**EpSBS** 



ISSN: 2357-1330

http://dx.doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2017.08.40

# EEIA-2017 2017 International conference "Education Environment for the Information Age"

# FORMING SKILLS TO MAKE CREATIVE SOLUTIONS IN TEACHING MEDIUM TECHNOLOGIES

Oksana S. Issers (a)\*, Elena G. Malysheva (b)
\*Corresponding author

- (a) Dr.Sc. (Philology), Omsk State University n. a. F. M. Dostoevskiy, 55A Prospekt Mira, 644077 Omsk, Russia, isserso@mail.ru\*
- (b) Dr.Sc. (Philology), Omsk State University n. a. F. M. Dostoevskiy, 55A Prospekt Mira, 644077 Omsk, Russia

#### Abstract

The article studies the formation of professional creativity skills in students of such departments as "Advertising and PR" and "Journalism". Based on the material of specific naming and journalistic tasks, it shows examples of non-standard solutions in this area. The research offers methods that allow students to set their own creative goals and achieve them without a teacher. The proposed methods turn the creative naming and non-standard journalistic texts into a technique, which can be effectively taught in the higher school. The article demonstrates framing as a basic technique of name generating to determine the consumer's knowledge about a product or a service. A unique algorithm for developing competitive names was created with the help of the frame analysis and gathered material. The analysis of the media texts written in "hybrid" genres allows future journalists to identify both normative and non-standard recourses, and describe the results of one's creativity distinguishing between its strengths and weaknesses. Thus, it becomes the first step in the development of creative thinking and a personal journalistic style in students. Therefore, a combination of a solid theoretical base in different humanitarian areas and students' practical creative solutions becomes one of the ways of realisation of a complicated task of the development of creative thinking in future journalists and advertising specialists. The analysis of two teaching methods considers the formation of creative professional skills to be a total of analytical and creative tasks, which can be consistently solved in a cooperative activity of students and a teacher.

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Keywords: Creativity, teaching, journalism, naming, hybrid genres.



#### 1. Introduction

Great changings in Russian educational system and their new perspectives within the area of global education provide the social necessity of creative specialists able to quickly find non-standard solutions in difficult situations (Ostroumov, Ostroumova, 2013). Thus, the formation of creative skills of future specialists becomes more and more important for higher education nowadays. The media sphere is not an exception. On the contrary, new information technologies, the popularity of journalistic and advertising practice among both professionals and amateurs provide a serious need for the development of creative thinking in students, which is also competitively significant in the labour market.

Is there a possibility to form such a creative nature in future specialists and what conditions are necessary to develop professional competences of a graduate student? Objectively speaking, modern media and advertising need creatively independent professionals; therefore, teaching creative solutions becomes a vital didactic problem.

Despite the fact that theoretical and practical research of creativity development has always been one of the challenging issues of Russian education, modern higher school, as well as education in general, is mostly oriented to the traditional type of teaching which includes giving knowledge and ready-made solutions for students' reproduction. Thus, traditional teaching does not form creativity in students and, therefore, does not provide a precise level of their professionalism (Henderson, 2008).

The problem of creativity and conditions of its formation, including the ones in the educational environment, is widely discussed in both domestic and foreign literature (Treffinger, Scott, Stead-Dorval, 2006; Drapeau, 2014; Henderson, 2008; Ostroumov, Ostroumova, 2013; Rowe, 2007). Moreover, the concepts "creativity" and "creation" are often considered the same. In its broad sense, creativity is actually identified with creation, but differs from it when the second traditionally deals with literature and art. The term "creative competence" which is very close to creativity becomes more and more popular nowadays, as its meaning is also important for training highly qualified media specialists.

### 2. Research Questions

In most cases, creativity/creation means the ability of a person to generate new ideas, find non-standard solutions, work out problems efficiently and form a continuous self-development (Treffinger, Scott, Stead-Dorval, 2006). Many teachers in higher education note that potential creativity may realise itself and turn into a skill of successful solving non-standard tasks in the professional environment only when the special teaching methods are used (Ostroumov, Ostroumova, 2013; Rowe, 2007). To reach this goal one needs to find out new educational technologies and appropriate methods for development of creativity in students whose professional competences include creative solutions. The present article dwells upon this issue with the reference to two directions of training bachelors – journalists and experts in the field of advertising and public relations.

The problem of teaching creative thinking is an "eternal" issue not only in artwork but also in applied areas – journalism, advertising, PR, marketing (Elistratov, Pimenov, 2014; Höij, 2004). The question of teaching is also vital for educational programs in higher school.

