

RLMSEE-2020**The Russian Language in Modern Scientific and Educational Environment****PARCELING AS A MECHANISM FOR CREATING AN IRONIC
CODE OF POLITICAL TEXTS**

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Abstract

The article presents an analysis of verbal constructs that manifest the linguo-pragmatic structure of Russian political communication. The authors distinguish a special class of pictorial means of political language, trope figures, which include *irony* and *parceling*. In this regard, attention is focused on the fact that irony, being a personified reception of the organization of the universe, which is reflected in language, is often expressed through parceled structures. In the context of political discourse, segmented units with the inclusion of an ironic code provide a specific opportunity for immanent manipulation of public opinion, which is used by politicians for latent defamation of an opponent. Particular attention is paid to the description of the categorical essence of parceled structures, the contextual exemplification of which forms the asymmetry of the semantic field of the utterance and the formal verbal expression and thus generates the accessory meanings of the sentence, which together determines the ironic reflection of the text by the participants of political interactions. The authors point out the grammatical ways of representation and functions of these convergent ornamental constructions in acts of political interaction. It is concluded that the frequency actualization and peculiarities of the idiorepresentation of trope figures lead to the authorization of the political field, the strengthening of the mode of the artistry of discursive practices, the expansion of their pragmatic and axiological potential, and the formation of a new model of the world perception of political and culturally determined realities.

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1. Introduction

Language, being the basic attribute of personality, is the most striking marker of the object/environment relationship, within which it undergoes endless development. The processes of centuries-old existence of verbal signs demonstrate the expansion of the semantic capacity of the word and the formation of new semasiological fields in discourse as a global communicative event, which is explained by the mutual influence/interpenetration of the constitutive elements of diverse institutional Interactions which are caused by the mental, behavioral, and ethnocultural elements of social relationships.

«In this regard, the entire formal organization of political discourse is subject to the need for an effective implementation of the impact function, which is instrumented by a variety of communication strategies and tactics. Intentional “message” of political discursive practice inevitably changes in the act of individual language situation». (Bozhenkova et al., 2017), turns out to be the most sensitive to various kinds of transformations. The basic feature of political discourse and its use as a tool for mastering power, its preservation and redistribution (Demyankov, 2019; Parshin, 2001; Sheigal, 2005), defines the arrangement of the organization and implementation of text units not merely of different types (comparison, conclusions, description, opinion) but also different genres (press conference, official statement, interviews, etc.), that, along with explicit information, certainly contain implicit-connotative elements (first of all, emotively colored linguistic constructs), in political practices.

These verbal signs to the greatest extent determine the special linguistic picture of political discourse and its differential characteristics, such as specific institutionality, ritualism, and semantic uncertainty, the restoration of which is possible due to the inextricable connection of political texts with sociocultural, axiological, ideological, historical, and psychological components of the communicative situation in which they were created, and simultaneously with the system of cognitive and pragmatic attitudes of the addresser interacting with the addressee (Bozhenkova & Bozhenkova 2019). Accordingly, the effectiveness of political discourse is determined by the adequate planning of the communicative behavior of the addresser and the skillful implementation of this plan through the use of various verbal means that realize the impacting potential of the natural language on the intellectual and emotional, and volitional sphere of the addressee, in the cluster of which trope and figured constructions occupy a special place.

In the philological tradition, there are various interpretations of the nature and boundaries of these phenomena: in the former broad understanding the figures of speech included tropes, later these terms were distinguished (Gornfeld, 1911), but some illustrative means and techniques (for example, oxymoron, chiasm, zeugma, etc.) turn out to be transitional and not fully motivated taxonomically by their nature from the point of view of the existing criteria. In this regard, the idea of Novikov is particularly important. He proposed to single out a special class of expressive means called trope figures including those ornamental constructions, the distinction of which is possible only to a certain extent: "If we take, say, a comparison, then it reveals the properties of both a trope (a "non-collapsed" metaphor) and a figure (structures with such conjunctions and linking words as like, as if, as it were, allegedly, etc.)" (Novikov, 2002, p. 122).

