

AGGRESSION IN ONLINE COMMUNICATION

Social media has got to the point where it shapes our life and makes a great impact on it. This impact can be both positive and negative. The latter is especially noticeable when there is aggression in online communication. Offensive language serves many purposes in everyday discourse. The paper analyses the language of aggression in social media; it also reveals the effects of aggressive language on society. The results of the study show that speech aggression manifests itself in different ways: vulgar language, such as curse words, taboos, colloquialisms, nicknaming, etc.

Key words: *social media, aggressive language, cyberbullying, linguistic means, vulgar language*

A few years ago social media was not that important yet, whereas nowadays we can get any kind of information from social networking services: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. However, most of this information we get can have a negative influence on users, because aggression has now become one of the main features of social media.

Violence and aggression manifested in media are the most vital issues which modern society faces. The modern space of everyday communication is characterized by a bright new feature, namely, its spread to the virtual world. One of the biggest things that people of online communities tend to overlook is the fact that words do hurt; saying things that are hurtful online can do much more harm. Similar to traditional forms of bullying, cyberbullying can be understood in terms of the three fundamental criteria: the intention of harm, repetition, and power imbalance between the victim and the bully.

Cyberbullying manifests itself in different ways, such as harassment, doxing, reputation attacks. Using different devices such as computers, cell phones, iPads, iPods, etc. people harm others, insult, curse, and sometimes even spread fear and terror online.

It is worth mentioning that anonymity is an important factor in launching hate campaigns against other users. Nowadays social media enables people to get in touch with each other irrespective of their location, ethnic origin, gender, nationality. This and many other factors make cyberbullying a great social problem, which needs to be researched and to be prevented.

Some common methods of cyberbullying are:

- Harassment – according to Legal Dictionary harassment (harris-meant or huh-rass-meant) is the act of systematic and/or continued unwanted and annoying actions of one party or a group, including threats and demands /<https://tinyurl.com/y9l4pb9h/>. When someone is harassed online he/she often gets abusive or threatening messages.

- Doxing is when users can find their personal data, such as, for example, home address, cell-phone number posted on social networks or public forums without that person's permission to do so.

- Revenge porn is when sexually explicit or compromising images of a person have been distributed onto social media or shared on revenge porn specific websites without their permission to do so.

- Swatting is the act of contacting emergency services, such as the police, with a report of an emergency so that they respond in large numbers to a certain location, often done as a prank. The name refers to SWAT ("Special Weapons and Tactics") teams, specialized police units that respond to especially dangerous situations /<https://tinyurl.com/y7aqx1w/>.

- Corporate attacks – In the corporate world, attacks can be used to send masses of information to a website in order to take the website down and make it non-functional.

- Account hacking – Cyberbullies can hack into a victim's social media accounts and post abusive or damaging messages. This can be particularly damaging for celebrities and public figures.

- False profiles – Fake social media accounts can be set up with the intention of damaging a person or brand's reputation.

- Slut-shaming – Slut-shaming is when someone is called out and labelled as a "slut" for something that they have done previously or even just how they dress. This kind of cyberbullying often occurs when someone has been sexting another person and their images or conversations become public. It is seen more commonly within young people and teenagers but anyone can fall victim to being slut-shamed /<https://tinyurl.com/ybu8zjqg>; Chadwick, 2014; Harasymiw, 2012/.

According to N. Willard cyberbullying can also have the following forms:

- Flaming – Sending angry, rude, vulgar messages directed at a person or persons privately or to an online group.

- Denigration (put-downs) – Sending or posting harmful, untrue, or cruel statements about a person to other people.

- Masquerade – Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material that makes that person look bad or places that person in potential danger.

- Outing and trickery – Sending or posting material about a person that contains sensitive, private, or embarrassing information, including forwarding private messages or images. Engaging in tricks to solicit embarrassing information that is then made public.

- Exclusion – Actions that specifically and intentionally exclude a person from an online group /Willard, 2007: 5-11/.

