PERUSAL OF VERBAL TEXT THROUGH THE LENS OF ILLUSTRATION

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Abstract. The article reveals the influence of Pre-existing (precedent) visual phenomena presented in newspaper article illustrations upon the consciousness of readers. The analysis of the research material is based on the theory of manipulation and neuro-semantic programming. The authors emphasize the specificity of precedent phenomena: semantic two-planarity of precedent phenomena, i.e. the availability of two semantic layers (literal and connotative) in their content; high pragmatic charge of precedent phenomena stipulated by the fact that they represent a concentration of cultural landmarks, ethnic and social stereotypes. The authors prove that precedent visual phenomenon appears to be a trigger activating the devices for a journalistic article perception being pre-arranged by the sender. The process of visual precedent phenomenon interpretation takes place in three stages. At the first stage of flipping through the newspaper in search of material for reading precedent visual phenomenon attracts the reader, activates his memory mechanisms, triggers associative forms of thinking and emotional experience of the visible. The next step is to establish semantic links between a precedent image presented in an illustration and strong positions of the verbal text (title, subtitle, lead) where the process of probabilistic forecasting takes place – a reader decides whether to read further the main text of the article or not. The last stage is the stage of acquaintance with the main verbal journalistic text of the newspaper where the interplay of verbal and visual information is promoted and their final merging takes place. Due to the verbal text the connotative meanings translated by the precedent visual text are updated. The whole message is interpreted in the key specified by the sender. Thus, necessary information is embedded into the reader's consciousness and thanks to its figurativeness, associative connections and emotional intension will be fixed in his memory for a long time.

Key words: Pre-existing visual images, implicit messages, multimodal texts, mass-media, neuro-semantic programming

1.Introduction. The change of the scientific paradigm in the XX-XXI centuries led to the conflict "coexistence" of sciences and rapid development of integrative, interdisciplinary research. Variety of paradigms becomes a distinctive feature of linguistics in XX – XXI centuries as evidenced by such universally recognized fields as cultural linguistics [see, for example: Mardanova, etc., 2016; Nurullina, etc., 2017], sociolinguistics [Koçak 2017], linguodidactics [Korneyeva 2016] and relatively new areas –neurolinguistics and clinical linguistics [Gorobets, etc., 2015]. The new principle of relations between disciplines allows the scientist to go beyond the narrowly defined range of scientific analysis objects, to expand the methodological apparatus. For the media language researcher this approach is particularly relevant since the development of new information technologies and associated increase in channels and ways of transferring knowledge about the world, development of integrated systems of multimedia texts, etc., require new accesses to media language studies. For instance, some works [Berger 1989; Cappello 2016] can be deemed as a methodological basis for this kind of research.

2.Materials and methods . The authors focus their attention on the phenomenon of precedence (such as intertext, "text within text", quotations, allusions, intertextuality, reminiscences, primary and secondary texts etc.). The subject of the research appears to be precedent (Pre-existing) visual images and their forms embodied in iconic media texts – precedent (Pre-existing) visual phenomena.

Semiotically heterogeneous (multimodal, polycode) media texts served as the material of research.

Theoretical and methodological background of the study.

In our studies we base ourselves upon the following principles.

1. A message encoded by different signs is much more effective in penetration into human consciousness and subconsciousness than that expressed by a monocode (exclusively verbal or exclusively iconic) text.

In the first place, the specific character of multimodal texts lies in the fact that they expressly attract attention and are able to maintain the reader's interest and concern for a protracted period of time.

In the second place, the addition of the iconic characters to the text brings down the threshold of effort needed for the perception of messages. R. Barthes considers the information based on the image to be more "lazy" since the iconic system requires much less effort from the consumer [Barthes 1989: 308 – 309].

And thirdly, a person is able to control the messages that he receives through one channel –via the word or by means of visual images. But if these channels are combined control weakens and the effectiveness of implanting necessary information in the mind dramatically increases [Kara-Murza 2007: 350, Courtney, S. A. (2018)].

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2. However, one cannot help but take into account the special nature of visual perception.

