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SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL CODE ESTABLISHMENT IN GERMAN-SPEAKING MEDIA DISCOURSE

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Abstract

The article explores complex integrative nature of the media space. It clarifies and updates methodological approaches to the study of media text as a cultural code, and emphasizes the relevance of studying specific mechanisms of media text impact. The study analyzes the methods for modeling value orientations, identifies and describes the explicit and implicit mechanisms for its implementation. The authors conclude that a modern media text should be considered not just as a message containing information, but also as a part of a meta-reality that actively creates its own cognitive, cultural, social and value orientations. The analysis carried out made it possible to identify the main mechanisms that ensure this process – the implication and creation of a non-linear semantic structure of the communicative space. From a language viewpoint, these mechanisms are implemented as decoding, implicating hidden meanings, free combination and completion of presuppositions and context, which contributes to the growth of conflict and the evaluative nature of media space. In conclusion, the authors emphasize the importance of a cognitive approach to the study of a media text, i.e. the interaction of meta-reality of the media space with the reality and our idea about it in the cognitive space – individual mental experience of a reader. The media text that defines the information array at the same time defines associative, contextual, semantic, and evaluative links between text elements and the whole fragments, thus being a constructive model that generalizes and represents isolated elements of meaning into a coherent picture.

Keywords: Evaluativity, media space, media text, non-linearity, subjectivism, value orientation

1. Introduction

Media text as a concept and subject of linguistic research has existed, as is known, since the 1990s, having appeared and developed initially in the English-language scientific discourse. The development of the media text concept is associated with the names of Alan Bell, Theo Van Dyck, Robert Fowler, Martin Montgomery.

Media text as an object and material of research has a complex integrative nature. Depending on the purpose and the nature of the study, a media text can be presented as a communicative action, an event in the media space, broadcasting a sequence of signs and meanings, a 'link of culture', 'a national stream of consciousness of a modern person' (Melnik, 2012). Characterizing the media text, modern scientific discourse highlights such properties as ideological pluralism, the corporate nature of production, multidimensionality and diversity of meanings embedded in it, non-linearity, dialogism and inclusion in the hypertext stream.

Despite a long and fruitful tradition of studying media, it should be noted that the current situation expresses the need to clarify approaches to the study of the media space and media text in particular. This is primarily due to the level of information provision of modern society – the media market permanent growth, the intensity of digital information flows, serious and sustainable change in the structure of media content (Gudova et al., 2021; Khachmafova et al., 2017). All these factors are associated with new computer technologies and are accelerated, among other things, by public and social transformations in the era of a pandemic.

2. Problem Statement

The current situation leads to the fact that the media text ceases to be just a message containing information. As this study shows, it also overcomes the framework laid down in it from the moment of its establishment – to be a bearer and translator of cultural codes. The media text itself becomes a cultural code, a meta-reality that actively sets its own cognitive, cultural, social, and, in particular, value orientations. In this regard, there is a need to study methodological approaches to the study of modern media text, to substantiate the non-linearity of the media text as one of the mechanisms for implementing value orientation in it, as well as to identify and describe the explicit and implicit mechanisms for implementing value orientation on the example of the German-language media text.

3. Research Questions

The media text more and more clearly reveals the features of subjectivism, evaluativeness and conflict. This becomes a continuation of the general trend of the era of globalization, in which the communicative nature of meaning formation is significantly enhanced (Gerasimova, 2020). In this context, a number of problems arise that require scientific understanding:

1. The discussion about the paradigm of subject-object relations in the situation of man vs media space is becoming increasingly relevant. It seems that the media text with its non-linear, multi-vector structure should be rethought as an independent and active subject of the communicative process. In this

role, the media text creates its own meta-space that defines mental, communicative and value orientations – meaningful, semantic, symbolic, and, of course, value orientations;

2. In the context of the current situation, there is a need for a more active discussion of the media text role as a translator of value orientations. The importance of such a discussion is due to many factors, including not only the strengthening of globalization, the growth of IT development of modern society, the growing role of artificial intelligence, but also the intensification of crisis phenomena provoked, among other things, by the coronavirus pandemic;

3. The linguistic study of the media space in the above paradigm should proceed from the understanding that the mechanisms of subjectivism, non-linearity and evaluativeness lie in the cognitive plane. Media text models the situation based on individual mental experience, worldview, and cultural codes within which we exist. Being a code, the media text itself sets associative, contextual and evaluative links, constructing a cognitive model, creating a conceptual network and including our individual experience in it.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the linguistic mechanisms for the implementation of value orientation in the modern German-speaking media space.

