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PECULIARITIES OF TEACHING THE COURSE “MASS MEDIA LANGUAGE”
ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ВИКЛАДАННЯ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ «МОВА ЗАСОБІВ МАСОВОЇ ІНФОРМАЦІЇ»

Mass media plays an important role in shaping public opinion and influencing people's behavior in the modern world. It is, therefore, crucial for students to develop the necessary communication skills to effectively interact with their audience through various media platforms. Teaching the course “Mass media language” is essential for cultivating these skills. The aim of the article is to examine the peculiarities of teaching this course, including the importance of understanding the target audience, adapting language for different situations, the significance of accuracy in journalistic writing, and the role of technology in mass media language.

The course "Mass media language" is a crucial component of education that prepares students for a career in media. It is essential to continue adapting the course curriculum to stay up to date with the constantly evolving world of mass media and be certain that students have the skills and knowledge necessary to communicate effectively in this field.

Keywords: mass media, teaching, activities, teaching techniques, students.

Introduction. The study of mass media language has become increasingly important as media has become a crucial aspect of modern society. With the rapid advancement of technology and the widespread use of the internet, social media platforms, and digital communication, the way we consume and create media has evolved drastically. This has resulted in the need for individuals who understand the intricacies of mass media language and can effectively communicate in this context. Teaching the course “Mass media language” poses certain peculiarities that are worth
exploring. The **aim** of the article is to explore these peculiarities and provide recommendations for effective teaching of the course.

It must be noted that mass media is constantly evolving, and the language used in the media is constantly changing to reflect these changes. This means that teachers of the course must keep up to date with the latest trends and developments in the media industry to ensure that their teachings remain relevant.

To effectively teach mass media language, teachers must incorporate practical exercises that allow students to apply the concepts learned in class to real-world scenarios. For example, students may be asked to write a news article or create a social media post to demonstrate their understanding of the language used in these mediums. This not only reinforces the concepts learned but also allows students to develop skills that will be valuable in their future careers.

Moreover, mass media language draws upon concepts from various disciplines such as linguistics, journalism, and communications. Therefore, teachers of the course must have a broad understanding of these disciplines and be able to effectively integrate them into their teachings.

To start, it is important to emphasize that the definition of the notion *the mass media*. According to the dictionaries *the mass media* is all the people and organizations that provide information and news for the public, including television, radio, and newspapers; newspapers, television, radio that communicate news and information to large numbers of people; the mass media refers to the various ways, especially television, radio, newspapers, and magazines, by which information and news are given to large numbers of people. Thus, the course “Mass media language” aims to help students master oral and written communication skills, listening comprehension of articles from newspapers, magazines, as well as radio and television messages related to various aspects of interethnic and intercultural communication. Thus, the course helps acquire such competences as ability to search, process and analyze information from various media sources, ability to conduct research at a proper level, ability to identify and solve problems, ability to communicate in a foreign language in professional activities, to study professional literature in a foreign language.
It must be stated that the crucial component of the course “Language of mass media” is that working on authentic material, such as printed publications, television and online publications students can analyze material taking into account such courses as “English Major”, “Stylistics and Lexicology”, “General Linguistics”, “Sociolinguistics”, “Theory of Cross-cultural Communication and Actual Problems of Linguistics of the Native, Major and Second Foreign Languages” that have already been taken before or those ones which coincide with the teaching time of the course itself. It is significant that the authentic material should be selected based on current issues, various cultural and historical facts and the issue which has a direct relation to mass media.

In our opinion, it is crucial to preserve the authenticity of the publication as much as possible (if it is a printed publication or an Internet publication) in the teaching process of the discipline. First of all, it is important to mention that keeping the original design and the font of the publication allows students learn and identify the main layout features of news reports and articles. It is important to emphasize that using such a technique students can learn all the functions and peculiarities of the news report layout features. Moreover, it must be stated that at the first stage of the analysis students do not know the source the material is taken from so that they could come to their own conclusions and learn how to indicate the proper source of information. There are two examples (Fig. 1 [4] and Fig. 2 [8]) given below which illustrate the way students can see and analyze such layout features as image captions, headline, standfirst or byline of a news article.

No more birthday candles, no more cities: experts on their worst pandemic predictions

Allie Volpe
Sun 7 Nov 2021 08.00 GMT

Hugs and handshakes have survived the pandemic. Not so much shared lipsticks and formal business attire

Fig. 1
Fig. 2

Having examined the examples given above, it can be stated that not only the layout but also structural and language features of news reports and articles can be studied since students have to analyze all other peculiarities of a publication such as language, structure and style. What is more, by doing this, students focus on the structure, language of the text and other techniques that help visually establish whether a particular publication belongs to reliable sources or represent tabloid news. This type of tasks can be used both in pre-reading, when we prepare students for the material, and in the part of after-reading, if the teacher plans to use other techniques.

