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DISCOURSE IDENTITY OF CELEBRITY IN THE CARNIVAL SPACE OF THE USA

Summary. The article is devoted to the complex cognitive-communicative phenomenon of the discursive identity of a celebrity in the carnival space of the USA. Its inherent features define non-standard thinking, bright individuality, paradoxical personal and creative manifestations, qualities of a leader, talent, inspiration, genius, creative self-consciousness, significance, self-realization, creativity and intentions of a creator. Culturally specific mental processes and worldviews of Americans influence and determine the communicative behavior of the discursive identity of the American celebrity. American stars in discursive creativity demonstrate a divergent, i.e. creative type of thinking, which serves as a means of generating original creative ideas. Creativity is a person's ability to learn something new, non-standard, to be able to find something original and interesting in everyday situations. The creativity of the discursive identity of the American celebrity is manifested in the ability to identify and pose problems; to generate numerous authentic ideas; to improve the world; to perform analysis and synthesis; to express flexible and positive opinions; to look for originality and non-standard solution of questions and answers in communicative contacts with other people, in particular, with journalists, talk show hosts, fans etc. Their ability to produce jokes, sense of humor, intelligence, wit, wide awareness in various fields, as well as rejection of the pathos of distance are defining features of the creative discursive identity of the American celebrity.

The means that manifest creativity of American celebrities in their creative discursive activities are: irony; contrast; acceptance of self-humiliation; a joke on yourself; expressive statements; emotionally colored tokens; stylistic repetitions; word game.

Key words: carnivalization, celebrity, creativity, discursive identity, humor, laughter, word game.

Today we live in a celebrity culture, where images of stars, people who are famous for their stardom, are spreading around the world every day.

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Introduction. At all times of its existence, man is in constant interaction with the environment. Thus, the ancestors resorted to rites and rituals which later developed into carnivals, masquerades, costumes and more. Such celebrations and events helped people to understand the world and enter into dialogue with it.

Modern linguistics is characterized by dominance of the ecology principle, according to which language is seen as a means of organizing society and mental development of reality. Ecolinguistic orientation of modern knowledge has focused scholars' attention on the study of the picture of the human world,

understanding of language as a tool of creation, preservation and transmission of linguistic and cultural traditions.

One of the brightest and clearest options for conveying identity of any nation is its laughing culture, because it is humor that distinguishes each culture among many. In jokes people raise the most pressing and acute issues of our time; they turn to the established stereotypes, so that they identify themselves as an original nation.

Knowledge of humor comes to a person through the media which is a great way to communicate effectively with a wide audience. Laughter worldview is one of the main features of human thinking and ideas. The basic form of it is a carnival in which "there is no stage, actors, spectators" [4, p. 207]. The study of carnivalization as a phenomenon provides an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of processes occurring in modern society, as well as mechanisms of their creation, through the analysis of transformation of the carnival worldview into the present. The phenomenon of carnivalization is also a so-called "factor" for providing an incentive for cultural renewal. Constant process of carnivalization is evolving in social development. Thanks to linguists, the term "carnivalization" has gained a broader meaning. Now it is a characteristic not only of one carnival or holiday, but also of life in general. Carnivalization is not a temporary process – it is life. Humor in the process of carnivalization serves as a way of communication in society. This is an understanding of the world that is based on subconscious which is influenced by the media.

Creativity of the individual is realized in his creative discursive activity, manifesting its specific features. The phenomenon of linguistic, communicative and discursive identity was studied in modern linguistics (F.S. Batsevich, V.I. Karasyk, Y.M. Karaulov, I.M. Kolegaeva, O.I. Selivanova, L.V. Soloshchuk, V.O. Samokhina etc.), but consideration of characteristics of the creative discursive identity of the American celebrity has not yet been the subject of linguistic research that determines the **novelty** of this study.

The **relevance** of the paper lies in a desire to highlight uniqueness of parameters of the creative identity of the American celebrity that is demonstrated in the field of celebrities' creative activity.

The **purpose of the article** is to analyze language behavior of the creative discursive identity of the American celebrity, i. e. the study of creative means used by stars of the United States in the process of their creative discursive activities.

The **object** of the study is the discursive identity of the American celebrity; the **subject** is usage of creative means of the discursive identity of the American celebrity in realization of humor.

The **material** of the study serves 549 discursive fragments of communicative contacts of the creative discursive identity

of the American celebrity. Discursive excerpts are selected by continuous sampling from the Internet (videos with subtitles and scripts). The selection of US celebrities for analysis was made in accordance with the rating tables of NetFlix and FOX for 2019–2020.