5. Research Methods

A wide scope of problems associated with the study of the media space leads to the fact that a variety of sciences is engaged in the study of modern media text. In addition to linguistics, media text is becoming the subject of research in philosophy, mathematics, sociology, psychology and many other disciplines. It seems that there has not been a science yet that would have such a degree of interdisciplinarity. This results in completely different methodological approaches to the study.

In the context of linguistics, a media text can be studied as a combination of media and verbal texts, as a result of the interaction of the expression plan and the content plan (functional approach), as a model of the communicative act Author – Text – Reader, in which it is considered as a joint product of the author and reader, etc. Many studies consider media text impact technologies using different methods of analysis, i.e. linguistic, stylistic, narrative, semiotic, contextual, and discursive (Melnik, 2012).

Such different approaches to the study of the media text find justification in modern epistemology as a science of cognition, for which one of the key points in the context of the discussion of the media space is the thesis of multiple realities: awareness of the complexity of reality, which is accompanied by the differentiation of knowledge and social communications, leads to an understanding of complexity and nonlinearity of cognition of this reality. As a result, the philosophy proposes to consider a coordinate grid with axes as the basis of a modern model of cognition: conscious – unconscious, explicit – implicit, external – internal, linear – non-linear, order – chaos, simple – complex, reflective – pre-reflexive, discrete – continual (Gerasimova, 2020).

Such methodological approach is being implemented in linguistics, for example, in the study of digital hypertext, which is attributed to one of the forms of media text. Analyzing the specific features of

the hypertext functioning in the digital media space, most studies come to the following characteristics: non-linearity, interactivity, dispersed structure, multi-vector nature, as well as the lack of continuity of perception (Baranova et al., 2021; Stroykov, 2019).

The analysis of current methodological approaches to the study of media text made it possible to identify our own methodological prerequisites.

First, it seems appropriate to consider the current situation of man vs media space in the paradigm of subject-object relations. According to the observations, there is a change of roles in this paradigm, i.e. the media text is more clearly appearing as an active principle – a subject, an actor involving society, a person in a special reality that functions according to its own rules. This approach makes it possible to consider and analyze the media text as an active, self-sufficient subject of the communicative space, which structures, represents and manifests new realities (Katermina, 2017) defining the boundaries and structure of our knowledge about this reality, personal ideas about it, and, as a result, forming the value orientations of modern man.

Secondly, and this is a logical continuation of the first proposition, the linguistic study of modern media text is moving into the cognitive field since it is the place where meta-reality of the media space interacts with the reality and our idea of it. "The text can and should be considered as a mechanism that 'starts' the cognitive processes of its perception" (Belyaeva & Chernyavskaya, 2016, p. 80). The cognitive approach to the study of media text relies primarily on the assumption that the media space and media text in particular are non-linear. Speaking of non-linearity, as the multidimensionality of the semantic structure of the text, it is necessary to give a justification for this concept in relation to the description of the semantic structure of the text. In modern scientific discourse, non-linearity is interpreted in different ways: as a plurality of semantic choices based on associative links (Riazantseva, 2010), and, in a broader sense, as potentially any possibility of reading and understanding, in the sense of an "open work" (Eco, 2018). The media text greatly enhances the original possibility of interpretation inherent in the semantic structure of the language. The non-linearity of its space is implemented in decoding, free combination and completion of meanings, which contributes to greater conflict and evaluation of the media space in comparison with all other language explications.

Based on these methodological prerequisites, we have explored the methods for modeling value orientations in the German-language media space on the material of such a genre of digital text as the daily newsletter (Morning Briefing) of the German edition Der Spiegel (the German title of the column is Die Lage am Morgen). This type of text is, in our opinion, a vivid expression of the implementation in the media text of dialogue, non-linearity, evaluativeness and conflict, those qualities that we have identified above as significant typological characteristics of the media text.

