СРЕДСТВА РЕАЛИЗАЦИИ ПРЕЗЕНТАЦИОННОЙ ФУНКЦИИ ДИСКУРСА СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ СЕТЕЙ (ПРЕДМЕТНАЯ СФЕРА – ИЗУЧЕНИЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА)

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В статье рассматривается презентационный дискурс, его определение и особенности. Описываются результаты анализа 100 профилей англоязычных преподавателей английского языка в социальной сети "Instagram". В результате проведенного исследования выделены неотъемлемые составляющие презентационного дискурса социальных сетей и его функции. Описываются результаты комплексного эмпирического исследования рассматриваемой функции на основе анализа основных языковых средств, использующихся для создания позитивного образа в русскоязычном и англоязычном презентационном дискурсе, с одной стороны, и качественного и количественного анализа результатов опроса студентов - будущих учителей английского языка и школьников, изучающих английский язык (n=173), нацеленного на выявление наиболее эффективных средств реализации презентационной функции в социальной сети "Instagram" с точки зрения потенциальных пользователей.

Ключевые слова: презентационный дискурс, социальные сети, изучение иностранных языков, презентема.

REALIZATION OF THE PRESENTATIONAL FUNCTION OF THE SOCIAL NETWORK DISCOURSE (SUBJECT AREA – ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING)

Research article

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Abstract

The study touches upon the presentational discourse, its definition and peculiarities. The paper describes the results of the analysis of 100 profiles of the English-speaking teachers of the English language in "Instagram". Based on the conducted analysis the integral components of the presentational discourse of social networks and its functions are determined. The authors analyze the main linguistic means used to create a positive image in the Russian-language and English-language presentational discourse. The study pays special attention to the qualitative and quantitative analysis of a survey conducted among students, future English teachers. The empirical part of the study (survey conducted among 173 school and university students) allowed the authors to single out the most effective means of realization of the presentational function from the point of view of the Internet users.

Keywords: presentational discourse, social networks, English language learning, presenteme.

Introduction

The presentational function performed by social networks is the function of creating a positive image of certain objects, processes, personalities, and services. Currently, social networks are widely used by representatives of commercial organizations, private companies and individual businessmen to represent and advertise their services and products, and some individuals create their own image that is attractive to the audience. In this perspective we can clearly see the necessity to carry out a complex linguistic study of the presentational function of the social network discourse. This necessity refers to lexical and grammatical language means used by the users of social networks as well as to non-verbal tools. That is why the study of the presentational function is believed to be relevant.

The object of the present research comprises the means of realization of the presentational function in the discourse of the social network Instagram. The subject of the study, in particular, includes intertextual, graphical, lexical and semantic peculiarities of expression in the presentational discourse.

The purpose of our research is to identify the main features and tools that Instagram users employ to present information about services related to English language teaching.

We claim that the detailed and complex analysis of the expressive means of the presentational discourse of social networks carried out in the study is quite a new research field in modern linguistics. Moreover, the material used for analysis is also quite new and up-to-date: we selected the Instagram accounts devoted to foreign language teaching. Such research appears to be a unique one, since there are not many papers devoted to this particular research object and the subject area. We dare to believe that such papers are quite valuable for the development of modern linguistics that reflects popular social trends and the reality of life, in fact.

Within the framework of this paper, the task is to identify the means of implementing the presentational function of discourse in social networks. To achieve the goal, an attempt was made to analyze the existing approaches to the concept of "discourse".

Thus, along with a generalized analysis of this concept from the point of view of its historical formation and development, as well as modern interpretation (for example, [1, P. 149-150]), we also considered the issue related to the typology of discourse and features of the discourse types under study.

Presentation can be considered an integral quality of discourse. It is one of the basic categories of discourse, which is conditioned by the needs of communication [2, P. 26]. According to O. F. Rusakova, the presentational discourse is an attributive element of any kind of public communication, since a presentation strategy is inherent in each communication [3, P. 141]. In the context of the presentational function of the discourse, the speaker transmits classified and cognitively mastered information (that is important for him) to the communicative environment (personal or institutionalized) [4, P. 148]. The purpose of the transfer is to have a semiotic and linguosemiotic effect.

Within the framework of this paper, we consider the presentational discourse from different points of view.

First, it should be noted that the presentational discourse is a set of socially and situationally conditioned genre norms and rules that are necessary for successful interaction [6, P. 33]. Thus, the presentational nature of the discourse reflects such basic genre features as information value, description, objectivity and realism [6, P. 34]. In addition, a characteristic feature of the presentational discourse is its expressiveness, that is, such features of the structure that attract the attention and interest of the addressee [5, P. 200].