Presentation of the main material.

1. Linguocultural specifics of carnivalization is the USA

1.1. History and traditions

Humor and laughter are present in American communication at all levels. Jokes are a way of social verification of the interlocutor, a way of transmitting information, maintaining communicative contact. To understand American humor in each situation one needs to have a special skill. Americans are such people who like to “pretend” that they are worse than they really are, trying to jokingly disguise their skills and achievements, joke about themselves and look at reaction of others. In an average American family, in any company of friends in the USA etc. they always joke about each other in communication and this situation is considered to be normal. Absence of “kidding” is seen as a signal of internal distress in the group. Humor is an important positive trait of a politician, teacher, university lecturer. Humor should always be present in an American’s public speech – one can start with a joke. American jokes are quite simple and unpretentious. They are “practical” and are accompanied by gestures or various actions. Americans are childishly funny: fun can be easily caused when the cake flies in the face of the main or secondary character [2, p. 152]. This attitude to jokes and humor determines their attitude to any festive, carnival event. For example:

(1) *My neighbor calls me and asks: “Would you like to go out tonight; would you be free?” And I answer “yes, I will, I’m American”* [3].

Humor lies in violation of logical and conceptual norms through association of the characteristic *free* with a stereotypical notion about Americans (USA – free nation!).

Immigrant jokes also left a big imprint on the linguistic and cultural specifics of humor. If to go back in history, the active flow of immigrants, which began in the early twentieth century, “provoked” a wave of jokes that “functioned as a social mechanism, indicating what should and should not be done, what must be done by an immigrant, and how an American must react” [4, p. 152]. By its nature humor is a revealer of clichés and stereotypes. In America optimism, humor and fun have long been a sign of “one hundred percent Americanism”. But quite often humor had a pessimistic tinge (even when it did not have a direct satirical orientation), which is quite typical of 20th century humor [ibid.].

1.2. Modern times

Modern American laughter culture is expressed by a considerable variety of humor. J. Perret identified the following types of American jokes: humor that contradicts the identity, his philosophy and is used contrary to the nature of the addressee; sarcastic humor – a claim to wit, but in fact it is evil; “put-down” humor – the addressee means: “I’m better than you, and don’t you forget it”; rough humor – many comedians in the United States resort to this form of humor (e. g. Don Rickles); physical humor – with disguise to achieve a comic effect [ibid., p. 38–39].

The most common type is a rude joke. This is stereotypical about the laughter culture of the United States: in their chatting with friends and acquaintances they often use profanity, humorous ridicule [6, p. 188]. However, such jokes only increase a comic effect.

Another topical issue of American jokes is racial affiliation [3, p. 197]. This is probably the most acute topic in the United

States. For several centuries in a row, the topic of racism has not abated. Maybe that’s why Americans are trying to make more jokes, so as not to focus too much on it. For example,

(2) *A black man walks into a white bar and orders himself a drink. But the waiter says: “Excuse me sir, but we don’t serve negros here”. “Oh, that’s fine, – he said, – I was not planning on ordering any”* [1, p. 32].

According to its characteristics, this joke is quite sharp, there is open sarcasm because it clearly depicts negative attitude towards African Americans. Presence of sharpness in this joke is more typical of the last century, because now such situations, if they happened (as the joke describes), cause a wave of condemnation and uprisings across the country. African Americans are defending their rights with dignity, trying not to repeat the attitude likely to them until recently.

Any subject of humor is relevant to Americans. They prefer simple funny humor while sometimes they resort to humor containing features of ridicule or rudeness. This does not reduce the number of listeners, but creates a circle of those who love this style of humor. Such themes of humor and jokes are essential in the carnivalization and carnival culture of the United States.

2. Carnival element of development of the discursive identity of the American celebrity

For any society, the image of a celebrity is a part of the idea of a “dream” which embodies a set of cultural values: success, fame, material well-being, great achievements. For most people, the token “celebrity” means something majestic, separate from the ordinary.

Creativity of celebrities is the key to success and opportunity to discover new heights. Rejecting stereotypes, they bring fresh ideas, originality, their assessments, individuality to the world. They are able to look differently at the already ingrained ordinary things [8, p. 13].

By the term celebrity we mean an extraordinary person who is popular among a certain segment of the population or among the entire population of the country and abroad because of personal characteristics that distinguish it from people.

