Metaphors in Media Discourse on Migration

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Abstract

The paper deals with the problems of cognitive linguistic discourse and comparative analysis studies of metaphor as a means of representing migration in mass media. It presents the most productive metaphoric models, shaping the concept of "migration", that function in printed and electronic media discourses of Great Britain, USA and Russia in 2016-2017. A comparative analysis of metaphorical models representing migration in British, American and Russian media discourses has shown that in media discourses on the migration of 2016-2017, regularly three high-frequency and productive metaphorical models operate: hydronymic, military and morbid. Images of these metaphorical models are united by vectors of anxiety, despair, threats to life and have negative conceptual potential.

Keywords: Linguistics, Discourse of mass media, Sphere of concepts, Metaphor, Comparative typology, Migration.

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1.   Introduction

1.1   The importance of the problem

The intensive development of information and communication technologies in recent decades has led to the formation of a fundamentally new approach to media language study. Keen interest of Russian and foreign linguists to verbal features observed in media is easy to explain, because the media "is an integral component of the social life of the modern man, the main means of its initiation to the events of the world, and it comes as an intermediary in culture formation" (Volodina, 2008: 3). Moreover, in today's society the mass media has ceased to function as a source of information; it is known as a powerful tool for shaping the consciousness and manipulating human behavior. As noted by E.S. Kubryakova and L.V. Tsurikova, the media doesn't just have the strongest influence on us, but strong pressure (2008: 183).

1.2 Status of the problem

This article aims to describe the most productive conceptual metaphors that represent the migration in political media discourse of Great Britain, of the USA and Russia. As evidences in newspaper articles, online publications, analytical interviews, public speeches of political leaders of the states of the 2016-2017 year, in Europe, in the USA and Russia indicate, "immigration" is one of the most topical issues in the political media discourse along with such issues as foreign policy, national security, war in Syria, terrorism and terrorist acts. Along with the undeniable advantages (such as the empowerment of social and economic development, cultural exchanges, the growth of the labor potential), migration often enough causes an imbalance in local communities. In particular, after the signing of the USA immigration decree by the new president Donald Trump on January 27, 2017, there followed series of protests in New York with participation of celebrities, which caused a wide resonance in the world media.

Among the variety of linguistic tools specific to the migration media discourse here stands metaphor. As a mirror of national cultural consciousness, the metaphor can concisely and accurately convey the common views about a particular phenomenon; convert ideas into a system of human representations. On the basis of the semantics of metaphor we can study the socio-economic and political history of the country; on the prevalence of various metaphorical models we can observe the idea of the situation in which the country occurred (Vinogradov, 1999: 71).

1.3 The Research Hypothesis

The mass media discourse is a special type of discourse, the main purpose of which is represented by "the promotion of certain ideas, emotive impact on the citizens and by encouraging them to political activity, to the development of public consensus, acceptance and justification of social and political decision-making in a multiplicity of points in a society" (Chudinov, 2001: 36).

One of the most important and complex global processes affecting human civilization is migration. According to the definitions given in the dictionaries, migration refers to the movement of people across borders of certain areas to change the place of residence for several reasons: to improve the quality of life, of study or work, because of national oppression, natural disasters and accidents (Rybakovsky, 2003: 90; Sklyarovskaya, 2006: 588).

2. Methodological framework

2.1. Research objectives

In order to carry out the comparative study of semantic differences between the metaphors related to the description of migration phenomenon we stated the following objectives:

- To review the existing works devoted to the research topic and analyze the main approaches to studying metaphors in British, American and Russian mass media discourse;

- Using continuous sampling method, to collect the body of metaphors from British, American and Russian media sources and determine their counterparts in the English and Russian languages;

- To study the migration media discourse, indicate the common and differential semantic properties of metaphors;

- To work out the typology of semantic differences between metaphors used to denote the migration process.

2.2. Theoretical and empirical methods

Our research is based on the following key methods:

- Theoretical methods of analysis and synthesis, including the analysis of the theoretical literature devoted to the research problem and generating the reviewed linguistic knowledge into the adequate research approach;

- Empirical methods including linguistic observation and selection of research data, which was examined in the light of comparative analysis.

2.3. Body of Data

The material for the study is based on extracts from the electronic and print versions of British, American and Russian media for the years 2016-2017 (the Guardian, the Observer, the Times, the New York Times, the New York Daily News, Argumenty i Facty, Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Izvestia, etc.), as well as transcripts of public speeches and analytical interviews with political leaders of these countries. Through continuous sampling there has been allocated 153 metaphoric units.

