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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HEADLINE AND LEAD FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF MEDIA ARTICLES

Abstract

The research examines the role of headlines and leads in the interpretation of articles, along with the linguistic means they use and their purpose. It aims to draw conclusions on whether these headlines and leads present the news accurately and what effect they have on the reader. The paper analyzes headlines about three events – the start of the Covid19 epidemic in Serbia, the anti-Serb graffiti in Zagreb, and the protests against the new Montenegrin Law on Religious Freedom – considering how online media have changed the way of reporting as opposed to print media.

Key words: the media, lead, headline, online portal, media objectivity, information, clickbait

INTRODUCTION

Mass media have a major influence on the general public and a significant impact on the general public's opinion, due to their public nature and availability to large numbers of people all around the globe. As McQuail claims "mass media are channels that carry mass

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communication and almost all research into the latter is based on the assumption that the media have significant effects on the affairs of people" (1994: 327). Media language, or more precisely, newspaper language, may be said to be a discourse on its own, as it has features and characteristics that separate it from other types of discourse. According to traditional beliefs, media reporting should always be objective, with no evaluations or insinuations made by reporters that could influence the reader's attitudes. However, the existence of media objectivity has been called into question.

Sociologist Stuart Hall argues that the cultural leadership and hegemony are exercised mainly through media (1982). He claims that the media are involved in the politics of signification, in which they produce images that give particular events particular meanings. He adds that the media do not simply mirror reality, but rather re-present it, or re-create it. Hall also suggests that the media have the power to signify events in a particular way, which points to the possible multiple versions of reality, created by the choices that article authors make. Social, cultural, economic and political factors determine the way in which the world will be presented in the media. Fairclough claims that ideological representations are generally implicit rather than explicit, since ideology is most effective when its workings are least visible (1989: 85).

Van Dijk (1993) lists some of the discursive structures that may contribute to the manipulation of beliefs:

- headlines and leads of news reports express semantic macrostructures defined by journalists and thus may underline the preferred macrostructures of mental models (e.g. a demonstration may be presented as an act of violence or the democratic right of the demonstrators);
- implications and presuppositions serve to assert information that may or may not be true in a subtle way;
- passive structures and nominalizations may be used to hide or downplay certain events;
- the lexical expression may influence opinions and knowledge in the mental models of the recipients;

- metaphors are a powerful tool to make abstract mental modes more concrete (e.g. the abstract notion of *immigration* becomes more real in the metaphor *waves of immigrants*, which creates the image of drowning in immigrants in the recipients' minds, thus creating a fear of them).

This research focuses on the analisys of articles published on various online portals in Serbia and it aims to gain perspective into how adequately the headlines and leads actually present the news piece, to see if they promote certain ideologies or contain emotionally charged language (and if yes, why), as well as to determine the means used to attract the audience and their differences depending on the character of the media. The headlines and leads refer to three different events that happened in Serbia over the course of three weeks, in the spring of 2020.

It is important to note that the goal of this research is to focus on the analysis of the headlines and leads and their possible effects on the readers' interpretations of the texts, and not to provide any type of judgement about the sources and/or events mentioned.

Newspaper article characteristics

According to James G. Stovall (2004), all journalistic writing should share four characteristics:
1. accuracy − all writers, not just journalists, are expected to present their information accurately;
2. completeness − refers to presenting the information in a context, in a clear and coherent way, while providing all the necessary answers that the audience needs for processing and understanding the information;
3. precision − refers to using accurate grammar structures and appropriate words;
4. efficiency − all journalists should use the fewest words to present the information clearly and truthfully.

Each newspaper article consists of various parts, but the aforementioned characteristics should be present in all of them in order to achieve objectivity. Van Dijk (1988b) provides a model of a *news schema*, according to which each news story has several constituent parts that can be categorized into different schematic categories.