Ability of American stars to produce jokes is a sign of intelligence, creativity and wide awareness of the individual in various fields. Creative discursive identities, which are American celebrities, demonstrate a number of qualities: 1) to be original – to be able to make associations; 2) to have semantic flexibility – to be able to use functions of the object in an unusual, creative way [ibid.]. Creative identity is characterized by: aesthetic sense, figurative thinking, visual picturing, sense of humor, non-standard thinking, curiosity, ability to see the problem and clearly formulate questions. Not everyone has all these qualities, but it is believed that they contribute to realization of the inherent inner creative potential. An integral feature of a creative identity is wit. T. Ivanova understands wit as the ability to create sharpness and states that: “wit is one of manifestations of creativity” [1, p. 78].

Cultural dominants and norms of communicative contact in the American community that identify American celebrities according to the linguistic and cultural environment are:

1. **Traditional friendliness and simplicity.** Americans are very open, always the first to make contact. It is not surprising when they answer questions in advance how they were addressed, as shown in the following situation:

(3) *Journalist: Congratulations, you’ve recently married.
H.Cree: Correct, yes, correct.*

Journalist: *So did you get a chance <...>*

H. Cree: *to have a honeymoon yet?*

Journalist: *Or busy?*

H. Cree: *We had a brief **honeymoon**, my wife **cried** throughout it (smiles) [6].*

Contrast and contradiction underlie the humor that the American movie star drew in during the interview. At the heart of this joke there is dissonance of the two tokens *a honeymoon* and *to cry* (*my wife cried*), because the first association that arises in the listener with the word *honeymoon* is happiness, love, smile but not tears.

2. **Emotional incontinence.** This trait is also one of the inherent traits of Americans. Celebrities in the United States are quite emotionally unrestrained during conversations and interviews, they usually show emotions, in most cases in the contact phase of establishing contact. This is the strategy used by US presidential candidate and TV star Bernie Sanders in the interview. He does not restrain his anger and his disapproval of competitors in the race to show his readiness to go to the polls:

(4) *Int.: Do you focus on beating Donald Trump or Hilary Clinton?*

B. S.: *Me?! Kidding?! I am looking forward to **beating Donald Trump**. I will enjoy this race. And with secretary Clinton <...> I think we will do it as well [7].*

Humor lies in an ironic answer to questions about his two rivals in the election. The comic is a play on words: *to beat* – 1) “defeat” and 2) “hit”. B. Sanders’ statement can be viewed: 1) “I’m looking forward to defeating Trump” or 2) “I’m looking forward to beating Trump”. The trickster is manifested in B. Sanders’ hint that D. Trump can be beaten as well as defeated, because he is a man and H. Clinton is a woman, so physical beating is impossible, but the result must be the only one: there will be no competitors.

3. **Verbosity.** It is also considered an important condition for communicative openness in American language etiquette. That is why the stars’ answers to reporters are so long that journalists even interrupt them. The example of an excerpt from a video interview with an American TV star:

(5) *Int.: Tell about your usual day out of work.*

J. Timb: *“I live in New York. I like being there because I get to see guys too aggressively hitting on girls on the street (auditory laughing). I like seeing that in public. I am not a type of guy to do that <...> I am not a type of guy to go up to a girl I don’t know and start talking to her. I am more the type of a guy to stare down a girl until she feels the need to button her shirt one more button (auditory laughing). And I saw this <...> I was on the street, this girl was walking in front of me and this guy approaches her. I can only describe this guy as probably owning every “Fast and Furious” DVD (auditory laughing). And he came up to her and he goes like this, he goes: “Damn, Girl! What you do? (auditory laughing). And she’s like: “Excuse me?!” (auditory laughing). And before she can finish <...> he goes: “Shut up!” And he walks away. And this was a Monday morning <...> (auditory laughing). That means that he left the house to do that <...> And I was like: “WHY?” And the only thing I could think of was he was doing her a huge favor, maybe, what he was doing was instantly living out what would have happened, if they’d dated, (auditory laughing) the 2 seconds preview. It’s going to be: **Lust, Confusion, Anger, Leaving**. Just saved you 2 and a half years :-” (auditory laughing)” [5].*

In this performance one observes presence of spoken language, making it easy and interesting for the audience to perceive. The celebrity comedian tells a comic story in a restrained mode, but such a performance brings success, because the audience laughs. Humor is built on a symbiosis of excessive constant digressions,

lexical repetitions, as well as the sarcastic remark of the star “*Lust, Confusion, Anger, Leaving*” due to monotony and oversaturation of facts in his story. The subject of the joke is ridicule for its brevity.

