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Abstract: The paper deals with the use of first names in media as opposed to the use of surnames. A comparison is made between the choice of the type of name (first name or surname) in English and in Bulgarian. That choice depends on the effect that text producers aim to achieve on the text receivers. First names can be used to make a public figure more approachable. This can contribute to the public image of the people covered in media articles and is evident in both languages.

The function that they aim to fulfil depends on the type of article they appear in. For instance, in sports news, the use of a first name can be seen as a way to create a feeling of identification with some sports players. This is especially true if the article is about someone's win. In an international sports event, the competitor who has the same nationality as the newspaper's audience is typically referred to by his or her first name. This creates a strong sense of identity and gives the feeling that this person is "one of us", that this is "our guy", etc., while the opponent's full name is usually used. The use of first names for political figures, however, has a completely different function. With politicians, first names are used to belittle and depreciate the referred people, to criticize, mock and even insult them. In the Bulgarian media texts, first names can be used to express criticism towards political figures. They can indicate negative attitude, reproach or disapproval. This could be done occasionally, for a specific act that they have committed. It can also be the result of a permanent disapproval of a person's behaviour or policy. In the English media texts such tendency was not found. Politician's first names are used if the article deals with a politician's private life and not in texts discussing political matters. They can also be used for former political figures, or for politicians whose term of office is already over. In British media texts, royalties are referred to by their first names preceded by the corresponding title: prince, princess, queen, king. However, sometimes the media produce articles in which members of the royal family are mentioned only with their first names without the title. It is even not uncommon for members of the royal family to be referred to by the short form of their names. The use of short forms is probably a strategy to portray people, who despite being of royal blood, are open to other people and do the same things that ordinary people do – go on a holiday, invite guests, spend time with their family. It can be assumed that this is done in order to increase the royal family's popularity and make them less distant.

Keywords: first names, surnames, media texts

1. INTRODUCTION.

According to Fowler first names in the media can be used to promote "feelings of identification, empathy or disapproval" or to effect "a metonymic simplification of complex historical or institutional narrative" [Fowler 1993: 15]. The function that they aim to fulfil depends on the type of article they appear in. The use of first names can be used to make people more approachable, as is the case with texts about sports players of popular people in the show business, or to express criticism or a negative attitude towards the referred people when used in texts about political figures.

2. FIRST NAMES IN THE BULGARIAN MEDIA.

In sports news, the use of a first name can be seen as a way to create a feeling of identification with some sports players. This is especially true if the article is about someone's win. In an international sports event, the competitor who has the same nationality as the newspaper's audience is typically referred to by his or her first name. This creates a strong sense of identity and gives the feeling that this person is "one of us", this is "our guy", etc., while the opponent's full name is usually used. This trend can be noticed in the following excerpt:

Мъри възхитен от **Гришо** преди финала в Пекин

Димитров записа добра победа срещу **Рафа** в здрав мач, заяви британецът

Водачът в основната схема **Анди Мъри** похвали **Григор Димитров** преди финала помежду им на силния тенис турнир на твърди кортове в китайската столица Пекин. Двубоят е утре от 14:30 часа българско време. Двамата са се срещали 10 пъти, като **Мъри** има 7 победи, българинът е с 3 успеха.

„Чувствам се в добра форма, което е много позитивно преди Шанхай“, сподели **Мъри** преди утрешния финал. (Blitz.bg, 08/10/2016)

Murray fascinated by **Grisho** before Beijing Final

Dimitrov scored a good win against **Raffa** in a tough match, the Briton said. The leader in the rank list **Andy Murray** complimented **Grigor Dimitrov** before their hard-court final in Beijing. The duel is tomorrow at 14:30 Bulgarian time. The two have met ten times with **Murray** having 7 wins and the Bulgarian – 3.

“I feel in good shape, which is very positive before Shanghai”, said **Murray**.

