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LINGUISTIC MANIPULATION DEVICES
(BY THE EXAMPLE OF ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN INFORMATION TEXTS)

Some linguistic devices of audience impact by means of formation of mass consciousness stereotypes concerning various countries, events, phenomena of social and political life, as well as individuals, used in British, American and Russian mass media, mainly, in the texts of information statements, are viewed in this article.

Keywords: linguistic manipulation, manipulative impact, mass consciousness, ideologeme, emotional evaluation, euphemization.

The primary function of informative style is information transfer, though in most cases such transfer is hardly neutral, i.e. totally free from the elements of audience impact. Informative texts, just like all other journalistic texts, also perform the function of impact, and are aimed at creation of a particular relation of the audience to the information transferred, and often reflect the position of the editors office or information agency. While analyzing mass media texts, researchers are trying not only to understand how the events are shown, what kind of lexical means are used for these purposes, but also on whose behalf and how the language influences the society [Beder 2004:210; Matheson 2005:12]. It stands to reason, because they are created "in accordance with a certain ideological system and are based on the system of ideological values" [Popova 2006: 129].

According to the researchers, the system of "stereotypes of mass (public) consciousness, included into the circle of customary associations, stable enough notwithstanding the nature of the interpreted event" [Chernyshova 2007: 231] is presented in mass media texts. The terms "key words of ideological system" or "ideologeme" are also applied to such stereotypes. [Trofimova, Kuznetsova 2010: 180]. N.I. Klushina determines an ideologeme as a basic idea of journalistic discourse, specifying that ideologically saturated general word lies at the heart of the ideologeme, often this is a figured word, a metaphor: *iron curtain, evil empire, axis of evil, cold war*, etc. [Klushina 2008: 93–95].

Linguistic impact on public consciousness can be shown in the open and the hidden form. Within the last decades hidden forms of impact gain greater value and relevance. The most popular and efficient type of

hidden impact on public consciousness is linguistic manipulation. A number of researchers [Mikhalskaya 2001; Danilova 2009] think that manipulation impact is one of the most important mass media functions along with informative, educational and advertising functions. They consider language manipulation to be "hidden linguistic impact on the recipient, intentionally misinforming it in relation to the idea or content of the speech, performed at three levels: individual, group and mass" [Danilova 2009: 12].

In the process of text creation, the authors of manipulation discourse often choose the most neutral word from the semantic field, though even a neutral word in a certain context may perform the role of impact, because in contrast to the word with an expressive negative connotation it transfers a positive estimation of this issue in a hidden form, reflecting the position of the whole ideological system, and, vice versa, while describing events, criticized by this system, emotional words with negative connotation are chosen. Compare: *peacemakers – aggressors*. It is vividly shown in phrases with political and estimation connotations in the texts, describing the conflict of interests of political parties, various military conflicts, terrorist attacks, etc.

We will show the results of the analysis of information materials about bombings in the tube in London, in July 2005, and in the underground in Moscow, in March 2010, from the BBC News website (www.bbc.co.uk/news) as an example. Though these events were so dreadfully similar (both bombings happened in the morning at several stations of both capitals, and as a result there were many injured and dead), the tonality of these statements and placement of accents differ a lot.

Relation to bombings in London and their executors is categorical - it was a terrorist attack, and the terrorists will be severely punished. The fact that it was exactly a terrorist attack in London is claimed at the very title – *London rocked by terror attack*. In the text of information statement the words *terrorist, terror* are repeated several times: they quote the Prime-Minister Tony Blair, who said that it was absolutely clear it had been a number of terrorist attacks: "It was *reasonably clear*" there had been a series of *terrorist attacks*", he also said: "We will not yield to these *terrorists*, we will find them, we will bring them to justice". They quote the words of the president George Bush, who said, that "the war on *terror* goes on". There is an explicit emotional evaluation of this event in the text, and for this purpose the word *barbaric* (wild, truculent, primitive) is used, and it is highlighted that it is "particularly *barbaric*" that this villainy was planned during the G8 Summit, which gathered together to try to help to settle the problems of poverty in Africa ("It's particularly *barbaric* that this has happened on a day when people are meeting to try to help the problems of poverty in Africa"). Thus, barbarians and the civilized world, which brings peace, are implicitly opposed in this situation.

In the statement of bombings in the Moscow underground the words *terrorist, terror* are absent in both the title and the text. We see instead: *suicide bombings, suicide bomb attacks, suicide bombers, militant groups*. It is reported, that the Russian security services relate those who blew themselves up in the underground, to the military groups (*militant groups*) in the North Caucasus and it is noted, that previous bombings of suicide bombers in the capital were made by "Islamist rebels" "fighting for independence from Russia in Chechnya".