The analysis of different articles and books on cyberbullying enables us to believe that there are variations in the terms used to describe different activities. Additionally, some methods mentioned above may overlap or be interrelated. No matter how these methods of cyberbullying are called, they are frequently used by social media users to harass and harm in a deliberate, repetitive, and hostile manner. And the main tool used in this case is aggressive, violent, and impolite language. Verbal aggression is a purposeful, motivated, conflict speech behaviour based upon the negative emotional influence on the addressee. This type of communication differs from oral communication with the following parameters:

- 1) situational unlimited number of participants;
- 2) anonymous character of communications;
- 3) the possibility to leave the communicative space or enter it at any moment.

Peculiarities of these forms of speech aggression are determined by the fact that the main aim of the aggressive user is to destabilize the communicative process. For this purpose all forms of the Internet language are used by the perpetrator.

David Crystal claims that the Internet language does not refer to one particular language. In his book "Language and the Internet" /2006/ he clearly named and listed five Internet situations – electronic mail or e-mail, synchronous and asynchronous chat groups, virtual worlds and the World Wide Web. However, the Internet language has all grammatical, lexical, graphical, discourse features of the English language. It also has phonetic (through the use of Internet communication which includes sound and video, such as online video chat, one can notice different vocal norms (voice quality, vocal register, etc.) and phonological features such as the distinctive use of consonants, intonation, stress, pronunciation, etc.

As verbal or linguistic aggression is a form of verbal communication aimed at insulting or intentionally causing harm to a person, group of people, organization, or society, many vulgar, taboo words are used as well as colloquialisms in social media discourse. However, even words having positive or neutral connotations can become hurtful and offensive when used as part of a certain expression. For instance, the word nice, which is semantically associated with positive connotations, can be negated in order to hurt one's feelings – You

are not a nice person, while the term spell, which is semantically associated with neutral connotations, can be used to target one's mental ability: You can't even spell!

Aggressive communication can be particularly damaging to celebrities and public figures. On the one hand, celebrities are now hooked on various social media sites that help them be connected and updated. On the other hand, they are among the common victims of cyberbullying.

These famous people are just regular human beings with feelings and they cannot bear humiliation. Actress Maja Salvador discovered there were several other profile accounts with her name. Actress Claudine Barretto and Angel Locsin were victimized in social media and they had to quit it to avoid the cruelty of strangers.

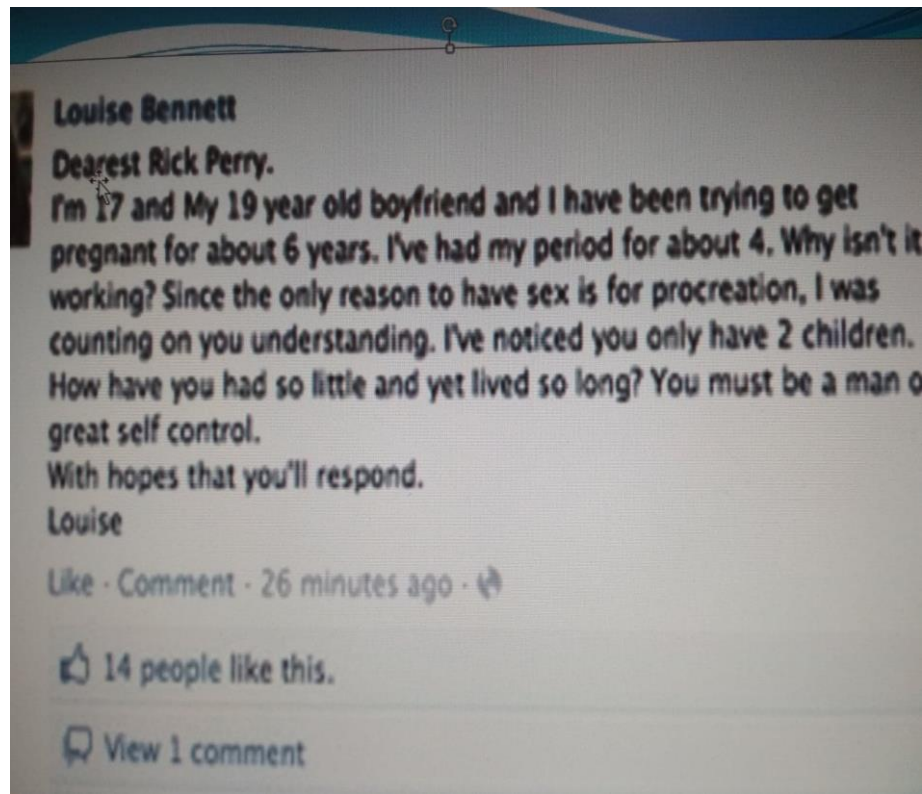
Justin Bieber admits that he is constantly experiencing all types of bullying. Recently he has found his photo on the cover of "Men Health" magazine. The article opens with words that Justin is only famous because he has managed to steal attention from girls.

