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IDIOSTYLE & REALIZATION OF “WAR” CONCEPT IN W. CHURCHILL’S SELECTED SPEECHES

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Abstract

The interest in the legacy of politicians of different epochs is largely determined by the importance to analyze deep text producing dominants and text constants, which highlight the specific features of the discourse inherent in certain political regimes, historical periods and a particular world order. Studying the past teaches the present not to repeat its mistakes in the future. The article gives an insight into the most frequent linguistic features and systematizes the dominants and specific characteristics of W. Churchill’s speeches within the axial model. The material of the study is two well-known speeches delivered by Winston Churchill in 1940 and 1949. The main research method is semantic, cognitive and rhetorical analysis of the text. The article explores the content of the “war” concept, which is considered on the basis of the “field model” and English-English dictionaries definitions, as well as describes its core and periphery. The detailed analysis shows that W. Churchill made an active use of rhetoric tropes and figures of speech, especially metaphors. W. Churchill clearly demonstrated the features of an elitist language personality as, along with being proficient in codified language, ethical, communicative-pragmatic and rhetorical norms of a standard language, he skillfully and creatively used the devices of functional styles, speech genres, and special techniques of oral and written forms of speech.

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Keywords: Churchill, concept, core, idiosyle, periphery, war.



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1. Introduction

Much of the research of a contemporary national political discourse is dedicated to idiostyles and idiolects of prominent political leaders of the present and the past. Stylistic features found in oral and written texts – metaphoric images, lexical and grammar mistakes of politicians, along with expressiveness and vivid bold images which demonstrate the search for an individual unique style, have become the subject of a thorough analysis.

Russian and foreign linguists join their efforts in investigating the specific features of the discourse inherent in certain political regimes, historical periods and a particular world order. They distinguish propaganda, militarism, party, terrorist, as well as new multipolar world types of discourse. “Presidential rhetoric” and “presidential discourse” are two concepts that are also singled out in some research.

2. Problem Statement

Studying “speech portrayals” of leading politicians of different historical periods can help to define the role of idiostyle in forming the perception of a charismatic politician, characterize some specific linguistic features of particular politicians and analyze their persuasive strategies.

3. Research Questions

The Stylistic Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Russian language defines ‘idiostyle’ as a collection of all typical personal linguistic and stylistic devices of the text, while the term ‘idiolect’ is considered one of the possible synonyms of it. The concept of idiostyle is being developed by scholars in three main dimensions. The semantic and stylistic approach focuses on idiostyle as a system of individual choice and use of expressive language tools, typical of a specific period of development of fine literature. The advocates of linguistic and poetic approach explore the forms of text organization, mostly lexical ones, and find out common universal patterns of the author’s words usage. The communicative approach studies how a specific language personality, the author, interacts with the reader, directs him to a certain objective featured in a communicative strategy of the text, its communicative genres and its author’s intention.

Our research analysis is based on the idiostyle concept developed by Chernysheva (2010) who believes that idiostyle has a special hierarchy structure, which can be defined as a certain “chain of dependencies” reflecting idiolect characteristic features. Chernysheva (2010) highlights the following basic idiostyle characteristics: 1. the selection of linguistic devices by an individual and the frequency of their use; 2. speech-style characteristics of the individual language personality, which are influenced by extralinguistic factors, such as functional-stylistic, genre-stylistic and individual-stylistic ones; 3. relationship between mental phenomena and the ways of their verbalization; 4) observing and describing specific features of an individual style inherent in a particular discourse; 5) chronological sequence of texts; 6) a natural trend when several styles exist in the same text is a specific reflection of different styles in the same text, often associated with discourses that overlap within the text.

Chernysheva (2010) also suggests describing the idiostyle phenomenon by means of the axial model, where the X-axis is the selection and frequency of use of the language devices; the Y-axis is the dominant functional structure of the idiostyle, the motivation for the language devices usage based on the

systematization of dominants and their functional fields, an attempt to search for the deep connections that determine idiostyle formation; the Z- axis is the specific features of the idiostyle which corresponds to the discourse concept; it is here that “deviation” from the most common norms of the first two axes occurs.

