

MSC 2020**International Scientific and Practical Conference «MAN. SOCIETY.
COMMUNICATION»****FIRST POLITICAL CARICATURES: THE IMAGE OF THE
HOMELAND DEFENDER**

Nadezhda Volskaya (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russian Federation, navolskaya@yandex.ru

Abstract

Political caricature is an art genre, a means of fighting the enemy, a “mirror of life”, an indicator of public opinion, and an effective way of creating it. The influence of this genre on the minds of people during the Patriotic War of 1812 is obvious. Political caricature is a component of the public consciousness of the era and a source of information about the Patriotic War of 1812. The alphabet “A Gift for Children in Memory of the Events of 1812” provided readers with the opportunity to learn the patriotic ideals and spiritual values of Russian society, to instill patriotism and humanism in the younger generation. The creolized texts of the “Terebenev ABC” form an idea among the recipients about the formation of the national Russian mentality features, about the national cultural realities that are part of the cognitive base of the Russian linguistic and cultural community and have an impersonal invariant character. Visual information has a causal relationship with reality, so caricatures play a major role in visualizing images of defenders. The caricature models representations and offers the recipient a ready-made image that supports national identity, showing the superiority of Russians and, therefore, contributing to their victory over the enemy. The specificity of the national mentality, and consequently the decoding of caricatures, lies in the various values inherent in a particular culture, archetypes, and stereotypes. Defenders of the Homeland are represented by three groups of characters: 1) military; 2) female images; 3) adolescents and children.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Creolized text, defender of the Homeland, national mentality, political caricature, sociocultural phenomenon, Terebenev ABC



1. Introduction

The phenomenon of creolized text from the late 1990s to the present has attracted the close attention of researchers developing the problem field of semiotically heterogeneous texts, including the problem of the terminological designation of such texts (Chernyavskaya, 2018; Voroshilova, 2006). The works by Anisimova (1992), Bernatskaya (2000), Valgina (2004), Voroshilova (2006), Gus'kova, (2016), Kustova and Lyadova (2016), Chernyavskaya (2018), etc. are devoted to the study of modern creolized texts from both foreign and Russian media.

2. Problem Statement

A unique work, created in 1815 and gone down in history under the name “A Gift for Children in Memory of 1812”, better known as “Terebenev ABC”, still has not come into the attention of linguists. The “ABC” is of undoubted scientific interest from the point of view of how the national stereotype “friends” – “strangers” was formed during the Patriotic War of 1812 and what national cultural realities were reflected in this work.

3. Research Questions

The research questions are as follows

3.1. What is the composition of the images of the Homeland defenders in the creolized texts of “Terebenev ABC” caricatures?

3.2. How is the content of images of Homeland defenders formed?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to analyze the composition and content of images of defenders of the Homeland in creolized texts of the first political caricatures, as well as graphic forms of expression of their individual reactions to military events presented by the authors.

5. Research Methods

The main research method for this subject is the method of linguosemiotic analysis, which is conditioned by both the specifics of this type of creolized text and the main features of the caricature genre.

6. Findings

In order to popularize the idea of a people's war in 1812, Russian artists used the form of “flying sheets”, which were the first political caricatures in Russia. Not all political caricatures were signed, but the best examples were created by artists A. G. Venetsianov, I. A. Ivanov and I. I. Terebenev. Presumably, I. I. Terebenev was the author of poems and letter signatures. Each sheet contained a couplet, beginning or ending with a specific letter of the Russian alphabet. After the Patriotic War of 1812, it was decided to

combine two plots by I.A. Ivanov and A.G. Venetsianov and 32 plots by I. I. Terebenev in the split alphabet “A Gift for Children in Memory of the Events of 1812”, which was printed in 1815 and received the name “Terebenev ABC” – by the name of the most active of its authors.

