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## АНАЛИЗ ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИХ ОСОБЕННОСТЕЙ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОГО ДИСКУРСА С ТОЧКИ ЗРЕНИЯ ВЛИЯНИЯ НА ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ ОБЩЕСТВЕННОГО МНЕНИЯ

В нынешних условиях ожесточенной информационной

войны очень важно понимать, какое влияние языковой материал, используемый в политическом дискурсе, оказывает на формирование общественного мнения о целом государстве и его месте на мировой арене.

В данной статье автор указывает на необходимость исследований, проведения направленных манипулятивных языковых средств, используемых в рамках политического дискурса, описывает языковые средства, применяемые политиками иелях манипуляции приводит общественным примеры сознанием uиспользования.

Ключевые слова: политический дискурс, общественное мнение, манипуляция, языковые средства, оппозиция «свой - чужой», ассерция, пресуппозиция, образ врага, дисфемизм.

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## ANALYSIS OF LINGIUSTIC PECULIARITIES OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE AIMED AT INFLUENCING PUBLIC OPINION

In the context of the current information warfare it is very important to understand the impact the language used in political discourse has on the formation of public opinion concerning the image and role of the whole state and its place in the world.

In the article the author underlines the importance of research aimed at analyzing linguistic peculiarities of political discourse aimed at influencing public opinion. The author describes the linguistic means used by politicians in order to manipulate public opinion, and gives examples of their usage.

Keywords: political discourse, public opinion, manipulation,

language means, «friend-foe» opposition, assertion, presupposition, enemy image, dysphemism.

#### Introduction

Political discourse is a phenomenon that was in focus of many scientists in the past few decades. It is of high interest to different disciplines, such as sociology, political science, psychology, journalism and not the least to linguistics. In Russia the high level of attention can be explained by the fact that the country is experiencing the development of democracy. As a consequence, the political sphere is becoming more open and more accessible to researchers.

The necessity of linguistic studies of political discourse is unquestionable, because there is a strong connection between the solution of different political problems, both at country and global levels, and the way these problems are expressed and communicated by language. There are a lot of questions about political discourse that need closer examination. What is the real content of political discourse? What are the boundaries of political discourse? Which are its main concepts and functions?

However, as soon as language of politics is used not only to exchange political information, but to persuade and control, we can speak about manipulative function as the most important function of political (or, rather, institutional) discourse [4; 5]. Power struggle is the core and the essence of any political discourse. Although the recipient of the message may vary, it can be targeted at the opponent, at the electorate, at the public in general etcetera, the aims of political communication remain the same – to acquire and retain the power [8]. There are different strategies and tactics used by politicians in order to manipulate public opinion, and this manipulation is implemented by special language means [7]. The main task for a linguist here is to determine, to describe and to analyze such language means. It becomes even more important in the current situation of the

global information warfare where it is vital to understand how the language used by politicians influences the public opinion about the image and role of a whole country and its place in the world.

## Language as a tool of manipulation

In the 20th century the problem of manipulation of human mind and behavior were examined by the researches such as V.N. Bessonov, E. Cassirer, T. van Dijk, M.L. Dotsenko, E.N. Malyuga, E.V. Ponomarenko, H. Schiller etc. [2; 3; 5; 6; 7; 12]. As previously stated, manipulation plays a significant role in the political discourse. The choice of most people is based not on the rational assessment of political programs and actions of particular political movements, parties and leaders. The significant part of electors is guided by the emotions, the likes and dislikes, the degree of trust and distrust, which to a considerable degree depend on the impression made by politicians during their public speeches and debates.

Nowadays the interest to this issue and the need for applied research in this area increase. This fact can be explained by the current situation of changes taking place in the balance of forces in the world and formation of new alliances. Under these conditions it is more important than ever to understand and analyze the linguistic means used in order to manipulate public opinion.

## «Friend-foe» opposition

One of the most frequent language means of manipulation is «friend-foe» opposition. It is one of the basic historical, cultural and psychological oppositions. The main objective of this strategy is to make the recipient feel involved and solidary. It is only natural that people tend to support the ideas they can relate to, even if this identity of interests is only illusory.

To implement the «friend-foe» opposition, a politician creates two opposite images: «We» and «They». «We» can be a nation, citizens of a city, electorate of a party, members of a society etc., while "They" can be both a specific country, a party of opposition or it also can be vague "others" that do not share "our" opinion, interests and objectives.

Considering Obama's speech at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly, we will see that he was using the «friend-foe» strategy by opposing «We» to «They». While by «We» he meant America and the UN, «They» referred to the countries supporting «that dangerous currents risk pulling us back into a darker, more disordered world» [11]. The president of USA asks a question «How should we respond to these trends?» [11] and says that «There are those who argue that the ideals enshrined in the U.N. charter are unachievable or out of date — a legacy of a postwar era not suited to our own. Effectively, they argue for a return to the rules that have been applied for most of human history and that pre-date this institution: the belief that power is a zero-sum game; that might makes right; that strong states must impose their will on weaker ones; that the rights of individuals don't matter; and that in a time of rapid change, order must be imposed by force» [11]. Obama uses «those», «they», «their will» to make distance between «foes», who «assert themselves in ways that contravene international law» [11] and «friends» who are «the nations of the world, cannot return to the old ways of conflict and coercion» [11].