In recent years the study of the national world image has been given special importance because of the ongoing geopolitical processes. The process of globalization has stimulated interest in national cultures, the features that collectively form the world view that unites the members of a linguistic community and distinguishes it among others (Shurygina, 2014). The national world image (NWI) is, on the one hand, some abstraction, and, on the other hand, a cognitive and psychological reality found in mental, cognitive, physical and verbal activities of the people. The NWI reflects a historical experience of a specific nation, which manifests itself in the national and cultural identity of the people. As a result, the NWI is defined as a part of the national world view, representing a holistic, systematic view of the world by representatives of a certain national community in diachrony. According to the definition, the NWI is reflected in the language world view (LWV), as a set of people’s perceptions of reality at a certain stage of the nation development, formalized in the units of the language (Popova & Sternin, 2002).

As Boldyrev (2015) rightly points out, the implementation of the anthropocentric nature of the language in its interpretive function is fully represented in the LWV, in its structure and the particular character of linguistic experience of a person when he/she interacts with the surrounding world and learns about it in the process of a cognitive activity. However, Popova and Sternin (2007) remind us that the LWV is limited and, apart from that, represents a «naive» picture of the world; it does not fully convey the picture of the world that is present in national consciousness, because the language names and categorizes far from everything that is in the consciousness of the people who speak the language. Moreover, they emphasize that the LWV is not equal to a cognitive one, the latter is immeasurably wider, since not all the content of the concept sphere is named, far from all concepts have linguistic expression and become a subject of communication. It is therefore possible to study the cognitive world view on the basis of the language world view only on a limited scale, always bearing in mind that the language names only what has or used to have a communicative significance – people speak about it now or used to (Popova & Sternin, 2007). At the same time, the connection between consciousness, the surrounding world and the concepts that characterize that consciousness can be established only through the processes of conceptualization, categorization and representation, and the language here is assigned a significant role (Boldyrev, 2019). The LWV only partially reflects the concept sphere and gives only a fragmented analysis of it, although there is probably no easier access to the concept sphere than through the language (Popova & Sternin, 2007). It should be noted that language expressions acquire a specific meaning only within a certain conceptual framework, i.e. are the result of interpretive human activities (Boldyrev, 2019). Thus, by the concept we mean a “unit of conscious knowledge about objects or events, their individual properties, characteristics, relationships with other objects and events which a person operates in the process of verbal and cognitive activity” (Boldyrev, 2019, p. 48). The world cognition always implies the world division into specific objects, events, segmentation and recognition of different characteristics, properties, and patterns. Concepts are those units of knowledge in which the product of cognition is realized and represented “with the aim of their subsequent transmission in the language form or further accumulation” (Boldyrev, 2019, p. 62).

4. Purpose of the Study

We are going to systemize and study the most frequent language devices, dominants and specific characteristics of W. Churchill's idiosyncrasy using the material of his selected speeches from 1940 and 1949 with the help of the axial model by T.A. Chernysheva. Moreover, relying on the "field model" we will try to analyze the "war" concept realization.

5. Research Methods

To represent the content of the "war" concept, we need to analyze the definitions fixed in dictionaries. In English-English dictionaries, the basic name of the concept "war" is explained as follows: 1. an armed conflict among states or nations; 2. a situation in which there is aggressive competition between groups, companies, countries, etc.; 3. a fight or an effort over a long period of time to get rid of or stop something unpleasant or illegal. 4. a state of discord. The idea of armed struggle is present as a generic feature, the conceptual component can be presented as the following set of attributes: 1. an armed confrontation between warring parties within a country; 2. a competition; 3. a fighting against something; 4. a serious conflict; 5. dislike.

