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STRATEGIES OF NOMINATION OF THE PERSON AS A REPRESENTATION OF STATUS-ROLE RELATIONS

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Abstract

The article explores the strategies for nomination a person in the texts of the pre-election discourse. Nomination practices are a way of representing status-role relations in a particular discourse. The authors describe how practices of person nomination form strategies for reflecting reality, on the one hand, through the relationship with the social norm, status, on the other hand, through the deconstruction of the norm. The pre-election discourse of Internet media revealed strategies to discredit and provoke official norms. The nomination tactics are based on the use of lexical units from the discourse of marginalized communities, jargon, as well as on generalization, when the proper name (person name) becomes a sign of status-role relations, a minimized script that defines the person's media representation. The second generalization mechanism is based on the use of an additional component determined by discourse, in combination with a neutral lexical unit of nomination. The use of such strategies indicates the expression of opposition views on all political events in the country, including elections. Status-role relations in the pre-election discourse of Internet media are deconstructed, since the norm itself is disputed as the basis of the existing political regime. This is one of the discursive ways of the presence of a “minority” in the media field, an option for exercising his right to a visible presence in the media field.

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1. Introduction

Leeuwen (2007) in his article analyzes how different types of discourse form strategies for legitimizing social relations in public communication and everyday communication. In other words, discourse is a system of cognitive conventions, fixed with the help of language signs, which determines the way of speaking about specific social subjects and objects and establishes their compliance/non-compliance with the status-role and socio-political relations that are common in the community. By legitimization, Leeuwen (2007) is understood to represent the subject of speech through its inclusion or exclusion from the norm through certain text-building practices. Butler (2018) emphasizes that the norm is not regarded as having an ontological status, but is understood as being established by a hegemonic (dominant in the current context) discourse through repeated reproduction. Thus, one of the key practices of legitimization and normalization becomes an appeal to authority (Authorization), that is, a reference to tradition, custom or law, an appeal to the status and social role of the hero.

Thus, a specific text, as a unit of discourse, becomes a carrier of social relations, represents, in addition to the actual content and factual information, models of community organization, as well as various systems of worldviews and ideological attitudes. Bykova (2018, p. 147) writes about this when she characterizes the interaction of the nomination as a speech technique and an axiological field, that is, the values of a community in the form of binary oppositions: morally / immoral, good / bad, own / alien. This is especially true for publicistic texts, which can include texts of mass communication (journalism, advertising, journalism, PR, etc.). Even Rosenthal (2006) pointed out this specific nature of the journalistic functional style, in which the function of influence (agitation and propaganda) is combined with a purely informative function (news reporting).

However, in the modern situation of total relativization, the institutional forms and types of mass media discourse, journalism as a whole are eroded. There is competition between heterogeneous systems to establish the legitimization of social relations in public communication through the production of specific texts. One of the key aspects in the struggle for legitimization is the representation of subjects of social relations in mass media texts. The inclusion or exclusion of the hero of a journalistic text, as a personalized embodiment of a worldview system, a carrier of social, political and cultural traditions, from the norm field reveals the author's attitudes in the interpretation of social reality and their discursive implementation.

2. Problem Statement

In the current Russian-language mass media discourse, there are value-oriented trends. On the one hand, traditional media consistently reproduce such discursive practices of selecting characters and their status-role nominations, which represent the current socio-cultural and political situation in the country stable and corresponding to the norm. On the other hand, rapidly developing new media construct a different, critical view of the situation in the country, while new media reproduce the same practices for selecting characters of texts that are accepted in traditional media, but discursively challenge their nomination strategies.

Thus, there is a problem in identifying and describing the strategy for nominating political actors in publicistic texts of modern mass communication. First, selection and nomination become a way of legitimizing / delegitimizing the hero's status, including or excluding him from the norm. Second, they form a narrative template in a specific type of discourse.

This problem is particularly acute in the pre-election discourse of the mass media, which forms a speech representation of electoral procedures and subjects for a mass audience. Today, elections have become a key topic around which positive socio-cultural, political, and ideological relations are being built, and a split in Russian society is being revealed.

3. Research Questions

Chepkina (2001), based on M. Foucault's theory of discourse, identified the basic rules for constructing a journalistic statement that are objectified in a specific text through a system of codes, that is, formal content and linguistic ways of manifestation. Chepkina (2001) explains the code as a trace of the text-generating practice of a particular discourse, that is, as a means of reproducing speech practice, giving the consumer instructions for reading a certain type and type of information. In other words, the code refers us, on the one hand, to a certain fragment of social reality, and on the other hand, reveals the rules of speaking about something. These include the character code, i.e. the selection, name, description, and establishment of the narrative role of the publication's hero. The code is a reflection of discursive practices and reveals the social reality that determines the rules of speaking.

