

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2020.23.3.16>**СПОСОБЫ ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ ИМПЛИЦИТНОЙ ИНФОРМАЦИИ ПЕСЕННОГО ТЕКСТА (НА ПРИМЕРЕ КОМПОЗИЦИИ “WE DON’T WANNA PUT IN”)**

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В статье проводится лингвистическая экспертиза песенного текста “We don’t wanna put in” представителей Грузии на «Евровидении-2009». Цель данного исследования заключается в выявлении наличия вербальных нарушений правил конкурса в песенном тексте. Используемые в исследовании методы описания, интерпретации текста, дискурсивного анализа текстового содержания дали возможность комплексно рассмотреть намерения авторов композиции, выявить приёмы речевого воздействия, сделать выводы для подтверждения теоретической гипотезы, представленной в работе.

Ключевые слова: лингвистическая экспертиза, песенный дискурс, приёмы речевого воздействия, стоп-кадр, политический дискурс, имплицитная информация.

MEANS OF CONVEYING IMPLICIT INFORMATION IN LYRICS (THROUGH THE EXAMPLE OF THE SONG “WE DON’T WANNA PUT IN”)

Research article

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Abstract

Abstract The article is devoted to the lyrics linguistic examination of the song “We don’t wanna put in” that was to have been the Georgian entry to the Eurovision Song Contest 2009. The purpose of the research was to ascertain the presence of verbal violations of the Contest in the lyrics. The methods of description, text interpretation and discourse analysis of the lyrics enabled package treatment of the song authors’ intentions, finding the linguistic manipulation methods, the conclusion that confirmed the theoretical hypothesis suggested in this paper.

Keywords: linguistic examination, song discourse, linguistic manipulation methods, screenshot, political discourse, implicit information.

Introduction

English-language song discourse is a polycode system, i.e. a combination of verbal text presented orally or in writing and the musical element that is affected by extratextual characteristics of the communicative situation [8, P. 248]. Lyrics is determined by the socially conditioned and situation-dependent communication because verbal product illustrated with music conveys the events, facts of life, history, and peoples’ culture, it helps to look into political, economic, social and spiritual woes [4, P. 150].

The Eurovision Song Contest provides a unique opportunity for contestants coming from more than 40 countries worldwide to share their inner turmoil, their feelings and emotions, with the audience through lyrics. Mostly, the artists perform compositions in pop music form, where the lyrics are full of emotions to the uttermost. From there, we can say with great certainty that for the matter of this genre, emotive constructions fulfil the function of projecting the author’s inner turmoil and emotions [8, P. 244].

O.I. Maksimenko and V.V. Podryadova specify that “a polycode text has the greatest effect onto the recipient when semantic (narrative) and visual or audio (non-narrative) aspects concur” [5, P. 33]. In such a case, the visuals may take on the supporting role in affecting the target emotionally. Moreover, lexical-stylistic means and linguistic manipulation methods affecting the recipients play a not unimportant part in song discourse.

In the year 2009, the Eurovision Song Contest was held in Moscow, following D. Bilan’s win in Belgrade [9]; however, the management of the Contest in Russia met many problems. One of the conflict situations was created by Georgian withdrawal from Eurovision 2009 [2]. Georgia chose the pop group Stephane & 3G to represent the country at the Contest. Then one of the sources mentioned that the members of the group declared their song “We don’t wanna put in” to voice their protest against Russian policy. That was directly related to the events of August 2008 in South Ossetia [2]. Another source refuted the political aspect of the song. The members of the group refuted the information about the existence of the political subtext [6]. The European Broadcasting Union in return performed the linguistic examination of the Georgian song’s lyrics and declared that the composition violated rule 2.6 of the Contest, which stated that the contestants should not use political or other appeals [13]. Georgia refused to change the lyrics to be allowed to participate in the Contest [6]. As such, Georgia decided to withdraw from the Eurovision Song Contest.