From our point of view, the signs of combining the characterological features of both tropes and figures of speech are most clearly revealed by irony and parceling, since their synergetic arrangement determines the possibility of transition from the individual to the universal. Moreover, the actualization of the parceled structure, due to the unlimited figure model and internal tropic activity, expresses certain linguocultural meanings, which often form an ironic code of utterance/discursive practice, which determines their viability in the space of political communication.

2. Problem Statement

In the course of the research, we had the following objectives: to describe the categorical signs of irony and parceling; to study the linguo-cognitive mechanisms of the formation of ironic codes in the author's works and their perception by the recipient; to characterize the ways of explication of ironic codes of a text field with the identification of the specifics of their representation in segmented constructions; to conduct a systematic, component, and contextual analysis of the functioning of parceled syntagmas in Russian political discourse as representatives of ironic content; to systematize the linguocultural markers of the implementation of the parceling trope figure and the irony trope figure in the sphere of political interaction.

3. Research Questions

The focus of our research interest is aimed at identifying the categorical essence of irony as a universal semiotic matrix representing the relationship between a person's cultural experience and verbalized reality, with the subsequent characterization of syntagmatic, semasiological, pragmatic, and, more broadly, value-based and cultural mechanisms of adaptation of the ironic code in the acts of modern political interaction.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the specifics of the functioning of segmented syntactic units that determine the ironic reflection of modern political communication and thereby create a new linguocultural space.

5. Research Methods

The cognitive and discursive focus of our research views determined the main research methods, from functional and pragmatic consideration of text units, descriptive and logical methods of comparing its categorical components to contextual analysis, and the method of linguocultural interpretations of speech acts. This made it possible to reveal new properties in the studied linguistic object, such as the irony trope figure and the parceling trope figure, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of their structural and semasiological organization, to characterize the typical ways of exemplifying these verbal constructs in political texts of different genre, and on this basis to systematize the linguocultural patterns of Russian-language political communication.

6. Findings

It is no secret that modern political discourse demonstrates the ever-increasing "withering away" of the ethical and aesthetic components of speech culture, which is taking on the most diverse forms of verbal manipulation. The reasons for this phenomenon can be various facts of modern social life: from the actual (intra)linguistic facts (the dominance of the polysemiotic form of speech interaction, the shift in the normative boundaries of the language of mass communication, the verbal democratization of the taboo zones of political discourse, due to the wide "migration" of linguistic constituents and some kind of tribute to speech fashion) to outside (extra)linguistic factors (instability of the world economic sphere, globalization, and, at the same time, the disintegration of the linguocultural components of each ethnic group, which have significantly increased due to the pandemic, etc.). However, the main factor is undoubtedly the unlimited penetration of the field of politics into the content of various media, Internet channels, and social networks. It can be argued that media resources are not only becoming the environment and means of existence of the political space but also act as subjects of political activity, convergently implementing (1) functions specific to political discourse, such as agonal, interpretive, and social identification functions (differentiation/integration of group political actors), the control function (immanently including the manipulation of public consciousness), (2) functions specific to the media space, such as intermediary and (especially important!) entertaining functions.

In this regard, the most important thesis of Western information technology is being actualized on Russian soil. This thesis was very clearly formulated back in 1994 by Sir Bernard Ingham (press secretary of Margaret Thatcher) at the seminar of the Moscow School of Political Science: "The driving force of the British and indeed of the whole Western press is the value system of news. The main value sounds like this: the bad news is good news, and the good news is no news at all." Accordingly, any story should be sensational (from Latin *sens* 'feeling, sensation') and (already etymologically) have a pronounced negative connotation. The main positive character of such a story is naturally categorized as a representative of any press organ or other organizer of the "struggle for good" (in logical nominations, a representative of the subject), while all other characters (objects) personify the evil. We see here not only the classical Aristotelian formula for the judgment "S is/is not O" (moreover, the predicative dichotomy is built in the reverse sequence, from "is not" at the beginning of the story to "is" at its end to further idealize the image of the main character) but also the mythological, even fairy-tale structure of the text/discourse. The means of embodying such a mythological structure are various linguistic devices, in the corpus of which a special place is given to the irony trope figure.