However, if we look at the speech of Vladimir Putin at the same occasion, we will see that Russian president is using the same tactics. In one of his phrases we can see an example of a clear «friend-foe» opposition: «Мы все знаем, что после окончания «холодной войны» — все это знают — в мире возник единственный центр доминирования. И тогда у тех, кто оказался на вершине этой пирамиды, возник соблазн думать, что если они такие сильные и исключительные, то лучше всех знают что делать» [9]. (We all know that after the end of the Cold War the world was left with one center of dominance, and those who found themselves at the top of the

pyramid were tempted to think that, since they are so powerful and exceptional, they know best what needs to be done» [10].)

According to Putin, «We» are Russia and the UN countries that understand the situation and respect the UN rules, while «They» the countries who do not. He is also opposing Russia alone to the USA by saying that «Мы, например, помним и примеры из истории Советского Союза» [9]. (We remember examples from our Soviet past [10]), but «Однако, похоже, никто не учится на чужих ошибках, а только повторяет их» [9]. (It seems, however, that instead of learning from other people's mistakes, some prefer to repeat them [10]). So the president uses «никто», that is usually translated into Russian as «nobody», though in transcript of the speech the translator chooses the word «some», to distance Russia from America.

The mentioned examples show that despite the fact that these two models of opposition contradict one another, they are used by the heads of two countries in order to create the effect they need.

### Using dysphemisms to create enemy image

We have already mentioned that creation of «friend-foe» opposition is frequently used by politicians with manipulative reasons. It can help both to integrate people and to disintegrate them, depending on the objectives perused by a politician.

In order to make the distinction between «We» and «They» even wider politician create enemy image. The idea of integration and mobilisation in the face of a common enemy is typical for a situation of war. However, it is successfully applied in times of piece. The enemy can be tangible and concrete: Nazy Germany, Soviet Union, Saddam Hussein and etc., or it can be just «idea of enemy»: capitalism, communism, terrorism, totalitarianism and so on.

So-called demonisation is a strategy of propaganda that contributes to creation of enemy image, where the enemy is presented as «absolute evil» in order to provoke such feeling as fear, hatred, anger and disgust.

One way to create enemy image is using dysphemisms to Dysphemism is a word with strong negative connotation used to describe originally neutral notion. We can find a lot of examples in Vladimir Putin's speech at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly. The president of Russia uses such words and expressions as: «расшатать авторитет» (undermine the legitimacy), «обрушение всей архитектуры международных отношений» (the collapse of the entire architecture of international relations), «агрессивное внешнее вмешательство» (aggressive intervention), «бесцеремонно разрушены» (rashly destroyed), «социальная катастрофа» (social disasters), «спровоцировали вооруженный переворот» (instigating a coup d'état from abroad), «вспыхнула гражданская война» (this has triggered a civil war), «экономический эгоизм» (economic selfishness) [9], [10] and etc., speaking about America and the consequences of its actions.

In addition to this, a lot of dysphemisms are used to describe Islamic State Terrorist Organization: «сеет зло и человеконенавистничество» [9]. (sow evil and hatred of humankind [10]), «кровавыми преступлениями оскверняет величайшую мировую религию» (also tarnishes one of the greatest world religions with its atrocities), «братоубийственная война» (fratricide), «издеваются над исламом» (make a mockery of Islam), «головорезы, которые уже почувствовали запах крови» (thugs have tasted blood), «черное дело» (criminal activities) [9], [10].

All these expressions help the head of Russia to create vivid negative enemy portraits. However, not all the choices of a translator really reflect the original meaning and can be regarded as equivalents. So the way language means of manipulation are translated to another language is an issue that also needs to be studied by linguists.

## **False presuppositions**

T.V. Bulygina and A.D. Shmelev in their book describe another way of manipulation by language means - assertions disguised as presuppositions [1]. Basically, presupposition is a background belief relating to the utterance that is assumed as known by the recipient and true, while assertion is just declaration without included reasoning. If presupposition is not true, the statement does not have sense. For example, a phrase «The country recovered from the economic crisis» is based on the facts that a) There was an economic crisis in the country and b)The country had difficulties caused by this crisis. Otherwise, the statement is senseless. Politicians often substitute presuppositions with assertions in order to make the public believe that something is obvious and does not require any proof.

In Barack Obama's speech at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly we can see a lot of examples of such substitutions. For example, in his phrase «The disorder we see is not driven solely by competition between nations or any single ideology.» [11] the idea that there is a disorder taking place is used as presupposition, despite the fact that this statement is rather controversial.

The same strategy we can see in the following statement: «Now, within Russia, state-controlled media may describe these events as an example of a resurgent Russia» [11]. Here the idea that Russian media is controlled by the government is implicit. However, this fact cannot be regarded as true and proven.

Finally, by saying «Imagine if, instead, Russia had engaged in true diplomacy...» [11]. Barack Obama means that everyone knows that in fact Russia had engaged in false diplomacy. This idea cannot serve as presupposition, because it is a subjective judgment.

## Conclusion

To sum it up, today the importance of research aimed at analyzing linguistic peculiarities of political discourse aimed at influencing public opinion is indisputable. We are living in the interesting times, when significant events and rapid changes are taking place in the political sphere, and the role of language in them can scarcely be overestimated.

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# НЕОЛОГИЗМЫ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ АНГЛИЙСКОМ И НЕМЕЦКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ КАК РЕЗУЛЬТАТ РАЗГОВОРНОГО ДИСКУРСА И СПОСОБЫ ИХ ПЕРЕВОДА НА РУССКИЙ ЯЗЫК

Данная статья посвящена таким вопросам как: способы появления неологизмов в английском и немецком языках, а также затрагивается проблема их перевода на русский язык. Согласно последним исследованиям, неологизмы являются не маловажным источником пополнения словарного состава любого языка.

Ключевые слова: неологизмы, способы образования, перевод.