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Linguistic and Cultural Analysis of the Treaty between Germany and France

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Abstract

The study deals with structuring of the analysis of the politically orientated texts in order to identify the main ideological content at the linguistic level and its expression in the text. In the course of the research, the influence of linguistic and spatial-social factors is revealed. The linguistic expression of the content changes depending on the purposes of communication and the social group in which it is currently taking place. The lexical units in these texts are inextricably linked with the associative field of this culture carriers. The analysis of a political text conducted without taking into account these specifics will be incomplete. It can lead to distortion of the original meaning and misunderstanding. The study develops the criteria for linguistic objectification of the text ideological orientation. To confirm the objectivity of the information received the linguistic analysis of the politically orientated texts is carried out. The treaty between Germany and France concluded in 2019 in Aachen is under consideration. Its analysis specifies the implementation sequence of separate stages of the analysis of the political text taking into account its specifics and outlines the content of the politically oriented texts according to the scheme offered by the authors of the research.

Keywords: Political Linguistics, International Relations, The Franco-German Treaty, Political Discourse, Text Analysis.

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Introduction

The growing influence of various political currents and movements on social institutions and public life, in general, leads to the increased interest in the political text as a linguistic phenomenon. The works of sociolinguists, political scientists, psychologists, linguists are devoted to the study of political texts from different points of view. At the same time researchers believe that politics as a sphere of social life directly affects thinking, determines not only the moral and ethical actions of people, but it can constitute a material term as well. Therefore, research of political discourse is of interest for interdisciplinary and intercultural studies. It is the effectiveness of the use of various means to achieve the intended impact which assesses the quality of the published text. But in this case the bilateral nature of the relationship between the author and the addressee of the text is not considered, though for modern linguistics, as well as political science, the result of the impact on the addressees is equally important. Taking into account the author's position, the perception of the text by the addressee and the text itself, it seems unlikely that in the case of such texts studies only linguistic analysis can show the deep ideas meant in the text. Hence it is significant to introduce a scheme for the analysis of political texts in order to reveal the mechanisms of understanding these narratives that are laid at the level of the text intent and that lead to the disclosure of basic meanings-actions expected from the addressee.

In many works related to the texts of the political sphere, it is noted that consisting of sentences or their fragments the text and, more broadly, the discourse is concentrated around some "reference" concept called "discourse topic" (Dem'jankov, 2002). The social purpose of political discourse is to encourage members of the human community to perform certain purposeful actions or assessments of what is happening in a positive way, i.e. a way of approval (Bayley, 1985). Therefore, political discourse is the object of linguistic study as a secondary language subsystem with certain functions, terminology and communicative influence (Gavrilova, 2002).

The linguistic study of political discourse is carried out using critical, cognitive, descriptive and quantitative methods. From an ideological point of view, the choice of words and expressions is an essential instrument of power to structure the "reality" in question (Blakar, 1979). The actual information is perceived as reliable only in case the author's attitude is emotionally consonant with the addressee's (Popova, 2002).

Methodical Framework

The material under consideration is the political texts of the German and French languages related to the prolongation of cooperation between Germany and France under the new international Treaty concluded in 2019 in the city of Aachen. The paper analyses not only the texts, but also the comments on the Treaty in the press, made by both political scientists and journalists. Therefore, comparative, descriptive and critical methods are chosen as the leading ones in this study. To determine the ideological content and compare it with the comments on it in the French and German press, a linguistic method of content analysis is used. In addition, the so-called methods of *unformalized analysis* (Altunyan, 2006) are used to recreate a holistic view of the main ideas in the course of the study. Due to it, the interpretation of the texts content is put according to a special scheme aimed at identifying discrepancies from the point of view of modern historical and political preconditions (see Kon'kov, 2013).

Thus, this study evaluates the ideas and assumed attitude that the author of the text is guided with following reconstruction of political preferences and attitude.

Based on the authors' methodology the analysis of the content, devices with the description of rhetorical, stylistic and graphical means used in the text is carried out. Then an overview of the Internet comments on the text is presented.

