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Гулиева Э.Ф. Модальности публицистических текстов

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Modality in English publicistic texts

В статье говорится о модальности публицистических текстов на английском языке

Ключевые слова: модальность, средства выражения, семантическая функция, публицистический текст, публицистический стиль, модализированные глаголы, необходимость, лексическое средство

The article is about the modality in English publicist texts

Key words: modality, means of expression, semantic function, publicistic text, publicistic style, modalized verbs, necessity, lexical means, grammatical means, syntactic means

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Human thinking appears as a result of the world perception and it is closely connected with language – the primary means of its expression. The category of modality is the category of language and presents in itself the judgments concerning the reality or the statement related to its ties and phenomena. In general, modality can be defined as the speaker's attitude to the content of his statement and the relation of the content of the statement to the reality. Numerous linguistic scholars have created different modality classifications, for example, N. Petrov, F.R. Palmer, G. Zolotova, etc. The most agreed-upon types are: real-unreal, intrinsic – extrinsic, subjective – objective, epistemic – deontic. The present study was based on the theory of modality presented as the Functional-Semantic Field, developed by A. Bondarenko. The FSP can be defined as – a group of grammatical and lexical units, also various combined language means, based on the definite semantic category and interacting due to their common semantic functions. The FSP has the following qualities:

- The common invariant lexical meaning possessed by all its constituents;
- The components are interdetermined and interchangeable (to a certain extent);
- Integrity and indivisibility.

Every FSP consists of the nucleus comprising the most typical means of expression of the given meaning, and the periphery including the language means occasion-

ally expressing the given meaning. The modern linguistics considers the language phenomena on the text (discourse) level, modality is not an exception. The most vivid expression modality acquires in fiction, as for the modality in publicistic texts, it certainly has some special features. The distinguishing feature of the publicistic style is – to exert a constant and deep influence on public opinion, to convince the reader that the interpretation given by the writer is the only correct one. Therefore, the most important place within the whole modality of the publicistic texts is occupied by the modality of necessity. Another concept important for the understanding of the text modality is its pragmatic aim – the intention of the addresser to exert an influence on the addressee – which is expressed by various language means and modality as well.

The FSP of necessity comprises the following semantic meanings: extrinsic – intrinsic necessity (stipulated by external factors or personal motives), functional – non-functional (stipulated by the social norms or a separate situation), objective – subjective, controlled – uncontrolled, desired – non-desired, planned – non-planned, imperative – non-imperative. Other meanings include logical necessity, obligation, compulsion, requirement and recommendation. The primary task of this investigation is to determine all language means expressing necessity in English publicistic texts. The task was considered in two following aspects:

- Determine the language means and build the FSP of necessity;
- Explore the peculiar features of necessity in a whole text.

About 10 articles from the English newspapers and magazines, published both in paper and Internet, were used to conduct the analysis. The selection of material was determined by their pragmatic (communicative) aim, namely the author's opinion on a certain problem and his/her attempt to influence the readers in order to convince them in the given point of view. After having conducted the analysis the following language means expressing necessity are determined:

- 1) Modal verbs expressing necessity;
- 2) Lexical means;
- 3) Grammatical means;
- 4) Syntactic means.

Let us describe each of the group in more detail. The English language disposes of the following modal verbs expressing necessity: have to, need, be to. Their principal meanings include the following sub-meanings:

HAVE TO – the same meanings but extrinsic;

BE TO – planned necessity, order, something inevitable.

What's happening to this country? Who says we have to leave? What we are doing, making a list? Let's see...

But here in America – where we're supposed to be leaders of the free world – I have to sail to Dick Morris Town that if all the adulterous politicians were removed from Congress, they couldn't hold a quorum.

In the given passage we can observe a wide range of modal verbs expressing both objective (have to) and subjective (have to) modality. The author chooses the verbs according to his communicative aim – to express his own opinion or to underline that something depends on the external factors.

Lexical means comprise other verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc. having a modal component within the general meaning. The lexical units of this kind can be termed modalized. Modalized verbs were described in detail and classified by A. Goldberg. The author subdivides the modalized verbs into several subgroups, for example, verbs of permission, prohibition, compulsion, government, necessity. Within each of the subgroups we can single out the following sub-meanings:

1. Compulsion – coercive influence, persuasive influence, encouraging influence;
2. Government – supervision, reprimand, condemn, submission;
3. Necessity – obligation, moral wish, demand, logical necessity, condemned behavior.

As for the peculiarities of modality expression in a whole text, we can conclude that the text modality comprises the separate modalities of all the text constituents. The general meaning of the text modality appears on the basis of their integrity. According to the observation, the general text modality has two aspects: the objective aspect expressing the relation of the information to the reality, and the subjective aspect expressing the author's point of view. If we apply it to the publicistic texts, the objective aspect may express the necessity proceeding not from the author but from outside – logical, deontic, physical. The subjective modality always proceeds from the author and expresses his/her demand, recommendation, obligation, etc.

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