

PHENOMENON OF TEXT CREOLIZATION IN MODERN RUSSIAN ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA PUBLICATIONS

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Abstract

The article examines the phenomenon of creolization and presents the results of an analysis of creolized texts (CT) in modern Russian entertainment media publications. It is stated that a CT in the entertainment media appears to be a complex textual formation, in which verbal and iconic elements form one visual, structural, semantic, and functional whole aimed at a complex pragmatic impact on the addressee. A modern CT is standardized in its structure, prone to increase visual information, multifunctional, and manipulative. The meaningful interaction between the verbal and visual components of a CT demonstrates a great variety; however, the key meanings of its message are predominantly duplicated in order to exclude the addressee's misinterpretation. The impact on the addressee is most noticeable in the headings of the analyzed CTs, which most often contain imperative or modal constructions, rhetorical questions, elliptical constructions (as features of oral speech), colloquial words and phrases, involving precedent units and numerous word-play techniques to create some implications or ironic effects. Our work was based on an integrated (structural-functional, communicative and discursive-stylistic) approach, which allowed us to consider the examined phenomenon from the above-mentioned perspective. For the study, we used the following methods: descriptive analysis, continuous sampling, contextual analysis, structural-component analysis, and content analysis. The descriptive-analytical method, including observation, comparison, generalization and interpretation of the obtained facts, made it possible to obtain a clear idea of the linguistic subject under study, develop a descriptive sequence, organize and systematize the linguistic material. Using the discursive-stylistic and communicative analyses, we were able to consider the phenomenon of creolization within the mass communication system, taking into account various press formats, and highlight shades of meaning in the semantic structure of specific CTs; the structural-component analysis made it possible to consider the CT components separately in order to study the characteristics of each of them and their interaction. The theoretical provisions of our study were verified by the content analysis method using factual material, including: data on the frequency of use of various types of creolization, their functions and ways of

interaction in various media formats. Applied together, the above-listed scientific approaches and methods make it possible to comprehend the existence of CTs in the entertainment media not abstractly but in specific manifestations of their actual functioning in publications for a targeted audience. The analysis of the factual material showed that modern CTs in the media are complete and targeted; they are creolized to varying degrees and tend to the extensive use of visual tools that simplify perception, keep attention and increase the impact on the addressee. Such CTs have a standard structure expected by the readers, their verbal and visual components are almost equivalent and aimed at forming certain opinions and desired preferences and evaluations; they have abstract and specific contents, figurativeness and high associative potential.

Keywords: media discourse, polycode text, creolized text, degree of creolization, verbal and visual components, functions of creolized text.

1 INTRODUCTION

It was not until fairly recently that Russian scientists became interested in studying texts that, in addition to the verbal component, include other sign systems. A variety of terms appeared in works on semiotics, linguistics, paralinguistics, psycholinguistics, and visual semantics, through which researchers tried to explain the ambiguous and complex essence of polycode texts, e.g., “syncretic message”, “composite”, “semiotically complicated”, “video-verbal”, “creolized text”, “linguovisual phenomenon”, “isoverbal complex”, “isoverb”, “iconotext” (Ye. Ye. Anisimova, V.M. Berezin, A. A. Bernatskaya, L. S. Bolshyanova, N. S. Valgina, L.V. Golovina, G. V. Eiger, A.Yu. Zenkova, O. L. Kamenskaya, V.M. Klyukanov, E. A. Lazareva, N. V. Meskhishvili, A.V. Mikheyev, O. V. Poymanova, A.G. Sonin, Yu. A. Sorokin, Ye. F. Tarasov, R. O. Yakobson, and others.) [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]. These terms are most often treated as interchangeable in modern science, but we shall use a very dynamic and metaphorized term “creolized text” or CT.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The first scientific attempts to interpret such texts were associated with the study of the image as a special sign system and contexts for its application: “...in this function the image is not different from the word. Both the word and the image can express concepts of different levels of abstractness” (Sorokin, Tarasov, 1997, pp.8). At the same time, the image by its nature cannot be such a clearly expressed symbolic unit as the word and, in semantic terms, it is characterized by greater blurriness. “Images and words in a polycode message are not the sum of semiotic signs, their meanings are integrated to form a complexly constructed meaning” (Sonin, 2005, pp.115). Therefore, the relevant problems of modern linguistics include studying the interaction and correlation between the verbal and iconic sign systems in various creolized texts of different pragmatics (politics, fiction, media, advertising, etc.), developing a typology of creolized texts and examining their textual essence. These directions are quite promising, and the phenomenon of text creolization is perceived in modern linguistics as “a combination of means of different semiotic systems in a complex that meets the condition of textuality” (Bernatskaya, 2000, pp.109). Here it is worth citing Ye.Ye. Anisimova who defines these texts as “a special lingovisual phenomenon, a text in which its verbal and nonverbal components form one visual, structural, semantic and functional whole, ensuring its complex pragmatic effect on the addressee” (Anisimova, 2003, pp.17). This broad understanding of a text, uniting all the verbal and non-verbal means that make up a text as a communicative unit and define its pragmatics, has made CTs an actual object of linguistic research.