According to this model, each news report consists of a *summary* and a *news story*. The headline and the lead make up the summary of the news story, i.e., they present the main events. The lead refers to the introductory sentences or introductory paragraph of an article, which serve to introduce its topic or purpose and attract the reader's attention. The news story encompasses the details of the situation (main events, its consequences, but also the background of the story – previous events, circumstances, history) and the comments (verbal reactions of other people or comments of the authors themselves). Van Dijk states that some of these schematic categories are mandatory, some are optional, and some of the categories are recursive, e.g., when an article is about several events, each with their own background and consequences (1986). The headline and the lead together give an overview of the text and express its semantic macrostructure (Van Dijk, 1988b: 53). The headline is obligatory and always comes before the lead, while the lead is common, but not always present. These categories appear in the text according to the value of the information they are providing, meaning thatevery newspaper article should progress from the most relevant pieces of information to the least important ones. For example, the headline always comes first and it is the first thing the readers notice. Only if the headline catches their attention, will they proceed with reading the rest of the article.

G. J. Digirolamo and D. L. Hintzman conducted an experiment during which they recorded people's reaction to an object stimulus that was presented to them five times, but either the first or the last picture was a mirror reverse. Upon seeing both photos side by side, most of the subjects claimed they only saw one of them – the one they had seen first, regardless of the remaining four, proving that the first impression can have a lasting effect (Digirolamo & Hintzman, 1997).

This suggests that headlines are important in that sense as well, since they are usually the first piece of information that people receive, which can a priori influence their perception of what can be expected in the article itself. What ensues from this is that the headline and the lead play a major role in news article interpretation.

Conventionally, the headline and the lead serve to summarize the essence of the text. As Bell puts it "the headline is an abstract of the abstract. The lead pares the story back to its essential point, and the headline abstracts the lead itself" (1991: 150). Being shorter of the two, the headline only contains the core of the story, while the lead conveys more details about the event. Bell states that "the lead focuses the story in a particular direction. It forms the lens through which the remainder of the story is viewed. This function is even more obvious for the headline" (1991: 152). This means that just by reading the headline and the lead the reader gets an idea on the article content and possibly forms a wrong opinion if the headline and the lead are biased (e.g., when they express a secondary topic of the article), especially since not all the readers will continue reading the text after having read the headline and the lead. Also, since the headline is the summary of a summary of a text, we must conclude that it is partly a reflection of the author's perspective, since there can be many different headlines for every article, so the headline should not be equated with the main topic of the text (Brown & Yule, 1983: 73).

Furthermore, traditionally, every piece of news should provide answers to the following questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Van Dijk refers to the works of Garst and Bernstein, who claim that according to the normative rules of news writing, the lead must contain answers to all these questions. (Garst & Bernstein, 1982 in Van Dijk, 1986). However, this is not an explicit rule, as leads do not express all the information about participants, actions or events, locations, or other properties of news events, but rather the information about main actors, main event, main location, i.e., the macropropositions of the text (Van Dijk, 1986).

As all the articles analyzed in this research were taken from online portals due to practical reasons, we must not forget to mention *clickbait* headlines. Clickbait headlines are links on the Internet which aim to get as many people as possible to click on them and visit the website. Various means are used in clickbait links, such as exaggeration, leaving out the vital part of information in the title, using more sensationalist language in order to grab someone's attention, etc. It can be argued that *clickbaiting* has gained momentum in journalistic reporting for different reasons, including different business models that depend on the number of page visitors for revenue. To put it simply, clickbait headlines are created with the sole purpose of earning page views on a website and that goal is often achieved through the use of language that is more emotional than informational, often misleading, and meant to spark curiosity, while non-clickbait headlines present the main idea of the article.

In an interview for BBC, Peter Preston, the former editor of *The Guardian*, claimed that the journalists should find a way to get the maximum level of interest, as they are the ones who should be serving their readers. He also added that there is a danger of *dumbing down* of content on news websites, as "the criterion for including the story on the website is determined by the number of clicks", which poses a danger and, according to Preston, leads to focusing on less important news (2015). In the same interview, Damian Radcliffe, honorary research fellow at Cardiff University's School of Journalism, claimed that "headline writing is an art" because it is something that "draws people in" (2015).