In the headline, the author of the article calls the Bulgarian tennis player *Grisho*, and his opponent is referred to by his surname *Murray*. Murray, however, calls the Bulgarian tennis player *Dimitrov*, while his opponent is called *Raffa*. These ways of address can be an indication of the relationship between Andy Murray and Grigor Dimitrov, on the one hand, and the relationship between Andy Murray and Rafael Nadal, on the other. Most probably, Murray considers Rafael Nadal a closer friend, while Grigor Dimitrov is viewed only as a colleague. The author of the text mentions the British tennis player by using his surname. The opposition “mine – not mine” can be expressed by the choice of name used to refer to someone. Grisho, “our guy” is juxtaposed to Murray, the rival, the one who is “not ours”. From Murray’s point of view, however, Grigor Dimitrov is an opponent, and definitely does not fall in the category “mine”, there is no sense of identification, so he is referred to by his surname *Dimitrov*. The typical pattern is as follows:

Mine (first name, diminutive) ↔ Not mine (surname)

This is also evident in the next excerpt:

Гришо очаквано падна, **Джокович** загуби сензационно

Grisho predictably raced out, **Jokovich** lost sensationally (в. „Cera”, 02/07/2016)

Grisho (ours, belonging to us) ↔ Jokovich (not ours, not belonging to us)

This type of mentioning sports players is found in other examples from the corpus such as the following:

Финалът между **Гришо** и **Мъри**

The final between **Grisho** and **Murray** (www.gol.bg, 17/10/2016)

Никол Шерцингер готова да се омъжи за **Гришо**? /**Nicol Scherzinger** ready to marry **Grisho**? (www.edna.bg, 30/09/2016)

In the last excerpt Nicol Scherzinger is not Grigor Dimitrov’s opponent, but the pattern “ours” versus “not ours” is followed again.

Such a way of referring to a sport player is quite common in the Bulgarian media. Sometimes the reference is not made by using a first name, but by the use of a diminutive, as in the next excerpt:

Индийци отново ухажват **Бербо**

ФК Пуне иска да вземе в редиците си българина

Интересът от Индия към бившия капитан на България **Димитър Бербаков** отново е актуален, твърди местното издание „Хиндустан Таймс”...

...Както преди няколко седмици стана ясно **Бербо** е отхвърлил солидни предложения от въпросната държава (gol.bg, 02/10/2016)

Indians court Berbo again

FC Pune wants the Bulgarian in its ranks

India’s interest in the former Bulgarian captain **Dimitar Berbatov** is still valid, according to the local edition “Hindustan Times”...

...As it became evident a few weeks ago, **Berbo** had flatly rejected the offer from the said country.

Here *Berbo* is a diminutive derived from the surname *Berbatov*, but it has the same function, namely of expressing proximity and shortening the distance between Dimitar Berbatov and the text receivers.

The same strategy is used when events about people in the entertainment industry are covered as in the next example:

Данчето с три приятелки в Мексико

Голямата певица **Йорданка Христова** замина за Мексико вчера. Изпълнителката на „Песен моя, обич моя” си подарява презокеанско пътешествие всяка година заради сестра си Лилия, която живее в Бъркли, Калифорния. Този път обаче **Данчето** ще пропусне да й гостува и ще кацне директно в страната на майте. (www.monitor.bg, 09/02/2016)

Dancheto in Mexico with three of her friends

The great singer **Yordanka Hristova** left for Mexico yesterday. The singer who performed “My song, my love” every year treats herself with a transatlantic voyage because of her sister Lilia, who lives in Berkley, California. This time, however, **Dancheto** will skip this visit and will land directly in the country of Mayans.

The famous singer is called *Dancheto* and her full name, *Yordanka Hristova*, is used only to make clear who the person mentioned in the text is, as *Danche* is a very typical first name in Bulgaria and can cause ambiguity. When a first name is used to refer to a popular person in sports or show business, that person is felt less distant by media audiences. In this way, celebrities are felt as part of that audience, as people who are “some of us”. This way the distance between the people mentioned in the text and the readers of that text is shortened.

The use of first names for political figures, however, has a completely different function. With politicians, first names are used to belittle and depreciate the referred people, to criticize, mock and even insult them. This could be done occasionally, for a specific act that they have committed. In this case, there is a sporadic use of the first name. It can also be the result of a permanent disapproval of a person’s behaviour or policy. As soon as a political figure makes a blunder, the media start expressing their disapproval and criticism by using their first name to refer to them, as is evident in the following excerpt:

Изцепката на **Радан** скара ГЕРБ и ДСБ

На всички стана ясно, че коалицията няма да се разпадне. Когато работиш в екип няма как да не правиш компромиси. Той бе направен не в името на властта, а в името на стабилността. (www.blitz.bg, 18/10/2016)

Radan’s gaffe set GERB and DSB at odds

It became clear to everyone that the coalition would not break up. When you work in a team there’s no way for you not to make compromises. It was made not in the name of power, but in the name of stability, said.

