ЯЗЫКИ НАРОДОВ ЗАРУБЕЖНЫХ СТРАН (С УКАЗАНИЕМ КОНКРЕТНОГО ЯЗЫКА ИЛИ ГРУППЫ ЯЗЫКОВ) / LANGUAGES OF PEOPLES OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES (INDICATING A SPECIFIC LANGUAGE OR GROUP OF LANGUAGES)

LINGUISTIC MEANS OF EXPRESSING NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT IN MEDIA DISCOURSE BASED ON THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

Research article

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Abstract

The subject of the study is the linguistic means of expressing negative assessments in media discourse.

The purpose of this article is to trace the impact on the consciousness of society of linguistic means of displaying negative assessments of political and social events, as well as politicians. The article is also aimed at proving the fact that the use of a number of means of negative assessment, categorical formulations, emotionally charged language and even insults, despite all this, the placement of this information in the electronic editions of German information and political magazines and newspapers indicates a deliberate intention to create a negative image of some countries and their politicians.

This study was conducted using texts from Internet news sites and electronic versions of well-known printed German newspapers, such as "Süddeutsche Zeitung", "Stern" et al.

Keywords: the German language, media discourse, negative assessment, expression of assessment in language.

ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ СРЕДСТВА ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ НЕГАТИВНОЙ ОЦЕНКИ В ДИСКУРСЕ СМИ НА ПРИМЕРЕ НЕМЕЦКОГО ЯЗЫКА

Научная статья

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Аннотация

Предметом исследования являются языковые средства выражения негативных оценок в дискурсе СМИ.

Цель данной статьи – проследить влияние на сознание общества языковых средств отображения негативных оценок политических и социальных событий, а также политиков. Целью статьи также является доказательство того факта, что использование ряда средств негативной оценки, категоричных формулировок, эмоционально окрашенной лексики и даже оскорблений, несмотря на все это, размещение данной информации в электронных изданиях немецких информационных и политических журналов и газет указывает на сознательное намерение создать негативный имидж некоторых стран и их политиков.

Исследование проводилось с использованием текстов новостных интернет-сайтов и электронных версий известных печатных немецких газет, таких как «Süddeutsche Zeitung», «Stern» и др.

Ключевые слова: немецкий язык, дискурс СМИ, негативная оценка, выражение оценки в языке.

Introduction

The authors of news publications, describing current events, address readers, thereby making a statement about the world around them. Thus, the authors express their worldview and a certain vision of the world through language. The language of the media does not directly reflect reality, it is a means of representing the results of individual mental activity in generally meaningful forms, therefore different authors will choose different linguistic signs when representing reality, and their choice will be determined by a certain intention.

The analysis of media texts, taking into account the political and social context, with the analysis of the meanings intended by the authors and interpreted by readers, is carried out within the framework of a discursive approach. Discourse in linguistics, in contrast to text, is a higher-level unit: "Discourses are conditionally high-level components of texts and form their virtual contexts" [8, P. 24]. They are not just sets of texts, but represent transtextual language structures. Discourses are represented as networks of statements.

The regular repetition and predictability of the use of certain linguistic means in media discourse, with all the variety of topics discussed, taking into account large text arrays updated daily, help highlight an obviously seen uniformity. The linguistic elements of media publications form one structural, semantic and functional whole, aimed at a comprehensive impact on readers.

The research apparatus includes a set of methods: descriptive method (observation, interpretation of linguistic facts), contextual and component analysis.

The main results of the research

The evaluation category represents the comprehension and categorization of the surrounding world, which manifests itself in the relationship of the subject of evaluation to the object of evaluation. The use of evaluative vocabulary and various stylistic techniques allows the author of the article to interpret events, placing the accents he needs. The originality of the narrative and the presentation of certain political events often reflect an evaluative vision of the event being covered and increase the information content of the articles. The category of evaluation in a language can be realized at various language levels, both at lexical, morphological, syntactic levels, and as a result of the interaction of several multi-level means of language. Many researchers (V.D. Devkin, T.I. Kuligina, M.S. Romanova, Z.E. Fomina) [1], [2], [4], [6] note that lexemes with a negative assessment predominate in the German language. A good state of things is considered as corresponding to the norm, a bad one as a deviation from it.

