
PHILOLOGY

UDC 81

Ekaterina A. Redkozubova*Southern federal university**Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation**kateredkozubova@mail.ru***SLANG AS A MEANS OF PERSUASION AND MANIPULATION
IN MODERN COMMUNICATIVE SPACE****[*Е.А. Редкозубова* Сленг как средство убеждения и манипуляции
в современном коммуникативном пространстве]**

It is considered the essence of modern English slang as an effective means of manipulation, which is not suitable for explicit persuasion and argumentation. Manipulation represents the pragmatic act that achieves its goals, without disclosure of obvious communicative intension: the addresser intentionally chooses such forms of the statement where any elements indicating directly an intentional condition of the addressee are excluded. The substitutive nature of manipulation determines the choice of certain linguistic units, such as words deprived of an internal form, euphemisms and slang. It is an advertisement where slang is often used as a successful manipulative means. Within a political discourse slang elements help to realize the idea of “people’s approach”. Slang included in the speech of the politician is a signal provoking involuntary attention. The relevance of such kind of research is determined by the urgent necessity of theoretical reflection on basic communicative problems.

Key words: communication, style, manipulation, slang, communicative space.

We consider communicative space as a phenomenon not only including cognitive and cultural space, but also reflecting ways and means of representation of various units which structure these spaces [1; 3]. Such approach allows to use the principles applied to the description of cognitive and cultural space in relation to the communicative space. As a result, it is possible to offer the following structure of communicative space: 1) universal communicative space which assumes reflection of the universal principles of communication for mankind representatives in general as a species; 2) communicative space of lingua-cultural community; 3) collective communicative space which is socially determined. This level of communicative space is represented by a set of elements: there can be as many collective spaces, as many societies the individual enters; 4) individual communicative space. The individual communicative space naturally includes segments of all other communicative spaces.

The concept of effective communication is connected with a number of urgent problems, however in linguistics there is still neither unity of basic terminology in general nor theoretical-methodological unity. Such fundamental basic terms as "persuasion" and "manipulation" are allocated not just with various, but quite often with opposite contents. Not all linguists, who are busy with researches of urgent problems of effective communication, speak about distinction between manipulation and persuasion. A factual manipulation includes all range of operations with truth-conditional aspect of the statement – from total distortion (lie) and full concealment to half-truth (partial distortion and partial concealment). Such manipulation is carried out on the level of the whole statement or the text. Quite often such kind of manipulation is connected with gender differentiation which takes place in slang [2]. The above mentioned distinction can be seen in opposition of the semantic (ontologic) and pragmatic (gnoseological) truth. Deception assumes a deviation from the first truth. In the course of deception a speaker reports false facts, which are ontologically doubtful, i.e. those which do not exist in reality. If we speak about manipulation, then it is necessary to notice that in the course of manipulation the author of the statement deviates only the pragmatic truth. The addressee of the message is pushed to fallacies which he does from absolutely right facts. It is logical to support D. Bollinger who placed the following postulate in the title of the work: the truth is a linguistic problem. Being rather pragmatic this thesis does not raise any doubts. The essence of manipulation is always motivating and in a way incentive, it is aimed at rendering the hidden, implicit influence, at pushing the addressee of the statement to actions, which are necessary from the manipulator's point of view.

In modern linguistics the idea of manipulative communication as a complex linguistic-psychological and social phenomenon has already been established, however. In a wide and rather uncertain semantic field of the term "manipulation" the key elements are eliminated. These elements are the following: a "negative" intentionality of the addresser and hidden (implicit for the addressee) nature of influence. Manipulation represents the pragmatic act that achieves its goals, without disclosure of obvious communicative intension: the addresser intentionally chooses such forms of the statement where any elements indicating directly an intentional condition of the addressee are excluded. The substitutive nature of manipulation determines the choice of certain linguistic units, such as words deprived of an internal form, euphemisms of various semantics and structures. As we will try to show in the present paper the usage of slang can be manipulative as well.