The results of the study are illustrated by the example of a newsletter published on the portal Der Spiegel on the day of the transfer of power from the former German Chancellor Angela Merkel to the newly elected Chancellor Olaf Scholz. The article has the following title Liefert Scholz die versprochene Erneuerung des Landes? Its author is Mathieu von Rohr, the Head of the International Editorial Office of this journal.

6. Findings

First, in the course of analysis the unconditional dialogical and evaluative nature of this text was established. The individual appeal to the reader in combination with the inversion "Liebe Leserin, lieber Leser, guten Morgen" ("Dear reader, good morning") both the expressive and stylistically reduced colloquial vocabulary at the very beginning of the text "Tschüss Kanzlerin, moin Kanzler" ("Bye Chancellor, hello Chancellor") set not only a dialogue nature, but also introduce elements of controversy and conflict into forthcoming dialogue with the reader. This occurs, in part, with the regional "moin" ("Hello"), a form of greeting typical of the inhabitants of Hamburg, which is a reference to Olaf Scholz's former position as a Mayor of Hamburg.

This reference has been found more than once in the article, for example, in the context of a discussion of the future foreign policy of a new coalition: „Scholz sagte auf die Frage mehrfach gar nichts, woraus man schließen darf, dass es darüber keine Einigkeit gibt. Zwischen der von den Grünen im Koalitionsvertrag postulierten "werte-basierten" Außenpolitik und der Hamburger Handelsaußenpolitik des SPD-Kanzlers wird es sicher noch häufiger knirschen" ("When asked, Scholz said nothing at all, from which one can conclude that there is no agreement on this. Between the "value-based" foreign policy postulated by the Greens in the coalition agreement and the Hamburg foreign trade policy of the SPD chancellor, there will certainly be more crunching"). The author explicitly expresses the belief – *wird es sicher noch häufiger knirschen* (it will certainly crunch more often) – that there will inevitably contradictions between the 'values-based' foreign policy postulated by the Green Party and, literally, the 'Hamburg foreign trade policy' (meaning the policy of Olaf Scholz). Thus, we see how the reader's value orientations are formed: on the one hand, the proposition "values - basis – foreign policy" arises, on the other hand, the proposition "Hamburg – trade – foreign policy". The propositions create the thematic fronting, and hence the contexts: "Kein Text ohne Präsuppositionen; und deshalb auch: kein Text ohne Kontexte. Jede vernünftige Rezeption eines Textes wird sich an die Thematisierungen im Text selbst halten…" ("No text without presuppositions; and therefore also: no text without context. Any reasonable reception of a text will stick to the themes in the text itself...") (Klotz, 2007, p. 89). The analysis of this example has also revealed the non-linearity of its semantic structure – a combination of explicit and implicit mechanisms of value orientation: the expression "wertebasier" ("values-based"), as we have noticed, is not conceptually defined and is not specified in any way. The implication starts the process of formation of new meanings – the semantic increments (Chernyavskaya, 2017), stimulating the reader to think out the situation, based on their own experience and ideas, to think of the category of "value". Propositional structures are integrated into a semantic whole that forms the semantic structure of the text (Zavarzina, 2016).

There have been discovered the mechanisms of value orientation, also in the way the author of the article pushes the reader to predict the future activities of Scholz as a Chancellor, using for this purpose both explicit and implicit mechanisms for creating appraisal: „Auch, wie Scholz das Amt ausüben wird, ist noch schwer vorstellbar" ("It is also difficult to imagine how Scholz will hold the office") (explicitly). "Er wird zeigen müssen, dass er mehr ist als ein noch wortkarger Merkel" ("He will have to show that he is more than just a taciturn Merkel") (explicit + implicit). In the last example, an explicit paraphrase is

observed – Scholz is literally called "laconic Merkel", which sounds very ironic and even rude. At the same time, there is also an implication here – in Peter Klotz's terminology – implicit context markers (2007). This fragment of the text contains a reference to the history of the formation of Olaf Scholz as a politician – many believe that his political growth took place under the influence and support of Merkel herself, and that he – as a political figure – copies her image, demeanor, communication style, without possessing however, so far her eloquence and ability to convince.

