

Methods and Techniques for Identifying Signs of Extremism

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Abstract: In the present reality, the public distribution of audio, video and printed materials containing signs of extremism causes serious social and state danger. In this regard, it is important to determine a clear algorithm for the activity of an expert in organizing research in order to identify signs of extremism, namely the determination of the most important methods and techniques for working with disputed materials.

Keywords: *linguistic expertise, extremism, verbal extremism, extremist materials, "hate speech", appeal propaganda.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Extremism is defined as a commitment to extreme views and measures (Krysin, 2008). This is the use of extreme, destructive means going beyond the permitted in order to achieve radical religious or political goals and to implement radical ideas.

One of the main components of the ideology of extremism, in particular, verbal extremism, is the linguistic component, through which extremely radical ideas are realized. In this regard, the role of linguistic expertise is being updated in terms of the possibility of identifying a diagnostically significant set of signs of extremism for the disclosure and investigation of crimes in order to establish the truth (Zhukova et al., 2017; Abishov et al, 2018; Esfahani et al 2018).

The linguistic examination of extremist materials has an extensive regulatory framework. Thus, the Constitution of the Russian Federation proclaims as the highest value human rights and freedoms, the recognition, observance and protection of which is the duty of the state (Article 2) (The Constitution of the Russian Federation dead 30.12.2008). At the same time, the Constitution of the Russian Federation, guaranteeing freedom of thought and speech, prohibits propaganda or agitation that incites social, racial, national or religious hatred and enmity, and also propaganda of social, racial, national, religious or linguistic superiority (Article 29).

From the point of view of international legal standards regarding human rights, free expression of opinion is proclaimed. However, according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights dated December 10, 1948 (The universal Declaration of human rights, 2019), the International Covenant

on Civil and Political Rights dated December 16, 1966 (The international Covenant on civil and political rights, 2019), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination dated December 21, 1965 (International Convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, 2019), the Declaration of the UN General Assembly dated November 25, 1981 on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief (The Declaration on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief", 2019), the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms dated November 4, 1950 (Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms 2019), any speeches and actions aimed at inciting religious enmity and hatred; dissemination of ideas about racial superiority, and any discrimination based on religious beliefs are prohibited by law. Based on the Shanghai Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism dated June 15, 2001 (The Shanghai Convention on combating terrorism, separatism and extremism, 2019), terrorism, separatism and extremism, despite their motives and under no circumstances, have no any opportunity to be acquitted, and, according to the law, persons who participated in such actions are held accountable. The Criminal Code of the Russian Federation also provides for liability for crimes of an extremist nature (The Criminal Code of the Russian Federation dated June 13, 1996).

In the decision of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation dated June 28, 2011 No. 11 "On judicial practice in criminal cases of extremist crimes" (Resolution of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation dated 28.06.2011), public calls are understood as "appealing expressed in any form (oral, written, using technical means, information and "public telecommunication networks, including the Internet) to other persons in order to encourage them to carry out extremist activities." Article 1 of the Federal Law dated July 25, 2002 No. 114-FZ "On Countering Extremist Activities" (Federal law, 2002), provides a definition of extremist materials, these are "documents intended for publication or information in other media calling for extremist activities or substantiating or justifying the need for the implementation of such activities, including the works of the leaders of the National Socialist Workers Party of Germany, the fascist party of Italy, publications substantiating or justifying "national and (or) racial superiority, or justifying the practice of committing military or other crimes aimed at the complete or partial destruction of any ethnic, social, racial, national or religious group."

Systematization of methods and techniques for identifying signs of extremism from the point of view of linguistic expertise today seems to be a very urgent problem. This is due to the fact that practical bodies that counteract extremism need methodological developments and recommendations that clearly define methods for identifying signs of extremism contained in both printed materials and video and audio materials.

II. METHODS

The empirical-inductive method of analysis of materials in which signs of extremism have been identified is used. In the process of working with materials, general scientific system-structural and comparative analysis, as well as particular-scientific linguistic methods: conceptual analysis method, lexical-semantic and semantic-syntactic analysis, analysis of the structural organization of a text, linguistic and stylistic analysis, component analysis methods and analysis of presuppositions, were used.

III. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The study of controversial materials in order to identify signs of extremism is sophisticated; there are several levels in its structure: national-cultural, socio-psychological, and linguistic. This complexity makes it necessary to attract specialists in the field of history, political science, psychology, religion and linguistics, who are capable to assess objectively the reliability of the content of the controversial materials.