In our analysis we will rely on the "field model" concept, taking into account that the *core* includes prototypic layers with the most sensitive-visual specificity, primarily the most vivid patterns; more abstract features constitute the *periphery* of the concept (Popova & Sternin, 2002).

6. Findings

The core of the "war" concept is represented by such concepts as: 1. armed struggle – ... to wage war by land, sea, and air; ... against a monstrous tyranny; ... war with all ... might and with all the strength ...; 2. victory as opposition to "war" – "victory at all costs... "; 3. enemy as a monstrous tyranny – "a monstrous tyranny"; 4. terror – "in spite of all terrors". *The near periphery* of the concept is of a more abstract nature, reflecting a certain stage of thinking about everyday patterns, characteristics and referring to a reflective layer of consciousness, expressed by such concepts as: 1. confrontation – "many months of struggle"; 2. united resistance – "united strength". *The far periphery* is based on individual knowledge, connotations and associations. It is represented by 1. blood, heavy sweat, toil, tears; 2. suffering – "many months of suffering"; 3. crime against humanity – "human crime"; 4. no salvation – "No survival for the British Empire"; 5. request for assistance to all – "to claim the aid of all", etc. (Speeches that changed the world, 2010).

Now we are going to consider *the core, near and far peripheries* examples of the "war" concept of the later 1949 speech by W. Churchill. *The core* of the concept: 1. world war III – "(avoid) a third world struggle"; 2. Civil War – "the Civil War in the United States"; 3. armed conflict – "could only have meant armed conflict "; 4. enemy, rival – armed divisions of Soviet communists, 14 people in the Kremlin, a government that seeks imperialist expansion; 5. Peace, war is not inevitable as opposition "war – peace" may be still preserved, "war is not inevitable". *The near periphery*: 1. Cold War - "Are we winning the cold war?"; 2. War of nerves – "There is to be a war of nerves "; 3. Communist attack and conspiracy – "(under) Communist attack and intrigue"; 4. takeover – "the absorption (of China and India)"; 5. tyranny

and any other illegal actions – "tyranny and wrong-doing in any form". **The far periphery:** 1. Something worse, more intimidating than Hitler – "Something quite as wicked but in some more ways formidable than Hitler"; 2. the Communist cult is "a church of Communist adepts"; 3. the godless religion and the communist doctrine of total subordination of the person to government – "anti-God religion; ... communist doctrine of the entire subjugation of the individual to the state"; 4. no hostility to Russians – "We have no hostility to the Russian people...".

This analysis illustrates that a concept is a mental reflection of a changing reality, its content may change in the course of its operation: on the one hand, individual features change over time; on the other hand, new features may be introduced into the structure of the concept. By comparing different features of Churchill speeches it becomes obvious how much the content of the "war" concept transformed under the influence of different historical events: in the core, certain components (enemy and opposition) changed, which in turn led to substantial transformations in the near and far peripheries.

The core of the "war" concept of the British national world image (NWI) finds its reflection in the language world image of Churchill (LWI). In this regard, we can note that the LWI primarily conveys not so much the world itself, but the way the individual sees and understands objects and phenomena, the structure of the world itself, distinguishing specific aspects and characteristics, i.e. how he builds the world in his mind (Boldyrev, 2015).

A collection of different concepts creates an individual-author concept, as V.V. Abramenko notes. In turn, it creates an individual-author picture of the world which, according to various researchers, is a reflection (yet an incomplete one) of the real world in the language. Thus, the individual-author concept sphere represents the idiosyncrasy of the author (Abramenko, 2017).

Let us focus on the analysis of the characteristics of the most frequent linguistic means encountered in **W.Churchill's 1940 speech on the X-axis**.

