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Медиадискурс в социальных сетях: лексико-семантические варианты

В статье стоит задача – дать оценку масштабам формирования новых парадигм речевого поведения журналистов и фрейма обратной связи с читателями. Объектом исследования послужила сетевая версия «Новой газеты», размещённая в социальной сети «ВКонтакте». Впервые изучается совокупный контент публикаций и комментариев в социальных сетях, для чего использовались методы дискурс-анализа и контент-анализа. Рассматривается тема современных трансформаций функционирования эвфемизмов в сети Интернет и ненормативной лексики, способы формирования сетевой идентичности. В статье исследуется функционирование в сетевом пространстве медиатекстов с провокационным содержанием, образующих социальный андеграунд в новых медиа. Результаты исследования контента публикаций в онлайн-версиях топовых изданий демонстрируют популярные стратегии средств массовой информации: критику властей и контроль за действиями властей. Политические темы разрабатываются участниками коммуникации в стиле иронии и сарказма. Комментарии пользователей идентифицируются как обратная связь. Особую роль в конфигурировании социального пространства играют журналисты, генерирующие провокативный дискурс. Социальные психологи и политологи считают, что это может стать поводом для оформления «твиттер-революций», «фейсбук-революций». Исследование последствий профессионального участия журналистов в информационной оппозиции актуализирует проблему теоретического осмысления информации деструктивного содержания и роли профессиональных журналистов в поддержании культуры коммуникации в медиaprостранстве страны. Необходимо теоретическое обоснование выработки актуальной практической стратегии журналистики. В статье даётся анализ медиатекста журналиста Д. Быкова как матрицы провокативного дискурса, вызывающего цепную реакцию комментариев с полярной коннотацией. Ставится задача выяснения некоторых проблем соотношения лингвистических и нелингвистических («экстралингвистических») факторов, влияющих на эмоциональную нагруженность текста, его культурологическую специфику.

Ключевые слова: дискурс, провокативный дискурс, табуированная лексика, эвфемизм, фрейм, слот, концепт

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Media Discourse in Social Networks: Lexical and Semantic Options

The article aims to assess the scale of the new paradigms formation of journalists' speech behavior and the feedback frame with readers. The object of the study was the network version of Novaya Gazeta, which is hosted on the social network VKontakte. For the first time, the cumulative content of publications and comments in social networks is studied, for which the methods of discourse analysis and content analysis were used. The topic of modern transformations of euphemisms functioning on the Internet and profanity, ways of forming a network identity are considered. The article explores the functioning in the network space of media texts with provocative content, forming a social underground in new media. The results of the publications content study in online versions of top publications demonstrate popular strategies of the media: criticism of the authorities and control over the authorities' actions. Participants of communication in the style of irony and sarcasm develop political themes. User comments are identified as feedback. Journalists who generate provocative discourse play a special role in the configuration of social space. Social psychologists and political scientists believe that this may be the reason for the design of "twitter revolutions", "Facebook revolutions". The study of the consequences of journalists' professional participation in the information opposition actualizes the problem of theoretical understanding of the destructive content information and the role of professional journalists in maintaining a culture of communication in the country's media space. The theoretical substantiation of the development of an actual practical journalism strategy is necessary. The article analyzes the media text of journalist D. Bykov as a matrix of provocative discourse that causes a chain reaction of comments with polar connotation. The task is to clarify some of the relationship problems between linguistic and non-linguistic ("extra linguistic") factors affecting the emotional load of the text, its cultural and cultural specifics.

Keywords: discourse, provocative discourse, taboo vocabulary, euphemism, frame, slot, concept

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Introduction. Over the past two decades, the spread of the Internet has visibly had a negative influence on the speech culture of mass communication actors. The extra-linguistic factors influencing the choice of vocabulary in a newspaper article include the increased aggressiveness of users of social networks. The case in point is the readership of the Russian weekly, *Novaya Gazeta*. *Novaya Gazeta* readers express their discomfort with the destructive actions of the government and the abuse of power by the officials for personal gains. Experts predict an increase in the ratings of independent publications: "In a situation of growing economic problems, there is a likelihood of turning low-impact opposition media, which the average man hadn't watched yesterday, into serious intellectual centers uniting the disaffected. During Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika*, the *Ogonek* magazine and the *Moskovskiye Novosti* newspaper, which had not previously been distinguished from the general mass of the Brezhnev press, rose to popularity in this way¹. On April 1, 1995, a pilot issue of the *Mother* newspaper was published. Its publishers Dmitry Bykov and Alexander Nikonov argued that one could not discuss Russian government and politics, Russian way of life and Russian love without using obscenities.

