

COMIC BOOK AND GRAPHIC NOVEL IN THE SYSTEM OF MEDIA SPACE

КОМІКС ТА ГРАФІЧНИЙ РОМАН В СИСТЕМІ МЕДІА ПРОСТОРУ

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The article analyzes the concepts of “creolized text”, “graphic novel” and “comic book”. A creolized text is a complex textual formation in which verbal and non-verbal elements form a single visual, structural, semantic and functional whole aimed at a complex pragmatic effect on the recipient. The principle of classification of creolized texts is presented (by the degree of fusion of verbal and non-verbal components, by the nature of the iconic component, by the nature of the verbal component, by the ratio of the amount of information transmitted by different signs and the role of the image, by the nature of the connections that unite the verbal and visual components, by socio-cultural orientation (interculturally oriented, trans-culturally oriented). The functions of a creative text are informative, attractive, expressive, aesthetic, symbolic, illustrative, argumentative, euphemistic, characterization, satirical, and image-building.

A comic book is a story in the form of images accompanied by words. A graphic novel is one of the most non-standard types of comics. Graphic novels and comics are texts with full creolization, i.e. they contain verbal and non-verbal components. Verbal components include the entire literary text within the work (the language of the characters and the author’s language). Non-verbal components include the comic’s graphics (sequence of drawings) and paragraphs (background, additional information).

Comics are classified according to the artistic techniques used, the place where they were created, the topics and formats in which they were published.

The problem of translating comics into Ukrainian is primarily related to the underdeveloped culture of reading comics in Ukraine. Graphic novels have common features with literature and cinema, and in general they follow the rules of literary translation, but due to specific aspects inherent in sequential art, they differ.

Key words: creolized text, graphic novel, comics, verbal and non-verbal elements.

У статті проаналізовано поняття «креолізований текст», «графічний роман» та «комікс». Креолізований текст – складне текстове утворення, в якому вербальні та невербальні елементи утворюють одне візуальне, структурне, смислове та функціональне ціле, спрямоване на комплексну прагматичну дію на реципієнта. Наведено принцип класифікації КТ (за мірою злитості в них вербальних і невербальних компонентів, за характером іконічного компонента, за характером вербального компонента, за співвідношенням обсягу інформації, яка передається різними знаками, і за роллю зображення, за характером зв’язків, що об’єднують вербальний і образотворчий компоненти, за соціокультурною орієнтованістю (інтеркультурно орієнтовані, транскультурно орієнтовані)). Функції КТ – інформативна, атрактивна, експресивна, естетична, символічна, ілюстративна, аргументуюча, евфемістична, характерологічна, сатирична та функція створення іміджу.

Комікс – оповідання у формі зображень, які супроводжуються словами. Графічний роман – один із найбільш нестандартних видів коміксу. Графічні романи та комікси є текстами з повною креолізацією, тобто кістять вербальні та невербальні компоненти. Під вербальними компонентами розуміється весь літерний текст у межах твору (мова персонажів та авторська мова). Невербальні компоненти включають графіку коміксу (послідовність малюнків) і параграфіку (фонова, додаткова інформація).

Комікси класифікуються за застосованими художніми прийомами, місцем, де вони був створений, темами та форматами, в яких були опублікований.

Проблема перекладу коміксів українською пов’язана насамперед із недостатньо розвинутою культурою читання коміксів в Україні. У графічного роману є спільні риси з літературою та кінематографом, і загалом він підпорядковується правилам літературного перекладу, але через специфічні моменти притаманні послідовному мистецтву він відрізняється.

Ключові слова: креолізований текст, графічний роман, комікс, вербальні та невербальні елементи.

Statement of the problem in general terms and its connection with important scientific or practical tasks. The twentieth century was a stage in forming new types of art, marked by vivid attempts to mutually enrich different types of creativity. One of the innovative areas of creative reproduction of reality was the visual arts, represented by the graphic novel, which is called the only truly new

cultural form born in the twentieth century. Still, its study began not so long ago, at the end of the twentieth century, due to the tendency to remove the opposition between elite and mass culture. One of the results of this process was a change in the “format” of graphic novels themselves, namely the growing importance of the novel itself and its close forms.

Analysis of research and publications. The definition of the concept of “creolized text”, its functions and analysis of approaches to classification can be found in the works of K. Bilyk, O. Zavadska, A. Zahnitko.