The example illustrated in Fig. 3 demonstrates techniques for pre-reading activities to introduce such material during the lesson.

![Article 1](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**When the media gets a close election wrong**

*How past missteps in calling elections can help viewers watch this year's race with care*

By Robert O'Connell  Nov 3, 2020

Fig. 3

In our opinion, fundamental preparation for working on authentic material is extremely significant as some lexical, grammatical, cultural, theoretical and historical aspects may not be known to all students. We suggest using such materials in accordance with the topic of classes from the English Major course, so that the material does not lose its relevance and is a logical and complex addition to the key discipline for philologists, or as a supplement to topics already covered in order to activate the vocabulary. As an example, we cite the following article. Post subject: **When the media gets a close election wrong** [7].

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*Buzz Bingo are looking for looking for a lucky person who will become their official Christmas Film Tester while enjoying a supply of festive snacks such as mince pies.*

*By Simon Duke*

*14:21, 1 Dec 2021*
Thus, it should be emphasized that the pre-reading and after-reading activities are useful either to introduce the topic or to sum up all the analyzed language, style, layout and structure features of a news report.

Before the main work with the material, several questions that introduce the topic can be offered for discussion. This is usually a lead-in part so that students can immerse themselves in the topic. For example, for the above publication, you can choose the following questions for discussion, which directly relate to the topic, perhaps in its broader aspect: What do you know about the elections in the USA? Is there a difference between the electoral system in Ukraine and in the USA? What do you know about the US presidents and political parties? Also, mind maps can be applied to activate the passive and active vocabulary of students (Fig. 5).

The next step is to introduce the lexical material. For instance, the figures 5 and 6 illustrate some of the vocabulary tasks such as matching the English equivalents to the Ukrainian ones or matching different phrases and expressions to their definitions to give full and deep explanation of specific terms or notions of business English vocabulary which is common for mass media style.

- incumbent (adj.) /inˈkʌmbənt/ c) участь в выборах
- to tip in favor (phr) d) виборчий бюлетень
- to concede (v) e) відмовляється
- too close to call (phr) f) досягти успіху
- electoral college votes (phr) g) достаточное
- margin (n) h) заочне голосування, відкритий таол
- fare better (phr) i) поступитися
- turnout (n) j) поступити, вчинити
- absentee ballot k) на рівних
- nip and tuck l) оприлюднення, проголошення
- ubiquitous (adj) /juˈbɪkwətəs/ m) везде
- to backtrack (v) n) відкат / повіт / графство

Exercise 1. Match the words/word combinations with their translation

1) ballot (n) a) досить неясній, важко передбачити
2) proclamation (n) b) голоси колегів виборців
We consider it to be useful to use the translation aspect as well since some lexical items may not be common in the Ukrainian language, therefore, to facilitate understanding, the explanation of words is introduced in the native language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Ukrainian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>calve (v) /ˈkæv/</td>
<td>(of an iceberg or glacier) split and shed (a smaller mass of ice).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meltwater (n)</td>
<td>water made from melted snow or ice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bedrock (n)</td>
<td>the hard area of rock in the ground that holds up the loose soil above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ice core</td>
<td>a core sample that is typically removed from an ice sheet or a high mountain glacier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intertidal</td>
<td>also known as the foreshore or seashore, the area above water level at low tide and underwater at high tide (in other words, the area within the tidal range).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cetacean (adj)</td>
<td>any of various types of mammal, such as the whale, that live in the sea like fish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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To continue, another part of the "lead-in" section can be Specialized vocabulary to the article, such as to the article “A Front-Row Seat on the Spectacle of Ice” [1] which can be used not only in “Mass media language” classes, but also during “English Major” classes to discuss such topics as “Ecology”, “Environmental problems”, “Man and Nature. Pollution. Wild Life”. It should be noted that such tasks are also provided with the native language translation due to the fact that specific words on different topics can be difficult to understand. However, it is vital to note that there are also other ways to introduce new vocabulary such as showing images, videos or films.