It has been found out that the words familiar to the average person and able create an ideological context depending on the political orientation are used in the texts. The stylistic effect of using these words is created both by multiple repeating such words and their derivatives, and by explicitly or implicitly emphasizing the positive characteristics of their supporters and the derogatory characteristics of ideological opponents. In the opposition "native – alien" a politician is a generic carrier of values of the potential electorate that protects these values against the attacks by the "opponents" who hold other value orientations (Yuldashbaev, 2011). This statement also applies to the generalized analysis of the text as an element of political discourse.

Two fundamental strategies of political discourse development are generally used for the success in the political struggle. The strategy of positive self-presentation (Van Dijk, 2013), or the increase-decrease strategies are meant (Mihaleva, 2009). It should be emphasized that both strategies complement each other. It is possible to analyze this phenomenon in texts by the method of content analysis of the text (Alasaniya, 2015).

Results

So, let us consider the text of the Treaty of 2019 in more detail. In order to make it straightforward to understand in what situation and under what circumstances the text of the Treaty was drawn up and its signing took place, we will briefly describe its background.

More than forty years ago, on January 22, 1963, the Treaty was signed between the two European powers, which marked the beginning of a new phase of relations between France and Germany. This Treaty of friendship and cooperation, called the Élysée Treaty, was signed by two heads of state: by Charles de Gaulle on behalf of France and by Konrad Adenauer on behalf of Germany.

The preamble explained that the document should promote and develop rapprochement as well as cooperation between the two countries, France and Germany. Henri Menudier, a specialist in Franco-German relations, emphasizes that the Treaty of 1963 helped Germany and France to cooperate on a permanent basis, covering such levels as state leaders, senior officials and civil society. The Treaty of 1963, later called the Élysée Treaty, was the first Treaty in post-war Europe on the youth exchanges within academic programs. It proclaimed France and Germany as the most important partners in the European arena. The permanence and enduring nature of the values laid down in the Treaty contributed to the fact that all subsequent German chancellors and French presidents wanted to continue and develop it.

The idea of a new Treaty was proposed by E. Macron. In 2019, on January 21 France and Germany, represented by President F. Macron and Chancellor A. Merkel, signed a cooperation agreement again, now in Aachen, in order to cooperate more closely in Europe on a wide range of political, economic and defence issues in the future. It should be presumed that after the end of Mr E. Macron and Mrs Merkel's terms of

office the execution of the Treaty will continue. For France and Germany this new Treaty provides intensification of cooperation and rapprochement in achieving goals in the following areas: economy, defence, social security, education, culture, etc.

According to the text of the Treaty of Aachen in 2019, as the successor of the Élysée Treaty, cooperation between France and Germany in the European arena on foreign and security policy, culture and education, research and technology development, as well as climate policy and environmental protection is proclaimed. Under the Treaty, the issues of cooperation between the border regions are expanded and supplemented. The basic provisions of the Aachen Treaty are as follows:

1. The main goal of cooperation is to create a Franco-German economic space with common rules. Economic law should be harmonized and developed in coordination with both the parties.
2. If the Federal Republic of Germany is accepted as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, to which both the states should strive, according to the Treaty, the priorities of "Franco-German diplomacy" are proclaimed.
3. Both the powers, as NATO members of the European Union, guarantee mutual support in the event of an armed attack. A question arises: is it an alternative to NATO? A special provision is made to restrict the export of weapons to the countries with armed conflicts.
4. In the border regions between Germany and France, cooperation aimed at everyday life should be developed, e.g. mutual recognition of secondary and vocational school certificates. In regard to accommodation comfort, special attention should be paid to environmental issues.
5. Maintenance of the regional sovereignty integrity. Does it signify the limitation to constitutional sovereignty?

Thus, in comparison to the Élysée Treaty, the new conditions focus on a closer rapprochement between France and Germany – the two member states of the European Union, on closer coordination and mutual consultations, as well as on new challenges such as artificial intelligence and the climate crisis being high priorities that require a quick solution.

Along with the main provisions of the Treaty, numerous comments that appeared and became available on the Internet were brought to the attention of the general public. Comments of both experts and journalists vary depending on political orientation, citizenship and national specifics. As our content analysis of the main concepts presented in the French and German commentaries shows, the prevailing sentiment in the French ones is *an understatement* of the Aachen Treaty, the second most important idea is limiting the national sovereignty of France, and finally, the third position is represented by the idea of the *consequences* or *lessons* that the Aachen Treaty may entail. The comments in the German press are less emotional and negative, as well as restrained commenting on the certain points of the Treaty. Let us dwell on the criticism in more detail and analyze the positions, based on the previously proposed scheme.