It was noted that any change in the relation and interaction between the CT structural components changes the text content perception at the general, linguistic and textual levels. Thus, the figurative component in varying degrees is included in the text organization. Depending on the presence of an image and the nature of its connection with the verbal part, it is possible to identify texts with zero, partial and complete creolization. And, if in the texts with zero creolization there is no image to represent a meaning for their organization, in the other two groups images participate in the text organization and enter into various complementary (auto-semantic) relations or interdependencies (synsemantic relations) with the verbalized component. “Being a carrier of certain information, functioning and interacting with each other in a single semantic space, the verbal and iconic components of a message attract the addressee’s attention, contribute to faster information perception, ensure the integrity and coherence of a CT and its communicative effect. It

becomes impossible to completely extract information from a CT without its decoding and interpretation ... The perception of such CTs is, as it were, a process of double decoding of the information contained in it: when an image is perceived, it is superimposed on the perceived verbal component content. Thus, there appears a certain third, unified, common semantic component of the entire creolized text" (Anisimova, 2003, pp.8). Currently, the problems of typology of CTs continue to be actively developed (in terms of the nature of the verbal and iconic components, the amount of information transmitted by various signs, the nature of connections that unite the verbal and visual components, etc.) (Poymanova, 2007).

We think it is promising and interesting to study the phenomenon of creolization, its methods and forms as well as to identify the peculiarities in the relationship between the verbal and non-verbal components and their impact on the addressee in media texts of different formats and trends. As rightly pointed out by V.M. Berezin, "illustrating is now increasingly becoming an element of text production. The level of integration of all graphic means, including other symbolic formations, into a single textual space of printed and electronic publications is very high" (Berezin, 1997). The preference of a particular type of communication is determined by the communicative goal and functional purpose of a CT as a whole.

3 METHODS

In our study, we relied on the integrated approach. The structural-functional approach considers a CT as a system with a single structure, a holistic unity of the functioning of its verbal and visual components. The communicative and discursive-stylistic approaches are also productive: they make it possible to consider the phenomenon of creolization within the mass communication system, taking into account various press formats. When working with entertainment media publications, the following research methods were used: descriptive analysis, continuous sampling, contextual analysis, structural-component analysis, and content analysis. The descriptive-analytical method, including observation, comparison, generalization and interpretation of the obtained facts, made it possible to obtain a clear idea of the linguistic subject under study, develop a descriptive sequence, organize and systematize the linguistic material. Using the discursive-stylistic and communicative analyses, we were able to consider the phenomenon of creolization within the mass communication system, taking into account various press formats, and highlight shades of meaning in the semantic structure of specific CTs; the structural-component analysis made it possible to consider the CT components separately in order to study the characteristics of each of them and their interaction. The theoretical provisions of our study were verified by the content analysis method using factual material, including: data on the frequency of use of various types of creolization, their functions and ways of interaction in various media formats. Applied together, the above-listed scientific approaches and methods make it possible to comprehend the existence of CTs in entertainment media not abstractly but in specific manifestations of their actual functioning in publications for a targeted audience.

The analysis covered more than 1000 CT publications under the 'Star Style' heading of the Russian weekly entertainment magazine 7 Dney (7 Days) for family reading for the period 2016–2018, which, according to independent research, had the largest audience among the weekly entertainment magazines from September 2016 to February 2017. The magazine talks about top-liners in movies, show business, sports, and other famous personalities; the column of interest is written by A. Vasilyev, a famous fashion historian and art expert.

