

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2021.27.3.24>**ФОНОСТИЛИСТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОГО КОМИКСА**

Научная статья

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**Аннотация**

Комиксы представляют собой так называемый креолизованный текст, сочетание двух частей, разных по своей природе: вербальной и невербальной. Последняя принадлежит к знаковой системе, отличной от естественного языка. Комиксы вобрала в себя черты изобразительного искусства и письменной речи.

Комикс является лингвосоциокультурным феноменом благодаря необычному изложению текста, ярким поворотам, наличию различных специфических, нехарактерных для других жанров выражений.

Использование комплекса лингвистических методов позволило выявить особенности англоязычных комиксов на многих уровнях: лексике, грамматике, синтаксисе и фонетике. При анализе комиксов была отмечена тесная взаимосвязь между графическими и вербальными компонентами комикса, способствующая созданию специфической образности.

Автор исследует функционально-стилистический аспект англоязычных комиксов, а также фонетические и графические средства комикса, которые играют важную роль в создании прагматического потенциала комического текста.

**Ключевые слова:** комиксы, фонографические средства, ономотопея; фоностилистические особенности.

**PHONOSTYLISTIC PECULIARITIES OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE COMIC BOOKS**

Research article

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**Abstract**

Comics are a so-called creolized text, a combination of two parts that are different in nature: verbal and non-verbal. The latter belongs to a sign system that is different from the natural language. Comics have absorbed the features of fine art and written speech.

The comic strip is a linguo-sociocultural phenomenon due to the unusual presentation of the text, bright turns, the presence of various specific.

The use of theoretical foundations made it possible to identify the features of the English-language comics at many levels: vocabulary, grammar, syntax and phonetics. When analyzing comics, a close relationship between the graphic and verbal components of the comic book was noted, contributing to the enhancement of imagery.

The author tried to investigate the functional and stylistic aspects, the language of the comic book, as well as the phonetic and graphic means of the comic strip that play an important role in creating the pragmatic potential of the comic text.

**Keywords:** comics, onomatopoeia, phonographic means, phonostylistic peculiarities of comics.

**Introduction**

The comic strip is a cultural phenomenon represented in the advertising sphere, in cinematography, as well as in magazines. Despite the importance and polarity of comics, there is very little research on them as a phenomenon of linguistic culture. The presented research is carried out through the prism of linguistics, within which this issue has a low degree of development. The research material (comics «Simpsons Comics № 206», «Futurama Comics № 1», «Garfield», «Sin City: That Yellow Bastard № 1», «Naruto Side Story – The Path Shone By The Full Moon's Light», «V for Vendetta № 1», «Age of Ultron № 1», «Gen 13 № 1») [7] allows to come to some conclusions.

While selecting examples for the analysis, the method of corpus analysis was used, which made it possible to establish the frequency of appearing particular features and means. Methods of linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis were used as well, they helped to define phonostylistic, lexical and syntactical peculiarities of comics. This article deals with Phonostylistic peculiarities only.

Traditionally, comics appeared and became especially popular in Europe, especially in France.

This industry originated from the principles of the western school of comics, and the eastern traditions of manga. In turn, the Americans consider comics of their own production practically a national treasure. Festivals and exhibitions are held in honor of the comics. They are also subjects of scientific research and lectures.

The genre of comics is very diverse in its subject matter, and it often becomes the basis of film scripts. Comics subsequently became the art, such as the genre of cinema, photography, painting and literature, which was recorded by the French Academy. Moreover, value of comics is explained by their use for educational purposes and for professional development in the field of various professions.

Comics conquered the entire population, becoming an object of study. In particular, comics are attractive for linguistic research because they reflect an ever-changing language. In addition, comics allow to improve knowledge of a foreign language. Comics become a reflection of the national character. This is due to the fact that they contain phraseological units, features of humor and regional geographic information.

Today comics are read by people of all ages. For example, in America, comics are read by 85% of children and 65% of adults. The plots of children's comics are, in most cases, adventures, and comics for adults are presented in the form of different literary genres: science fiction, detective stories, humorous stories, etc.

Comics are now one of the most popular genres of popular culture around the world, from comic books in the United States to comic books with short strips or miniatures in Europe, from Chinese manhua to Japanese manga.