Murray refers to the concept of “graphic novel” in his study. The concept of “comic book” is used by Kaindl, Celotti (including verbal and non-verbal components), Eisner, McCloud (also classifies comics by categories), L. Milchenko (classification of comics by place of origin), Kunzle (classification by format).

The purpose of the study is to analyze approaches to defining the concepts of “comic book” and “graphic novel”.

Presentation of the main material. The study of text nature and its categories has always been of great importance in the development of modern linguistics. Linguists’ interest in this category contributed to the emergence of a new branch of linguistics - text linguistics. According to linguists, the task of text linguistics is to find and build a system of text categories with specific semantic units, as well as to describe the conditions of human communication.

A creolized text is an illustrated text where verbalized information is combined with an image; verbal and pictorial components form a visual, structural, semantic and functional whole that provides a comprehensive, pragmatic impact on the addressee [1].

O. Zavadska considers a creolized text as a poly-coded text that uses elements of different semiotic systems (images, less often animation, music, etc.) [2]. The opinion of K. Bilyk is similar to it [3]. In modern practice, these are primarily texts in which verbal and visual components interact. Among the possible ways of visualization, the most commonly used are photographs, drawings, infographics, photo collages, charts, graphs, diagrams, diagrams, maps, etc. The choice of a particular tool depends on many characteristics: the author’s intention; the genre of the material; the addressee’s factor: social status, level of education, age, gender, the area of CT functioning, and many others [2].

Modern scholars propose classifications of creolized texts based on various criteria, namely: 1) by the degree of merging of verbal and non-verbal components (homogeneous verbal/iconic texts, paralinguistically active texts, texts with partial/full creolization); 2) by the nature of the iconic component (static/dynamic, two-dimensional and three-dimensional); 3) by the nature of the verbal component (oral/written; including signs of one or more natural languages); 4) by the ratio of the amount of information transmitted by different signs and the role of the

image: (rehearsal, adaptive, selective, oppositional, integrative, image-centered); 5) by the nature of the connections that unite the verbal and visual components (explicit/expressive/implicit); 6) by socio-cultural orientation (interculturally oriented, transculturally oriented). Thus, the image is involved to varying degrees in the organization of the text [3].

By functioning and interacting in a single semantic space, verbal and non-verbal components ensure the integrity and coherence of the creolized text, as well as its communicative effect. The main universal functions of the image are considered to be informative, attractive, expressive and aesthetic. The symbolic, illustrative, argumentative, euphemistic, characterization, satirical, and image-creating functions of the image are defined as separate ones [3]. From the point of view of psycholinguistics, an important function of creolized texts is the independence of non-verbal communication from language barriers, since the universality of the non-verbal extralinguistic code allows people to communicate when they do not know the language. Creolized texts are also capable of conveying a large amount of information in a compact form, thereby increasing the information capacity of polycode texts. Thanks to the codes of various semiotic systems, creolized texts provide a comprehensive communicative and pragmatic effect on the reader, draw the reader’s attention to information, and stimulate his or her cognitive activity [2].

Verbal components are understood to mean all the written text within a work. Two subtypes are distinguished here: character speech and author speech (including titles, headlines, author’s summary, comments on the entire comics or on individual episodes). Character speech is placed in a special space, the so-called verbal bubble [5, 38]. Since the verbal component is concise and simple, the bubble contains a shortened direct speech, a line spoken by a comic character. Non-verbal components include the comics strip’s graphics (a sequence of drawings, so-called panels, each of which is framed and forms a frame) and paraphrase, which conveys mostly background, and additional information that acts as a substitute for written text and contributes to the expressiveness and emotionality of the comic strip, as well as creates animation of the graphic part [5, 183]. The more abstract and less realistic a drawing is, the closer it is to the text, and the more difficult it is to perceive. And vice versa, the simpler and more straightforward the text, the more it resembles an image in terms of speed and ease of perception [6, 49].

A graphic novel is a term usually used for works that are not published serially. Authors often use this concept to show that their work is intended for an

adult audience. It is believed that the term appeared in the 1970s, when comics first began to be considered in academic circles, and appropriate terminology was needed to study them [7, 34].

