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Media Ecology and Language Innovations (Infolexicographic Literacy)

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Abstract

The article interprets lexicographic problems from a new perspective, namely: in the media ecology. The main focus of the article is on language innovations which are actively being integrated into media communication. Their replication is not always correct and logical. We have conducted a professional survey among prospective users of the dictionary of language innovations (Shevchenko, Syzonov, 2021), which enables to assess the role of media ecology in lexicography. Among those involved in the analysis are responses from journalists, SMM analysts, PR specialists, publishing editors, and media corporation managers. The analysis has revealed that an overwhelming majority of media workers monitor language innovations and often use them in media texts. Different motivations for using language innovations (from trendiness to deliberate manipulation) give rise to incorrect interpretation by recipients, that is why it is proposed to pay attention to the media environment when replicating language innovations in the media. Lexicographers are advised to pay attention to the environmental factor when compiling dictionaries of new vocabulary. It is proposed to adhere to infolexicographic literacy when working with a media product as an illustrative material for dictionaries of language innovations.

Keywords: media ecology, media linguistics, media literacy, language innovations, infolexicographic literacy.

1. Introduction

The information space of the 21st century is one of the most dynamic, which is associated with actual processes of technological progress. This also affects the language resource, updated in accordance with new technical realities (radio → online radio, streaming, podcast; TV → video stream, internet TV; social media → new multimedia platforms, stories, stream art). The language design of new media texts is also changing. We are talking about neology and neophraseology in mass media.

Parameterization of language innovations in mass communication is one of the tasks of our research project *Ecolinguistic Modes of Discursive Space of Ukraine in the European Multicultural Continuum*, within the framework of which we perform this research. The American scientist L. Strate dealt with some topical issues of media ecology as a progressive neo-direction of our times (Strate, 2006; 2017). One of the latest conferences at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv *Ecolinguistics (Media Ecology) and the Anthropomorphic Profile of War in Socio- and Psycholinguistic Dimensions* (2021/12/03) discussed topical issues of media ecology in interdisciplinary synergy, with a special attention paid to lexicography.

Within the framework of our lexicographic project, a series of dictionaries of new words and phraseological units in mass media is being compiled, the purpose of which is to fairly reflect a true picture of the dynamics of the Ukrainian language in mass communication, to analyze strong

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trends in the language development in the socio-cultural processes of the modern state, in particular on the material of modern mass media, as well as to identify ecolinguistic features of functioning language units in new evolutionary processes of mass communication. It should be noted that the ecolinguistic problem of information literacy is a key aspect of modern humanitarian science (Davenport, Prusak, 1997; Nardi, O'Day, 1999), as it reflects the correct use of language units not only in spelling, but also in stylistics.

An ambitious goal of the lexicographic project is representation of language changes through mass recipient and development of media genres (Shevchenko, Syzonov, 2021a), which can be achieved by drawing attention to the ecological issue of the language. Neo-genres and modern multimedia platforms obviously affect mass communication, generating language innovations in its system to be included in the lexicographic publications of the future (Massaro, 2015). We have created computer records (Syzonov, 2021), which contribute to media neolexicography and actually become a mirror of language changes in the mass consciousness. For functional lexicography (Salzmann, 2002) it is computerization of the collected material which corresponds to the development trends of the modern dictionary – a dictionary of the 21st century. For new types of dictionaries, it is important to take into account modern advertising, manipulative genres on the internet and social media, new multimedia platforms, etc. (Balmas, 2014; Brunson, 2013; Grinberg et al., 2019; Vziatyshева, 2020).

A key problem in understanding any media material is comprehending the information truth and countering misrepresentation (Dentith, 2017; Shevchenko et al., 2014; Vosoughi, et al., 2018). Due to the new vocabulary, the recipient may not always react quickly to new events, which leads to incorrect perception of such information in the future. This is especially evident in a new material, for instance the so-called *COVID innovations* (Shevchenko et al., 2021), and therefore such innovations are often incorrectly defined in the media. As a result, further interpretation of this information in information streaming is incorrect (Fitzpatrick, 2018). Our assignment is to provide recommendations with regard to methodically correct parameterization of the lexicographic representation of new vocabulary by media genres, communication situation, marking, stylistic characteristics, etc.