In provocative discourse, profanity is important and, as evidenced by journalistic practices, it is a popular way of embodying the connection between the verbalization of relevant moods and emotional relaxation. Tokens belonging to invective slang are most commonly used as discourse matrices, communicative fragments which the author includes in his text, which allows him to be understood by the reader with a similar vocabulary [1].

V. Kangaspunta notes that the research approach to the study of the communication strategy of commenting online on journalistic pieces is dominated by a normative approach. Researchers focus on the interaction of media with social networks [3].

I. Yahav and D. G. Schwartz sees a conflict between civic participation by commenting on the news and the demands of self-censorship. Researchers emphasize that self-censorship and the concealment of information sources are revealed in journalistic texts to ensure their safety. The comments usually use the substitute name for the initial, which protects military personnel, witnesses, minors, victims or suspects, who need to be granted anonymity in the public sphere. I. Yahav and D. G. Schwartz character-

¹ Travin D. From media to SMRAD (mass entertainment, agitation and disinformation) // *Novaya Gazeta*. – 2016. – January.

ize commentators in terms of the degree of their awareness of the potential of social networks to circumvent censorship and the attitude to journalists censorship [3].

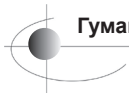
The study by D. G. Moreira Aguirre, S. J. Perez Samaniego, V. P. Altamirano Benitez, I. Marin-Gutierrez focuses on democratization of communication. Researchers claim that democratization of communication allows citizens to access truthful, contextualized and independent information, thereby encouraging all Internet users to have opinions and exercise their right to express them freely [4].

Methods. The choice of the methodological basis of the research and the clarity of the terminological apparatus are of fundamental importance for the development of tools for analyzing the social role of new media. Speaking about the methodological basis, we should emphasize the importance of the authors' understanding the nature of social networks as a basis for feedback. It seems relevant to study the influence of social networks on the journalist's verbal behavior. Methodologically, this research is based on the general theory of social networks analysis.

The frame method of media text analysis was applied. The standard scheme of a situation (stereotypical situation) is a frame. The frame is structured; it consists of slots (fragments of the situation). Due to the formalization of political life, media coverage of various events is conveniently described by the term of event frame. The event frame is a standard, repetitive, legislative or instructive act of social and political life. Since a socio-political event is a standard, repeated, legislatively or instructively described, structured action, it is convenient to describe it with a frame pattern, in this case, an event frame. We will define the term event frame as a temporal procedural sequence towards the implementation of a social and political goal: an election; the adoption of a new law or its enforcement; activities of civil society or the opposition; international summits or academic forums, i. e. traditionally repetitive facts of social and political life that have a legally fixed procedure. The frame structure of a political event is established on the basis of relevant documents. Clear examples include elections, press conferences, statements by state leaders, political debates, or the endorsement of candidates by political parties.

Reflexives were selected within the frame of the constructed feedback frame, the core of which is the concept of mutual understanding.

The object of linguistic reflection in statements is the denotations behind the facts of speech (certain political events and figures), as



well as the nominative units – euphemisms used as names of certain concepts. They reflect the negative attitude of the author to certain events and persons, the interpretation of the actions and words of which constitutes the content of the media text.

The author interprets statements and actions through the prism of his own picture of the world, which demonstrates the author's:

- ability to change intonation depending on the context;
- psychologism, accuracy of motivations;
- use of euphemisms as the equivalent of taboo vocabulary;
- use of comic forms including irony;
- return to eternal themes: good and evil, life and death;
- ability to touch upon the most acute problems of the time.

Ironic statements reflect the author's subjectivity in the media text.

Irony releases negative emotions, which in oppositional political discourse is a means of achieving the main illocutionary intention, namely, introducing in the minds of users a sense of like-mindedness with the author, on the one hand, and a sense of danger, isolation, tension and threat, on the other.

Among the many negative-evaluative reflexives, we specifically focus on statements whose illocutionary purpose is to show the erroneousness of actions, the insincerity of intentions and the futility of the efforts undertaken by the authorities; to expose a euphemistic camouflage; and to discredit persons vested with authority.

The structure of the ironic statement: a claim, to which the author applies his irony. The claim may be explicitly expressed or may follow from the previous context.