Vision is a complex farsighted activity: 1) the creation of visible world is regulated by a system of meanings and resembles the construction of statements –change of meaning in one of the elements in the picture observed leads to a variation in its other elements; 2) visible world is based not only on the current perception, but also on the recipient's overall picture of the world where the system of attitudes, expectations, as well as the "visual task" which a person solves during the reception, turns the same visual field into different visible worlds [Rozin 2006: 44 – 45].

The nature of everything visual is accurately and vividly described in the works on neurosemantics programming: "... Visual sensation involves *visual memory* where I recall the image as I saw it before with my own eyes (V^r); *visual design* where I create the image unseen by me ever before (V^c); and *external visual side* from which I look at anything in the real world (V^e)" [Hall and others 2001: 91]. Visual construction is understood as a result of the influence exerted by external visual side and visual memory upon the perceiver's consciousness, i.e. his introspection: having seen the blue sky, I remember staying on the beach and start to feel good [Ibid.]. No wonder, the perception of any precedent image occurs according to the described algorithm.

3. Precedent phenomena including visual ones are, in fact, clots of cultural landmarks, they are imbued with emotional stereotyped ideas, therefore, they are trusted and their pragmatic dedication becomes overmastering. It is also important that using objectified precedent visual images the sender launches the machinery of right-hemispheric type of thinking counting on the emotional intension tendentiousness of perception.

4. The influence of the precedent visual phenomenon upon the structures of recipient's consciousness and subconsciousness is based on the semantic dual-planarity of precedent visual phenomena and availability of two types of messages therein. These types are called by R. Barthes "literal" and "symbolic": "of two iconic messages, the first is, as it were, imprinted on the surface of the second: "literal" message serves as a support for the "symbolic" message" [Barthes 1989: 303]. As noted by Barthes, "the system using another system's symbols as meaning ones, is none other than a connotative system..." [ibid].

3.   Results And Discussion. We proceed from the statement that precedent visual image is an effective means of implicit influence on the readers' consciousness and the process of interpreting visual precedent phenomenon objectified in the iconic component of a newspaper text is meant to be a process of involvement.

The process of precedent phenomenon interpreting can be divided into three stages. In the course of scrolling and visual scanning newspaper [Pérez, Eudes De Armas, Cristian De Armas Iturriago, and Eudes Rafael De Armas.2018; Men 1995, etc.] in search of material for reading, the iconic message is the first to be superficially read. This is the stage to establish associative links with the primary source: a reader recalls the storyline in bare outlines and the main images of the source text and, as a result, semantic and emotional gloriole of the visual image is originated. Consequently, visual design is getting involved and, accordingly, the formation of the reader's emotional-evaluative mood takes place. Without question, the precedent phenomenon performs the function of the trigger - it launches planned mechanisms of perception and initiates necessary conditions being "vast, covering the whole brain comments concerning a number of ideas and available psychological reactions" [Hall and others 2001: 99].

Subsequently, merging of the verbal message contained in the heading (subtitle and lead, if any) and iconic image is materialized. This is the stage of probabilistic forecasting. The reader makes hypotheses of the article content level based on the information received and decides whether to read the article or not.

 The last stage is the step of precedent visual phenomenon interpretation within the context of the main verbal text. This is the stage of launching the process wherein verbal and visual information merge to get a coordinate action. Precedent visual phenomenon in newspaper texts is tight knit with verbal journalistic material to get a complete whole and, as a rule, it acts as a connotative message and triggers the mechanism of visual design in the key intended by the sender. Verbal text controls connotative denotations not allowing them to slip into the zone of purely individual meanings, hence, it acts as a regulator, suppressing the emergence of undevised associative increments being awaken by a visual image. The information contained in a precedent symbol is implicit. It seems to the reader that he or she all alone establishes associative and logical connections with a verbal text and extra-linguistic context. But what actually happens is that the reader is skillfully brought to the prepared conclusion but he appears to be under the illusion of arriving at this upshot independently, and therefore, the information received is perceived by him as reliable.