3. Results

Comparative analysis of the metaphors in conjunction with the methods of cognitive-discursive and lingua-cultural research allowed to define the essence of peoples' relationship to the phenomenon of migration and to group them according to the procedure of metaphorical simulation, which was proposed by A.P. Chudinov (2001), presented in Table 1.

Table. 1. The frequency of metaphorical models that represent the migration of the British, American and Russian media discourses

United Kingdom		The USA		The Russian Federation	
Types of metaphors	Number	Types of metaphors	Number	Types of metaphors	Number
hydronymic	18	hydronymic	20	hydronymic	23
military	7	military	9	military	7
morbid	5	morbid	4	morbid	6

economical	4	economical	4	house	6
mechanical	2	house	2	economical	4
sport	2	relativity	2	physiological	3
constructional	2	constructional	2	constructional	2
mechanical	2	house	2	relativity	2
religious	2	religious	2	mechanical	2
house	1	mechanical	1	theatrical	2
ethnic	1	ethnic	1	ethnic	2
zoomorphic	-	zoomorphic	-	zoomorphic	1
theatrical	-	theatrical	-	religious	1

As the study showed, the most frequent and productive is the hydronymic metaphor. Water is the most important resource for the existence of any organisms on Earth, which have both a favorable and adverse impact on all life. However, in the migration discourse of the last two years, the negative components of the concept of "water" as spontaneity, uncontrollability, destructive force are mainly actualized. The problem of immigration (particularly from Mexico and Latin American countries) is especially acute in the American media, where migration is likened to a natural disaster, like flood, storm, tsunami. The British and Russian media discourses are dominated by the metaphors of the "Water movement" frame (inflow, flow, outflow, wave), which also have negative vectors of surprise and confusion.

(1)   Migrants from Haiti have **flooded** the southern border of Mexico since last spring (Immigrants Head to Washington to Rally While Obama Is Still There – The New York Times, 11/01/2017). – *S proshloi vesny migranty iz Gaiti prosto navodnili yuzhnuyu granitsu s Meksikoi.*

(2)   Dr. Bastida had a dire prediction: "It will be an economic **tsunami**." ('Economic Tsunami': Fearing Donald Trump, Immigrants in New York Spend Less – The New York Times, 24/11/ 2016). – *Doktor Bastida vyrazil neuteshitel'noe predpolozhenie: «Eto budet ekonomicheskim tsunami».*

(3)   It is clear that concerns are not limited to the areas that have experienced large and rapid inward **migration flows** (Jobseekers flood in from Europe before gates close – The Times, 02/12/2016). – *Sovershenno obosnovany bespokoistva za te regiony, kotorye ispytyvayut mnogochislennyi i stremitel'nyi pritok migrantov.*

(4)   V Evrosoyuze, kotoryi perezhivaet **naplyv** bezhentsev iz Afriki i s Blizhnego Vostoka, tozhe pytayutsya navesti poryadok (Migranty, po domam. Kakie granitsy i dlya kogo nuzhno zakryt' Rossii? – Argumenty i Fakty, 24.11.2016).

(5)   Vizy ne pomeshali tomu, chto devyat' iz desyati zhitelei OAE immigranty, oni ne stali prepyatstviem dlya millionov bezhentsev, **khlynuvshikh** v ES (Skrytaya ugroza. Situatsiya s gastarbaiterami v OAE – budushchee Evropy i Rossii? – Argumenty i Fakty, № 8, 24.02.2016).

Less frequent in the media language are military metaphors. Incorporated by the source sphere of "War", the metaphors of this model represent migration as a threat to society, and the migrant stands in the image of an "enemy" or an "enemy army". In military metaphors, there are conceptual vectors of danger and anxiety that are intertwined with an aggressive attitude towards migrants and the task of protecting their country from their unwanted presence. Especially bright and productive image of the "migrant-enemy" is represented by verbal metaphors in Russian media; s/he prepares for military attacks, comes, seizes territory, deploys military operations. The explanation for such popularity and imagery of military metaphors is found in the monograph of A.P. Chudinova: "The fate of almost every generation was war, and therefore military vocabulary is one of the main sources of metaphorical expansion at various stages of the development of the Russian language" (2001: 171).