- **The infinitive of purpose and the infinitive as an attribute:** *to declare; to record; to form; to be considered; to act; to offer; to wage; to claim.*
- **Communicative modality of sentences:** 1) narrative (affirmative): *I may be pardoned; I can answer; I hope; I feel sure; I would say; I can say; I take up my task;* 2) interrogative (question-and-answer constructions): *You ask, what is our aim? ... I can answer...; You ask, what is our policy? ... That is our policy...* 3) imperative: *Come then, let us... ; let that be realized;*
- **Lexically expressed modality (modal verbs):** *should include; should be conceived; should be summoned; should be done; it must be remembered.*

Verbs. Tenses

1. **Indicative mood:** Present Simple: *we are* in the preliminary phase; I now *invite*; the air battle *is* continuous; it *is* victory; there *is* no survival. Present Perfect: a War Cabinet *has been formed*; I *have completed* ...; the three party Leaders *have agreed* to serve; the three Fighting Services *have been filled*.

2. **Imperative mood:** *let that be realized; let us go...; come then ...*

- **Repetitions:** *We have before us an ordeal ... ; we have before us many, many; It is to wage war ... with all our might and with all the strength ...; to wage war against ...; It is victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror... , victory, however long and hard the road may be...; there is no survival; no survival for...; I feel sure, I feel entitled... .*
- **Metaphors:** survival for the urge and impulse of the ages.

Taking X-axis as the basis for our analysis we will try to single out the most frequent linguistic means which are specific to the **1949 W. Churchill speech**.

- **Infinitives:** *to be guided; to enforce; to succeed; to overcome; to translate; to be industrialized; to avert; to blame; to sink; to share; to travel; to think; to prevent; ever be so wicked as to use... to adjust.*
- **Communicative modality of sentences:** 1) narrative (affirmative): *I was so glad; It is certain; there might be some ... disagreements ...; the problems of victory may be... ; we may well...; (negative): I do not think myself; I must not conceal; it may not be our nerve...; 2) interrogative (question-and-answer constructions): *And the question is asked: "Are we winning the cold war?" "How could a submarine it was asked... ?" ... 3) imperative: *Let us then move forward Let us make sure ... Do not underrate ... Do not suppose... .***
- **Lexically expressed modality (modal verbs):** *can be answered; cannot be achieved...; cannot afford...; should take part... ; should not shape; should be achieved; ... should be taken now; ...must make sure action; must also look ...; must not conceal...; must persevere; must not despair; hope to solve...; could feel...; need not abandon ...*

Verbs. Tenses

1. **Indicative mood:** *the latter and larger part of the Nineteenth Century had been the period ... ; as they never have been before... and could never have been; The United Nations Organization which has been erected; the outstanding feature of the Twentieth Century has been ...; I was so glad ...; science presently placed; the Nineteenth Century ended... , and we entered ...; we saluted ...; all the free nations are being welded together...; the questions which we are debating...; they are being subjected...; here then we have ...; so many hundreds of millions share together...; the flame of Christian ethics is still our highest guide; today there is a very different climate of opinion; I am in cordial accord with ...; we are now confronted...; war is not inevitable.*

2. **Imperative mood:** *let us make sure ...; let us then move forward ... together; do not underrate ...; do not suppose*

3. **Subjunctive mood:** *it is certain that Europe would have been communized; ... it is certain that mankind would not agree ... , and there might be some very sharp disagreements*

4. **Conditionals:** *if ... we find ourselves unable to avert world famine ...; if we are to bring the broad masses of the people ;if we persevere steadfastly together...*

- **Repetitions:** *We have no hostility to the Russian people and no desire to deny...*
- **Metaphors:** this Twentieth Century of storm and change; Britannia had ruled the waves; logic, like science, must be the servant and not the master of man; philosophy and history walk hand in hand; this unity is our present salvation; the flame of Christian ethics is still our highest guide; disagreements about how the last crust was to be shared; the soul of man thus held in trance or frozen in a long night can be awakened by a spark coming from God; a church of Communist adepts; the machinery of propaganda may pack their minds with falsehood and deny them truth; national rivalries would fade in; the Russians everywhere would be received as brothers in the human family; the first half of the Twentieth Century, fanned by the crimson wings of war; the English speaking world gloriously but narrowly emerged, bleeding and breathless; human beings and human societies are not structures that are built or machines that are forged, they are plants that grow and must be tended as such.

