



LINGUOCULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NEWS MEDIA TEXTS IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

Otakhonova Khilola Akhmadjon qizi,
Teacher, Uzbekistan State University of World Languages,
Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Abstract:

The modern stage of linguistics development is characterized by an increased interest in the functioning of linguistic units in the field of mass communication. This fact is explained by the awareness of the huge role of the mass media that they play in the life of society. It is no coincidence that the media is often called the “fourth power”, which emphasizes their importance.

Keywords: mass media, “fourth power”, linguistic units, development, linguocultural characteristics, news media texts, contemporary English.

The rapid development and transformation of traditional mass media, the rapid growth of high computer technologies and the emergence of the Internet have had and continue to have a significant impact on all aspects of public life, as well as on the processes of production and dissemination of the word. To date, mass media texts are one of the most common forms of speech use. This is what determines the relevance of this study, which is of particular interest to the news texts of the high-quality print press in the world.

A news text is a message about the most important events that reflects all the phenomena of the surrounding reality, forming the current picture of the world in dynamics. The total volume of news texts in the general media stream significantly exceeds the number of other types of mass media texts and the properties of high repeatability and reproducibility only enhance their significance.

The flow of information produced and transmitted daily through the media channels is steadily growing and is already many times higher than the similar text array of previous years. This fact is a consequence of the rapid development and improvement of methods of mass dissemination of information, the emergence of new digital media technologies. The primary importance in the entire volume of media texts belongs to news reports. It is the news that forms the basis of the entire media stream, forms the content and structure of the modern information space. In this type of texts, all the main features and features of this sphere of speech use are presented most fully, in a





concentrated form, which allows us to define them as basic texts of mass media in the media system in general and in the high-quality British press in particular.

The concept of a quality press can be defined on the basis of its opposition to the mass press. The basis for the division of UK print publications into two groups are differences in the social and financial situation of readers, their education and professional affiliation. The audience of high-quality press belongs to the upper and middle class, these are people who run the country or serve managers with their professional abilities. A high-quality press is distinguished by its format (the print edition is approximately twice as large as the mass one in size), content (contains serious information about events in the country and the world, analytical and editorial articles) and language features. The high-quality British press steadily includes the following 5 publications: "The Times", "The Daily Telegraph", "The Guardian", "The Independent", "The Financial Times". The news text in the listed publications is a standard model that meets the basic requirements of high-quality journalism.

The most important property of information messages in the high-quality British press is an objective form of information presentation (impartiality), reflecting the desire for neutrality, depersonification, intentional distancing of the producer of the news text from its recipient. This fact explains the lack of authorship of a news text, collegial in the way of creation, distributed on behalf of a group of people: editorial offices, TV companies, news agencies.

The main purpose of the news text is to inform the audience about socially significant incidents, events and facts occurring in the country and abroad, to report on the phenomena of reality and their properties. The objective form of information presentation is achieved by the presence of several layers in the text - segments of the speech of a journalist, a correspondent, statements of interviewees, quotes from participants of the event, experts emphasizing the reliability of the transmitted information. Thus, the news text is a kind of "synthesis", "fusion" of many individual texts.

News texts have a number of properties that determine their linguistic-stylistic and format features. Such signs include regular repeatability and reproducibility. The process of mass communication is organized in such a way that a message about the same event is distributed simultaneously by a huge number of mass media in several variants, that is, we are dealing with synchronous reproducibility. When the same message is reproduced by the same media repeatedly over a period of time, we are talking about diachronic repeatability.

The conducted research allows us to identify the following linguistic features of news texts due to extralinguistic factors. At the level of morphology and syntax, news texts





are characterized by the presence of a significant number of verbal phrases, passive verb forms and constructions with passive participle II, various time variants of the impersonal construction there is, continuous forms emphasizing the procedural nature of the action and the Present Perfect form, showing that the action ended recently and is important at the moment, more than with other types of media texts, the number of multicomponent compounds consisting of a number of nouns, as well as phrases of the adjective + noun type, where the first component is more often restrictive, rather than descriptive adjectives.

Analyzing the lexical component of news texts, it is worth noting the increased standardization of ways of expression. The language of high-quality press news is distinguished by the manifestations of intellectual speech. The emphasized documentary-factual accuracy, which is based on the desire for objectivity, is manifested in the termination, the use of special vocabulary of various fields of knowledge, proper names, abbreviations. As the analysis of the material shows, the main feature of news texts at the lexical and phraseological level is a high degree of cliché. Compounds clichéd to one degree or another make up an average of 20-30% of the total number. Indeed, the news text is very predictable in terms of the use of language means of media text types. The presence of culture-specific units denoting objects and phenomena specific to this particular culture is also a distinctive feature of the news text.

In addition to the semantic components that convey the main content of the message, the news is saturated with text-forming elements, which include word-bundles, links to information sources, citations and phrases for the introduction of quotations.

