МЕДИАКОММУНИКАЦИИ И ЖУРНАЛИСТИКА / MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS AND JOURNALISM

PSYCHOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF STUDY OF LINGUISTIC EFFECT AND MANIPULATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Research article

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Abstract

The article contains description of a number of psycholinguistics aspects that allow for effective research in the field of linguistic effect and manipulation of consciousness using language in the mass media and "new" media, e.g., social networks and popular messengers. Four aspects have been considered in detail: namely psychological, linguistic, sociological and culturological. There are tools of effect within each aspect, a description of a number of strategies and tactics of linguistic effect and manipulation of consciousness, as well as a number of issues related to the effect on the consciousness of the mass media consumer. Recently, the topics of such researches have become most relevant, while the field of mass communication was becoming as manipulative and aggressive as possible.

Keywords: psycholinguistics, psycholinguistic methods, linguistic effect, mind games, opinion-based journalism, association experiment.

ПСИХОЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ РЕЧЕВОГО ВОЗДЕЙСТВИЯ И МАНИПУЛИРОВАНИЯ СОЗНАНИЕМ

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В статье описывается ряд аспектов психолингвистики, позволяющих проводить результативные исследования в области речевого воздействия и манипулирования сознанием с помощью языка в средствах массовой информации и «новых» медиа, например, социальных сетях и популярных мессенджерах. Подробно рассмотрены четыре аспекта: психологический, собственно лингвистический, социологический и культурологический. В рамках каждого из аспектов представлен инструментарий воздействия, описан ряд стратегий и тактик речевого воздействия и манипулирования сознанием, а также намечен ряд проблем, связанных с воздействием на сознание потребителя массовой информации. Темы таких исследований наиболее актуальны в последнее время, когда сфера массовой коммуникации становится максимально манипулятивной и агрессивной.

Ключевые слова: психолингвистика, психолингвистические методы, речевое воздействие, манипулирование сознанием, публицистика, ассоциативный эксперимент.

Introduction

Psycholinguistics is science directly involved in solving the issues of linguistic effect. It is a fairly young science (founded in 1953), though lots have been done in its short history. These days psycholinguistics defines the subject of study as the correlation of personality with the structure and functions of linguistic activity, on the one hand, and a language as the basic constituent of the human world image, on the other one [5].

Discussion

The following psycholinguistics aspects can be distinguished.

Psychological aspect. In a situation of communication, any act of communication is considered from the point of view of its orientation to a particular scheduled response, which from this point of view can be defined as a *psychological effect.*

Two components are conventionally distinguished in the meaning of language elements: the subject-logical (denotative) meaning and the additional (connotative) one, which reflects the attitude to the subject of speech and is defined as an aggregation of emotional, evaluative, expressive, associative-figurative, contextual, stylistic components of meaning. But when we hear and understand this or that word, we do not realize those individual factors, but perceive the information as a single, complex image which is a gestalt that lies directly beyond what is being expressed and simultaneously organically connected therewith [4].

The specific power of the word is in the fact that in its entirety, it is addressed to a person as a special information field. It includes the following:

1) things that are currently relevant for a person have a special meaning for him/her and meets his/her needs;

2) acquired individual and collective experience, a picture of being, a system of categories and meanings which the world is unconsciously interpreted with.

So, the new information is superimposed on the individual information field, which, in turn, enters the general information space.

Today it is common to speak of the practical implementation of the interaction of information and a person from the standpoint of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), which raises an issue of simulation of thinking by external programs, the ability to anticipate the outcome of information exposure, internal mental strategies of thinking and its hidden motivating forces.

Linguistic aspect. The structure of language has almost the same effect on consciousness as the bright mental images. There are six basic tools for the implementation of the communicative force of language available to the addresser:

1) namely the choice of words and expressions,
2) the creation of new words and expressions,
3) the choice of grammatical form,
4) the choice of the sequence of information provision,
5) the use of intonation and tonality,
6) the use of general context [4].

However, the matter of linguistic effect is not quite simple: since the same communicative techniques in some cases serve for skillful manipulation, and make the message more expressive for the rest. Thus, it is not the reception itself that is manipulative, but its affecting load in a specific situation: what conclusions the addressee can draw based on that and whether he/she will be misled about the information crucial to him/her [7].

