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Hate Speech in Ukrainian Media Discourse

Abstract

The article deals with the problem of hate speech in the legal, cognitive, and linguistic fields and presents an analysis of the different views and interpretations of this problem in academia. The terms “hate speech” and “hostile language” are semantically delimited in the Ukrainian language as non-identical. Specific examples are given of the use of hate speech from the Ukrainian press and online media. The article proposes criteria for value judgments which do not represent hate speech. Statements about national and racial characteristics and identity are considered. The article proposes a specific algorithm for the implementation of linguistic expertise regarding the detection of hate speech.

Keywords: hate speech; identity; value judgment; algorithm of linguistic analysis of hate speech; nationality

1 Introduction

The relevance of the study is caused by the complex socio-political realities of modern Ukraine, which have given rise to new types of discourse and a number of neologisms which are necessary in order to understand and evaluate processes and events. On the other hand, interest in hate speech has been inspired by the development of linguistic, social, gender and other academic studies which focus on human rights their and place in modern society. In the context of hybrid warfare, rethinking the historical matrix and finding a new political path for Ukraine, detecting, counteracting and preventing hate speech is becoming one of the cornerstones of Ukrainian humanities in general and journalism in particular. The symbiosis of linguistics and social communications should produce a clear definition of the concept of hate speech, and formulate clear definition criteria and prevention algorithms. The social-human sciences should not only study a person in all his/her manifestations, but also provide mechanisms for the humanitarian protection of the individual. The legislative documents which regulate language usage in Ukraine are the following: The Constitution of Ukraine, the Declaration of Ukrainian Nationality, the Principles of State Language Policy Bill (which has now been revoked, leading to the return of the Soviet-era Languages in the Ukrainian SSR law), the Languages in Ukraine Bill, the Prohibition of Narrowing the Spheres of the Use of Regional Languages and the Languages of National Minorities of Ukraine Bill, and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) (Demska, 2019).

This article aims to identify the key criteria for the manifestation of hate speech in different types of media discourse. The specific objectives are to understand the term “hate speech”, to outline the scope and main features of this concept; and to offer algorithms for preventing and counteracting this phenomenon, both in journalistic texts and online social media.

1.1 The Current State of Research

According to the Centre for Democracy and the Rule of Law (*Mova vorozhnechi*, 2017), hate speech is an evaluative term because there is no generally accepted concept in international human rights law. The criteria for defining hate speech are also quite contradictory due to the fact that international and regional documents provide different standards. Furthermore, the Commission on Journalistic Ethics has been updated and other organizations seeking to regulate the media have emerged due to numerous cases in which unacceptable content has been broadcast. Thus, at the end of 2015 five media NGOs (the Centre for Democracy and the Rule of Law, the Institute of Mass Information, Internews-Ukraine, Detector Media, and the Sospilnist Foundation) established the Independent Media Council, a public monitoring and advisory body, founded to establish standards of excellence in journalism and for the objective consideration of controversial issues and situations that arise in the Ukrainian media (*Zbirnyk vysnovkiv*, 2018).

1.2 Methodological Research Approaches

To date, Ukrainian legislation has defined the following hate speech criteria prescribed in the Information Law as a component of “inadmissibility of abuse of the right to information”:

- calls for the overthrow of the constitutional order, violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine;
- propaganda of war, violence, or cruelty;
- calls to incite interethnic, racial and religious hatred;
- calls to commit terrorist acts (*Zakon Ukraïny “Pro informatsïiu”*, 1992, Art. 28).

The Printed Mass Media (Press) Law in Ukraine added another item, “calls to propagate communist and / or National Socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regimes and their symbols” (*Zakon Ukraïny “Pro drukovani zasoby”*, 1993, Art. 3).

All citizens of Ukraine are subject to the Constitution, which in Articles 21 and 24 provides the principle of equality of all people in their dignity and rights, as well as the principle of prohibition of the establishment of privileges or restrictions on the grounds of ethnic origin and place of residence.

