

АКТУАЛЬНІ ПИТАННЯ ПСИХОЛІНГВІСТИКИ [CURRENT ISSUES IN PSYCHOLINGUISTICS]

УДК 81`23

Стаття надійшла до редакції [Article received] – 10.03.2022 р.

Фінансування [Financing] – самофінансування [self-financing]

Перевірено на плагіат [Checked for plagiarism] – 14.03.2022 р.

Оригінальність тексту [The originality of the text] – 99.2 %

<http://doi.org/10.17721/2663-6530.2022.41.05>

PSYCHOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE VERBAL AND NONVERBAL PRESENTATIONS IN THE ANIMATED CARTOON “HORRID HENRY”

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The article accounts on the psycholinguistic semantics of the verbal and nonverbal children's representations thus reflecting the everlasting problem of children upbringing. The animated cartoon “Horrid Henry” has not yet been chosen as the material for the polyparadigmal psycholinguistic study of communication, comprising lexicosemantic, linguocognitive, pragmalinguistic and linguodidactic analyses. The complex investigation of the collocation “Horrid Henry” comprised lexicosemantic, contextual and textual analyses. The object of the article is the dialogical speech in the children's animated cartoon television series “Horrid Henry. The subject matter of the research is the linguistic and conceptual semantics of the title “Horrid Henry”. The novelty of the research is represented both by the material and by the psycholinguistic functional paradigmal methods applied as psycholinguistic studies are inseparable from other branches of linguistics. The article is aimed at interpreting and classifying the motives of the child's misbehavior in verbal and nonverbal psycho-semantic representations, The purpose of the article is reflecting the pluses and minuses of communication adults-children and their far-going influence on society. The key notion “horrid” forms the complex concept of subjective egotism that can be attributed to the child's sub-consciousness and his search for the social recognition. The functional paradigm revealed the fact that it is useful activity rather than the parents' instructions or adaptation to society that organizes the child's mind and behavior. Thus, the title “Horrid Henry” loses its semantic “horrid”, revealing positive conceptual transformations.

(Актуальні питання психолінгвістики [Aktual'ni pitannja psiholinguistiki])

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Key words: *polyparadigmal study, psycholinguistics, semantic representations, communication, behavior.*

ПСИХОЛІНГВІСТИЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ ВЕРБАЛЬНИХ ТА НЕВЕРБАЛЬНИХ ПРЕЗЕНТАЦІЙ У МУЛЬТИПЛІКАЦІЙНОМУ ФІЛЬМІ «HORRID HENRY»

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В статті висвітлюється психолінгвістична семантика вербальних та невербальних дитячих репрезентацій, які відтворюють одвічні проблеми виховання дітей. Мультиплікаційний фільм “Horrid Henry” іще не був вибраний як матеріал для поліпарадигмального психолінгвістичного вивчення комунікації у складі лінгвістичного, лінгвокогнітивного, прагмалінгвістичного та лінгвіодидактичного аналізу. Комплексне дослідження назви мультфільму “Horrid Henry” охоплювало лексикосемантичний, контекстуальний та текстовий аналіз. Функціональна парадигма дослідження виявила той факт, що саме корисна діяльність, а не батьківські повчання і не адаптація до суспільства організує розум та поведінку дитини. Таким чином, колокація “Horrid Henry” втрачає семантику “horrid”, виявляючи позитивні концептуальні трансформації.

Ключові слова: поліпарадигмальне вивчення, психолінгвістика, семантичні репрезентації, комунікація, поведінка.

Introduction

Communication is inseparable from developing the child's behavior [4, c. 332], so, dialogue is the effective method of upbringing people. Misconduct is the usual phenomenon in many families and outside. Dialogue as educating strategy should organize thinking and emotions, bringing up children in high morality and self-organization. Communication with children includes psychological, instructive, deductive, pragmatic strategies, the psychology may be called the first key to the child's mind by forming his positive emotions in the complex process of cognizing his widening world. The contrast of the child's needs and possibilities produces his

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affected states which can be stabilized by cognitive and emotional communication tactics: logical arguments and warm feelings. J. A. Komensky cites the words of Plutarch on moral education of children: “Nobody is responsible for the new-born children’s behavior but to make them good is in our competence” [2, c. 309-311]. All great pedagogues emphasized the prime role of useful activity in upbringing children. “It is favorite and free activity that makes one happy and dignified, that is why it is necessary to develop the desire to work and independence simultaneously to ensure progress” [3, 1983, c. 393]. The behaviorist and phenomenological (Husserl) theories layed the foundations of children’s development.