During communication, various language techniques are used, the application of which depends on the desired result. E.g., various techniques of nominating the addressee, compatibility with evaluative and connotatively colored words, euphemization, generalization, associative transfer, etc.

Sociological aspect. A social subject corresponds to each level of social arrangement of society. The study of how social subjects arrange their living space, how they act and exchange information, allows to learn more deeply the peculiarities of their lifestyle and features of thinking. This in turn requires the deepest possible mastering of the social and socio-psychological mechanisms that form it.

When considering sociological aspect, not only situational forms of communication that are of great interest, but also non-situational (universal) ones, since when communicating people master cultural values at the level of everyday practice, by arranging them into individual or social value systems [1]. The study and structuring of such systems have become a relevant issue of sociolinguistics. One of the components of that system is the everyday consciousness, an average language personality, as well as the native speaker of the current moment.

Being a prototype of social thinking, the language is considered an ideal tool for managing the consciousness of both an individual and an entire society as a whole [10]. It is precisely due to the ability to affect that language is called a social power tool. The power of language assumes that it allows to encode information in many formally alternative, but functionally equivalent ways, i.e., the same thought can be conveyed by various means.

If the linguistic effect becomes self-sufficient and manipulative, becomes an end in itself, then the social effect becomes aggressive. "Information ceases to serve a person, acts against him, does not correspond to his interests, but tries to subdue the worldview and life goals. From the standpoint of sociopsychologistics, it can be considered as a phenomenon of information warfare" [4].

Culturological aspect. Beliefs and values are formed throughout lifetime, by generating a linguistic and cultural field of interaction between human and society. They are similar to filters that affect any view of the world, the interpretation of events, and are the basis for the motivation of behavior. No matter how self-conscious we are about it, we proceed primarily from accumulated beliefs, traditions, culture, i.e., a model of the world that reflects everything culturally significant by means of language.

Each culture has its own model of the world, but from force of habit, the human does not notice it, by treating it as the fact of life. A model of the world is the knowledge about the world arranged in a definite manner and inherent in the cognitive system. On the one hand, it includes generally known and "objective" knowledge about the world (for example: the Volga River flows into the Caspian Sea but the Amazon River flows into the Atlantic Ocean); on the other hand, it includes "subjective" knowledge, values and related hierarchies, various norms and other cognitive structures generalizing the experience of an individual and society.

The formation of categories is associated with the creation of cognitive concepts and their stable associations. The concept pulls together a particular content, while restructuring it and somehow arranging the semantic space. Finding such concepts may be the transition to a semantic code which is not directly observable, but is recognized as such by everyone. In respect of the text, the external manifestation of concepts are keywords (semantic milestones, strong points) that create a sort of "relief" of the semantic space being formed in consciousness.

The model of the world of each person is strictly individual. So, bringing various individual models of the world into a particular compliance with each other is executed using such an institution as a community or cohabitation. The models found and tested are transmitted, to a certain degree of reliability, between the individuals differently, including using the language. So, the society can be defined as a system representing itself a "world of interacting models" [6].

The models of the world have a figurative nature. The phenomenon of associative connection, combining images into a single whole, is defined precisely by culture, as well as by the sensory experience of a human. It allows using verbal *associations* as a means of identifying and describing the cultural model of the world [9]. Psycholinguistics deals with the study of verbal associations only: both the stimulus and the response are considered words. The commonality of associations is fixed by the so-called dictionaries of associative norms, where the brightest example is the Russian associative dictionary [8].

The tactics of updating associative connections between words (associative transfer) is also one of the widely used manipulative techniques. In this event, the directed associations are used to create a particular (generally negative) opinion of

the addressee about the character of the text. This tactic is based on the property of language units located in the text close to each other to enter into stable associative relationships and form text associative fields [2].

Some words use associations to create a sense of "another world" which is attractive to the addressee. E.g., foreign-language borrowings have become such, while creating in the minds of the addressees an image of the "shining world" of a civilized and prosperous West [3].

The installation of associative connections (often by minor signs) is also the basis of a common technique known as "labeling" and many others.

Conclusion

The considered aspects of psycholinguistic research allow both to effectively describe strategies and tactics of linguistic effect and manipulation of consciousness by means of language, and also to develop various techniques of countering aggressive psychological effect on the consciousness of the mass reader in traditional and "new" mass media, which is extremely widespread at the present time.

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Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

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Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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