One of the ways to create a negative assessment is the technique emerging in labeling and imposing negative and emotional assessments on events participants and, accordingly, on countries. This process, in its extreme expression, is aimed at causing disgust or horror towards a specific person or country. For the negative assessment to persist, the object of consideration must be constantly presented in a negative way, and as it is known, a negative assessment or attitude, unlike a positive one, stays for a longer time. In expressing their opinion, the authors choose evaluative means depending on who is the object of evaluation. This makes it possible to emphasize nuances while using selective perception. This is the linguistic realization of the opposition "friend – foe", which is expressed in the following: everything that is related to one's own realities is assessed positively, and all the rest – negatively.

For example, *"Xi, al-Sisi, der Emir – sie alle sind, wie Erdoğan, gute Beispiele für das Dilemma, in dem die deutsche Außenpolitik steckt, und für den permanenten Balanceakt, den sie vollführen muss. Man möchte mit solchen Leuten lieber nichts zu tun haben. Aber ohne sie geht es nicht. Zu viel steht auf dem Spiel, national wie international. Es geht um Frieden, um Wirtschaft, um Flüchtlingsbewegungen. Und ums Klima."* [10]. – *"Xi Jinping, El-Sisi, the emir - all of them, like Erdogan, are good examples of the dilemma that German foreign policy finds itself in, the constant balancing act it has to perform. It is preferable to have nothing to do with such people. But without them, things will not move forward. There is too much at stake, both nationally and internationally. We are talking about peace, the economy, refugees. And about the climate."*

The author creates a negative assessment by contrasting the negative actions of the leaders of several states in relation to the positive policies of Germany. The author divides states into hostile ones (China, Egypt, the Emirate of Qatar) and respectable ones, like supposedly Germany itself, which is forced to negotiate on the settlement of world problems "with people with whom it is preferable to have nothing in common" with people like Erdogan, Xi and Emir of Qatar. What is viewed is not important, what is important is how it is viewed.

The use of precedent names in media discourse also serves as one of the ways to create a negative assessment. Precedent names are the names of historical and fictional personalities, events and objects of material and spiritual culture widely known in the linguistic and cultural community, used as symbols or to characterize certain situations.

„Doch Trump ergeht es wie Lord Voldemort bei Harry Potter. Es wird über ihn gesprochen, sein Name aber nicht ausgesprochen. Don't say his name!" [11] – *"Thus Trump looks like Lord Voldemort from "Harry Potter": he is talked about, but his name is not pronounced."*

The author of the article compares Trump with a character from the Harry Potter series of novels, namely with a dark wizard who has enormous magical power and practically achieved immortality using the most disgusting techniques of black magic. The precedent name "Lord Voldemort" characterizes Trump, according to the author of the article, as the embodiment of evil.

„Erdoğan ist kein Sultan, steht aber in deren Tradition, so sieht er sich" [12]. – *"Erdogan is not a sultan, but he is part of their tradition, that's how he sees himself."*

By using the precedent title "sultan", the author of the article achieves the effect of creating Erdogan's unlimited power in Turkey, thereby presenting him as the absolute ruler.

The media shapes the public's positive or negative attitude towards political figures. This relationship is formed through language, namely, through the purposeful use of semantic units.

The image of politicians is both a reflection of reality and is deliberately formed by the media. Peter Stiegnitz argues that public opinion is shaped by political lies, which stem from the goals and interests of the current government. The media is considered as the fourth branch of government along with the three classical ones – legislative, executive and judicial – but the fourth branch has greater influence not only on these three branches, but also on political and economic decisions [9].

The formation of politicians' images in media reports is carried out using evaluative vocabulary. The images of politicians are perceived by readers in a revised form, through refraction in the mind of the author of the article. Most often you can find means of verbalizing a negative assessment.

