THE ROLE OF MEDIA DISCOURSE IN SHAPING PUBLIC OPINION AND SOCIAL PERCEPTION

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Abstract. Media discourse plays an important role in shaping public opinion, influencing social attitudes, and presenting information to a wide audience. This article examines the main features and functions of media discourse, focusing on the ways language is used in newspapers, television, online news platforms, and social media. It explores how journalists and media organizations use specific linguistic choices, framing[1], headlines, and persuasive strategies to attract audiences and communicate particular perspectives. The study also considers the relationship between media discourse and society, emphasizing how media language can influence the way people understand social, political, and cultural issues. The findings suggest that media discourse is not only a means of providing information but also a powerful tool for constructing meanings and influencing public perception. Understanding media discourse is therefore essential for developing critical thinking and media literacy in modern society.

Keywords: Media discourse, public opinion, media language, communication, persuasion, social media, media literacy.

Kalit so'zlar: Media diskursi, jamoatchilik fikri, media tili, kommunikatsiya, ishontirish, ijtimoiy media, media savodxonligi.

Ключевые слова: Медиадискурс, общественное мнение, язык СМИ, коммуникация, убеждение, социальные сети, медиаграмот

Introduction. In the modern world, media plays a significant role in shaping public opinion, influencing social attitudes, and communicating information. The development of digital technologies and social media platforms has transformed the way people receive, interpret, and share information. As a result, media discourse has become an important area of study in linguistics, communication studies, and social sciences.

Media discourse refers to the language, meanings, and communication strategies used in newspapers, television, online news platforms, and social media. It does not simply convey information but also influences how people understand events, individuals, and social issues. Through the use of specific words, expressions, and persuasive techniques, media texts can shape public perceptions and present particular viewpoints.

The study of media discourse is particularly important in the digital age, when information spreads rapidly and reaches a wide audience. Understanding how media language works helps readers develop critical thinking skills and recognize the ways in which information is presented and interpreted. Therefore, this article aims to examine the main characteristics of media discourse, its linguistic features, and its influence on public opinion. It also explores the role of language in constructing meaning and shaping communication in contemporary society.

[1] The choice of words and style used to express an idea

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Literature Review. Media discourse has been widely studied in linguistics, particularly in relation to language use, discourse structure, ideology[2], and communication. Several scholars have contributed significantly to understanding how linguistic features shape media texts and influence the interpretation[3] of information.

Fairclough (1995), in his book Media Discourse, examines the relationship between language and social practices. He explains how media communication can be analyzed through linguistic structures and patterns of interaction. His approach provides a theoretical basis for investigating how media language constructs meaning and represents social issues.

Van Dijk (1988), in News as Discourse, focuses on the structure and organization of news texts. His research highlights the importance of headlines, thematic structures, and the organization of information in news reports. His approach is particularly useful for analyzing how linguistic choices influence the presentation and interpretation of news.

Fowler (1991), in Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press, investigates the relationship between language and ideology in newspaper reporting. He demonstrates the importance of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and linguistic representation in the construction of news. His work provides valuable insights into how language choices may communicate particular perspectives. Bell and Garrett (1998), in Approaches to Media Discourse, present different theoretical perspectives on the study of media language. Their collection explores media discourse through approaches that consider news structure, ideology, and linguistic communication. This work illustrates the interdisciplinary nature of media discourse research and the importance of analyzing media texts from different perspectives. Wodak's contribution to critical discourse analysis also provides a useful theoretical perspective for studying language, power, and ideology. Her research emphasizes the importance of examining discourse within its historical and social context. This approach can help explain how media language reflects social relations and contributes to the construction of public meanings.

Overall, these scholars demonstrate that media discourse is an important field of linguistic research. Their studies provide theoretical[4] foundations for examining lexical choices, grammatical structures, discourse organization, and the relationship between language and ideology. Building on these approaches, the present study focuses on the linguistic characteristics of media discourse and explores how language contributes to meaning construction in contemporary media communication.

Methodology. This study uses a qualitative approach to analyze the linguistic features of media discourse. The research focuses on selected online news articles and newspaper reports. Discourse analysis, lexical analysis, and syntactic analysis are used to examine word choice, sentence structure, and the presentation of information. Particular attention is given to headlines, evaluative vocabulary, and language strategies used in media texts.

The collected texts are analyzed to identify linguistic patterns and understand how language contributes to meaning construction and audience interpretation. This approach helps explain the role of language in contemporary media communication.

[2] A systematic set of ideas, values, and beliefs that shapes how individuals, groups, or political parties understand the world and guide their actions.
[3] The act, process, or result of explaining, clarifying, or making sense of something that is not immediately clear or is open to multiple perspectives.
[4] Based on ideas, principles, or possibilities rather than practical application, actual events, or proven physical evidence.

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Discussion and Analysis. Media discourse plays an important role in shaping how information is presented and understood. From a linguistic perspective, word choice, sentence structure, and discourse strategies influence the meaning of media texts.

Lexical analysis shows that journalists may use evaluative words to present events positively or negatively. Headlines are also important because they attract readers' attention and emphasize particular aspects of a story. Syntactic[5] structures, including active and passive sentences, can influence how actions and participants are represented.

Furthermore, media discourse uses different communication strategies to inform, persuade, and influence audiences. These linguistic features demonstrate that media language is not simply a means of delivering information; it also contributes to the construction of meaning and public interpretation.

Overall, the analysis highlights the importance of examining lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic features to understand how language functions in contemporary media communication.

Conclusion. In conclusion, media discourse is an important area of linguistic research because it demonstrates how language is used to present information and shape public understanding. The analysis shows that lexical choices, grammatical structures, and pragmatic strategies play a significant role in constructing meaning in media texts. Word choice can influence the tone of news, while sentence structure determines how events and participants are presented. Furthermore, headlines often use expressive language to attract readers' attention. Therefore, studying media discourse helps us understand the relationship between language, communication, and society. Further research may explore the differences between traditional and digital media discourse and their influence on audience interpretation.

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[5] The grammatical rules and structural arrangements of words, phrases, clauses in a language or the formal structure of statements in computer programming.

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