The phenomenon of the irony trope figure, despite the centuries-old study and description of the ways of its explication (Muecke, 1969; Potebnya, 2017; Shilikhina, 2010), remains "scientifically lacunar", which is confirmed by both its many interpretations and many typologies (Glazova, 2016; Gnezdilova, 2014; Kiryukhin, 2011). From our point of view, the following should be stated: irony is a multifunctional phenomenon, due to the asynchrony of the meaning of the text and its form, the categorical essence of which is based on the disproportion/asymmetry of the verbal sign, which leads to the incongruity of the language layers (the conceptual and functional layer) and thus gives rise to accessory values in a sentence. Such a "deconstruction" of its structure, mediated by contextual

characteristics and a certain syntagmatic collocation, gives rise to a secondary nomination that actualizes both a new (usually opposite) to this and a new value-based and evaluative characteristic.

Today, it can be argued that being a personified reception of the organization of the universe, which is reflected in the language, the irony trope figure gives the text imagery and brightness, thereby fixing authorization in the modern political space, strengthening the mode of artistry, and political discourse acquiring panintertextuality. It is not surprising that irony in various symbolic designs not only gradually fills the information media space but also largely replaces the "classic" campaign speeches: "the use of Internet memes in election campaigns is a new trend in modern politics" (Glukhikh & Eliseev 2017, p. 94). Modern Internet trends, manifesting ideological views, can be viewed from different positions: (1) as a kind of folklore phenomenon that expresses the response of the people to certain political events or statements; (2) as a well-thought-out PR campaign of politicians and their teams. In the first case, it is a spontaneous, uncontrollable, and uncontrolled phenomenon, in the second case, the creation of each meme has a clear goal-setting (management of public consciousness, endowing a specific politician with positive or negative signs) and determines the strategy and tactics of interaction with society.

In this regard, it is extremely interesting to evaluate the irony trope figure as a method of latent defamation of the opponent by one of the most important representatives of the Russian political space, the Director of the Information and Press Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign affairs Zakharova:

TK: Is irony acceptable in political discourse?

MZ: Of course. Now we have the concept of "trolling". This didn't exist before, at least not in public. It's just a special genre, a special direction of work, or a special sign of the times, something that people could not do before, which is now a common form. Ministers of Foreign affairs, Presidents, Heads of State allow themselves to do some things that would seem simply unacceptable before, but today this is the norm.

TK: We have touched upon the terms of irony and sarcasm, but do you somehow distinguish between these two concepts for yourself?

MZ: Sarcasm is just harsher, stronger than irony. The irony is softer, I do not have a table on which I would relate these things. There is the concept of appropriate and inappropriate and a very important point that you will never be nice and pleasant for everyone. No matter how elegant this irony, humor, or sarcasm is, no matter how fine a joke or expression, it will never be approved by one hundred percent of the audience.

TK: Do you think the attitude towards irony is different in different cultures?

MZ: Of course, this is a question of different mentality and, probably, to a greater extent, different traditions, peculiarities, lifestyles, attitudes towards life, assessing life situations, ways of expressing opinions and feelings. Of course, there are some very significant peculiarities.

TK: That is, we can talk about a different degree of irony in your speeches, depending on whether your audience is Russian-speaking or foreign?

MZ: I would say this: our audience is different in age and composition. As for the preparation for the meeting, you always look at the declared topic, see who are the people you meet, what they do, and so

on. We also do not lose sight of the feelings of the audience, which implies a large number of components that make appropriate adjustments, including in the presentation of information and the communication with these people."