„Immer wieder erwähnte Trump auch Joe Biden, den US-Präsidenten und seinen Konkurrenten bei der Wahl im November. Er nannte ihn einen "dummen Präsidenten", teils deutete er auch obszöne Beleidigungen an, die er das Publikum in einer Sprechpause vollenden ließ" [13]. – *"Trump has repeatedly mentioned Joe Biden, the US president and his rival in the November election. He called him a "stupid president" and sometimes made obscene insults, which he allowed the audience to finish during a break in the speech."*

In this passage, the author goes to the extent of insulting in order to discredit the enemy and to create certain sentiments in society. By insulting his opponent, Trump is trying to gain advantages in the upcoming elections.

„Trump sprach in seiner Rede auch das wohl größte Wahlkampfthema in den USA an: die Migration an der Südgrenze. Ohne dies zu belegen, behauptete er, Regierungen in Zentral- und Südamerika, leerten ihre Gefängnisse, um sie dann in die USA zu schicken. "Meiner Meinung nach sind das keine Menschen", sagte er über die Geflüchteten. Später bezeichnete er sie der New York Times zufolge als „Tiere" [13]. – *„In his speech, Trump also addressed perhaps the biggest issue of the US election campaign: migration at the southern border. Without providing any evidence, he said governments in Central and*

South America were emptying their prisons and then sending prisoners to the United States. "In my opinion, these are not people," he said of the refugees. He later called them „animals "according to the New York Times. "

Insulting in public is becoming commonplace in this environment. Kremer [7] notes that every language always harbors the potential for offensive words. Can we imagine a (natural) language that does not include curse words in its vocabulary, and which simply lacks the means to discriminate, ridicule, or denigrate an opponent?

For example, in his speeches to voters, Trump uses insults, and the press, in turn, picks up these statements, emphasizing the danger of an aggravation of the political situation if Trump comes to power: *"Dann kippte seine Rede ins Dystopische: „Wenn ich jetzt nicht gewählt werde, wird es ein Blutbad für das Ganze geben - das wird das Geringste sein. Es wird ein Blutbad für das Land sein" [13]. – "Then his speech took on a dystopian character: "If I am not elected now, there will be a bloodbath for the entire country - and that's the least of it. It will be a bloody massacre for the country."*

Prejudiced categorical formulations are used for manipulative purposes. The following wording serves as a catchy, attention-grabbing title and subtitle:

„Moskau will Showdown in Skopje" – „Russia wants a decisive showdown in Skopje." „Viele OSZE-Mitglieder würden die Anwesenheit von Russlands Außenminister Sergej Lawrow beim Ministertreffen in Skopje für ein notwendiges Übel halten" [14]. – „Many OSCE members would consider the presence of Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov at the Skopje summit as a necessary evil."

In this example, there is a borrowing from the English language (Showdown – a final showdown that ends in the defeat of the opponent) and phraseology (für ein notwendiges Übel halten), which have pronounced evaluative, associative meanings. We observe here a deliberate emphasis on the aggravation of the political situation; the author twice emphasizes the severity of the current situation, interpreting the participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs as a necessary evil, and thereby creates a negative image of the country and its representatives.

The evaluative nature of political discourse is achieved through the introduction of various linguistic means: foreign words, oppositions, metaphors, repetitions and other phenomena. *„Beiden hat Grund zur Sorge. Seine Unterstützung für Israel schadet US-Präsident Joe Biden, zeigt sich in Umfragen. Und mit Blick auf eine mögliche weitere Amtszeit ist sein Alter ein Handicap" [15]. – „Biden has cause for concern. Polls show that support for Israel is damaging US President Joe Biden's image. And given the possible further term of presidentship, his age is a disadvantage. "*

The authors of the article deliberately chose the lexical unit of English origin (Handicap), because it has multiple meanings, and in this context and taking into account the condition of J. Biden, this word can be translated as a hindrance, obstacle, physical and mental handicap, defect, illness.

