

Informal communication as a linguocultural phenomenon of the new Russia

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Abstract. The goal of research is to find language special aspects of informal communication. Informal communication is a communicative sphere where speech-creating behavior of communicants meets the natural need not to be constrained in means of self expression and interaction with other people. The language novations of this communicative sphere can not be self consistent and included to written official sources. The novelty of informal communication discourse is determined by the next principles of language and text manipulation: first, the principle of refusing known planes of expression (by using occasional and potential units which correlate with several producing words; by using potential of infringed orthographical norms); second, the principle of contrast which basic function is determined by mechanism of joint realization of methods in one context. These methods create contradictory meanings, combinations, communicative effects.

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Introduction

Communicative space of the Russian society at the turn of the XX – XXI centuries is distinguished by snowballing novation processes embodied in transformative, combinative and anew use of means and language features. Extraordinary intensification of the sphere of creatively focused speech is correlated with overall cultural speech situation and corresponds to the tendency of the renovation of the Russian society as a whole.

In Russian linguistics significant scholars in Russian philology dedicated their works to creative use of language capacity such as Bakhtin M.M., Vinogradov V.V., Vinokur G.O., Larin B.A., Shcherba L.V., etc. Over the past half century the language is especially actively studied in domestic linguistics in the aspect of the new pragmatism and creativity (e.g., linguistics of the post-totalitarian society, media linguistics, political linguistics, etc.), as demonstrated by monographs, doctoral researches, articles (see work of Elistratov V.S., Ermakova O.P., Zemsky E.A., Kakorina Y.V., Karaulova Y.N., Kostomarov V.G., Krysin L.P., Kubryakova Y.S., Mokienko V.M., Remchukova E. N., Himik V.V., Chudinov A.P., and many others). Among foreign language researchers focusing on its creative and social creative use are T. Van Dyck, Wierzbicka A., Labov W., Dick S., Bushnell J., Walter H., and other scientists.

Setting on the original use of a language is sign of the times. It is fundamental for a wide range of informal communication that combines speech practices of different (by status, culture, and other members) societies and generations, as well as an informal style of expression inside the others, to

varying degrees of formal speech practices. The uniqueness of the informal communication is in the fact that in the opinion of Letovaar H. it attracts all other communications beyond it [1].

We understand *the informal communication* (hereinafter – IC) as a communicative sphere where speech-creating behavior of communicants meets the natural need not to be constrained in means of self expression and interaction with other people and language novations can not be self consistent and included to written official sources. From the perspective of linguistic potential the IC material – is units and language tools in a familiar and original combinations, culturally marked, often stylistically reduced. From the perspective of the sphere of operation the IC material is largely presented in oral and written sources of media, internet communications, advertising, graffiti, oral conversation, public speeches of formal and informal parties, announcements and signs, posters at rallies, etc. Extraordinary demand for the informal style of communication in different communication areas is due to the fact that it is IC, according to scientists, allows a person to be satisfied with communication in his/her society and be more productive in a formalized (working) process [2].

Linguistic and cultural research *methodology* of IC units (lexemes, combinations, texts) in this paper takes into account mutual apperception base of native speakers, using the language potential, precedent units to create IC units. Mostly derivative nature of the latter explains the need for a research procedure of comparing IC units with samples reflected in language consciousness of native speakers. To this end, the analysis involves

structural (morpheme, word-formation, syntax), component, interpretative and semantic analyzes to provide comparative analysis of planes of expression and content of representation means of one or another speech object in the NC discourse.

The *urgency* of studying the scope of NC is due to several factors, among which we note the following.

First, the historical factor (factor of traditions, mental factor), according to which informal communication is a priority in Russian culture [3; 4], and is versatile in a variety of – formal and informal – speech areas.

Second, the influence factor of social development on language dynamics. Creative attitude to the language at the present stage is manifested in the high frequency of representations infringing automatic speech perception of the product; in the style of representations simultaneously transmitting opposite, singular, ironic and other new meanings. Besides, modern IC features significant expansion of the boundaries of "just like" to business projects (exploiting the language potential in comic show-programs), adding active publicity to the private status of functioning.

Third, the factor of new generation, the older layer through which informal speech creating seeks to rid the "diseases of disharmony and decay in time and space" [5], the younger one – claims for recognition of the right to "special operation" by others [6] (subordination of subcultures to the culture of the dominant group (state), see [ibid]). Obviously, the new generation in the informal speech creating demonstrates predisposition and susceptibility to a particular type of cultural (and linguistic) norms, which are accelerated in the current reality, namely:

1) readiness for innovations, tied to the factor of fashion for wit in speech, banter (without regard to the aesthetic and ethical value to say) showing increased personal principle;

2) Sensibility in recognizing the essence of the changes and categorialness in their assessments; active use of socially relevant content, the scope of discussion of which was regulated by the official culture before;

3) A high degree of competition in society and related creative synergies of the IC sphere implemented through the original language design, detabooing of topics, means of representation, through a different character of expressiveness;

4) Motivation in the form of dividends – from emotional recognition to financial reward. It is connected with an extremely intensive business use of the language potential and cultural elements of the nation fund in show programs, on TV channels specializing in shows.