News texts have a carefully developed, highly organized and extremely stable structure, which, combined with stable features at the language level, allows us to consider these texts as globally clichéd mass media texts. The newspaper format, which is understood as the combination of certain external features with stable components of content and style, includes such external features as the size of the strip, the number of pages, thematic heading, the presence of illustrations, the specific location of the material on the strip, the fonts used.

At the format level, news texts tend to be structured according to the principle of an inverted pyramid, which assumes that the most important information is presented in the initial sentences, namely in the title and introduction. Then the degree of informative saturation decreases. In addition, the format structuring of news materials meets the principle of maximum convenience for readers ("reader-friendly"). Most of the messages are presented both in a short and complete form so that the reader can, after viewing all the main news, choose those that are of the





greatest interest to him and get acquainted with them in all details. A summary of the most significant messages in a compressed form is located on the first page. The news is distributed according to the main thematic headings (world news, sports news, business news). The length of the news text ranges from 200-500 words. The electronic news text does not exceed one or two screens in volume and is provided with hyperlinks to relevant materials.

With regard to the structure of news discourse, we have attempted to present the schemes of texts in the form of geometric shapes, the number of angles of which is equal to the number of categories of discursive analysis. As the results of the study showed, most news reports have a standard, stable structure and, accordingly, can be depicted in the form of a hexagon, where all the main categories are available: Summary, Main Event, Consequences, History, Context and Verbal Reactions. According to our data, the percentage of news texts characterized by the presence of all components was 73.6%. The sequence of presentation of these components is subject to the principles of relevance and novelty.

Considering cognitive features, we note, first of all, that news texts, being components of the infosphere, have three important properties: reflective, organizing and formative. News texts, to a greater extent than media texts of other types, reflect current changes in the life of society, create and maintain an information picture of the world. At the same time, news serves the purpose of streamlining the daily information flow. In this study, we have presented a diagram illustrating how this happens. At the first stage, the flow of information is structured, when information about an event is perceived by the journalist's consciousness, processed and encoded by linguistic means, turning into a media text - a product of cognitive and linguistic activity of its creator. In the mass media, all media texts receive thematic attribution, i.e. they are organized according to the appropriate headings and transmitted to the reader, who perceives, decodes, interprets them. The data obtained from the text are conceptualized, categorized by means of stable conceptual models expressed in a set of mediatopics, and stored in a structured form in the recipient's mind, forming a fragment of the picture of the world in his mind. In other words, messages about the phenomena of reality, their objective properties that are beyond the observation of readers, are presented in the media text as the results of understanding this reality, its reflection by the consciousness of the author of the text. Thus, media texts create in consciousness an already structured, ordered, thematically organized cognitive analogue of reality.

Determining which thematic blocks are involved in structuring the news flow in the British high-quality press, it is important to note that for the British press, it is





traditional to divide thematic blocks into universal coverage topics and culture-specific thematic blocks. The analysis of the content side of the information flow demonstrates that the general thematic pattern of coverage of such topics as political life at home and abroad, the economy, sports, education, etc. is sufficiently universal in the press of different cultural societies. Universal topics are grouped into larger headings and/or divided into smaller thematic units.

The topics of greatest interest to the British audience are "International News", "National News", "Sports News" and "Football", as evidenced by the volume of their content characteristics, the ability to undergo further, more fractional division. The thematic block "National News" in its content and specific part in the total volume of the news stream quantitatively exceeds all other topics (67%). Our research also allows us to conclude that the thematic attribution of a particular news article to a certain thematic block is not strict. Confirmation of this remark can be the fact that messages similar in content can be published in different headings, depending on the technical and format features of this issue or the number of other messages on the same topic.

Cultural-specific topics play a significant role in the total amount of information, since it is here that the category of cultural specificity is realized, which is so important in the cognitive aspect of studying news texts. The most frequently repeated media topics or "buzz-topics" that are constantly present in the UK media include such as the private lives of high-ranking politicians and members of the royal family, the struggle for animal rights. After the bombings in London in July 2005, the topics of intensive coverage reflecting the specifics of modern British life can also include the topic of interethnic relations in British society. Thus, in the British media, the picture of the world is made up of both universal and culture-specific mediatopics. The above provisions allow us to speak about the cultural specificity of the thematic organization of the news information space and the importance of the role of these thematic structures in creating a picture of the world.

Due to the high degree of repeatability and global cliched news texts, each of the mediatopics is characterized by the presence of a certain syntagmatic content. This thematic stratification of linguistic units is of great interest, especially from a practical point of view. The news texts of the media topic "Education" are also characterized by thematic attribution of vocabulary, which manifests itself in the constant use of a certain set of words and phrases, which is illustrated in our work. We have given the structure of the thematic block "Education" and a list of words and expressions serving this area. The block "Education" consists of the following headings: news of higher education, news of school education, news of postgraduate education, student





life. These subheadings reflect the main aspects of the educational sphere and help regulate all incoming information related to this area of society.

In conclusion, it should be said that the study of mass media texts using the methods and techniques discussed in this chapter allows not only to identify the national and cultural specifics of the text, but also to consistently describe it from the point of view of the interaction of cultures, manifested at all structural levels - language, format, content.

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