### **Historical Review**

Since the middle of the twentieth century, comics have become the subject of close study as a result of the synergy of the visual and literary trends in art. This was a prerequisite for the opening of a special center for the study of comics in France.

The content and definition of comics have undergone many changes throughout their history. Today comics have become very popular and, with the advent of comics in various cultures, the question has arisen about their linguistic and paralinguistic characteristics.

From the point of view of linguistics, a comic strip (from the English comic — funny) is a series of drawings with short texts that form a coherent narrative. Appeared in the late 19th century in US newspapers. In the middle of the 20th century, comics are one of the most popular genres of mass culture. Modern comics have mostly lost their comic character, they were replaced by “horror” comics — about crimes, war, as well as comics that simplify the works of the classics.

At its core, a comic strip is a special way of storytelling, the text of which is a sequence of frames, in addition to a drawing, a verbal work, representing the characteristics of a character and enclosed in a special frame, while the drawing and the verbal text enclosed in it provide an organic semantic unity.

The popularity of these comics was also facilitated by the fact that the culture of book publishing improved, completely new technologies for making comics appeared. Over the years, artists and colorists have adapted to the bright colors and good print quality. At about the same time, coloring on the computer began, which later became the predominant technology.

Since the 2000s, the fashion for experimental comics began to wane. Now the overwhelming majority of comics were drawn on a computer, which, on the one hand, greatly facilitated the artist's work, and on the other, it lost its aesthetic and artistic uniqueness. But it is worth noting that some artists have learned to combine digital and traditional art, which leads to an even greater uniqueness and aesthetic value of such comics.

Initially comics were only a phenomenon of mass culture as an entertainment industry, then since the 1960s their artistic form and content have an integral artistic system, unique in their kind, as well as certain artistic criteria.

The word "comics" comes from the English comic, or "humorous", which, in turn, began to be used at the beginning of the 20th century, when describing daily or weekly newspaper stories in pictures, most often of a humorous nature and called funnies. According to Bart Beaty, “the term has outlived its original meaning” and went beyond humorous stories: “cognitive dissonance can arise when the term “comic” is used to describe works of genres such as tragedy, romance, or story” [Groensteen, 2009: 131]. Moreover, the author notes the discrepancy between the term comic book, “the term refers us to a collection of funny stories, but in fact describes all types of publications and publications containing comics, and more often in magazine than book format”.

### **Phonostylistic peculiarities of comics**

The main object of the study was the verbal components of the comic book, i.e. literal text, which includes the speech of the characters and the author's comment.

In general, the text of the comic can be characterized by brevity and conciseness. This allows the reader to capture the entire text at once. In the comic book, not only drawing, but also text is important.

It is the use of replicas of the characters that contributes to the fact that the author conveys oral speech in writing. Despite the fact that the comic book is considered a written genre, according to some signs, it tends to the oral form, which is associated with the limited space of the frame in which the replicas of the characters are located.

Placing heroes, their environment, and also text in one frame limits the use of long replicas, so the speech of the comic book characters consists of simple phrases and simple syntax. It is worth noting that, unlike cartoons and movies, the limiting factor of which is time, in the comic book the space imposes a limitation.

Comic texts are characterized by relatively simple syntactic structure, which is as close as possible to the spoken language. Since spoken language is simple enough to understand, comics are an entertaining genre. The speech of the heroes is characterized by dialogism, while the author seeks to make the statements of the heroes the most concise and capacious. Using a picture allows you to achieve this effect, because the picture contains a large amount of information. As a result, the syntax of the speech of the comic book characters is similar to the syntax of oral speech.

According to many linguistic studies, the spoken and book versions of the English language are quite diverging in structural terms.

A characteristic feature of the English comic book language at the phonetic level is onomatopoeia (onomatopoeia), which is a reproduction of the sounds of nature and the sounds accompanying some processes (for example, trembling, laughter, whistling, etc.), as well as cries, sounds of animals. However, some scholars believe that onomatopoeia does not carry lexical meanings.

Regarding comics, one can agree with the opinion of A. N. Tikhonov, who claims that although onomatopoeic words do not have a nominative function, they have lexical meanings and are full words [10, C. 74]. Thus, they carry linguistic information and are means of communication.