The first name can often be accompanied by some qualifying adjective. In the following excerpt from 168 Chasa newspaper, the Chair of the Parliament, Tsetska Tsacheva, is criticized for having spent unjustified amount of money for her trips. In the headline only the first name *Tsetska* is used, indicating lack of respect and reproach and accompanied by the adjective *Златната*, meaning “the golden one” – emphasizing the fact that she is spending too much money:

Златната **Цецка**

Шефката на парламента лети с частни самолети, вместо да си купи 10 пъти по-евтин билет

Цецка Чачева се е повозила на свръхлюксозни самолети на две частни авиокомпании, докато е пътувала в служебни командировки през тази и миналата година. Те са платени от специалния „Авиоотряд 28”, който е на бюджетна издръжка. Парите пак са на данъкоплатеца, независимо че не идват директно от Народното събрание. (в. „168 часа”, 24/11/2010)

Golden **Tsetska**

The Parliament’s boss flies with private jets, instead of buying a 10 times cheaper ticket

Tsetska Tsacheva travelled as a passenger on two private companies’ super luxurious planes while on business trips this and the previous year. The expenses were paid by special squad “Aviootryad 28”, which is on a budget financing. The money comes from the taxpayers, although it does not come directly from the Parliament.

In the Bulgarian media, the President of the Republic is often mentioned by using his first name and even a diminutive. The use of a diminutive can be interpreted as indicating any lack of respect. *Rosencho*, roughly meaning “little Rosen”, can be seen as a way of comparing the president to a young child who is not held in high esteem by the author of the text, as it is a diminutive mostly used only for small children. This is a way to indicate the text producer’s disapproval of the President’s actions:

Росенчо не иска руски инвестиции

Президентът **Росен Плевнелиев** покани британски фирми в газовия сектор, но затръшна вратата пред руските капитали у нас.

„Ще се радваме, ако британски фирми проявят интерес към новите находища на природен газ в Черно море. Ще предоставим най-добрите условия за концесии”, бяха думите на **Плевнелиев**. (www.bulgarski.pogled.info/news)

Rosencho (Little Rosen) does not want Russian investments

President **Rosen Plevneliev** invited British firms in the gas sector but shut the door in front of the Russian capital in the country.

“We will be happy if British firms show interest in the new gas deposits in the Black Sea. We will offer the best concession terms” said **Plevneliev**.

When a political figure makes a blunder, the media express their criticism by using their first name. In some cases, though, political figures are referred to by their first names in order to present them as part of the nation, as ordinary people, and mostly as people who care about the nation’s well-being. When an article deals with a politician’s personal matters, such as their hobby, or a personal event in their life, their first name is used. This could be interpreted as a message for the audience: “they are one of us”. This could be used as a PR strategy. On the one hand, those political figures are people who care about the nation; on the other hand, as ordinary people, they are prone to make mistakes. In the following excerpt, the Prime Minister Boyko Borisov is presented as an ordinary person taking part in an ordinary activity, behaving like an ordinary person. The author of the text even pays attention to his clothing. He wears clothes people usually wear on such occasions, a sports outfit, thus indicating that he is not on a governmental visit, but just having fun with people and who has accidentally come across the bungee jumping lot. All these facts fit very naturally with the use of the Prime Minister’s first name *Boyko*. What is more, the first name is used in the headline thus attracting the readers’ attention:

Бойко спря внезапно на мост и даде кураж на пловдивчани, скачащи с бънджи

Премиерът по анцуг и в добро настроение се изплаши за живота на младо момиче, нареди ѝ да спре. Дошли на моста на Клисура да си начешат крастата – т. е. да скачат с бънджи, пловдивчани бяха изненадани от височайшо посещение. Два лъскави джипа внезапно спряха на моста и от единия от тях излезе премиерът **Бойко Борисов** – по анцуг и с розова ризка.

Във видимо прекрасно настроение, министър-председателят се захласна по смелчаците, решили да си вдигнат адреналина, като се метнат от високия мост. (www.blitz.bg)

Boyko suddenly pulled up on a bridge and encouraged bungee jumping people from Plovdiv

In a sports outfit and in a good mood, the PM was concerned about a young girl’s life and ordered her to stop.

While on the Klisura Bridge to give loose to their vice – i. e. bungee jumping – people from Plovdiv were surprised by the appearance of a highly esteemed person. Two natty Jeeps suddenly pulled up on the bridge and the Prime Minister **Boyko Borisov** got off one of them, wearing a sports outfit and a pink shirt.