ANALYSIS

The articles were taken from the most popular web portals in Serbia −*N1, Nova, Danas, RTS, Prva, B92, Blic, Alo, Kurir, Telegraf*. Apart from their popularity, one of the criteria for choosing the following sources is their difference in character, i.e., their informativeness. For instance, *RTS* is the portal of the national television of the Republic of Serbia, while *Alo, Kurir*, and *Telegraf* are tabloids, or the so-called

yellow press. The articles were accessed via search engine *naslovi.net*, as this way it was possible to search for headlines by day, making it easier to compare how different media reported on the same event. The events analyzed happened between June 14 and June 28, 2020. The three events this paper will focus on are the appearance of Darija Kisić Tepavčević, the Deputy Director of the *Batut* Institute[1], on the RTS Morning Show in the midst of Covid-19 epidemic in Serbia, the anti-Serbian graffiti in Zagreb, and the new Montenegrin Law on Religious Freedom, which resulted in mass protests all around the country. For the sake of easier comparison, these three topics will be separated during the analysis, but it should be noted that they are not always mutually exclusive.

The analysis that follows will try to determine how different sources reported on the mentioned topics, what means (linguistic and others) they used to attract readers, as well as whether the title summarized the article objectively and accurately. The context of each of the events will be explained for easier understanding. The goal of this analysis is not to judge someone's reporting, but only to answer the aforementioned questions.

COVID-19 EPIDEMIC IN SERBIA

On March 15, 2020 Serbia declared a state of emergency due to the spread of the new virus Covid-19 and a huge increase in the number of cases on a daily basis. Various strict measures were introduced in order to stop the spread of the virus, many of which made it impossible for people to work or move freely. However, only 11 days prior, parliamentary elections were called and they were supposed to take place on June 21. There were doubts concerning whether the elections would take place, as it was impossible to predict how long the epidemic was going to last and whether the elections would pose a health threat for the citizens of Serbia. The state of emergency was lifted on May 6,

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[1] Institute of Public Health of Serbia *Dr Milan Jovanović Batut* is an expert institution which provides advice, support and guidance for the Serbian government and all public health departments in the country.

after it was declared that the situation was under control and that life could slowly return to normal. Most of the measures have been lifted, and it was decided that the parliamentary elections would be held when they were originally scheduled.

The Deputy Director of the *Batut* Institute, Dr. Darija Kisić Tepavčević, appeared on the RTS Morning Show on June 14, stating that the number of patients in Belgrade had increased in the past few days, due to people gathering in larger numbers. She adds that the situation is under control in the rest of the country, that the clinical picture of the newly infected patients is mild, and asks the citizens to act responsibly, since the holiday season has begun.

Web portals that reported on her appearance are *RTS, N1, Danas, Nova, Kurir*, and *Telegraf. RTS* had the following headline and lead:

> H: There are no newly infected people in most parts of the country – why most new cases are from the area of Belgrade.
>
> L: The coronavirus is not giving up, most of the newly infected are in Belgrade. Protection measures and responsible behavior are key, says Dr. Darija Kisić Tepavčević for RTS.

When comparing the article to the headline and lead, we can say that both the headline and the lead summarize the article adequately, providing key points and allowing the reader to find out more by reading the whole article. Still, the headline is a sort of clickbait, as there is a question *why most new cases are from the area of Belgrade.* We can assume that readers will get curious to find out and will therefore click on the link and open it to learn more.