The purpose and the research design

The *purpose* of the research is to perform holistic initiative linguistic examination [1, P. 16] and ascertain the existence of verbal violations to the Contest's rules in the lyrics of “We don’t wanna put in” (the European Broadcasting Union examined the lyrics but did not make the conclusion available to the audience). To get the whole linguosemiotic picture, the video of Georgian contesters with the song “We don’t wanna put in” was studied as a multi-modal emotive text. That suggests the *academic novelty* of this paper in terms of linguistic examination of the text: the visual (screenshot) and verbal content allow us integrated consideration of the authors’ intentions, identifying linguistic manipulation methods and drawing conclusions. Yu.A. Yevgrafova, in her research, analysed screen text at the screenshot level, not including their syntagmatic organisation. Of course, the analysis of the signs functioning in a heterogeneous text should not be conducted exclusive of their relations and decoding semiotic systems. However, in that [her] paper there was an attempt made to take the first step, concentrated on describing the small field of research that should serve as a stepping stone for further analysis of linguosemiotic features of heterogeneous texts, including the relations of signs and codes [3, P. 242]. Thus, integrated research of the composition suggests the usage of the following *methods*: description, interpretation, discourse analysis.

Linguistic examination of the lyrics of “We don’t wanna put in”

To conduct the examination of the disputable lyrics of “We don’t wanna put in” the following questions were formulated:

1. Does the lyrics’ title “We don’t wanna put in” relate to the substance of the composition?
2. Do the lyrics analysed have implicit information? If this is the case, then of what is the information?
3. Does the target of research have speech acts of an appeal?
4. Do the visuals of the song “We don’t wanna put in” relate to its substance?
5. Was it possible to change the lyrics through the use of different vocabulary or linguistic devices, while keeping the substance of the composition?

To have the questions answered, it is necessary to integratively consider the lexical-stylistic, semantic, discourse and semiotic parameters of the composition “We don’t want to put in” [7] submitted for examination.

The first line holds an ambiguous statement. “*Some people tell you the stories*” («*Некоторые люди рассказывают тебе (вам) истории*»), the usage of the pronoun ‘some’ refers to a group of people, i.e. the authors of the composition want to highlight specific individuals. The next syntactic construction holds the phrase “*To drag you down to the knees*” («*Чтобы поставить тебя (вас) колени*»), which is related to the object ‘you’ in the first line. The expression “drag sb down” means ‘to make sb feel unhappy, sick’ [12]. In the third line, the music group states “*But lemme tell you don’t worry*” («*Но позволь сказать тебе – не волнуйся*»), so that the target can detect the implicit message hidden in the song’s refrain, it being the key semantic core of the composition’s entire substance. The colloquialism “lemme” is necessary to communicate within the audience’s range of speech code and to follow the metre. The fourth line holds the reiteration “*no worries*” («*нет беспокойств*»). The expressions “*Another glass of my moonshine*” («*Ещё (другой) стакан самогона*») and “*Will kick the hell out of me*” («*Свалит меня с ног*») tell the audience that the target/targets are in a drunken state; the word “moonshine” meaning ‘a strong alcoholic drink’ and the idiom “kick the hell out of” («нанести сильный и длительный физический удар») meaning ‘to physically attack with punches and other blows’ [11] are used. Then the author appeals to the matters which are probably mentioned in the following refrain, through the phrasal verb “focus on” meaning ‘to concentrate’ and the reiteration “good stuff” meaning ‘something good’. Upon that, the expression “good stuff” serves as the ‘bridge’ necessary to disclose the composition’s dictum.

As mentioned above, the visuals of the song “We don’t wanna put in” were considered along with the lyrics. The visual scene is set in an American diner, where the four artists of Stephane & 3G appear in fur coats and fur caps (refer to picture 1).



Pic. 1 – The first verse

The attendees receive the guests coldly; the kinesics seen in the visuals affirm it (refer to picture 2 and picture 3).



Pic. 2 – Attendee



Pic. 3 – Attendees (2)

After the performance of the song fragment, there is the video frame that cannot be analysed linguistically, where moonshine is mentioned. The waitress brings the attendees a glass of a different drink; in this frame, it might be a milkshake or a lemonade (refer to picture 4).

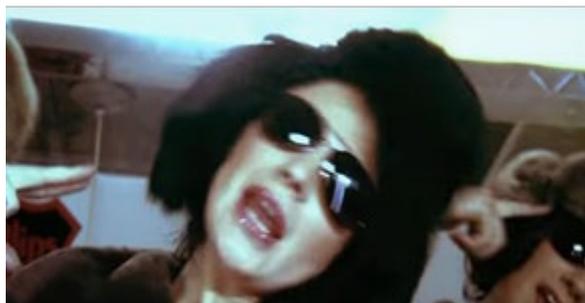


Pic. 4 – The drink

While conducting the linguistic examination of the lyrics, after analysing the first verse and the corresponding video frames we shall consider the song's refrain which theoretically might be the semantic core of the entire composition.