For some, hate speech legislation means not only acknowledging bad taste in word choices, but also the fact that it is aggressive towards human identity. “Although dignity is a concept that is difficult to define, it must be at the heart of what it means to be human. It is the human right to equal treatment in accordance with the law and the right not to be considered inferior because of an idea based on its identity. However, some argue that it is less clear that this justifies the use of criminal rather than civil law” (Gillespie, 2014, p. 496).

Jurisprudence does not answer all the questions regarding the definition of hate speech. We believe that discourse analysis, content analysis, lexical-semantic analysis, sociolinguistic methods, cognitive analysis (concept analysis), etc. are the tools by which researchers can systematize the answers to the question. It is possible to create an optimal Ukrainian-language definition and translation of the concept of hate speech with the help of lexicographic analysis.

Anthropological and sociological approaches to solving the problem will make it possible to apply not just a semantic evaluation of statements, but also to provide spiritual and informational proof for a particular statement.

2 Characteristics of the Term “Hate Speech”

The term “hate speech” is connected with the term “xenophobic”. Jens Rydgren writes: “I argue that xenophobic and racist beliefs maybe seen as rational from a subject’s point of view because of two basic types of erroneous inferences: one in which people draw dubious or false conclusions

about individuals based on their knowledge about the social group and/or category to which the individual belongs (i.e. stereotyping) and one in which people draw dubious or false conclusions about social groups and categories from observation of individual instances (i.e. inductive strategies and heuristics)” (Rydgren, 2004, p. 124).

Researchers are clarifying the scope of the concept of hate speech. O. Gorbacheva notes that the concept is used to denote any public “language action, directly or indirectly based on xenophobia, which, in turn, modifies or distorts social relations, is the cause of aggression, violence, enmity and conflict on the basis of a national, religious, social or other distinction, or is a powerful destructive and destabilizing factor in the development of the modern world community” (*Pravyi ekstremizm*, 2008, p. 36).

The Institute of Mass Media also adds a visual element to the verbal component and defines hate speech as “words, photos or images that create or deepen hostility between groups in society or individuals” (*Zakon Ukraïny “Pro informatsiiu”*, 1992, Art. 28).

The broadest definition is given by the Sova Centre: Hate speech is an incorrect statement addressed to ethnic, religious or certain social groups as communities and to specific people as representatives of these communities (*Sova*, 2020).

It is important to note that all definitions directly or indirectly state that hate speech violates human rights. Toby Mendel, in his article “Hate Speech Rules Under International Law”, notes that the fight against hate speech is based on the principles of equality and freedom from discrimination as a fundamental human right (Mendel, 2010).

3 The Nature of Hostile Language: Stereotyping and Xenophobia

Stereotypes are based on a logical error, which perceives less difference between people in one group than between people in different groups. As R. Lavinsky points out, the colossal discourse of messages perceived by modern man increasingly contains “composed” texts, which are partly stereotypical. Stereotypes reflect not so much reality as the way of filtering, dismembering, structuring and interpreting the subjects and objects of communication (Lavins’kyi, 2010).

Y. Maslova notes that “stereotypes perform in language a generalizing function of organizing knowledge about their own and others, which leads to social categorization and the formation of structures that become landmarks for people in everyday life” (Maslova, 2014).

When discussing stereotypes, one cannot ignore such an important category as ethnic stereotypes. Ethnic stereotypes, in turn, are divided into auto-stereotypes (the representation of one’s own ethnic group) and hetero-stereotypes (the representation of other ethnic groups). Accordingly, in language auto-stereotypes have a linguistic expression in the self-naming of representatives of one group, and hetero stereotypes have a linguistic expression in the naming of representatives of other groups.

Yu. Garkavenko notes that, “as a rule, the auto-stereotype is characterized by positive modality and considerable detail. For hetero-stereotypes, on the contrary, typical is mostly negative expression, schematic thinking, bias, incompleteness, and inversion. However, it should be noted that the binary opposition ‘we and they’ is the basis of group stereotyping” (Harkavenko, 2019).

