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Манипулятивный характер публицистического заголовка военно-политического дискурса (на материале английского языка)

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Аннотация. Цель исследования - изучение роли военно-политического дискурса в манипулировании массовым сознанием в ходе информационно-психологической войны. В настоящее время средства массовой информации перестают быть пассивными ретрансляторами информации и проявляют активное участие в процессе формирования общественного мнения, представляя диаметрально противоположные позиции по тем или иным вопросам. Научная новизна работы заключается в определении степени данного влияния современных СМИ на общественное сознание. В результате исследования публицистических заголовков, представленных диктемой особого рода - диктемным именем текста, - были выявлены основные приемы речевого воздействия, имеющие манипулятивный характер: введение в отрицательно оцениваемый контекст, концентрированный повтор информации, переход на личности, навязывание пресуппозиции, использование «лексем-ограничителей» и другие.

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Journalistic Headline Manipulative Nature in Military-Political Discourse (Based on the English Language)

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Abstract. The study aims at considering the role of military-political discourse in manipulating the mass consciousness during the information-psychological warfare. At present the mass media are no longer passive sources of information. They are actively participating in the process of forming public opinion, presenting diametrically opposed points of view on certain issues. The research scientific novelty is based on determining the degree of modern mass media influence on public consciousness. The attained results have shown the main manipulative methods of speech influence used in American and British journalistic headlines, presented by a dicteme of a special kind - the text dictemic name: the introduction into the negatively assessed context, concentrated information repetition, transition to personalities, the imposing of a presupposition, the "lexemes-limiters" use and others.

Introduction

The relevance of the research topic is due to the fact that the informational influence has recently become an effective means of political and economic domination, an essential component of which is a military-political discourse. Its analysis makes it possible to identify the tools for the society consciousness manipulating, to expand knowledge on the issues of the relationship between language, consciousness and ideology, as well as the exerted influence.

Hybrid warfare is a modern form of military action, which differs from other conflicts by the military force use and the enemy economic suppression. It widely uses the capabilities of modern information technologies in order to establish strategic control over the target country population consciousness and obtain full power over the conquered state future.

According to the main objective of the article the authors have set up the following tasks:

- to consider the integrative nature of the military-political discourse and its main functions;
- to single out a number of speech influence methods used as the basic techniques in readers' consciousness manipulating;
- to demonstrate the process of forming the reader's attitude to the concerned events and problems by speech manipulation means using the examples of American and British mass media journalistic headlines.

The practical value of the work lies in the fact that the results of the research part can be used in manipulative characteristics identification in order to subject texts to critical analysis. Nowadays some journalistic texts become an informational occasion for political games and PR actions. The research results will be useful for different specialists in the field of text linguistic expertise, for example for public figures, military leaders, politicians, and lawyers.

To solve the set tasks, the article uses the following research methods: the method of continuous sampling, the statistical method, the method of component, conceptual, comparative analysis, the method of linguistic description. The study material is the English-language newspaper texts' headlines of authoritative western mass media (*The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Financial Times, The Daily Telegraph*) [12-15].

The theoretical background of this work is the dictemic text structure theory by M. Ya. Blokh [2], the military-political discourse theory by R. R. Mavleev [6], A. V. Olyanich [8], I. V. Sentenberg, V. I. Karasik [5; 9] and L. L. Nelyubin [7], theoretical provision of speech influence methods as an object of text linguistic examination research by A. N. Baranov [1].

The integrative nature of the military-political discourse and its main functions

Within the framework of this study devoted to the problems of military-political discourse, it should be noted that numerous studies of Russian and foreign linguists consider issues of political or military discourse separately. However, according to R. R. Mavleev, "military discourse turns out to be a component of the whole – political discourse. In order to understand the whole, it is necessary to understand the components it consists of, but understanding each component suggests a certain idea of the meaning of the whole" [6, c. 91]. It is the integrative nature of the military-political discourse that gives it its special features, when the military appear before the press with a report on hostilities and are forced to link their answers to questions from representatives of the media with the political interests of the authorities, who ordered the use of military force in relation to the subject of statehood [8, c. 121].

Among the main functions of military-political discourse, it is customary to single out informative-ideological, educational and manipulative-propaganda [10, c. 274]. It is the latter function that implies the manipulation of mass consciousness, which is a key element of psychological operations and information warfare, in which the media have become the battleground. Since most people have not experienced war in reality, they are unable to assess the falsity or truth of the material presented. Accordingly, all versions of events offered by the manipulator will be taken on faith.

One of the means of forming the reader's attitude to the concerned events and problems is speech manipulation, which is a type of speech influence on the certain beliefs creation, as well as prejudices and consciousness stereotypes among the mass audience [9, c. 31]. The publicist makes an influence on the reader by hiding the true purpose and that is considered to be a fundamentally distinctive feature of speech manipulation. Using a variety of psychological and psycholinguistic mechanisms, the manipulator pushes the reader towards an uncritical perception of the speech message [3, c. 171].