It is important that the factor of predisposition to a certain type of cultural norms is the basis of solidarity of any speech creating process under specific society "in-group identity" [7] and it is "the preferred approach in solving problems" that causes it, according to Demyankov V.Z. [8]. It is an expression of opinions and preferences that fills IC, while formal communication focuses on factual information [9]. Numerous observations of linguistic features of IC units indicate that preference is given to original planes of expression and content or an impaired balance of their usual implementations, specific angle of representations (associated with detabooing of topics, with second senses), evaluation, potential dialogueness. The creative component in IC is the result of a kind of poetry, which, according to Chomsky N., has a unique status among the other arts [10]. Using aggregate data on the implementation of these factors we can talk about *the IC language* as a functional variety of the Russian language, capable of performing the function of self-identifying communicative sphere different from the sphere of formalized communication.

Comparative analytical procedures allow identifying the most sought-after principles of manipulation with the language and texts that define *the effect of novelty* of the IC discourse, the principle of declining known planes of expression and the principle of contrast (in various aspects of its implementation).

The principle of **refusing known planes of expression** is implemented through the use of occasional and potential units, impaired balance of language relations between existing planes expression and content of units of any language level, including text. In cases of occasional use for IC units the effect of *correlation with a few derivatives* (real and pseudo-derivatives), for which complex methods of addition, contamination, unproductive (unique) and re-interpreted word-formation models, as well as the potential of sound-letter similarity of comparable units are used.

In oral speech, in an informal online communication, in large billboards, in urban signs and in other sources numerous occasionalisms, which prepossess recipients to the informal style of communication in the perception of the suggested information are recorded. For example, telescopically organized words *brehlama*, *konvulsium* (www.rodim.ru), *vushniki* (doctorhead.ru) and others (refer respectively to derivatives *brehat* (Eng. to lie) and *reklama* (Eng. advertisement), *convulsii* (Eng. convulsions) and *consilium*, *v ushi* (Eng. into ears) and *naushniki* (Eng. headphones); composites usually combining

full and haphazardly truncated morpheme: *martyun* (and could be *mariyun* or *maryun*), *Bobryaka* (from *bobr* (beaver) and *sobaka* (dog)) (www.vk.com), *mnogollion* (of toys) (from *mnogo* (many) and million) (in a commercials of the child store). For native speakers in this speech creating ambiguity of the process of word formation of a certain units is always communicatively significant. So, in a word *strekozel* we can simultaneously feel possible formation by analogy and possible addition of base morphemes with the partial application of morphemes or fragments thereof. However, a possibility to use the word with the intention of insulting adds expressiveness as well (with the current trend of coarsening of speech), and the restoration of "linguistic justice" with filling a gap in the language opposition "strekoza (dragonfly) – ..." by analogy with the lexical opposition "koza (female goat) – kozel (male goat)".

As an example of atypical functioning of the word formation model, we can use occasionalisms *kurkulyi*, *validoliy*, *money-mania*, *bezteschiy*, *podmatrasiy*, *dolgoyamiy*, *Beritiy*, *kogdanadiy*, *hochushuby*, *nadobratiy* and the unit *tratyi* (instead of the analogical *tratiy*), used for loan names for the SKB Bank (Ekaterinburg) in large billboard advertising. In these occasional usages for native speakers affixal similarity of new words is obvious, but it is implemented on the basis of grammatically different derivatives. As the latter, certain nouns are used (animate and inanimate) in the nominative case, see *kurkul*, *validol* for *kurkulyi*, *validoliy*; prepositional-case forms of nouns, see *bezteschi* (without mother-in-law) and *pod matrasom* (under a mattress) for *bezteschiy*, *podmatrasiy*; syntactic communication phrases of different type and even sentences with verbal predicates, see *dolgovaya yama* (debt pit) for *dolgoyamiy*, imperative predicates *beri* (take it) and *trat' ih* (spend it) for *beritiy*, *tratyi*, one member sentences *kogda nado* (when necessary), *nado brat'* (it should be taken), *hocu shubu* (I want a fur coat) for *kogdanadiy*, *nadobratiy*, *hochushubiy*. This diversity of word formation process, resulting in having formally similar lexemes, allows talking about *original functionalization of existing word-formation models*, which are typical for IC.