Let us confirm the above said as exemplified in the analysis of the article by journalist Gordeeva "Hello! I've got registered at your place..." ("Kazanskiye Vedomosti"). The article is illustrated with a picture showing the characters of the Russian folk tale "Teremok" (Small Tower House): a bear, a fox, and a wolf show some documents to a frog, a mouse and a hedgehog that drag themselves off the "teremok" with their small parcels ("uzelok" in Russian –, a kind of a small bag in the form of a furl suspended on a stick). The picture presents the opposition "strong-weak" and tells us about the conflict. Employment of this socially charged mythological opposition facilitates the reader's imagination activity and emotional-evaluative orientation preparing him for the perception of verbal text pre-arranged by the sender. The heading "Hello! I've got registered at your place..." reports the subject of the article - registration of Russian citizens at their place of residence. The lead brings clarity: "to obtain registration at the place of residence or at the place of sojourn right now you should simply send an application by mail or via the Internet through the information system "Public Services Portal of the Russian Federation". As it is reported by the journalist in the main part of the text, the complete registration procedure is very simple but the swindlers began to use it for mercenary purposes to get their own profit – they registered persons absolutely unknown to an apartment owner behind his back.

Apart from the general theme of residential property this verbal text does not reveal any explicit connection with that visualized fragment of the tale which has undergone the transformation. The articulated verbal – evaluative opinion – *"the system allows for the possibility of fraud"* backed up by facts about detected cases of falsifications (factual information), a subtle irony felt in some fragments (prompted, in particular, by such exclamation sentences with the appropriate connotation as: *«...But if you have done it in the opposite way!»; «That's the talk! Good stuff that!!»*, etc.), i.e. combination of persuasion and suggestion reinforces the reader's negative emotional attitude to the situation described by the journalist. But such emotional attitude is formed in the process of the precedent visual text perusal and hereby the reader is prepared to "independent" interpreting information (in the direction intended by the sender) and creating the targeted piece of the social environment image. Possible variants of the readers ' reflection are as follows: 1) " Swindlers can leave law-abiding citizens without a home" (such possible interpretation in iconic text is prompted by the fairy-tale characters dragging themselves off the "teremok" with their small parcels but on the verbal level this information is clearly pronounced: "Judge for yourself: an applicant is asked no documents confirming his right to live in this apartment and the owner of the living space is not at all asked his consent therefor"; 2) "Some officials arriving at ill-considered decisions, someone has to pay and someone cash in thereon" such reciting is hinted by obvious opposition in the iconic text: the bear, the wolf and the fox stay in teremok but the frog, the mouse and the hedgehog stroll pensively off. The verbal text of the journalist's material states: "...Some of the victims claim that their bills for utilities comprise all these unlawfully registered citizens!"

4.Summary **.**So, the fairy – tale "Teremok" characters illustrating the article are called for rousing the reader's curiosity and engaging him in the process of the article interpretation. Transposition of precedent visual images into a new context and variations in the storyline of the original text intensify the intrigue turning the reader into a co-author. Here visual precedent text acts as a trigger initiating associative connections between images of cultural heroes (bear, fox and wolf) and the swindlers of today, between fairy-tale characters (the frog, the mouse and the hedgehog) and law-abiding citizens. As a result, the reader is "immersed" in the situation of the classical mythological opposition "strong and weak", "good and evil". It is important that fairy – tale characters – bear, fox, wolf – are among the "wandering" characters, they represent brute force, cunning and foolish evil in many Russian folk tales. The availability of factual information inspires confidence in the information received. It is important to note that the fairy – tale characters: the bear, the fox, the wolf - belong to "wandering" personages, they impersonate brutal force, cunning and stupid evil in many Russian folk tales. Availability of factual information lends credibility to the information received.

5.Conclusions. Thus, precedent visual image is designated to help the reader in conceiving some implicit messages (in our case, the messages of generalizing nature). The message of the precedent iconic text repeatedly bubbles to the surface in the mind of the recipient where it is compared with the verbal text that controls the process of precedent image decrypting. However, it is the precedent text that makes possible to decipher and feel in full measure the whole spectrum of reality created by the senders.

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