Therefore, national identity, expressed by the same token, can be perceived differently. It depends on both the context in which the word is used and who uses the word. For example, the word *khokhol* (an ethnic slur used by Russians to describe Ukrainians) which in the current political situation with Russia has a negative connotation, was perceived very negatively when used in the name of an ice cream.

The Slavitsa ice cream factory in Krasnoyarsk (Russia) produced the ice cream in a yellow-blue wrapper. Therefore, it was logical to predict that the metonymy that people use to describe the process of eating, such as “eat + the name of ice cream”, would sound like “to eat a *khokhol*”. Proof of this can be found in the article “‘Zik’, ‘Khokhol’ and ‘American’ got stuck: a new ice cream is launched in Russia – ‘Poor Jew’” (“*Khokhol’ i ‘Amerykanets’*”, 2018).

But *khokhol* is not the only “national” name of ice cream produced by the Slavitsa factory in Russia. There is also an ice cream called “Obamka” (little Obama) and one named “Poor Jew”. The head of the Jewish community of Naberezhnye Chelny, Leonid Steinberg, demanded a halt to production. In case of refusal to withdraw the range of ice creams, he promised to take legal action: “I asked my colleagues to bring me a sample of this ice cream. I will see it tomorrow and ask the manufacturer: ‘Did you come to Naberezhnye Chelny to break our tolerance?’” (“*Khokhol’ i ‘Amerykanets’*”, 2018) L. Steinberg also drew attention to the fact that the state flag of Israel was used on the ice cream label without the consent of the Israeli embassy.

The same story was covered by Ukraine’s *Obozrevatel* website. The word *khokhol* is given here as *kh*khly*: “Obama, *kh*khly*, and Jews: in Russia an ice cream scandal has broken out: published photos” (*Obama, kh*khly i ievrei*, 2018). Note that the words *kh*khly* and Jews are written without quotation marks, as in the previous version of the story.

The main task of a journalist is to deliver information as neutrally as possible. However, even information which may appear neutral at first glance ultimately shapes our worldview. The media plays a huge role in spreading stereotypes. Stereotypes cannot be viewed solely in a negative sense: they do not only cause the rejection of one social group by another, but they also advocate for the preservation of cultural values and traditions within a particular group.

Stereotyping assumes a person’s behaviour towards a “foreign” group in the following order: verbalization (humour, irony, sarcasm), avoidance, discrimination (exclusion from certain areas of society), acts of violence, and destruction of the group. Thus, the negative impact that the transmission of hate speech has on society can take the form of both the exacerbation of conflicts between individuals and the mass destruction of one social group by another. Regardless, all the negative consequences are directly related to human rights violations.

As long as stereotyping does not move from the category of “humour” to the category of “discrimination”, we can talk about the almost neutral influence of stereotypes on behaviour. For example, the stereotype that Germans are very punctual will not have a bad effect on people of other nationalities. Maybe they will be even more disciplined so as not to be late for a meeting involving Germans. However, the stereotype that Roma people are often thieves already presupposes at least cautious behaviour towards the representatives of this ethnic group. Furthermore, the constant replication of this stereotype can lead to outright discrimination and aggression.

Psychologists note that stereotypes are dangerous both in relation to one group, which is set against another, and in relation to one particular person. “Others”, “strangers”, “foreigners”, “they” are perceived as evil, dangerous, and hostile. People may perceive themselves as “wrong” because they belong to a certain group (ethnic, racial, cultural, age) and thus destroy themselves. “Brutality in human coexistence has been the rule for most of humanity’s history. And for such, it is only normal to see fearful reactions in the presence of strangers: the fear of the unknown is a cognitive reaction, caused by years of adaptation and evolution, that has allowed humans to survive to the hostility of their environment. Today, we call it xenophobia, morally valued as a negative term” (Rodil Schlesinger, 2021, p. 5).

As N. Varekh notes, “recently the term “phobia” has undergone certain transformations in scientific usage, lost its psychopathological specificity and is now used not only to denote pathological fears, but also a sharply negative attitude towards something or someone” (Varekh, 2013).

