Linguistic Manipulative Means in British Tourist Discourse
Métodos de manipulación lingüística en los discursos turísticos británicos

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has witnessed continued expansion and deepening diversification over the decades. Tourist discourse can be seen as a pivotal tool of propaganda. The language use in tourist discourse, with the purpose of promoting consumption, is deliberately designed to build a positive image and exert an unconscious impact on the targeted audience. The paper provides a systematic analysis of the manipulative means in British tourist discourse from the perspective of language structure: phonological, lexical, semantic, and syntactic levels.

Keywords: linguistic manipulation; discourse; tourist discourse; language structure.

RESUMEN

El turismo ha sido testigo de la constante expansión y profundización de la diversificación a través de las décadas. El discurso turístico puede ser visto como una herramienta fundamental para hacer propaganda. El lenguaje usado en los discursos turísticos, con la intención de promocionar el consumo, está diseñado deliberadamente para crear una imagen positiva y ejercer un impacto inconsciente en el público objetivo. El papel proporciona un análisis sistemático de los métodos manipulativos en los discursos turísticos británicos desde la perspectiva de la estructura del lenguaje: los niveles fonológicos, léxicos, semánticos y sintácticos.

Palabras clave: manipulación lingüística; discurso; discurso turístico; estructura del lenguaje.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many works dedicated to linguistic manipulation. According to Van Dijk, T. (1996) linguistic manipulation can be understood as a means of achieving goals through persuasion. Gurochkina A. G. (2003) in her work "*Manipulation in Linguistics*" analyzes the linguistic manipulative means from lexical and syntactic levels, which is explained as implicit linguistic manipulative means. In "*Language, power and manipulation: the use of rhetoric in maintaining managerial influence*", Maya, K. D. (2017) studies the linguistic manipulative strategies at lexical, semantic, pragmatic and textual levels and describes the common rhetorical devices.

In terms of tourist discourse, the study of linguistic manipulative means is quite scattered and mainly focuses on its lexical and syntactic levels. Tanaeva, L. P. and Datsyuk, V. V. (2013) divide tourism discourse into three groups: professional, academic and public tourism discourse, each of which is characterized by specific communicative strategies and tactics: in professional and academic tourism discourses, argumentative strategies are dominant, while in public tourist discourse—manipulative strategies. The work also emphasizes the specificity of lexical structure: in professional and academic tourist discourse, terms and special vocabulary are noted in frequency, in public—vocabulary with evaluative prevails and emotive connotations. In "*Travelling words: Languaging in English tourism discourse*", Gloria Cappelli (2013) studies a pervasive phenomenon—languaging—in English tourist discourse and finds out that languaging pragmatically contributes to the expression of pragmatic meaning and reduces the cultural gap. Lyubov M. G. (2011) in the work "*Strategies and Tactics of Advertising Texts in Tourism Sphere*" studies the communicative possibilities of speech strategy and tactics in the advertising texts in tourism sphere, which finds that advertiser intends to win the potential client by creating positive strategy and establishing communication with politeness. In "*Linguistic Features of Persuasive Discourse Strategy Guide (based on the analysis of guides to Yakutia)*", Korzhikova N. V. (2018) identifies strategic potential of the guide discourse to Yakutia, and notes that the persuasive strategy is featured by syntactic, lexical-expressive and figurative means of expression.

TOURIST DISCOURSE AS AN OBJECT OF LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Tourist discourse can be defined as a set of expressions, words and behaviour as well as particular touristic structures and activities that describe a place and its inhabitants (Lindknud, 1998). Aiming at a selected group of potential visitors, tourist discourse supplies basic information and guiding service of tourism attractions, not only to catch their attention but also to promote consumption.

In terms of the type of tourist discourse, L. P. Tanaeva, V. V. Datsyuk divide it into three groups according to their functions: professional, academic and public tourist discourse. Each type is characterized by specificity of lexical structure, genre-stylistic features, specific communicative strategies and tactics: professional (serving the process of business activity in the field of tourist industry), academic (functioning in the field of training specialists of tourist business, and also carries out scientific analysis of existing practical activities in this area of the economy) and public (aiming mainly at disseminating information about the tourism industry and attracting travelers) (Tanaeva & Datsyuk, 2013).

