

VERBALIZATION OF THE "RICH / POOR" DICHOTOMY IN THE RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH-LANGUAGE OF MASS MEDIA

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Abstract: The article deals with studying of one of the basic cultural and psychological oppositions forming the cognitive value-appraisal picture of the world, the rich and the poor dichotomy and its verbalizations in the language of mass media. Specificity of representation of the rich/poor bipolarity as dominants of the journalistic text and as one of the ways of linguistic cognition of the world is defined. The method of continuous sampling, method of component-definitional analysis, descriptive method, including observation and classification of the material under study, and evidently the contextual analysis have been used as the major methods of research. At first, the microcontexts are analyzed, where the poor/rich dichotomy is considered as the subject-bearer of the feature. The paradigmatic set of nominations of subject-bearers of the rich/poor feature by occupation, age, social status, etc., is revealed. Secondly, the analysis of verbalization in the newspaper text of the items of possession of the poor/rich (nominations combined by the meaning of "food", "clothing", "housing", etc.) is presented. Thirdly, the analysis of contexts depicting the style and lifestyle of the poor/rich is given. The rich/poor binary code in the linguistic space of the Russian and English mass media has exposed a wide range of lexico-semantic links promoting formation of semantic sets and paradigms based on synonymy and antonymy, phraseological and associative representations and images, valence of the word and its contextual interaction.

Keywords: linguoculturology, language of mass media, multi-structural languages, opposition, paradigmatic relations.

1 Introduction

Recently in linguistics there has been a transition to new paradigms of the language study: anthropocentric and culturological, where the language is viewed not as a static linguistic system, but as a tool of communication, reflection of the world, integral component and bearer of the ethnos culture (Likhachev 1993; Maslova 2005, Safin et al. 2015; Villalobos Antúnez, 2016). Most of information about the world comes to the man through a linguistic channel, so people live rather in the world of concepts created by them for intellectual, spiritual, social needs than in the world of objects and things.

Contemporary studies of the phenomenon of bipolarity are carried out within the framework of the anthropological paradigm, being one of the core trends of the linguistic surveys at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, whereupon the person, the bearer and the user of the language are placed at the forefront. It still remains attractive to look into functioning of the binary oppositions in the mass media language, where the most important functions include information value and impact on the recipient. The informational function of journalistic texts is that the author intends to inform the widest possible range of readers about the problems vital for society. Being at a considerable distance by space, the author of the mass media text seeks to approach the addressee by time, topic of communications through use of the speech stylistic means, whereunder verbalization of the rich/poor dichotomy is one of the methods for "reviving" the speech on pages of the mass media.

2 Methodology

In the course of researching, we have relied on the previous experience of studying the semantic-functional features of linguistic units in the area of artistic and journalistic text (Nurullina & Usmanova, 2016; Safonova & Chupryakova, 2017; Farkhoutdinov & Isavnin, 2017) and comparative-typological study of the unrelated languages (Fatkhutdinova 2014; Khusnullina et al, 2017; Yusupova & Lu, 2017). The linguistic research has been conducted on the basis of the two multi-structured languages: the Russian and English ones, and includes extensive factual materials (more than 250 expressions and microtexts, including judgments about the rich and/or the poor, extracted by continuous sampling from various mass media

publications). In the course of study, we have applied the method of continuous sampling; statistical method; method of component-definition analysis (as exemplified in explanatory dictionaries) (Ozhegov 2010, Cambridge Dictionary Online); descriptive method that includes observation and classification of the material under study and the contextual analysis.

3 Results and Discussion

We have created a scheme, whereunder the linguistic expression of the notions of poor and rich in the contemporary mass media has been analyzed. Firstly, analysis of the contexts, where the poor/rich is considered as the subject-bearer of the feature; secondly, analysis of the representation objects of possession of the poor/rich in the text; thirdly, analysis of the representations associated with lifestyle of the poor/rich.

I. Analysis of the contexts where the rich/poor dichotomy is interpreted as the subject-bearer of the feature has revealed a paradigmatic set of nominations of the subject-bearers of the feature "rich" by occupation:

1) nominations united by the meaning of "entrepreneur" (merchant, manager, businessman, etc.); 2) nominations united by the meaning of "official" (minister, deputy, President, mayor, etc.); 3) nominations united by the meaning of "management professional" (administrator, supervisor, director, et.); 4) nominations, united by the meaning of "the person engaged in the oil industry" (oilman, oil tycoon, oil king, etc.); 5) nominations united by the meaning of "the person engaged in jurisprudence" (prosecutor, legal adviser, lawyer, judge, etc.): The wealthiest people in Saint Petersburg are financiers, the poorest are nursery teachers and public catering staff. (AiF 07.05.08) It appeared to be that mayors not only assign stratospheric salaries for themselves, but also try to ensure a deep-pocket old age at public expense. (AiF 19.08.15)