The title of the song and the beginning of the refrain are identical [7]. It is important to pay attention to the verb “put”. In the given fragment of the composition's syntactic structure, it does not act like a phrasal verb. That means we should find the correct definition of the verb 'put' in the context of the expression “*We don't wanna put in the negative move*” («*Мы не хотим [...] плохое движение*»). There are several most used definitions: *1 to move something or somebody to a particular place, position, or direction; 2 to write something; 3 to phrase something; 4 to cause someone or something to be in a particular situation or state* [10], [12]. The word “move” has the following possible translations as a noun: «*движение*» (movement), «*действие*» (deed), «*шаг*» (step), «*ночтынок*» (action) [10], [12]. With this, we have several syntactic fragments: in the sentence “We don't wanna put in the negative move” the word “wanna” is the informal short form of ‘want to’, and “in the negative move” is the Complex Object. It should be noted that the artists accentuate the verb “put” and the preposition “in” which are followed by the logical pause. The expression “*It's killin' the groove*” («*Это убьёт ритм*») supplements the semantic aspect of the refrain's beginning. The implicit information may be indirectly related to the metaphor “groove of life” (pace of life), so the verb and preposition “put in”, the epithet “the negative move”, pronoun “It” may serve as the subject of the composition's refrain, “s killin'” as the predicate, and “the groove” as the object. This expression might be presented in the following form: [Subject (SS) + P + O]. Moreover, as mentioned above, the Georgian composition implied the protest against Russian authorities, so it is possible to speak about the political subtext in the composition, which is hidden in the phonetic component “put in” – «*пут-ин*» (put-in). The fact that the first line rhymes only with the fourth one “put in” – “shoot in” confirm this. The refrain contains the words “disco”, “boogie” which appeal to the dancing genres. The verb “put” in this context is ambiguous. Such being the case, the musical band could change the words, expressions, for example, “*We don't wanna get in [add now, dance now, do it, include, perform, follow etc.]*”, if the authors meant to relate the verbal component to the dancing genres to affect the audience. So, there is the possibility to change the verb “put”, but the authors chose not to follow the Contest organisers' recommendations. Georgia created such lyrics on purpose to voice their political protest. The “*reluctance to go in the wrong direction*” is implicitly related to the actions of Russian authorities. So the lyrics of the Georgian song commits to the naming of the ‘enemy’.

The video demonstrates the dance of the band, the nonverbal component of the rhyme “put in” – “shoot in” can be seen in picture 5, where the addressants ‘shoot for the head’.



Pic. 5 – The shot

As a result, the expression “we don’t wanna <...>” affirms the existence of the political subtext. The expression “*shoot in some disco tonight*” («оторваться (погрузиться) в диско сегодня вечером») may be used in this context meaning ‘to have fun, to delight in’ [10]. Other possible translations are not adequate for the given speech act. So the verbal and nonverbal elements do not supplement each other, i.e. they do not strengthen the emotional influence.

The refrain of the song “We don’t wanna put in” uses several linguistic manipulation methods: 1) introduction to the negatively evaluated context/associative field; 2) establishment of unmotivated similarity with the negatively evaluated entity; 3) hint; 4) language game as the means of leverage; 5) the possibility of a verbal description of the example in non-verbal exemplification [1, P. 179-281]. During the analysis, we found the exceptional case when the authors of the lyrics used several methods of linguistic manipulation, which are demonstrated in the composition's refrain.

The second verse mentions “people” [7]. The second line tells the recipients that “*They're freakin' all day long*” («Они бушуют целый день»). The authors of the lyrics create contrasts between the people mentioned in the first and the second verses. The expression “*The bitchin' will last forever*” («Это д*рьмо будет продолжаться вечно») in this context might violate the Eurovision Song Contest rules, because of the usage of an unacceptable insulting word “bitchin'” [10], [12]. That could be one of the objections the European Broadcasting Union had against the authors of the Georgian song's lyrics. This fragment also allows the substitution of the word for a synonymic word or phrase, for example, “bustlin'” («суета»), “bad staff” («плохие дела»), etc. Then the artists address the audience “*You better change your perspective*” («Ты (Вы) лучше измени(те) свои (ваши) перспективы (взгляды)»), which might relate to the people mentioned at the beginning of the second verse. In such a case, the expression might be characterised as an indirect appeal because it has synthetic comparative adjective “better”. The following expression “*Your life won't be outta luck*” («Твоя (Ваша) жизнь не будет неудачей») implies some solution, the outcome of the situation in case of ‘changes in people’s views’. There is mentioned “groovy”, which is the word form of ‘groove’ («заводной»), that is a reference to the song's refrain “It's killin' the groove”. It is of importance that the discontent of the people mentioned in the second verse is covered in the video (refer to picture 6 and picture 7).