In an apparently good mood, the Prime Minister was carried away by the brave guys, who had decided to get their adrenaline going by jumping from the high bridge.

3. FIRST NAMES IN ENGLISH.

The British media also use first names to refer to people working in the entertainment industry, but this is more typical for the tabloids than the serious press. The motivation behind using first names is probably in the idea to shorten the distance between ordinary people and celebrities, to make popular people more approachable, and to make readers or viewers feel as if they know them personally.

When the news about Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie’s divorce appeared, tabloids started exploiting the matter and produced a great number of articles related to it. While some newspapers used their full names, or their surnames, in some articles only their first names appeared. The following excerpt taken from the Hello Magazine adopted this strategy:

Dalai Lama reveals thoughts on **Brad** and **Angelina** split: ‘It’s difficult.’

Dalai Lama has been the latest to reveal his thoughts on **Brad** and **Angelina**’s shock split.

His Holiness was asked his thoughts on the end of the Hollywood power couple’s marriage during an interview on *Good Morning Britain* with Piers Morgan. The spiritual leader said he was “sad” to hear the news, then spoke about **Brad** and **Angelina**’s six children. (www.hellomagazine.com)

In combination with first names, sometimes a diminutive is used to enhance the feeling of approachability. This is done especially in cases in which an article deals with some gossip that is aimed at attracting readers’ attention and provoking their interest. In the following excerpt, the first names of the two celebrities are followed by the name *Brangelina*, standing for the two of them as a couple and formed by their first names (mostly in the yellow press), and then the diminutive *Angie* is used:

This Week In Tabloids: **Angelina** Dumped **Brad** For a Mysterious Billionaire?!

Welcome to Midweek Madness, where the tabloids are still horny as a dolphin in an isolation tank for **Brangelina** gossip. This week, we discover that our magazine store has just opened a new location a block

away from the old one that is a tiny bit smaller than the old one, but has an entire row of candy! Also bongos and vapes and poppers, but that's not the point! The point is that Brad had an "emotional rendezvous" with Jennifer Aniston, and a "face-to-face showdown" with **Angie**, who is apparently in love with some billionaire. (www.jezebel.com)

The use of Brad Pitt's and Angelina Jolie's first names can be viewed as having another purpose: to convey the idea that these people may be successful, popular, and known worldwide, but are still not perfect, they also have their mistakes and are actually not that different from the rest of the people.

Another group of people that are referred to by their first names in the British media are the royalties. Before discussing the newspaper articles in which they are used and analyzing the reasons and motivation behind that use, it should be mentioned that royalties are addressed and referred to by their first names in all monarch states. They practically do not have surnames in the sense ordinary people do. For instance, the etiquette demands it to say Queen Elizabeth, Prince Edward, Princess Diana, King George, etc. Their first names are preceded by the corresponding title: prince, princess, queen, king. However, sometimes the media produce articles in which members of the royal family are mentioned only with their first names without the corresponding title. And if calling the Queen just *Elizabeth* is absolutely inconceivable, the rest of the family are referred to only by their first names and this is not considered impolite, derogatory or a sign of criticism and disapproval. In the next excerpt from a BBC article, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are called William and Kate in the headline, but later in the article they are called *The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge*, and the Duke is called *Prince William*. Their children are also mentioned with the titles they have: *Prince George* and *Princess Charlotte*:

William and **Kate** praise Canada for 'happy' family memories

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have praised Canada for leaving their family with 'happy memories' as their tour of Canada came to an end.

Prince William said they felt 'very lucky' to have introduced **Prince George** and **Princess Charlotte** to the Commonwealth country.

The royal children stole the limelight during a trip to an outdoor fun day as part of the eight-day engagement. The visit was their first official overseas trip as a family of four. (BBC news, 02/10/2016, www.bbc.com/news/uk-37531184)

In an article from The Daily Beast, however, the royalties' first names without titles are used throughout the text:

What's Wrong with **William** and **Kate**'s Tour of Canada?

William, Kate, George, and Charlotte are visiting Canada on what was intended to be a high-profile family tour. But so far it has registered a big fat zero on the global news feed. (www.thedailybeast.com)

The People Magazine, however, not only uses the royalties' first names, but even uses a short form of the name *William* – *Will* in the headline, to refer to the Duke of Cambridge. In the main body, names are used with the titles but again in their short forms:

Party at **Will** and **Kate**'s! Royal Couple Hosts Young Heroes at Their Palace Home

Prince William and **Princess Kate** laid out the welcome mat for a party at their Kensington Palace home this week.