As a result of the analysis, it was found that the subjective beginning of the media text – active manipulation of the content orientation, assessments, reader's opinion – is realized due to the non-linear semantic organization of the text space and a mixture of explicit (connotation, semantic and pragmatic transpositions, metaphorization, irony) and implicit (reference to contexts, situational models) mechanisms. Speaking about the political future of Olaf Scholz, the author of the text simultaneously expresses irony, skepticism, and hope: "Wie lange Olaf Scholz Kanzler sein wird, kann heute niemand sagen – wird die Ampel ein langfristiges oder ein kurzlebiges Bündnis?... Und doch sind die Hoffnungen groß, dass nach Jahren des Bewahrens nun Jahre des Gestaltens kommen. Scholz selbst muss in die Rolle noch hineinwachsen…" ("No one can say today how long Olaf Scholz will be chancellor - will the traffic light be a long-term or a short-lived alliance?... And yet there are high hopes that after years of preservation there will now be years of shaping. Scholz himself still has to grow into the role...") Along with the explicit expression of evaluativeness – rhetorical question, modality, lexical means (*niemand, langfristig, kurzlebig, Hoffnungen*) (*nobody, long-term, short-lived, hopes*), idiom (*in die Rolle noch hineinwachsen*) (*grow into the role*), in this segment of the text one can also see the implication of mechanisms. The sentence „Und doch sind die Hoffnungen groß, dass nach Jahren des Bewahrens nun Jahre des Gestaltens kommen" ("And yet the hopes are high that years of preserving will now be followed by years of design") contains implicit markers for the social assessment of Angela Merkel's activities. The substantiated verb *das Bewahren* means "to preserve, protect", the opposition to it is the substantiated verb *das Gestalten*, which means "to create". This semantic opposition implicates the context of the political situation in Germany and can be considered as its value orientation – most of the country's population is waiting for creativeness and change.

This assessment, as a leitmotif, runs throughout the text, and, by analogy with the conceptual network, forms an evaluation network of the text:

„Merkel war stets eine *moderierende* und *stabilisierende* Kraft, nur selten eine *gestaltende*."

("Merkel was always a moderating and stabilizing force, only rarely a formative one.")

„Insgesamt verdient ihre Ära eher den Titel einer *Bewahrungskanzlerschaft*."

("All in all, her era deserves the title of a preservation chancellorship.")

„… sie habe aus ihren Chancen *zu wenig gemacht*: „Was bei ihr groß begann, endete fast immer in *Kleinmut*."

("... she didn't make enough of her chances: "What started out big for her almost always ended in faintheartedness.")

As the analysis shows, the non-linearity of the media space can be found in the media text in various forms:

1) Speaking of non-linearity, we mean the deep vertical semantic structure of the text, based on the implication of additional meanings, contexts, semantic associations, including evaluativeness. "Texte rufen also mehr oder weniger komplexe Sachverhalte auf, ohne sie selbst zur Gänze abbilden zu können. Sie haben Verweischarakter" ("Texts therefore call up more or less complex facts without being able to depict them in their entirety. They have reference character") (Klotz, 2007). In this sense, non-linearity is related to interactivity;

2) As a non-linear structure of the text space, organization of the digital hypertext space through hyperlinks (Stroykov, 2019), the ability for the reader to independently choose the movement within the text, and, as a result, create their own text.

The results of the analysis confirm the following provisions: firstly, in the horizontal plane of the studied text, there is a clear division into topical (according to the editors) subjects. Each section of the article is divided into a separate text, with its own title, internal division, its own references and comments. These separate thematic frontings have clear and explicit graphic and stylistic marking, and create separate situational models. Each section contains one or more hyperlinks that redirect the reader to the sources of more detailed information, or links to live broadcasts. We view this as a text-driven reading trajectory.

Each thematic fronging is preceded by a subheading, not only clearly marked graphically (special font, size, bolding, line spacing), but explicitly marked stylistically and pragmatically. Some of the subheadings have the structure of a question, the purpose of which is to raise doubt or controversy, in other words, to start the mechanism for modeling appraisal:

„Stoppt Deutschland Nord Stream2?"

("Will Germany stop Nord Stream 2?")

„Kann Scholz mehr als Kanzlermat?"

("Can Scholz do more than chancellorship?")