A clear example of this xenophobia is the cartoon scandal of 2005-2006, which provoked protests by Muslims around the world against the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands Posten*.

“Xenophobia can be understood through various definitions. However, considering the work *Psychopathology and Social Prejudice*, by Derek Hook and Gillian Eagle (2002), xenophobia can be defined as an attitude of disenchantment, hatred, and fear of what is different from oneself” (Rodil Schlesinger, 2021, p. 2). The concept of “xenophobia” is placed at the level of human thinking, whereas the concept of “hate speech” is at the level of language.

Hate speech can be interpreted as a verbal manifestation of xenophobia. Hate speech is often a manifestation of a certain kind of xenophobia — ageism, sexism, migrant-phobia and so on.

Xenophobia can take different forms of intolerance, depending on the specific group in question. Accordingly, at the linguistic level, we may observe abusive expressions, calls for discrimination, etc., which are interpreted as hate speech.

The use of hate speech breaks the ethical standards that journalists must adhere to in their professional activities. However, the use of hate speech has a much deeper and more serious hazard – it may lead to physical confrontation between different social groups.

4 Value Judgments and Hate Speech

A value judgment is a statement that does not contain facts and data, but provides a personal assessment and reveals the attitude of the speaker to the subject. Such judgments are often marked by irony, sarcasm, allegories, hyperbole and more. Value judgments are usually separated from slander and insult.

Linguistics considers evaluation in terms of pragma-stylistic orientations of evaluative expressions in texts, mainly artistic speech, in terms of types of verbalizations of evaluation, i.e., the lexical and grammatical means of its expression. Traditionally in linguistics, evaluation is viewed as a positive or negative qualification of a subject, and as a judgment of the speaker, which reveals his/her attitude to the object of speech. Most often, the subject of axiological studies is lexical and semantic material, and different types of meanings and connotations.

The problem of distinguishing between value judgments and slander and insults runs through the concept of identity.

As Volodymyr Kulyk notes, “an important element of the participant’s delineation of the context of a discursive event – and therefore one of the reasons to include it in a practice with a more or less established convention – is the perception of oneself and others as stable carriers of certain traits or orientations – biological, social, cultural, ideological – that determine the essence of these people and their place among others. Self-identification of a person, called in social science his identity, is formed in interaction with how others describe it» (Kulyk, 2010). In turn, identity is correlated with such sociolinguistic categories as social role and social portrait in such characteristics as age, gender, type of activity, position, religiosity (denomination), belonging to subcultures, etc. These social indicators help a person to determine the interlocutor by the coordinate system “we – they”.

In the context of the second wave of toponym change in Ukraine, the problem of human identity requires further study. Prof. Demska and Prof. Levchuk have started the research into this process. As the authors write: “The state authorities have declared a change of attitude from pro-Russian to pro-European” (Demska & Levchuk, 2020), yet political decisions regarding toponym changes face resistance among many of Ukrainian citizens. This is why explanatory work and a scientific basis are crucial in the current situation. The process of decommunization should be free from hate speech.

In addition to social statuses and roles, other important identifiers are the proximity of interlocutors’ idiolects, similarities or differences in the choice of speech units, methods of assessment, common vocabulary for speakers, intelligibility or incomprehensibility of implicit expressions, a clear sense of irony, and so on. A common speech code helps to build sympathy and understanding. It is determined by certain linguistic techniques and tactics.

Hostile language can be found most frequently in the headlines of articles, because the reader often does not read the main text but instead browses the headlines. As an example of hate speech, take the word *khokhol* (or *kh*khly*), which is used in the headline mentioned previously. Of course, by using such words electronic media will receive what they most desire – views and discussion, but no publication has the right to treat people of any nationality negatively. For example, “No way out without *kh*khlov*: the internet showed how the ‘authorities’ in the Crimea changed their minds because of the water in the Dnieper” (*Bez kh*khlov nikak*, 2017).