Speech influence methods

In his work "Linguistic examination of the text: theory and practice", A. N. Baranov singles out a number of speech influence methods as an object of text linguistic examination research [1]. Among the basic techniques, A. N. Baranov designates the following: lack of evidence as guilt; establishing an unmotivated similarity with a negatively evaluated entity; semantic implication as a tool for understanding control; extensive use of metaphors; hint; reception of concentrated information repetition; using a question as an answer; language game; link to an unknown source; misleading by the genre of the text; artificial construction of argumentation; link to authority and others. In this article we focus on the most frequently used media methods of readers' minds manipulating, namely, *the introduction into the negatively assessed context / associative array, repeated repetition, transition to personalities, the imposition of a presupposition, and a decrease in the strength of assertion by "lexemes-limiters"* [Ibidem, c. 174-299].

Hidden speech impact is achieved thanks to categorical statements that force the reader to accept the imposed point of view. Forming the urge to take certain actions in the form of advice and warnings also makes the statement manipulative. Of particular interest from the stylistic point of view is the use of linguistic (speech) aggression (the sphere of speech behavior motivated by the aggressive state of the informant) [9, c. 35].

Through the analysis of newspaper headlines of influential American and British media devoted to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular in Russia, we will trace the manipulative and propaganda function of the military-political discourse. But before proceeding with this analysis, one should note the special role of the headline of newspaper articles as an element of publicistic discourse from the standpoint of the text dictemic organization theory, formulated and developed by Professor M. Ya. Blokh [2, c. 56]. Following M. Ya. Blokh, in this work we consider the headline as a dictemic name of the text, which is represented by a dicteme of a special kind with all functional aspects of speech, namely: nomination, predication, thematization and stylization. As a result of these functions' actualization, different types of information are formed, but in the context of this work, our attention is focused primarily on emotive and impressive information, which makes it possible to reveal the features of a publicistic article author's emotional attitude expression.

Taking a strong position in relation to the entire text, the headline plays an important role in creating the text unity and is an effective means of attracting attention, while fulfilling an attractive-pragmatical function [4, c. 173].

Note, however, that there is a difference between the utterance emotionality and its emotiveness. An emotive statement is presented consciously, deliberately and has the intention to influence the addressee, while using emotive means of special vocabulary and syntax [Ibidem, c. 174].

The process of forming the reader's attitude to the concerned events and problems by speech manipulation

Introduction to a negatively assessed context / associative array, as a method of speech influence, is often used in the so-called "black PR" of the American and British media to create a negative image in the public consciousness using manipulative speech technologies. In a newspaper headline "***As Russia Prepares for Coronavirus, Putin Allows Subordinates to Take the Heat***" (The New York Times, 30.03.2020) [14], it is clear that a *negative assessment* is being "induced" on the Russian leader without using an explicit statement, thereby weakening him as a strong leader. In the following title entry "***The Russian leader hates to deliver bad news and wants to distinguish his rule from the turbulent presidency of Boris N. Yeltsin. So he is leaving it to his minions to announce harsh measures***", the author of the article uses the technique of placing the name of the Russian leader in a negatively assessed context, thereby increasing the effectiveness of his influence on the formation of an ambiguous reader's opinion about the president's personality. The lexeme *minion* gives a negative connotation to the described events (minion is the designation of a favorite, a friend or pet of a royal personage, which was widespread in France in the 15th century; borrowed in English as minion, it also began to denote a devoted servant [11]). Placing the main character in a negatively assessed associative array with *repeated repetition* of his name in this context aims to constantly draw the reader's attention to the president's personality and associate him with negatively assessed actions. This technique is also used in the following headlines:
- ***Coronavirus knocks Putin's popularity in Russia***
(The Daily Telegraph, 05.03.2020) [12];
- ***Russian official questions Putin's coronavirus data***
(The Financial Times, 24.03.2020) [13];
- ***The pandemic shows that Putin is not a strong leader***
(The Washington Post, 22.05.2020) [15].

Positioning in a negatively assessed context or associative array is often adjacent to such a method of argumentation, which is called "*argumentation that does not relate to the essence of the problem, but to the opponent's shortcomings as a person*" or "*transition to personality*" [1, c. 184]. The purpose of such argumentation is to discredit the opponent on various grounds and in various ways. The use of derogatory vocabulary (bleak, passive, bored, loser, etc.) that belittles the personal qualities of the Russian leader and is clearly aimed at demonstrating the weakening of his positions can be found in the following headlines in American and British media publications devoted to the activities of the Russian President amid the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic:
- ***Putin's Bleak Covid-19 Admission: "We Don't Have Much to Brag About"***
(The New York Times, 13.04.2020) [14];
- ***Economic woes undermine Putin's pledge pandemic is 'under control'***
(The Financial Times, 23.04.2020) [13];
- ***Putin, Russia's Man of Action, Is Passive, Even Bored, in the Coronavirus Era***
(The New York Times, 30.04.2020) [14];
- ***Xi and Putin are the big losers from this pandemic***
(The Financial Times, 12.05.2020) [13];
- ***Russia's economic woes will clip Putin's wings***
(The Financial Times, 12.05.2020) [Ibidem].

