

ЯЗЫКИ НАРОДОВ ЗАРУБЕЖНЫХ СТРАН (С УКАЗАНИЕМ КОНКРЕТНОГО ЯЗЫКА ИЛИ ГРУППЫ ЯЗЫКОВ) / LANGUAGES OF PEOPLES OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES (INDICATING A SPECIFIC LANGUAGE OR GROUP OF LANGUAGES)

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INTERTEXTUALITY IN ENGLISH LYRICS OF THE XX-XXI CENTURIES

Research article

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the category of intertextuality on the material of the English song of the XX-XXI centuries. The work examines various approaches to the interpretation of the concept of intertextuality in the works of domestic and foreign linguists, distinguishes two models of intertextuality – wide and narrow, as a result of which intertextuality is defined, on the one hand, as a universal property of the text in general, when any text is read as intertext, and, on the other hand, as a specific quality of certain texts. The article studies types of intertextual relations, gives the definition of the pretext. The authors focus on intertextual inclusions, the sources of which are religious pretexts. The texts of English songs are examined as receiving texts, and the texts of religious content are considered from the perspective of precedence. In the work, the problem of interpretation of intertextual inclusions is associated with the problem of reader's perception.

Keywords: text, textual category, intertextuality, intertextual relations, pretext.

ИНТЕРТЕКСТУАЛЬНОСТЬ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОЙ ПЕСНИ XX-XXI ВЕКОВ

Научная статья

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена изучению категории интертекстуальности на материале англоязычной песни XX-XXI веков. В работе рассматриваются различные подходы к интерпретации понятия интертекстуальности в концепциях отечественных и зарубежных лингвистов, выделяются две модели интертекстуальности – широкая и узкая, в результате чего интертекстуальность определяется, с одной стороны, как универсальное свойство текста вообще, когда любой текст прочитывается как интертекст, и, с другой стороны, как специфическое качество определённых текстов. Изучаются виды интертекстуальных отношений, предлагается определение прецедентного текста. Авторы акцентируют внимание на интертекстуальных элементах, источниками которых являются претексты религиозного содержания. Тексты англоязычных песен исследуются как принимающие тексты, а тексты религиозного содержания рассматриваются в ракурсе прецедентности. В работе проблема интерпретации интертекстуальных включений связывается с проблемой читательского восприятия.

Ключевые слова: текст, категория текста, интертекстуальность, интертекстуальные отношения, прецедентный текст.

Introduction

The article is devoted to the study of the phenomenon of intertextuality in texts of English songs. The breadth and multidimensionality of this concept is explained, first of all, by the fact that intertextuality is one of the most important strategies of text-building. In addition, intertextuality is an extremely multifaceted phenomenon, the study of which is impossible within the framework of a separate science.

The research material includes two groups of texts: lyrics of English songs and texts of religious content: Old Testament, New Testament, Holy Scriptures (Hebrew Bible), philosophical and biblical interpretations, etc.

The relevance of the study of the texts of English-language songs in the light of intertextuality is dictated by several factors. Firstly, the study of lyrics has an ongoing popularity among people of different age groups. Secondly, lyrics of songs related to different time and genres demonstrate different types of intertextual interaction. Thirdly, the lyrics of English songs have unlimited potential for penetration into various spheres of life (politics, social structures, human relationships, art, history, etc.), and therefore, not only for perception, but also for creating unusual intertextual connections. In turn, the texts of religious content carry many vivid images that are reflected in the texts of modern English songs.

The purpose of the research is to comprehensively consider the phenomenon of examples of intertextual connections in the texts of English songs and religious texts.

Main results

The term “intertextuality” was introduced into scientific circulation in 1967 by the French linguist Yulia Kristeva who referred this term to the literal and effective presence of a text in another text.

Contemporary studies of intertextuality as a theory of interaction between texts single out two models of intertextuality – broad and narrow [22], [8]. In accordance with them, intertextuality is considered, on the one hand, as a universal quality of the text in general, when any text is read as an intertext, and, on the other hand, as a specific quality of certain texts.

The broad (radical) model goes back to M. Bakhtin's theory of "dialogism". He believed that in every existing text there are traces of a whole universe of texts corresponding to each other. M. Bakhtin speaks of the text as a dialogue of the author with the entire preceding and contemporary culture. Dialogue is the basis for cultural continuity, mutual understanding and spiritual unity of people. Polyphony manifests itself in the ambivalence and dissonance of voices, the text is open as a potentially unfinished dialogue [3, P. 337]. The concept of dialogism by M. Bakhtin formed the basis of a new concept of understanding and interpretation of the text.