LINGUISTIC MANIPULATION IN TOURIST DISCOURSE

Linguistic manipulation, according to Akopova Asya, in a broad sense is any verbal interaction regarded from the point of view of its motivation and realized by the subject (speaker) and the object (listener) of communication (Akopova, 2013).

Communication strategies are indispensable in all types of tourist discourse.

Generally, communicative strategies can be categorized into two main groups: argumentative and manipulative (Tarnaeva, 2011). Argumentative strategies are logical and rhetorical, which are dominant in professional and academic tourist discourses; manipulative strategies are a type of linguistic influence used to persuade the addressee to accept goals, desires, intentions, relationships or attitudes that do not coincide with those that he currently has. Manipulative strategies are pervasive in public tourist discourse (Tanaeva & Datsyuk, 2013).

It is important to note here that whether in professional, academic or public tourism discourse, the ratio of the communication strategies outlined above may vary depending on the situation, communication goals, and type of communicants.

LANGUAGE MEANS OF MANIPULATION IN BRITISH TOURIST DISCOURSE

In terms of research materials, we mainly focus on the written form of public tourist discourse chosen from the magazine *Discover Britain*, a geographical-themed series created by the Royal Geographical Society that aims to inspire tourists to explore and learn about Britain. Besides, it is completely free, and suitable for all ages and abilities, which means that the target audience is massive. All the samples selected cover a wide range of topics, including history, nature, services and so on. The systematic analysis of the manipulative means in British tourist discourse is presented from the perspective of language structure, including phonological, lexical, semantic, and syntactic levels.

1. Means of manipulation at phonological level

    In order to reach to the targeted audience and impact their emotions, sonic devices are deployed as an instrument, which can increase the expressiveness and more easily provoke an emotional response in the audience.

    Alliteration is commonly employed in tourist discourse, for instance, *living legend, glorious gardens, Sacred Spring,* and so on. The repeated sounds at the beginning of neighboring words can add the expressiveness of the text to the audience.

    The repetition of identical or similar consonants in neighboring words and the repletion of similar vowel sounds, that is consonance and assonance, are another two frequent means of phonological manipulation, which can add the sense of rhythm. For example:

    "By day of night come rain or shine."

    "Relax in the warm, mineral-rich waters of Bath's natural thermal Spa."

    "A spa resort unique in Britain with its thermal spring gushing forth sacred healing waters."

    "Everyone came – locals, soldiers, travelers form across Europe – seeking physical and spiritual wellbeing.

    "Immerse yourself in the World Heritage City's famous naturally warm waters."

2. Means of manipulation at lexical level

In professional and academic tourist discourses, terms and special vocabulary are frequent, in public—vocabulary with evaluative prevails and emotive connotations. (Tanaeva & Datsyuk, 2013)

From the perspective of lexicon structure and style, public tourist discourse is featured with its specific vocabulary form and the lexical style.

In terms of vocabulary form, borrowed word, compound words, and the superlative form of epithets are abundant in public tourist discourse. Borrowed words, adopted from another language, can convey an exotic atmosphere. For example, the famous Latin phrase "mens sana in corpore sano", which means "a healthy mind in a healthy body" is quoted in a spa advertisement to attract tourists by recalling the Roman lifestyle. In terms of compound words, there are two types—composition by word meaning and composition by means of metaphor or metonymy, both contributing to the expressiveness and persuasiveness of the discourse.

