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The role of rumors in shaping of the image of Natalia Korolevska during the election campaign in 2012

Khmel O., Zima N. The role of rumors in shaping of the image of Natalia Korolevska during the election campaign in 2012. The article deals with the influence of rumors as a specific communication unit on creating the image of the leader «Ukraine — Go!» Natalia Korolevska during the election campaign in 2012. The role of the spontaneous communication in shaping public opinion about the events of the political life of the country is defined. The reasons of the false information's influence and features of its functioning in the modern Ukrainian information space are analyzed in the article.

Keywords: *rumors, image, election.*

Хмель О. С., Зіма Н. С. Роль чуток у формуванні іміджу Наталії Королевської у передвиборчій кампанії 2012 року. Розглянуто вплив чуток як специфічної комунікативної одиниці на формування іміджу лідера партії «Україна — Вперед!» Наталії Королевської під час передвиборчої кампанії 2012 року. Визначено роль стихійних комунікацій у формуванні громадської думки щодо подій політичного життя країни. Проаналізовано причини виникнення недостовірної інформації та особливості її функціонування в сучасному українському інформаційному просторі.

Ключові слова: *чутки, імідж, вибори.*

Хмель О. С., Зіма Н. С. Роль слухов в формировании имиджа Натальи Королевской в предвыборной кампании 2012 года. Рассмотрено влияние слухов как специфической коммуникативной единицы на формирование имиджа лидера партии «Украина — Вперед!» Натальи Королевской во время предвыборной кампании 2012 года. Определена роль стихийных коммуникаций в формировании общественного мнения относительно событий политической жизни страны. Проанализированы причины возникновения недостоверной информации и особенности ее функционирования в современном украинском информационном пространстве.

Ключевые слова: *слухи, имидж, выборы.*

Informal mass communication processes play an important role in shaping public opinion, including the events of political life. S. Zielinski [1], O. Caraiani [2], D. Olshansky [3], O. Poteryahin [4], G. Pocheptsov [5], [6], [7] and other scientists investigated the problem of the using of hearsay in political communication and the range of scientific interests which include political PR, imageology, communication technology and so on.

Informal communication that grows from uncontrolled communication between individuals or groups in certain circumstances is an important factor in the formation of public opinion and don't inferior in popularity to official channels of mass communication. Rumors as a separate communication unit have a special place in today's information space. A. Poteryahin defines rumor as verbal information with uncertain degree of confidence that is transferred spontaneously to the participants concerning important communication events and meets their needs and focus of interest [4:8]. In addition to informing

society by rumors, they are using some informal channels. Also rumors are the formative elements of the image of individuals, organizations, businesses, and widely used in the political struggle, especially during election campaigns.

Despite the fairly detailed studying the problem of our predecessors, some aspects are remained pending, such as: the use of hearsay in the political struggle in the current development of communication technologies, causes of rumors' appearance and features of their functioning in the Ukrainian information space.

A good proof that natural communication greatly influences on the course of election campaigns is campaign in 2012, which preceded the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Effect of rumors distinctly traced to the creation of the image of the leader of a new political party «Ukraine, Go Ahead!» Natalia Korolevska.

The purpose of the article — to determine the role of speculation in shaping the image of the party leader «Ukraine, Go Ahead!» Natalia Korolevska during the campaign of 2012.

The relevance of the study is in relatively small researching of rumors and functions they perform in modern politics. A more detailed analysis of the problem makes it possible to determine the role of speculation in creating the image of Ukrainian politicians, to distinguish spontaneous communication from artificial propagation of false information in order to avoid manipulating the last one (it is well known that the rumors as an oral form of the myth not only occur spontaneously due to the lack of official information, but also deliberately spread to covertly inform society to track its reaction to some potential government action).

The emergence of rumors around Natalia Korolevska primarily due to the lack of reliable information about her, about her biography, business, education, family, hobbies etc. Interest of these areas of life increases significantly during the campaign and remains unsatisfied for some time, so it is the reason of false information's spreading. Rumors fill information gaps, thus responding to emerging issues in the community. Their significant characteristic is the high velocity of serving samotranslovanosti result. Such quality rumors is based by Pocheptsov's definition on the fact that they are subject to further circulation and does not require the creation of ancillary environmental conditions [5:281].

According to D. Olshansky, often political campaigns use rumors to control competing for sounding of public opinion and the possible reaction of society to the official publication of the information and to improve the rank of politics [3:107]. «Rumors — mass phenomenon of interpersonal exchange of distorted, emotionally intense information» [3:117]. They arise as a response to the lack of official information. Thus, during the election campaign in 2012 a mass audience interested in the financing of Natalie Korolevska's party, a good response to those official sources is not allowed. The reason for the emergence of rumors was that the advertising party «Ukraine — Go!» on the streets of Ukrainian cities appeared first in winter 2011–2012, and cost, according to news agency UNN, 83 million dollars.

