

Creolized texts used as the instrument of digital marketing

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Abstract —By the start of a new millennium the mankind has progressed to a new phase entitled the information era, which in its turn entails the need for introduction of a new term – digital society. This new digital society requires innovative forms of cognition which are based upon information processing, data visualization, digital mapping and creating new products and services with the use of digital form of information communication. Complex multimodal creolized text characterized by meaning compression is a key feature of contemporary society. By means of a case study of over 700 creolized texts located on the children's clothing manufactured in the USA and in the United Kingdom, the authors try to reveal linguistic and cognitive characteristics of marketing discourse of American and British children's clothing companies. The texts under analysis have been selected by means of continuous sampling method from the online shopping sites of the following companies: Gap, Old Navy, the Children's Place, Carter's, Addams kids, George, Marks & Spencer, Mothercare, Next. Creolized texts located on the products of the companies are considered to be the key elements in the realization of value concepts in marketing discourse of the companies under analysis and the main channel of communication between the sender and the recipient. Slogans, images, engravings on the products are viewed as creolized texts in which the verbal and nonverbal components create a single visual, structural, semantic and functional whole that ensures complex pragmatic influence on the recipient. The structure of the analyzed concepts consists of the logical and notional as well as the figurative and associative layers. It is maintained that the predominant cognitive mechanism involved in construing the analyzed concepts is conceptual metaphor. Cognitive marketing becomes a standpoint in the new marketing paradigm. It is based on the concept of shaping the common perception of the world in the customers, which has an impact on the outlook, aims and goals i.e. the picture of the world. Multidimensional text examination is the reflection of the polycode character of humans' interaction. Searching for the ways to attract new customers and to promote brand loyalty, manufacturers have to modify the formats of their products and use different means of creolization.

Keywords: *creolized text, slogan, concept, conceptual metaphor, digital marketing, marketing discourse.*

I. INTRODUCTION

By the start of a new millennium the mankind has progressed to a new phase which has been entitled the

information era. New specific features have begun to persist in the information space, which in its turn entails the need for introduction of a new term – digital society. This new digital society requires innovative forms of cognition which are based upon information processing, data visualization, digital mapping and creating new products and services with the use of digital form of information communication. Mass computerization and globalization, innovations in graphic design and computer technology allow for a more complex integration of different semiotic resources (linguistic, visual, spatial, and so on) and have an impact on the ways of information encoding. The development of new multimedia information and communication technologies has contributed to the expansion of the human capacity for meaningful sign-making activity.

Previously texts used to be designed linearly and required thorough reading. However, modern digital society makes use of complex multimodal, semiotically complex polycode or creolized texts. Complex multimodal texts characterized by meaning compression have become a key feature of contemporary society. What is more, in recent studies language is perceived as a marketing structure turning a linguistic research into a sort of a marketing research.

In fact, there has already appeared a new branch of linguistics – marketing linguistics which focuses on various aspects of marketing discourse. Marketing linguistics makes it possible to analyze perlocutionary effect of marketing messages. In a broad sense, marketing linguistics is associated with a dynamic approach, an anthropocentric paradigm in linguistics, i.e. it takes into account the behavior of not only the sender of the message but also its recipient.

There have been several research papers on creolized texts which examine their structural components and suggest polycode message classifications (see Anisimova 2003; Bulatova 2013). Some researchers examine cognitive and discourse mechanisms of slogans found on clothing (see Ivus 2011; Paju 2018). However, the research into creolized texts on clothing from several countries which reflect their cultural differences is still to be undertaken.

II. CREOLIZED TEXTS AS THE OBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The creolized texts located on children's clothing are the object of this research. If the clothes contain creolized text they may be considered not only as a set of items necessary to protect the body from exposure but as a means of communication which reflects multiple social changes. Therefore when we take research into creolized texts on clothing, we may understand how the modern social world is developed. Both children and adults choose clothes with creolized texts scrupulously as this choice enables them to make a statement and to highlight some personality traits, personal opinions and beliefs.

As creolized texts influence the way a person perceives the world around, we see it as important to examine creolized texts further, especially in terms of linguistic, cognitive, communicative and pragmatic aspects.