Even this statement, apparently, seems very categorical to the author of these lines, because after the verb “carried out” he adds “or blamed on”. (*Past suicide bombings in the capital have been carried out by or blamed on Islamist rebels fighting for independence from Russia in Chechnya*). So, if bombings in London tube were in any case committed by barbarian terrorists, who challenge the whole civilized world and who are being fought against, then in Moscow they were “freedom fighters”, whose actions can be treated ambiguously – they may be disapproved or people may feel sorry for them.

The same was noted by the writer Nick Perumov, living in the USA, who informed the internet channel Russia.ru about the reaction of the American and the English mass media to bombings in the Moscow underground: “In USA, the country that suffered in a result of a dreadful terrorist attack, what happened in Russia caused unabashed malevolence. One can simply open the article of The New York Times to read this cliched set of phrases about “Chechen freedom fighters”, who are never called terrorists – only – *rebels*, *revolters*, *insurgents*, *partisans*, who in such a way are introduced to a noble context” (www.vz.ru/news/2010/4/5/389947.html).

These examples of manipulation of the public consciousness are not single. In the information statement, published in The New York Times on April 01, 2010, the head of the terrorist group Doka Umarov, who claimed responsibility for bombings in the Moscow underground, is described as a “*chechen rebel warlord*”, “*warlord*”, “*a military leader*”, “*self-styled*” *emir*”, “*president of the unrecognized independent Chechen Republic of Ichkeria*”, “*warrior*”, “*key leader*”. All these definitions are given with a positive connotation. Let’s see an example: : *A Chechen rebel warlord and “self-styled” emir of Russia’s seething North Caucasus region has claimed responsibility for the Moscow metro bombings, which killed 39 people Monday. He warned of more attacks to come. Doku Umarov – whose own violent path has traced a transition from nationalist rebel and president of the unrecognized independent Chechen Republic of Ichkeria to Islamist warrior who aspires to lead*

all Muslims of the region away from Russian rule – is emerging from the shadows as the key leader of a loose confederation of Islamist groups who are fighting against Moscow and its local proxies across Russia’s turbulent and mainly-Muslim southern flank known as the North Caucasus (The New York Times, 1.04.2010)

The same can be seen in information statements about the terrorist attack in Domodedovo airport that happened in January 2011: *Chechen warlord Doku Umarov has claimed responsibility for last month’s suicide bombing at a Moscow airport; Doku Umarov is the Chechen separatist warlord most closely linked to recent deadly attacks on Russia* (www.bbc.co.uk/news/30.03.2011).

On BBC website in the text, where the acts of violence, committed by Umarov, are specified, and the number of victims is specified (including during the seizure of the school in Beslan, where over 300 people died) we meet repeated *Mr Umarov*, which seems blasphemous with all due respect to the English etiquette. For example: : *Mr Umarov is also said to have ordered the November 2009 bombing of a train from Moscow to St Petersburg that claimed 26 lives* (www.bbc.co.uk/.../world / 08.02.2011). Thus, in spite of the fact that the English mass media inform the audience about all crimes of Umarov, they implicitly form rather neutral relation to him, whereas the Russian mass media, as a rule, express their highly negative relation through emotional and appraisal means.[Larina, Ozyumenko, Ponomarenko 2011: 44].

Linguistic means of impact are widely used to form the audience’s relation not only to certain details, but to the whole countries, and the policy they carry out. Thus, the fact of separation of Abkhazia and North Ossetia from Georgia is traced in a regular use of the adjective *breakaway* in mass media, as a result of which *breakaway regions*, and then *breakaway republics* became stock phrases: *Russia signs treaties with Georgia’s breakaway regions* (www.voanews.com/english/news); *Venezuela today recognized the independence of Georgia’s two breakaway republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, in an unexpected move that delighted Russia but provoked a vituperative*

response from Georgia (The Guardian, 09.10.2009).

Since 1990s during the office of the President Bill Clinton, the Administration of the USA started to use phrases *rogue states* and *rogue countries*, in order to designate countries hostile to the USA and not in the fairway of the American policy (Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Afghanistan, Libya, Yugoslavia), which were quickly adopted by the mass media. At the end of the office of the President Bill Clinton his administration started to use a milder term states of concern, however during administration of George Bush the term *rogue countries* was reborn, and then changed for even more severe term - axis of evil.