Selena is a famous teen actress/singer. She admits that she has been bullied since childhood. Things got only worse when she started dating an icon for teenage girls – Justin Bieber. Selena was harassed in social media by girls who were screaming with hate and jealousy towards her. The latest message she received on Twitter was from a girl who said: "I hate you, I hope you and your family have cancer and die".

Several years ago singer Alla Levonyan reported that she was being harassed by a woman who claimed to kill her. Other Armenian artists and singers are often harassed in social media for supporting the former president Robert Kocharyan. It is clear that the language used in comments is vulgar, full of swear words.

As we see the peculiarities of speech aggression are determined by the fact that the main aim of the addressant is to destabilize the communicative process and bring to a communicative conflict.

Let us bring the example of James Richard "Rick" Perry, the current United States Secretary of Energy, serving in the Cabinet of Donald Trump. From December 2000 to 2015 he was the 47th Governor of Texas. In this period Texas cut off Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood clinics on the grounds that the state should not help to fund an organization that is involved in abortion. Many women became furious about it and started heated debates in social media. J.R. Perry got messages from these women who wrote about their sexual habits, their sexual health, and even Perry's contraceptive use to protest a recent Texas decision on Planned Parenthood funding.



Aggressive language has become more prevalent in various contexts, such as in the political arena. People with low aggressive personality scores were unaffected by language differences, but aggressive people are already more likely to support political violence, and violent language makes them more so. There are many words and phrases that politicians use to get away with racism and sexism, or it can be said that they use rude language or coded language to get rid of racism and sexism.

Our survey revealed that lots of aggressive words and expressions are used by Donald Trump in Twitter, such as naming human beings “animals” or “predator”, as well as using the word “aliens” instead of “immigrants”, using such expressions as "Lock her up, the hell out of our country", “fucking journalists” and so on /USA TODAY analysis, <https://bit.ly/3dkY6UF/>.

Nicknaming as well as using already existing nicknames is a common practice in social media. When a nickname is used instead of the real name of the president or a famous person, it evokes a set of associations about his/her character or actions, and reveals the attitude of the speaker. Very often these are nicknames that users coin and use with a negative communicative intent in order to express lack of appreciation or a negative attitude towards the person.

Politicians are often nicknamed in social media. President Trump, for example, has thousands of nicknames: from “The Donald” to “Mr. Brexit.” Vladimir Putin is considered to have even more nicknames than the president of the USA. Recently he has got the epithet “Botox” for his smooth skin.

North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un is called “Kim Fatty III”. The nickname “*Mutti*” or “Mommy” was made for Chancellor Angela Merkel as an insult by her opponents.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was nicknamed “Little Potato” by the Chinese. The reason is that “*Trudeau*” in Mandarin means “potato” /<https://tinyurl.com/y86cun98/>.

British politicians have amazing nicknames. The former Prime Minister David Cameron got the name *Dave* or *Call me Dave*, used since the publishing of his 2015 biography “Call Me Dave”. The most recent former Theresa May was called *Bloody Difficult Woman*; *Lino*, short for “Leader in name only”, used during the Brexit process in reference to May's difficulty in dealing with the problems.

