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THE INFLUENCE OF LANGUAGE ON THE PERCEPTION OF SAFETY

Language plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion, influencing discourse, and framing perceptions, particularly during periods of war and crisis. Political rhetoric, media reporting, and citizen discourse on social media can profoundly impact how events are understood and interpreted. This thesis examines how linguistic choices, framing, and narratives have determined perceptions of safety during the Ukraine war and ways to enhance public trust and contribute to a secure environment amid armed conflicts.

Perception is an attempt to comprehend the world around us. It is fundamentally subjective and is never a precise account of the circumstance or the event. Thus, there can be significant differences between one's perception and actual reality [2].

Political rhetoric often emphasizes themes of national security, military readiness, and the protection of citizens, constructing a narrative of safety through strength and vigilance. Media coverage tends to highlight the risks faced by civilians, framing safety in terms of humanitarian concerns and the need for diplomatic solutions. Meanwhile, public discourse on social media reveals diverse perspectives, ranging from feelings of insecurity and fear to resilience and solidarity.

A frame can impact a person by highlighting elements of reality while downplaying others — it serves a purpose. Research on political news framing typically looks at topics that may appear insignificant and distant, to the public resulting in a range of beliefs that are accessible and available [3]. Therefore, political news framing should not only operate based on significance but introduce fresh perspectives to individuals that differ from the objective truth.

Within Ukraine, the language used by government officials and public figures has a significant impact on whether social cohesiveness and public trust are strengthened or weakened. Clear, transparent, and empathetic communication that resonates with the public's concerns and values can bolster trust and encourage cooperation with policies and initiatives aimed at protecting civilians. However, contentious speech that feeds preconceptions inflames anxieties, or propagates false information can disrupt confidence, increase hostilities, and split society apart.

One may anticipate that the media would be important in shaping the public's perception of foreign nations, given how much reliance citizens have on the mass media for global news. To influence how the general public views another country, it is necessary to present a coherent narrative that clarifies the issues involved and the foreign nation's position on them [1]. Although this may have unfavorable effects on foreign countries, it also raises the possibility that some narratives that link a country's popular stance could be an effective instrument in public diplomacy [4].

Global public views of safety can be influenced by narratives of humanitarian crises, threats to world peace, or the possibility of broader conflict that might shape perceptions of how the war will affect international security on a global scale. Linguistic choices that evoke empathy, solidarity, or shared concerns about safety can foster a sense of global interconnectedness and a collective responsibility to address the crisis.

Given the influential role of language, it is crucial to develop and promote linguistic strategies and best practices that can contribute to a more secure environment during armed conflicts.

Government and military officials should prioritize clear, honest, and empathetic communication that resonates with the public emphasizing shared goals, resilience, and unity. Avoiding overly technical jargon and divisive language, acknowledging uncertainties, and expressing genuine care for civilian safety can enhance trust and inspire collaboration.

Media outlets should endeavor for a balanced and responsible framing of war-related events

promoting fact-based discourse, media literacy, and critical thinking skills among the public. Countering misinformation, teaching discernment in evaluating information sources, and encouraging rational discussions can ensure more balanced perceptions of safety.

In conclusion, this thesis has examined how language and narratives influence public perceptions of safety during armed conflicts. A key finding is that political rhetoric, media framing, and social media discourse can profoundly shape how events are understood, evoking diverse emotional responses ranging from fear and insecurity to resilience and solidarity. Ultimately, the language used by political and public figures has significant power to either unite society or divide it amidst the uncertainties of war. Therefore, promoting transparent, compassionate, and responsible linguistic choices and narratives is crucial to secure the public environment.

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МІЖНАРОДНА ТА НАЦІОНАЛЬНА БЕЗПЕКА: ЛІНГВІСТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ

З початком російського вторгнення в Україну змінилося ставлення до міжнародної та національної безпеки, оскільки десятирічна війна ведеться насамперед з метою зміни мовних, правових, культурних і політичних чинників життя суспільства і держави.

Національна безпека України – це захищеність суверенітету, територіальної цілісності, демократичного конституційного ладу та інших національних інтересів України від реальних та потенційних загроз [1]. Останнім часом, мабуть, усі громадяни України усвідомили, що поняття «національна безпека» – це не офіційний атрибут держави, а реальність, яка має гарантувати безконфліктне існування держави [2, с. 11]. Слід зазначити, що в російськомовному мовленні місцевих постійно зустрічаються доповнення до речень, частота вживання яких перевищує кількість слів, що репрезентують основний зміст. Відомі одиниці на кшталт «наприклад», «образно кажучи», «у принципі», «скажімо так», «ось», «і так далі», «можна сказати» – це так звані мовленнєві маркери, що не мають достатньої літературності і не претендують на літературність (публічність). Тому чути таку мову від керівництва Миколаївської та Херсонських оюластей, з одного боку, неприємно, а з іншого – зрозуміло. [2, с. 134].