N1 and *Danas* both copy the article, citing *RTS* as the source, but they change the headline:

> H: Kisić Tepavčević: There are no newly infected people in most parts of the country

These two online portals publish the same article, with the same headline, quoting Dr. Kisić Tepavčević. Despite the headline being a quote, if the readers only read the headline, they could be misled to think the situation has improved overall and that the risk is almost

gone, which indicates that the headline without the lead would not adequately convey the point of the article. It is worth mentioning that both *RTS* and *N1* posted the video of the guest appearance, which allowed the readers to check the accuracy of the articles.

Portal *Nova* published the same article, but a shorter version, with different headline and lead:

> H: Kisić: The majority of new cases in Belgrade due to celebrations
>
> L: The vast majority of newly infected with the coronavirus are from the area of Belgrade, and epidemiological research has shown that the infection was transmitted indoors, at celebrations and at larger gatherings, said the deputy director ofthe Batut Institute, Darija Kisić Tepavčević.

Portal *Nova* cited the second part of Dr. Kisić's statement, which reoriented the direction of seeing the news – while *N1* and *Danas* focused on a small number of the newly infected in Serbia, portal *Nova* highlighted the fact that a large number of people in Belgrade caught the virus at celebrations and large gatherings, and the extensive lead that follows the headline confirms this view.

Telegraf reported on this only briefly, focusing on the increase in the number of new cases in Belgrade as opposed to the rest of the country.

> H: Belgrade is the new hotbed of coronavirus: Everyone caught the virus in the same way, in almost the same place.
>
> L: Kisić Tepavčević pointed out that more than 75 percent of all newly confirmed cases do not have any symptoms of infection.

Telegraf also focuses on the growing numbers, calling Belgrade *the hotbed* of the virus. This is another clickbait, as we can assume the readers would want to find out what place it is where everyone in Belgrade got infected. This rather alarming title is accompanied by a lead with the completely opposite tone, which informs the readers that the clinical picture of 75% newly infected is mild or asymptomatic. However, even this title and lead adequately display the text, given the fact that it is quite abbreviated compared to those on other portals.

Kurir states the following:

> H: NO COVID CASES IN MOST OF SERBIA, BUT IT'S A WHOLE OTHER STORY IN BELGRADE! Dr. Daria found out why! HERE IS WHERE THE TRANSMISSION HAPPENS!

Kurir gives us the most dramatic perspective of all. The majority of the headline is in capital letters in order to catch the readers' attention and create the feeling that the text is about something shocking. The author contrasts the parts of Serbia that are virus-free and Belgrade which is *a whole other story*, insinuating that the situation in Belgrade is quite alarming. The readers are invited to read the text and find out why, as well as where the virus is most transmitted, which makes this title the most obvious clickbait of all, especially considering that the title itself does not provide us with any specific information.

All in all, none of the headlines deceive the reader in the true sense of the word. However, by seeing how the same event (which was even recorded on camera and available to everyone who wanted to watch it) was reported differently, and even more, how sometimes the headline changed while the text remained the same, we can conclude that there are factors outside the news that affect in what way it will be shared with an audience (journalist, portal policy, external factors, etc.). In this case, the focus of the headline shifts to different aspects of the news: 1) there are no new cases in most parts of Serbia; 2) the number of new cases is growing in Belgrade; 3) the largest number of new casesgot infected at celebrations. Most of the headlines are accompanied by leads that somewhat balance them out and mention the key details missing from the headline, but we must bear in mind that we don't always click on the news and get the chance to read the lead, so we simply acquire the information from the headline. Certain expressions and capital letters used in these headlines and leads underscore the gravity of the epidemic, and clickbait appears even on the portal of the Radio Television of Serbia.

Anti-Serbian graffiti in Zagreb

A graffiti of a hanged Serbian family appeared at the periphery of Zagreb on June 14, which was widely condemned by the public, both in Serbia and in Croatia. The graffiti appeared on a wall close to a kindergarten and it shows people hanging from the tree, along with the text *Serbian family tree*. This was the third provocation of this type in just a few days.