The importance of the discovery made by M. Bakhtin in the field of literary theory lies in the fact that "any text is constructed as a mosaic of citations, any text is a product of absorption and transformation of some other text. The concept of intertextuality takes the place of intersubjectivity, and it turns out that poetic language lends itself at least to double reading" [20, P. 79]. Thus, in Bakhtin's "dialogism" Yu. Kristeva reveals the intertextual principle.

Intertextuality, according to Yu. Kristeva, appears, as a theory of an infinite text, intertextual in each of its fragments. The broad concept of intertextuality implies the openness of the text to infinity as its basis. This model of intertextuality was further developed in various versions by R. Barthes [2], Y. Lotman [4].

However, the broad concept of intertextuality has a significant drawback, as it caused the blurring of the boundaries of defining the concepts of text and textuality. The focus was not on the texts, but on the relationship between them.

The narrow model of intertextuality is based on the understanding of intertextuality as a special quality of certain texts or types of text. According to the narrow interpretation, one should speak about intertextuality in the case when the author deliberately emphasizes the interaction between texts, makes it visible to the reader using special formal means. Intertextuality in this sense is reduced to a deliberately marked intertextuality [22, P. 23], [14, P. 31]. This assumes that not only the author deliberately and consciously includes fragments of other texts in his text, but also the addressee correctly defines the author's intention and perceives the text in its dialogical correlation. A necessary condition for such a communicative process will be the "intertextual consciousness" of both partners. The theory of marked intertextuality is contained in the works of R. de Beaugrande, W. Dressler, M. Pfister, U. Broich, I. Arnold, V. Chernyavskaya, N. Fateeva, A. Suprun, I. Potylitsina, etc. It is the narrow model of labeled intertextuality that we take as the theoretical basis of our research.

Due to the fact that attempts to theoretically substantiate the phenomenon of intertextuality are carried out in various disciplines of the humanitarian cycle, the terminological issue remains not completely resolved. Thus, the following terms are used to designate the subjects of intertextual relations: pretext [8], prototext [1], precedent texts and textual reminiscences [6], precedent text and receiving text [1], [5], donor text and recipient text [7], Text / Praetext [22], [14]. In our study, the term *pretext* is used to denote the text that precedes the given one and is the source of the inclusions used in it, and *accepting text* to denote the text containing a reference to the pretext.

Proceeding from the fact that the precedent text has a supra-personal character, it is a text, the reference to which is renewed again and again, reflects the life ideology of a certain society, precedent texts like the Bible, mythology, literary works are characterized by a high precedent status.

The term "*polygenetic intertexts*" denotes intertexts which are correlated not with one, but with some set of precedent texts. Polygenetic intertextuality is a consequence of the repeated use of certain pretexts in other texts.

Presenting a text in dialogical interaction with other texts, intertextuality is considered by linguists as one of its main categories [11], [1], [7], [8]. Intertextuality exists in close connection with the concepts of "text" and "textuality" and is one of the constituent features of a text, a criterion of textuality in general.

An important role in the process of text formation belongs to a variety of intertextuality, *interdiscourse intertextuality*, which is understood as the interaction of various discourse genres in the process of text formation.

Interdiscourse intertextuality is correlated either with a specific precedent, or with a generalized precedent, i.e. with precedent directed not to any one specific text, but to the "generalized image" of a certain set of texts.

Depending on the nature of the intertext, the following types of semantic intertextuality are distinguished: *intersubjective and referential*.

Intersubjective intertextuality is created with the help of various kinds of quotation inclusions, correlated with the author's or non-author's precedent texts. Non-author's precedent texts mean the texts of myths, folk tales, sayings, proverbs, etc. They can be regarded as precedents for intersubjective intertextuality on the ground that at one time these texts had an author. There are two main types of intersubjective intertextuality: *verbal and non-verbal*. The first is created with the participation of verbal texts, the second – with the participation of non-verbal texts belonging to different semiotic systems (music, painting, sculpture, etc.).

When analyzing the text, semantic intertextual inclusions of different size are found which are called quotation inclusions. A quote is understood as an element or fragment of someone else's text included in the author's text. Based on the adopted definition, the following are distinguished: the intertextual quote name; the intertextual quote title; the intertextual quotation.

Intertextual quotations are classified into actualized and non-actualized. The former are included in the text with the help of graphical means (quotation marks, italics, etc.) and often accompanied by an indication of the borrowing source. The latter have neither graphic emphasis nor links to the pretext.

Intertextual quotations can be verbatim and not verbatim. A feature of non-verbal intertextual quotations is that they annotate the precedent text using key components, making it recognizable by verbally expressed units. Most often it is the nomination of a character or some significant element of the precedent text in combination with a plot component. It is possible that only the nomination of the character appears, or a significant component, or only the plot component of the precedent text.

The source of referential intertextuality is socio-cultural discourse. Its main features are the intertexts expressed by anthroponyms and toponyms. The latter are most often used to add a local colour to the depicted events, while realizing a very wide range of connections and associations.