Literature review

People’s behavior is the object of psychology and sociology. Behaviorism of John Watson and B. F. Skinner (1904–1990) was reflected in linguistics in philosophy and analytical behaviorism of Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), Gilbert Ryle (1900–1976), Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951), Rudolf Carnap (1891–1970), etc. by mental terms, their meaning and using. So, mental terms belong to the realm of psychology as well as psycholinguistics. Mental and emotional expression produced in society by verbal and non-verbal self-presentation means reminds of a theatrical performance for creating image of oneself according to the sociologist Erving Goffman (1922–1982) with the strategies of exemplification, self-promotion, supplication and impression management. (5).

The object of the article is the dialogical speech in the children’s animated cartoon television series “Horrid Henry” (based on the popular book by the United Kingdom writer Francesca Simon and produced by Novel Entertainment in association with Nelvana Limited) which was chosen as **the material** of research. **The subject matter** of the research is the linguistic and conceptual semantics of the title “Horrid Henry”. **The novelty** of the research is represented both by the material and by the psycholinguistic functional paradigmal **methods** applied as psycholinguistic studies are inseparable from other branches of linguistics. The article **is aimed at** interpreting and classifying the motives of the child’s misbehavior in verbal and nonverbal psycho-semantic representations in the cartoon, reflecting the pluses and minuses of communication adults-children and their far-going influence on the society, which facts determine **the purpose** of the article.

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Findings and discussion

The cartoon “Horrid Henry” contains valuable material both for the linguistic culture, didactics, pragmatics, communication and psycholinguistics. Its main characters are Horrid Henry, Perfect Peter, Mum, Dad, Moody Margaret, Rude Ralph, Axe, Sour Susan and Gordon. Children are the most emotional part of the world population and their behavior is the eternal problem to their parents and society. In the cartoons as in life children express themselves both in verbal and nonverbal ways – shouting, mimic, gestures, motion, hysterical affects motivated by unsatisfied needs, limited freedom or punishment. An anecdote has it that children may have much will power but are little won’t power. I-concept of a child is dynamic and undergoes changes with age from egocentric to different degrees of exocentric.

Textual semantics reveals the psychological state of the growing child’ mind: his desire of self-presentation which is considered as “the act of self-expression and human behavior, aimed at creating agreeable influence about a person in another person” [1, p. 149], in which term the scientists distinguish such meanings as “impression management” that is the tactic to raise emotions, social performance for attracting people’s attention and self-salience” from the adjective “salient” “outstanding” interpreted textually as “demonstrating outstanding qualities” [after 1, c. 147–148[with the deeper connotation “craving for social recognition”. Aggressive attitude to people and pursuing ineffective tactics conceptualize Henry as a “destructive if not inadequate child” [1, c. 148].

The animated cartoon “Horrid Henry” reveals the number of the author’s communication strategies: entertaining spectators, typifying the family relations, revealing parents’ problems of upbringing children, age and gender problems of equality and submission in verbal and nonverbal competition. The entertaining strategy is achieved through Henry’s endless lying, tricking and misdeeds resulting in discomfort, evoking the spectators’ laughter rather by the images absurd poses, mimics and gestures than by the harm done. The verbal psycholinguistic semantics is expressed in Henry’s unceasing complaining, blaming and criticizing everything and everyone. Nonverbal psycholinguistic semantics depicted in Henry’s behavior and mimics demonstrate his restless nature, dissatisfaction with everything and the desire of self-presentation, so as to be the object of attention and praising. The

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cognitive semantics of Henry's self-presentation in everyday situation at home forms the image concept of the disobedient child rarely praised, often blamed and punished, evidently uncontrolled in his wishes and actions. The typifying effect is produced by numerous situations of Henry's refusal to obey parents, inventing false excuses to stay out of school, his raw with his brother for toys, books, food, etc.