Now we are going to analyze **both speeches on the Y-axis**, which represents the dominant functional structure of an idiostyle. What is more, we intend to do it relying on the systematization of dominants and their functional fields.

In the earlier speech, *the infinitive of purpose and the infinitive as an attribute* predominate as Churchill formulates specific tasks and assesses the exciting military situation. In the 1949 speech, the author gave preference to infinitives in the function of attributes. The speech is more descriptive and philosophical.

In both speeches modality, as different kinds of subjective attitude to an event, in particular «confidence/ uncertainty», «opportunity», «reality/unreality of the event», «desirability», «necessity» etc., is clearly expressed, that is, the position of Churchill is unambiguous, as evidenced in such constructions and modal verbs as: *I feel sure, I must not conceal, I could feel, I trust, I was so glad, I can answer, I should take part, I do not think myself.*

The absolute majority of modal verbs in the first speech (*should, have to, must*) demonstrate the unprecedented importance of the stated task – to fight Nazi Germany – and the need to accomplish the set goal. In the second speech, the great variability of modal verbs is obvious and justifiable from the point of view of a simple logic, as the author describes different historic events in different contexts.

The choice of the *Indicative mood* of verbs and present tenses in the first speech is also logical, as Churchill confidently assesses the developments of the time. In his later speech Churchill repeatedly resorts to historical excursions as well as dwells on actual and future challenges, and we can see the use of present and past tenses along with a few examples of the Present Continuous. Tellingly, the future is conveyed mainly through modal verbs, which give Churchill's vision of events. It should be noted that in his later speech, Churchill also makes use of subjunctive and conditional moods, because he is assessing prospects for the future of humanity.

In both speeches Churchill uses narrative (affirmative) sentences, but also interrogative and imperative ones, depending on the purpose and the intention of the message. The question-and-answer constructions that are typical of interrogative sentences facilitate Churchill's communication with the audience. Imperative sentences are certainly justified in that they call for action – resistance to the enemy.

Churchill's stylistic techniques are also of great interest, for instance they can be viewed as vivid examples of an influential speech. Through repetitions Churchill focuses on the essential aspects of the strategy, while metaphors are an important means of influencing the mind, feelings and will of the audience.

7. Conclusion

Analyzing **the Z- axis** – the specific features of the idiostyle which corresponds to the concept of discourse (it is here that “deviation” from the basic norms of the first two axes occurs), – it can be stated that the idiostyle of W.Churchill is unique in the sense that it is a combination of several discourses – the publicist, rhetorical, and political ones.

W. Churchill makes an abundant use of metaphors. It is well known that, in addition to naming the objects, humans use other mechanisms to represent the meaning and reflect in the language their experience in conceiving the world. These mechanisms are conceptual and linguistic metaphors. The latter ones are more commonly used for secondary conceptualization and representation of the world knowledge. The metaphor is not limited to the sphere of the language; human *thought processes* are *largely metaphorical* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The metaphor as a consciousness phenomenon is manifested not only in the language, but also in mind and action... The metaphor is not so much a tool of describing reality, but rather a steady way of thinking about it, a cognitive mechanism.

Grammatical, lexical and stylistic techniques used by W. Churchill indicate that he belongs to the category of an elitist linguistic personality (ELP). An ELP is fluent in codified linguistic, ethical, communicative-pragmatic and rhetorical norms of the standard language, and makes skilful and creative use of the possibilities of functional styles and speech genres, along with specific devices of oral and written speech. The main component of the psychological profile of an ELP is the absolute degree of freedom intrinsic to this type of a person and exercised by him/her in intellectual and spiritual development.

In his speeches, W. Churchill uses cognitive units of a different degree of complexity: along with the “war” concept he refers to such key concepts as “man”, “government”, “friendship”, “freedom” and many others, which represent his unique concept sphere and form his idiostyle.

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