As it can be seen from the examples, the paradigmatic rows are used in speech as aspectual nominations of the persons gaining high/the highest profits. The paradigm of nouns and adjectives grouped within the meaning of "rich" is also updated: rich man, tycoon, financial tycoon, millionaire etc.: And in Russia they are traditionally considered to be "oligarchs" and just wealthy citizens. (AiF 28.10.15) These guys are millionaires, they make the laws, they make the rules and regulations. (The Washington Post, November 10) The type of nominations that denote graduality of the feature "rich" is formed: super-prosperous, super-wealthy, dollar tycoon, multi-billionaire. Along with activation of intermediate nominations of subjects in the speech considered as rich, the negative meanings are verbalized in the newspaper texts under study. In such statements, a negative generalized-composite image of the rich occupying the highest level in the hierarchical ladder is formed through negatively connoted linguistic units: They are the influential people, who have become multi-billionaires following thievish privatization according to the Western scenario. (AiF 04.11.15)

In the journalistic discourse, there is a trend towards personalizing the subject-bearers of the feature "rich" (linguistic personalization tools include the proper names: Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Roman Abramovich, etc.): Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, is now officially a billionaire. Until now, Mr. Zuckerberg has been staggeringly rich only on paper. (The New York Times, May 24, 2012)

Let us consider the paradigmatic set of nominations of subjects-bearers of the feature "poor". With that, it should be noted that the denoter of any member of the row systematically acquires an additional seme "poor; having no means for provision of average standard of living":

1) nominations united by the meaning of "the person, who is by occupation on public subsidy". The basic nomination of the

public sector employee is represented by specific nominations (professor, teacher, army officer, doctor, nurse, etc.): It is more difficult for those poor who work. < ... > Thus, for example, the state museum caretakers, nurses in budget medical institutions do not earn enough to fill the typical consumer bundle. (Izvestiya 14.03.07);

2) nominations united by the meaning of "the person, who is on public social subsidy, receiving the pension/allowance" (pensioner, disabled person, unemployed, etc.): I have a far more extensive concern not of the billionaires' wealth, but of the poverty of pensioners, for example. (AiF 28.10.15);

3) nominations of poor by the age connected with the single meaning "people of mature age" (old people, elderly, poor, etc.): All the "poverty" was burnt: old people, pensioners, poor people. (AiF 22.04.15);

4) nominations that indicate membership of the family as poor and associated with the single meaning of "the member of an incomplete and/or large family" (large family, single mother, orphan, etc.): Children from the poor and large families, whose breakfasts are paid from local budgets, are malnourished at the first meal. (Izvestiya 24.02.16) There's something about growing up with a single mother, growing up in poor neighbourhoods and attending low-quality schools that hurts boys much more than it hurts girls. (The Washington Post, December 02)

As it can be seen from the examples, the paradigmatic rows' members are used in speech as aspectual nominations of the persons living on a small salary, pension, allowance, and the paradigm of nouns and adjectives united by the meaning "poor" is updated: tatterdemalion, needy, economically disadvantaged, indigent, insolvent, etc.

Analysis of the contexts, where the items of possession of the rich are described, makes it possible to single out the nominations characterizing a high standard of living of the rich. We have identified the following paradigms of nominations of the items of possession, objectifying the current stereotyped perceptions about the rich:

1) nominations united by the meaning of "aristocratic food and drinks" (marbled beef, black caviar, white truffle, etc.): ... when the flows of petrodollars run out, starvation will commence among the citizens and not in the government, with the latter having the traditions to eat black caviar even in the besieged Leningrad dying of famine. (AiF 26.04.13);

2) nominations united by the meaning of "expensive, high-quality apparel" (Tom Ford costumes, Dolce and Gabbana, Donatella Versace, Giorgio Armani apparel, etc.): The best thing you can do for her is to give a mink coat and a diamond necklace or, as a last resort, to give her telephone number to your friend-millionaire. (AiF 06.06.08);

3) nominations united by the meaning of "expensive house" (country house, penthouse, house (in the capital/in the downtown), etc.): Downtown is traditionally considered to be the most desirable, prestigious and therefore expensive place to live in the capital. (AiF 08.04.15) This month, the most expensive new listings consist of several newly constructed homes, including a 24,000-square-foot estate on more than five acres in Great Falls, Va., and three new custom homes in McLean. (The Washington Post, December 15, 2015);

4) nominations united by the meaning of "expensive private vehicles" (cross country vehicle, sportcar, Bentley (car), private jetliner, etc.): Another way to protect yourself against theft is to buy a very expensive car: in 2014 only one Rolls Royce was stolen (prices for the model range start from 24 million roubles), two Maserati sportcars and nine Bentley cars. (AiF 30.04.15) Nissan's most expensive car, the Maxima, is re-engineered and restyled for 2016 for a more luxurious and sporty experience and, thanks to a more powerful V-6, delivers 300 horsepower for the first time. (The Washington Post, May 11);

5) nominations united by the meaning of "expensive jewellery" (gold jewellery, diamond products, expensive watches, etc.): The top lots are exhibited from the anonymous private collections: a ring adorned with a large, over 7 carat, diamond of the rarest peach colour (2.5-3.5 million US dollars) and a diamond necklace of sunny-yellow colour (2.0-3.0 million US dollars). (Izvestiya 20.04.10)