N1 reports about the new graffiti in a short article, including the photo of the graffiti, and states that the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia Andrej Plenković and the Minister of the Interior Davor Božinović condemned such provocations. The headline and the lead are the following:

> H: Another message of hatred, graffiti with hanged Serbs appeared in Zagreb.
>
> L: A new graffiti insulting Serbs has appeared in Zagreb. The graffiti is located in Sveta Klara in Zagreb, right next to the children's playground.

RTS reports on this event too, stating in the news piece what were the previous two provocations:

> H: Zagreb, the third threatening message sent to Serbs
>
> L: Another threatening message addressed to Serbs appeared in Zagreb. This is the third message of its kind in the last few days.

Blic publishes the same article, with a different headline and no lead:

> H: The third scandalous graffiti on the streets of Zagreb: Graffiti HANGED SERBIAN FAMILIES on the wall near the kindergarten (PHOTO)

Alo also changes the headline:

> H: NEW, DISGUSTING MESSAGE IN ZAGREB Ustashas have been taught since they were little, a sick burden of hatred towards Serbs (PHOTO)
>
> L: There is a tree from which people are hung, and next to which is written "Serbian family tree".

As the article itself is rather short on every portal, all headlines assert the main topic of the text. The clearest headlines are those found

in *N1* and *Blic*. However, the headline in *Blic* contains sensationalist elements – the word *PHOTO* in capital letters, which invites the readers to click on the link and see the graffiti. Furthermore, the adjective *scandalous* is used to describe the graffiti and the phrase *HANGED SERBIAN FAMILIES* is in capital letters too, which strengthens its tone and emphasizes the mentioned scandal.

The *RTS* headline does not inform the readers what happened. *The third threatening message addressed to Serbs* may relate to many things, not necessarily to the graffiti written. Even the lead does not provide this piece of information, so the readersare forced to read further if they want to know what kind of message it is. This is an obvious example of omitting key information from the headline, or an example of a clickbait.

The same can be said for the title of the *Alo* portal, with a few additions. First, in this case, the lead provides additional information about the event. Second, in the title we clearly see the author's subjectivity in the choice of the adjective used (*disgusting*) and the conclusion the author drew, which is that children in Croatia are taught to develop negative feelings and attitudes towards Serbs. The author bases this attitude on the fact that the graffiti appeared next to the children's playground.

According to the *Serbian Journalists' Code of Ethics*, there must be no spreading of any kind of stereotype in journalism, and personal prejudices of journalists must not be present in their work, and neither should any colloquial, derogatory and imprecise naming of a certain group. By reporting this way, the journalist encourages the readers to accept these views, thus promoting discrimination with their free interpretation and violating the *Code*. Every journalist must be aware of the danger of discrimination that can be spread by the media and should do everything in their power to avoid it. Discrimination of this type is mainly based on race, gender, age, sexual orientation, language, religion, political and other opinion, national or social origin[2].

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[2] Accessed at http://www.savetzastampu.rs/latinica/uploaded/Prirucnik%20U%20 JAVNOM%20INTERESU%20final.pdf

Protests in Montenegro

The new Montenegrin Law on Religious Freedom, which stipulates that the state becomes the owner of all religious buildings built before December 1918 (when Montenegro became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) – if religious communities do not prove ownership, caused numerous protests around Montenegro. This topic was widely covered by the media, so in this case we will not look at one event, but at those headlines and leads that are openly biased, as they may help us reach certain conclusions relevant for this research. The difference in the media quality is most obvious regarding this event. *Danas*, *N1*, *RTS* and *Nova* published texts with neutral headlines and leads. Every headline is informative and every leadserves its purpose to provide more details. Also, they summarize the articles adequately and the reader would not get the wrong idea by reading only the headline and the lead, instead of the whole text. These four portals published a significantly lower number of articles that deal with this topic than tabloids, where we can find the following headlines and leads:

> H: THE PEOPLE ARE RISING,LITANIES STARTED IN MONTENEGRO: Bijelo Polje, Berane, Pljevlja, Plužine stood up in defense of the sanctuary ...
>
> L: After three months and the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, liturgies for the defense of the sanctuary of the Serbian Orthodox Church continue in Montenegro today (*Alo*, June 6, 2020)

> H: CHAOS IN PODGORICA Milo's police forcesbroke into the Cathedral, the people are guarding Archpriest Mirčeta
>
> L: Drama in the capital of Montenegro (*Alo*, June 14, 2020)

> H: ALL AS ONE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE SANCTUARY A video from Podgorica showing the UNBREAKABLE STRENGTH OF THE PEOPLE AT LITANIES (*Blic*, June 15, 2020)

> H: THERE IS NO END TO REPRESSION! Father Željko stays behind bars, the reason is amazing! The people are chanting THROW AWAY THE BADGE AND SHAME ON YOU! VIDEO
>
> L: Danilovgrad parish priest Željko Ćalić was detained for 72 hours, and the people gathered in front of the Prosecutor's Office are indignant because of this repression. (*Kurir*, June 15, 2020)

H: MONTENEGRO RISES Litanies in Podgorica and Budva LED BY BISHOPS, Archpriest of Bijelo Polje summoned to the Security Center for questioning (*Blic*, June 21, 2020)

H: BRUTALITY IN MONTENEGRO Police shoot a man during the arrest in Budva, TEAR GAS ALL OVER PODGORICA (VIDEO) *(Blic*, June 24, 2020)

H: MILO'S SUBJECTS, HOW MUCH MORE? HARASSMENT OF A PRIEST AND HIS SON ON THE MONTENEGRIN BORDER!
L: KONSTANTIN DOJIĆ AND HIS UNDERAGE SON STAYED AT THE BORDER WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO RESOLVE HIS COMPLAINT. (*Alo*, June 26, 2020)

Each of the headlines is obviously a clickbait – we see capital letters, words *photo/video*, as well as emotionally charged vocabulary (*harassment, brutality, repression, chaos, unbreakable strength, all as one*, etc.). Also, the headlines create a negative attitude towards the president of Montenegro, Milo Đukanović, as he is implied to be responsible for the harassment of the Serbian people, while the Montenegrin police are called *Milo's subjects*. A number of the headlines somewhat supports the protests, presenting them as a sort of revolution (*Montenegro rises, all as one, defending the sanctuary*, etc.), highlighting patriotic feelings by implying the difference between *us*, the Serbian people, who defend what is sacred, and *them* who harass and repress. This subjectivity directly violates the *Serbian Journalists' Code of Ethic*.

What is interesting is that, although these headlines are explicitly biased, the leads that follow and the actual articles are more neutral. A possible reason for this is that the headline is simply exaggerated so that readers, shocked, could go to the portal and read the whole article, which, as we have already mentioned, is the goal of clickbait.

Conclusion

Almost all the means of manipulation mentioned by Van Dijk (1993) can be seen in the analyzed headlines – implications, presuppositions, the use of passive, nominalization, open attitude of the author, use of

emotionally-charged words, etc. There is an obvious difference in the reporting of tabloids and other media, especially when it comes to the second and third topics, which contain aspects of nationalism.

As far as coronavirus reporting is concerned, we have noticed that portals report differently on the same event, as well as that the author of the text determines what will be presented as the primary news topic. This is further evidenced by the fact that various portals published identical articles with different headlines. The appearance of clickbait headlines was noticed, as well as taking quotes for headlines. In general, none of these titles are highly manipulative or subjective.

The second group of articles resulted in the use of emotionally-charged vocabulary and more obvious subjectivity, especially in the tabloid media. The authors present their own biased conclusions and opinions without any relevant support. Such reporting can be extremely dangerous, as it may result in creating tensions and negative attitudes towards the citizens of the Republic of Croatia, because some media not only report on the event, but also express a very negative attitude towards a nation that readers can adopt.