We are talking about *infolexicographic literacy* – a new term in media lexicography, taking into account the environmental aspect: not only the definitions in the lexicographic description should be appropriate and systematic, but also the language units themselves and the contexts which make up the macrostructure of the dictionary.

2. Materials and methods

We are aware that searching for the necessary resource in the information flow should be correct. "The right approach to lexicography and its disciplinary status is particularly important in our era of globalization. Only state-of-the-art lexicographic and corpus resources will secure the future of many languages" (Margalitzadze, 2018), processed by both traditional and innovative methods. Thus, for the correct description of our dictionary, we apply the following methods of organizing vocabulary material (Shevchenko, Syzonov, 2021):

(1) *the registered word* of a dictionary entry is presented in accordance with the rules of the applicable spelling of the modern Ukrainian language; instead, *the dictionary entry* provides illustrative material in forms, existing in real media communication. This principle, in our opinion, reveals trends in the development of the Ukrainian language today and can be discussed by linguists in terms of the norms and its variability/innovation/opportunity/tradition. A multidimensional analysis is necessary for the situation with the influence of the English language on the vocabulary of the modern Ukrainian language and its spelling norms also requires. In any case, we consider it wrong and non-perspective to ignore modern speech processes in the mass communication;

(2) to maximize the objectification of the representation of a dictionary material, the author's method of collecting materials was devised. Thus, we were guided by the principle of *frequent functioning* of the unit in the media: a neologism/neofrazeme should be used in at least *ten contexts of ten publications*, which indicates the tendency of the innovative unit to be replicated in the media and imprinted in the memory of the mass recipient. The formula *10x10* is a new parameter in lexicography which correlates with the logic of the recipient's perception of the language innovation (Shevchenko, Syzonov, 2021: 4-5; Syzonov, 2021).

We advise authors to follow *infolexicographic literacy* when compiling dictionaries, as well as readers when working with dictionaries. In particular, we are talking about the correct and most complete representation of the media flow in dictionaries in order the work for readers is justified and systematic. Such methods contribute to forming the macrostructure of the media dictionary, taking into account information chaos in terms of competition and infodemia.

We also use *sociological and stylistic methods* which helped to present ecolinguistic problems in lexicography more correctly. Representatives of media journalists, SMM analysts, PR workers, publishing editors and heads of media corporations took part as respondents in the research.

3. Discussion

In modern science, analysis of neology dictionaries is updated in the context of functional-stylistic and mediallynguistic approaches which are dominant nowadays. In the information age, lexicography has become an interdisciplinary, syncretic and innovative field of scientific knowledge, testing the experience of several sciences, primarily linguistics, semiotics and computer science, cybernetics, social communications, etc. Media ecology also follows the trends of scientific syncretism: it "represents a new synthesis that moves the field forward in a manner that is both unique and unprecedented, and simultaneously grounded in an unparalleled grasp of media ecology's intellectual foundations and its relation to other disciplines" (Strate, 2017: 3).

It is in the 21st when the most productive research ideas are neophilological areas, which include mediallynguistics, mediaecology and ecolinguistics. Mass communication is considered in the context of its correctness and ecological safety (information literacy) (Frechette, Williams, 2016); language innovations quickly enter mass communication, which leads to numerous semantic errors in the future. To prevent this when replicating, e-lexicography becomes relevant (Frankenberg-Garcia et al., 2021; Granger, Paquot 2012). This type of innovative lexicography quickly develops according to the demands of the time, which is particularly productive in the context of *the Digital Age* (Sujon, Dyer, 2020).

Modern parameterization of lexicography depends on general trends in lexicography. Deviation from paper versions of lexicographic sources and emergence of modern dictionaries on the Internet and/or on the basis of the language of internet communication confirm advantages of innovative dictionaries based on computer technologies over paper ones (this trend is especially relevant in western European lexicographic practice today).