The argument reveals the author's social beliefs. This part of the text is the most expressive one, with maximum impact on the reader.

Then repeated value statements follow. Evaluation is a method of argumentation, created through the use of adjectives with negative connotation and expressive syntactic constructions.

The structural forms include text inserts such as remarks, aphorisms, precedent phenomena, and a detailed statement of an emotional-evaluative character in the form of an opinion, a maxim, or a rhetorical question.

E. Hargreaves, C. Agosti, D. Menasche, G. Neglia, A. Reiffers-Masson, E. Altman provide a methodology of effective personalization in social media such as Facebook, including measurement criteria and an analytical model. They conclude that bias is a significant drawback [5].

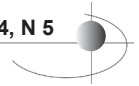
Sarcasm and irony are common forms of expressing wit in social networks. D. Das and A. J. Clark indicate that sarcasm is a common property of the dialogical interaction of users on social networking sites [6]. S. Lockyer explores comic techniques employed in the "Private Eye Magazine" in the UK, which combine satire and investigative journalism. The authors analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the synthesis of comic and journalistic practices in British journalism and discuss the role of British democracy in the development of comic forms in the modern press [7].

Social networks provide Internet users with the opportunity to comment on journalistic texts. It can be argued that Facebook creates a precedent for people's involvement with journalistic practices. This is all the more important given the fact that Russian sociologists and political scientists often talk about the indifference of Russians. In this regard, it is useful to mention the remark of the historian A. Zubov that "civil society can never and nowhere be the goal of political aspirations. It is only a mechanism that allows society to coexist with the state and protect its interests when the state ceases to consider itself a social tool and allows itself to be seduced by its own self-sufficiency" [8]. On the other hand, Western political scientists and sociologists express concern that social apathy is both a result and a reason of the attitude of society towards the authorities.

The results of the empirical study were processed using descriptive statistical methods. The reliability and validity of the findings is provided by an extensive theoretical base drawing on Russian and international research.

Discussion. In the face of fierce competition from online publications, traditional media should more clearly than ever represent the interests of their readers in order to understand how most effectively influence the reading audience. To ensure reliable contact and guarantee feedback, media organizations must be aware of the various creative forms of communication used in social networks. Today, the Internet is the most effective way to transfer information. It has become a genre-forming environment that has generated new media forms, among which the reader's comment stands out.

The modern media systems that are traditionally susceptible to technological progress and political change are dynamic. The speed with which the Internet is gaining a mass audience is unprecedented for the history of the media and information. It took 38 years before the American radio gathered an audience of 50 million people.



Television has covered the same distance in 14 years. It took the Internet only 4 years for the number of its users in the United States to reach the same number of 50 million people [9].

While traditional methods of maintaining readers' feedback (letters to the editor, telephone calls to the editor or meetings with readers) remain useful, but they cannot be considered sufficient due to their low efficiency. By losing feedback with the audience, the press loses its prestige in society. Thus, it becomes obvious that the media need new approaches to stimulating communication with the audience one of which is the use of blogs.

In order to identify the extent to which new media can influence the development of journalism (primarily the print media), we should find out what position the press is currently in and how it copes with its tasks in a communicative society and the globalization of information flows.

Journalism provides the platform for an exchange of views within society, a constructive dialogue. If journalism ceases to perform its task of adequately informing the public, it ceases to exist as a public institution. Thus, it can be said that the goal of journalism politically engages its audience and helps its members find their moral identification. This way, journalism exercises a moral and political influence on society.

In order for journalism to fulfill its primary function, it should adequately reflect the real picture of the world. The path to the adequacy of the text runs through identification of the social scale of the fact and truthfulness in its presentation, which, in turn is based on the accuracy of the facts. This requires indicating all sides and details that are necessary to characterize the fact. Inadequate reflection of information in turn creates myths that are most often used to manipulate the reader. Conflict relations between the press and society are connected with the moral, economic, and political imperfection of society, which does not fully realize the need for the degree of independence and freedom of the media, without which it is impossible to realize the function of an independent mediator and driver of vital mass communication processes.

Unfortunately, in connection with the expansion of the role of public communication in modern society, journalism is increasingly becoming similar to a tool for promoting private or corporate interests. Political parties, civil servants, private firms and public organizations often perceive the media as a vehicle for promoting their own brand. Economic factors make journalism adopt the role of an agency for leasing its venue to the highest bidder. Economic factors make

newspapers lease their pages to the highest bidder. Meanwhile, only independent journalism is capable, regardless of the political and economic situation, to be guided by super-tasks, the solution of which is necessary for human survival and preservation of the environment.