Hate speech may appear in quotes which are often included to the headline. However, this is not an excuse for the media to create content of this kind. For example: “What’s up with

*kh*khly*: Russian politician called the reason for Ukraine’s popularity on KremlinTV (“*Che tam u khokhl*v*”, 2017) “*Shut up! You are gypsies!...*” (Farion, 2017).

Hostile language includes cases when the authors of headlines emphasize the ethnicity of individuals. This is especially true of crime stories and it does not matter whether the nationality of the offender or the victim is emphasized. The headline “In Slovakia, a car hit a large group of Gypsy children” and the text itself contain an unjustified reference to the ethnicity of the victims. The Criminal Code of Ukraine does not allow for discrimination based on nationality or ethnicity, so an emphasis on ethnicity in a headline or story may be considered a manifestation of hate speech. For example, the headline of an article in *Tyachiv News*: “A 43-year-old Transcarpathian gypsy organized a begging network (VIDEO) in Chernivtsi.” The text of the article itself indicates that the individual’s nationality or ethnicity is not important in this case (*43-rychnyi zakarpats'kyi tsyhan*, 2018). Sometimes both the headline and the text of the article indicate a person’s nationality or ethnicity without any justification whatsoever: “In Uzhhorod, a drunken gypsy beat a passenger who remarked to him in a minibus (VIDEO).” [...] “During the movement of the minibus the gypsy, who was intoxicated, several times did not hold on to the handrail and leaned over the passenger standing nearby” (“*Pid chas rukhu ‘marshrutky’*”, 2017).

We also find headlines based on the contextual opposition of *Gypsies – Kyivans Gypsies – policemen*, etc. to be intolerable. For example:

- (1) *A physical clash between local gypsies and police took place in Velykyi Berezny* (“*U Velykomu Bereznomu*”, 2017);
- (2) *In broad daylight, five gypsies beat a policeman in the center of Velykyi Berezny: one policeman in hospital* (PHOTO, VIDEO) (*Sered biloho dnia*, 2017).
- (3) *Near Lviv, the police raided gypsies – the media* (*Pid L'vovom politsiia*, 2017).
- (4) *Residents of Ternopil region suffer from gypsies* (“*Meshkantsi Ternopil'shchyny*”, 2017).
- (5) *In the center of Lviv, a group of gypsies rob passers-by at public transport stops* (“*U tsentri L'vova na zupynkakh*”, 2018).
- (6) *15 gypsies were beaten by ordinary passers-by with sticks in the center of Kyiv* (VIDEO) (*15 tsyhan*, 2017).

The words that create the structure of contextual opposition have not only an incomparable semantic content (*residents of a certain city – nationality, occupation / profession – nationality*), but also different connotations. Note that the word “gypsies” is perceived negatively by society. Sometimes this token is put on a synonymous line with the word addicts. For example, *Ukrainian citizens are lenient with immigrants and people of other cultures. But not to drug addicts and gypsies* (*Hromadiansky Ukraïny*, 2017).

A striking example of interethnic relations, which are often exploited to emphasize the “inequality” of nations or ethnicities, is the relationship between Roma and Ukrainians. Thus, the creation of the public organization L.O.V.C.I (Eng. “Hunters”) in L’viv and coverage of its activities in the media represent an important moment in these interethnic relations, and, accordingly, the peaceful or hostile coexistence of Roma and Ukrainians.

In the article “Who are the L.O.V.C.I and against whom are they fighting?”, the founder of the organization Roksolana Lisovska distinguishes between gypsies (people who steal and violate public order) and Roma people (people who lead the same way of life as other people in L’viv): “We do not oppress *the Roma*, as some human rights activists say, and we do not persecute them. We fight crime in the city as a whole. I myself live in an area where Roma people live. They are absolutely integrated into society, respect the law, study and work. These are good people! The people we are looking for are *gypsies* who steal people’s wallets and smartphones in the centre of L’viv” (*Khto taki “L.O.V.TS.I”*, 2018). Despite the rather incorrect differentiation between representatives of one ethnicity which is used by Roksolana Lisovska, the article itself is written correctly and avoids using hate speech.