Another feature of this discourse function is its creativity, since in order to become successful the presentational discourse must not only show and tell, but also surprise information receivers [3, P. 143].

Presentation in the discourse includes special communication mechanisms. It involves special verbal and non-verbal means of influence in communication, a system of special semiotic characteristics of communication and special language features.

Secondly, it is necessary to indicate that the presentational function of discourse is a three-part interrelated process that includes:

1) cognitive-nominative fixation of the reality surrounding the speaker or the reality constructed by the communicant himself in his consciousness, given to him in a conceptual and figurative form, that is, in the form of a set of descriptive features that characterize this reality taking into account the individual perception of it,

2) evaluation and selection of descriptive features of fixed concepts and images that are most important for the realization of the speaker's life and communicative needs,

3) use of the results of the selection of descriptive features to determine the goals of influence in the communication process [8, P. 85].

The information transmission channel determines the choice of a certain text form. Presentation is most often used in indirect communication to arouse the interest of a potential client. Thus, the texts are created in such a way as to contain as much information as possible, as well as contact details [6, P. 34].

The presentational discourse has a number of functions:

1. informing, i.e. transmitting up-to-date information to the addressee concerning goods and services;
2. positioning, i.e. demonstration of innovations, competitiveness, main achievements;
3. advertising, i.e. product promotion, increasing awareness;
4. training, i.e. providing diagrams and drawings that clearly demonstrate how to work [6, P. 34].

It should also be noted that the presentational function of the discourse is actualized with the help of special units — presentemes. The term 'presenteme' is offered by the authors of the present research as an equivalent of the corresponding Russian term denoting the smallest information unit of influence, which is a complex sign complex, which, in turn, consists of images of the surrounding reality cognitively mastered by an individual and transmitted to another individual within the framework of communication in order to influence him/her [5, P. 213]. According to O. F. Rusakova, presentemes are both linguo-semiotic formations and non-verbal demonstration signs [3].

These theoretical justifications formed the basis of the present study.

Research methods

The complex of theoretical and methodological methods was used in the present research including the continuous sampling method, semantic and quantitative presenteme analysis as well as a socio-linguistic survey.

To analyze the presentational function of the discourse of social networks, the subject area "English language learning" was chosen. To begin with, we defined what the concept of "subject area" implies. In our opinion, the subject area is a combination of objects, properties and relationships related to one topic, considered within the same context.

Thus, the subject area "English language learning" is a complex of items studied during the analysis of the process of foreign language learning. This process can include teachers, students, coursebooks, additional materials, methods and approaches to teaching, as well as the foreign language itself.

To analyze the presentational function of the social media discourse Instagram, the most popular social network for promoting and advertising services, was chosen. In studying its presentational function, we had a particular look at virtual communicants or influencers. At this stage of our analysis we followed the idea of V. V. Kaziaba who distinguishes four ways of verbal self-presentation in Instagram: self-nomination (user name and account name), self-description, caption for a photo or video, comment [9].

In the course of the study, 100 profiles offering English language teaching services were selected and analyzed using the continuous sampling method.

The analysis was carried out from the point of view of several components:

— account name / profile name (self-nomination);
— profile content;
— the content of the "about me" section (self-description);

— discourse style.

The specific publications were analyzed in terms of their function, the main communicative act realized or the type of information presented in the publication, for example, learning English in groups for beginners or exam preparation.

In this way the analysis of Instagram publications allows us to clarify the details of the proposed information. For example, from some publications we learn about the variety of groups for training according to the age, level of the English language proficiency, and learning goals; or we learn about the regularity of payment, prices for the current period and discounts.

Further on, it is important to stress that not only clearly structured information about the most important issues that may interest potential customers, but also visual images, photos of smiling and happy young people and children contribute to creating a positive image of the company or the entrepreneur.

At the third stage, the Internet survey method was used for the study. Students — future teachers of English (n=120) and high school students learning English (n=53) were provided with the 37 publications under the study. The respondents had to choose three images that would motivate them to learn English and would stimulate their professional growth in the field of foreign language teaching. All advertising images were quite diverse in their content and appearance. The students were asked to interpret their choice, supporting it with arguments. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the answers was performed.

Results and discussion

Due to the poly-paradigmatic nature of the analyzed concept, there are many interpretations of it that directly depend on the research tasks. Having considered various directions of the discourse study, we can conclude that for the purposes of the present research, the most suitable definition of the discourse is the one according to T.F. van Dyck, who understands discourse as part of socio-cultural interaction, which implies an impact on the spiritual space of the recipient.

