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POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN CINEMATIC DISCOURSE (BASED ON 'SHREK-3')

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Abstract

Cinematic discourse is a kind of discourse that is revealed in such media forms as documentaries, feature films, animated cartoons, etc. Cinematic discourse usually reflects many aspects of our life. In the present paper, we look into the problem of cinematic discourse from the point of view of interrelationship between cinematic discourse and political discourse. The analysis is undertaken with due account for lexical units and contextual meanings. The study is based on the full-length animated cartoon 'Shrek-3', which is aimed at children but presupposes a wider audience due to the collective author's usage of explicit units conveying deep meaning and reflecting many aspects of our life, that in their turn might not be understandable for children. Thus, the research is of a dual-track character depending on two modes of expression (implicit and explicit). First, we look upon political discourse in the cinematic discourse and underline that tactics and strategies common for political movements of all times are still actual and are present in the cartoon. Both tactics and strategies are implicitly expressed. Secondly, we study ways of representation of political discourse in cinematic discourse through the use of allusions and conclude that political allusion serves explicitly and is represented in two ways: visual and audio.

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Keywords: Cinematic discourse, political discourse, political allusion.

1. Introduction

Cinematic discourse is a relatively new direction of linguistics. It is analysed through different aspects: semiotics, psychology, culture study, etc. While studying it, linguists take into account the interconnection of verbal and visual perception as well as the relationship between the cinematic discourse and other kinds of discourses that are inevitably represented in it. Our paper is devoted to the interrelation of political discourse and cinematic discourse in the full-animated cartoon 'Shrek- 3'. In our study, we look upon political discourse through the use of allusion in cinematographic discourse. The question of study of allusion as a sign of intertextuality is currently topical. While watching news, political debates, or entertaining works like feature or animated films, while reading newspapers or books there is a certain set of visual or audio images and textual representations (such as quotations, comparative structures, idiomatic expressions etc.) that come to minds of viewers/readers. The effect is reached due to the adequate and clever use of allusions. With the help of their usage the work comes to possess cohesiveness and thoroughness (Nikashina & Suprun, 2016). Allusions represent "a body of knowledge that is shared by the author and the reader/viewer and that therefore the reader/viewer will understand the author's referent" (Luebering, 2014, para. 1). Owing to the proper usage of allusions, it is possible not only to draw parallels or stand sharp contrasts between time settings, major historical events, values of the whole nations, traditions, religious beliefs, important figures but also to create a special atmosphere. It is obvious that this very atmosphere is usually defined by the main topic of the film/animated film in question.

2. Problem Statement

Cinematic discourse is represented in documentary films, feature films, animated films (cartoons), etc. The appeal to such artworks as feature or animated films remains actual. This mainly occurs due to the following facts:

-the target audience of both kinds of films is expanded as they are aimed at people of all ages;

-feature and animated films reflect political, cultural, social, geographical and other realities of different societies;

-the information contributes to the easy uptake of the content and main messages by viewers.

Despite the fact that both kinds of films are popular in the allusive frameworks and that there has been certain research conducted, little attention has been paid to the political aspect of allusive references, so, there is a necessity to analyze this interconnection and underline the functions of political discourse inside cinematographic discourse.

3. Research Questions

The main questions of the present paper are as follows:

- Looking upon the term 'cinematic discourse';

- Identifying the term 'political discourse';

- Underlying some key features of political discourse;

- Defining the term 'allusion';

- Observing how political discourse and political allusion are represented in the full-length cartoon 'Shrek-3'.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to analyze the associative links of political discourse and political allusion in the full-length animated cartoon 'Shrek-3'.

5. Research Methods

The study is based on the analysis of the DreamWorks studio full-length animated cartoon 'Shrek-3'. In our research, we use the main aspects of linguistic analysis: material choice, comparing, defining and describing the data present. At the same time, we examine the text taking into account lexical units and contextual meaning.

6. Findings

6.1. Cinematic discourse

Serving as a kind of discourse, cinematic discourse is the communicative event between a film director and a film viewer during which certain messages (including the combination of language units characterizing film heroes and the system of communicative means and rules common for the cultural sphere) are represented and comprehended (Koryachkina, 2017).

According to the linguist Zaretskaya (2010), cinematic discourse is the creolized entity that possesses such qualities as cohesiveness, coherence, informativeness, communicative-pragmatic meaning and which is produced by a collective-differentiated author for the recipient's viewing.

Cinematic discourse has a polymodal character as it comprises not only the linguistic but nonlinguistic aspects as well. Both visual and audio representations are interrelated and cannot function separately, only as a unit. According to Lavrinenko (2012), cinematic discourse is expressed by means of verbal, nonverbal (including cinematographic) symbols in accordance with the author's intention and is structured by turn-taking. The major aspect of such a unity is meaning (Dukhovnaya, 2015).

6.2. Political discourse and speech strategies

Political discourse is considered to be a specific kind of discourse. It comprises all types of interaction of an individual and society, creating worldview. Political discourse reveals the way cultural values and social order are imposed in different societies (Skvortsova, 2017).

The instrumental function of the language is extensively used in the political discourse and is realized through using speech strategies (Mironova, 2015).

It is necessary to define the term 'speech strategy'. According to Issers (2016), a speech strategy is a combination of speech actions aimed at achieving certain communication goals; the whole process involves certain speech production planning and depends on communication circumstances, personal features of the involved participants and the way the plan is realized.

Political discourse is not only about communication; it brings together its clear goals and specific participants. The major goal of political discourse is the conquest and deduction of power; and its participants are politicians and society (Kenzhekanova, 2015). The power in the form of an immediate manipulative effect on the minds of the public is reached with the help of certain tactics and strategies of political discourse representation. Speech strategies in this respect possess their specific uniqueness (Sukhanov, 2018).