The European network of electronic lexicography shows that today we do not correctly and accurately use the information flow for widespread implementation. The time challenge in lexicography lies in informatization of science, where lexicography remains the leading bridge between linguistics, journalism, and computer science (Granger, Paquot 2012; Hobbs, 2010; Nardi, O'Day, 1999). As computer technologies develop, a new component has been added – *e-Filing system* (Syzonov, 2021). Today, e-Filing system means a database of texts marked up to provide its users with information on the formal, semantic and functional properties of a word, a base balanced and indicative of the real condition of the language system in a certain period of its existence, as a model of language in action, as media screening.

Analysis of media texts in the infoecological aspect is also the responsibility of a journalist to the public: what information is to be conveyed to the recipient. The fact-based purity of the information flow is the main task of a journalist as well as of a lexicographer, who chooses the material for further study. Extralinguistic factors – politics, economy, business, etc. – remain in the same plane while compiling lexicographic works, with the Ukrainian media as the source, which ideally should not affect, but in reality have an impact on the public. Not only media analysts, but also lexicographers are struggling against the problem of *Fake News* and the flow of news with the sign *untrue* (Dentith, 2017; Horbatuck, Sears, 2018; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020; Vziatysheva, 2020).

In modern medialexicographic research, more and more attention is being paid to environmental issues (Derakhshan, Wardle, 2017; Ruotsalainen, Heinonen, 2015). A pure information flow is the key to success in lexicographic description: this parameter, in our opinion, is also included in infolexicographic literacy. Media ecology and language innovations are a new discussion within the framework of the previously proposed one (we are talking about *pre-Web 2.0 culture*). New media encourage journalists to search for new language forms, with this search paying less and less attention to purity of the language and its environmental component. The researchers add that the ethical component of mass communication is important for media ecology: "media ecology contends that understanding media ethics requires analysis which not only

focuses upon the content of mediated communications but also explores values built into the systems of software and hardware" (Taffel, 2013: 236), and media culture is considered the dominant component of media ecology, after all, "new values and social functions of media and journalism may turn out as the most fundamental question concerning the new media environment" (Ruotsalainen, Heinonen, 2015). We also emphasize the functional aspect – the use of a media-ecological component in the professional activity of a lexicographer.

4. Results

The material in our dictionary (Shevchenko, Syzonov, 2021a: 8-10) is arranged according to the traditional alphabetical principle (with comments and illustrative material on the semantics of new units). As a criterion for the novelty of semantics, we also take into account frequent and typical functioning of a new unit (new meaning) in the media context, which enables us to objectify the dynamics of development of the modern Ukrainian language as a real source of replenishment of the active dictionary.

The dictionary is arranged with respect to *medialogicity and information continuity*: expressly, therefore, clearly and concisely. The dictionary includes some sections reflecting the author's concept of selecting and describing new words, general research methodology, and motivated ecolinguistic attention to language innovations. At first, it is clear that this project is intended for several years, and therefore is well-planned in terms of daily organization of research activities, convenience and clarity of the text of a scientific publication. It is also clear that the work on the dictionary is designed in such a way as to simultaneously implement several functions: research, educational, didactic, educational and informative.

When working with language innovations, a lexicographer focuses on three aspects: (a) the time of appearance of a language innovation – *an extralinguistic factor*; (b) the genre and stylistic parameter of functioning the language innovation in media – a *medialinguistic factor*; (c) the grammatical and semantic correctness of language innovation – *an ecolinguistic factor*. When performing our research, we turned to modern professional users of media stores (100.0 %, n = 34) – journalists (50.0 %, n = 17), SMM analysts (15.0 %, n = 5), PR workers (15.0 %, n = 5), publishing editors of media institutes (15.0 %, n = 5), heads of media corporations (5.0 %, n = 2).