(4)   We have to get down to creating a country that's not going to have the kind of problems that we've had with people flying planes into the World Trade Centers, with the shootings in California … (D. Trump about Muslim immigrants). – *My dolzhny sozdat' stranu bez tekh problem, kotorye u nee byli: s passazhirskimi samoletami, vletevshimi vo Vsemirnyi torgovyi tsentr, so strel'boi v Kalifornii...*

(5)   We are therefore alarmed by the way more MPs are now also turning their **firepower** on immigration. (Migrants are not to blame for Britain's Problems – Guardian, 10/01/2017). – *My vstrevozheny tem, chto vse bol'she chlenov parlamenta napravlyayut svoe oruzhie na immigratsiyu.*

(6)   Trudovaya migratsiya obrela global'nyi kharakter i **zakhvatila** prakticheski vse regiony mira (Chto est' natsiya? V poiskakh rossiiskoi identichnosti – Nezavisimaya gazeta, 24.01.2017).

(7)   Na segodnyashnii den' nekotorye sfery ekonomiki **okkupirovany** migrantami, k primeru, torgovlya, kuda mestnoe naselenie uzhe prakticheski ne puskayut (Gastarbaitery vozvrashchayutsya v Rossiyu - Nezavisimaya gazeta, 10.01.2017)

The third group on the frequency of use and productivity are the morbic metaphors. In this model, migration is seen as a disease or a disease state, accompanied by various psychological experiences and often leading to sad consequences. Negative vectors of inevitability, helplessness and painfulness, existing in the meanings of metaphors, indicate the crisis and difficulties in regulating the migration process, which are associated with the sick or weakened from the physical torture of the human body. In analyzing the metaphorical formations of this model, it is revealed that the frame of the "Diagnosis of Disease" dominates in the political discourse of migration of the United Kingdom and the United States, the metaphors of the frame "Pain sensations" prevail in the Russian migration picture of the world.

(8)   More importantly it revealed an angst verging on **neurosis** about immigration in a party run by metropolitan liberals (Labour no longer knows what it stands for – The Times, 24/01/2017). – *Bolee togo, v partii Londonskikh liberalov nablyudaetsya krainyaya ozabochennost' po povodu immigratsii, granichashchaya s nevrozom.*

(9)   "It's a **cancer** that we cannot allow to metastasize. We have to fix this", he said. (Letters threatening that Trump will be 'Hitler' to Muslims now going to mosques nationwide – The New York Daily News, 11.30.2016). – Eto kak rakovaya opukhol' i my ne mozhem dopustit' chtoby ona dala metastazy.

(10)   Poimka i vozvrashchenie ekonomicheskikh migrantov – **bolevaya tochka** migratsionnogo voprosa (Migratsionnye manevry Evrosoyuza - Nezavisimaya gazeta, 17.10.2016).

(11)   Problemy, kotorye sozdaet migratsiya, sravnivayutsya s **rodovymi mukami** pri poyavlenii na svet cheloveka (Migranty oprovergayut dogmaty Evropy - Nezavisimaya gazeta, 29.06.2016)

Economical metaphors are less frequent in American and British media; in the Russian media discourse these are the metaphors referring to the house. In the USA and British migration discourses, the so-called "migrant is good" frame prevails, which gives economic metaphors positive vectors of utility, profitability and respectfulness, whereas in the Russian conceptosphere the migrant is estimated as a "living good" that is bought and sold, sent and delivered. Obviously, these metaphors are characterized by negative vectors of illegality, desperation and hopelessness. The "migrant is good" frame is noted once in the USA media.

(12)   Our history and the facts show that immigrants are a **net plus** for our economy and our society (B. Obama). – *Istoriya nashei strany i fakty pokazyvayut, chto immigranty vygodny dlya nashei ekonomiki i obshchestva.*

(13)   Historically, the main **driving force** for immigration to this country has been government policy powered by an economic necessity within the UK. We need **migrant workers** (Labour has never had an open-door immigration policy – The Guardian, 06/12/2016). – *Istoricheski, osnovnoi dvizhushchei siloi dlya immigratsii v nashu stranu byla gosudarstvennaya politika, opredelyaemaya ekonomicheskoi neobkhodimost'yu v Korolevstve. Nam nuzhny trudyashchiesya-migranty.*

(14)   Naibol'shii rezonans eto vyzvalo v Starom Svete, gde **«migratsionnyi krizis»** prevratilsya v odin iz glavnykh voprosov povestki dnya, a osnovnymi **«eksporterami»** migrantov stali Siriya, Afganistan, Irak i nekotorye afrikanskie strany. (Migranty oprovergayut dogmaty Evropy 29.06.2016 Aleksei Noskov)