The purpose of this paper are twofold:

a) to provide a comparative study of creolized texts on the clothes of British and American manufacturers, which will outline the main "routine" concepts, representing and shaping the virtues typical of these cultures;

b) to prove that polycode means of text organization (combination of verbal and visual form) provides a way to improve the effectiveness of commercial advertising through implementation of various channels of perception.

III. COMPLEX METHODOLOGY APPLIED FOR ANALYSIS OF CREOLISED TEXTS

Over 700 creolized texts found on the children's clothing manufactured in the USA (Gap, Old Navy, the Children's Place, Carter's) and in the United Kingdom (Addams kids, George, Marks & Spencer, Mothercare, Next) have become the object of the research. The texts have been selected by means of continuous sampling method from the online shopping sites of the companies mentioned above.

The metaphoric term "creolized texts" was coined by psycholinguists U. Sorokin and E. Tarasov, who claimed that such texts consisted of two non-homogeneous entities, i.e. verbal (referring to the speech) and nonverbal (referring to other codes). According to the latest findings in creolized texts research, such texts are characterized by the presence of an iconic element which is integrated into the verbal message in reference to the aspects of semantics, compositional semantics and linguistic semantics [1]. According to E. Anisimova, creolized texts are characterized by iconic means dominant in the field of paralinguistic means [2].

The term creolized texts is not the only one used by the researchers who try to examine the notion of texts of such type. There have been suggested the following terms – semiotically complex texts, untraditional texts, video verbal texts, composed texts, polycoded texts, lingual visual phenomenon, syncretic message, isoverbal complex, isoverb, iconotext (see Anisimova, Berezin, Bernatzkaya, Bolshiyanova, Valgina, Golovina, Eyger, Zenkova, Kamenskaya, Klyukanova, Lazareva, Meskhishvili, Mikheyev, Poymanova, Sonin, Sorokin, Tarasov, Yakobson). This chain of terms outlines the opportunity for verbal and nonverbal text components interaction.

The authors of this paper determine creolized texts as a lingual visual complex verbal and nonverbal components of which are combined to create a single structural functional semantic entity providing for its complex pragmatic impact on the recipient.

In creolized texts located on children's clothing the verbal component is the verbal text or slogan and the nonverbal component is a picture. According to the aim of the recipient, the former or the latter will prevail. Verbal components may be divided into main and auxiliary ones; the same applies to nonverbal components which can also be main and auxiliary. The main component includes the most significant information which is coherent and independent. Auxiliary verbal component is aimed at delivering additional information which is less important and is printed either in brackets or in fine print. Auxiliary nonverbal component serves as illustration to the information which is not crucial for the recipient and as a result has a function of the backdrop information (pictures of small elements in the background).

Homogeneous verbal texts or texts with zero creolization are one of the types of creolized texts. Creolized texts of such type are not too common on children's clothing owing to the fact that they lack nonverbal component i.e. the picture, which is essential for the child recipient. Slogan is the main type of such texts. Researchers refer to the term slogan when they mean a brief independent advertising message. It is usually a short impressive phrase which can be easily memorized. A slogan located on the clothes is a creolized message whose aim is to actualize "routine" concepts representing and forming values and anti-values of a man in the modern world. Slogans are used to introduce oneself and to present the portrayed self [3]. Nonverbal elements of slogans located on clothing serve a pragmatic function used for expressive highlighting, emotional evaluation and aesthetics [4], [5].

The authors of this paper have undertaken research into discourse which is actualized in creolized texts and used methodology of contrasting analysis of American and British pictures of the world. The methodology comprises several stages.

The first stage outlines a set of main dominant concepts. Frequent lexical units are considered to be the key text codes therefore they represent leading concepts. The recipient accentuates key textual concepts by increasing the frequency of concept repetition and placing them into the strongest text position, which is mainly the image in terms of creolized texts. This could also be made by means of graphics.

While processing the factual material the authors of this paper considered conceptual structures linguistic actualization to be connected with the choice of concepts counterparts which were communicatively relevant in a particular situation. According to this hypothesis, only a part of the potential concept structure may be verbalized in any text. Positive or negative connotation may be expressed either explicitly or implicitly.

The second stage of the research is aimed at distinguishing image associated layer of concepts. The factual material analysis proved that metaphorical model or conceptual metaphor dominates in creolized texts located on children's clothing.