The graphic novel is one of the most unconventional types of comics, positioning itself as a serious genre that has nothing to do with funny pictures and clichéd stories. Despite this, there's no denying that in many ways the graphic novel is similar to the genres its authors want nothing to do with. They are united by the very concept of a comic book, to which they all belong.

All of the above leads to the statement that the concept of a graphic novel is directly related to the concept of a comic book. We tend to believe that "comic book" and "graphic novel" are in a sense interchangeable terms, but the former has a wider range of meanings. In other words, any graphic novel can be called a comic book, but not every comic book can be called a graphic novel. Which raises the question: what is a comic book in itself?

Eisner defines comics as "sequential art," meaning a creative expression, an artistic and literary form, and a particular order of pictures and words to express an idea or narrative [8]. In his book *Comics and Sequential Art*, he considers both magazine comics and graphic novels, instruction books and scripted storyboards together. His definition of a comics also includes animation, which is usually not included, because in cartoons the sequence is presented in time, while a comics is not temporally constrained.

S. McCloud in his book *Understanding Comics* also starts with Eisner's definition, but tries to narrow it down and clarify it, giving the following version: "Illustrative and other images juxtaposed side by side in a deliberate sequence to convey information and/or elicit an aesthetic response from the viewer" [6, 30].

K. Kindle considers the comics strip "a form of storytelling consisting of at least two pictures" [9, 25].

The disadvantage of these definitions is that they do not include single-panel comics (one image including text), which were originally considered to be such. S. McCloud compares them to a movie cutout, missing the fact that such a comics, unlike a movie frame, can carry a semantic load and be independent of any other extraneous elements.

According to R. Harvey, a comic book is a story in the form of images accompanied by words (often inserted from the picture area) that complement it, and vice versa [10, 75]. This definition applies to single-panel comics, but is not suitable for those with no text. All these definitions are based on the physical structure of the comic book.

In light of this, the comic book can only be understood as a sociological, literary, and cultural product that does not depend on its internal composition. The comic book is built on the basis of three types of art: literature, painting and cinema. W. Eisner also argues that a comic book is a kaleidoscope of images and words, and therefore the reader needs to perceive information both visually and in textual form, these two aspects are inseparable [8, 164].

Due to this diversity of opinions, some researchers are convinced that there is no single correct definition at all. The variability and impermanence of the comic strip is also the reason why it has not yet been possible to identify a universal and precise definition of what can be called a comic strip, but despite this, the above options should give a relatively comprehensive idea [12]. Nevertheless, we think that W. Eisner's definition is the most correct, since it was he who first defined comics as "sequential art", which is the main concept for further study.

The fundamental difference between a comic book and a graphic novel is the topics the author explores and the way they are presented. The concept of a comic book is broad and does not always allow for a clear characterization of a work, which is why the term "graphic novel" was coined. However, we can confidently say that the translation features are the same for both, since a graphic novel is essentially a continuation of a comic book and one of its types.

A comic book, like any other art form, can be classified according to various criteria. A comic book includes both textual and pictorial components, and thus can be classified according to the artistic techniques used, the place where it was created, and the topics and formats in which it was published.

Geographically, comics are usually divided into those published in the United States and the United Kingdom, continental Europe, and East Asia. They differ not only in terms of genres and topics, but also in terms of publishing policy and format. In the United States, as in other English-speaking countries that are often grouped together, comics are the most diverse in terms of genres and styles, and have a great influence on the comics industry as a whole. Almost every European country has its own format of publication, for example, in Italy it is "bonellianos" – black and white softcover books of about one hundred pages each, and in France comic books are colored and printed in landscape format in hardcover. Japanese manga differs from American and European comics in that it is read from right to left (sometimes pages are printed in mirror image when translated, but this greatly harms the composition of the picture and

storyboarding), it is usually published in monthly or weekly magazines, and it is always black and white. In China, there is a type of manga called manhua, and in South Korea, manhwa [4].

When it comes to artistic techniques, comics can be divided into many categories. Each artist has his or her own unique style, but in general, there are two main trends: realism and caricature [6, 30]. The caricature style works to simplify the anatomy, but gives more freedom for expression than realism. However, artists often combine them in different ways, for example, by detailing the background and simplifying the characters.

Comics are also divided according to the artistic tools, techniques, and use of color. And while sketches created with a pencil are usually outlined with pens or a brush, materials for working with color are much more diverse: watercolor, acrylic, pastel, etc. Thanks to the development of technology, the entire comic strip can be completely created using a variety of programs on a computer.