Thus, the irony in the context of modern political discourse turns out to be a model of the world perception of political and culturally determined realities that arise as a result of the semantic and stylistic interaction of "our" and "other people's" speech, which gives rise to duality, semantic ambiguity and thereby greatly enhances the manipulative potential of the statement. Moreover, in modern geopolitical conditions, the irony trope figure becomes the most important linguistic technique for legitimizing political phenomena, which often have a contradictory assessment of the electorate (Bozhenkova et al., 2020).

Undoubtedly, the process of creating an ironic code and managing its (code) reflection involves many semiotic incarnations, but the very specificity of media resources dictates the inevitability of a combination of perceptual auditory and visual sensory and perceptual channels, which leads to an avalanche-like increase in communicative phenomena that synergistically combine linguistic constructs heterogeneous in the structural and semasiological organization, where parceled syntagms are of the greatest interest as explicants of the ironic code.

Traditionally, parceling is the name for a stylistic figure of speech, which presumes breaking the original integral structure of an utterance into two (or more) intonationally/graphically separate segments, such as the basic structure and parceled structure (Kalinin, 2005; Pinegina, 2005; Vinokur, 2009). However, linguistic observations suggest that the segmented syntagma is a verbal marker of the cognitive mechanisms of text formation which allow the participant to present their communicative goal setting in a certain way. Accordingly, from a technique and a means of enhancing expressiveness, parceling is increasingly turning into a marker of an idiomatic process, which in the case of "iconic" figures of political activity (leaders of states, heads of government structures, representatives of opposition views, etc.) is often extrapolated to the way that members of the society that share these ideological views see the world.

Being a syncretic syntactic phenomenon, in which "features of two positions, the proverbial one and the unconventional one, are combined outside a sentence with a distributed component" (Pankov, 2019, p. 251), A linguistic mechanism of formation a text also known as parceling creates an environment, which contributes to overcoming linguistic prohibitions on placing various word forms in syntactic postposition, since, being "a compromise of expansion and compactness" (Vannikov, 1979, p. 83); it allows both to actualize and, more importantly, to rhematize the communicatively relevant component of the utterance.

The functional versatility of parceling, the openness of its lexical embodiment and sufficient freedom of syntactic representation (within the structure of a simple/complex sentence, or homogeneous members; due to the ellipse of the verb of general meaning; contact/distant location; the degree of prevalence and quantity of parceled structures), determine not only the variety of models of parceled structures in political discursive practices but the multilevel ironic reflection of such a construction:

"Interestingly, the assessments of the participants and journalists fell quite apart. In opposite directions" (Volkov, <https://www.leonidvolkov.ru/t/47/>, 11.04.2019);

"This is Putin's horrible plan: to put Volkov and me in jail to leave our headquarters, activists, volunteers, and the public in general alone with the terrible people called political scientists. And their satanic apprentices, the columnists" (Navalny, 2017, October 10).

"And now you can just take the example of Ilya Yashin and stick it in the face of everyone who says that the opposition will run things worse. Much more than that. They will run things much better" (Navalny, 2020, May 13).

"I watched a thriller last night. Then another one. Before, after a horror movie, it was scary to go out into a dark corridor. Now you're scared of falling asleep before you watch a horror movie. What if you start dreaming about the news"(Zakharova, <https://www.facebook.com/maria.zakharova.167/posts/10224660635732995>, 13.11.2020);

"Elections in 31 regions. Six million-plus cities are participating. That's where we need to strike. At Putin and United Russia" (Navalny, 2020, June 22);

"It's like a marathon or some kind of group therapy. The Central Election Committee made a statement. United Russia made a statement. The State Duma made a statement. The Federation Council made a statement. Now the Prosecutor General's Office is making a statement. I am waiting for statements from the Hydrometeorological Center and Sportloto on this topic" (Navalny, 2020, October 25).

"And you know what the author of the program offers us to get acquainted with instead of the spy scandal? Here Brilev has surpassed himself. "Another story filmed in London was no less sensational. Now the American actress Megan Markle will appear from the car. Although she has just become a duchess, she will close the car door herself. It's a small thing, but in terms of the number of views this video is in the lead". Meghan Markle. Herself. Closed. A. Car. Door. Bravo!"(Navalny, 2018, November 22).