Political caricature is both an art genre, a means of fighting the enemy, a “mirror of life”, an indicator of public opinion, and an effective way of creating it. If you look at the caricature from the point of view of mass production of satirical graphics, its accessibility to all social strata, you will see the influence of this genre on people’s mindset during the Patriotic War of 1812. Being close to folklore, the caricature had a huge impact on ordinary people, because it affected not only the sphere of rational thinking, but also affected emotions. A graphic image, especially with manifold repetition, is easy to remember and stored for a long time in human memory (Barbazanov, 2011). It makes political caricature an important sociocultural phenomenon; in addition, it is also a component of the public consciousness of the era and a source of information about the Patriotic War of 1812.

A caricature is a creolized text, i.e. “a special linguistic-visual phenomenon, a text in which the verbal and pictorial components form one visual, structural, semantic and functional whole, providing its complex pragmatic impact on the addressee” (Anisimova, 1992, p. 73). Thus, caricature is, on the one hand, a graphic representation of society phenomena and on the other, a verbal text. Being interconnected with each other, these components represent a semantic unity. The question of the interaction of verbal and visual parts is a key one in the study of creolized text (Kolshansky, 2017). In the study of political caricature, researchers often note that it is graphics that perform the main function (Volskaya et al., 2017). The text of the phylacter, the caption under the caricature or on objects depicted in the visual space of the caricature, is minimized and is used only to actualize one or another component of the meaning: in this case it is directly associated with a specific letter of the Russian alphabet. The basic principle of the connection of the compositional elements of the caricature is substantial complementarity. In accordance with this, the meaning of this type of text is composed of the meaning of all its elements in total. The dialogue of the text, manifested in the chain “author – text – reader”, creates a persuasive effect on the reader. The caricature is a conductor from the addresser, i.e. creating consciousness, to the addressee – perceiving consciousness. The persuasive goals of political caricature are realized through the assessment by the addresser of reality events in order to form the the addressee’s relation to these events preassigned by the addresser. Evaluation of the addresser is expressed implicitly in the direct content of this type of creolized text. In order to adequately decode the content of such a text, the addressee needs to have background knowledge. The assessment is implemented in political caricatures through tactics of changing the conceptual ideas of the addressee about the existing picture of the world. The tools to implement the evaluation of the addresser at the linguistic and visual levels are metaphor, metonymy, simile, precedent situation (Abakumova et al., 2018). The verbal level proper includes language game, epithet, rhetorical question, vernacular, slang, dialecticism, precedent names and texts. The authors of the first Russian caricatures intended to make the created social solidarity really existing and, therefore, national. Visual information has a causal relationship with reality, so caricatures play a major role in visualizing the images of “enemies”, “strangers” and “friends”, defenders. The caricature models the image of both the enemy and the defender of the Homeland and offers the recipient a ready-made image that supports national identity, showing the superiority of Russians and, therefore, contributing to their victory over the enemy. The Patriotic War of 1812 influenced

the mentality of the Russian people. The specificity of the national mentality, and therefore the decoding of caricatures, lies in the various values inherent in a particular culture, archetypes, stereotypes. The main elements of the mentality as a system are language, myth-making, national memory, morality, history and attitude to it, religion, national culture, the system of mental symbols, the prevailing attitude towards life, law, family, work, etc. In the creolized texts of the “Terebenev ABC”, there are two main persons: “our own” (defender) and “alien” (invader). All caricatures are built on the antithesis of “invaders” - “defenders”. The French, the “invaders” are endowed with such qualities as cowardice, arrogance, narrow-sightedness, weakness. Russians, on the contrary, possess such qualities as power, courage, strength, sharpness, justice, kindness, mercy, humor. Images of the defenders of the Homeland are present in 18 caricatures of letters: А, Ж, Е, И-І, К, М, О, П, Ф, Ш, Щ, Ъ, Ы, Ь, Ъ, Э, Ъ, V.

Defenders of the Homeland are represented by three groups of characters: 1) military (soldiers, Cossacks and officers – letters А, М, Ш, Ъ, Ы, Ь, Э, Ъ, V); 2) female images of peasant women (Vasilisa Vlashevna Kozhina, young women, a very old woman – letters Е, И-І,Ф); 3) adolescents and children (shepherds) – letters Е, И-І, V).