The most common classification of comics is based on the format in which they are published. Cartoon – consists of a single drawing with a text commentary. A comic strip is a small block of panel comics published in newspapers and magazines, usually associated with satire and humor [13]. Nowadays, strips are short episodes (22–24 pages) of a story that will be continued in the next issue. Usually, these issues are then published in a separate comic book, in a paperback and approximately 32 to 80 pages long, which is the format we are used to seeing superhero stories in. Also, several issues of comics can be published in a comic album. A graphic novel falls under the same classification.

This classification cannot be called complete, since comics is a constantly evolving art, where something new is constantly emerging that does not fit into the previously established framework and formats.

Thus, a graphic novel is a subgenre of the comic book that utilizes the same structure, namely, a graphic novel can be published according to the comic book standard once a month, but the number of issues will be limited, and with the last issue the plot will be considered finalized, and after the publication of the last issue, all parts are often combined into a hardcover book, which can be up to 500 pages long and have additional materials from the authors. The most distinctive difference between a graphic novel and a regular comic book is the subject matter, which is aimed at an adult reader and reveals complex and deep issues that may relate to, for example, society or politics.

When translating, it should be kept in mind that a comic book, and therefore a graphic novel, is not a literary genre but a separate independent art form. The similarities and differences between the translation of comics, literature, and movies can be divided into two categories: textual (relating to the text itself) and technical (related to the form rather than the content). Translators are usually concerned with the first category.

The translation of a literary work, as well as a graphic novel, is primarily associated with working with the text: it involves the search for lexical equivalents, lexical and grammatical transformations, and structural changes. The same issues are revealed during subtitling and dubbing of films, but in the case of graphic novels they are more evident, since, like literary works, graphic novels exist in written form. When translating both, the coherence of the text must be maintained, although it is not so obvious in a graphic novel, but the text must be perceived as a whole, not in separate blocks. However, literary works do not have untranslatable elements, and there are no restrictions on frames and pictures. Untranslatable elements are part of the unchanging discourse that must remain intact in any edition in any language. For a graphic novel, these are images, storyboarding, and art style. They create the context for the story the translator is working with [14].

Spatial constraints are also typical for film translation, but if for a graphic novel they are only the boundaries of speech bubbles, then for subtitling or dubbing there is also a time constraint, with elements that are not translated present in both. Both a subtitle translator and a translator working with a graphic novel cannot influence or alter the movie footage or drawing in any way, but unlike movies, in comics, sound and graphics are an integral part of the translation. The same is true when translating plays, where the translator is also bound by time constraints.

Graphic novels are also linked to audiovisual translation by the need to find a dynamic equivalent (selecting the most accurate unit based on how it affects the recipient) instead of a formal equivalent (the closest and most accurate translation). Dynamic equivalence is needed because of the already mentioned spatial constraints, as well as for translating jokes and wordplay.

In works on translation theory, comics or graphic novels have rarely been mentioned and have a rather precarious position in translation studies. Even in works that study subfields of translation studies, such as film dubbing, they are mentioned only in passing.

The problem of translating comics into Ukrainian is primarily related to the underdeveloped culture of reading comics in Ukraine. At the moment, amateur translation still far outnumbers professional translation, which affects the quality and adequacy of translation and causes difficulties in identifying patterns in the translation of comics into Ukrainian.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. To summarize the above information, we have considered the concepts of «creolized text», «graphic novel» and «comic book», and the statement about their connection and interchangeability has been expressed and substantiated. The most common classifications are also presented, and the relationship of the graphic novel to other art forms is described.

The graphic novel has common features with literature and cinema, and in general it follows the

rules of literary translation, but due to specific aspects inherent in sequential art it differs.

Thus, a creolized text is a complex textual formation in which verbal and non-verbal elements form a single visual, structural, semantic, and functional whole aimed at a complex pragmatic effect on the recipient. The above features allow us to consider graphic novels and comics as texts with full creolization, that is, texts with systematic relations between the verbal and visual parts of which are established: the image and verbal commentary of the text bubble are interconnected, complementary and interdeterminate each other. This marks the uniqueness of the comic strip as a semantically complex text in the contemporary context. We see the prospects for further research in identifying the peculiarities of comic book translation and their practical analysis.

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