To identify the audience of his or her work, the journalist must try to understand what subculture it might belong to, establish its quantitative and qualitative parameters, and its intellectual, mental and conceptual profile. Reaching this target audience requires taking into account the audience's requirements as to the relevance, novelty, and truthfulness of the content and the expressiveness of its language. As a journalist, you must know exactly what the interests of the audience are. Comments give an insight into this.

Editorial boards need to dramatically change the way their media outlets keep in contact with the audience. The availability of new technologies makes information universally accessible. Thus, effective work of the media today means a well-organized information flow, which cannot exist without the feedback channel. Both journalists and readers have become part of something new in the newspaper production process. Readers who use interactive communication tools (blogs, wikis) get news more quickly than journalists do. Journalists should also use the tools of mass journalism, which will provide an opportunity to fight the total commercialization of the media and achieve feedback results.

The audience, which previously consumed information passively, can now join the process of journalistic activity and help to establish mass communication. Interactive ways of interaction with the audience are priorities for the media. Social networks will continue to play a decisive role in the development of relations between readers and the media.

Hyperlinks destroy hierarchy. This feature of virtual communication allows any reader with access to the Internet to come into contact with the editors, leave a comment on the official website of the publication, or post a blog entry that can be a news-making event for the media. In this sense, the most interesting characteristic of blogs is not only that they are a new source of information, but also that they can change the approach to the information process. Many consider blogs to be a more democratic platform compared to authoritative print media sites, as they allow anyone to communicate their opinion on any topic provided they have the technological capability to do so.

The media can use social networks as a platform to search for new ideas and readers by cre-



ating groups in various social media. This can serve to discuss published or upcoming articles, conduct opinion polls, and explore other ways of communicating with readers.

With circulation numbers falling, newspapers are starting to view the Internet and new media forms as tools for attracting new readers. Newspapers want to attract the younger generation, but at the same time they are afraid of radical changes that may cost the publication the loss of loyal readers. Meanwhile, young people lose their writing skills and lose the habit of reading print publications, ironically calling them offline media.

Today, the largest Russian newspapers already understand that the practical use of online methods of communication with the audience is a necessary condition for their development. In order for newspapers to create an 'elixir of youth', they must stop viewing the Internet and mobile media as a threat to life and strive for mutual convergence. Once an announcement on a mobile phone or an interesting blog which has a reference to a newspaper article gets a young person's attention it may eventually lead to their interest in the newspaper.

The worst nightmare newspapers are living through today is competing with the Internet which makes it possible for the reader not only to receive information as quickly as possible, but also to participate in its creation and design. Strategic communications of traditional media (print media) should be aimed at successful co-existence with search engines and their news aggregators. They allow using links to other sites to give people different points of view on the same events and use blogs as a way to find the truth. At the same time, the value of information transmitted through friends, social networks, blogs and forums becomes ever higher. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg published a manifesto (2017), in which he stated that the most important task of his company is the development of social infrastructure in order to build a global community. We emphasize that such statements should be regarded as a competitive challenge to journalism and the media.

Just 10 years ago, it was believed that mass communication audience was inclined to uncritically believe what the journalist wrote. Mass media were supposed to transfer information "from top down" – from the publication to the reader [10].

Commentary as a feedback slot frame entails changes in the linear way of conveying information inherent in mass communication [11].

Our study focused on the content that can cause a response from readers and discussion

in the comments. The impetus for the discussion is usually the author's position on the problem at hand. Just one phrase can be a reason for discussion.

As part of the study, we used the electronic version of the Russian opposition newspaper *Novaya Gazeta*. Our task was to analyze examples containing the phenomenon of language coloring.

The study found that in euphemisms fulfill the function of paraphrasing. "Paraphrasing is a stylistic term denoting a descriptive expression of an object according to some of its properties or characteristics. Most commonly, paraphrasing involves listing homogeneous items in order to avoid uniformity in naming. Euphemism is a special type of paraphrasing" [12]. O. S. Akhmanova's linguistic dictionary describes euphemisms as "words or expressions used instead of synonymous words or expressions that appear to be rude or indecent" [13].