4. **Non-rigid thematic framework of communication.** Communication does not involve a sufficiently rigid thematic fixation. One can discuss various topics in interviews with stars. Even questions about private life which somewhat violate personal space, are common and not taboo.

(6) *Int.: Tell, please, our viewers. You, so famous, popular <...> What are you afraid of?*

Woody Allen: *It’s not that I am afraid of dying; I just don’t want to be present at that moment [5].*

In this example comic is created by hyperbole which is expressed in the part of the joke: “*I just don’t want to be present at that moment*”.

5. **Black humor and obscene vocabulary.** Black humor has become especially prevalent in American culture. Even a school of American representatives of “black humor” has appeared. The purpose of such humor is to ridicule everything: art, activity, manners, society, as well as to provide elements of sarcasm in the story, joke, conversation. Consider an example:

(7) *“Friendship can’t be bought; it is the most important thing in life. But, when one of these bastards owes you 30 dollars for a long period of time, this friendship may become annoying” [2].*

The joke is an ironic hint that friendship can be easily lost if you do not get your money back on time. Although, in the first part of the joke we see how importance of friendship is explained, and the second part is comical.

Conclusions. The United States is a large and multicultural country with its own characteristics. Such a country is formed by a large number of nationalities, a cultural mix that enriches the cultural heritage of the United States. American stars as discursive identities demonstrate a divergent, creative type of thinking which serves as a means of generating original creative ideas when existence of several answers to the same question is allowed. Creativity of the discursive identity of the US celebrity is manifested in the ability to be original and non-standard in solving questions and providing answers to other people (journalists, talk show hosts, fans).

The creative discursive identity of the American celebrity shows his creativity in humor involving stylistic figures which makes her jokes smart and interesting. Also, the creativity can be manifested non-verbally, in a strange, somewhat extravagant outfit, and manners to behave in public, but this is not a violation of communication, but is natural for extraordinary stars, who have an interesting taste originally. All these features – verbal and nonverbal manifestations of creativity – make the discursive identity of the star famous and interesting for the viewer, especially for fans.

The study of the creative discursive identity of the British celebrity in the ecosystem of creative activity as well as their comparing is a perspective of the work.

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Тарасова С. Дискурсивна особистість знаменитості у карнавальному просторі Сполучених Штатів Америки

Анотація. Стаття присвячена комплексному когнітивно-комунікативним феномену – дискурсивній особистості

знаменитості в карнавальному просторі Сполучених Штатів Америки. Її інгерентними рисами визначено нестандартне мислення, яскраву індивідуальність, парадоксальні особистісні та творчі прояви, якості лідера, таланту, натхнення, геніальність, творчу самосвідомість, значущість, самореалізацію, творчість та інтенції творця: спонукати до думок, змусити створити своє, виявити новизну. Культурно-специфічні ментальні процеси та світоуявлення американців впливають та визначають комунікативну поведінку дискурсивної особистості американської знаменитості.

Американські зірки в дискурсивній творчості демонструють дивергентний, тобто креативний, тип мислення, який слугує засобом породження оригінальних творчих ідей. Креативність – це вміння особистості пізнавати нове, нестандартне, вміти знаходити щось оригінальне та цікаве в буденних ситуаціях. Креативність дискурсивної особистості американських селебріті маніфестується у здатності до: виявлення і постановки проблем; до генерування численних аутентичних ідей; до вдосконалення світу; до аналізу і синтезу; висловлення гнучкості та позитивності думок; оригінальності й нестандартності постановки питань та надання відповідей у комунікативних контактах з іншими людьми, зокрема із журналістами, ведучими ток-шоу, шанувальниками їхньої творчості тощо. Здатність продукувати жарти, почуття гумору, інтелект, дотепність, широка обізнаність у різних сферах, відмова від пафосу дистанції є визначальними рисами креативної дискурсивної особистості американської знаменитості.

Засоби, що маніфестують креативність американських селебріті в їхній творчій дискурсивній діяльності, такі: іронія; контраст; прийом самоприниження; жарг над собою; експресивні висловлення; емоційно забарвлені лексеми; стилістичні повтори; гра слів.

Ключові слова: дискурсивна особистість, гумор, знаменитість, карнавалізація, креативність, мовна гра, сміх.