Using various manipulative strategies, the addresser expects a strong implementation of perlocutive effect, because according to the speaker's plan the addressee should not only apprehend information transferred in the message but also take some nonverbal actions.

Alongside with the term "manipulation" and the estimating word "zombiing or zombification" (which is characteristic of journalism and contains negative connotation), the term "suggestion" is often used with a positive connotation. Suggestion may be defined as revival in the examinee's nature of the corresponding external or internal irritation. Especially often the term "suggestion" is applied in relation to advertizing both political, and commercial. At the same time (unlike manipulation) the term's connotation is positive as a rule. However, it is a real challenge to find a distinction between suggestion and manipulation: it is opposite to open persuasion, though it is not connected with the direct deception or the order. Quite right are those authors who consider that the most modern ways of persuasion, call them either suggestion or "zombing" represent nothing essentially new and have been more or less known since sophistical rhetoric.

So, we consider manipulation as one of speech influence types. Persuasion, order and deception are distinguished among other types. Unlike manipulation the process of persuasion proceeds openly and is verified by consciousness. The addresser of persuasion has no means which are uncontrollable to the addressee. The science dealing with convincing speech is known as rhetoric that always (during the postsophistical period) emphasizes the voluntary and conscious nature of the choice made by the recipient of the speech, while solutions are proposed by the subject of the speech. It recognizes what human thoughts and actions are defined not by samples of the order and submission, but by various interpersonal ways. Manipulations are successful because of focusing the attention of the recipient on minor things which cover from him really important circumstances necessary to make this or that decision. Quite often, speaking about prevalence in a modern discourse of the emotional argumentation over logical, we understand the emotional argumentation not only as arguments to the person, which were quite admissible in Aristotle's rhetoric, but also as a pure manipulation when the initial thesis is not formulated at all. In such case persuasion and manipulation are equal: purely logical persuasion is a utopia from Aristotle's point of view, it may be possible only in the most obvious cases. Such understanding made Aristotle go further Plato had gone. The idea of

persuasion has become central for classical rhetoric since Aristotle. In pre-Aristotle time sophistical rhetoric relied not on persuasion but on a kind of a peculiar cradling of the recipient with beautiful, metrical speeches. In other words, the sophistical rhetoric, especially in the person of its founder Gorgyi, was manipulative.

At the same time all language means of persuasion are connected with such fundamental quality of the speech as clarity. The persuasion is opposite to manipulation as the latter has nothing to do with clarity. The border between rhetoric (as a science about the convincing speech) and manipulation (as methods of hidden influence) does not coincide with the border between rational and emotional. Distinction between persuasion and manipulation is a distinction between the open and hidden speech influence. Therefore rhetoric for centuries has been taught as a verbal art which has a developed reflection in comparison to its means. Methods of manipulation, as a rule, have no nominations of their own. All the rhetorical tradition, from antiquity to neorhetoric, has never avoided the psychological argumentation and it is also reflected in rhetoric courses. Arguments for pathos and ethos have always been studied by rhetoric. Manipulative tactics are not compatible with rational not because they lean on emotional (rational and emotional are combined both in oratory, and in poetry) but because the basic manipulation purpose is to block critical thinking, to interfere with rational thinking. Alongside with the term "manipulation" the term "language demagogy" is often applied. In any discourse the usual persuasion based on the verified arguments is used. However, in advertizing texts a reader comes across manipulation, but not an honest, reasoned story about advantages of the advertized goods (most likely, due to the lack of such advantages).

It is an advertisement where slang words are often used as a manipulative means. The target audience of such advertizing is young people. So, language units common for youth slang are used as a means of influence. It is a way of identification with young recipients of advertizing. There is an opinion that any advertizing aimed at sale of goods or service is nothing else but manipulation with consciousness of the recipient. In our opinion, a different (informative) advertizing strategy is possible. Instead of an empty extolling and substandard vocabulary that is aimed at identification with a certain audience advertizing may contain the description of real advantages of the advertized goods. Not only the buyer is interested in such advertizing, but, eventually, the seller because the trust for manipulative advertizing fades and very soon it becomes pointless. The con-

control under the recipient's attention is a phenomenon described in linguistic literature within two absolutely different approaches. In decoding stylistics control of attention is considered from the promotion theory's position: the author of the message resorts to special means of allocation of the main thing in the text (promotion) to facilitate to the recipient a problem of understanding.