4 TEXT

Modern linguistic studies state that there are multidirectional processes in the media, i.e., standardization and individualization of perceived media information; print press specialization, involving segmentation of the audience according to interest; and convergence, combining different media that use the same technology and text forms, including CTs (Nodelman, 1988; Messaris, 1997; Voroshilova 2006; Mukhutdinova, 2017; Chigayev, 2010; Udod, 2013). Let us prove these statements via examples of the 'Star Style' column, which is primarily intended for a female audience interested in fashion trends, star style of recognizable people, choice of their own fashion style and advice from an experienced professional. As a rule, this column is standardized in its structure and includes the following components: the author's (A. Vasilyev) photo; the CT general title, reflecting the topic and an explanation of why this particular topic was chosen; the general author's comment followed by microtexts under their own subtitles, with photographs of famous media-persons, to confirm the author's statements (in fact, these are subchapters of the author's comment). The integrity of a CT is set by the communicative-cognitive attitude of the addresser (the text author, "co-authors" represented by the visual artist, photographer, editor, etc.) and the entire theme disclosed by verbal, iconic and other paralinguistic means. For example, the CT entitled "Daineko will marry as soon as she changes her wardrobe" contains an explanation "A crucial period has come in Vika Daineko's life. A year ago she

divorced her husband” and microtexts with photos of this media-person under the following subtitles: «Девочка-припевочка» (Ditty-girl), «Инфантильно» (In an infantile manner), «Лолита, сбежавшая от своего покровителя» (Lolita escaped from her sugar daddy), «На выпускной бал» (To the prom), «Оставим в гардеробе школьницы» (Leave in the schoolgirl's wardrobe), «Делает взрослее» (Makes more mature). The main purpose of the columnist, as the titles of these microtexts show, is to convince numerous female readers to correct their typical mistake, i.e., to make an adult woman change her girl's wardrobe. Transparent and understandable to readers is another CT under the general title “Stars make typical mistakes dressing their children” with the explanation “On the eve of September 1, our expert decided to pay attention to how children of stars are dressed” and microtexts under the following subtitles: «Пиджаки – снять!» (Jackets off!), «Круглые отличницы» (Straight-A schoolgirls), «Из маминого гардероба» (From Mummy's wardrobe), «Детям до 16» (For under-16s), «Для женщины с опытом» (For an experienced woman), «Кто в лес, кто по дрова» (Cat's concert). Quite often, there appear CTs, in which the main task of a fashion expert is to present examples of style he/she thinks noteworthy. Take note, for example, of the following CT title: “I know why men find Ksenia Rapoport so attractive”.

As we see, creolization becomes an important tool of communication and a way of expressing the text semantic organization: CTs attract and keep the addressees' attention, simplify perception and increase the impact on them. It is noteworthy that the images as a visual component in these examples are practically equivalent in their meaning to the text and act as an independent component: they convey different shadows of meaning of the text verbal components, have abstract and concrete contents, figurativeness and high associative potential!

The integrated space of such CTs in the entertainment media also gives a wealth of material for examining the meaning-making and manipulating mechanisms aimed at forming certain opinions, desired preferences and evaluations.

Analyzing, for example, the subtitles of microtexts in the CT single space, we can safely assume that A. Vasilyev purposefully forms the ideal (in his opinion) fashionable image of a famous person in the proposed circumstances, using a language understandable to his addressee. We noted that only in the subtitles of microtexts, acting as a component of the studied CTs, there are imperative and modal constructions, rhetorical questions, elliptical constructions (as features of oral speech); an essential role is played by emotional colloquialisms and word-play built on the speech metaphorization; there are various examples of precedent units (headings-quotes, precedent names, a large number of associations aimed at the reader's mind), and all sorts of evaluations, both explicit (quite obvious for the audience) and implicit ones. Selected photographs, which, as we noted earlier, are practically equivalent to the verbal text, also contribute to the achievement of the goals set in this column. Take note, for example, of the numerous uses of imperative and modal constructions: *часы отдать юристу!* (give the watch to a lawyer!); *долой гульку!* (down with the bun!); *не утяжеляйте образ!* (don't weight the image!); *идем на выпускной!* (come along to the prom); *сохраняйте дистанцию между телом и одеждой!* (keep a distance between your body and clothes!); *вульгарные сердечки надо снять!* (these vulgar hearts must be removed!); *снимите тапочки!* (take off your slippers!); *закройте колени!* (hide you knees!); *растянутый кардиган выкидываем* (thrash that stretched cardigan right away!); *выход не удался* (the debut failed); *лак все портит* (the varnish spoils everything); *цепи снимаем, шляпу оставляем* (take the chains off, leave the hat on); *меняем топ* (change the top); *убрать бахрому* (remove the fringe); *волан не нужен* (the flounce is not needed); *поясная сумка здесь не нужна* (the belt bag is not needed here); *требуется декольте* (a neckline required); *нужна другая прическа* (another hairstyle required); *пора заканчивать с мини!* (time to get done with the mini!); etc.