The images of the characters in the cartoons are a representation of the antithesis “invaders” - “defenders” and at the same time they serve as a code for revealing their inner content. The artists created the appearance of the invaders based on ethnic stereotypes (large, “Gallic” noses, the thin and stoop French, “small” height and thickness of Napoleon) (Bogoyavlenskaya et al., 2016). The Russians, “our own”, are depicted incredibly large, with a famously twisted mustache, in dynamics; their poses, gestures, body movements speak of fearlessness, fair wrath, the intention to defend the Homeland at all costs. The violation of the proportions in the image of the characters’ bodies is connected with the idea of rooting in the recipients’ minds the idea of misery and worthlessness of the invader, expressing contempt for the defeated enemy and at the same time glorifying the defenders of the Homeland, and capturing their deeds on paper. A similar example of worship is a caricature of the letter К (by I. I. Terebenev). It depicts a peasant who is going to chop off his left hand. The caption under the picture: “As the black tsar cannot reign in Russia, so I can’t carry his name on my hand” (Kovshova, 2015). According to the existing legend, a peasant, distinguished by a strong physique, was captured by the French during the war of 1812; it was decided to take him on the service in the French army. As a sign that from now on he belonged to Napoleon Bonaparte, they put a stamp with the letter “N” on his hand. The peasant, not wanting to serve the enemies, chopped off his hand with an ax. Such courage aroused respect among the enemy, and the prisoner was released. I. I. Terebenev compares the act of this Russian peasant with the bravery act of the ancient Roman Gaius Mucius Scaevola, who in 508 BC sacrificed his hand in the name of saving the Homeland (Kremneva, 2019).

Another example of the glorification of not only courage, but also the mercy of the Russian defender is a drawing for the letter О. It depicts Russian soldiers feeding the French prisoners. Signature under the caricature is “Only a Ross honors Christian blood in his enemies. How terrible is his revenge, so sincere his love is”.

A symbol of fearlessness, righteous anger and just retribution are female images depicted in caricatures of the letters Е, И-І, Ф. Thus, the picture for the letter Ф shows a young peasant woman about to set fire to a hut with the French prisoners in it. Signature to the caricature is “I caught the French, like

mice, in a trap. There should not be any of their wind in Russia, or I will put all to fire”. The drawings to the letters E and И-И (author A.G. Venetsianov) depict Vasilisa Vlashevna Kozhina. In the drawing the artist conveyed her facial expression, decisively shifted eyebrows, indicating righteous anger, a raised left hand - this is the pose of a brave person who defends her position and is ready to punish the enemy (Babina & Proskurnich, 2019). It is known that she, being the widow of the village headman in Gorshkov of Sychevsky district, Smolensk province, avenged the death of her husband tortured by the French and, being a strong-willed and courageous woman, gathered and led a partisan detachment. She participated several times in the convoy of French prisoners to the town of Sychevka and once scythed a slanting prisoner who did not want to obey the woman. In the issue XI of 1812 magazine Syn Otechestva [Son of the Fatherland], under the heading “Mixture” an article “The Headwoman Vasilisa” was published. After the war, Alexander I awarded her with a silver medal and a cash prize. Under the caricature of the letter “И-И” is the signature “Guys! There are so many naparts here. Hey, Vlashevna! Hold them tight!”

7. Conclusion

“Terebenev ABC” offers readers a ready-made image of the defender of the Homeland, supporting national identity, showing the superiority of the Russians and thereby contributing to their victory over the enemy. The slit alphabet “A Gift for Children in Memory of the Events of 1812” provided readers with the opportunity to learn the patriotic ideals and spiritual values of Russian society, to instill patriotism and humanism in the younger generation. The creolized texts of the “Terebenev ABC” form an idea among the recipients about the formation of the features of the national Russian mentality, about the national cultural realities that are part of the cognitive base of the Russian linguistic and cultural community and have an over-personal invariant character.