However, it is obvious that linguistics plays a leading role in identifying signs of extremism in video, audio and text materials. And from a linguistic point of view, verbal extremism is used to influence addressees to manipulate their actions (Inna et al., 2018). One cannot disagree with the fair position of the Criminal Expertise Centre at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, according to which “analysis of the communicative situation concerning the implementation of an utterance, its semantic content, communicative goal setting of a speaker, determination of the form, situational relevance of the utterance is the subject of research by linguistic experts, which a priori falls within their competence according to the profile of higher education in this area of knowledge and can be comprehensively and fully investigated without the participation of a psychologist ... ” (Nazarova & Gromova, 2017). In this case, the leading linguistic task is the qualification of a text from the point of view of the so-called "hostile language" content (Verhovskij, 2002; Dubrovskij, 2003). Any appeal, propaganda, justification of any action in the text is realized by verbal means, certain lexical units, functioning in a given syntactic construction in one or another grammatical form. Along with textual information, it is possible to identify subtextual meanings using semantic-syntactic and contextual methods (Ivin, 2008).

One of the important conditions for conducting a study of materials in order to identify signs of extremism is the ideological impartiality of an expert linguist, and an evaluative approach to the analysis of religious views, beliefs, and dogmas is completely excluded by the requirements of law. Therefore, the choice of an expert to conduct a study of controversial material should be based on his/her ideological and religious impartiality.

The urgent problem is the construction of a clear algorithm for working with specialists in conducting research and examinations for the content of signs of extremism in audio, video and printed materials (Zelenina & Suslonov, 2009; Machado et al, 2019).

In connection with the foregoing, it is advisable to pay attention to the most important ways and methods of working with controversial materials containing signs of extremism.

1) The analysis of the disputed textual material by an expert, first of all, should be aimed at establishing the truth or falsity of the facts presented. This is due to the fact that there are frequent cases when the disputed materials do not contain factual data confirmed by history and modern science, but contain thoughts, ideas, fictitious phenomena that do not have any evidence base. The expert's task is to answer the question regarding the truth of the facts presented. The expert must give an objective, correct assessment of the possible conscious distortion by the addressee of the specifics of certain social or religious groups, parties, etc. activity.

2) When studying the meaning of the controversial text, an expert should proceed from the actual expressiveness of the meanings of both explicit and implicit language constructions. The arguments about what the author of the controversial material wanted to say are not acceptable; an expert analysis is based on what is actually said in the text.

3) The study of a controversial material should, first of all, be aimed at identifying the main

diagnostic signs of an extremist text:

a) A call to action is a statement in which the addressee agitates or calls on the recipient to commit certain actions with an extremist orientation. For example: "I'm addressing you, brother, with an appeal. Look around, open your eyes wider, think with your own head, do you really go blind and don't see that all the countries of the world and the notorious enemies of Allah have gathered for war with the Islamic state ... So be hurry, go to our camp ... "

b) Signs of propaganda contain statements in which author's intentions are presented, aimed at the formation of certain views, worldviews, ideologies, and extremist ideas, which, in turn, encourage their recipient to perform certain actions. In this context, an expert is important in distinguishing between propaganda of the symbols and ideas of Nazism and the activities of historical and cultural clubs and associations. "Propaganda is the dissemination among a wide range of people of ideas, views, perceptions or motivations for actions aimed at inciting national, racial or religious hatred" (On the use of special knowledge of cases and materials on national, race and religious hatred, 2008). So, in one of the video materials that came to the study, there was a public demonstration of the attributes of the Second World War with Nazi symbols - the image of a German eagle with a swastika on a military helmet. The expert came to the conclusion that this demonstration was without propaganda, without insulting the Soviet people and the memory of the victims of the Great Patriotic War, without popularizing the ideas of Nazism, the theory of racial superiority, and the justification of Nazi war crimes. And taking into account the situational, pragmatic presupposition (celebrations dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Kursk and the Prokhorov tank battle) - a demonstration of the Second World War attributes with Nazi symbols was made for historical and exhibition purposes.

c) Signs of incitement to hatred or enmity on a national, racial basis. These are expressions that demonstrate through linguistic means a hostile, aggressive, and derogatory attitude towards representatives of a certain nation or social group: "The Caucasian misfortune has uninvitedly come to our native land. There are dull black faces and guttural alien speech harsh to our ears everywhere. "

4) Expressive, emotionally colored vocabulary used by an author of the controversial text deserves special attention from the expert. These are language units that have a pronounced negative rating, which makes up their main meaning. Such word forms, as a rule, include lexemes denoting a socially condemned activity or position. They are interpreted by the public consciousness as negative, relating the object of the nomination to the class of a socially condemned group, for example, a fascist, racist, Nazi, etc.