Another approach is offered in works on the theory of manipulation which deals with attraction of special attention to the sender of the speech and attachment of one person to another, when one acts as a subject of manipulation, and the other as the manipulator. The recipient's attention is purposely focused on minor details in order to distract it from the main thing. Thus, it is expedient to focus attention on two types of control of attention. The management of attention subordinated to problems of persuasion is surely connected with clarity. Such management promotes quick explanation of the message in general. Rigid barriers between a live informal conversation and communicative space of public communication have been removed and this fact stimulates an active entry of The Substandard into The Standard. So, we observe functioning of slang units in the public speech of politicians, various officials and scientists. Slang items are known as a powerful manifestation of unity. The use of slang is caused by the speaker's intention to reveal the social role that he plays in a certain group at a certain period of time. In this regard slang words in V. V. Putin's speech are very characteristic.

The use of slang words is a mark of a higher degree of communicative freedom. People having certain official status resort to slang due to various reasons but the main one is to achieve special informal relations between the participants of the communication. Such method may be estimated as "lingua-ideological bribery". An emphasized intention of the addresser to mark his position as "an in-member" can mean for the addressee that the sender of the speech is an "out-member" who intends to change a social and psychological distance of the communicative space. The appeal to a similar situation (sending to other functional style, to lexical layers, not typical of this usage) meets the manipulative goals more often, than persuasion does. It is interesting to note that an ability of slang to serve the manipulative purposes was revealed by D. Bollinger who defined slang as all those stylistically low words and expressions of the native language which try to hide the unpleasant truth and/or to promote success of the speaker by verbal manipulations and the reader or the listener is viewed as a victim in this case.

For rhetoric as the theory of convincing speech it is relevant to distinguish two types of colouring: expressive and emotional. Such distinction is based on the idea of expressiveness as a means of strengthening of “picturesqueness”, proved in the rhetorical theory of graphic expressive means. The use of more picturesque synonym increases clarity of the speech and works, eventually, for its persuasiveness. Use of emotional and evaluative vocabulary directly expresses an author's connotation and is an effective tool of the convincing speech.

The usage of slang in a public discourse, especially in the speech of the famous politician correlates with the concept of “humiliation”, that is with low style which essence consists in usage of low colloquial vocabulary. Due to the disintegration of three-style-system an "elevated style", with its rigidly fixed outlines, has ceased to exist. However, the term itself ("elevated style") does not get out of use, being applied to separate stylized works dealing with anniversary congratulation, the solemn speech, etc.

Colloquialisation, especially humiliation are mainly used by the speaker whose purposes are manipulative because they have a populist character, creating an image of "the next door guy", especially when the people's criticism of any phenomenon is required. In the same paradigm it is necessary to consider use of jargon. Slang units, as well as colloquial elements (sometimes rather rough) help to realize within a political discourse the idea of “people's approach”.

Slang included in the speech of the politician is a signal provoking involuntary attention. It has special expressiveness and is capable of drawing attention due to its singular, extraordinary character which stands out against the background of standard words. But additional expressiveness is often followed by the lack of explicitness and clarity, as it happens, for example, to metaphors in artistic speech. Expressiveness deprived of clarity and, furthermore, expressiveness which is combined with pejoration is a perfect basis for manipulation. The manipulation antipode – honest persuasion by means of arguments – always represents clearing. But as researchers of the standard underline, slang itself means double encoding and therefore slang vocabulary is far from being a suitable means of an open reasoned persuasion and argumentation [4]. In modern communicative space of mass media we observe a new language, to a large extent consisting of thieves' cant and teenage vocabulary, a language which doesn't meet the demands of serious reasoning and discussion, a language which represents a trap both for the addressee and the addresser.

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