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“TELEVISION DISCOURSE: SYSTEMATIC-FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS (THE CASE OF ENTERTAINING AND PUBLICISTIC PROGRAM «TALENT-SHOW»)”

ABSTRACT

For the dissertation to obtain the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the specialty «6D021300 – Linguistics»

General description of the thesis. The thesis explores television discourse and its genre specifics as its analysis appears to be a promising area for studies in modern linguistics. Mass communication is one of the main types of communication and its development shows how society has been developing and functioning. At the same time TV being a specific type of mass communication turns out to be a powerful tool to influence human mind. The study of television discourse aims at expanding linguistic research because this expansion allows connecting linguistics with other sciences, as Baudouin de Courtenay envisaged earlier [1].

Entertainment programs are meant to meet people’s need for entertaining and thus communicative practices of show participants led to the formation of entertainment discourse. Talent-based competition shows have kept their niche on Kazakhstani TV for the last ten years. As a rule, talent-based competition shows are a mixture of other communication genres, like interview, entertainment programs and commercials. Content variety of local copy of western talent-based competition shows defines peculiarities of verbal and nonverbal means as well as explains the growing interest from psychologists, sociologists, political analysts, journalists, cognitive psychologists, linguists, psycholinguists, sociolinguists and other specialists in discourse. This dissertation is focused on the discourse analysis of participants of TV hedonistic program and study of systemic-functional characteristics of television discourse. Special attention in the dissertation research is paid to the analysis of discourse in the aspect of its functioning.

Due to its nature media discourse has been studied by a number of linguistic allied disciplines [2]. The subject of the dissertation research is interdisciplinary, since television discourse requires a multidimensional study. A growing body of literature has analyzed the discourse of print material, but despite this interest television discourse remains understudied. The previous work is either of experimental character (Y.V. Artemiyeva, 2000) or about peculiarities of a small number of television genres like interview (Uhova, 2001) and TV debates (Ivanova, 2003). Television and popular genres mostly borrowed from European and American media shows such as talk shows, television bridges television games, television shops, television extremes, television investigations, reality shows, talent-based competition and others have been outside of research. The TV
program under the study was chosen for its highest rating on 31 TV Channel during 2010-2012, totaling four seasons.

Rationale of the research. Rapid development of discourse theory has been very productive and as a result has been applied in many linguistic studies. Participants’ knowledge of world realities, moral values, self-assessment of social status, explicit and implicit ways of phrasing lead to the need for considering a human factor from a modern anthropocentric position. Discourse has been studied as a structural object and dynamic process within certain time period by many scholars who offered various theories and models of discourse analysis.

Rapid development of communicative technologies made humankind change their communicative behavior. The era when pragmatic aims could be achieved verbally was replaced by the time of hyper information boom where it became necessary to include visual component when communicating with people. Modern society seeks for visualization when trying to meet their intellectual needs and they would rather watch and observe than read.

Many issues are to be reconsidered within theoretical discourse framework as a result of television moving towards entertaining mode more. This tendency is taking place because existing conditions of TV programs are changing. The number of TV entertaining programs in Kazakhstan has grown significantly recently and reached its point when their content requires a critical analysis. This study was done to analyze changes happening in speech genre system of modern mass media discourse. In particular, the study focuses on development and transformation process of TV competition-based programs, the main aim of which is to find talented people.

The object of the study is a talent-based competition shows genre as a variety of television discourse.

The subject of the study is verbal and nonverbal means of speech communication, defining talent shows as a genre of television discourse, implemented in a situation of interpersonal communication, complicated by the conditions of mass communication and the institutional status of the television communicator (TV presenter), the main intention of which is to influence the TV audience.

The aim of this study is to identify linguistic and extralinguistic peculiarities of television discourse through systematic-functional analysis.

The aim, the object and the subject of the study have set the following tasks:

1) Trace back to the origin of discourse theory and describe the ways of its development, its relations with other linguistics phenomena as well as types of discourse analysis within anthropocentric paradigm;

2) Structure the genre of this type of show by its content, provide new definitions and their descriptors;

3) Describe communicative and pragmatic and lingvostylistic peculiarities of television discourse as well as consider the ways of verbal manipulation;

4) Identify peculiarities of television discourse in a bilingual environment at present moment.
5) To determine the influence of the subjective comment of the producent (journalist behind the scenes) on the opinion of the recipient (audience) and compare it with the decision of the jury;

6) Analyze the mistakes of word use in television discourse of “Zhuldyzdy do da” program participants (Khabar channel);

7) Analyze rhetorical means and lexicogrammatical peculiarities of children’s competition-based program “Luchshe vseh” (the Best) (Eurasia channel)


Research methods. A variety of methods have been used to achieve the aims of the study. Description method have been employed to review the literature on theory of discourse; discourse analysis allowed step by step recognition of participants’ intentions and explication of verbal means used to express intentions; in order to overcome the “Observer’s Paradox” in the experiment a “false goal” technique was set; content analysis was chosen to study genre ratio of various daily programs of a weekly broadcast on Kazakhstani TV; deductive and inductive methods were used to analyze the texts to identify strategic intentions of the participants, strategies and tactics of their communicative behavior; data were also gathered from questionnaires and interviews.