In the following example, the author of the article, using contrast, as well as by introducing signs of a foreign culture (sesame buns), the realities of a foreign country (Kasımpaşha), sarcastically describes Erdogan's path from a seller of sesame buns to a ruler whose residence is in a palace of 1000 rooms:

Die Welt von Kasimpasa und den Sesamkringeln hat Erdoğan schon lange hinter sich gelassen. Heute residiert er in einem Palast in Ankara mit 1000 Zimmern. Der Überlebensinstinkt aber, den er als Kind lernte, prägt ihn bis heute [16]. – Erdogan has long left behind the world of Kasimpasa (a district of Istanbul) and sesame buns. Today he owns a 1000 room palace in Ankara. But the survival instinct he acquired as a child still leaves its mark on him.

One of the central functions of media language, the influence on the recipient, is carried out when choosing linguistic means to realize a certain intention. One of the most frequent and favourite methods of speech influence is a metaphor.

A metaphor is a means of reflecting and describing the world, which is expressed in the creation of new concepts. The process of metaphorization is a procedure for processing knowledge structures, where the expression of new concepts is realized by the known meanings of words. Most scientists interpret metaphor broadly, meaning both the linguistic metaphor itself and any associative-figurative lexical means (metonymy, synecdoche, irony, allusion, comparison).

Metaphors help us transform the linguistic picture of the world existing in the reader's mind, introduce a new categorization into the presentation of seemingly well-known phenomena. Political discourse serving the area of public relations uses metaphor to structure social and political reality. So, for example, in terms of politics, painful conditions explicate negative and crisis phenomena in the social and political activities of the German government. In the following example, the metaphor of illness verbalizes the political situation in the country:

Eine vitale Demokratie lebt von echten Alternativen. Die Politik sollte sich endlich trauen, Prioritäten zu setzen und Zumutungen nicht mehr zu scheuen. Sonst zerstört sie noch mehr Vertrauen. Hier liegt der tiefere Grund für die Malaise, in der die Koalition jetzt steckt [17]. – Viable democracy thrives on real alternatives. Politics must finally have the courage to set priorities and no longer shy away from unreasonable demands. Otherwise, it will destroy even more trust. Herein lies a deeper reason for the malaise in which the coalition is now mired.

In the following context, the lexical unit *verwunden* is used metaphorically, it reflects the situation in Israel after the Hamas attack: *Der Bundespräsident (Steinmeier) betonte jedoch das Selbstverteidigungsrecht Israels. Noch nie sei das Land so tief verwundet worden wie am 7. Oktober, es kämpfe um seine Existenz [18]. – However, the Federal President (Steinmeier) emphasized Israel's right to self-defence. The country has never been so deeply wounded as on October 7, and it is fighting for its existence.*

„Zwischen extremer Anspannung und Hoffnung": So ist die Stimmung vor Ort am Tag des geplanten Geisel-Deals [19]. – Between *extreme tension and hope": this is the mood on the day of the planned hostage deal.*

"Geisel-Deals", this is how the author of the article metaphorically calls the exchange of hostages between Hamas and Israel during the four-day ceasefire, using a colloquial lexical unit of English origin: "Dubious deal".

In einem Jahr wird in den USA gewählt. Die Wirtschaft erholt sich allmählich. Gleichzeitig ist Donald Trump Dauergast vor Gericht [15]. – In a year there will be elections in the United States. The economy is gradually recovering. At the same time, Donald Trump is a regular guest in court.

Using a metaphor *(Dauergast vor Gericht),* which generates irony, the author conveys the situation in which Donald Trump found himself. This is a civil lawsuit in which the former US President is accused of inflating the value of his real estate. In addition to this civil trial, charges have been brought against Trump in four more criminal cases.

G.Y. Solganik notes that "the picture of the world created in the media is intended to inform, as well as to persuade and influence. Therefore, it largely depends on the ideological and political attitudes of the addressee" [5, P. 795].