A conscious use of the potential of *infringed orthographical norms*, resulting in new units, is prominent today in IC. For example, the spelling of the name *VKontakte*, *Vkontakte* (Internet communication). This new unit surprised any literate native speaker and demonstrated contradictions on several grounds. First, widespread "abbreviated" versions of the name *VK*, *vk* explicitly refer to two words, although the name of the network is presented

as a single word. Second, combinability possibilities of the new unit indicate its fuzzy morphological identity: on the one hand, "morphological history" substantive derivative is strong, that's why the new unit is still perceived as an immutable noun (to communicate in what?/where? – *vkontakte*) functioning as its own name; on the other hand, the new unit carries characteristics of an adverb (to chat how – *vkontakte*) and can be used as an inconsistent definition as an immutable adjective as (what communication – *vkontakte*). Such grammatical diffuseness of the new unit is important for communicators and a potential basis for a new creative use of the language. We can take similarly formed new units as examples: the baby food name *Spelenok* (form *s pelenok* (from diapers)), the word *Ekanevidal* (from *Eka nevidal*) (in Internet communications), the article title, "sNezhnosti" (from *s nezhnosti* (with tenderness)) (in the student newspaper "Generation N", #3, January 2012 (UrFU, Ekaterinburg)), etc.

Another example of following the principle of refusing the known planes of expression in IC is potential words created in the "image and likeness". They are most actively used in the speech of journalists focused on informal communication with the audience, in texts in Internet communication, syncretic in terms of privacy / publicity, oral / written forms. For example, a) compound words: *zarplatomer*; *Dyroburg*; *rubleprovod*, *zvezdoprovod*; *kotobus*; *asfaltoedy*; *asfaltogryzy*; b) truncated words: slang *infa* from information (in colloquial speech, in a police environment *Po figurantu est' infa?* (Do you have info about the defendant in the case?) – TV); *nout* (note) or *buk* (book) from (the word notebook is used in Russian for laptop) (colloquial); c) affixal derivatives *santabarbarschina*, *prohorovschina*, *navalschina*; *putiniada*; *putinoidy*, *debiloid*; d) words based on borrowed root morphemes and word formation Russian affixes: *juzat* – to use, *connectitsya* – connect, *laykat* and *layknut* (From Eng. to like) – to mark favourite material on the internet by pressing a button, etc.

The second much needed in IC a principle of linguistic organization of units – the principle of **contrast**. Its basis is the mechanism of the joint implementation of methods and techniques in the same context that create contradictory in anything values, combinations, communicative effects (at the level of lexical and grammatical semantics, stylistic markedness, nature of relations between derivatives and pseudo-derivatives of the language). We use the following examples.

1) *Lexical contrasts* arising on the basis of homonymy with existing language units. For

example, the acronym *prymat(y)* (ape-man(s)) in the student's oral speech meaning "teachers and students of the Department of Applied Mathematics (**prikladnoy matematiki**)," is based on a contrast of "mathematical, intellectual" and "unconscious, at the level of an animal"; acronym *PUPPS* (Police Department patrol) in colloquial speech because of homophony with the word *pups* in the meaning "doll ..." (in baby talk *pupsik*) demonstrates the contrast "serious public service, power structure" and "low status of the police in the eyes of the people".

2) *Lexical and stylistic contrasts* created by the inclusion of different styles assets in a small-format text. For example, in oral speech in police environment **Gentlemen police officers did you become too bold?** (TV series "Cop War." NTV, 23/01/2014); in online communication *Na ulitse mnogotelochno* (There are many heifers on the street) (see: Telka - Rude. 2. Mocking, disrespectful, slang. About a girl, young woman, girlfriend, wife).

3) *Lexical and syntactic contrasts* implementing the technique of context combination of semantically incongruous units. For example, in student graffiti **Lecturer, do your thing in SILENCE!**; Nothing **warms** the soul like a **cold** beer.

4) *Lexical and grammatical contrasts*, based on in-text antonymy of grammatically different lexical means. For example, the antonymy of lexical pairs *trezvy* (sober) in the meaning 'in good memory' and *ya ne pomnyu* (I do not remember) in the student graffiti **I'm either sober or I do not remember; lived and died in the graffiti Tamagotchi lived at my place. It died, bitch!**

Conclusions

Summarizing the above observations we will emphasize the following points.

Extraordinary demand of the informal style of communication in the modern communicative space of Russia meets the requirements and influence largely in the extreme time of changes.

The social model of NC discourse is certainly democratic, but extremely active personal principle often develops into ignoring linguistic, ethical, mental standards.

IC today is the sphere of creative efforts of special exploratory nature, demonstrating extraordinary ingenuity of a new generation of Russians in choosing the form of expression of actual meanings. IC imposes game origin in

communication, making to put some effort on guessing meanings and their embodiments (preferred language means and methods of combining them). The following features are typical for IC: active reduction of linguistic units at different levels, potential and original word formation, occasional inclusions, which, while not denying inherent to the language logical models of the reality representation, combine them with specific society interpretations. In this sense, IC can be classified as the primary scope of genesis and expansion of the phenomena, active processes in the Russian language.

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