The Internet discourse is characterized by particular features that distinguish it among other types [10, P. 184]. Presentational function is one of its peculiarities.

As a result of the analysis of the presentational discourse from different sides, it was concluded that the most complete concept of the presentational discourse is the definition by M. E. Bukeeva. The researcher considers the presentational discourse as a unique communicative situation, which is formed by combination of several types of institutional discourse at once. This ensures the discourse universality, versatility, as well as wide application possibilities [6, P. 31].

Moreover, according to the results of the study, it seems reasonable, in our opinion, to state that the presentational discourse is represented by several genres and is implemented in various types of texts, which implies a variety of forms and ways of distributing information, for example, in social networks.

In addition, it was revealed that the presentational discourse in social networks can be represented by one of its genres – a promotional text. The smallest information unit of influence is called in the present research a presenteme. A presenteme can be found in any discourse type. The process of communication is presented in the form of a sequence of presentemes occurring in time and space both purely semiotic and discursive.

Empirical analysis of the content of Instagram profiles and publications allows us to divide them into several groups by the type of information offered:

— publications, inviting to apply for services of a particular company, teacher;
— examples of exercises, classes, and activities at English lessons;
— invitations for the customers to trial classes, webinars;
— publication of interesting facts about the language, fragments of exercises, texts, tasks to perform;
— publication of questionnaires.

According to the "target audience" criterion, all publications can be divided into those that are addressed to:
— people who want to learn English;
— English language teachers who want to improve their skills;
— teachers of English who want to add to their methodological bank.

The main language tools that the authors of publications use to create a positive image of themselves are:

— adjectives, epithets (*incredible, best, own course, advanced students, modern methods, best textbooks, detailed plan, various genres, free newsletter*, etc.) — 73 %;
— indication of the cost, the price of the service (*this information is usually indicated to show that the price in a particular case is lower than that of others*) – 5.4 %;
— indication of the fast speed of mastering the English language — 8 %;
— use of hyperbole (*millions of subscribers; everything you need*) — 5.4 %;
— use of words with positive emotional coloring (*kids give me hope, must-have, gift, innovation, perspective*) — 92 %.

An important element of the analyzed discourse is the use of exclamation sentences, mottos like «*Все мечтают, а ты действуй!*», «*есть места*», «*учи английский!*», and interrogative sentences " *Кому срочно*?".

All publications, as we have already noted, use not only the verbal component, but also visual images that contribute to the creation of a positive and attractive image of the author, the process.

So, in 41 % of the publications, we found photos of young, happy, smiling people. In 11% of cases, the creators of publications used animated images and drawings, and in another 11 % – images of books.

The analysis of the profile name and the "About me" section allows us to draw a number of conclusions.

First, the user name in most cases contains the keyword *English* (74 % out of 100 accounts, for example, **english**examangel, everythingamerican**english**, arnelseveryday**english**, skaviani.**english**, etc.), and in many cases is structured according to the pattern "englishwith + name" (18 %). Thus, when creating a promotional text, you need to use the first word-association, and also, if possible, resort to layouts that help to get the client's positive attitude.

Secondly, when creating a profile name, advertisers try to specify keywords to interest the consumer. In this study we revealed that the key word was *English (68 %)*, which determines the type of services provided. Other keywords are *teacher* –

13 %, coach – 9 %, learn – 7 %, IELTS – 7 %, online – 5 %, which help consumers to immediately identify the main functions of the profile.

Thirdly, when writing the section "About myself", intertextual lexical presentemes are the most popular type of presentation (*confidence*, *daily*, *help*, *free* – 15 %, *improve* – 14 %, *experienced*, *quality* – 7 %), graphic ones (links to the user's website, emoticons, capital letters) take the second place, making the section more colorful and helping to identify the main points within a large amount of information.

The results of the survey based on the opinion of 120 university students, intending teachers of English (it is an important fact to stress because such respondents could evaluate the publications both from the point of view of language learners and language teachers), and 53 school-students learning English at school (the 10th and the 11th grades) are as follows.

The results presented by the two groups of respondents differ in some aspects. Thus, analyzing the answers of the university students, we ca note that the first place is taken by the publication where it is suggested to practice English with a native speaker (*Practice English with a native speaker as your teacher and speak English fluently. Be a confident speaker. Try Cambly for free!*). This advertising content is chosen by 45% of respondents.