Euphemism is one of the most effective tools for creating politically correct vocabulary. It is important to remember that "at present, one of the most important factors contributing to the formation and consolidation in the language of euphemisms is their ability to be a powerful tool for the formation of new social settings. It is no coincidence that euphemisms are becoming extremely widespread in socially significant spheres of speech activity, such as, for example, the mass media" [14].

The concept of norm is central to the idea of linguistic creativity. A review of literature (E. Durkheim, M. Weber, W. Sumner, T. Parsons, R. Merton, R. Mills, M. Sheriff, R. Morris, R. Linton, V. Momov, V. Vichev, V. Prodanov, V. A. Yadov, and others) found that a wide variety of theoretical approaches exist to determining the concept of norm.

From the point of view of linguistics, norm is understood as a set of rules governing the use of words, spelling, the formation of words and their grammatical forms, word combinations and the construction of sentences.

D. Bykov's non-normative speech behavior is a way of creating a linguistic personality mask. Using it he is able to draw attention to the destructive social and political processes occurring in society, mistakes in the implementation of socio-economic reforms, lower living standards, and the crisis of the traditional value system.

Bykov's journalism is the production of meanings. The difference is that while the journalist often resorts to euphemisms to express his negative judgments; other users do not seem to shy away from using swear words. Whereas



slang serves as a tool for expressing an emotional state, often negative, performing a protest function, comic discourse excludes the semantics of insulting someone, eliminates the intention to humiliate or discredit. On the contrary, the author creates his own image as a person humiliated and insulted.

Dmitry Bykov's use of slang performs the function of establishing contact with *Novaya Gazeta* readers, attracting their attention, and creating a corporate spirit of the newspaper community.

Euphemism is a tool of political discourse. Euphemisms neutralize taboo vocabulary. Euphemizing changes in the basic meaning of the lexical unit. The specificity of the use of euphemisms in a humorous discourse is the focus of the latter on drawing the reader's attention to a taboo phenomenon, which is replaced by a euphemism. The attention grabbing function is fundamental. Euphemism does not hide the meaning, but accentuates it, for which the emotional contrast between content and form is used as the main comic technique. In journalism, the position of the author is a reflection of the point of view of a certain part of society, on whose behalf the author speaks.

In the pamphlet, *Russian* Dmitry Bykov defends the position of the powerless Russians. Laughter results from a sharp, absurd discrepancy between the object or phenomenon and the stereotypical representation of it. In the pamphlet, the comical is manifested by a deliberate reversal of the stereotype. Dmitry Bykov does not separate himself from the audience for which his satire is intended; on the contrary, he identifies himself with it through personal emotions. Using his own self he tries to reflect on the problems of modern society. Like many of Dmitry Bykov's satirical texts, the pamphlet is written in rhymed poetry, which makes it possible to most clearly fulfill the expressive function of the text. The text under the heading "Optimistic" has all the characteristics typical of Bykov's creative style. The text is written in the review genre, the main feature of which is summarizing the year filled with terrorist attacks, military conflicts, disasters and political scandals. This invokes the title of the play and film, *Optimistic Tragedy*. Alluding to the literary work, the author introduces a code indicating that the author's optimistic mood is juxtaposed with the public state of disappointment and frustration. Juxtaposing and contrasting are classic methods of creating a comic effect due to the violation of cultural prohibitions. Slang and taboo words are markers of the author's *anti-behavior*, balanc-

ing on the verge of violating the Russian language law.

The analyzed text contains invective vocabulary ranging from rudeness and vulgarism ("So much has been stolen and wasted, so soulless and sick everyone has become that hardly anyone will bring us back to morality besides a thunderous war") to foul language and obscenities, one of which is easily reconstructed in the last sentence in this fragment:

Pissed off, they always want to beat up and kill... You say, "A great generation is growing" and in response you will hear, "All morons, ...!"

Like any sign, ellipsis enhances the expressiveness of an unprintable word. This does not shock or offend the audience, but, on the contrary, attracts more and more people to the ranks of admirers of Dmitry Bykov's talent. The mechanism of action is quite simple and has long been known. Researchers of Russian folklore in the XIX century. noticed that "profanity... produces an act of resentment only when pronounced in a serious tone with the intention to insult; in humorous conversations... it is the main salt, seasoning, weight of speech" [15]. In the 18th century, bad language was used in the comedy which was considered to be a "contemptible genre" (M. V. Lomonosov), humorous poetry, testifying to "the cheerful direction of the mind". A humorous text written with rhyme and rhythm (this is a more precise definition for Bykov's works than a poem, as his texts are perceived as a set of poetic conventions, semantically transformed in relation to the genre pattern) – the author' signature style, who is prone to flaunt taboos to create a text in a special emotional tonality, representing a sharp mixture of humor, irony and jargon. The transparency of semantic codes does not hide the invective, including obscene, vocabulary. We must not forget that invectives are a deviation from the norm, and any deviation from the norm attracts the reader's interest, keeps their attention. Poetic rhetoric is generally not characteristic of journalistic discourse, but by its nature it is integral to it, since it creates conditions for the compression of factual information, an essential component of media writing.