Reactions to L.O.V.C.I and their activities can be seen in the following headlines:

- (7) *In the centre of L'viv, gypsies threatened girls from L.O.V.C.I. with knives* (*U tsentri L'vova tsyhany*, 2018).
- (8) *The problem of xenophobia against gypsies (audio) was discussed in L'viv* (*U L'vovi obhovoriuvaly*, 2018).
- (9) *L'viv is a city where you will be robbed. [...] She has already been called a racist and accused of xenophobia, and the activities of a small group of ethnic crime fighters have been called a threat to L'viv's tolerant image. About gypsy crime in L'viv and methods of combating it in a conversation with the chairman and founder of the organization "LOVCI" Roksolana Lisovska* (*L'viv – tse misto*, 2018).

Contrary to statements condemning the entire Roma nation, not just the perpetrators of crime, articles began to appear in the media in which Roma people tried to talk about themselves and their way of life. They highlighted that, as with all nationalities and ethnic groups, there are completely different types of people among them: “Unveiling: how do young Roma live in Ukraine” (*Zniaty zavisu: yak zhyvut molodi romy v Ukrayini*, 2018); “We don't eat people”: Ukrainians are told about the life of Roma (*My liudei ne imo*, 2018).

The self-identification of Roma people can be traced on the example of such articles. This is very important, because the right to self-determination and self-title is the basis of the fight against hate speech.

In the article “Can Roma be called Gypsies in Ukraine?”, Olga Vesnyanka, a human rights activist, journalist, editor and news anchor for the Roma Internet radio station *Chiriklo*, says it all depends on the context or intonation. However, she advises using the words Roma or, to be sure, a Roma man / woman. “In Ukrainian official documents, this self-name – the Roma population – is used in the Roma strategy for the period up to 2020... The language has many dialects, such a self-name is present. It is worth mentioning even a greeting or an address: a *romale*” (*Chy mozhna*, 2018).

Lexemes such as *gypsy*, *khokhol* and others are possible only in the case of self-identification or in the context of an officially established name. For example:

- (10) “Pap-Jazz Fest annual jazz forums have been held in Uzhgorod for 20 years, giving impetus to the development of jazz art. The festival is organized by the Society of Musical Culture of Transcarpathian Gypsies ‘Lautari’” (*Ukrains'ki mista*, 2017).
- (11) “Representatives of the network had the opportunity to take part in study visits to Serbia and Slovakia to learn about the experience of local networks. Now among the partner organizations are: Transcarpathian Gypsy Association ‘Roma’, Transcarpathian Regional Association ‘Romani Chgib’...” (*V Ukraini rozvyvaiut' merezhu*, 2018).
- (12) “I'm a *khokhol*, and he's a Jew – a funny video greeting for Dmitry Gershenzon Singer and composer Anatoliy Hovoradlo congratulated his colleague Dmytro Gershenzon on his birthday with a humorous song (*“IA khokhol, a vin ievrei”*, 2018).

Intragroup naming is not hostile language, because it is the addressee who is important not the one who addresses. It is not what is said that offends, but the fact of who says it.

Hate speech on social media which contains sarcasm and which has gained popularity has the potential to become a meme. “An interesting recent trend, which is perhaps comparable to this non-hostile content, is that as ‘hate speech’ has entered popular lexicon, sites will go out of their way to state that they are not hate sites. They will also present content in a ‘positive’ rather than ‘negative’ way, i.e. not saying that there is anything bad with group [x] but instead saying that the site is ‘rebalancing the debate’ or ‘standing up for [y]’” (Gillespie, 2014, p. 501).

The issue of aggressive memes requires closer study. “The relevance of the study of memes is dictated, first and foremost, by their unique features: a modern meme (unlike memes that originated in the pre-internet era) has a particularly short ‘period of decomposition’ — it appears instantly, transforms within a few days (sometimes hours), and just as quickly loses its appeal. In contrast to modern European and American studies, in Ukraine the study of memes remains

sporadic. From a purely linguistic perspective, memes are rarely examined” (Pidkuimukha & Kiss, 2020).