The main arguments given by the students show that studying English with a native speaker appears to be the most interesting and encouraging way to practice fluent speech. One important point, stressed by the respondents, is that they want to be taught by a professional teacher, not simply a native speaker without any teaching qualification. The students used such epithets as *effective*, *profitable*, *significantly improve*.

The second place is taken by the image, where visitors and guests of the page are invited to learn about teaching English at a US university. As a gift for a subscription, a detailed methodological plan for conducting a lesson is offered. This publication is chosen by 26% of respondents. The reasons to choose the profile of *dasha.linguist* include the teaching experience of the author and a free bonus in the form of a lesson-plan.

The third place is taken by an image that contains an invitation to a conference for English teachers: "*Free on-line conference for teachers of English devoted to Cambridge Exams and modern ways of developing school education*". This publication is chosen by 25% of respondents. The word '*free*' used in one publication twice, as well as the combination of the topics relevant and popular with teachers attracted the attention of the respondents. Some other reasons to choose the publication, mentioned by the student, include simplicity of the design of the post, professional interest and easy instruments offered for those who want to participate in the event.

The remaining 4% of the choices are connected with the rest of the images. A fairly large number of publications did not interest the students in any way.

Further on, the survey was taken among 53 school students of the 8-10th grades. Most part of the pupils (43%) chose the publication which suggested the preparation for the Unified State Exam of English (*Who are in a hurry? February Intensive. The Unified State Exam's format in 30 hours. +systematisation of the language material + analysis of assessment criteria for all types of assignments + expert's advice + 50% discount for a trial*). The respondents explained their choice telling that this advertisement would be especially interesting for school children who would like to pass the examination. Potential learners are attracted by the promise to be prepared within a limited time span (*30 hours*) and by an expert (*expert's advice*). One more important element of the publication attracting the learners' attention is the promise of a discount (50 % *discount)*.

The second place (38%) is taken by the publication, that is the most popular one among university students and suggests practicing English with a native speaker. Pupils are impressed by the image of the native speaker since they want to try their hand at speaking fluently with a «*real English-speaking person*».

The third place was taken by a video that contained an advertisement of a course of English for beginners: "*The English language. Simply and easy. English for beginners from scratch. Spoken English in 4 weeks*". This advertising content was chosen by 11% of the respondents. The words '*from scratch*' and '*easy*' used by the speaker grabbed the attention of the school students. The pupils also mentioned such arguments as a very short time span of the course (*in 4 weeks)*.

The remaining 8% of the choices are connected with the rest of the images.

Comparing the opinions of the two groups of respondents, we can see that both the school children and university students make their choice on the grounds of the occupational interests particularly important for them at the current moment: school-leaving examination and professional career development correspondingly. Another significant element, attracting attention of the Instagram users, is the opportunity to be taught English by a native speaker and by an expert. Visualization of the limited and comparatively short period allotted for the course is also an important attractive element of the chosen publications.

The only difference between the prevailing answers of school pupils and students of the linguistic department is the fact that 11 % of the pupils are attracted by such presentemes as *easy*, *simply*, *for beginners*, whereas students whose level of language proficiency is advanced simply ignore such publications. At the same time, the presemteme '*easy*' influenced the choice of the students as well, but in a different way: the students were attracted by easy tools of event registration offered by the Instagram account.

Thus, we can note that according to the research results, it seems reasonable to state that successful presentational discourse of social networks is primarily realized through all types of presentemes and catching words; secondly, it is supposed to emphasize that the teacher and the audience are close to each other in their ideas and desires; finally, it should directly and clearly implement its basic function, namely to convey relevant information, to show the teacher's achievements and to promote his/her profile/website/channel.

Conclusion

To sum up, we shall point out that theatricality (by which we mean the creation of bright, attention-grabbing verbal and visual images), availability of accurate information and information completeness are the tools that contribute to the implementation of the presentational function of the social network Instagram.

We can say that the first place among the reasons for choosing a particular publication by the Internet user is the way the content of the publication is presented. Thus, in the case with the subject area connected with the English language teaching, it is important for future and practicing teachers to understand whether the information contained in the advertising images is relevant to them. In the same way, school students learning English are attracted either by the simplicity of the course or the professional exam preparation, depending on their language level.

The second place is taken by the design of the publication. Visualization of information is always quite important in the process of assimilation and perception of information. The "visual mess" repels the audience.

We must not forget that much depends on the personality of the author. The ability to motivate subscribers with the level of knowledge and relevance of information, as well as to give certain bonuses for subscriptions, will allow the authors of publications to increase the number of interested subscribers.

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Не указан.	None declared.

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