Composition by word meaning, such as *tree-clad hills, richly-layered history, centre-cum-spa*, and so on, is featured with doubled or tripled images, which is more evocative and expressive. Composition by means of metaphor or metonymy can vividly depict the salient features of the object and recall at the same time several images in the reader's mind, for example:

"Rainfall is common in Scotland, so if you're caught out when exploring the National Park, head to Bracklinn Falls, a series of waterfalls which attain peak performance during a heavy downpour." In this sentence, compound words "downpour" is composed by means of the metonymy form, which clearly points out the salient feature of the rainfall and vividly picture the image in the readers' mind. Moreover, by means of metaphor, the meaning of words can be formed by transferring form concrete things to abstract ones or from abstract things to concrete ones such as backbone, eagle-eyed and arrow-straight roads. Words, like "back", "bone", "eagle", "eye", "arrow" and "straight", with their own images, when compounded together to depict other items, can directly recall several related images in the readers' mind.

The superlative form of epithets is a frequent manipulative means. Those epithets come with emotive connotations, which are more likely to lead to the audience's expectation and positive impression. For instance, *"the largest concentration", "its first silent film", "the country's finest collection of paintings"* and so on. By taking advantage of those epithets in superlative form, the author intentionally builds a positive picture of the destination, so as to attract more visitors. Similarly, the word "only" has the same function. For example, "*Cornwall's only five-star country house-hotel", "the only place one can enjoy afternoon tea in the grounds of a royal palace",* and etc. All these words come with special connotations and positive pictures so as to impress the readers.

With respect to lexicon style, compared to the lexicon in academic and professional tourist discourses, the lexicon in public tourist discourse is less formal and more communicative, which can add the intimacy with the targeted readers and create a friendly and relaxing atmosphere. For example, *"Today, we can take you to a land of overpowering natural beauty with a welcoming character, some of the finest historic sites in the British Isles and truly delicious traditional dishes."* The words, *"overpowering", "natural", "welcoming", "finest", "historic", "truly", "delicious",* and *"traditional",* are all positive and emotionally colored, which can narrow the distance between the reader and the writer and draw an attractive picture.

Besides, words in an informal style can be found in the discourse, such as *"hotchpotch"* and *"blockbusters"*, which adds the casual style of the discourse.

3. Means of manipulation at semantic level

In semantic aspects, public tourism discourse tends to convey meaning in an expressive way, where many types of figures of speech are found, like simile, metaphor, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole, allusion, pun and euphemism. Those figures of speech can exert a strong impact on readers by comparing, referring to other things or exaggerating, which also at the same time make the discourse quite lively and readable.

For instance, *"chameleon-like settlement of Port of Menteith"*. By comparing the settlement to chameleon, readers can have a better understanding of how the destination looks like, which makes the discourse catchier and more expressive.

"Coombeshead Farm sits outside the tiny village of Lewannick, ideally located between Dartmoor National Park and the foodie haven of Padstow." The author compares the place Padstow to "the foodie haven", which not only indicates that Padstow is a wonderful place to enjoy delicious food but also make the language more graphic and attractive.

In addition, puns can be found as a frequent means in public tourist discourses, such as *"visitors can follow in her wake on one of two boats"*. Here, "wake" is a pun, which means the track that the boat leaves behind on the water, and also denotes the same way of the tour that recommended to take. This device is featured with its humorous style, highlighting the key information and attracting the readers.

As we all know, in tourist discourse, in order to exert impact on the visitors and attract them, the merits of the scenic spots should be listed and pointed out; however, in order to be more objective, sometimes the shortcomings are touched, but interpreted in favor to the side of the author. For instance, in this sentence *"Its visual quirks and beauty are obvious, but its functional finesse may take longer to appreciate."* As the functional finesse is not as obvious as the quirks and beauty, the author doesn't use the direct way to describe the unobvious feature, instead he or she interprets the hidden feature from the other side by suggesting the readers to stay longer to explore the finesse by themselves.

4. Means of manipulation at syntactic level

In terms of syntax, public tourism discourse is featured with vividness and expressiveness, which can be displayed by its structural characteristics and the expressive means adopted.

With respect to structural characteristics, the expressiveness can be explained by the preferable use of verbal predicates in positive voice, and various adopted sentence patterns (mainly interrogative sentences, exclamatory sentences, imperative sentences and euphemistic sentences). It is also necessary to mention that the text usually shows a euphemistic tone expressed by interrogative sentences, euphemistic sentences, or some sentences including subjunctive mood.