Discussion

On the basis of the comments published in the German press, it is impossible to draw firm conclusions neither about the critical attitude to the Treaty nor the negative attitude of the general public. Rather the

contrary, in the eyes of the public the Treaty was adopted neutrally and was the next stage in the development of Franco-German relations. Although some critical articles appeared later.

Since the announcement of the Aachen Treaty signing the reaction in the media and among the population was highly ambiguous in the French press.

As a rule, when journalists analyse such kind of documents a full analysis of the text of the treaty is given in the press first (which was done in the Results section of this article). The second stage is a professional analysis of the treaty from a legal point of view while the third one gives the floor to professional politicians representing various political forces. It is obvious that in the case of the review of the Treaty of 2019 such a scheme was not used, as immediately after its signing there were responses in social networks and on the Internet that the media picked up and run with. Since the statements were mostly anonymous, it cannot be said that the criticism was justified. Anonymous "experts" might not have qualifications and proper preparation. Below we examine the Treaty clauses which caused the greatest number of objections or comments in the press.

1. The preamble of the Treaty repeatedly mentions the desire to create a "sovereign" Europe, while the European Union is an international organization, not a state. In France, sovereignty is national and is exercised by the French people under the current Constitution. The same can be said for Germany. The question of sovereignty violation arises on the grounds of the inconsistency of the sovereignty statement of the two countries which is enshrined in the Constitution. A Treaty can only be concluded between two sovereign states, one of which is France. From the constitutional point of view, the French Republic is unitary. International relations are a monopoly of the state in France. Therefore, the nature of the Treaty is contradictory.

2. Article 4 of the Treaty provides (stipulates, conditions) that France and Germany shall provide each other with help and assistance (support) by all means they possess, including the use of armed forces in the event of armed aggression against their territories. This support under the contract is mandatory. This is a replication of the fifth clause of the Washington Treaty of July 4, 1949, although it does not impose such strict obligations on the allies. The creation of such a situation for the French Republic on the basis of the Aachen Treaty is in itself an encroachment on the national sovereignty of France, not to mention a strategy of deterrence that can only be national.

3. Article 5 of the Aachen Treaty states that both the countries "will instate exchanges between their Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York, in particular between Security Council Teams". (Franco-German-Treaty-of-Aachen). It is clear that the inclusion of Germany in the number of permanent members of the Council or its participation in the relevant body with the possible reform of the United Nations is meant. But does this imply that France could be represented by German politicians or diplomats within the Security Council of which France is a permanent member with the right to veto, unlike Germany? This would again be an encroachment on national sovereignty under Article 5 of the Charter of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, adopted on April, 4 in 1949 in Washington, D.C. According to the approved procedure, the alleged attack must first be reported to the Security Council, which will convene an emergency meeting at which appropriate action will be taken. Moreover, each country has its own understanding of "necessary action", as well as the right not to take part in the response. Hence Article 5 is not a guarantee of an immediate joint response of NATO countries to any aggressive intervention. See more on https://www.newsru.com/world/19jan2017/nato_ustav_5st.html

4. By signing the Treaty, France and Germany are committed to strengthening modern European integration, focusing on the redistribution of mobility, employment and bringing together social, educational programs and the health system. These facts are listed within the special competence of the Department established in the Moselle region. It is worthwhile noting that the European Union currently consists of twenty-eight member states among which cooperation is carried out. Singling out two of them leads to regionalization rather than integration. And finally, at the beginning and end of the Treaty the text authors slightly lose the strict style of international documents speaking about "social and economic upward convergence in the European Union" [quoted from the text of the Treaty], that disturbs the structure of the document.

These remarks deserve special attention, as the signing of the Treaty took place while the yellow vests movement was growing.

Summary and Conclusions

Thus, the interpretation of political discourse in its entirety requires not only the analysis of linguistic features, but also the prehistory of the creation of the text, the socio-historical background, the author's intentions, his/her ulterior motives, making the story line, audience expectations and writing patterns. Otherwise, the intentions and purpose of political discourse may be misunderstood. Therefore, despite the existence of various schemes of analysis of the political text, linguistic analysis of the political text can be carried out only in conjunction with them.

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