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LEXICO-SEMANTIC SPACE OF PRE-ELECTION POLITICAL SLOGAN

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Abstract

Such a specific element of political communication as a slogan, which is often used within election campaign, has been to the present day a less studied issue in the Russian and Kazakh political linguistics. Nowadays this genre of political text is being mainly mastered by the sociologists, politologists, image-makers, etc., dealing with the issues of electoral technologies. This article deals with the study of functional-semantic features of lexical units of a political slogan which are characteristic for the election campaigns of Russia and Kazakhstan held in the period of recent decades. This research analyze common lexems associated with the election process and detecting a high degree of frequency. It is the commonly used vocabulary that forms the basis of the dictionary of any national language. The works of famous Russian, Kazakh and foreign linguists form the methodological basis of the article. The factual material of the research allowed using several methods such as comparative-contrastive, statistical, descriptive and etc. The comparative analysis revealed not only universal lexical-semantic units, but also the differences of lexical items, which are reflected in the slogans of election campaigns of both countries. The results of the study show that the functioning of a political slogan is determined by its main communicative objective—to establish the dialogue between the participants of the electoral process.

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1. Introduction

One of the genres of political discourse due to its functional specificity is a slogan, which has entered the scientific circulation in recent years. Performing regulatory role, today the slogan plays a leading role in political communication and is being mastered mainly by researchers and analysts involved in election and pre-election technologies.

The Dictionary defines slogan as "a call, expressing a guiding idea, task, requirement in a short form" (Ozhegov, 2018, p. 472). The purpose of the political slogan as a communicatively directed text is to influence the consciousness and behavior of the electorate. The realization of this goal is only possible if a voter establishes a contact and understanding with candidates. In this case there is a need for a good slogan representing a positive image of a politician or party within a few bright, memorable words, realizing an expressive function (Chudinov, 2017). In other words, the text of the slogan should facilitate the interaction between the politician and the voter and it should have a communicative orientation (Nugumanova, 2019).

According to the researcher Akhatova (2006), "politics is perceived and interpreted through the speech by means of which politicians inform, hide true goals, convince, recommend, comment, manipulate and govern" (p. 5). The choice of language means of the slogan plays a decisive role in creating a positive image of the candidate, assessing his activities and motivating voters to see a particular politician in a certain position (Skulimovskaya, 2017). The content of any political slogan implies that it contains commonly used words and specialized means of expression, which have been called political vocabulary.

The works of Steksova and Krylov (2018), Pakhalyuk (2018), Chudinov (2017), Walter (2016), Zyryanov (2016), Shulezhkova (2016), Akhatova (2006) and others are devoted to the study of linguistic features of the political slogan.

2. Problem Statement

In this study, we analyze common lexemes associated with the election process and detecting a high degree of frequency. It is the commonly used vocabulary that forms the basis of the dictionary of any national language. An essential feature of the lexical system, which serves as a universal means of "objectification of individual consciousness and cultural tradition", is its direct reversion to phenomena of reality (The newest philosophic dictionary, 2008, p. 125).

3. Research Questions

Based on the structure of the communication act, the participants of which are the addressee and the addressant (in our case - the voter and the candidate), transmitting information to achieve a certain effect, we can divide the vocabulary of the common vocabulary into two groups (Lozheva, 2011). The first group includes lexemes characterizing the candidate (addressant, the subject of an action), the second contains those lexemes that relate directly to the voter (addressee, the object of an action). The famous scientist Walter (2016) noted that "the specificity of the slogan is quite objectively highlighted when taking into account the addressee to whom the slogan is directed" (p. 33-45).

In the semantic space of the first group, the subject of an action is formed by a number of particular components that are distributed into the following lexical-semantic groups (LSG).

1) LSG denoting the subject (candidate) in the slogan. The lexemes of this group help the candidate, on the one hand, to declare himself, to stand out among rivals. However, on the other hand, obsessive, explicit positioning can initially narrow the audience of voters. As a result, candidates are cautious about choosing an "identification word": only those that are essential to voters for economic or moral reasons are included in the list of units calling a candidate (Steksova & Krylov, 2018, pp.179-188). This group is rarely found in the slogans of election campaigns: in Kazakhstan it is 3.2%, and in Russia this type of slogan is 3.1% of the total number. The slogan with the lexeme *лидер* is found: "*Лидер новой эпохи*", "*Сильный лидер – успешная страна*", "*Новый лидер – сильный Алтай*".