Theoretical significance. The current results of the study contribute to the existing knowledge by providing a new understanding of television discourse genres taking into consideration their interactive character and cultural specifics of tele communication, as well as by expanding conceptual theoretical framework of mass media discourse. The results of the study demonstrate pragmatic nature of media discourse that define the use of linguistic means. The findings from this study on television discourse are important both for understanding media and culture, sociocultural reality and its representation in media as well as complicated
The semantic structure of mass media texts and various aspects of communicative behavior of a linguistic personality.

**Practical implications.** The results of the research and collection of samples might be used for study purposes as well as for course and materials development on linguistic pragmatics, stylistics, lingvocultural studies, rhetoric. New interpretation of standard concepts allows new vision of common things that can be used in development of new courses on current issues in television journalism. Moreover, following the analysis of entertaining television programs, the recommendations were developed to help telecommunication specialists facilitate a successful communication among television discourse participants.

**Scientific significance.** This work contributes to the existing knowledge by providing the description of the system of talent show genre, topic content, communicative, pragmatic, linguistic and stylistic characteristics of talent show genre. The paper also describes linguistic means of discourse representation of agonality in TV shows. For the first time the experiment discourse analysis has been employed to study Talent Show TV program (the case of competition based dance, singing and circus performance). Experiment materials and survey results allowed to determine constituent characteristics of talent show television discourse and develop a formula for talent show television genre. In addition, verbal, nonverbal, productive, receptive aspects of communicative behavior of linguistic persona have been identified and major common characteristics of show participants have been defined. The thesis describes major modes of communication strategies used by participants in the programs; analysis of communicative utterances following the theory of speech acts allowed to identify main illocutionary acts; moreover, peculiarities of television discourse were studied in a bilingual environment; in addition, the structure of language broadcasting on Kazakhstani TV channels in terms of genre ratio was considered as well some examples of code switching in Talent Show program were presented; the analysis of programs for children showed rhetorical and lexicogrammatical peculiarities that are reflected in onomatopoetic words, prosodic units (rhythm and rhyme), various syntactic constructions (forms of address, parenthesis).

**Scientific authenticity and validity** of the study are supported by a variety of methods, goals and tasks set as well as the results of the study.

The **data** for this research was drawn from regular television runs of Talent Show program of 2011. There were three runs totaling 6 hours 40 minutes of videotext without commercials. The transcribed text contains 610 thousand characters.

**The research was done in a few stages:**

During the first stage previous literature on psychology, journalism and linguistics has been studied and analyzed in order to define a conceptual framework. The literature review also helped to identify communicative, pragmatic and lingo stylistic peculiarities of talent show genre. After setting the aim and the tasks, the research sources were finalized.

During the second stage the survey was conducted to know why people participated in television shows and what their attitude towards them was. This
stage also included the experiment discourse analysis of Talent Show TV program (the case of competition-based dance, singing and circus performance).

The final stage encompassed data analysis. Based on the conclusions, the recommendations on how to improve the content of Kazakhstani television programs have been suggested.

**Main findings:**

1 Genre variety of entertaining programs led to transformation of existing genres, one of which is a talent show. New types of talent show genre have been identified and defined in the paper.

2 Wonder + Entertainment = Wondertainment formula for talent show provides insight into hybrid programs where genre formulas are combined with show strategies, techniques and development. The formula mentioned previously means making wonder while entertaining.

3 Discussion, confrontation and game types are typical characteristics of talent-based competition shows. The strategies identified in the study are among general extra linguistic characteristics of talent shows that fall under television discourse genre. It should be mentioned that communicative tactics possess discriminative extra linguistic attributes.

4 Broadcasting time of Kazakhstani programs in terms of Kazakh/Russian language distribution is followed formally.

5 The discourse analysis shows the relationship between pragmatic expressions and personality type. The results of interactive voting of viewers indicate manipulative influence of a producer on a recipient.

6 Failure to follow lexical selection criteria and formation of lexical cripples in television discourse result in errors in Kazakh language norms.

7 Talent show for kids presents a special form of discourse characterized by specific traits of its audience. This media discourse is constructed by rhetorical, lexico-syntactic, phonosemantic and prosodic means to create a bright and emotional atmosphere.

**Evaluation of results**

Main results of the study were published in the papers below:


research conference on National science in transition period: premises of the past and theory of today, Part 4. 3 (8), pp.54-56.


**Structure of the dissertation.** This paper divided into five sections, including introduction and conclusion. The appendix includes 13 tables, 12 diagrams, 3 pictures and the reference list containing 267 sources, and attachments.