could involve graphic images, violent or disturbing events, explicit details of tragedies, accidents, war, terrorism, or other distressing subjects. Like any other media, the English-language media cover a wide range of topics, including violent, disturbing, sensitive and stressful events. This is necessary to inform the public, to raise people's awareness. At the same time, it is important to consider the potential impact on the audience, especially when the content of the information can have traumatic effects that can upset or provoke.

Naydionova proposes an "algorithm for ecologically presenting potentially traumatic information," which involves a resource-based psychological framework: resource-trigger (or confrontation) and resource-integration. In other words, initially, a resource is provided that enables better mastery of one's state, and only then we address the potentially traumatic experience. "Knowledge of risk protects if a person knows what they can oppose to these risks, how to protect themselves from them" [8, p.180].

The given statement describes a specific scheme of a communicative act used for analyzing media discourse in times of crisis. This scheme highlights the essential elements of the message (presuppositions) and defines the communicative intention of the leader (to inform, advise, warn, change perception of information).

The communicative intention aims to provide more information to the audience about the main protagonists of the crisis situations; persuade representatives of nations of the necessity to support the affected population and prevent further escalation of the conflict. The communicative intention refers to the purpose or goal behind a particular act of communication. It's the underlying motivation or objective that drives an individual to convey a message, express thoughts, or engage in interaction with others. Understanding communicative intention is essential in grasping the meaning behind someone's communication and how they aim to convey information. There are several types of communicative intentions such as

1) *informative* (to provide facts, share information, or educate others about a topic or situation):

"If you think Gaza is heading for a neat and happy ending, you're wrong" [9, p. 11]. Matthew D'Ancona's article discusses the ongoing difficulties and conflicts in Gaza. The author focuses on socio-economic problems, political tensions and humanitarian crises. The title suggests that there is a misconception or misplaced optimism about the future of the region, and the author seeks to challenge this perception by highlighting the complexities, caused by ongoing Israeli-Palestinian war$

2) *expressive* (showing emotions, feelings, attitudes, or personal opinions. This can include sharing joy, sadness, anger, or any other emotion):

How did a brilliant teenager who loved quizzes, photography and playing the trumpet end up killing herself at Britain's top all-girls boarding school? [10, p. 11]. This phrase provoke an emotional response and engage the reader's empathy. How could a brilliant young girl, so talented (who loves quizzes, photography, and playing the trumpet) finish so tragically? This information causes readers to feel anxiety and sympathy, worry for their children, raising awareness of the importance of mental health support$

3) *persuasive* (the intention to influence others' beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors):

It seems increasingly to be the case that the UN is not merely incapable of making moral judgements but is actively making the world a worse place [7, p. 18]. Rod Liddle, the author, is convinced that the UN is not effective in making moral or ethical decisions, moreover, the contribution of this organization to solving global situations or conflicts is negative. The phrase "actively making the world a worse place" suggests a perception that the actions or decisions taken by the UN are exacerbating existing problems or creating new ones rather than mitigating or solving them.

Directive (the intention to guide or instruct others on what to do often involving commands, requests, or advice):

Quick thinking activist stopped a Victorian attraction being ruined for more parking place [7, p. 25]. The intention behind such a headline could be to highlight the proactive and resourceful actions of an individual or a group in safeguarding historical or cultural

landmarks from potential destruction or alteration for the sake of modern conveniences like parking spaces. It could also aim to inspire others to take similar actions to preserve historical sites and maintain their integrity;

4) *performative (*the intention to perform a speech act that brings about a change saying "We promise" or "I apologize"):

In 2050 our grandchildren will not ask what we said – they will be living with the consequences of what we did or didn't do [7, p. 27]. This statement underscores the idea of responsibility and foresight. It implies that instead of merely talking or discussing problems without taking action, it's crucial to actively address these challenges now because the effects of our actions, or lack thereof, will be felt by our descendants.

The predicted result of a publication is to make the audience more informed about what the affected countries are experiencing. The synergy of such speeches is the cumulative effect resulting from the interaction and coexistence of verbal, non-verbal, and para-verbal semiotic means [11, p. 199].

The predicted result can vary significantly depending on various factors such as the content, audience, context, timing, and the platform where it's published. Publications often seek to engage their audience by providing valuable information, thought-provoking content, or entertainment. A predicted result could be increased by reader/viewer engagement, comments, shares, or interactions, indicating a positive reception. Publications may aim to increase awareness about a particular topic, event, product, or cause. The predicted result could be a wider reach, attracting more viewers or readers, and potentially influencing opinions or behavior. Some publications aim to inspire action or bring about behavioral change in the audience. Predicted outcomes could include calls to action, participation in campaigns, or changes in attitudes or practices related to the published content. Publications in commercial settings may aim for increased sales, conversions, or achieving specific business goals. Predicted results could include increased revenue, customer acquisition, or brand visibility. A publication might generate positive or negative reactions from the audience or stakeholders. Predicted results could include praise, criticism, controversy, or backlash.

It should be noted that it is difficult to predict the impact of a negative post as it involves many factors and can be complex because audience reactions and consequences can be varied and unpredictable. Sometimes negative posts can cause a strong reaction, and sometimes they can go unnoticed. Estimating how many people will see or read a negative article can also be difficult. The reach of a publication may vary depending on how it is distributed through social networks and other media. Some publications have more authority and influence than others. A negative publication in a well-known and respected source may carry more weight than in lesser-known publications.

We analyzed an issue of the Sunday Times, the newspaper with a large circulation of 1.3 million copies. On 30 pages edition there were only negative titles like *What causes cerebral abscess? Labour and Tory rebels… Art display that ended with a gun to my head. My baby was trapped. Army officer shot dead. The ice cold war. Fears for hostages. Boris on trial. Lies, damned lies. UAE's autocrats think a free press is a crime.*

Media are expected to deliver not bad news only. Positive information may have an important impact on psychological state, motivation and general development of media consumers. Optimistic publication can improve people's mood, low stress, anxiety, help them get rid of negative emotions and relax. Positive articles, success stories or motivational texts can inspire readers to achieve their goals, believe in themselves and strive for better.

Conclusion. In modern English language media discourse, discussions surrounding media psychology are crucial for fostering awareness, critical analysis, and informed engagement with media content. It aids in understanding how psychological principles intersect with media messages, technologies, and societal trends, thereby influencing individual perceptions, behaviors, and the broader cultural landscape.

Modern media, including social media, employs various **persuasive techniques**, such as emotional appeals, framing, and selective presentation of information, to influence opinions and attitudes. They can evoke emotional responses and affect cognitive processes. The authors think that people greatly underestimate the influence of the media. It seems that the media are much more than a harmless list of what happened and the facts found by journalists. They sneak into our subconscious and affect our lives in the most bizarre ways. They can influence decision-making and behavior, change our attitude towards immigrants, they can invade our dreams, prevent us from seeing the real risk of a particular disease, shape our view of what is happening in another country... And they can even affect the health of the economy of the entire state. There is growing evidence that the emotional consequences of news consumption can take a toll on our health, increasing our chances of having a heart attack or developing medical conditions in later years. Anxiety tendencies can greatly influence how we perceive the world.

In our opinion the further in-depth research on the interactions between media discourse and people's psychology would be necessary to see whether they promote a more knowledgeable and media literate society.

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