There are some possible ways of teaching creative thinking, which include criticism of other's art, telling stories about successful cases, author's techniques of invention creative products etc. However, one must admit that effective methods of teaching creative thinking are supposed to be connected with ready-made models, strategies and techniques allowing students to independently set tasks and solve them without teacher's help.

Unfortunately, despite long lasting searching in this direction, the psychology of creativity and its methods (self-reports, the method of simplified model experiments, questionnaires, tests) have not offered the experts stable-working schemes. In modern methods of creative skills formation, an individual should always intentionally look for one or two effective unique solutions.

To understand the main principles of teaching creative thinking one also should not forget that successful writing of creative advertising and journalistic texts is closely connected to linguistic theory and practice which offer effective creative solutions in media based on modern discourse studies (Golomidova, 2012; Klink, 2001; Remchukova, Makhiyanova, 2015; Skripnikova, 2014). The following examples of commercial nominations and media texts of hybrid genres demonstrate this.

## 3. Purpose of the Study

Modern scientific marketing and linguistic paradigms treat naming first as a sphere of commercial nomination. Naming focuses on the invention of commercially successful proper names (Balade, Ojars, 2014; Bugheşiu, 2012; De Stefan, 2014; Kopperoud, Nel'son, 1998; *Name and Naming: Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives*, 2012; *Names in the Economy: Cultural Prospects*, 2013; Serwe et al., 2013; Sjöblom, 2013; Spitzner, 2016). Moreover, the possibility of object's identification through its name becomes one of the key factors of a successful naming strategy as it provides the shortest way to convey the idea of the brand to the consumer (Literary Onomastics. Other Names. Commercial Names, 2016; Sokolova, 2012). However, theoretical linguistic studies on modern naming in Russia appeared only in the last 10-15 years (Elistratov, Pimenov, 2014; Ivanova, 2013; Remchukova, Makhiyanova, 2015). Training for effective naming is mainly aimed at advertising and marketing specialists, but not at the students of the higher school.

Thus, there arises a problem of an optimal naming strategy, which allows the customer to identify quickly a product or a service. On the one hand, the task is difficult because of its "quick identification", on the other – it is important to find an original name, different from the competitor's, which creates a unique image of an object in consumer's mind. The balance between the brand awareness and its uniqueness can be described from the linguistic point of view. This may allow discovering the names with low identifying ability formed due to insufficient attention to the specifics of the product (service) frame in the consciousness of the target group.

# 4. Research Methods

The process of framing can be used as a basic instrument for name generating. It allows identifying the consumer's knowledge about a product or a service. In cognitive sciences, a frame comprises a cognitive structure based on the perception of knowledge about typical situations and

expectations, characteristics of the objects and relationships between them (Goffman, 1974; Vigso, 2010). Frames structure our attention to different segments of the social world (Skripnikova, 2014; Yanow, Van Hulst, 2011). On the one hand, frame analysis helps to discover not only regularly filled slots but also the ones that are rarely used in naming practice despite their significant identifying ability. On the other hand, it allows finding out the names, which are not associated with the knowledge about the service and, as a rule, need extra advertising in their positioning and promotion.

To demonstrate the role of frame analysis in naming a total of 95 and 98 hotel names of two big Siberian cities (Omsk and Tyumen) were used.

The analytical part of the study includes identification of basic and optional slots, forming the structure of the "hotel" frame; the slot filling, based on the analysis of Omsk and Tyumen hotel names (separately) and their comparison; revealing of "lexical gaps" of the "hotel" frame and development of the names which can fit these "gaps".

The first stage offers a hypothesis about the frame and slot structure of the product (service) and presents the slot filling with real names from several regions, where names are analysed in terms of their identifying potential.

The idea of the hotel and hotel services is usually based on the lexical meaning of the word (hotel – 'a tourist house for a temporary living with single or double rooms including different services') and background knowledge about the object formed due to personal experience and discourse practices. The frame structure includes both the category features (a house, a building, a temporary living place, accommodation in rooms, a paid lodging) and the features built on the basis of primary and secondary associations (cosiness, comfort, "feeling at home") (Cox, 1994).

Analysing a frame, one should not forget to define this concept as a set of typical questions arising in a stereotyped situation. The "hotel" frame comprises a logical set of questions as follows: "What is it?" (identifies the category of the object); "Who is it?" (specifies the participants of the situation); "Where is it?", "How is it?", "How much is it?" (identify the place, facilities and price) etc. The next chapter analyses the practice of the hotel naming.

#### 5. Findings

Names of Siberian hotels often have category components borrowed from English and written in Cyrillic and Latin. They point to the type of the service: hotel: Отель на Каширской (Hotel at Kashirskaya Street), Hotel Brick Walls; apartments: Дом апартаментов (Apartment House), Апарт-Вояж (Apart-Voyage); hostel: Омск-Хостел (Omsk-Hostel), Hostel Globus, Travel's Hostel. A group of names identifying a hotel through its "elements" represent such examples as Четырекомнаты (Four rooms), 7 этажей (7 Floors).