References

- Abakumova, O., Volskaya, N., Zheltukhina, M., Nikolava, A., Slyshkin, G., & Tameryan, T. (2018). Metaphor in Political Media Discourse: Mental Political Leader Portrait. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, 8(4), 377-384.
- Anisimova, Ye. Ye. (1992). Paralingvistika i tekst (k probleme kreolizovannykh i gibridnykh tekstov) [Paralinguistics and text (on the problem of creolized and hybrid texts)]. *Topics in the study of language*, 1, 71-78.
- Babina, L. V., & Proskurnich, O. D. (2019). Kontseptualizatsiya i interpretatsiya mimicheskikh dvizheniy v angliyskom yazyke [Conceptualization and interpretation of facial movements in the English language]. *Issues of cognitive linguistics*, 1, 12-20.
- Barbazanov, Ye. O. (2011). Russkaya patrioticheskaya pechatnaya grafika pervoy chetverti XIX veka [Russian patriotic printed graphics of the first quarter of the XIX century]. *Proceedings of Irkutsk state technical university*, 10(57), 281-285.
- Bernatskaya, A. A. (2000). K probleme “kreolizatsii” teksta: istoriya i sovremennoye sostoyaniye [On the problem of “creolization” of the text: history and current state]. *Rechevoye obshcheniye: Spetsializirovanny vestnik* [Verbal Communication: Specialized Gazette], 3(11), 104-110.
- Bogoyavlenskaya, Yu. V., Nakhimova, Ye. A., & Chudinov, A. P. (2016). Pretsedentnyye vyskazyvaniya v natsional'noy istoricheskoy pamyati: korpusno-oriyentirovannoye issledovaniye [Precedent Statements in National Historical Memory: A Case-Oriented Study]. *Issues of cognitive linguistics*, 2, 39-48.

- Chernyavskaya, V. Ye. (2018). Diskursivnyy analiz i korpusnyye metody: neobkhodimoye dokazatel'noye zveno? Ob''yasnite'nyye vozmozhnosti kachestvennogo i kolichestvennogo podkhodov [Discursive analysis and corpuscular methods: a necessary evidence link? Explanatory possibilities of qualitative and quantitative approaches]. *Issues of cognitive linguistics*, 2, 31-37.
- Gus'kova, S. V. (2016). Kreolizovanny tekst v rossiyskikh mass-media (na primere obshchestvenno-politicheskikh izdaniy Tsentral'nogo federal'nogo okruga Rossii) [Creolized text in Russian mass media (the case of socio-political publications in the Central Federal District of Russia)]. *Issues of cognitive linguistics*, 1, 109-116.
- Kolshansky, G. V. (2017). *Paralingvistika* [Paralinguistics]. LENAND.
- Kovshova, M. L. (2015). *Lingvokul'turologicheskiy metod vo frazeologii* [Linguoculturological method in phraseology]. LENAND.
- Kremneva, A. V. (2019). Pretsedentnoye imya kak sinkretnyy semioticheskiy znak i yego kul'turnaya obuslovlennost' [The precedent name as a syncretic semiotic sign and its cultural conditioning]. *Issues of cognitive linguistics*, 4, 46-53.
- Kustova, O. Yu., & Lyadova, N. A. (2016). Correlation types in the polycode text: translation aspect. *International scientific journal "The Way of Science"*, 1(11-33), 49-52.
- Valgina, N. S. (2004). *Teoriya teksta* [Text Theory]. Logos.
- Volskaya, N., Borbotko, L., Zheltukhina, M., Kupriyanova, M., & Ilina, A. (2017). Effective suggestive psychotechniques in the political media discourse. *XLinguae*, 2, 84-95.
- Voroshilova, M. B. (2006). Kreolizovanny tekst: aspekty izucheniya [Creolized text: aspects of research]. *Political Linguistics*, 20, 180-189.