For instance,

"Travel options available, please call for details."

"Snug in your villa, relaxing at the end of the day, you would have enjoyed a plethora of cosmopolitan comforts shipped in from the Roman Empire."

It is obvious that in each of those sentences there is a dialogue created by the author on purpose, where the mood is rather polite. This can make the potential visitors feel respected and more willing to purchase the products.

Concerning syntactical expressive means, according to Yulia Sergeeva and Irina Syresina, there are three groups of syntactical expressive means, including syntactical expressive means based on the absence of some element (on the principle of economy), on the presence of extra-elements (on the principle of redundancy), and on the unusual arrangement of syntactic elements in a sequence. (Sergeeva & Syresina, 2018)

In public tourist discourses, the expressive means based on the absence of some element stands out, especially ellipsis (*"Time to board the living legend."*), nominative one-member sentences (*"Inspiring postcards from around the British Isles."*), aposiopesis (*"Wish you were here."*), and apokoinou (*"With temperatures warmed by the close proximity of the Gulf Stream to support sub-tropical plants and marine life not seen elsewhere in the UK."*). The expressive means based on the presence of extra-elements is also pervasive in public tourist discourses, which includes repetition (*"close to our home base, and close to our hearts"*), parallel constructions or syntactic parallelism, and parenthesis (*"there was an exercise hall (basilica), outdoor exercise yard (palaestra) and an open-air swimming pool (natatio)"*). Last but not least, the expressive means based on the unusual arrangement of syntactic elements in a sequence also plays an important role in the discourse. For example, stylistic inversions for emphasizing the specific location (*On this bridge stands The Elephant House.*) or feeling (*So excited was he by the reviving atmosphere.*). All those expressive means highlight the main features of the landscape and make them more impressive.

CONCLUSION

The paper is devoted to the analysis of linguistic manipulative means in the British public tourist discourse from the perspective of language structure: phonological, lexical, semantic, and syntactic levels.

Based on our selected research materials, we find that at phonological level, sonic devices—alliteration, consonance and assonance—are deployed as instruments, which can increase the expressiveness and more easily provoke an emotional response in the audience.

At the level of lexicon, the lexicon in public tourism discourse is featured with special forms, including borrowed words, compound words, and the superlative form of epithets, which come special connotations to reach the readers and manage their feelings. With respect to the style of lexicon, compared to the lexicon in academic and professional tourist discourses, the lexicon in public tourist discourse is less formal and more communicative, which can add the intimacy with the targeted readers and create a friendly and relaxing atmosphere.

In semantic aspects, public tourism discourse tends to convey meaning in an expressive way, where many types of figures of speech are found, like simile, metaphor, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole, allusion, pun and euphemism. Those figures of speech can exert a strong impact on the readers by comparing, referring to other things or exaggerating, which also at the same time make the discourse quite lively and readable.

Concerning syntax, it is found that public tourism discourse is featured with vividness and expressiveness, which can be displayed by its structural characteristics and the expressive means adopted. With respect to structural characteristics, the expressiveness can be explained by the preferable use of verbal predicates in positive voice, and various adopted sentence patterns (mainly interrogative sentences, exclamatory sentences, imperative sentences and

euphemistic sentences). It is also necessary to mention that the text usually shows a euphemistic tone expressed by interrogative sentences, euphemistic sentences, or some sentences including subjunctive mood. Concerning syntactical expressive means, three groups of syntactical expressive means, including syntactical expressive means based on the absence of some element (on the principle of economy), on the presence of extra-elements (on the principle of redundancy), and on the unusual arrangement of syntactic elements in a sequence, play an important role in affecting the visitors and finally reaching the purpose the tourist discourse—selling the products or services.

Based on the results, it is expected that the paper could contribute to the studies of tourist discourse, increase the understanding of tourism propaganda and promote the development of tourism industry. However, it is necessary to note here that the results are limited by the limited scale of database. Speaking about the future prospects of research on this topic, the analysis of linguistic manipulative means from the perspective of contextual and pragmatic levels is imperative.

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