The society began to circulate within the meaning of the various rumors concerning the financing of political power. In one of them, known Ukrainian businessman Renat Akhmetov, the second — tycoon Haiduk, the third — MP Oleksandr Yefremov and others sponsor the political activities of Natalie Korolevska. Under the influence of such information the idea that «Ukraine — Go!» — a technical project of the Party of Regions, aimed at taking away votes in

opposition force — namely in PA «Homeland». According to another version, «Ukraine — Go!» funded by opposition, Natalia Korolevska should take the place of Julia Tymoshenko. Because of that Korolevska refutes rumors and insists that she finances the party by herself. Lack of formal and diversity false information misleads voters and potential negative impact on the image of politics.

As you know, the image is the most effective way to penetrate in mass consciousness. It reflects its needs and condenses in the features which on the one hand, are the interest for your device, on the other — to the audience [6:19]. Therefore corrupted image may cause lesions in the political struggle.

Natalia Korolevska repeatedly and publicly denied rumors of a collaboration with the Party of Regions. In terms of public relations as a science of managing public opinion, thus proliferation of spontaneous information is not productive. It is believed that the official denials of rumors you can learn about them to those who had not been familiar with them. That campaign aimed at countering rumors, leading to further their spread. On the other hand, the absence of any response to rumors tantamount to encouraging them. The best prevention and countering rumors is information openness, honesty, under which the society will not be a need for additional sources of information [4:47].

At the present stage of development of communication technology arena for the rapid spread of rumors was the Internet. Internet resources, blogs, social networks, forums are convenient for anonymous communication. Anonymity is one of the main features of spontaneous information. Recently, the Internet began to emerge individual pages whose purpose is to collect and spread rumors. Sites like govoryat.com.ua, Baba-Babi.com specialized in distributing unofficial information which is important for society events, prominent figures of culture, sports and politics. In addition, their users and visitors can not only find information, but also to vote for her truthfulness / untruthfulness. These and similar sites often spread rumors about his personal life and political activity of Natalia Korolevska.

Possible collaboration between Natalie Korolevska and the leader of «Beat» party Vitalij Klitschko is very interesting for mass audience. However, rumors about the union of two political forces are short-lived: Vitalij Klitschko promptly extended the official information that the parliamentary elections in 2012 «Beat» act independently. Joining to the party «Ukraine — Go!» famous Ukrainian footballer Andrij

Shevchenko, actor Ostap Stupka is planned PR-campaign based on appeal to authority.

We know that rumors as a unit of communication have several classifications. With the information they are divided by a completely false, just misleading, relatively accurate and relatively close to reality. It should also distinguish between natural and specially rumors spread that can perform specific tasks. According to the emotional coloring rumors are divided into «rumor-desire», «rumor-monsters», «aggressive rumors» and «ridiculous rumors» [3:96]. A. Poteryahin includes the existing classification of «rumor-exposure» objects which are usually well-known public figures, artists, athletes, politicians, etc [4:16]. So we can conclude that most of the rumors about Natalia Korolevska are a «rumor — revelations».

«Rumor — exposure» can be called as information regarding the loss Natalia Korolevska graduation certificate. It came after the Parliamentary elections, but also reflected the image of politics. People's Deputy of Ukraine, former Interior Minister Gennady Moskal' has suggested that Natalie Korolevska actually has higher education. In turn, the current Minister of Social Affairs (Korolevska holds this position since December 24, 2012), according to UNN, promised to show the media a copy of the diploma. The event sparked public interest and was the reason for spreading rumors that adversely affect the image policy.

The cause of the publicity was also reported that in 2008, according to the magazine «Focus», Natalie Korolevska with the fortune of 243 million wants to hundred the richest people in Ukraine, finishing in the 93rd position. Conflicting facts about the financial condition and Natalia Korolevska's small piece of information about the formation and development of her business sparked rumors spread about unfair and non-self earning her money. Discussion subject to family policy: The mother — a teacher, his father — a

miner and brother — former Deputy Minister of Regional Development of the Russian Federation — in which Natalia Korolevska allegedly set up her own business. The basis for the emergence of rumors was raised public concern and lack of reliable information concerning the business of «Ukraine — Go!»'s leader.

Scandalous messages distributed on the Internet in September 2012, that representatives of Natalie Korolevska's party «Ukraine — Go!» were seen in copyright infringement and unauthorized using and distribution of musical production (quoted in golos.ua), definitely adversely affect the image of the party and its leader. Information about the misappropriation of songs by the group «DRESS CODE», on the one hand, provoked distrust of potential voters to the party, and on the other — was black PR for the band.

Thus, due to the rapid pace of dissemination and capacity in a very limited time to meet the public interest hearings greatly influence the course of events of political life. Thus, during the election campaign in 2012 rumors, mostly negative, influenced on the image of Natalie Korolevska — the leader of the party «Ukraine — Go!», which resulted in the elections (only 1,58% of the vote). Studying rumors and functions, you can classify spontaneous interpersonal communication as an important part of modern Ukraine's information space; determine the reasons for its occurrence and effective methods of prevention. As you can see by the example of Natalie Korolevska, fighting rumors as specific communicative unit are extremely complex and inefficient because all attempts to prevent the spreading of false information are failed.

Despite the large number of specialized papers, rumors' role in shaping the image of Ukrainian political parties' leaders in election campaign requires further research using modern empirical material.

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