This article presents an attempt to chase the phenomenon of intertextual connections between the two types of texts – texts of English songs and texts of religious content, namely, passages from the Bible, that serve as pretexts. The musical genres and styles covered in the study allow us to see on what a large scale biblical motifs, heroes, images, scenes, plots have been used in music intended for different social strata, different ages, cultures and times. Successfully fitting into all sorts of contexts with different messages, pretext elements create a clear picture of the role of religion in the life of a person of the XX-XXI centuries.

In 1941 Billie Holiday (1915-1959), a singer, whose work constitutes an entire era in the history of jazz, released the song “God, Bless the Child” within the album “Don’t Explain”. The lyrics contains vivid examples of intertextual connections.

The song illuminates the fact that is relevant at all times – the rich are strong, the poor are weak. And already in the title of the song, the author turns to God with a request to bless the most vulnerable, children, on the difficult life path. For a brighter emotional colouring of the song, the author reinforces his thought with words from the Bible: “*God bless the child*”, “*Them that’s got shall get; Them that’s not shall lose*” [18].

In the first case the intertextual inclusion refers to Psalm 127: 3 (“*Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb, a reward*” [19]) and Matthew 19: 14 (“*But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven*” [19]). In the second case the author refers to Matthew 25: 29 (“*For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him*” [19]). Taking into consideration the pretext, we can identify the message of the song – the religion seems to have no effect in making people treat each other better.

In his book “Jazz Singing – America’s Great Voices From Bessie Smith to Bebop and Beyond” [17] an American author and music critic Will Friedwald describes the song as ‘sacred and profane’, indicating that though it references the Bible the word of God is misinterpreted. “People have received all from God, and our receiving from God is in order to our working for him”. It means those who improve what is committed to them will be rewarded; and the strenuous worker will gather to himself what is lost by the idle.

Judging by the nature of the intertext, we deal with an intersubjective, verbal intertextual connection. In the first case, we can say that the intertexts are polygenetic, since the sources are not one, but several pretexts. In both cases, intertextual quotations are not actualized and not verbatim.

Bob Dylan (1941), an American songwriter, poet, artist, and film actor from Minnesota is known to be a cult figure in rock music. Religiously, Bob Dylan was at various times considered an agnostic, then a Christian. He attends Jewish religious events to this day. Many of his songs have become anthems for the civil rights and anti-war movements in the United States.

Speaking about Bob Dylan’s lyrics, one cannot help but consider the song “The Gates of Eden”, released as part of the album “Bringing It All Back Home” in 1965. B. Dylan metaphorically draws ridiculous, but at the same time sad and sarcastic scenes from people’s lives, full of vice, sin, lust for power, and each verse ends with a statement of the fact that nothing of this can be found inside the Gates of Eden (“*No sound ever comes from the Gates of Eden; There are no kings inside the Gates of Eden; And there are no sins inside the Gates of Eden; And there are no trials inside the Gates of Eden; And there are no truths outside the Gates of Eden*” [19]).

The song demonstrates a decaying society without hope for heaven on earth. It is built on a contrast that is clearly expressed in every verse. The answer to the question of what is the Gate of Eden is given by the Old Testament: “*The Gates of Eden*” – The gates of the biblical “garden of God”, described most notably in the Book of Genesis (Genesis 2-3), but also mentioned, directly or indirectly, in Ezekiel, Isaiah and elsewhere in the Old Testament [19].

Also in the song we meet monks who have ridden the Golden Calf and promise heaven on earth [16].

The image of the Golden Calf appears several times on the pages of the Old Testament and the Holy Scriptures (the Hebrew Bible) as an object of worship for those who apostate from the God of Israel. According to the Hebrew Bible, the golden calf was an idol (a cult image) made by Aaron the Priest (Mose’s brother) to satisfy the Israelites who asked to “make us gods who shall go before us” during Moses’ absence, when he went up to Mount Sinai [19]. The calf was intended to be a physical representation of the God of Israel, and therefore was doubly wrong for involving Israel in idolatry and for ascribing physicality to God.

The idea of the song is that we are often guilty of trying to mold God to fit our expectations. When we do this, we end up worshipping something else. Our golden calf can be success, fame, money, precious possessions or anything we pursue more than our spiritual growth with God.

In both cases, there is an intersubjective verbal connection, in which the intertextual inclusions are quotation names: “*The Gates of Eden*”, “*The Golden Calf*”, and the pretexts are *the Old Testament* and *Holy Scripture (Hebrew Bible)*.