The Russian candidates use the name of their profession in the slogans for the self-positioning, which plays a peculiar role of a compressed characteristic of the candidate. For example, "*Врач должен лечить! Педагог учить! А женщина наводит порядок*", "*Врач Лилия Беленко: стабильная помощь*", "*Учитель, голосуй за своего! За Алексея Ульянова, 4 года проработавшего Школьным учителем, ЗА ЯБЛОКО!*".

2) LSG denoting the residence status of the subject (candidate). This group of lexeme is used to inform voters about the status of the candidate's residence on the principle of home/foreign. As it is known, according to the world rules of political marketing the slogan should be nationally colored (Khabibullina & Trapeznirova, 2016, p. 2). So, the most frequent slogans in the elections under discussion are those with lexemes Russia and Kazakhstan and their derivatives were: "*Вместе мы сделаем Россию единой, сильной*", "*Интересы России превыше всего*", "*Богатый Казахстан – процветающий народ*", "*Мы объединились, чтобы создать новый Казахстан!*", "*Казахстан, только вперед!*" and etc.

In the slogans of regional and municipal election campaigns, the candidates are more likely to use such lexemes as *город*, *район*, *село*, which do not broadcast the meaning "within a certain territory": "*Жизнь села – наша жизнь!*", "*Каждому человеку достойную жизнь в нашем прекрасном городе!*", "*Комфортный город – счастливые жители!*". Less frequently used are toponym indicating a certain place of residence, for example: "*Работаем на Курганскую область. Вместе!*", "*Сумкино – под крылом надежного депутата!*".

3) LSG denoting the personal and business qualities of the subject (candidate). This group of lexemes is quite well-known: one of the most common personal qualities that position the candidates is transmitted by such lexemes as *дело* and *слово*. Using the above-mentioned lexemes, candidates try to form an opinion of themselves as sensible, serious, entrepreneurial potential politicians for whom voters should vote: "*За наше общее дело!*", "*Мои слова – не просто пустые обещания!*" "*Преданность делу, верность слову!*", "*За словом – дело! За делом – результат!*", "*Не словом, а делом!*", "*Дела важнее слов*".

The lexeme *работа* holds the third place in the frequency of use in the slogans of candidates: "*Работать умею, слово держу*", "*Энергия, здравый смысл, работа на результат*", "*Я честно говорю, что не могу обещать вам многого, но обещаю много и честно работать...*", "*Ак Жол – время работать*".

4)LSG denoting the basic idea of the elective program of the subject (candidate). The lexemes of this group help candidates position themselves as a potential politician for whom the interests of voters are significant and important. Sociologists and psychologists identify six needs, which, regardless of the political order of the country and the social status of voters, are the main components of the candidate's private life:

- physiological (food, water, housing, health);
- security, confidence in the future;
- be part of the community (family, campaigns and friends);
- respect, recognition;
- self-realization;
- positive emotions (Maslow, 2006, p. 60).

Having analyzed the slogans of election campaigns, we came to the conclusions that most of them, varying in verbal design, find a place in the slogans of candidates in order to influence the voter.

It should also be noted that the lexemes of this group (in the terminology of Feofanov (2003) "lexemes of the matter of promises") in the advertising text can be realized in the "warm emotional field" (peace, family, social justice) and "cold emotional field" (crisis, crime, corruption) (p. 384). The analysis of the factual material showed that most of the election programs were built in the paradigm of "warm semantic space".

The semantic frame of the matter of promise is formed by the following lexemes: *здоровье, забота, защита, благосостояние, образование, строительство, семья, экономика, экология*. But it should be noted that in Russian election campaigns candidates more often use lexemes of "cold" emotional fields, using the reception of denial: *"Нищая старость – не демократия!", "Россия без жуликов и воров", "Ни одного безработного, бездомного, голодного"*.

The slogans of the candidates demonstrate a high frequency lexemes *благо* and *достойный*, designating quality of life: *"Достойную жизнь – всем и сегодня!", "Достойное поколение – наше национальное достояние!", "Благополучие для всех!", "Благополучие семьи и дома – забота настоящего мужчины!", "Вся наша работа идет на благо Якутска"*. In our opinion, the use of these lexeme in the candidate's slogans is due to pragmatic actions: voters, first of all, should undoubtedly support programs to improve the quality of life.

