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НАПРЯМ 8. МОВА І ЗАСОБИ МАСОВОЇ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ

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FAKE NEWS AS A MEANS OF MEDIA COMMUNICATION: SIX STEPS OF LINGUO-STYLISTIC APPROACH

Fake news is a progressively common characteristic of modern political sphere. Fake (forgery, deception, lies) news and materials flood the modern media space and become an important factor in the dissemination of certain opinions in the media on the Internet. Fake news has a long history, but its scale and effectiveness have risen to unprecedented levels today thanks to the development of social networks. Fake news is a message stylistically created as real news, but false in whole or in part.

There have been our several attempts to shed light on the problem [1; 2; 5; 6]. In this article we propose some methodological steps for analyzing texts of fake news within linguo-stylistic approach.

To our mind, the investigation of fake news can be carried out on the basis of the integrated approach with the use of general scientific (synthesis, analysis, systematization, generalization and observation) and purely linguistic (descriptive analytical, contextual interpretive, lexico-semantic, structural semantic, thesaurus, conceptual, linguistic, component, descriptive) methods of analysis. The application of the above methods, focused on describing the linguistic and stylistic specifics of fake news, involves a scientific search at six stages of analysis.

The first step. At this stage the focus is on describing communication as the dominant concept of media. The status of media reality as well as its regulatory functions in close connection with mass communication is the subject of the analysis. Using the methods of synthesis and analysis, one can describe some interpretations of the concepts of “communication” and “media communication” given both in the scientific circles of domestic and foreign scholars and lexicographical sources.

Using the methods of systematization and generalization, different points of view on the definition of media communication, based on existing concepts of communication theory in historical retrospect can be given.

According to the results of descriptive and analytical review of traditional scientific developments on the issue discussed, three levels of communication: technical (accuracy of information transferring from a sender to a recipient), semantic (interpretation of the message by a recipient in comparison with the initial value) and level of efficiency (the results of behaviour being changed in connection with the message) [4] are actively used in up-to-date print and electronic media while creating, processing, transmitting of textual, graphic, audio or digital information.

On this very stage we can conclude that media communication is a functional system based on applied models developed in line with the theory of communication, but the impact of information technology is currently helping to rethink the definition of “media communication”.

The second step. We are sure one can't but deal with the description of such a concept as “post-truth”. This is a new socio-political phenomenon the definition of which can be clarified by means of various lexicographical sources (Ukrainian and English as well). The post-truth is a set of distorted, fabricated or truncated facts, provided with misinterpretations, unsubstantiated conclusions. It's emotionally coloured by inadequate patterns and syllogic conclusions confirming a certain concept followed by the author [3]. Central to understanding the communicative nature of post-truth is the notion of a “media narrative”, or a story about politics in the media. With the help of contextual interpretative analysis one can analyze English-language news, which shows that the authors of the news text explicitly write about deception (untruth), underlying the narrative: not facts or analytical conclusions are important in the communicative process, but already formed interpretations, contrasting with the already concluded beliefs of a recipient.

The third step. It's relevant, in our opinion, to pay attention to the means and forms of fake content expressing. Such means, according to the results of observation and processing of scientific sources, are the basis for creating and disseminating fake news. The use of lexico-semantic analysis may allow to find out the semantics of words-markers of false fake news content. Among them there is a large proportion of nouns naming the doer of the action. It helps to assume a significant role of the individual in creating lies. Also one can observe a significant number of verbs, the diversity of which is achieved by expressing different ways of verb action. A lot of synonyms for the lexeme “*lie*” can be outlined such as “*swank, nonsense, prate, idle talk, twaddle*”. They reflect different shades of meaning of “*lie*”.

At this stage, we again turn to the method of thesaurus analysis to determine the lie. Conceptual analysis is used to identify the range of lexical compatibility of the name of the concept LIE, to analyze lexical units associated with the word “*lie*” alongside with paremiological units the part of which it is.

The fourth step. It is related to the study of rumors as an integral element in the structure of informal communication. Linguistic analysis is involved in order to establish the specifics of language means available in the language, which facilitate the process of packing false information into a convenient form. Discursive analysis in combination with general scientific methods of synthesis and observation prove that rumors as prototypes of fake news (according to G. Pocheptsov) have two dominant characteristics: they have no specific standards of evidence, so the line between information and deception is blurred; rumors are not just a related notion, they gain their power through widespread dissemination and repetition, which confirms the idea of the same characteristic typical of fake news.

The analysis of dictionary entries of the word “rumors” and component analysis of the data show that the semanticization of this lexeme is based on categorization by the following criteria: 1) communicative status, 2) the nature of communication, 3) the channel of information transmission, 4) the type of communication situations, 5) sources of information, 6) the degree of reliability of information, 7) the degree of verification of the message, 8) the extent of information dissemination.

The fifth step directly correlates with determining the status of fake news in modern media space. This step is carried out by using general scientific (synthesis, analysis) and descriptive analytical methods. The structural semantic method is focused on the description of the meaning of the words “fake” and “hoax” to demonstrate their semantic content and identify common semes. One can list six factors having changed the information environment and contributed to the emergence of fakes: democratization of the creation and dissemination of information; information socialization; atomization as a discrepancy of individual news from brands and sources; anonymity of creation and dissemination of information; personalization of the information environment; sovereignty.

The sixth step. We can perform linguistic and stylistic analysis of fake news texts. We use the method of contextual interpretive analysis, which is aimed at studying the media texts of fake news on English-language sites to interpret their content and functional and stylistic peculiarities.

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