

The planned research is connected with forensic psychology, more specifically - with the psychology of witness testimony and preventing errors in such testimony. One of the main reasons for the distortions in human testimony is misinformation reaching the witnesses between the moments when they saw an event and are interrogated about it. Misinformation can cause a so called memory misinformation effect. It consists in including misinformation into the testimony, stemming from sources other than the event, about which testimony is given. For example, if a person witnesses to a traffic accident caused by a driver with fair hair, and subsequently reads and hears in mass media, internet, or from other witnesses, than subsequently he/she may state that the driver dark hair. Consequences of such distortions may be serious and reach to convicting an innocent person or acquitting a guilty person.

Therefore, research aiming at constructing methods for reducing the vulnerability to misinformation is very important. The present project is connected with this. Its aim is research connected with so called reinforced self-affirmation. It is a technique designed in order to boost self-confidence of the witness. It is assumed here that people who are self-confident rely on their own memory, not on external sources of information. In the above example, a witness who is very self-confident may still testify according to his own memory, that is, that the driver had fair hair, not trusting other people saying that he had dark hair.

In sum, the results of the present project may help in future to construct methods for enhancing the self-confidence of the witnesses, which could be applied in the complicated circumstances of a real forensic interrogation.