A distinctive feature of the comic book language is the frequent use of interjections and various onomatopoeic words. Using onomatopoeia, the author conveys more information and expresses the feelings of the characters.

The English language is characterized by such common onomatopoeic words as meow (cat), quack (duck), woof (dog barking), cock-a-doodle-do (rooster crowing). Since these units are in constant form, they are equally understood by all English speakers. Based on this, it can be assumed that onomatopoeia have a socially conscious semantic content.

In English comics, there are not only sounds made by animals, but also onomatopoeic words such as: *BIIIIIP!* (car horn), *TIIOUIIOUII ...* (alarm sound), *BAOOM!* (blast sound), *WRROOOAMM*, *TTTWR* ... (motor sound), *PFFIOUUU*, *TA TATATA* (shot sound), *IIK!* (screch), etc.

The use of onomatopoeia serves the purpose of language compression. In addition, its use depends on the theme of the comics, in which fights, collisions, blows, screams, etc. can occur. Phonetically motivated signs are responsible for the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of sound, which makes it possible to "sound" a dumb text and bring it closer in impact to such types of mass culture as cinema and television. This effect is achieved through the use of onomatopoeias — onomatopoeic words. The category of sound becomes a unique textual category that can only function within the semiotic system of comics.

Onomatopoeia is very often regarded as interjection, but interjection and onomatopoeic words are significantly different. Unlike interjections, onomatopoeic words do not express emotions and feelings, they are imitations of specific natural sounds.

According to the majority of scientists, interjections are a category of words that serves to directly express emotions, feelings, expressions of will and calls without naming them. The language of the comic book can be simplified as a "concentrated" mixture of emotional reactions that follow the lines of the characters. Interjections are the most important element of this system and carry a significant stylistic load, visualizing emotional reactions and thereby bringing the comic book text closer to the oral form of communication.

So, interjections are words that directly express the feelings of the characters. In the implementation of the lexical meanings of interjections, the linguistic context, intonation, gestures and facial expressions are important. Typically, comics use lexicalized and individual interjections, but there presents the homonymy of interjections, which is found primarily among emotional interjections, so context is necessary. It should be noted here that such a meaning of interjections and particles directly depends on the context itself, since in other contexts we can see a different meaning, for example:

Table 1. – Interjections in Comics

1	<i>Aww, cripes!</i> (Marvel)
2	<i>Ta-ha. You're a mind-reader, Hisako</i> (Marvel).
3	<i>Hiya!</i> (Marvel)

The first example illustrates the interjection "Aww" widespread on the Internet with the contextual meaning of an irritated, angry exclamation, there is a homonymous interjection expressing tenderness and joy.

The last example is interesting because the English-language "Hiya" is defined in dictionaries as a spoken greeting: *Hiya* (exclamation informal) —

1. *an expression said when people who know each other well meet: Hiya, Pete, how're you doing?* [2];
2. *the cool way to say hi* [8].

In the case of Marvel, "Hiya" is used to express a battle cry upon impact, which is rather an occasional meaning of an interjection.

One of the most frequently used interjections is *OK!*.

Interjection words serve to create emotional tension in the recipient, thereby performing an influencing function, and also carry a significant stylistic load, being a means of the character's speech characteristics.

Graphically motivated signs are an essential element of the semiotic system of comics and, unlike phonetically motivated signs, are universal, and some of them have even gone beyond the boundaries of the comic book text and function separately in advertising, the Internet, etc. These include such signs as: frame, bold type, phylactery, motion line, explosion, exclamation or question mark, notes and other symbolic images.

The most common means of graphically expressing text is to highlight words in bold. This is usually used to emphasize the main point.

Table 2. – Means of graphically expressing text

1	— <i>Sorry! I'm <b>no good</b> until my first morning <b>beer!</b></i>
2	— <i>But it's <b>two in the afternoon!</b></i>
3	— <i>What? I gotta get to <b>Moe's!</b></i>
4	— <i>My name is <b>special agent Barker</b>. I'm with the <b>National Security Committee</b>.</i>
5	— <i>Sorry to bother you at this hour, Ms. Fairchild, but it was <b>vital</b> that we reach you today to inform you that you've been accepted into our <b>Gen-13 program</b>.</i>
6	— <i>You guys! Come quick! <b>You gotta see this!</b></i>
7	— <i><b>How did it happened?</b></i>
8	— <i><b>Woo!</b> Who needs ethics? <b>Not us!</b></i>
9	— <i><b>Never had'em, never will!</b></i>
10	— <i><b>Nah</b>, I just wanted to let you know that you're an <b>idiot</b> and Leela's a <b>sappy know-it-all!</b></i>

Examples 1-3 are from Simpsons Comics, 2013. In example 3, we see an indication of the time that it is too late to drink beer, but since the hero only drinks beer with Mo, it must be emphasized that the hero will go to him, and not to the other.