On Tuesday, the same day the couple honored British Olympians and Paralympians at Buckingham Palace, they also hosted a party for a special group of young leaders.

The winners of BBC Radio 1's Teen Heroes awards, which celebrates the exceptional achievements of young people, were invited to spend an evening with **Will** and **Kate**. (www.people.com)

The use of short forms is probably a strategy to portray people, who despite being of royal blood, are open to other people and do the same things that ordinary people do – go on a holiday, invite guests, spend time with their family. It can be assumed that this is done in order to increase the royal family's popularity and make them less distant.

For some public figures, the way of reference changes with the role they have in society. The case with Hillary and Bill Clinton provides a good example of that. At the time Hillary's husband Bill Clinton was President of the United States, she was often called *Hillary*, *Mrs Clinton*, or referred to as "the First Lady" and when the name Clinton was mentioned in the press, it was usually understood as standing for Bill Clinton. When she decided to run for the President office, however, she was very rarely, if at all, called just *Hillary* and the name *Clinton* was used to refer to her. Her husband, Bill Clinton, was called just *Bill*. The next excerpt from The Guardian was published at the time Hillary was the President's wife:

Hillary explains away **Clinton**'s infidelity

Bill Clinton suffered childhood abuse which may have caused him to philander and experience “bimbo eruptions” later in life, according to his wife **Hillary**.

In her most frank interview yet, the First Lady described her husband as “a hard dog to keep on the porch” but praised him for his leadership qualities.

Mrs Clinton, who is widely expected to run for the senate in the state of New York next year, said that her husband was a weak man who had achieved a remarkable amount considering his troubled childhood.

Talking in public for the first time about the Monica Lewinsky affair, **Mrs Clinton** said that the president was grieving at the time, following the death of his friend Vincent Foster, and he had denied his involvement to spare her suffering.

(www.theguardian.com)

The next excerpt is taken from an article by the same newspaper that was published at the time Hillary was running for the President’s office:

Did **Hillary Clinton** intimidate **Bill**’s accusers? Let’s look at the evidence

Trump was attempting to take advantage of the false equivalencies that have riddled this presidential campaign, almost always to **Hillary Clinton**’s detriment. Here are some of them: Donald Trump not releasing his tax returns is no worse than **Clinton** not releasing her Wall Street speeches; the Trump Foundation doesn’t stretch the law as much as the Clinton Foundation; and, on display Sunday night, **Hillary**’s intimidation of **Bill**’s accusers from the 90s is just as unspeakable as the assault on women Trump described on that Access Hollywood tape. (www.theguardian.com)

As it is evident in the text, this time the former President is called just Bill, as now he is viewed just as Hillary Clinton’s husband. In a similar way, Michelle Obama is sometimes called just Michelle in the media. When President Obama’s last dinner at the White House was covered, the first lady was called Michelle. Interestingly, the President was also referred to by his first name. This could be explained by the non-political nature of the covered event. What is described is the way the president couple looked, how they behaved with their guests and so on and so forth:

Hands-on Italian prime minister puts on VERY tactile display with **Michelle** in her custom-made Versace gown at **Barack**’s last state dinner

President Obama and first lady **Michelle** welcomed the Italian PM Matteo Renzi and his wife to White House (www.dailymail.co.uk)

The first names in the above article can be explained with the end of Barack Obama’s term of office. As he will soon not be the President of the USA, he could be called by his first name, as is the case with Hillary and Bill Clinton.

4. CONCLUSION.

Based on the excerpted texts in the corpus, the following conclusions about the use of first names can be made:

First names can be used to make certain public figure more approachable and make texts’ audience feel that they are people like them. This could be used as a PR strategy contributing to the public image of the people covered in media articles and is evident in both languages.

In the Bulgarian texts, first names can be used to differentiate between “ours” and “not ours”, i. e. people or celebrities who are considered one’s own and those thought of as someone else’s. The first name is used to refer to the person thought of as one’s own, while a surname is typically applied to the one considered someone else’s. In the English language texts such a tendency was not found.

In the Bulgarian texts, first names can be used to express criticism towards political figures as well. They can indicate negative attitude, reproach or disapproval. In the English language texts, first names are not used for that purpose. They are used in articles that deal with a politician’s private life and not in texts dealing with political matters. First names can also be used for former political figures, or for politicians whose term of office is already over.

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