FEATURES OF THE US VERSUS UK PRESS

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The purpose of this article is to highlight the main differences that exist between the two variants of English. Based on the words of Noah Webster, who was sure that the British dialect would soon be very different from the American one, today, some scholars accept and promote his idea, but there are others who deny all the differences between these two dialects, which has become the main focus of the present article.

Back in the 60s, Great Britain ranked first in the West in the distribution of newspapers: the British bought twice as many newspapers as Americans. However, today, no matter how others try to surpass them, the United States occupies a leading position in the world in the information sphere. They write in the international language and do not censor their articles. The freedom of pressmen is reinforced by the first Amendment to the US Constitution, which states: „Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press <...>” Perhaps nowhere else are publishers allowed such openness and absolute freedom [1, p. 116].

Interestingly, the American media, both print and electronic, are exclusively commercial in nature. This is a big business. There is no state-owned media in the country, so all newspapers and magazines are owned by private entrepreneurs. The exceptions are state television and radio, but they are not very popular. Thus, making a profit is the primary goal of any American publishing house. If the printing does not pay off or the income is constantly falling, the newspaper is usually closed or sold.

It is noteworthy that in order to open a newspaper in USA, it is not required to obtain a license from any government agency. It is enough to have the desire and money for this.

The American press is traditionally aimed at the local reader. This is due to the fact that the first newspapers appeared on the territory of the United States even before its proclamation as an independent state. Then each of the 13 colonies had its own publishing houses and newspapers. Another reason is the high cost of delivering newspapers over long distances. Also, the American reader is more interested in local news [1, p. 119].

But the most important reason is the dependence of the newspaper and its income on local advertising. Advertising pays the newspaper’s bills. The annual revenue from advertising is more than twice the profit from sales and subscriptions. There are also free newspapers that exist only thanks to advertising – they are, by the way, very popular [1, p. 122].

It is distinctive that the British Isles are dominated by national newspapers that are published in London. However, this does not exclude the existence of provincial newspapers and magazines that focus on local news.

Given the regional or local nature of the American newspaper, its small circulation is not surprising. The average circulation of an American newspaper is 35 thousand copies, and there are 282 copies per thousand inhabitants.

Paper printing has been generally losing popularity lately. Almost every publisher has acquired an electronic version in order to attract a new audience. It worked, but gradually almost the entire audience switched to the electronic version. Some publishing houses have now completely switched to electronic format, but require a paid subscription [1, p. 119].

By the way, American publishing houses are not always limited to the USA. For example, the largest newspaper monopoly, the ‚Gannett Company', established in 1906, owns 82 daily newspapers published in the United States and other 17 newspapers published in the UK.

Another feature of the American press is Sunday editions. They are very reverently treated, and they are usually much bigger than weekday editions. The Sunday edition of the Washington Post reaches 800 pages – and that is for a weekly issue onvy. It can be assumed that the text is being written very carelessly in a hurry, and the content may seem scattered since a large group of people usually takes part in the creation of Sunday editions.

Speaking of UK, Sunday newspapers and electronic publications are loved there as much as in the USA. Sunday newspapers even exceed the circulation of daily newspapers, as there is more demand for them.

It is noteworthy that the evaluation factor tends to be limited in newspapers. In higher educational institutions, journalists are taught that the editorial board's opinion should not go beyond the boundaries of the editorial page, that is, news and commentary should be separated. The American reader prefers a publication that does not impose its point of view [1, p.123].

The UK press is divided into high-quality and mass (or popular) kinds. The first is characterised by an objective narrative, a high level of analysis and processing of information, reliability of facts, relevance of headlines, etc. The second one, surprisingly enough, is gradually losing popularity, although it has a more entertaining character: tabloids chase a sensation, do not disdain distorting facts and use simple vocabulary and constructions [2, p. 192].

But if Americans prefer photography and analysis to opinion, then the British press has not yet abandoned the trend of commenting. Which does not mean that this is inherent in all British publications, but only states that in most publicist genres [3, p.110].

We shall observe the high-quality press now. Obviously, it is bulkier and more expensive than the popular one. Quality newspapers are interested in both national and international news; they cover social and cultural issues. Separate pages are reserved for sports-related news or those from the financial world [4, p. 163].

As a rule, information about the main character of the article is displayed in the first paragraph, and then, referring to him, the author uses a proper name or a personal pronoun. This feature also expresses the desire of a high-quality press for an objective presentation of events.

The high-quality press is preferred by educated people who have economic or political power. An unbiased presentation of the news is preferable for them since they analyse it themselves in order to make decisions later that are favourable to their business or political interests.

These newspapers often use colloquial vocabulary and slang. Journalists, as it were, try to get closer to the reader in advance and establish familiar relations due to such a casual address. An abundance of expressive means and words with a bright emotional colouring will certainly be used here. The evaluation factor is also strongly expressed, although the assessment is not based on a deep analysis and is often very superficial and hasty [5, p. 9].

However, the reader will be satisfied if the author’s opinion coincides with his opinion. And if the journalist was not convincing enough, it is still better than indifference on the part of the reader. He will continue reading anyway because people like to feel right. Nothing will emphasise the rightness of one so much as a lousy written article with poor argumentation.

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Recomandat

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