There are quite a few examples of using rhetorical questions in the texts: *как исправить ситуацию?* (how to fix the situation?); *гуманитарная помощь?* (humanitarian aid?); *что лучше: косы или локоны?* (which is better: braids or curls?); *как подчеркнуть стройность?* (how to emphasize slenderness?); *вы забыли надеть юбку?* (did you forget to put on a skirt?); *мадам, вы без белья?* (Madam, don't you have underwear on?); *куда пропала грудь?* (where has the bosom gone?); *идете на маскарад?* (going to the masquerade?); *вдоль или поперек?* (along or across?); *и как на это реагировать?* (and how to respond to it?)

The author's comments are characterized by elliptical constructions and emotional colloquial words and phrases, for example: *ждем восхищения* (looking forward to admiration); *не хватает шика* (not enough chic); *не тот цвет* (wrong color); *больше жемчуга* (more pearls); *перегруз!* (overload!); *вот это пряжка!* (now, that's a buckle!); *а где чехол?* (but where is the cover?); *когда вещам не по пути* (when clothes are out of the way); *джинсы – и маме, и дочке* (jeans for the mother and the daughter); *коротким*

штанишкам – да! ('yes' to shorties!); косичка ни к чему (the pigtail is of no use); не хватает только золотого жезла (all that's missing is a golden staff); примерам – пятерка (the face painters get the full mark); куколка-балетница (ballet-dolly); девочка-припевочка (ditty-girl); девушка-киллер (killer-girl); артистка кабаре (cabaret dancer); птица счастья (bluebird of happiness); на грани фола (on the edge); Лондон, гуд бай! (London, good-bye!); лишняя деталь (extra detail); выбор впопыхах (choice in a hurry); боевой раскрас (war paint); игры в детство (childish games); тарелка из другого сервиза? (a plate from another set?); деньги тут водятся (there's money here); для знойной дамы (for a sultry beauty); кредит одобрен (credit approved); достала с антресолей (pulled out of the mezzanine).

It should be noted that a common feature of modern media publicistic discourse is the use of subtitles based on a word-play and various associations with precedent names, for example: опасная клетка (dangerous cage); святая грешница (holy sinner); очень плохая девочка (very bad girl); дорогая игрушка (expensive toy); неудачная мимоза (unsuccessful mimosa); вялая брусника (sluggish lingonberry); работа с напильником (working with a rough file); подарок для мужа (a gift for a husband); гостья из будущего (guest from the future); женщина с загадкой (woman with a mystery); берлинский след (Berlin trail); для бакинских мужчин (for Baku men); суебливое пальто (fussy coat); звезда американского кино (American movie star); звезда гарема (harem star); наряд из будуара (attire from boudoir); королева инопланетян (queen of aliens); для пробежек в Монаковке (for jogging in Monakovka); фурия революции (fury of revolution); балахон из «Моссельпрома» (hoodie from "Mosselprom"); типичная невеста с Рублевки (a typical bride from Rublevka); Надежда Константиновна (Nadezhda Konstantinovna); в шляпе Незнайки (in Dunno' hat); Ирина Шейк на каникулах (Irina Shayk on vacation); костюм импресарио (impresario costume); печь Петра 1 (the furnace of Peter 1); наследие римских гетер (legacy of Roman hetaeras); чеховский вариант (Chekhov's version); трофейное платье звезды 40-х (trophy 40s star dress); обогнала Мадонну (overtook Madonna); «Вишневый сад»? (The Cherry Orchard?); для шоу в Турции (for shows in Turkey); типичный гламур 90-х (typical glamor of the 90s); для ночи с Казановой (for a night with Casanova); в стиле Лолиты (in the style of Lolita); еще не Ирина Шейк и не Виктория Боня (not yet Irina Shayk and not Victoria Bonya); Базилио и лиса Алиса (Basilio and the Vixen Alice); Рязань и Севилья (Ryazan and Seville); мечта товарища Саахова (Comrade Saakhov' dream); дама из кафешантана (cafe chantant lady); etc. There are also examples of headings-quotes: Снегурочка нужна? (Snow Maiden wanted?); А вдруг я встречу принца? (What if I meet a prince?); Я вся пылаю (I am all burning); Можно с вами познакомиться? (Could I make your acquaintance?); Красотка, на выход! (Your entry, beauty!).