The reference to the client (guest) or to the client's activity also becomes a strong semantic identifier of the hotel service. In most cases, they are connected with tourism, so the examples are as follows: Турист (Tourist), Путник (Traveler), Вояж (Voyage), Круиз (Cruise), Транзит (Transit), Визит (Visit).

Hotel self-presentation often includes a slot 'living conditions' represented in hotel naming through the words 'coziness', 'comfort', 'rest'. Tyumen hotel names are: Уютная (Cozy), Отдых (Rest),

Домашняя (Homelike), Атмосфера комфорта (Atmosphere of Comfort); Omsk hotel names include: Уютная (Соzy), Академия уюта (Academy of Comfort), Абсолютный уют (Absolute Comfort), Resttime. Such names as Абажур (Lampshade), Очаг (Fireplace) and Grelka (Warming Pad) are also associated with the ideas of coziness and warmth and closely connected to the names characterizing hotel as a "paradise": Грезы (Dreams), Мираж (Illusion), Оазис (Oasis), Рай (Paradise).

Toponymical reference is one of the most common motives when it comes to the naming choice. Thus, names of the streets (На Омской (At Omskaya Street), На Челюскинцев (At Chelyuskintsev Street)), local identifying toponyms (Иртыш (Irtysh), Омск (Omsk)) or noticeable city topographic objects (Перекресток (Crossroads), У фонаря (Ву the Lantern), Железнодорожная (Railway)) are used to create a name.

Weak intensifiers in hotel naming are traditionally represented by precedent names (Dostoevsky for Omsk, Remezov and Nakhimov for Tyumen), names of flora and fauna objects (Абрикос (Аргісоt), Крокус (Crocus), Елка (Fir-tree), Сова (Owl), Березка (Birch-tree), Сокол (Falcon)), myth names which can hardly be associated with the object itself (Аврора (Aurora), Афина (Athena), Купидон (Cupid), Ной (Noah), Велес (Volos), Ника (Nike), Афродита(Aphrodite)).

Names appealing to prestige and size (Престиж (Prestige), Континент (Continent), Мегаполис (Megapolis)), Zodiac signs (Водолей (Aquarius)) as well as names of the departments (Энергия (Energy), Лайнер (Liner), Старт (Start)) become typical for this sphere. These names do not have a structural or semantic identifier and therefore exclude recognizability of the service. Anthroponyms is another variant of weak identifiers in Russian naming practice (Svetlana (Светлана), Olga (Ольга) etc.).

Basing on the frame analysis and the presented material, one can offer the students an algorithm of developing competitive creative names. It includes the following stages:

- 1) analysis of the frame and slot structure of a product or a service;
- 2) filling the slots with some existing regional names;
- 3) identification of typical names and "lexical gaps" (basing on the analysis of the slot filling);
- 4) development of creative names.

In hotel naming of two Siberian cities there exist "lexical gaps" and poorly filled slots as follows:

- names reflecting an image of a traveler (including the structural element "guest");
- names showing the price bracket of the hotel;
- names with toponymical identifiers "Tyumen" and "Omsk".

In recent years the problem of "teaching creativity" modern journalists working in conditions of convergent and online media has been discussed by both Russian and foreign specialists (Treffinger, Scott, Stead-Dorval, 2006; Drapeau, 2014; Dzyaloshinsky, 2014; Njölke, 2006; Ostroumov, Ostroumova, 2013; Vartanova, Lukina, 2014).

Teaching modern journalists, it is vital to study texts which are supposed to be "hybrid" in their genre and stylistic. Such analysis allows making relevant conclusions not only on modern tendencies in the genre formation but also on the genre and stylistic uniqueness of modern Russian media.

Modern media genre system suffers dramatic changes nowadays. They are related to the genre diffusion, the blurring of genre boundaries, the emergence of the new genres and the periphery position of certain journalistic genres (Barkeman, 2006; Höij, 2004; Solganik, 2014).

First, one should ask the following questions together with the students:

- Why do modern journalists try to make their texts "hybrid" with the traits of literary style if there exist a branched genre system?
- What opportunities of information delivery and interpretation are hidden in the "hybrid" genres?
- What theoretical knowledge and practical skills are necessary to create a "hybrid" media text with a high pragmatic potential?

The pragmastilistic analysis is used as a basic method for studies of "hybrid" texts. It helps to identify standard and non-standard resources and to describe the results of others' creative activity including their advantages and disadvantages. This is the first stage of creative thinking development in students for their personal writing of journalistic texts in a unique manner.