It is widely known that our thinking, everyday experience and conduct are mainly attributable to metaphors [6], [7]. Conceptual metaphors are formed in the person's mind owing to the ability to think metaphorically, to find analogies in heterogeneous entities and to reconsider them in terms of other conceptual nature. Conceptual metaphors provide a structure for the way a human perceives the world, thinks and acts [8], [9], [10]. This way a person comprehends abstract and alien domain by means of specific and intuitive domain. We define conceptual metaphor as mapping of information from source

domain, which contains information on the defining subject or object, to the target domain, which contains information on the defined object or phenomenon. Source domain elements provide for the structure of less comprehensible target domain, which constitutes the very gist of metaphor potential [8], [10], [11].

Conceptual metaphor is particularly outstanding because it is based on the concepts which have been formed in the person's mind and is not based on the exact meaning of the words or existing categories. These concepts include people's vision of their personal traits and of the world around. As any other metaphor the conceptual metaphor has a stage of image. However, unlike a traditional metaphor it is actually eager to get rid of its imagery. This fact makes it possible to conclude that conceptual metaphor theory is aimed at detecting deep concept transfers, which underlie everyday use of language and are no longer perceived figuratively.

In order to reconstruct conceptual metaphor one should undertake the following steps.

1. Identify the target domain concept which contains information on the defined object.
2. Identify the source domain concept which is used as a defining object.
3. Trace the connections in meaning between the target and the source domains.

The key concepts of creolized texts under analysis are the target domain concepts. Topical dominant lays the ground for creolized texts identification. Source domain concepts are identified by means of semantics associative analysis of the keywords which embody the topical dominant and are connected to through a variety of semantic relations including cause-and-effect, attribute, partition relations and others. Lexical meaning of such words are related to the notions and to the system of background knowledge of the phenomena under analysis by means of semantic and association connections. As a result of this thinking process one can outline the items of source domain concepts.

In practice we should emphasize the importance of using the method suggested by L. Cherneyko. It states that one can outline conceptual metaphor by understanding literally the meaning of the verb which has been used with an abstract noun in the figurative meaning. Considering the fact that not only verbs may be used metaphorically, we may conclude that conceptual metaphors may be reconstructed by literal understanding of not only predicate – attribute, but all phrases [12].

Metaphorical conceptualization presupposes that one or several conceptual metaphors may represent the same "cognitive space" [10], [13]. As a result, multiple facets of the cognition object are explicated, which enables the researcher to outline its essential traits and reconstruct its comprehensive image.

IV. EXAMPLES OF METHODOLOGY APPLICATION

The authors examine marketing branch which uses metaphor modeling based on other spheres of social life. Metaphors are a powerful tool of shaping consumer behavior in advertising [14]. Within an e-commerce setting, the persuasive effect of the visual metaphor is sufficiently enhanced with the aim of motivating an on-line buyer towards a successful purchase. These findings can be confirmed empirically. The authors of this paper have conducted a qualitative and quantitative analysis of children's clothing

range by the manufacturers stated above and discovered that items of clothes with creolized texts make up to 70 per cent of items of the same range. Considering the fact that supply is generated by demand, it is creolization that transforms to a new digital marketing tool and facilitates the process of attracting customers and promoting brand loyalty.

The main models of analog perception of concepts which are realized in creolized texts located on children's clothing enables us to illustrate lingual cultural and social peculiarities of American and British pictures of the world, to reconstruct prototypical images of a child and a family, which the system of upbringing in these countries is oriented on. It is essential for the children's clothing manufacturers to take into account the conceptual picture of the world and the system of values which the customer has. This will undoubtedly increase the pragmatic effect of the text and increase the sales.

As a result of linguistic conceptual analysis of creolized texts located on the children's clothing by American companies we have discovered a number of the most frequently actualized concepts of FAMILY, GAME, SPORT, PATRIOTISM, PEACE.

