Imagery in Political Mass Media Discourse

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Abstract—**The article is devoted to the analysis of figurative means (zoomorphic, somatic and substantive metaphors) in the English language in the discourse of political mass-media. Language plays a role in developing and evolving into a systematic language, so it constantly needs support in the language and the reflections in the changes which in its turn stimulates linguistic processes. The significant peculiarity of vocabulary is its inherent direction to the phenomena of reality, that's why it is the vocabulary that reflects all the changes happening in the public life, which inevitably leads to the formation of new nominations. Figurative means in English political mass-media are of peculiar interest to scholars as a word in this sphere of life should possess expressiveness, draw the attention of the audience for which in some cases lexical units capable of fulfilling a certain communicative task are formed. And the dissemination of these new words is a popular means of mass media. The article underlines that the analysis of figurative means in the English language in the discourse of political mass-media contributes to the understanding of typical and specific peculiarities of a people by a language personality, and as a result of a description of cultural interpretation of a basis of the analyzed units conceptual values of the people based on their mentality, typical traits of an ethnos can be singled out.**

Keywords—image, imagery, political discourse, mass media, idiom

I. INTRODUCTION

Mass media are "technologies and institutes through which information and other forms of symbolic communication are distributed to large, heterogeneous and geographically dispersed audiences; one of the essential forms of distribution and being of mass culture" [1]. In other words, these are institutions involved in "adaptation and distribution of information" intended for mass audience [2].

With the help of mass communication people structure and substantiate their own beliefs and experience. Mass media predetermine not only information awareness but also daily life and a picture of the world. Mass communication can be considered the space where people create and share life orientations, values and knowledge.

Word is not the only but the most accessible and effective weapon of politicians. What and how politicians say is of scientific and applied interest. In a broad sense, the totality of communicative practices in a political context is a political discourse and the definition of political discourse may encompass issues of power, conflict, control or domination.

II. THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Language fixes the conceptual world of man having as its initial source the real world and activities in this world. It is believed that, in essence, all nominative human activity proceeds in support of the signs that are ready and known from previous experience. Nevertheless, the peculiarities of human nature consisting in the estimated psychological orientation are manifested in the so-called selective interest, i.e. the allocation of some objects (or some properties, signs, qualities, objects) compared to others.

We believe that the internal form, the image underlying the meaning or use of the word can be understood only against the background of the material and spiritual culture in which it originated [3].

An image is both what it is in terms of its literal designation and what it represents in its wider content hidden in its literal meaning.

According to linguists, images in verbal expression are complex iconic signs that are formed during the generalization and expansion of the meaning of a simple language sign and the concept expressed by it and endowing it with an indicative function [4].

The concepts *image*, *imagery* and *figurative* are used in different sciences: philosophy, psychology, aesthetics, art history, literary studies, linguistics etc [5-7]. At the same time, the figurative nomination is understood as a process of forming names, in the semantic structure of which there is a figurative opposition. A.A. Potebnya believed that the imaginative opposition was unity and opposition of the actual meaning and the internal form of the name [8]. During the study of the specific nature of the imagery Charles Bally came to the following conclusion: the figurative opposition that arises in speech becomes the basis of speech figurativeness; figurative opposition in the language system is the basis of the language imagery [9]. Evidence of internal form indicates the preservation of the opposition.

It should be noted that the nomination is figurative if there is a figurative opposition in the semantic structure of a nominative unit. In modern linguistic literature there are three types of oppositions: 1) opposition based on the transfer of the name and on the associations between related

names; 2) opposition based on combination of components; 3) opposition based on etymologically motivated relations of homonymy or paronym between etymologically unrelated names [10].

The opposition of the figurative nomination is etymologically motivated in contrast to the opposition of artistic imagery.

III. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The study of linguistic phenomena in conjunction with the consciousness, thinking, spiritual life of a person, national psychology, history and culture makes it possible to re-imagine the most significant fragments of the linguistic picture of the world. One of these fragments is the study of the functioning of figurative units in political mass media discourse. The implementation of this task is a practical contribution to the development of an anthropocentric approach to language learning.

This paper is an attempt to synthesize various aspects of the description of the choice of metaphorical units to influence the underlying processes of human cognition.

The impact of figurative units in the political mass media discourse is a significant set of ideas about the linguistic personality historically established within the framework of the national culture as a result of summarizing various aspects of value orientations – moral and ethical, aesthetic, pragmatic attitudes and norms.

IV. DATA, ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Those linguists who study specific features of the structure of an image identify several ways of figurative nomination distinguished by the sphere of functioning: methods of nomination independent of the presence or absence of linguistic contact, that is, methods of interlingual nomination common for the studied languages, and intra-language nomination. The first group includes the ways of forming semantic neologisms: models of transferring names (metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, hyperbole, or litotes, meiosis), expansion, specialization of meaning, oxymoron, catachresis (methods of indirect nomination); secondly, the methods of primary figurative nomination leading to the formation of figurative names (affixation, shortening, combinatorial methods); thirdly, the methods of secondary indirect nomination leading to the formation of figurative names on the basis of coordinative and subordinative relations. The second group includes the formation of names motivated by contact between languages: borrowing, calque and transformation or the periphrasis of the names of one language when they are transferred by means of another [11].