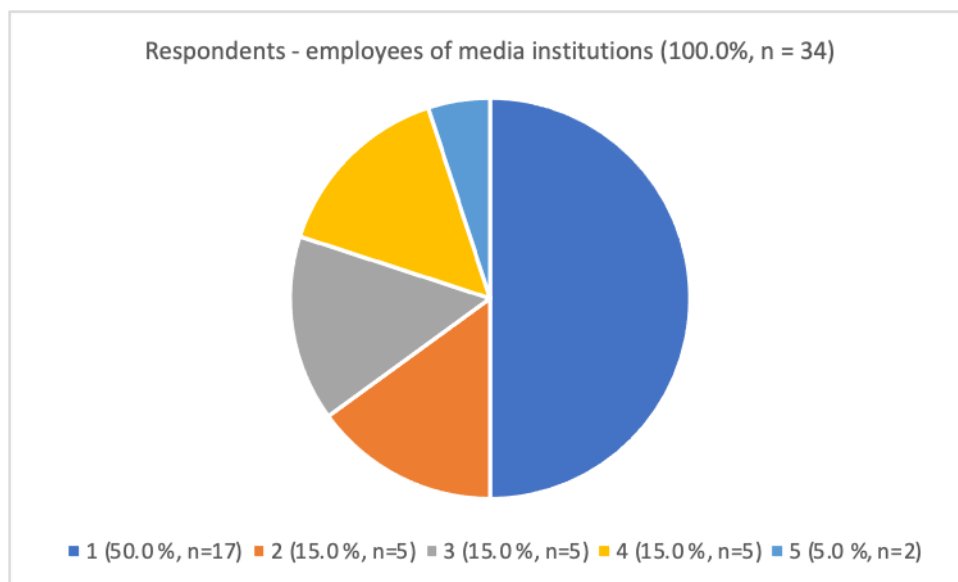


Fig. 1. Representation of respondents in the study (sociological principle)

The basic questions for respondents were formulated as follows:

- (1) How do media workers feel about language innovations in media stores?
- (2) Do they check a new word for correctness in the media?
- (3) Should the media ecological factor be taken into account when compiling a dictionary of language innovations?

Each of the questions was formulated before introducing the dictionary in order to objectify the data as much as possible.

Each of the groups of respondents answered in the affirmative that they monitor language innovations in the media. This is especially true for journalists and heads of media corporations, who respond most to language innovations, but SMM analysts and PR workers pay attention to language innovations as a manipulative tool to be used to advertise a product and attract attention of recipients.

Table. 1. Representation of respondents' answers (statistical principle)

(1)			(2)			(3)		
positively	negatively	neutral	I'm checking	I do not check	anyway	must be	should not be	does not matter
13	3	1	13	4	-	17	-	-
5	-	-	3	2	-	5	-	-
4	1	-	3	2	-	5	-	-
4	1	-	2	3	-	5	-	-
1	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-

In our opinion, it is the manipulative effect that can affect the purity of a speech innovation, as replicating new products with errors can be deliberately included in the media text to attract attention.

So, respondents' responses can be reflected as follows:

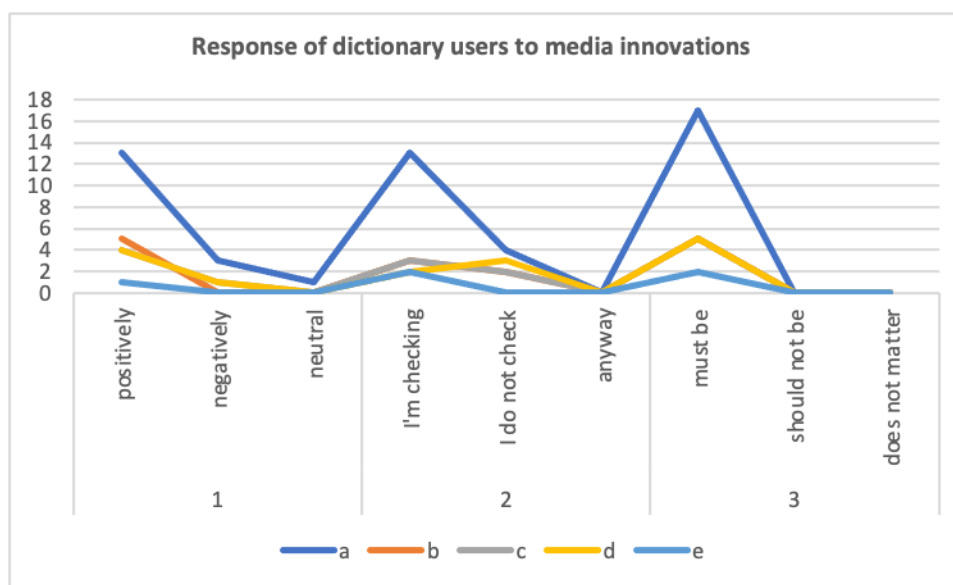


Fig. 2. Response of dictionary users to media innovations (psycholinguistic principle)

The lexicographic project, therefore, focuses on these relevant data. The dictionary aims at strategic research goals motivated by solving a number of new problems for Ukrainian linguistics related to trends in the development of the Ukrainian literary language, its media representation, problems of lexicographic analysis of the semantic structure of a polysemantic word, issues of borrowings, neology, transformation of terms in media communication, search for ideographic language units, scientific interpretation of deactivated units in the modern context, etc. These aspects determine the apparent search of modern media researchers, which takes place both in the theoretical and applied aspects of modern scientific knowledge (Hobbs, 2010; Shevchenko et al., 2014; Shevchenko, Syzonov, 2021b).

Today, the debating issue is not only the fact of appearance of a great number of language innovations in the media, but also their operational representation in a new type of dictionaries. We are going to recall in this regard the facts from the generator linguistics: we are talking about

the mechanisms of functioning language units in electronic formats, creating web corpuses at the level of structure and taxonomy, as well as working with new corpuses which enable to recreate the dynamics of language systems (Toshovich, 2018).

It is crucially important that all language units in the dictionary reflect the true picture of the time, are markers of the present time and do not appear sporadically in the individual's mind, but are quickly distributed and replicated by mass media. This process is a significant indicator of updating the lexical and phraseological stock of the language, fixing realities, and remains a strategic task of a modern lexicographer.

In our dictionary, media ecology is a separate locus and a tool for logically correct reproduction of language innovations. After analysing the answers of respondents – potential users of the dictionary – we were able to come to the conclusion that language innovations are included in the media as a trendiness factor, explained by the international nature of language infusions and further wide replication in mass communication. Figure 3 shows the reasons for introduction of innovations in more detail, which the lexicographer-media ecologist faces with.

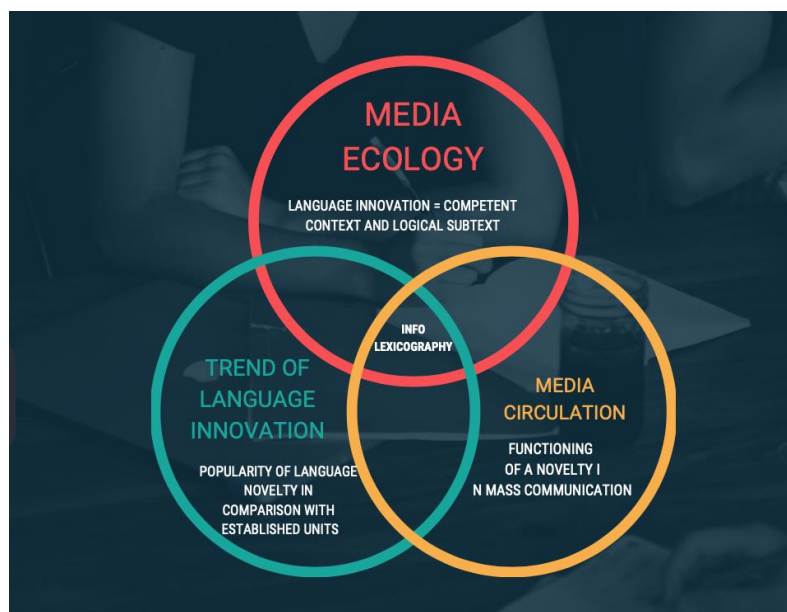


Fig. 3. Reasons for the emergence of language innovation (media ecology + media trend + media circulation)

When language innovations penetrate in the media, it is quickly replicated by journalists, which may not always be appropriate and logical. Often, the fashion for such novelties is one of the reasons for further use of the language innovation. And finally, the mediaecological factor becomes dominant in the later life of these language innovations in the language system.