In the course of our research we will need to take into account some aspects of political discourse. We need to pay attention to the self-presentation strategy (creating the image of a politician). This strategy, according to Titova (2018), includes the tactics of making oneself equal to others (showing that one belongs to this or that social or political group); and the tactics of opposition (dividing the society into 'friends' and 'foes').

We also outline two strategies of persuasion.

1) Argumentative strategy (persuading a recipient with the help of arguments). This sub strategy is comprised of several tactics which are as follows:

   a) tactics of proven assessment (when a speaker tries to assess something and prove their point);

   b) tactics of contrast analysis (comparing and contrasting facts, events, results);

   c) tactics of showing a perspective (forecasting development of events, commenting on future goals);

   d) illustration tactics (giving examples, facts).

2) Propagation strategy (the strategy of influencing people's behavior by making them do something, make a choice), which includes the tactics of promise and the tactics of appeal (Titova, 2018).

6.3. Allusion

The fairy-tale world forming the basis of animated cartoon discourse is a unique setting with the dominance of fantastic nature, time and place irreality and the effects of miracle / miraculous transformation. At the same time the world itself is implicitly or explicitly interrelated with literary, musical, dramatic and other works by means of usage of specific lexical units, audio or visual symbols, meaningful characters etc. This effect is reached due to allusive links which convey a deep meaning. This occurs because "an allusion can carry some of the connotations of the whole story from which it is drawn, or because an individual's name can be associated with more than one characteristic" (Oxford Dictionary of Reference and Allusion, 2010, Introduction to the 2nd edition, para. 6).

Allusion serves as a kind of "mechanism" that joins intertextual links and helps to react to them properly. By means of associative thinking the reader / viewer learns, analyzes and generalizes information, connected with a pretext which, in their turn, helps with the process of creation of new ideas and promotes deeper understanding of what has been read/seen (Kochneva, 2018).

Allusion is the indirect indication of some historical, geographical, literary, mythological or biblical fact (Iskhanova, 2018). According to Iskhanova, the indirect indication can as well be connected with everyday life. Beside the ordinary routine, everyday life cannot but be associated with a certain set of information we get to know through mass media. The information itself is multilayered as it covers all

aspects of personal, national and international relations. Political sphere being one of the most urgent issues nowadays is significant in this way.

6.4. Political Discourse in Cinematic Discourse

In our paper, we analyze the DreamWorks full-length animated cartoon 'Shrek-3' in which the father of Fiona dies and Shrek becomes the direct successor to the throne. Nevertheless, he wants to get rid of this 'honor' and goes off to bring one more rightful heir, Arthur, who Shrek wants to take all the responsibility. Meanwhile Prince Charming, who lost Princess Fiona and all hope to get the throne in the Far Far Away Kingdom, organizes a rebellion and an ensuing revolution so as to usurp the throne and punish Shrek.

Prince Charming comes to a local bar full of fairy-tale losers and uses speech strategies and tactics that modern politicians use to persuade the bar attendees (Captain Hook, Wicked Witch, Cinderella's stepsister Mabel, etc.) to inspire the rebellion and support him. Here we can clearly see the allusion to modern world election campaigns in which politicians implement such speech strategies as 'shaping the recipients' emotional state', which involves the tactics of unification and self-presentation. For example, when Prince Charming comes to the bar and asks for a 'Fuzzy Navels' for all his friends, Captain Cook says, 'We're not your friends. You don't belong here.' Prince Charming replies: 'We're more alike than you think,' and then starts enumerating all the misfortunes the fairy-tale losers have been through. He underlines that if they do not take action, they will forever remain losers. As a result of this manipulative political propaganda with promises of a better future, all those losers follow him and organize a revolution, which looks grim with looted and plundered houses and chaos all around. This situation which is represented mostly visually (broken windows, paper flying around dirty streets, drunk hooligans, etc.) is a political allusion.

6.5. Political Allusion in Cinematic Discourse

The climactic scene of the animated cartoon focuses on the attempt of Shrek and his friends to rebel against the self-proclaimed king Prince Charming. This is the explicit political allusion to a revolution. Political allusion which serves as a kind of allusion has the same means of representation: visual and audio. Both groups are semantically meaningful and are present in the table 01 below.

Table 01. Representation of Political allusions in "Shrek-3"

Allusions with Visual Representation	Allusions with Audio Representation
The setting: ▪ Deserted streets with barricades and houses with blocked windows; ▪ Dirty papers flying around; ▪ Infrequent panicking city-dwellers passing by; ▪ Pickpockets making easy money; prison/dungeon)	The rebels' side: ▪ "The villains took over!"; ▪ "They attacked us!"

People's perception/reaction:	The villains' side:
▪ Fight scenes; ▪ Aggression; ▪ Villains using weapons	▪ "Get him!"; ▪ "Kill!"; ▪ "The people [of this kingdom] will pay dearly"; ▪ "Stand still!"

The mentioned in the table above allusive indicators are typical of the similar revolutionary/rebellious scenes in cinematic discourse.

7.   Conclusion

Making a conclusion, cinematic discourse is a complex cohesive entity that comprises many aspects of our life due to multifunctional units/symbols that form it. One of the aspects in this regard is politics. Being the topical issue that occupies the minds of the whole nations political motifs are frequently used in feature and animated films because they can easily reflect political strategies and systems actual for the present-day world or in the form of historical reminiscence. Therefore, political discourse and cinematic discourse are closely interrelated.

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