Through their statements, journalists and political figures have the opportunity to create the desired image of the country in the eyes of Europeans and the whole world. They deliberately distort information; as an example, the following excerpt from the article is based on an incorrect comparison of Russia with a gas station masquerading as a country:

"Russland ist eine Tankstelle, die sich als Land verkleidet", sagte McCain im Interview mit dem Fernsehsender CNN. Das Geschäftsmodell war damit trefflich beschrieben: Öl in die Welt bringen und von den Einnahmen leben. Anders als beim Gas kaufen Deutschland und die meisten anderen europäischen Länder längst kein Öl mehr beim Kreml. Die USA orchestrierten im Rahmen des Industrieländerbunds G 7 außerdem einen Preisdeckel für russisches Rohöl. Wochenlang hatten die Beamten der US-Administration am Konzept eines Ölpreisdeckels geschraubt - und schlussendlich die G-7-Staaten überzeugt [20]. – *"Russia is a gas station masquerading as a country," McCain told CNN. The business model was thus perfectly described: supply oil to the world market and live off the income. Unlike gas, Germany and most other European countries have long stopped buying oil from the Kremlin. The United States also organized price restrictions on Russian oil within the G7 association of industrialized countries. For several weeks, US administration officials worked on the concept of limiting oil prices - and finally convinced the G7 countries.*

To convince readers of the presented point of view, the author uses a number of evaluative linguistic means: the figurative use of the verb *orchestrieren* in the meaning of "initiate, organize", also *schrauben* in the meaning of "achieve, get", although the verb is translated as twist, screw in, annoy. In the context, the lexical unit *Preisdeckel* is used, which is not registered in the online dictionary Duden.de, which indicates that the word is occasional and serves to inform and attract the reader's attention, and is also used for the purpose of rationalization and saving space while achieving maximum communicative effect.

In the expression *"kein Öl mehr beim Kreml,"* the journalist uses a precedent name (name-symbol) with high information capacity; in this nomination, a certain layer of culturally significant knowledge is encoded in a condensed form; in Russian linguistic culture, this nomination refers to the country's top leadership. Judging by the context, the author reduces all government activities of the country to trading in minerals and generating income from sales and tries to convince the reader of this.

According to E.O. Mendzheritskaya, the language of the press as a type of discourse is not limited to the communication of information, but represents thinking through the means of a specific language, taking into account verbal and mental reality [3, P. 78]. In addition to informing, the media influence the audience, shape public opinion, and social-political consciousness.

Conclusion

The organizational and structural features of media messages (memorable headlines and subheadings) and the use by authors of various means of artistic expression (metaphors, metonymies, borrowings, precedent lexical units, occasionalisms, allusions, phraseological units) are ways of cognition, explanation, interpretation and assessment of political events.

Electronic media use a rich arsenal of linguistic means aimed at forming a pre-determined assessment of the event being described. Of course, all of the listed methods of forming an evaluative attitude towards events are not exhaustive, but only represent the implementation of speech manipulative influence on the reader.

Along with the prompt statement of new events in electronic versions of magazines and newspapers, there is comprehension, generalization, evaluation and typification of the presented facts of reality. In the media, by placing semantic accents, it is possible to manipulate public consciousness. This is realized not so much through the description and presentation of this or that event, but rather through the formation of a certain point of view on this event. These facts give reason to say that the language of the media, using the example of the German press, is ideologically loaded. When covering political events, German news media discourse is able to divide countries into hostile and respectable ones and convince the reader of this.

A wide range of diverse and multi-aspect means of subjective modality are used as tools for manipulation: reference to sources of information in the form of direct, improperly direct and indirect speech of politicians; use of evaluative vocabulary; use of categorical language. Based on lexical content, press reports become appealing and acquire a subjective character. Messages from news portals are characterized by multifunctionality; they are focused on presenting new information, shaping the reader's opinion and aimed at entertaining the addressee.

News consumption is increasingly taking place on the Internet, where the full range of means of expressing a negative assessment of certain events is used to attract the reader's attention and influence mass consciousness.

Creating messages with a pronounced negative assessment occurs to increase audience coverage, for the purpose of entertainment, and sometimes with the intention of misleading. Any information needs to be double-checked and confirmed; no source of information is reliable, be it state media, private media, social networks or instant messengers.

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