We can also note examples of various evaluations (positive, negative, hidden or built on comparisons/oppositions or irony) in the CT titles, for example: выигрышно (advantageous), неоднозначно (ambiguous), безвкусица (bad taste), вульгарно (vulgar), полнейший диссонанс (utter dissonance), аляповато (flashy), какофония цветов (cacophony of colors), странный декор (strange decor), только для Якутии (only for Yakutia), настоящая королева (real queen), вызов и провокация (challenge and provocation), для рынка (for the market), для встречи любовника (for meeting her lover), гусарский фрак (hussar tail-coat), секретарь на отдыхе (secretary on vacation), для занавесок (for curtains), как плащ-палатка (like a ground sheet), офис на пляже (office on the beach), только для сцены (only for the stage), деним и перья несовместимы (denim and feathers are incompatible). Such bright and intuitively intelligible subtitles, in the first place, greatly simplify the text perception process for the recipients, giving them the opportunity to choose whether to agree or disagree with the author's viewpoint. The text evaluativity is also transmitted through iconic means that reinforce the disclosing or encouraging orientation of the text verbal part.

There are also great opportunities for CT creators to handle information perception. Most often, such subtitles have a hidden manipulative effect on a gender-oriented audience and impose the author's viewpoint as the only possible and correct one. Such manipulation is built on an emotional rather than logical impact. Modern researchers note that a large proportion of modal information in paralinguistically active texts is carried by non-verbal means: "Known to linguistic science, the so-called traditional means of modality in the language development process, enriching human society with new forms of language and non-linguistic (extralinguistic and paralinguistic) capabilities, significantly expand their borders ..." Nemets, 1999, pp.38]. Extracting the modal component of the CT meaning, i.e., defining its "modal key", is based on information contained in verbal and non-verbal signs and perceived by a linguistic persona. In this case, the background knowledge, worldviews, emotions, desires of the text recipient are of particular importance. A. Vasilyev uses all the above examples as language techniques that enhance the author's manipulations. They are characterized by great expressiveness, figurativeness, semantic versatility and associativity. Step by step, from issue to issue, an image of a modern, successful, fashionable, elegant woman is created.

It should be clarified that the compatibility of modal information between parts of a CT can be different: in some texts, verbal means are the main carriers of evaluative information while visual ones are complementary; in other texts, images set the modality, visually conveying the text expression; however, there are texts where verbal and visual means are independent and peer components. In the considered column, we note that the modal keys of verbal and iconic means most often coincide, as if they were in harmony with each other, or the modal keys of verbal and iconic means differ, in which case the iconic means can soften or, on the contrary, toughen the evaluativity of the verbal component. And only in rare cases is there a situation when the modal keys of verbal and iconic means are contrasted, colliding with each other. The positive evaluation of one component (verbal or iconic) is negated by the negative evaluation of the other component. The resulting apparent dissonance creates ironic connotations, sometimes quite tough with respect to the media person concerned.

5 CONCLUSION

Thus, we can state that a CT in entertainment media appears to be a complex textual formation, in which verbal and iconic elements form one visual, structural, semantic, and functional whole aimed at a complex pragmatic impact on the addressee. A modern CT is standardized in structure, prone to increase visual information, multifunctional, and manipulative. The meaningful interaction between the verbal and visual components of a CT demonstrates a great variety; however, the key meanings of the message are predominantly duplicated in order to exclude the addressee's misinterpretation. The impact on the addressee is most noticeable in the headings of the analyzed CTs, which most often contain imperative or modal constructions, rhetorical questions, elliptical constructions (as features of oral speech), colloquial words and phrases, involving precedent units and numerous language game techniques to create some implications or ironic effects.

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