"On the right side of the frame, you can see a river on the territory of the Golubev section, completely cut off from public access. It is illegal. He stole it. As well as his thesis, by the way" (Navalny, 2019, March 14)

Of course, the examples given above have different semasiological and grammatical arrangements (the ability to delimit segments is determined by a weakened semantic connection with the dominant element, propositional factors, and specific communicative tasks). Therefore, the parceled structures are diverse both in the syntactic organization (mono/poly/semi-predicative), the nature of the connection (hypo-/paratactic), and morphological representation (from adverbs and prepositional-case combinations of the adverbial type to nominal parts of speech). However, the essential feature of a parceled structure, the cognitive and intonational accentuation on the dependent position of the parceled structure, which enhances the appellative effect of the utterance, creates fragmentation, mobility, the dynamism of expression, and the effect of live speech, thereby forming the expressive and pragmatic center of the text field and the ironic code of political discursive practice. At the same time, we note that the last two examples are convergent ornamental constructions: the first parceled structures are reinforced by the following ones, as a result of which the character of an elliptical construction appears, at the same time a gradation series is singled out, semantically reinforced by the diversity of referential attribution of the verbal sign and (in the last example) the zeugmatic articulation of lexemes replacing the positions of the

direct object. This kind of combination of categorical features of ornamental constructions multiplies the interpretive and influencing potential of the utterance and thereby ensures the specific institutionalization of political practice.

No less interesting are constructions that equalize two "semantic isotopies" at the text level (Beregovskaya, 2004, p. 42). As a rule, these are the common and the idiomatic meaning: "I must say that Russia's arms are getting stronger and stronger. It is hardly possible to twist them. Even for such a strong partner as the European Union" (Putin, <http://special.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22150>, 20.04.2020). Here, the simultaneous explication of the two meanings of the trope figure not only turns out to be a kind of hypersemantization inherent in literary speech (which actualizes the agonal, identification, and interpretive functions of political discourse) but also determines the vector of ideological-axiological reading of the political situation as a whole.

Thus, the pragmatic potential and the actual function of irony, syntagmatically formed through parceling, can vary depending on the situation, but the two most common functions stand out. The first is the ability to take a pause and end the speech unexpectedly, even provocatively, changing the meaning of the previous text to its opposite. The second significant function of contaminated parceling and irony can be considered the linguistic self-expression of a politician, the transfer of their attitude to the situation. The implementation of these functions determines the solution of two tasks: a text with an ironic code requires special cognitive efforts of the recipient, as a result of which it turns out to be more memorable and potentially precedent-forming, while the speaker implicitly forms the image they need, an attitude towards themselves and the object of the statement. The formal and semasiological ambiguity and the obvious idiosyncrasy coloring of the segmented ironic statement turn the author of a political speech into an "immanent manager" of the consciousness of their audience: this is how long-established principles, rules, and norms are questioned, and the irony appearing out of a joke turns into a paradox. Further, textual composites (the capacity of the given figures turns out to be unlimited) gradually move into adjacent discursive fields, their derived meanings develop, thereby forming new laws of societal interaction.

7. Conclusion

Political discourse, without a doubt, manifests both the culture of a certain group with its ideological attitudes, axiological signs, mental symbols, etc., and the general linguistic tendency of ambivalence in the use of speech means, combining "economy" with visualization (and compensation of the first component by the second one). The determinant feature of such a phenomenon in political interaction should be the factor of the author's awareness, reflexivity, of the construction and use of the trope figure since in the present case we contend with a strictly organized illocutionary act that realizes certain intentions. The diverse interactional actualization of trope figures not only and not so much determines the link-cultural dominance of the named linguistic signs, but rather demonstrates the semasiological characteristics of the modern political logosphere, modifying the social-hierarchical structure of society and the linguo-ethnic universe as a whole.

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