To continue our study of the music of the 60s, we could not help but turn to the art of The Beatles (1960-1970). The British band from Liverpool began by imitating the American classics of rock-and-roll of the 50s and came to their own, fundamentally new sound, now known as the beat. John Lennon’s work is classified by many as radical, anti-political and anti-religious. Lennon admitted the fact that in Christianity, in order to get to heaven, a person must suffer. The song “Girl” included in the album “Rubber Soul” (1965) contains the words: “*pain would lead to pleasure*” [10], which is a sort of the Catholic Christian concept. The pretext sources of the phrase are the following: 1. Peter 5: 10 “*But the God of all grace, ... after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you*” [19]. 2. Romans 8: 18 “*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*” [19].

In this case, the intersubjective verbal intertextual connection, the intertextual quotation can be considered as not actualized.

“Let It Be” is another Beatles’ song released in March 1970 as a single and as the title track of the album “Let It Be”. Written by Paul McCartney, but signed by Lennon-McCartney, it was the last single before McCartney announced his departure from the band. The song took first places in the European charts. McCartney said that the idea for “Let It Be” came to him after he saw his mother in a dream while recording the White Album. McCartney explained that his mother, Mary McCartney (who died of cancer when Paul was 14), inspired the words “Mother Mary” [9].

The song attracted our interest by the fact that listeners who do not know its background undoubtedly have an association with the Virgin Mary, who comes to the hero of the song in hard times, whispering words of approval and wisdom, bringing the light of illumination and hope for better times. The allusion establishes an intertextual connection between the lyrics of this song and the New Testament. Mother Mary is identified in the New Testament as the mother of Jesus through divine intervention: 1. Matthew 1:16. 2. Luke 1: 39-44 [19].

In this case of intersubjective verbal intertextual relation, it is obvious that the intertextual quotation was transformed: “*The mother of my Lord*” in the song text is called “*Mother Mary*”, and the grammatical design of the phrases is also different.

Stephanie Joanne Angelina Germanotta, an American pop singer better known as Lady Gaga, released the album “Born This Way” in 2011. One of the songs on this album, “Judas”, is about a woman in love with a man who betrays her. This song caught our attention with several examples of intertextual connections.

The title of the song “Judas” is an intertwined name found throughout the New Testament and other biblical writings. *Judas Iscariot* was, according to the New Testament, one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. He is infamously known for his kiss and betrayal of Jesus to the hands of the chief Sanhedrin priests for a ransom of 30 pieces of silver.

The heroine of the song, describing biblical scenes, identifies herself with the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ, later betrayed by Judas. Accordingly, all fragments of the text that carry intertextual connections have their origins in the Gospel writings and in the New Testament, being also examples of non-actualized intertextual quotations.

“*I’ll wash his feet with my hair if he needs*” [21] is a reference to Luke 7: 38 [19], in which Mary of Bethany anoints Jesus’ feet with her tears and dries them with her hair. “*Even after three times, he betrays me*” [21] is an allusion to Peter, who denies Jesus three times. “*A king with no crown*” – In Matthew 27: 29, the soldiers who tortured and crucified Jesus put a crown of thorns on his head. “*They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’*” [19] “*Judas, kiss me if offended*” – In Luke 22: 48 “*Is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?*” [19] Jesus asks Judas. Indeed, Judas’s kiss was a signal to the gathered mob that they should arrest Jesus.

Conclusion

Summing up the results of the study, first of all, we would like to note that English lyrics reveal interesting, sometimes unique and diverse cases of intertextual connections. Most often, non-actualized intertextual quotations were found, that is, quotations that are not isolated in the text, the understanding of which depends only on the competence of the listener or reader. This is due to the fact that a verbatim quotation is difficult to express in the poetic text of a song, and sketches and scenes from texts of religious content, borrowed by the author, are often collective images, the specific source of which is difficult to single out.

Taking into account the character of the precedent texts, it is not surprising that we often came across intertextual quotation names. Also, during the study, rather unusual and rare cases of non-verbal intersubjective intertextual relations were identified, when the precedent was not a text, but a melody, a philosophical concept or even an architectural structure.

In the process of working with the lyrics of the songs, we had to read a lot of comments, reviews, characteristics, discussions and disputes that play out around the meanings of the songs, namely songs that carry even a small religious message. We could not help but notice that the interpretation of the meanings of religious images in songs evokes in people completely different, often opposite associations and opinions, generates interesting allusions and images. We believe this suggests that songs, the precedents of which are religious texts, stand a little apart in terms of aesthetics and erudition of the listener, as they make one think, provoke an internal dialogue.

This problem turns out to be part of the reader’s perception problem. It is known that completely new information is perceived with great difficulty by the reader. He, often even unconsciously, tries to find something already known to him in an unfamiliar text. The author, including in the text of the work quotes or allusions from other texts, expects that these inclusions will be recognized by the reader and, thus, create the illusion of a kind of common memory of the author and the reader, which will help the reader to perceive the work of art in accordance with the author’s intention.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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