When reporting on the protests in Montenegro, the authors use sensationalism. We can argue that these titles try to awaken the national consciousness of the Serbian people and to provoke certain emotions towards those who threaten their national identity. As in the previous case, the goal of these titles is not only to present the event, but to cause a feeling of shock and create attitudes in the readers. The subjectivity in these titles is distinctly explicit.

In general, non-tabloid media still follow the traditional way of reporting and creating headlines to some degree, although there is no doubt that each author has their own view, according to which they writethe headline. Without exception, tabloids use means to turn headlines into clickbait headlines. Subjectivity is more explicit in the tabloids, even though the topic itself is an important factor in determining its presence.

Going back to Van Dijk's and Bell's definitions of headlines and leads, we see that there is a difference between theory and practice. While the headlines vary significantly, the leads mostly provide us

with all the necessary information about the given news. Even in tabloids, where headlines are sensationalist and subjective, the lead often has a completely different tone. In some cases, the title and the lead are not related or represent two (sometimes opposite) points from the text, so the headline does not actually always prove to be the summary of the lead. Nevertheless, even if the lead is more objective than the headline, we must bear in mind that we cannot see the lead unless we click on the headline, so the headline remains the primary source of information, which can influence our views.

Still, before we confirm the author's intention to manipulate the readers, we must keep in mind that online media have significantly changed the way headlines and articles are created and that research on traditional print media cannot be fully applied to them. Portals report differently than the print media. The main difference is that the portal can publish more articles on a topic per day, that is, each new piece of information about the event can be (and mostly is) separate news, because the portal profits from the number of visitors. Also, portals have the opportunity to post a relevant video along with the article (e.g., the guest appearance of Dr. Kisić Tepavčević), which enables readers to verify the facts they are served. We can see this in the example of *N1* and *RTS* – even if their headlines were completely subjective, we could assume that their main intention was not to deceive their readers.

To sum up, after seeing the headlines, leads and all the articles, it is most probable that the biggest difference can be seen in the headlines, but the reason for that is most likely the wish to attract as many readers as possible, rather than to manipulate and deceive. It if were not the case, there would be significant differences in every element of the articles. This does not mean that there is no subjectivity, so we should still be careful, think critically and be well informed about a topic before we make our judgment and form an attitude. Studying the influence of the media is certainly a broad topic and it is necessary to constantly re-examine our conclusions and look at information from different perspectives, so that we have a chance

to achieve relative objectivity and not become passive recipients of the media content.

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ВАЖНОСТЬ ЗАГОЛОВКА И ЛИДА ДЛЯ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ СТАТЕЙ СМИ

Р е з ю м е

Средства массовой информации играют важную роль в формировании общественного мнения из-за их доступности и присутствия во всех аспектах жизни, а их объективность уже давно подвергается сомнению. Это исследование направлено на то, чтобы понять роль заголовков в интерпретации новостей, языковых средств, представленных в заголовках, и их цели. Цель исследования — сделать вывод, адекватно ли и точно ли представляют заголовки и лиды тексты, и какое влияние они оказывают на читателей. Тексты, являющиеся предметом анализа, поступают из разных СМИ и относятся к трём событиям первой половины 2020-ого года — началу Эпидемии коронавируса в Сербии, появлению антисербских граффити в Загребе и протестам против принятия нового Закона о свободе вероисповедания в Черногории. В исследовании также рассматривается появление кликбейтных заголовков, т. е. насколько онлайн-СМИ отличаются от печатных СМИ и насколько изменилась роль самых заголовков, от информирования читателя до привлечения как можно большего числа читателей. Анализ статей позволяет сделать вывод о том, что кликбейтные заголовки и субъективизм почти всегда присутствуют в таблоидах, реже в других СМИ, что говорит о важности развития медиаграмотности читателей.

Ключевые слова: СМИ, лид, заголовок, онлайн-портал, объективность СМИ, информация, кликбейт