

LEXICAL AND SYNTACTIC LINGUISTIC MEANS IN REFLECTING POLITICAL REALITIES IN THE TEXT OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DYSTOPIAS

Research article

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Abstract

The article deals with language means that are used to influence people's feelings and consciousness to attract the attention of listeners by deliberate deviating from standard speech. The purpose of this article is to identify the specific features of lexical and syntactic means of reflecting political realities in the texts of English-language dystopias. The material for the study was the English-language dystopias of the 20-50s of the XX century. The analysis was based on methods of systematization and classification of the material, interpretation of the text, as well as contextual analysis. The practical significance of the research is that its results can be used in university courses in linguistics, literary studies and special courses in cultural linguistics, stylistics and linguistics of the text. As a result of the study, it was revealed that the stylistic means of language in the texts of English-speaking dystopias are used to highlight the emotional and expressive aspects of political language.

Keywords: language means, political realities, text, English-language dystopias.

ЛЕКСИЧЕСКИЕ И СИНТАКСИЧЕСКИЕ ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ СРЕДСТВА ОТРАЖЕНИЯ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИХ РЕАЛИЙ В ТЕКСТЕ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНЫХ АНТИУТОПИЙ

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В статье говорится о языковых средствах, которые используются для воздействия на чувства и сознание людей для привлечения внимания слушателей с помощью намеренного отклонения от стандартной речи. Целью данной статьи является выявление специфики лексических и синтаксических средств отражения политических реалий в текстах англоязычных антиутопий. Материалом для исследования стали англоязычные антиутопии 20-50-х гг. ХХ века. Проведенный анализ базировался на методах систематизации и классификации материала, интерпретации текста, а также контекстуальном анализе. Практическая значимость исследования заключается в том, что ее результаты могут найти применение в вузовских курсах по языкоznанию, литературоведению и спецкурсах по лингвокультурологии, стилистике и лингвистике текста. В результате исследования, было выявлено, что стилистические средства языка в текстах англоязычных антиутопий используются с целью выделения эмоционально-экспрессивных аспектов политического языка.

Ключевые слова: языковые средства, политические реалии, текст, англоязычные антиутопии.

Introduction

Special linguistic means are used to influence people's feelings, and consciousness, and are divided into lexical language means and expressive means. Their purpose is to attract the attention of listeners by deliberate deviating from standard speech [13, P. 106]. The influence of speech is provided by multilevel linguistic means: phonetic, lexical, syntactic, and non-verbal [10, P. 54]. In this paper, the object of research is lexical and syntactic linguistic means of reflecting political realities in the texts of English-language dystopias. Considering that dystopias are pieces of discourse of fiction, researching them from the point of view of political discourse is very promising. This analysis affects the interactions of various areas of knowledge and thereby generates new research perspectives in the interpretation of the studied material.

The language of fiction is a system of linguistic means and rules that allow the creation of an imaginary world in fiction [12]. At the same time, the purpose of studying the language of discourse of fiction 'is to show those linguistic means by which the ideological and related emotional content of literary works is expressed' [14]. According to V.V. Vinogradov, each literary work can 'come into relation with other works of the same genre and various related genres. Threads of analogies, correspondences, contrasts, kinship ties stretch from him in all directions, even into the depths of the literary past' [9], that is, works of art can be studied according to the principle of genre affiliation. Considering the above, we consider it possible in our study to use the term 'dystopian language' in relation to the language of the dystopian texts.

Research methods and principles

The data for study was the dystopias of British and American writers. The analysis was based on methods of systematization and classification of the material, interpretation of the text, and contextual analysis. The theoretical basis of the research was the works of Russian and foreign scientists in the field of analysis of the language of dystopias [11], theory of political discourse [10], [13], stylistics and linguistics [2], [8].

Discussion

Lexical language means are all kinds of figurative use of words and phrases and their main purpose is to describe. They include such types of figurative use of words and expressions as metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, litotes, irony, periphrasis, euphemism, comparison, antonomasia, etc. Expressive means increase the expressiveness of speech and enhance its emotionality with the help of special syntactic constructions: rhetorical question, inversion, parallel constructions, etc. [2, P. 29-30], [8, P. 89].

Lexical means of achieving expressiveness are associated with the use of a figurative meaning of a word, or with the use of lexemes from certain lexical groups [10, P. 54].

Metaphors are the most frequent lexical language means used by the authors, when representing political realities in the text of dystopias. A.P. Chudinov calls metaphors a mirror in which ‘regardless of one’s likes and dislikes, national consciousness is reflected, including the essence of political life and the interrelationship of various spheres of human existence’ [13, P. 123]. In dystopias, metaphors really act as a mirror, reflecting the political reality of a dystopian state.

In ‘NINETEEN EIGHTY-FIVE’ metaphors act as the personification of power as a living being, which means that ‘power’ can have eyes, ears, brains, hands, with the help of which surveillance can be carried out.

