SECTION 6. GENERAL LINGUISTICS

METAPHORS AS A MEANS OF IMAGE-MAKING
IN BUSINESS MEDIA DISCOURSE

МЕТАФОРА ЯК ЗАСІБ СТВОРЕННЯ ІМІДЖУ
У ДИСКУРСІ БІЗНЕС-МЕДІА

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The media visibility of CEOs has experienced a substantial increase [1]. This is why it is important to study how corporate leaders are being portrayed within business media discourse.

The image of a CEO is crucial for shaping corporate reputation, which is the public's perception of a certain business. H.M. Chen and H.M. Chung have developed a scale that makes it possible to measure the personal brand of a CEO. This scale includes such factors as competency, charisma, values, and so on [2].

The word image is derived from the Latin word *imago*, meaning "likeness" or "imitation." The two main components of an image (or public perception) are verbal and nonverbal elements. The nonverbal component includes appearance, style, gestures, and other visual elements. The verbal component includes speech and statements made by a person.

The verbal markers that contribute to the public perception of a business leader can be studied through the lens of *linguoimageology*. Linguoimageology is viewed as one of the sub-directions of neolinguistics dealing with the linguistic means of creating the image of someone or something.

As noted by L. Shevchenko, linguoimageology combines general humanitarian approaches related to image (social, psychological, etc.) with linguistic components that include the operation aspect (the strategic use of

language for achieving communicative goals) and the instrumental aspect (the linguistic form) [3; p. 14–15].

For now, linguistic imagology is still in the early stages of development. There are certain challenges such as the lack of clear definitions for some fundamental categories. Its scope and methodology are still being determined.

The object of linguistic imagology in business media discourse can be defined as the image of a corporate leader or a company in the linguistic consciousness of audiences. The specific means of verbalization (image markers) can be viewed as the subjects of research.

According to A. Skrypnyk, imagology can be viewed as an alternative to mainstream linguistic trends that make it possible to address the context in which a certain linguistic image gets used [4]. It highlights the importance of social and psychological factors.

X. Li and D. Lu have studied conceptual metaphors as a means of constructing the image of a nation-state [5]. O. Plysun has also focused on the linguistic aspect of Ukraine's image-building. The researcher has singled out such image-forming markers as:

1) emotional-evaluative epithets;
2) periphrastic constructions:
3) metaphoric constructions;
4) phraseological transformations and so on [6].

According to O. Ivantsiv, conceptual metaphors are "one of the most effective means of image formation." The researcher has explored how metaphorical modeling can be used to create the corporate image of cosmetic companies. Based on the analysis of press releases, O. Ivantsiv has determined that conceptual metaphors are capable of creating a "powerful" and "vivid" image [7].

Medialingvoimageology has emerged as a new paradigm in modern linguistics, focusing on how media outlets create an "emotionally evaluative thought" about an object (subject). It has already attracted some scholarly attention. I. Bezrodnykh and O. Konopelkina, for instance, have studied the metaphoricity of political image-making in Canadian media discourse [8].

The linguistic aspects of the portrayal of CEOs in business media have already attracted some scholarly attention. E. Blankespoor, for instance, has investigated the linguistic style of CEO quotes [9]. However, the role of metaphors in creating as an image-making tool in business media discourse is yet to be studied.

When it comes to business media discourse, linguoimageology (or linguistic imageology) aims to explore how metaphors, framing, and evaluative language can contribute to positive or negative portrayals of corporate executives. Metaphors make it possible to frame the business

leader's role and personality in a way that aligns with cultural and ideological expectations. For instance, military metaphors can reinforce the masculinization of business media discourse and aggressive leadership styles while religious metaphors elevate CEOs to near-mythical figures.

Studying the mechanisms of metaphoric modeling is crucial for understanding how language shapes the image of a business executive and leadership narratives. This is highly relevant given the growing visibility of CEOs in the media and the potential impact of their media image on investor confidence.

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