In the above-mentioned headlines, the technique of speech influence used by journalists is aimed at connecting the name of the president with the events described in the article and causing a negative attitude towards him among readers. In this case, negative information is an optional implication, an inference that the reader may or may not do.

The technology of influence in the case of consciousness manipulation consists in introducing into a reader's consciousness and his ideas about reality some information that is not subjected to critical analysis, is not perceived by him as something requiring consideration. One of the techniques of this type is the "*imposing of presupposition*". This technique consists in the fact that semantic information that is important for the speaker is presented not as new knowledge that requires rational and conscious analysis, but as something taken for granted, known, or as a condition for meaningfulness of what has been said. The following headlines trace the use of this technique, when the presentation of information occurs naturally and unobtrusively, but as a common statement of facts, with which it is difficult to disagree, but, nevertheless, a negative connotation is felt:
- ***Putin Speaks, Officials Shrug, and Doctors Are Caught in the Middle***
(The New York Times, 14.05.2020) [14];
- ***As Virus Spreads in Russia's Caucasus, Rumors Swirl Over Strongman's Health***
(The Washington Post, 22.05.2020) [15].

In these examples, it is obvious that when a presupposition is imposed, the addressee (reader) perceives the information placed in the presuppositional part of the content of the utterance uncritically, as something taken for granted, known or as a condition for the meaningfulness of what was said.

To the class of speech influence methods associated with the phenomenon of argumentation it is customary to include lexemes that are used to reduce the strength of a statement. In the English-speaking linguistic tradition, they are called "*hedges*". In Russian, words of this type are called "*limiters*". Expressions *at least, sort of, it seems, like, etc.* relate to the limitation of the strength of the statement, since they allow disclaiming responsibility for the stated thesis:

- ***Putin knows how to rule Russia as an autocrat. But he seems on the sidelines amid coronavirus crisis***

(The Washington Post, 07.05.2020) [Ibidem].

The use of the limiter "*but he seems...*" allows the journalist to absolve himself of responsibility for the thesis expressed. Even though the statement is characterized by a number of inaccuracies, and the speaker is aware of them, however, in this situation, the statement still remains true.

Conclusion

Having considered the role of military-political discourse in manipulating the mass consciousness by the examples of American and British newspapers' headlines, we come to the following conclusions:

1) the integrative nature of the English military-political discourse defines its special functions: informative-ideological, educational and manipulative-propaganda. The main purpose of the military-political discourse is to manipulate the audience and hide information;

2) "manipulation" means manipulation of people's consciousness – their beliefs, knowledge, opinions, ideologies that control their behavior. The military-political discourse is involved in the creation and implementation of constructed in a special way opinion, assessments, stereotypes into target audience minds. The main instrument of the manipulative influence on public consciousness is the mass media, which create the necessary cognitive effect using various methods of presenting information (e.g. the introduction into the negatively assessed context, repeated repetition, transition to personalities, imposing of presupposition, "lexemes-limiters"), emotionally colored vocabulary, various stylistic techniques, etc. The used in this paper examples of headlines, which have a manipulative effect on the audience, confirm the fact that the reader not only has the opportunity to choose different options for expressing some content, but in any case is forced to make this choice. In all speech influence methods considered in this study, an implicit, hidden form of information presentation is used. The technique of "*introduction into a negatively assessed context*" is used by the media to create a negative image of a person in the public consciousness without a hidden or explicit statement. Thus, the technique of "*imposing a presupposition*" allows the reader to optimize the communication process itself, avoiding discussing what he would not like to pay attention to. The mechanisms of variable reality interpretation, as well as linguistic variation, allow journalists to effectively influence and control the reader's consciousness, the processes of understanding speech messages. Speech manipulation techniques are often used in the field of public policy and, as a result, become the subject of legal proceedings;

3) the reviewed in this article American and British mass media headlines, presented by the dicteme of a special kind, are a clear and vivid confirmation of the fact that within the framework of military-political discourse, a newspaper headline is a powerful means of influencing the target audience from the moment of attracting the readers' attention to the process of the required for publicist opinion obtrusion. In this case, various manipulative nature methods are used, as a result the majority of modern mass media audience not only does not want, but sometimes is not able to subject texts to critical analysis, preferring a simple perception of information. Thus, the task of the military-political publicistic discourse is considered completed: the versions of events proposed by the manipulators are taken on faith.

Further research perspectives in this scientific field are presented in timely identification of the characteristics of manipulative types of discourse and their impact on the mass consciousness that will contribute to the development of emerging threats adequate assessment and determination of the appropriate resistance possibility.

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