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DISCURSIVE MARKERS OF VALUES IN ECOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

ДИСКУРСИВНІ МАРКЕРИ ЦІННОСТЕЙ В ЕКОЛІНГВІСТИЧНОМУ ВИМІРІ

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This paper investigates discursive markers of values in the ecolinguistic perspective, focusing on Instagram posts of popular personalities ($\geq 30,000$ followers). Recent ecolinguistic scholarship emphasizes the socio-ecological function of language as a system that constructs environmental values and facilitates ecological awareness and action. Penz and Fill offer an integrated account of ecolinguistics, advocating critical discourse analysis to elucidate how language frames environmental narratives [3]. Chau et al. further argue for actionable ecolinguistics, linking discourse to Sustainable Development Goals and social justice [1]. Complementing this, bibliometric work by Kamarullah & Yanti maps the intersection of ecolinguistics and critical discourse analysis, revealing emergent themes around social justice, biodiversity, and ethical communication [2]. Instagram as a platform is conceptualized by Schreiber as an **emerging discursive genre**, where text and visual affordances create new modalities for value-laden communication [4].

The **relevance** of this study lies in its formalization of a multimodal classifier of value markers for visual digital discourse, its empirical demonstration of how popular influencers communicate pro-environmental and social values through consistent discursive strategies, and its contribution to interdisciplinary research at the intersection of ecolinguistics, digital communication, and ecological ethics. The **object** of the research is the multimodal discursive representation of values in digital ecolinguistic communication. The **subject** is discursive markers (verbal, kinesic, prosodic, proxemic, and supra-verbal correlates) used by popular Instagram

personalities to index ecological and humanistic values. The **aim** of the research is to identify and classify multimodal discursive strategies through which popular influencers semantically encode ecological and humanistic values on Instagram, within the theoretical framework of ecolinguistics.

A corpus of 100 Instagram posts by public figures (celebrities, activists, influencers; follower count > 30k) was manually selected across themes of environmental activism, social inclusion, and wellness. Each post was coded for presence/absence of markers drawn from a unified classifier: **verbal correlates**: value lexemes (*sustainability, empathy, justice, resilience, organic*), inclusive pronouns (*we, together*), emotional support terms (*love, hope*); **kinesic correlates**: smiles, embracing gestures, pointing, openness of posture, and use of emojis conveying gesture; **prosodic correlates** (in reels or videos): soft tone (empathy), energetic intonation (activism), varied intonation (creativity/self-expression); **proxemic correlates**: close-up selfies (trust-building), group photos (solidarity), settings such as forests or volunteer events; **supra-verbal correlates**: minimalist clothing, no makeup, home or natural backgrounds, eco-themed symbols. The findings of the research are summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Discursive value markers in Instagram

Value type	Discursive markers				
	Verbal correlates	Kinesic correlates	Prosodic correlates	Proxemic correlates	Supra-verbal correlates
Ecological	eco lexemes				nature setting
Solidarity	inclusive pronouns			group photo/video	
Emotional support	support lexemes	smile, hugs, shaking hands, patting shoulder	soft tone	close interpersonal distance	smile emoticons, heart emoji
Authenticity		relaxed posture and mimics		selfie/ closeups (photo/ video)	no make-up, simple clothing and accessories
Activism	social lexemes	open posture, pointing gesture	rhythmic tone	close-ups	natural background

Ecological values are vividly communicated in a reel by @maxlamanna, containing a verbal marker of eco-lexeme (*organic*) and care for nature, filmed in a garden setting (Pic. 1):

Pt. 2 Quick, easy courgette pickle. We're closing out summer with a garden fresh pickle. Everything was straight from @nettlesandpetals organic garden look how beautiful this looks. Full recipe in the comments. #organic #garden #pickle #zucchini #easyrecipe[https://www.instagram.com/reel/C_f906LxJtZ/?igsh=MTYzMXdsNXFrOTBuaQ%3D%3D].



Pic. 1. Visualisation of ecological values

The value of activism is represented in the Instagram post by @browngirl_green via verbal correlates in the overlay headline and caption highlighting themes of rights and environmental protection (*rights, environmental protection, federal courts*). Kinesically, the activist's open smile and expressive hand gesture convey enthusiasm and confidence, reinforcing a sense of empowerment. Proxemically, the close-up framing of her seated body against a natural background establishes intimacy with the viewer and symbolically links the activist's presence to ecological concerns (Pic. 2).



Pic. 2. Visualisation of the value of activism

The value of emotional support is expressed in a post by @barackobama via verbal correlates of inclusive pronoun (*our*) and emotional support (*love*):

President Carter taught all of us what it means to live a life of grace, dignity, justice, and service. Michelle and I send our thoughts and prayers to the Carter family, and everyone who loved and learned from this remarkable man [https://www.instagram.com/p/DELei_ovA3I/?utm_source=chatgpt.com].

Kinesically, the handshake between Barack Obama and Jimmy Carter, Carter's warm smile, and Michelle Obama's supportive gesture of applause embody respect and shared admiration (Pic. 3). Proxemically, the close interpersonal distance and triadic formation emphasize intimacy and collective recognition, contrasting with the distant crowd in the background.



Pic. 3. Visualisation of the value of emotional support

Through an ecolinguistic lens, Instagram posts by popular personalities emerge as rich sites of value encoding, where verbal, kinesic, prosodic, proxemic, and supra-verbal correlates collaboratively index ecological and humanistic orientations. This framework opens **perspectives** for further corpus-assisted or automated studies of values-based sociodiscourse across social media, aligned with ecolinguistics' mission to connect language and environment meaningfully.

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