Examples 4 and 5 (Gen-13) emphasize the status of a person, his importance and the name of the program, which is also very important. Therefore, it is important to preserve all these components, since they carry a semantic function.

Examples 6-9 (Futurama Comics) illustrate that font highlighting can also indicate an increased tone of the hero's voice, shows the emotionality of the sentences. In them we see surprise, joy, and disappointment — all these emotions are foiled due to the emphasis in font.

Example 12 shows that sometimes bold typeface is used to draw attention to particular words: proper names, words that especially highlight the hero or just words invented by the character or author of the comic strip, realities are also often highlighted, the equivalent of which is rarely found in another language as in this example of Futurama Comics. It is indicated how the hero characterizes others, their features.

Let us consider other phonographic means. Such means as one of the most striking means of characterizing a character is a common phenomenon presented in the text of the comic. In such cases, phonographic means are used in order to display loud speech, a drawn-out cry and, as a rule, are manifested in a quantitative change in the letter composition of a word.

Table 3. – Phonographic Means

1	— ≡ <i>Whisper! Whisper!</i> ≡ <i>Hunger games</i> ≡ <i>Whisper! Whisper!</i> ≡ <i>Lawsuit</i> ≡ <i>Whisper! Whisper!</i> ≡
2	<i>You can seeee, by our outfits... That we are all he-eroes...</i> (Marvel)
3	<i>Ah was startin' t' figure you'd forgotten all 'bout me</i> (Marvel).
4	<i>Simplest solution is to boogie at top speed, faster'n they can catch me, 'til the poor dears run out o'gas</i> (Marvel).
5	<i>Ah was startin' t' figure you'd forgotten all 'bout me</i> (Marvel).
6	<i>Hang loose, sugah</i> (Marvel).
7	<i>The mutants aren't a community, punkin</i> (Marvel).

In example 1 from comic strip "Simpsons Comics", we can observe a special sign (≡), which is used to transmit soft sounds, or, as in the example, whisperings.

Another example of phonographic means is singing (example 2).

Often phonographic means are the leading component in reflecting sociolects and vernaculars and change the composition of the word on a qualitative basis. So, when analyzing the material, elisions were found, variants of the final -ing, as well as widespread colloquial forms of words (examples 3-5).

Non-standard spoken "pronunciation" of words is also reflected through phonographic means (examples 6-7).

A comic strip is a rich, creolized text, in which the characters of the heroes, their socio-cultural and speech originality are presented extremely vividly and sometimes exaggerated. Phonographic tools are an integral part of comics and, performing a range of functions, from the representation of colloquial speech to sociocultural and stylistic functions, play an important role in creating the pragmatic potential of the comic text.

### Conclusion

The linguistic aspect of studying comics is very diverse and represents a certain complex, consisting of several levels, each of which can be studied separately. The text of the comic is characterized by features typical of a literary text: emotionality, expressiveness, imagery, use of slang, a pronounced individuality of the author and expressive means that enrich the language of the text.

The analysis performed allows us to draw a number of conclusions regarding the peculiarities of the comic book text.

1. Onomatopoeia and interjections in comics reveals similar problems associated with the unformed systems of onomatopoeia and interjections in both languages, differences in the frequency of the use of such lexical units in English and Russian, as well as the presence of

- a) onomatopoeia and interjections proper;
- b) onomatopoeia and interjections modified by means of phonetic-graphic means.

2. Graphic representation of the phonetic features of colloquial speech, as well as typical deviations from the phonetic norm associated with the emotional and physical state of the character, play an important role in creating the pragmatic potential of the comic book text.

In this study, the main directions of the analysis of the phonostylistic means of comics are outlined, but this problem is not exhausted.

### Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

### Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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