The common nickname for Boris Johnson is BoJo the Clown, a pun on Bozo the Clown. The latter “The World's Most Famous Clown” – is a clown character created for children's entertainment, widely popular in the second half of the 20th century /Wikipedia <<https://tinyurl.com/nllmqn8>>/.

Armenian politicians also have nicknames: our former president Serj Sargsyan is famous for his nickname *Gort* (meaning “a frog”), the prime minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan is nicknamed as *Duxov* by supporters and *monkey, clown* by his opponents.

Thus, political nicknames have been used in different societies. However, in the last few centuries, nicknames have become almost standard issue, with almost every president, prime minister, and elected leader of any kind given some kind of nickname. Most of these insulting nicknames are used by social network users to humiliate, offend the leaders, thus expressing aggressive attitude towards them.

At one of his rallies, President Trump called Adam Schiff, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee “Little pencil neck Adam Schiff.” “Pencil neck” is a nickname used in 1950s in high schools against the wimps.

President Trump announced this nickname pausing for the crowd to laugh and shout insults and then added: “He’s got the smallest, thinnest neck I’ve ever seen.” Trump’s use of nicknames and abusive language while referring to his opponents is often embraced by his fans. Even T-shirts were made with Schiff’s photo and nickname during his campaign /<https://tinyurl.com/yyk779gl/>.

Little Pencil-Neck Adam Schiff

Everyone should buy a Pencil-Neck Adam Schiff shirt today!

BUY Now:

https://shop.donaldjtrump.com/products/official-mr-pencil-neck-limited-edition-tee?fbclid=IwARmTntcYirsceVoOpli67zll_sXuAJMPbGHcwggXZ3_ahkldKQugGKODM

TEXT "TRUMP" TO 88022

\$28

To sum up, today the level of aggressiveness in people's speech behaviour is extremely high. In recent years the genre of speech invective has been activated. Aggressive users are good at employing diverse language means: from expressive words and phrases within the limits of literary usage, to rudely vernacular and devalued vocabulary. All these features of modern oral and written speech are the result of negative processes taking place in extra-linguistic reality.

On the other hand, people are affected by the social behaviour and social norms of others, which leads us to the assumption that social media users can adopt an aggressive tone in their own comments when other users comment aggressively. Hence violation of linguistic, ethical, communicative norms by social media users gives the mass audience examples of abusive use of the language, forms speech aggression as a way of communication. This is the reason that governments should implement certain policies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour.

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Ա. ԳԱԼՍՅԱՆ – Ազրեսիան առցանց հաղորդակցման մեջ. – Ազրեսիվ լեզուն կամ խոսքի ազրեսիվությունը կարող է սահմանվել որպես հաղորդակցման ձև, որն օգտագործվում է անձին, մարդկանց մի խմբին կամ հասարակությանը դիտավորյալ վիրավորելու կամ սպառնալու համար: Սույն հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվել են ազրեսիայի դրսևորման լեզվական միջոցները սոցիալական ցանցերում: Հետազոտության արդյունքները վկայում են, որ կիբերհարձակման նպատակով հիմնականում կիրառում են գռեհիկ լեզու, հայհոյանքներ, մականուններ, և այլն:

Բանալի բառեր. սոցիալական ցանցեր, խոսքի ազրեսիվություն, կիբերահարձակում, լեզվական միջոցներ, գռեհիկ լեզու

А. ГАЛСТЯН – Агрессия в онлайн общении. – Речевая агрессия может быть определена как форма общения, которая используется для преднамеренного оскорбления или угрозы человеку, группе людей или обществу. В данной статье рассматриваются языковые средства агрессии в социальных сетях. В результате анализа было выявлено, что с целью кибератаки пользователи в основном используют вульгарные выражения, ругательства, прозвища и т.п.

Ключевые слова: социальные сети, речевая агрессия, киберзапугивание, языковые средства, вульгарный язык

Ներկայացվել է՝ 15.05.2020

Երաշխավորվել է ԵՊՀ Անգլիական բանասիրության ամբիոնի կողմից

Ընդունվել է տպագրության՝ 19.06.2020