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Argumentation as an important discursive parameter in analysis of online deliberations

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The study was conducted according to the methodology of discourse analysis developed and described by Yu. G. Misnikov in his PhD work. The scientist created the “deliberative standard to assess discourse quality” where seven thematically different discursive standards were described to guide the coding of online discussion messages. Each standard contains a set of specific empirical parameters designed to reflect certain discursive qualities.

We were focusing on argumentation as an essential aspect in the research of online discussions. It is variable and never static, it is primarily aimed at ensuring understanding between the participants in the discussions and maintaining a dialogue between them during interactions. Argumentation is always important as it helps to see positions of consent and disagreement, which, in turn, can be democratic forms of public reasoning through interpersonal interaction.

According to Misnikov, argumentation as a discursive standard includes two sets of parameters: the first contains facts, conclusions, examples, comparisons, generalizations, logical conclusions; the second contains different links on online resources, print media, radio and TV. These positions were used to analyze the argumentation of hyperactive participants in online discussions on pension reform:

- 1) subjective conclusions, analysis, conclusions, reasoning, generalizations;
- 2) subjective recommendations, suggestions;
- 3) any examples, cases, comparisons, events, dates, winged expressions;
- 4) objective facts (narrative, quantitative);
- 5) references to political figures (their actions are implied);
- 6) links on various online resources, print media, radio and TV.

In our research we selected the most popular Internet platforms of 11 different of Russian cities (in population), where the topic of raising the retirement age was discussed. According to the Code of Rules on Urban Planning, Planning and Development of Urban and Rural Settlements of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, cities are divided into the largest, large, big, medium and small. To analyze online discussions on pension issues we randomly took two cities from each group. The sample included St. Petersburg and Volgograd (the largest), Kaliningrad and Sevastopol (large), Bratsk and Nalchik (big), Belorechensk and Noginsk (medium), Snezhinsk and Uryupinsk (small), and Moscow. We analyzed 4,123 comments written by 405 participants.

The total percentage of argumentation was about 49% of all posts of hyperactive participants, however, it is worth mentioning that some posts contained several types of argumentation, some contained only one, and the rest did not. Most used conclusions, generalizations and reasoning associated with raising the retirement age, the consequences of the reform. It is curious that participants in online discussions often referred to politicians and various information resources (about 95% were online sources, including social networks (mainly Facebook, Twitter, VKontakte and YouTube), online media (mainly articles and statements political figures),

websites of political parties (United Russia, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation) and individual politicians (Navalny), online statistical resources, legal documents; TV and print media were rarely mentioned).

Источники и литература

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