4) An indispensable method of studying controversial material is the identification of deliberate, conscious assault and insult of religious, national feelings, various mockeries of the historical memory of a people and nation, which seems to be one of the methods of inciting hatred (Zelenina & Suslonov, 2009). For example, the use of various components of fascist symbols (graphics, gestures, shouts, etc.), and the propaganda of Nazism degrade the dignity of the peoples who fought in the Great Patriotic War with the aggression of fascism.

5) The identification of signs of propaganda which proclaims exclusivity, superiority or inferiority of citizens on the basis of their attitude to religion, social, racial, national, religious or linguistic affiliation is also one of the methods of researching controversial materials in order to identify signs of extremism. So, for example, in the text of the article by Tis Christoffersen "Adolf Hitler. Life for

Germany and Europe”, the superiority and exclusivity of the German people are expressed in comparison with other peoples and countries of the world and at the level of the nominative representation of individual states and their representatives. Thus, with regard to Germany, the author of the article uses lexemes with a pronounced positive connotation: “German Empire”, “Great Germany”, “Great German Empire”, “Great German Wehrmacht” “tormented German people”, “brilliant creation of Adolf Hitler”, and “great people”. The genius and greatness of Germany in comparison with the other world, the superiority of the German nation over others, according to Tis Christoffersen, are determined by the organizational abilities of the German people, (“Their organizational abilities would establish order and tranquility in Europe in the shortest time”), achievements in the field of science, art, technology, music, etc. Moreover, the author of the article gives the German nation the ability and authority to create a new state: “They would have created the United States of Europe without bloodshed, and would have placed at the disposal of the whole world their abilities in science, art and technology, as they did before. Their spiritual life, first of all, unique German music, would enrich life on this earth”). The recipient brings to its limit the idea of the exclusivity of the German nation, which in turn leads to the dehumanization of representatives of another national groups and which justifies the violence of fascist Germany against them.

6) In the course of study of a controversial material, an expert should pay attention to the potential addressee of statements with signs of extremism. That is, the text should include the personification of the object in relation to which the author incites ethnic or religious discord. For example, in many extremist materials the following ethnic invectives are used as a nomination for the object, in order to create an image of the enemy from representatives of Central Asia and the North Caucasus: churban (soulless clod), churban rabble, churkobesy (skibbies), black faces, tsunarefs (wogs), etc., which appear in as nominative units for the object of action, in respect of which the addressee inflames the national struggle.

7) The methods of studying controversial materials of an extremist nature include the study of the text in order to identify the author’s way of presenting facts, based on a deliberate violation of life, logical and legal principles. For example: “Kill. Break the laws. Do not be a vegetable. Prove that you are alive at all. ” So, the actions to which the recipient prompts have a direct lexical expression: kill, break laws. For the author, living means killing and killing again; breaking laws is proof that you are alive. The sender of the speech text is trying to introduce into the mind of the addressee the idea of the need not to comply with their constitutional obligations and to violate laws.

8) The figurative component of extremist materials deserves special attention on the part of the researcher when the author of the text uses various kinds of artistic images, symbols in order to emotionally affect the addressee. So, the prohibited law is the use of Nazi, fascist symbols, shouts, gestures, etc. Often extremist video and audio materials are accompanied by shouts of “WhitePower”, which are the slogan of the skinhead movement meaning in the context of this ideology “power to white, power to white”. This slogan is often accompanied by the image of the Celtic cross, the most popular symbol among European neo-Nazis.

9) The fundamentally important limiting point in the study of controversial materials with a view to identifying signs of extremism is the proven fact of their public dissemination, when the main author’s goal is to incite hatred or enmity, as well as humiliating the dignity of a person or group of people based on gender, race, nationality, language, origin, attitude to religion, as well as belonging to any social group, according to article 282 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (Ivanova, et al., 2019; Svetlana et al., 2018; Makogon et al., 2017).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

It follows from the foregoing that linguistic examination is an effective measure regulating controversial speech situations presented in the form of audio, video, and printed materials. The results of this study are evidence-based and provide justice with a reliable tool for the fight and prevention in the social environment of all manifestations of extremism. The ability of an expert linguist to see, identify and correctly understand the essential diagnostic features of such a phenomenon as verbal extremism determines the effective study of controversial video, audio and printed materials. In the modern world, extremism is distinguished by the dynamics and variety of its manifestations; therefore, the activity of a linguist expert requires knowledge of the legal basis concerning this kind of forensic research, the necessary theoretical base, certain algorithms, development of methods and methodological techniques for studying extremist materials.

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