The lexem *horrid* contains negative semantics "very unpleasant or unkind" [7] which is believed old-fashioned or informal [8], also deteriorated connotation "bad and shocking" [8]. The text semantics, expressed by both the images and the authors (script-writer and the cartoonist) in the key word *horrid* interpret it as "one of bad behavior", "mischievous, disobedient, rude", the contextual meanings concretize *horrid* as "abusing, lying, provoking, evading school and responsibility, etc.". The text meaning of the sentence-reproach *Don't be horrid Henry* is a social evaluation of Henry's behavior. The conceptual unverbal portrait of Henry is composed of his distinctive features: harm doing, with always sulky expression on his face, disorderly manners, constant frowning and grimacing. His mentality may be disintegrated into the sub-concepts: craving for everything best compared to others, playful, enjoying when doing harm, provoking, envies, impatient, terrorizing, manipulating people, evading punishment, lacking compassion, etc.

We can observe that the child of seven dislikes order and obedience as contrasted to his younger brother Peter, a model boy though with time he takes over some Henry's bad manners. Henry is obsessed with his own desires and never cares for others' except for some present. He seems to look for the slightest opportunity to do harm and does it playfully for his own joy and to the grief of the adults, other children and often himself. Henry is always provoking others to believe his words and makes fools of them. His constant search for the ways to harm people is connected with permanent dissatisfaction with everything that does not concern him, which facts reveals the textual pragmatic egotistic semantics. Henry's dislike for his little brother Peter is expressed in his offending words *smelly little baby*, *little worm*, accusing him as the first to have started raw, making him obey and ordering him about, practicing physical and emotional violence on his brother terrorizing him with roaring and attacking. Henry's violence is cartooned in the images of a crocodile, gorilla and eagle, which may stand for the metaphoric comparisons in his parents' accusations of Henry. Henry uncessently provokes his brother to do something harmful for himself. Peter's resistance to his brother's

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aggression is contained in shouting, defending himself, calling “*M-a-a-m*” to stop the brother’s attack on him and telling of Henry’s misdeeds to parents. Henry is strengthening his self-assurance by proclaiming himself *a king* to other children and playing at king or pirate with them. The child’s behavior may determine him as the one with spoiled psychic, characterized by aggressiveness and cheating.

On the other hand the reasons of the child harm doing may be his need in motion, attention, praising, his fear, etc. He makes no excuses for his misdeeds, and always protests aggressively against punishment by his affects, his deafening shout “*N-o-o-o!*” or the words “*It isn’t fair*” charged with emotional semantics of helplessness, hatred, craving for revenge and recognition, the cognitive semantics of his fault, and unawareness of injuring peoples’ senses. His cognitive semantics in the arguments against punishment often fails because of the peoples’ evidence. Henry’s pragmatic semantics of profit is especially revealed in the scenes of money matters, competitions and his *deals*.

Henry pleads his mother for something by false promises, drawing “*p-l-e-e-e-a-se*” pragmatically counting on his mother’s kind heart. Henry’s provokative speech tactics of treating people are: false proposals, cheating, threatening, attacking; those of evading punishment are: deafening shouting, accusations of others or just negation. Aggressive semantics is evident in his words characterizing positively himself and negatively others, in nonverbal (visual) absence of self-control in behavior and expressiveness. The cartoon series discovers the family source of Henry’s misbehavior in the scenes of his ankle’s quarrels with his father, which seem to be life-long. Parents’ manners are the first example for the children to watch and copy. So, like father, like son.

The image of the Henry’s hamster pet plays a special role in the cartoon reflecting the beast’s limited mind with its only sounds “*yeh-yeh-yeh*” and simple needs which are part of Henry’s nature, but the small beast’s behavior is impulsive and natural reaction to danger, hunger and other irritants, so is Henry’s but the boy’s misdeeds are often planned and aimed at certain people as provocation or revenge. So, the spectator is aware of the comparison of the child and the beast conceptualizing the primitive part of human nature.