The author does not explicitly express his opinion on the subject of speech, but leads the reader to independent conclusions; this is one of the characteristic methods of journalism. On the one hand, it ensures the legal security of the author, and on the other, allows the reader to independently analyze the situation. The dominant technique of forming an extremely negative assessment of the object of evaluation is "dero-



gation by irony” through deliberate ridiculing its qualities and characteristics.

In satire, which is the highest comic form, there is “militant” disagreement often manifested in an open opposition between the described phenomenon and the norm. Dmitry Bykov achieves this by implicitly referring to the knowledge of the recipient, who must understand that the “donation for a temple” is a bribe, “be humble and patient and love everyone,” refers only to the common people and hints at the unquestioning humility of the sheep. However, these formally positive signs become categorically negative when we read the pamphlet.

The author uses metaphors and metonymy: “Otherwise, all kinds of evil things with a predator’s smile on their lips” when talking about VIP drivers for whom pedestrians mean nothing.

All language tools are put to work to create an expressive, clear-cut image. The use of fairy-tale language invokes an eternal juxtaposition between good and evil. The vocabulary can be divided into two groups: words with positive semantics that are used to characterize the opinions expressed by officials, and with negative semantics that characterize the opinions of the common people, the recipients of the text. Words with positive and negative connotations are superimposed on each other in such a way that those with a positive connotation turn out to be dramatically negative, further enhancing the strength of words with negative connotations.

Expressing his personal perception of the world, Bykov tries to reduce the level of categorical negativity, leaving the job of creating their own picture to the readers who receive various cues from the author. This is considered to be one of Dmitry Bykov’s favorite writing techniques. The author’s idea is encrypted in context, so the task of the recipient is to grasp this meaning and make a conclusion. This allows the reader to independently interpret the meaning of a given statement and the text as a whole. In the final part of the pamphlet, the author provides an even more categorical assessment of the situation, which exacerbates the sarcasm of the text.

To express his radical value judgments, Dmitry Bykov uses comical means both explicitly using expressive language and implicitly by highlighting the difference between the mental picture the object of evaluation and its real state.

Conclusions. Social networks have significantly enriched the communication capabilities

of individuals. Comments in social networks can be represented as hypertext with a variety of link and threads. Comments are loaded with communication effect (communicative and cognitive activity of the audience, dialogic communication practices).

The development of digital technologies has turned social networks into the main tool of everyday mass communication. Any individual has the opportunity to form their own communication space depending on personal information needs, interests, and culture. The current sociocultural trends include the transformation of mechanisms for understanding the media, social differentiation and fragmentation of society and targeting.

Digitalization has increased the degree of freedom of the audience in terms of the choice of reading material.

In social networks, the language is used not so much to inform about an important event, action or situation, but rather to speak out about social reality, emotionally respond to a media text, and evaluate its quality.

Dmitry Bykov writes what he thinks about what is happening in the country and the world. Users assess the degree of sincerity of the journalist’s statements and the adequacy of his interpretation of events, actions, and statements.

Dmitry Bykov aims not so much at revealing lies in the actions of politicians, as in ironic reflection over their true intentions.

The most popular lexical means is the use of polysemantic words, homonyms, and occasionalisms, i. e. words with unusual, context-specific meanings. An important role is played by semantic transformations including punning on proper names, the transformation of phraseological units and other linguistic means. The popularity of occasionalisms is due to their non-standard, context-specific character, which increases the level of expression. Parceled constructions actualize and decode the meanings created by the author. Various forms of syntactic parallelism (anaphora and epiphora) emphasize key words and create emotional tension. Signs of personal deixis, which is part of the “friend-foe” opposition, raise the status of the reader and lower the status of the object of irony. Dmitry Bykov’s use of slang and invectives is not only his way to pass judgment, but also a technique to minimize the distance between the journalist and his audience.

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