Despite the fact that expressions *rogue states* and *axis of evil* are criticized a lot from the part of political, social leaders and scientists, calling them chauvinistic, they are widely used in the English mass media and have become political cliches: US to take North Korea off *rogue states* list and lift sanctions (The Guardian, 26.07.2008); Of all the countries on the US list of so-called “*rogue states*”, the case is the weakest for Cuba (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/20.12.2003>);

Speaking about the means of hidden linguistic impact on public consciousness, used in mass media, euphemisms should not go unmentioned – emotionally neutral words or expressions, used instead of synonymic words and expressions, which the speaker considers undesirable, not quite polite, indecent. Euphemisms represent a device of indirect and soft designation of the object, property, action or phenomenon. Thus, euphemization is rather a social than a linguistic concept, and when journalistic or political discourse is in question - even ideological. Euphemization, according to observations of scientists, performs two primary functions – is used as a means of mitigation, reduction of rudeness and as a means of *supressio veri* [Zemskaya 2004: 529]. In mass media texts, euphemisms, as a manipulation tool, usually perform the second function.

In Russian information texts a lot of concepts are changed by euphemisms, which have already become an integral part of news vocabulary. Instead of the ominous word war, as we have already noted, such neutral words as conflict, operation and

special operation, peace operation or bringing of constitutional order are used. In the army, military hazing but not the facts of recruits' abuse by old-timers are investigated; the militants are not killed, but eliminated, etc.

In the English mass media euphemization is also popular. The same as in the Russian language, instead of to kill the word to eliminate is used, instead of killing – neutralisation, neutralization, which means “*the removal of a threat by killing or destroying it especially in a covert operation or military operation*” [Merriam Webster Dictionary]. Instead of *regime overthrow*, in case this fact is officially recognized, the neutral *regime change* is used, instead of *deserting* a new euphemism *un-volunteering* has appeared, instead of *refugee - internally displaced person*.

During the war in Vietnam such euphemistic phrase as *collateral damage* became very popular, which is used in relation to the civilians, who dead during the war or military operations, for example: *The bombs were aimed at military targets but there was some collateral damage to civilian areas*. This expression is widely condemned by the society for its cynical hidden sense and is given as an example of double standards, when a murder, named in any other words, is thought not to be a murder.

The other example of double standards in relation to Russia from the part of Western society is rather a small rush in the world about the arrest of the producer of a scandalous movie “Innocence of Muslims”, especially in comparison to the public response caused by the proceedings with Pussy Riot. According to the words of the director of the Fund of democracy problems investigation M. Grigoryev, “by such a quick response to such an attack of Islamic values, and, vice versa, actually supporting the attack of Orthodox values, which was unconditionally made with the help of the Pussy Riot’s campaign, the western political leaders showed their policy of double standards again” (www.ria.news. 28.09.2012). Giving comments to these two events, in the article of *U.S. Government supports Pussy Riot (but not ‘Innocence of Muslims’) dated September 16,*

2012, American professor of politics M. Philosopher writes: “*I noticed an interesting contradiction between the way the U.S. government reacted to the jail sentences handed down to Russian punk activists ‘Pussy Riot’ and the way it responded to the YouTube video ‘Innocence of Muslims’...*” Then he quotes the statement of the State Department of the USA as a response to the decision made in relation to Pussy Riot band: “*The United States is concerned about both the verdict and the disproportionate sentences handed down by a Moscow court in the case against the members of the band Pussy Riot and the negative impact on freedom of expression in Russia. We urge Russian authorities to review this case and ensure that the right to freedom of expression is upheld.*” On the contrary, the Secretary of State, keeps the author writing, speaking about the video “Innocence of Muslims”, “*sang a very different tune*”: “*The United States government absolutely rejects the content and message [of the video]... to us, to me personally, this video is disgusting and reprehensible...*” (www.american.thinker.com 16.09.2012). Director General of the Center of political information Aleksey Mukhin said that “in the case with Pussy Riot the United States have clearly showed that they are not impersonal watchers, but “interested and very committed participants of the proceedings” (www.ria.news. 28.09.2012).

In this article, some devices of hidden impact on the public opinion, used in mass media, are viewed, primarily those from the texts of information statements. Linguistic manipulation represents an all-powerful communicative resource. The problem of interpretation of events is very important, because “various mediamorphoses, that suggest wrong ideas about the life phenomena and processes may be formed” [Zemlyanova 2004:202] in the consciousness of the audience under the influence of mass media. Due to intensification of the impact function, found in modern mass media, journalists are searching for new ways, attracting new linguistic means in order to attract attention to any facts and to form a certain relation to them.

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