5 The Linguistic Analysis of Statements

To carry out a linguistic analysis of a statement that does not contain a direct call for aggressive action, in terms of the presence / absence of hate speech, we propose the following analysis algorithm:

1. Define a word / phrase / sentence with a negative connotation (for words and phrases) or a negative meaning (for a sentence). Identify units of text that name or characterize people on national, gender, political, religious, social grounds etc.
2. Determine whether the analysed word / phrase / sentence refers to one person or to a group of people or one person who belongs to a certain group. In the case of an indication of a specific, individual person, the expression is not considered hate speech. Otherwise, we turn to step 3.
3. Ascertain if the defined unit is a phraseology, a constant inversion, a direct quote from a classic work of culture, a line from a song, a proverb or saying, etc. If this is the case with oral use, it is not hate speech. If not, go to step 4.
4. Identify whether the negative connotation is related to the self-name of people of a certain group or to how the representatives of this group are identified by others. If it is self-proclaimed, it is most likely not hate speech. However, in the media women’s anti-feminist statements are sometimes perceived by members of the same sex as misogyny. As this example shows, belonging to one social group (in this case the female gender) in some cases cannot justify the use of the self-name, only when the self-name refers to a specific speaker and is not a generalization of the social group to which he or she belongs.
5. Consider the context in which the analysed unit is used. Determine whether the use of the marked feature is justified. In other words, determine if the removal of this word, phrase or sentence from the text will lead to partial or complete loss of meaning. For comparison, here are two headlines:
 - “Five Caucasians inflicted severe injuries on a pensioner in Dnipro.”
 - “Interethnic clashes have begun in the Dnipro: Dagestanis against Georgians.”

In the first case the nationality of the criminals is superfluous, as it in no way affects the severity of the crime or punishment. It only serves to incite ethnic hatred. In the second case, the indications of nationalities specify the general problem, without putting them into opposition with other social groups.

6. Identify the existing hyponymic and hypernymic hierarchical relationships between the named objects, if any exist. For example, “younger brothers (about representatives of other nations)”, “women are also people”, “when a man speaks, a woman is silent (as an imperative)”, etc.
7. Apply content analysis in order to identify on which topics the material is presented in a particular media source.
8. Ascertain the political and ideological reputation of the media source: who is the owner? What values are broadcast by a particular publication / TV channel / online publication?

6 Conclusion

The fact that humans tend to react with a negative response to groups of people with different social, cultural and ethical characteristics is biologically defined. The instinct for self-safety dictates certain behavioural patterns, which have been forming for as long as humans have existed as a social species.

With cultural development, social rules start prevailing over instincts. Fear of the unknown is now associated with aggression and hatred. Verbal expressions of xenophobic attitudes are met with ever increasing social disapproval.

Hate speech is becoming an object of research in the social sciences and linguistics. The main criteria which define hate speech in discourse depend on the attitude of the targeted person to the addressed words.

Word categories defining nationality, sexual orientation, political views, religion, physical appearance etc. can be both judgmental and non-judgmental, depending on the intentions of the speaker. Another important criterion is self-determination. The evolution of lexical meaning and the latest connotations must be considered.

Summarizing the above, it can be concluded that the problem of hate speech in the age of digitalization, in which Internet users have the possibility to transmit their own opinions to the general public, requires further linguistic processing.

Further studies of the speech markers of hate speech are promising in terms of formulating a specific and effective algorithm for analysing a text message in order to detect and prevent hate speech.

Another area of linguistic research may lie in the study of humour. Depending on the speaker's intentions, a sentence which contains markers of hate speech could be seen as either humour or hate speech. New ethical norms raise many questions about the protection of human dignity, self-identification, and moral security. Linguistic tools can be effective in the fight against xenophobia.

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The publication was financed at the authors' expense.

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Both the authors participated equally in preparing conception and academic editing of this article.

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Publisher: Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

Publishing history: Received 2021-08-21; Accepted 2022-01-13; Published 2022-12-28.