(15)   S tsel'yu presech' ezhenoshchnuyu **dostavku immigrantov** v Italiyu v ES sobralis' provesti voennuyu operatsiyu protiv lagerei kontrabandistov v Livii — no v itoge ne dogovorilis', kto budet bombit', a kto **finansirovat**'. (Polzuchii apokalipsis. Smozhet li Rossiya protivostoyat' naplyvu bezhentsev? - Argumenty i Fakty, № 10, 09.03.2016)

(16)   The traffickers, who rake in tens of thousands of pounds and dollars a month **ferrying migrants** into Libya and then on to boats to Italy, said the **deadly trade** had never been so profitable. (People trafficker boasts of making £30,000 a month – The New York Times, 30/12/2016) – *Torgovtsy, zagrebayushchie v mesyats desyatki tysyach dollarov i funtov perepravlyaya na parome migrantov snachala v Liviyu, a potom na lodkakh v Italiyu, skazali, chto smertonosnaya torgovlya nikogda ne byla nastol'ko pribyl'noi.*

As for the metaphor referring to the house in Russian media, there is a likening of society or state to "home". Interestingly, most often this characteristic is exposed to the European or American society. In the Russian conceptosphere, the "house" has a high emotional potential and includes such concepts as housing and space around the house, family life, home comfort. Let us note that in the metaphors of this model the "house" is described as a place of dwelling of a prosperous family, where order and unanimity are highly valued. The so-called "residents of the house" categorically disapprove intrusions into their territory, hate violations of the established order and seek to clear it of unwanted migrants. Thus, the metaphors of the house in Russian media discourse have a negative conceptual potential and are characterized by vectors of caution, dislike and criticality.

(17)   V svoyu ochered' glava MVD Bavarii Ioakhim Kherrmann letom 2016 goda prizval k uzhestocheniyu politiki protiv pereselentsev, kotorye narushayut zakony **priyutivshei** ikh strany (Potok migrantov v Germaniyu snizilsya vtroe – Izvestiya, 11.01.2017).

(18)   Esli by na Zapade deistvitel'no priderzhivalis' srednevekovykh vzglyadov, to nikogda ne pozvolili by inovertsam tak bystro **zaselyat' evropeiskii dom** (A byl li stuk ili opyat' pokazalos'? – Nezavisimaya gazeta, 23.01.2017).

(19)   Posle izbraniya prezidentom SShA Donal'd Tramp podtverdil, chto sobiraetsya **vydvorit'** iz strany milliony immigrantov s kriminal'nym proshlym (Rossiya na tret'em meste v mire po kolichestvu migrantov – Izvestiya, 22.07.2016).

4. Discussion

Good deal of material and research experience about metaphorical discourse formations in the media is gained. The popular works of scholars such as M. Johnson & J. Lakoff (2004), A.N. Baranov & Yu.N. Karaulov (1994), A.P. Chudinov (2001), E.V. Budaev & A.P. Chudinov (2008), M.N. Volodin (2008), L.E. Vesnina (2010), A.A. Gavrilov (2013), M.U. Kalygina (2009) describe us a metaphor like the way of thinking, conceptualization and categorization of reality, creating a complete picture of the world language. Metaphorical basis of worldview is the man himself, his experience, the social environment and activities in the process of being (Vesnina, 2010: 50). Thus, the key is the human factor. On the one hand, it is the author's identity, putting different ideas in metaphors and metaphors themselves creating a certain image of reality, on the other hand, it is the readers, to comprehend the metaphors making their own representations of reality.

5. Conclusion

A comparative analysis of metaphorical models representing migration in British, American and Russian media discourses has shown that in media discourses on the migration of 2016-2017, regularly three high-frequency and productive metaphorical models operate: hydronymic, military and morbid. Images of these metaphorical models are united by vectors of anxiety, despair, threats to life and have negative conceptual potential. We also found out that illegal migrants and refugees are relevant for the media of all three countries, who according to the metaphorical representations under study have a negative image in the public consciousness of American, British and Russian peoples. It is significant that a comparative study of metaphorical models at the cognitive-cultural level makes it possible to reveal metaphorical universals and differences in migration media discourses of different countries and opens new perspectives for the study of problems of verbal objectification of conceptual metaphors in political media discourse.

Acknowledgments

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