In dystopias, hunting metaphors are widely represented, and the victim can be an ordinary person. The job of the main character of the novel is to identify and remove the names of enemies of the state from the press, and the author uses the hunter’s term ‘*tracking down*’, which further emphasizes the role of a person as a victim [5].

The animals in Orwell’s story ‘Animal Farm’ cannot escape the role of victim either. They will have to die ‘*screaming their lives out*’, accepted death from a knife of their master [6]. These metaphors are used by the speaker to influence animals properly, so that it can make them revolt against man.

The representative of the authorities in R. Bradbury’s novel ‘Fahrenheit 451’ draws an analogy between a book and a loaded gun, since the book acts as the main threat to the security of society. Its destruction is the main means of controlling free-thinking people [1].

The use of deliberate exaggeration in praising the political system is the favourite method of dystopian authorities. Phrases with hyperbole are no longer perceived by the inhabitants of the country because of their frequent repetition. However, they certainly remain an integral and inevitable part of the propaganda of the dystopian state of power: *Big Brother is all-powerful and infallible. Every success, scientific discovery, achievement, victory ... are held to issue directly from his inspiration and leadership* [5].

An oxymoron is an ‘ingeniously absurd’ transfer of a contrasting feature. In the text of a dystopia, the oxymoron emphasizes the nonsense of what is happening. This method is used in the speeches of both the author and the characters. So, for example, being imprisoned thanks to the denunciation of his own daughter, the father claims with ecstasy and ‘doleful pride’ that he had brought up his child correctly [5].

Such lexical linguistic means, as comparison, synecdoche, antonomasia, are less frequent in dystopias. All these means used to reflect political realities, to enrich the language and the imaginative impression, such as, for example, the comparison of the invasion of the World Army in Berlin with the capture of Troy by the Greeks [3]. The change of a common name to a proper name, which is the case of antonomasia, is quite rare and is used to emphasize contempt or to belittle the enemies of the current government using their names as a humiliating abusive name.

The lexical linguistic means also include euphemisms. A special feature of the language of totalitarian regimes is the tendency to euphemize. In dystopian novels, political euphemisms are mainly used, as any dystopia shows the structure of the state system. The implementation of the new state principles into people’s minds requires a new vocabulary, which is filled with new words. They can perform the function of euphemisms.

The greatest number of political euphemisms can be found in the novel ‘NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR’. These are euphemisms that make up the dictionary of Newspeak. They are created artificially to explain the realities of the new world: ‘*doublethink* – reality control; *facecrime* – a face improper expression.

Neutral connotation words are used to hide the true meaning of a word or phrase. Speaking about executed people, the word ‘*vapourized*’ is commonly used instead of *abolished*, *disappeared* or *annihilated* [5].

Thus, euphemisms are widely used by the authorities to conceal unnecessary information and to manipulate people’s minds in order to retain their power.

Next, we will speak about the syntactic means of the language designed to enhance emotional impact. The use of similar syntactic constructions, or parallelism, is a fairly commonly used method in dystopias. They are used both within one sentence and in several ones following one after another. It is worth noting that the expressive language means are the most often used in the speeches of authorities. They are similar to rhymed poems and are used for propaganda purposes, for example, in slogans and mottos to simplify their perception and better memorization: ... *who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past* [4].

Besides, frequent repetition of expressive means is used as the subconscious persuasion and the right ideology implementation when the rulers speak to the people: ‘*Oceania has always been at war with Eastasia. Since the beginning of your life, since the beginning of the Party, since the beginning of history*’ [5].

Another expressive means that is often used in the text of dystopias is a rhetorical question. It is interesting for its counterintuitive nature, since it does not require any answer. The people seem to be a fully entitled interlocutors who can ask and answer questions. Though in reality there is a monologue, not a dialogue, between a representative of the authorities and ordinary people. Questions are asked not to get an answer, but solely to implement the right opinion: ‘*Will Big Brother ever die?*’ ‘*Of course not. How could he die?*’ [5].

Conclusion

Stylistic language means are used in the texts of dystopias for reflecting political realities in order to highlight the emotional and expressive aspects of political language. In the text of dystopias, both lexical and syntactic means of language are used in the representation of political realities. The lexical language means reflecting political realities are used in order to achieve an artistic effect of expressiveness. While expressive language means, such as parallel constructions and rhetorical question, contribute to the spread of ideology and the subordination of people and their consciousness to a common idea. The authors of the dystopian works use lexical and expressive linguistic means when reflecting political realities in the text of dystopias in order to highlight the emotional and expressive aspects of political language. The most frequent lexical means are metaphors, euphemisms, hyperbole, oxymoron and are used to achieve an effect of expressiveness. Euphemisms serve to spread the ideology of the state and to manipulate people's consciousness. Euphemisms can hide and embellish the real activities of the government. They are the means of politicizing the language of dystopian states.

Prospects for further research of the dystopian language can be associated with solving following problems as a more detailed study of the onomasticon, and the study of vocabulary, grammar and word formation.

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.

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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