
Azerbaijani Mass Media : Technologies Of Information Activity

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In the article is spoken about information activity carried out in the Azerbaijani mass media classified by their main directions and the names given to them conventionally. It is especially accentuated the fact that a seriously prepared, far reaching information warfare is being waged against Armenia not yielding to open military operations and even posing serious dangers.

1. "Factor of priority." The forefather of this principle may be considered one of the outstanding leaders of Nazi Germany - Doctor Gebels. "A person who will say the world the first word is always right," he says¹. A big number of scientists, including K. Hovland, N. Janis, L Doube, have also come to such a conclusion. They are sure that a propagandist is sure to succeed if the public is aware of his information earlier than the one of his opponent. It is motivated by the fact that people prefer believing the first information they get, and it is quite difficult for them to change the already shaped opinion on something².

According to Hitler the society is inclined believing even 90% not proved accusation than its disproof, even if it is 100% grounded³. Applying this principle, the Azerbaijani press tries to change public opinion (its own, Armenian and international). It is noteworthy the announcements in the Azerbaijani press about the cases of violating ceasefire.

Should one follow these reports, an opinion will be created that last year the Armenian party was almost every day violating cease-fire in one or two directions. Since the end of the last year frequency of violations has increased and today the Armenian party already violates the cease-fire in 4-5 directions every day. The world community perceives these false reports to be reality: it has come to be proved by the concerns of the European Council, OCSE, European Union and the US leaders on the occasion of frequent violations of cease-fire. In other words, false propaganda is sure to be in favor of the neighbor country certifying its "peaceful essence" and devotion to observing cease-fire. Whereas, only once every three months, the Armenian party reports about ceasefire violations by the "neighbors". Only from time to time responding its neighbors' false reports on cease-fire violations, it acquires the status of "cease-fire violator," which, in its turn, has negative impact on international rating of Armenia and Karabakh issue. If we add to it the activity of the Azerbaijani party in international organizations which resulted the adoption of A/62/L.424 resolution by the UN General Assembly, where the states (37 - for, 7 - against and 150 - abstentions) demonstrated their attitude to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, it will become clear what this kind of propaganda will bring to.

2. "System of cross and anonymous references." It is accepted that the reference to any authoritative person concerning to any information has big influence upon the society. This authoritative person may be a clergyman, a politician, scientist or a specialist of any sphere. At the same time to carry more convenience may also be used commentaries to the documents, estimations of specialists or other suchlike reports. For example, on March 28, 2008 Day.az informational agency informed that a group of Armenians, not

identified, made a brigandage assault on the office of the Azerbaijani congress of Benelux, located in Rotterdam. The police and witnesses confirmed that the assault was made by the Armenians. The above mentioned agency took for granted the report of another Azerbaijani agency (ANS) where the event was represented without any references. What have the police, witnesses and the group of Armenians to do here? At the same time the source of information was not revealed, and the journalists did not account for spreading the false information. It is worth mentioning that such kind of information has been proved to be generally false. And the references to not existing authors make it more grounded and convincing for people. So, on January 28, 2008 Day.az agency announced that the Armenian community of the Ukrainian city Lvov had suggested renaming it "Aryuc" in honor of its Armenian founders⁵. The agency based on the statement of another Azerbaijani agency (APA) which did not ground that information at all.

3. "Mediators" or "well known specialists." It is known that effective information influence is possible to exert by means of authoritative and well known people in the society. Non-official information (news, estimation of specialists of different spheres, opinions of spiritual leaders) are more ponderable than official information of any of the state structures. In that way, any state position may be brought to the public's notice with the objective to reach the desirable goal. Having several suchlike specialists and leaders, the Azerbaijani press is making use of this factor successfully. Let's bring a few examples. The Azerbaijani mass media and, in particular, the agency Day.az takes interview from the well known specialists. This principle plays an important role in shaping public opinion. Thus, on March 14, 2006 a well known Azerbaijani "political scientist," Vugar Seidov, appeared in the press with his "historical and political analytical" article⁶. A few months later the same person was presented as a "famous political scientist from Hungary⁷." Among the specialists is also famous Vafa Guluzade, who from time to time appears in the press with some important commentaries. The list of "famous" Azerbaijani specialists may be continued ad infinity, as the above mentioned factor is not of little importance in waging informational warfare.

4. "Distortion and classification of concepts." According to the psychologist G. Olport, the essence of any language is in classifying and distributing the endless information flow we come across every second. While describing any subject we single out its distinctive peculiarities paying no attention to other factors of not small importance (the way it is described and classified, how it is presented) which lead our ideas and perception⁸.

As a result of such classification the subjects or events presented are shaped in a way that a person perceives the ideas imposed to him about them.

Such a classification furnished to provide information includes specially chosen words and word-combinations aiming at representing their own, "positive" and constructive positions. They are also differentiating words to present the enemy in the negative light. Let's consider it in the context of the Azerbaijani mass media. The Azerbaijani agencies Day.az, ANS, Trend and "Ə-ƏµÑ~@Đ°Đ°Đ°Đ°Ä", aspiring to raise the spirit of their armed forces, represent Armenia's armed forces as "Armenian armed forces" or even "Armenian armed subdivisions," calling their own subdivisions "National army of Azerbaijan⁹." The incidents happening on the contingency line of Armenian-Azerbaijani frontier are presented in²⁰ such a way that its propagandistic character is clear even for a child¹⁰.