It is noteworthy that the methods of figurative nomination include the means of production of only figurative names that is specific ways of figurative nomination, and the methods that form both figurative and non-figurative names are non-specific methods of figurative nomination. It should be noted that specific means are the formation of semantic neologisms (first of all, models of transfer of names), non-specific are other methods of intra-language nomination and methods of interlingual nomination. Specific ways of figurative nomination are universal and underlie the formation of all figurative oppositions.

Imagery as a real property of linguistic units of various levels is manifested in their ability to evoke visual representations in our mind, vivid pictures against which we perceive the subject-real or conceptual-logical content of these units. Figurativeness as a category customarily assigned to words with figuratively motivated meanings and a certain part of phraseological units when forming their meanings acts as an active structure-forming factor: it contributes to the expressiveness and vivid emotionality of these linguistic units and creates objective prerequisites for expressing a diverse range of assessments (from "beautiful", "wonderful" to "unacceptable", "disgusting") in relation to the fragments of reality. Thus it becomes the connotative component of their semantics [12].

Metaphor is usually associated with a conceptual system of native speakers, with their standard ideas about the world, with a system of assessments that exist in this linguistic culture and are only verbalized in the language. The effect of the metaphorical use of words in relation to a person consists not only in identifying expressive and emotional tones of the meaning of a word through contexts of different sizes but also in actualizing the corresponding system of generally accepted associations in a given linguistic culture.

The following online newspapers and magazines were used in the research: The Washington Post, The Guardian, The Economist, Russia Today, Project Syndicate, Russia in Global Affairs, Daily News, News Week, Independent, and The Telegraph. The statements with a figurative component of a political nature were selected and analyzed. In political mass media discourse the use of phraseological units in the statements of politicians is quite common. Thus, the analysis of English newspapers and magazines has led to the conclusion that politicians quite often use the zoomorphic, somatic and substantive metaphors.

In a number of scientific works it is argued that metaphoric characteristic of units with the zoomorphic component, the subjectively-estimated connotation inherent in them, the specificity of their semantic parameters is largely due to their referential sphere which is based on implicitly expressed anthropocentrism in them as a manifestation of the ancient folklore tradition of ascribing specific features of a person to certain animals. In the ethnoculture of different nations units that include the names of animals are primarily statements about a person, his or her spiritual and social features [13].

The pace of negotiations on environmental issues was compared in English political mass media discourse with a "snail's pace" which cannot but worry the public:

Negotiations for a deal to fight climate change were moving at a "snail's pace", the United Nations chief, Ban Ki-Moon, told a high-level meeting on Monday [14].

The idea of using citizens as "guinea pigs" is of concern – nevertheless in the opinion of the author of the article this is justified in special cases by the government:

People are unlikely to react positively to the idea of using citizens as guinea pigs; many will be downright disgusted. But there are times when government must experiment on us in the search for knowledge and better policy [15].

A political leader can be compared to an "elephant in the room" – an obvious one, but sometimes ignored:

Donald Trump is the elephant in the room at conservative summit in Iowa [16].

Nominees with a somatic component are one of the numerous rows of all thematic groups. They are one of the oldest classes of nomination units and constitute the most commonly used part of the nominees of the languages. Their productivity is determined by the degree of awareness in the past by a person of the need for certain organs for their lives.

Often somatic units do not reflect historical, cultural or social facts in their content. They arise as a result of a figurative interpretation of phrases that call various actions and conditions involving parts of the body. Many nominees are connected by their origin with various social or psychophysiological factors.

"Hand-wringing" is one of the actions politicians may take after a public ambiguous remark:

Hand-Wringing in G.O.P. After Donald Trump's Remarks on Megyn Kelly [17].

Similarity in political views is important for maintaining peace and tranquility which is reflected in the idiom "eye to eye":

Britain and Iran see "eye to eye" in the battle against the Isis militant group, the UK's foreign secretary has said. Philip Hammond made the statement the day after the reopening of the British embassy in the Iranian capital of Tehran [18].

"To fight tooth and nail" is a characteristic feature of politicians:

The battle continues in New Hampshire as candidates fight tooth and nail to take home the state [19].

The source of the units with the substantive component is the metaphorical rethinking of objects that are closely related to human life in a given period of development of society, their personification and reflection in the language.

Card terminology is typical of metaphorical images in political media discourse:

Putting cards on the table, a trump card on the sleeve, and the joker in the pack:

President Putin has not disclosed his future strategic plans during the annual Q&A since to surprise international markets one should always have an ace up the sleeve [20].

Ukip is playing the race card, so I'm quitting the party Sanya-Jeet

Thandi [21].

V. Conclusions

Phraseological units occupy a significant place among artistic and visual means in all functional styles including political mass media discourse: they are usually intuitively singled out as the main carriers of imagery and expression. The analysis of figurative means (zoomorphic, somatic and substantive metaphors) in the English political media discourse helps to reveal the linguistic personality's vision of typical and specific features of their people and as a result of describing the cultural interpretation of the analyzed units the conceptual values of a given people are revealed based on their mentality and typical ethnical features.

The diverse connections of political culture with various social and political processes predetermine its complex structure and organization. Various internal structures of political culture reflect the technology of forming the political behavior of subjects, the stages of the formation of culture (that is, the political culture of a particular country, region), the presence of various political subcultures, etc.

Language is a tool for influencing public awareness and guiding public action. It allows politicians to achieve their goals if they are properly and clearly named.

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