It should be emphasized that there can be a wide variety of after reading tasks. Thus, we suggest involving individual work, work in pairs (groups) and discussions. For example, to discuss the article entitled “Awarding the Nobel to journalists recognizes the growing repression of media” [2] a lot of different questions can be chosen as the following ones:

What is the writer’s opinion on the Nobel Prize winners?
What is the author’s opinion on the situation with the freedom of the press?
What are the threats to the freedom of the press mentioned?
What is the state of the freedom of the press nowadays?
It is important to suggest discussing such questions as mentioned above together with the students to ensure those who had difficulties in understanding the text or had some problems with certain points understand the point better.

To continue, for individual work, regardless of the material, the following task options can be offered:

- **What are the situations the following names, numbers, organizations and dates are used in?** UNESCO, 1992, 32, Trump, the Committee to Protect Journalists, Scott Griffen, Berit Reiss-Andersen.

Moreover, to check how attentive the students have been after the first reading, the following tasks can be used:

- **Analyze the language of the article:** explain the meaning of the phrases: to come at a time, authoritarian governments, fake news, to issue reports, to cover protests, to reveal uncomfortable truths.

- **Analyze the semantic structure of the text by making its outline.** Combine the paragraphs into 4-5 paragraphs uniting them with one and the same idea. Find topic sentences in each paragraph, decide which of them express the main ideas of the article and which ones are supportive or subordinate.

- **Decide what method of developing introduction is used:** a) appeal to reader’s emotions; b) use of logic; c) provocative question; d) unexpected statistics or surprising fact; e) question; f) relevant quotation; g) eye-catching image.

- **Decide which method of organizing the concluding paragraph the writer uses:** a) emphasizing the thesis or main points with a summary or enumeration; b) making a judgment; c) expressing an opinion; d) posing a question to provoke further thought or indicate further possible development of the topic.

Thus, it can be revealed if the idea of the article is fully understood.

To continue, it must be stated that the course “Mass media language” focuses on a variety of methods and approaches to build sentences of different type and provide readers or listeners with the information in a laconic and clear way. It should be stated that language of headlines is very peculiar. Analyzing different types of headlines students can learn how to identify specific grammar and vocabulary peculiarities of
mass media headlines. Moreover, working on vocabulary and grammar of mass media headlines students can be introduced to different types of headlines.

It should be stated that headline is the text above an article that summarizes its overall content. As a rule, headlines are quite short summary of a news report, which normally appear in large letters above the report.

The grammar of headlines is often non-standard and that is why headlines can be difficult to read. The main features of the grammar of headlines are the use of noun strings and noun phrases which can be challenging for the learners. To add, indefinite or definite articles (a/an, the) and some verbs (especially the verb to be) are often dropped, thus, working on analysis of authentic news articles it is always important to draw students’ attention to the understanding of all possible and common grammar manipulations in mass media texts. Moreover, simple tenses are often used even to refer to a past event or the to-infinitive form to refer to future events to make the news seem more dramatic and immediate.

To practice grammar peculiarities of headlines in use students are provided with different activities to rephrase, match or identify. One of the examples of headlines with various grammar peculiarities for analysis is given below [5].

**Ocean treaty: Historic agreement reached after decade of talks**

Focusing on such activities students learn how to identify and solve different grammar problems as they can differentiate various grammar constructions used in headlines and replace them with other grammar options. Moreover, it is significant to note that dealing with such activities as rephrasing headlines or identifying types of grammar peculiarities can help students identify and differentiate the grammar peculiarities of headlines and learn how to create a proper headline for news reports. What is more, doing such activities students can learn how to make eye-catchy, laconic and accurate headlines as some taken from BBC [3] or “The Guardian”[6] for examples: “US inflation stays high as housing costs bite”, “Greek train crash: PM Mitsotakis seeks forgiveness from families”. Thus, the grammar peculiarities of mass media sources are studied.
In conclusion, teaching the course “Mass media language” is essential for developing the necessary communication skills. Understanding the target audience, adapting language for different media platforms, the significance of accuracy in journalistic writing, and the role of technology in mass media language are crucial components of this course. Students must learn to tailor their language and tone to suit the audience they intend to reach, adapt their writing to suit the specific requirements of each media platform, and understand the significance of accuracy in their writing. Additionally, students must learn to use technology to their advantage and understand the potential pitfalls of using technology in mass media language.

To sum up, the course “Mass media language” must, therefore, equip students with the necessary skills to navigate the constantly evolving world of mass media. By understanding the target audience, adapting language for different media platforms, recognizing the significance of accuracy in journalistic writing, and the role of technology in mass media language, students will be better prepared to communicate effectively and ethically through various media platforms.

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