One more example, illustrating "adherence" of the neighbor country to peaceful settlement of the Karabakh conflict: "non-constructive position of Armenia hinders peaceful settlement of the conflict¹¹." Numerous comparisons are made of "unprecedented economic growth" or other successes (economic, political, sports) with the ones of Armenia, and here every opportunity is seized to show its "privilege."

5. "Statement of facts." Most of the people think with stereotypes. It is the matter of proverbs "there is no smoke without fire" or "If it is spoken about, than there is what." As a result, the persona thinking unlike the others has a false impression that he is among the minority. Such propaganda is mainly spread under the umbrella of authoritative people or by means of social researches, which reduces criticism of perception as people can hardly catch falsehood in information about the events happening in their country and out of its borders. For example, on March 25 2006 Day.az agency spread information about public opinion poll according to which 72.2% of electors support the president in power. It is noteworthy that in the information it is mentioned the name of the social center which had conducted the research and are brought some figures without any references or methodological explanations¹². On July 17, 2007 one could see the research results of another organization. The information represented in the same style doesn't differ much from the one of the previous year. It is noteworthy that within a year no changes were noticeable even between percentage ratio of the figures and the whole sense of the represented information is praising and glorify the president on the eve of presidential elections¹³. As for anti-Armenian subject-matter of this factor, than the striking example of it is the information uploaded in Day.az site on November 3, 2005 about the social research conducted by so called "Organization of liberated Karabakh¹⁴." The orientation of this organization is obvious. It is only to be mentioned that this "research" aims at presenting the society its own desirable format of the Karabakh conflict settlement.

6. "Feedback." The peculiarities of measures concerning to this factor are heart-to-heart talks of high ranking officials in the streets, visits to districts, direct communication with people and mass media. Quite often such relations look like beforehand prepared theatrical actions. For example, it is known that the French president De Gaulle was never asked questions to which he wasn't ready. In general, the machinery of any leader gets him ready for all the possible questions. And what about the situation in Azerbaijan? The Azerbaijani press elucidates numerous visits of its leader to districts, where the main questions and answers are concentrated on military successes and "liberating" the territories by military forces.

The representatives of Parliament adhere to the same style of work carrying out anti-Armenian campaign abroad. In that way it is ruffled the factor of information warfare, are demonstrated concern of the president and other high ranking officials to the problems of society and, in particular, to the inhabitants of remote districts, and their readiness to win back the territories at any cost. The striking example of it is the recent visit of the state's leader to the south-western districts. According to information provided by ANS agency, the AR president visited this region to be present at the opening ceremony of the medical center and thermoelectric power station. However, the presented material was completely relating to "territories occupied by Armenia," the priority of liberating them as well as the issue of thousands of refugees as sufferers of the Karabakh conflict¹⁵. The announcements referring to the visits of Azerbaijani representatives as well

as the state officials of other countries in international organizations and their elucidation don't differ much of the work carried out inside the country. Trend News agency took an interview from the Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan E. Mamedyarov during his visit to Latvia. However, instead of telling the details of this visit the journalist speaks about the possible meeting with the Armenian Foreign Minister and his expectation from it. As a result in the article is as usual spoken about "non-constructive" approaches of Armenia, the position of international community and intolerance of Azerbaijan to the Karabakh issue. So, one can come to a conclusion that the visits of high ranking officials to the neighbor countries and their feedback are on the whole pursuing one objective - to keep the society watchful and remind it about military operation by "the Armenian party" aspiring to ensure the necessary number of votes at the coming elections for his "patriotic work."

7. "Transcription of History." This factor is used with the objective of shaping the future generation and introducing the desirable ideology.

Artificially modeled historical realities are spread through books and lectures, on the radio and TV, by means of the mass media, theatrical plays and feature films. Making use of all these resources is created a virtual world perceived to be a reality. As a result, a person may consider his real life as an unpleasant dream, and everything propagandized - as reality. The English film director said, "It is important for the history to be written by us, as those writing it are lead by the present¹⁶." By distorting history it is possible to influence on the memory of broad masses. In this sense, the 20 Azerbaijani propaganda is succeeding as ever: falsifications of historical facts is unprecedented and are voiced absurd announcements.

Historical-cultural researches are conducted all over the territory of the country and the discoveries are ascribed to Azerbaijan's "ancient history." Encroachments don't circle not only the reach Armenian culture and history, but also Persian and Georgian cultures. All this work is carried out under the umbrella of the state and by direct participation of Azerbaijani scientists.

Thus, the existence of the above mentioned factors of information warfare in the Azerbaijani press have come to prove the fact that a serious wide scale and long lasting war against Armenia is waged in Azerbaijan. Our country's mass media pays almost no attention to this problem - doesn't suppress it and doesn't counterattack. From time to time appear refutation of this or that information in the Azerbaijani mass media.

At that, taking into consideration the scope and intensity of spreading information, Armenia is once again defeated. It also influences on its international rating, which may cause serious after-effects. The difference between Azerbaijani and Turkish anti-Armenian information activities is that Azerbaijan's strategy is directed to the Azerbaijani community and disposes it to Armenia, and the information warfare waged by Turkey is addressed to Armenian and Azerbaijani communities²⁰ disposing them to the very Armenia. However, Turkey's strategy and the factors used by it is the subject of another research.

⁹The Armenian armed forces violated cease-fire in Tavuzk, Fizulinsk and Agdamsk regions Armenia's armed forces fired over the positions of Azerbaijan's national army