3.1. Nomination in the framework of ritual communication

On the other hand, media discourse (due to its proximity to the official public sphere) largely uses practices of the ritual type of communication (Lisina, 2016; Olyanich, 2016; Ovcharova, 2016), communication that have signs that establish mandatory rules for speaking about a character as a subject of speech (a combination of the proper name and the title of the position, title, official status). Thus, the nomination of a hero is a discursive manifestation of certain status-role and socio-political relations. Olyanich and Karasik (2007) present a logical-semantic interpretation of ritual communication:

Within ritual communication, an extensive system of signs and symbols, firmly fixed in the course of the history of communication, has been formed that implement the function of visual presentation of conventional consent to contact between social groups, supported by language signs of the corresponding ritual nature. We believe that there are three broad groups of signs that nominate the communicative situation characteristic of ritual communication. This communicative situation reflects the affiliation of subjects to a social convention and their fulfillment of the sequence of rules required by the convention to identify such affiliation (p. 168).

In ritual communication, a special role is played by the name, it is sacred, a special sign is the nomination of the actor himself, a sign is the person. In addition to the proper name, the discourse dictates a rigid set

of lexical units that establish the status and role positions of the hero. However, this may not be enough to affect the emotional sphere of the information consumer. As noted by Olyanich (2007):

An important characteristic of the communication format within the framework of ritual communication is its regular recurrence within rigorously defined frameworks of proceduralism. The form of communication should be determined once and for all in order to become understandable (cognitively familiar) for both sides of communication (p. 167).

This thesis explains why the “second” character name appears in publications, which is very frequent and includes/excludes it in the field of norm, tradition, or hierarchy, and is repeated (Abdullaeva, 2015). It should fix a recognizable feature in the mind of the audience, become a collapsed scenario for the perception of the hero as a whole. But due to the fact that the Russian media discourse is now in a situation of competition between traditional media and new media, ritual communication is experiencing a period of turbulence. The discursive practices of nominating significant political actors are no longer defined once and for all for the mass audience. The categories assigned to a hero in Internet media texts compete with those assigned to the same hero in traditional media. The status-role nominations of political actors distributed through television or social networks, their narrative representations are based on repeated repetition of the same speech formulas. The repeatability and consistency of nominations with the normative assessment, although from different ideological positions, allows us to refer them to such statements that simultaneously contain both a performative and a constative. In other words, continuing the thought of Austin (1999), we can say that the performative power of these statements, their success or failure in a communicative situation depends on whether the audience shares the social norm constructed by this performative.

3.2. Violation of ritual conventions as a means of the presence of "minorities"

Thus, Polyakov (2015) emphasizes the existence of a pragmatic compromise proposed by the government on the platform of “conservative values” to unite society and oppose the liberal ideology of the minority of Russian society. The characterization of discursive strategies of character nomination and representation of their social and role relations in the election discourse of Internet media from the position of performance theory allows to overcome in analysis simple opposition correctly/incorrectly and to focus on which discursive ways the minority tries to declare itself in the media field.

In this sense, the key tendency in the discourse of Internet media, built on the delegitimization of the established order, social and role hierarchy, which is supported by the discourse of official (pro-government) media, is quite understandable.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the strategies of nomination of election campaign participants of the President of the Russian Federation in spring 2018 in the discourse of Internet media “The Real Lentach”.

5. Research Methods

The method of study is discourse analysis of mass communication texts. The proposed discourse analysis is based on identifying and describing strategies for nominating media discourse objects. As Ruzhentseva (2018) writes:

We, in turn, believe that the language adapts to discursive necessity, and the language mechanisms of nomination in the election discourse can be reduced to a number of compression options and concretization of the basic meaning of the common word (p. 43).

In other words, the discursive approach to the analysis of the nomination strategy in mass communication texts allows, on the one hand, to identify the language and speech mechanisms of representation of objects and subjects of the election campaign, on the other hand, to establish a correlation with social and political reality, to determine the political landscape.

By nomination strategies, we understand the selection and use of one means of naming an element of reality from among this of functional means: a subject (a person or an organization) (Artamonova, 2016). Artamonova (2016) indicates that “the choice of a specific nominative units is determined by the discursive, in accordance with the purposes and conditions of communication” (p. 5).

Thus, through the analysis of speech material, it is possible to construct laws and mechanisms of language functioning within a certain sphere of social life, as well as to establish a link between discourse and existing status-role relations that meet or contradict the norm.

6. Findings

In the dictionary of Tarasenko “Dictionary of the election campaign” (2017), various lexical units are presented that function as means of nominating the participants (subjects) of the election campaign. It lists both normative, customary options, and specific ones, determined by discourse, professional election jargon (Ruzhentseva, 2018). Ruzhentseva (2018) describes “the thematic differentiation of the jargon vocabulary of advance texts: processes, results, subjects and institutions” (p. 41). The author also identifies the language mechanisms of formation of jargon lexical units, acting as a means of nomination: vocabulary, unconventional lexical combination, synonymous substitutions, updating of expressive seams, case law. In turn, Matova (2019) considers the metaphorization of the vocabulary of professional and labor activity in political communication and notes that this method of nomination combines the naming of a politician, the characteristic of his behavior, personal qualities, and the evaluation of these characteristics. We can say that the selected practices and mechanisms are common in the discourse not only of professionals, but also in the texts of mass communication, which means that they can be used as potential models for analyzing empirical material.