The components of the FAMILY concept which are most frequently actualized are MOTHER, SISTER, BROTHER, AUNT and FATHER. They are most frequently verbalized by such lexical units as *mom*, *mommy*, *mummy*, *sister*, *brother*, *bro*, *aunt*, *auntie*, *dad* and *daddy*, with MOTHER being the leading one. Nominative units *mother*, *father* have not been found in any slogans. The main scheme of concept actualization in creolized texts located on children's clothing by American companies is the conceptual metaphor FAMILY IS SOMETHING MODERN. The following lexemes prevail – "rock" and "rules", e.g. *my mommy rocks*, *sisters rock*, *my auntie rocks*, *my mom rules!* – *yeah! she rocks!*. The abilities of family members are exaggerated e.g. *whatever is my sister did it*, *big sister to a little mister*. They idea of being modern and trendy is reflected in the usage of colloquial contracted forms which are typical of American creolized texts e. g. *I don't wanna taco 'bout it*.

The concept GAME is actualized mostly via such components as MUSIC and DANCE e. g. *dance your heart out*.

Americans inclination to rock music is emphasized by the prevalence of nominative unit *rock* in creolized texts on children's clothing. Kids dream of becoming rock stars and such musical instruments as guitar, piano keys, bass guitar are frequently depicted on children's clothing.

The concept SPORT is actualized via the conceptual metaphor SPORT IS AMUSEMENT. Going in for sport is seen as an opportunity to spend time with the family, e.g. *daddy's team*, *home run*.

Creolized texts about patriotism abound American children's clothes, which is reflected by the image of American flag and its elements i. e. stars, stripes and colors. Conceptual metaphor PATRIOTISM IS UNITY is the basis of its actualization.

Although people speak English in Britain and in the USA their pictures of the world are completely different. The most frequently actualized concepts in the examined creolized texts are SPORT, GAME, FAMILY, which proves that sports and entertainment mean a lot in this country.

Nominative units which constitute the SPORT concept are the numbers of famous players and logos and titles of the famous teams. Kids are encouraged to look up to the

sportsmen. Conceptual metaphor SPORT IS FAME is the basic scheme of this concept actualization.

A large number of creolized texts with the GAME concept may be interpreted as the desire of the British to reveal their outgoing nature which overrides the misconception about their being arrogant and stiff.

The FAMILY concept is characterized by positive modality and is often verbalized by means of words with positive connotations e.g. *like*, *love* as well as nonverbal elements with similar meaning – hearts.

Unlike American manufacturers, the British use creolized texts with two lexemes mummy and daddy simultaneously and put the premium on GRANDFATHER and GRANDMOTHER concepts. The FAMILY concept is actualized in British clothing via the conceptual metaphor FAMILY IS LOVE. Love proves to be the integral element in life of the British. Children wish to follow in their parents' footsteps, especially the father's, e.g. *super cool like dad*.

British manufacturers make use of phraseological units, idiomatic expressions, puns and incorporate nonverbal elements into them e. g. *I'm the apple of my daddy's eye, having a whale of time with mummy*. The words *apple* and *whale* are played with by means of nonverbal elements which emphasizes the sense of humor.

From an early age girls are taught to be independent and to stand their ground, which is reflected in such slogans as *supergirl*, *batgirl*. It is worth noting that in Britain there are few creolized texts which actualize the FOOD concept.

V. CONCLUSION

Most verbal means serve mainly for linguistic compression and clearly exemplify language means economy. The latter fact is the characteristic of communication of this type and serves as emotional intensifier. Therefore, the message is oriented to mass perception and facilitates communicative integrity. Consumerism has transformed to systematic code manipulation. Consumption is to fill the identity vacuum in the world where identities are depersonalized by routines and uniform clothing items. Making purchases means that one searches for an answer to the existential question "*Who am I ?*"

Marketing discourse is to be examined as a complex communicative process which is aimed not only at product promotion, but also at communicative interaction of manufacturer, buyer and their surroundings. Marketing discourse maintains a particular type of marketing thinking which comprises genre resources within an extensive macrosystem.

To conclude, cognitive marketing becomes a standpoint in the new marketing paradigm. It is based on the concept of shaping the common perception of the world in the customers, which has an impact on the outlook, aims and goals i.e. the

picture of the world. Multidimensional text examination is the reflection of the polycode character of humans' interaction. Searching for the ways to attract new customers and to promote brand loyalty, manufacturers have to modify the formats of their products and use different means of crealization.

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