In their election campaigns, candidates use concepts not of a global, but of a private targeted nature aimed at helping, protecting, caring for each voter: *"Защита. Забота. Работа", "За Александра Хлопонина. Занятость, Зарплата, Законность, Забота"*.

This trend can be explained by the fact that candidates in their election programs pay attention to the solution of problems related to the spiritual life of citizens and involving the fulfillment of promises (Zyryanov, 2016). As the factual material shows, the set of language tools that denote the ways or conditions of their implementation is extremely small and is represented by a standard set of verbal reflections that permeate election campaigns of all levels (Pakhalyuk, 2018). The candidates consider, as the main condition for the implementation of the declared programs, *закон (законность)* and *порядок* with the indication of the specific person capable of ensuring their guarantee: *"Сила правды! Власть Закона! Торжество справедливости!", "Мы сделаем всё, что возможно в рамках закона, чтобы"*

помочь людям”, “Жириновский – железный порядок. Каждый получит свое”, “Где женщины – там порядок”, “Туюкбай – справедливость и порядок”, “Мне нужен Ваш голос, чтобы обеспечить честные выборы и защищать законные права граждан, а Вам нужен честный депутат”.

In general, we can note that in the structure of a political slogan every word carries a certain semantic load. So we can see such lexical units which contain pragmatic potential (Shulezhkova, 2016).

In our study, we analyzed lexical units relating to voters, to the object of action. They can be divided into two groups.

1) LSG denoting the addressee (voter) of the slogan. This group is not observed in the Kazakhstan election campaigns analyzed by us. The Russian slogans have it: the name of persons is transmitted by an entire spectrum of lexemes such as *россияне, москвичи, горожане*. The rare use of direct-circulation slogans is explained by the fact that this is due to the intense spread of slogan-image. Its structure does not imply direct appeal to the candidate, but the inclusion of the pronouns OUR, YOUR in the slogans allows to directly identify the candidate and voters: *“Наша крымская Савченко”, “Жить достойно! Галина Хованская – ваш кандидат в депутаты по избирательному округу №7”, “МЫ – вместе! Бисетаев Кайрат – наш кандидат!”, “Казахстан – наш общий дом. Казахстан – наша крепость. Нурсултан Назарбаев – наш Лидер”.*

2) LSG indicating the inducement of the addressee (voter) to act. This group is represented by the imperative forms. Candidates in their election campaigns used verbs expressing the order, desire of the speaker/writer: *“Будь с нами!”, “Отдай голос за справедливость”, “Путер, прояви характер!”.* However, verb forms expressing inducement to joint action of candidates and voters are most frequently used: *“Вместе возродим Пятигорск!”, “Вернём украденную Родину!”, “Вместе мы победим!”, “Построим светлое будущее для ваших детей и внуков! Политикарукамимолодых!”, “Сделаем город лучше!”, “Продолжим наш уверенный путь в будущее!”.*

The analysis of common lexical units in the slogans studied shows that their authors are aware that political advertising is aimed at large groups of the population with different levels of education and culture, personal experience and interest in politics.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article is to study the Russian and Kazakh slogans found in the media. In order to achieve this goal, the analysis of common vocabulary related to the electoral process and detecting a high degree of frequency in the Russian and Kazakh slogans was carried out.

5. Research Methods

The specifics of the material under study and the tasks set in the work led to the choice of methods and techniques of research oriented to comparison, quantitative-statistical analysis and description of the material under study.

6. Findings

Analysis of common lexical units in the considered slogans shows that political advertising is designed for mass population with different educational level and culture, life experience and interest in politics.

The study of language units in the structure of the political slogan also revealed that their functioning is determined by the main communicative task –to establish a trusting dialogue between the participants of the electoral process (Nugumanova, 2019).

Statistics shows that the lexical-semantic nature of the slogan is formed by two layers of vocabulary: common and political, with a significant preponderance of units of the nation-wide language, which is confirmed by our samples from the mass media.

7. Conclusion

The group of commonly used vocabulary, permeated by personality beginnings, is dominated by LSGs positioning the subject and object of the electoral process, as well as lexemes naming key provisions of the candidate's elective program.

In the study of political communication, there is a need for scientific justification of this phenomenon, taking into account the diversity of methodological instruments in interdisciplinary fields from the perspective of the polyparadigm approach.

The political vocabulary presented by the two LSGs is used in the representation of the slogans of the election campaigns of Russia and Kazakhstan in order to accentuate the attention of the recipients, the mass addressee on the importance or significance of the event taking place in the life of the two countries.

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