Both subheadings manifest a clear pragmatic and evaluative attitude: in the first example, the semantics of the German verb *stoppen* implies, in addition to the meaning "stop", the same meaning "interrupt" as a purposeful action aimed at stopping an undesirable situation (‚etwas. infolge eingetretener Mängel, Schwierigkeiten unterbrechen' – 'some. as a result of defects that have occurred, difficulties interrupt') . This gives the situational model "Germany – Nord Stream" a clear negative or at least polemical connotation.

The second of the analyzed subheadings correlates with the topic that has been already voiced – the entry of Olaf Scholz into the office of Chancellor. This example is interesting for the occasionalism *Kanzlermat* consisting of the German *Kanzler* and the English *mat* – a mat, a rug, something tangled, something that serves as a lining, and on which the main material is attached from above. There is a context for a discussion about the possible role of a politician, his strength and ability to act independently, and the prospect of his coming to this position. And, as the study shows, in the process of implication, not the most positive assessment arises, which, moreover, is enhanced by the grammatical structure of this sentence, namely its lacunarity – the absence of a semantic verb and the need for semantic implication. As a result, we obtain the possible proposition Scholz – sein – Kanzlermat.

By analyzing the explicit and implicit mechanisms of evaluativeness modeling, their role in creating a non-linear semantic and evaluative structure of the media text was discovered. Most often they are implemented in the text as a language game based on sound, associative, and symbolic connections. An example of this provision is the following thematic fronting of the studied text, which is preceded by the heading *Die Omikron-Virusvorhersage: schwerwiegend bis mild* (The omicron virus prediction: severe to mild). The implication of hidden meanings is carried out in this case through a paradox and a play on words, in particular, through a double violation of collocation. The occasionalism of *Virusvorhersage* (literally: virus forecast) implies a language game, evoking an association with the habitual and stable *Wettervorhersage* (weather forecast). The expression *schwerwiegend bis mild* is a play on the usual weather forecast *kalt bis mild* (from cold to mild weather), but is associated with the situation of the spread of the coronavirus. The text sets pragmatic meanings and evaluativeness – irony, associations with prediction, the probabilistic nature of the situation, its unscientific nature, ambiguity and uncertainty. The possibility of such an interpretation is based on "discursive competence" as the ability to "deduce intentions and hidden meanings, implicatures and presuppositions of statements based on common knowledge, possession of codes, mental operations" (Chernyavskaya, 2017, p. 91). It seems that in the cases similar to the analyzed example, we can talk about a not entirely fair game with the reader – the manipulation of a general skeptical mood and fatigue to create the illusion of community and complicity.

Playing around with the grammatical structure in the analyzed text could also be attributed to such discursive competence. We mean the masculine gender of the noun Kanzler: "An das Maskulinum wird man sich in dem Zusammenhang noch gewöhnen müssen…" ("You will have to get used to the masculine noun in this context…") Of course, Maskulinum, not without irony, means not only and not so much the gender of the noun, but rather the discourse of the political situation of the change of power in Germany.

7. Conclusion

Modern science considers the media text not just as a message containing information, and not as a transmitter of cultural codes, it becomes a cultural code, a meta-reality that actively sets its own cognitive, cultural, social, and value orientations. In this regard, the study of specific technologies and mechanisms of influence of the media text is becoming increasingly relevant.

Exploring the role of the media space in modeling value orientations, it is efficient to approach the media text as an active, self-sufficient subject of the communicative space that structures, represents and manifests new realities, defining the boundaries and structure of our knowledge about this reality, personal ideas about it, and, affects the value orientations of a modern man.

The linguistic study of the modern media text is moving into the cognitive field, since it is the place where the meta-reality of media space interacts with the reality and our idea about it. This interaction takes place in the individual mental experience of the reader, his picture of the world, in the codes of his culture. The media text, which defines an information array, at the same time, defines associative, contextual, semantic, and evaluative links between text elements and entire fragments, thus being a constructive model that generalizes and represents isolated elements of meaning – propositions.

The cognitive approach in the study of the media text relies primarily on the assumption of the non-linearity of the media space and media text in particular. The media text greatly enhances the original possibility of interpretation inherent in the semantic structure of the language. The non-linearity of its space is realized in decoding, free combination and completion of meanings, which contributes to a greater conflict and evaluation of the media space in comparison with other language explications.

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