Pic. 6 – Discontent (1)



Pic. 7 – Discontent (2)

So, in this case, there is a correlation between verbal and nonverbal elements of the composition. Following the words “*Be rising, it's rising*” («Будем растти, растёт (уже, сейчас)») the attendees and the guests take off their outdoor clothes and start dancing together (refer to picture 8).



Pic. 8 – The dance

In this fragment, the addressants express their love for the countries of Europe. Depersonification of the addressee, in this case, features the citizens of the European countries; the performers appeal to them through the standard zero-subject imperative “Say: give me sexy yeah” («Скажи: дай мне сексуальности»). The authors apply reiteration to affect the audience. The video demonstrates the waitress dancing. It is worth noting that the verbal element of the bridge comes in a male voice, perhaps, to emphasise and to enforce communicative influence upon the recipients (refer to picture 9).



Pic. 9 – The waitress dancing

Following the end of the speech act containing the appeal, the authors of the lyrics use the expression “put in” in the bridge of the composition. Having analysed the refrain we proved that “put in” is not a phrasal verb, but in this case, the authors of the lyrics did not take into account that they implicitly mention V.V. Putin (the Prime Minister of Russia then) through the language game. Then there is the reiteration of the lines “We don’t wanna put in”, though it would be more logical to reiterate and supplement the expression with the words “some disco tonight”, since the attendees of the diner and the main characters “found common ground” and met in dance. The last frames demonstrate all the people sitting together at the table (refer to picture 10).



Pic. 10 – The end

Study findings

As a result, the conducted analysis of the “We don’t wanna put in” composition (verbal elements), and the analysis of the video screenshots (nonverbal element) makes it possible to answer the questions raised before the linguistic examination of the lyrics:

1) Does the lyric's title “We don’t wanna put in” relate to the substance of the composition?

The answer is *yes, it does*.

2) Do the lyrics analysed have implicit information? If this is the case, then of what is the information?

The answer is *yes, it has*.

Note. It is important to take notice that the authors of the composition used implicit information, having a political undertone to voice their protest against the Russian government.

3) Does the target of research have speech acts of an appeal?

The answer is *yes, it has to a degree*.

Note. We found out several standard forms of direct and indirect appeals in verse, and the chorus of the “We don’t wanna put in” lyrics. However, the analysed communicative acts of the appeal have no political undertone.

4) Do the visuals of the song “We don’t wanna put in” relate to its substance?

The answer is *yes, almost everywhere*.

Note. We found out some faults in the video, which were related to the difference in verbal and nonverbal components of the visuals at the level of screenshots: stage properties and the usage of male voice through a female image.

5) Was it possible to change the lyrics through the use of different vocabulary or linguistic devices, while keeping the substance of the composition?

The answer is *yes, it was possible, but that would have led to losing the message of the implicit information in the refrain*.

Note. During the research, we made attempts to change the lyrics through synonyms. Moreover, a sample was found, vocabulary usage of which contradicts the ethical principles of the Contest. It is beyond controversy that the political subtext would be eliminated on the semantic change of the refrain.

Conclusion

Georgia had no strong potential or firm intent to participate in the Eurovision Song Contest 2009, perhaps, that was due to the events of 2008. The European Broadcasting Union advised changes be made in the lyrics, but the Georgian party ignored that and went for the ‘buzz’ and scandals around the holding of the Contest. That once again proves that if the lyrics had been changed, Georgian artists would have lost the chance to sing about the sensible subject, affect the European audience and voice their protest. Moreover, the short communicative act of the refrain contains five linguistic manipulation methods, the substance of which includes political undertone (the implicit information). The implied name of the ‘enemy’ in the “We don’t wanna put in” lyrics proves that the song discourse of pop music genre holds conflict potential.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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