In the course of analyzing the contexts, where items of possession of the poor are described, we have identified two major paradigms of nominations of the items of possession embodying stereotyped perceptions about the poor and characterizing the poor's specific "index of life":

6) nominations united by the meaning of "inexpensive products" / "simple food" (bread, milk, cereals, etc.): As for the poorest layers and residents of the depressed regions, they were not drinking coffee and cream before and do not see any changes in their current menu. (AiF 04.11.15);

7) nominations united by the meaning of "uncomfortable place of residence" (barrack, hostel, Khrushchev-ear flats, etc.): It was then that young people < ... > clearly felt, understood that their unity, their prayer, their love for the Gospel should be filled with service to their neighbours, especially the poor children living in barracks. (AiF 29.11.10) Our home had mud walls, a thatch roof, three small rooms and a mud floor. We had no electricity, no running water, no bathrooms and no heat. (The New York Times, February 12, 2016)

The mass media language has frequent descriptive construction denoting the poor (below poverty line, low income bracket, etc.), prescribing absence / inadequate quantity of money (no money, low money, etc.): ... the deputy of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Nikolay Ryabov, in June introduced a bill providing for a differentiated taxation: it was proposed to abolish and to raise it up to 16% for millionaires. (Izvestiya 13.11.15) We also find that the Federal Reserve destroys the value of the currency, what you're finding is that if you're poor, if you make \$20,000 a year and you have three or four kids, and you're trying to get by, as your prices rise or as the value of the dollar shrinks, these are the people that are hurt the worst. (The Washington Post, November 10)

It is worth noting that stereotypical perceptions of the poor accrue a typical specific, containing the notion of a numerical measurement of the item of possession; the phraseological units that symbolize stereotypical perceptions of poverty are activated (to scrape the bottom of the barrel, broke to the wide, to make ends meet, to tighten belts, penniless, etc.): His parents had arrived penniless just a few years earlier but became ardent capitalists and eventually started a meat wholesale business. (The New York Times, December 3, 2010)

Financial status of the poor and the rich is verbalized in the mass media language through use of the lexemes purse and pocket as a part of metaphorical stable expressions: to impact on the purse, fat/light wallet, within the pocket (far beyond means), to cost a pretty penny, etc.

8) Analysis of the contexts describing lifestyle of the rich and the poor.

Lifestyle of the rich is verbalized in the exemplary standard formulations: The fortune is obtained through the work of others; Wealthy people try to get income by all manner of means; Wealthy people lead an idle existence; The wealthy are characterized by spiritual poverty. There is a trend of formation of the values directed by the sociocultural context, which have not become the "common places" yet, but which change the stereotypical perception of the rich: Authorities must clearly show that they are with people, and not with "moneybags". < ... > show that the authorities are with ordinary people, that they will share all the hardships of the crisis with people < ... > That the oligarchs piling debts on debts will pay for greed with their own property, and will not crawl out of the debt pit on the people's coffin. (AiF 27.01.09)

Lifestyle of the poor is reflected in the exemplary standard formulations: Beggars work in good faith; Beggars save cultural and moral values against the difficult circumstances of life: Millions of Americans are working longer hours for lower wages, and yet almost all of the new income and wealth being created is going to the top one percent. (The Washington Post, October 13)

Negating the feature "poor", the newspaper text writers represent the feature "rich" through euphemistic descriptive constructions (not the poorest, there are good savings, good financial condition, etc.): In terms of the average level of pensions across the regions of Russia, the cases when people fix high pensions to themselves for a comfortable old age can only be called swaggers. (AiF 19.08.15) and, vice versa, the feature "poor" is rendered through negation of the feature "rich" (to be not rich): As I've said many times before, my parents were never rich people. (The Washington Post, November 10)

4 Summary

In the Russian and English languages, the nominations of subject-carriers of the feature "rich" coincide by occupation, meanwhile the trend towards personalization of bearers of the feature "rich" is traced. The nominations that refer to membership of the family of the poor and grouped by the single meaning of "the member of incomplete and/or large family" are also universal.

Each nomination of items of possession of the rich and the poor in the Russian and English-language mass media highlights a specific "standard of living" of the rich and the "index of life" of the poor. Alongside, the nominations united by the meaning of "expensive house", "expensive private vehicles" and "uncomfortable place of residence" coincide. Lifestyles of the rich and the poor in the Russian and English linguistic cultures are represented by the standard language constructions through the stereotyped expressions (metaphorical combinations, descriptive constructions, phraseological units).

5 Conclusions

Sociologists, political scientists and correspondents write a lot about the rich and the poor, about the dramatic division of society into the rich and the poor. In the Russian and English linguistic consciousness, the rich/poor dichotomy is a universal one, which fact is confirmed by its ability to be used in speech as the basic element of judgment and that each component has got rows of linguistic and contextual synonyms.

In the Russian culture, verbalization of the wealth concept to a large degree shows indifference, even contempt for wealth, has a negative connotation in respect to the financial wealth; in the English mentality, the attitude to wealth is more practical, pragmatic: it largely depends on the person, his aspirations and tenacity.

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