As part of the study, we collected news texts with the lexem “elections” and its derivatives from January to May 2018, published in the community “The Real Lentach” on the platform “VKontakte”. Thus, in the discourse of media “The Real Lenanach” strategies of nomination of participants of electoral procedures are based on several practices. First, the nomination of subjects through lexical units from

jargon and argo marginal social groups, the use of vocabulary limited in use. Second, in practice generalization and generalization (name of personal and position, status and political position).

For example, lexical units from criminal jargon (godfather, old man, grandfather, etc.) appear in the designation of the incumbent president and prime minister, vulgarized forms of proper names: Yesterday at Putin's headquarters it was reported that the old man will have his own telegrams for the elections-channel (Vchera v shtabe Putina soobshchili..., 2018). Here we see an example of the actualization of the same, a person endowed with power, an elder.

Also often used is the designation of current events and current realities through borrowings from youth slang, for example: Putin collected money in his election fund (Putin sobiral bablo v svoj predvybornyj..., 2018). It is significant that this speech practice is applied both in the creation of news and on independent candidates who are perceived either as having a connection with the ruling elite or as people who are not interested in the real problems of the electorate.

Thus, A. Navalny positions himself as a representative of the non-systemic opposition, its leader (rallies, arrests, speeches in social networks). On the other hand, in the modern information space, it is customary to talk about the existence of the "The Navalny Project". There is a discursive rapprochement: Navalny was left without money – "Alfa-Bank" blocked the accounts of the Fund that deals with the financial support of the politician's election campaign (Naval'nogo ostavili bez babla..., 2018). The unit of loot actualizes this big money that was easily received from someone.

However, Bykova (2018) emphasizes that there can be an extremely sharp change in the nomination of the subject of political relations under the influence of specific events, within a single discursive field, often these transformations are built on polarization, the antinomy of own / alien: "own guy" can turn into an enemy.

Thus, the practice of nominating subjects, as well as parts of objects, and electoral procedures, based on the use of units of marginal discourses, leads to an exit from the field of normality, and here it gets formalized through an appeal to the cognitive model, which is built on the idea of violating existing rights and norms, on the image of chaos and lawlessness.

The second practice in using lexical units as means of nomination is the practice of generalization and generalization. Thus, each of the subjects of the election campaign was assigned an image-a scenario that became a generalization of the political fate of the candidate. There are stereotypical formulas-nominations. It should be noted that in the materials of the lexeme, the opposition leader in frequency terms prevails over the candidate unit in the name of A. Navalny, which may indirectly indicate the fixed role of this subject in the election discourse. So, on the one hand, proper names are actively used as a personal brand (Putin, Sobchak, Navalny, etc.), and on the other hand, a simple mechanism is used, which Ruzhentseva (2018, p.45) defined as a word – forming mechanism, when a concretizing element is added to the neutral component, a kind of discursive binding: Sobchak is a candidate "against all", Navalny is a candidate – oppositionist or just a politician, and so on. However, it is important to note a clear trend: the Putin nomination, which has a small number of equivalents, is opposed to the nomination of other candidates with their very different images. There is an antithesis: a stable norm / anything that does not look like this norm (the effect of carnival, buffoonery as antinorms is created), in order to delegitimize the officially established version of the norm, including in the field of elections.

On the other hand, delegitimization and deconstruction are directly related to the phenomenon of style collage, or interdiscursivity. In other words, the use of elements of different functional styles, the blending of types of discourse (shows, series, popular culture in General) in the formation of news content leads to deprofessionalization and deinstitutionalization discursive representation election procedures as at the level of speech practices are creating a model of activities of participants of campaign, which does not meet the standard of conduct, a standard accepted in professional political communication (Tarasenko, 2017). Once again, this discrepancy is intended to destroy the norm.

The results obtained allow us to speak about the use of a strategy of discrediting and provocation in the discourse of the Internet media “The Real Lentach”, which indicates the expression of opposition views on all political events in the country, including elections. Status-role relations in electoral discourse are deconstructed, since the norm itself is disputed as the basis of the existing political regime.

7. Conclusion

Discourse analysis of empirical material has shown that in Internet media, discursive strategies for nomination and representation of status-role relations of active political actors are aimed at delegitimizing them. Internet media (new media) performatively endow political characters with characteristics that do not correspond to their status, expanding the expressive component of the news message, turning the news into “short” journalism. This is one of the discursive ways of producing the presence of a "minority" in the media field, a variant of realizing its right to visible presence in the media field.

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