The lexicographer, correspondingly, works with such units and filters it before including it in the dictionary (this operational principle called *infolexicographic literacy*).

According to *infographic/lexicographic literacy*, a language innovation is included in the dictionary by two stages:

1. The search and systemic stage:

- registration of a new language unit (new semantic variant of the lexeme; new combinability; new transformation of the traditional language unit);
- representation of the context/contexts in which the language unit is fixed;
- certification of novelty (it was mandatory to analyze serious lexicographic publications from the point of view of registration/non-registration of a specific word/new meaning of the word/phraseological unit);
- scientific arranging of the analyzed part of the register of new language units.

2. The evaluation and analytical stage:

- systematization of the material in accordance with the dictionary concept;
- scientific analyzing and editing of the material collected;

- arranging the general register of the analyzed language units.

As you know, the ecolinguistic component is also a *language tradition* with which a new word appears in the language system. Some researchers, when assessing the social background which influences new language infusions, use the concept of information ecology (Nardi, O'Day, 1999). "In media research, such comprehensive social questions are studied especially within the media ecology research tradition" (Ruotsalainen, Heinonen, 2015), and therefore language ecology is a perspective with a focus on the history of the word, semantic peculiarities and new shades, which continues the tradition.

For our dictionary, transformed units are an important innovation layer, influenced by the history of the language, the history of grammatical forms, semantic shades of meanings, etc. Each language transformation is also an innovation, because it is a new context and a new perception of the word. When compiling the register, it is necessary to take into account active dynamics of the language system associated with extralingual motivation, influenced by politics, economics, and globalization processes. At ecological safety of the lexical innovation, it is necessary to take into account *three elements*: (1) systematization and standardization of various elements of the word-forming structure of the language and adaptation to normative standards; (2) wide potential of the source base in updating the linguistic stock of the language: from colloquial elements to random word formation and stylistic transformation in media communication; (3) scientific and technological progress, information globalization, multiculturalism, etc., factors affecting the quality of the language innovation and its further replication.

We tried to reflect the dynamics of language innovations in the annual dictionary series. Using the collected material, we tried to recreate the real condition of the language in mass communication, the evolution of the language in the media, and the new context which influenced the language updating. All these components in mass communication are integral parts of the (*media*) *ecological system of the language*.

5. Conclusion

Appearance of a new word in the media, its semantic transformations, rigid or soft typical communicative situation which leads to the semantic vibration of a social/cultural symbol, influence of the communicative sphere of media on the grammatical structure of speech, etc. have a perspective in scientific linguistic analysis and determine the conceptual basis of an innovative dictionary presented for analysis in media lexicography. Rapid emergence of language innovations in media is caused by the dynamic evolution of media sources, new milestones in the Digital Age, the revolution in the web industry (Web 2.0 theory), as well as search for innovative manipulative forms to attract the attention of recipients.

Media ecology and language innovations are an inseparable tandem of a lexicographer: appearance of a word in the media should be filtered by language laws, and not by emotional messages or banal trendiness. Our research has shown that most professional dictionary users monitor emergence of language innovations, but not everyone is ready to deal with their ecology (see Fig. 2.). Correct recording and scientific interpretation of language innovations in mass media enable to recreate the true picture of the language and make dictionary users more competent in perception of the material, because "media literacy education is the key to understanding the modern information society: today, a person is simply obliged to be media-competent, otherwise he or she will not only become an easy victim of numerous media manipulations, but will not be able to fully enter the differentiated world of media culture" (Tselykh, 2020: 103).

The new age of e-lexicography also creates new challenges in this area. We propose to apply *infolexicographic literacy* to work out the information flow, in which language innovations are quickly emerging and massively spread.

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