The proposed pragmatistic analysis includes several stages:

Analysing of a heading and a crossheading of an article.

Headings and crossheads play a great role in modern journalistic discourse as they "attract the reader's attention" [16]. Their additional functions are of a linguistic and pragmatic nature. Therefore, the heading may have an explicit author's opinion or a genre.

- Analysing of theme and matter of the text and the basic intention of the author.
- Analysing of language means used by the author to express his personal attitude.
- Making conclusions on the genre and stylistic character of the text as well as on the proper use
  of pragmatistic means and, as a consequence, on the successful/unsuccessful communicative
  ability of the text.

The articles by Omsk journalist Sergey Shkaev were used to analyse the "hybrid" genres in journalistic texts in terms of a course "Literary work of a journalist".

# 6. Discussion

"Hybrid" media texts in Omsk journalism: ways of author's creativity realisation.

The usage of headings and crossheads as author's "markers" of the genre identification becomes a specific characteristic of S. Shkaev's discourse linguistic identity. In his headings the journalist uses markers usual for literature, epistolary and folklore: "Сказание о встрече с Агасфером" ("A Tale of a Meeting with Ahasverus"); "Письмо к учёному Министру" ("A Letter to a Learned Minister"); "Разговор с Кампанеллой о городе Солнца" ("A Talk with Campanella about the City of Sun"); "Отрывок из трагикомедии для политической антрепризы в двух действиях" ("An Abstract from a Tragicomedy for a political Enterprise in Two Acts"). Many headings are based on the precedent texts. То understand the author's intention, it is necessary to analyse the intertextual sources together with the students: "Органчик-2. История одной страны" ("A Little Organ II. A History of a Country") (a reference to the precedent book by M.E. Saltykov-Schedrin "A History of a Town").

"Genre name" defines the author's stylistic manner, preliminarily informing the reader about it, and expands the semantic of the journalistic text by appealing not only to a new discourse genres but also to their stylistic devices.

Being a device in a journalistic text, artistic fiction may contribute to the discussion of the problems which are vital for the journalist himself. However, the effectiveness of the device becomes

poorer when the author uses it too much: the reader's attention shifts from the problem to the author's opinion based on the fiction but not on the facts.

Analysing the text based on this uncharacteristic device one can demonstrate the threatening nature of "passion" for hybrid genres.

S. Shkaev's discourse is also known for its poetic means of rhythm and rhyme which are, in general, absolutely unusual for a journalistic discourse. On the one hand, the shift to these means from the journalistic standard creates a vivid individual style. On the other – the more the author neglects the standard, the less the reader perceives the text. Sometimes it is even impossible to determine what was the author's intention.

Shkaev's texts are also difficult for perception because of the hard-recognizable intertextual markers, while the text language game must be based on a superficial sense, easily «read» mass by the addressee.

In other words, the future journalists should understand that intertextual markers in a journalistic text are effective only when the reader can easily recognise them. Otherwise, such references make the text difficult for understanding and create extra false meanings.

"Hybrid" media text: creativity or destruction of the main journalistic function?

Basing on the analysis of some journalistic texts, one can demonstrate students the cases of good and bad examples of "genre" variations when the author mostly intends to work in hybrid genres but not present informing and pragmatic functions of a text.

Moreover, such an analysis should bring the students to the thought that when creating a journalistic text one should not be motivated only by the idea of author's self-expression and forget about the communication with the reader and his specific characteristics. In the long run, the shift from the standard to the individualization of a discourse may lead to the reader's refusal to get any information.

In the end, one can show the variety of literary features in a modern journalistic text and offer some creative tasks for an optimal use if such stylistic devices in a media text. There exist the features as follows: literary narration; poetic devices (rhythm and rhyme); elements of fiction; stylistic dispersion usual for the literary style; features of postmodern stylistics (ironic narration, intertextuality), used in journalistic texts in a different way and with different purposes.

The value of the analysis of such experimental texts different in their content and genre demonstrates future journalists both the potential of sophisticated genre forms and negative "pitfalls" of their usage in real journalistic practice.

# 7. Conclusion

The interdisciplinary nature of the problem of creativity proofs the complexity of the studied object and contributes to the development of new scientific areas and didactic methods, which can become significant for the sphere of higher education in Russia. Results and effectiveness of media education depend on creative component included into the teaching process.

To realise a complex task of creative thinking development in future specialists of advertising and journalism it is vital to combine a rich theoretical base in different areas of modern humanitarian science with practical creative tasks fulfilled under the guidance of the teacher. The analysis of two presented

teaching methods offers to consider the process of creative professional skills formation as a set of analytical and creative tasks, which can be consequently solved in joint efforts of the students and the teacher.

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