No doubt that it is parents first of all who are responsible for the children’s behavior. We can agree with the statement that language itself does not make man,

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but, we also move the idea that communication is the strongest factor that turns the disorganized thinking into organized, grows people human or inhuman, stupid or clever, useful or harmful to society, warmongers or peace makers. Henry often contradicts his parents and others, especially after his misdeeds. Arguing and even quarreling is usual in dialogical speech of parents and children because of age, needs, desires, conditions, etc., though contradiction may be supplementary to another person's argument and contains the grain of the idea development.

The communicative tactics applied by Henry's parents to organize children include commands of the type "*time to bed*", "*time to breakfast*", "*time to go to school*", words of promise, permission and prohibition. So reminding the brothers of their schedule helps to organize their everyday life and often stops quarrels between them. Parents often contrast Henry to Peter with his good conduct and musical talent, the mother demonstrates her affection to Peter calling him "*my little bunny*", "*my sweet pie*", "*my best toy*" and often caresses him. On the contrary, Henry is seldom caressed and never told sweet names. These are the reasons why Henry dislikes Peter's good looks and behavior, his obedience to grown-ups and resistance to his leadership. The often repeated words "*Don't be horrid, Henry*" as a reproach and warning as human attitude to the child and organizing tactic produce only timely effect because of little explanation and lack of efforts to distract the child from his mischievous thoughts and deeds. The teachers repeat the parents' words "*Don't be horrid, Henry*" to stop Henry in his misdeeds with the usual little effect.

The children dialogues reflect competition in boasting, showing, insisting on their positions and their possibilities. Uncommunicative semantics of the children competition is incarnated in the emotional interjection of teasing "*ne-ne-ne*" and making faces. Children relations cannot be defined as "war" or "aggression", except for the scenes of fighting. More often their rivalry and contradictions are the process of stimulation, search of self-assurance.

On the examples of other children in the cartoon we can see that some of them have a concrete aim in life. Henry's schoolmate Moody Margaret decidedly stands on becoming an actress and *super star*. This goal organizes her mind and that of her escorting girl-friends to defend the right principles of truth and justice and to oppose Henry in his misdeeds. Moody Margaret is also fond of tricking, but her dialogues with Henry are more often challenging than provokative, she is

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PROBLEMS OF SEMANTICS, PRAGMATICS AND COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

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<http://semantics.knu.ua/index.php/prblmsemantics>

always competing with him. It is especially Peter and Moody Margaret who influenced Henry's desire to gain popularity not only for his bad doings but for something really valid, to become the first in everything, *the super star*, thus forming his goal in life. This aim was realized first in sport by cheating the classmates in racing competition for prize, in the compositions competition, then faking performing on violin with player. Henry succeeded in all his bad affairs and enjoyed the victories without shame. So cheating people became Henry's reliable tactics in his strategy to win.

Henry's psychological tactics in communication include false compassion (empathy), affective moments of joy or relaxation. Cognitive semantics in the child's behavior, linked to emotional, is revealed in contacts with his friends (exchange of ideas, experience, skills), their understanding, self-presentation intentions, ability to interpret social situations, foreseeing the results, people evaluations, ability to influence people's conclusions by presentation tactics. Henry's self-presentation becomes conscious in social surrounding, developing his cognitive skills.

It is a known fact that children's behavior differ with their gender, and the boys are usually more agile and reactive than girls. On the other hand, the Bible advice "*Be like children*" is interpreted in all possible ways, resulting in unconscious, unsociable, inhuman conduct. So in communication sub-consciousness may be realized and not the trained norms of civilized life. Thus the progress in children bringing up and education is only possible with special attention to developing consciousness as awareness of social surrounding and logical thinking which skills will favor communication and cooperation.

Conclusion. The polyparadymal psycholinguistic analysis of lexical and textual semantics in the verbal and nonverbal representations of Henry's behavior in dialogical speech with children and adults reveals the cognitive semantics of the key notion "horrid" which forms the complex concept of subjective egotism that can be attributed to the child's sub-consciousness and his search for the social recognition and not adaptation to society. The psycholinguistic screening discovers the way of the harm-doing child to socialization and self-organization by developing his abilities in seeking and achieving social recognition in his

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challenging surrounding. **The prospective investigation** will be focused on the uncomplimentary dialogical communication.

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