VLOG AS A TYPE OF INTERNET TEXT (STYLISTIC ASPECT)

Shylin Vladislav Albertovich

student
V.I. Vernadsky Crimean Federal University, Simferopol

Abstract. The subject of the present article is the main types and functions of videoblog. Stylistic analysis of 250 text fragments reveals the ways of creating image, producing humorous effect, shaping up perception of reality by the audience. Furthermore, signs and means of implicit human consciousness manipulation are disclosed.

Key words: vlogosphere, vlog, videoblog, manipulation of consciousness, mass-media.

ВЛОГ КАК ТИП ИНТЕРНЕТ-ТЕКСТА (СТИЛИСТИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ)

Шилин Владислав Альбертович

студент
Крымский федеральный университет им. В.И. Вернадского
Симферополь

Аннотация. Данная статья посвящена основным типам и функциям видеоблога. Стилистический анализ 250 текстовых фрагментов раскрывает способы создания образности, юмористического эффекта, и изменения восприятия реальности зрителями. Кроме того, раскрываются знаки и способы имплицитной манипуляции человеческим сознанием.

Ключевые слова: влогосфера; влог; видеоблог; манипуляция сознанием; масс-медиа.
Appearance of Internet communication and its global spreading results in creation of new speech genres. Their functioning in online space is the evidence of change in communication objectives and sets, executed by means of actualization of individualized language that is actively present in online discourse. Mass character of new developing genres turns Internet-communication into a kind of genre-procreating field.

Videoblog (vlog) occupies a prominent position in the field of Internet-communication, though its importance seems to be underestimated by the majority of contemporary scholars. According to recent calculations, YouTube.com is the most frequently attended website due to streaming popularity of videoblogging. The topicality of the research is reasoned by the necessity to develop and elaborate the classification of vlogs, define their structure and functions. Besides, being texts of a certain type, vlogs are abundant in figures of speech shaping up a number of functions able to impact human perception of reality, thus they require detailed observation and analysis from stylistic point of view.

What are the peculiarities of the genre? Videoblog is a form of blog, where streaming of video is the main way of transmitting information [1]. Vlog can also be considered a form of Internet television.

Videoblog is based on the concept of Internet diary where posts are placed in chronological order (blog). The concept of chronological placement of posts was partially borrowed from blogs and went through numerous changes on the way of making vlog a dominant, more complex genre.

One of the conspicuous features of vlog is analogy compositional components. All vlogs possess the following elements: the introduction of the author, definition of the topic or event under discussion, evaluation by means of comments and video-responses, reasoning of the declared position, an invitation to a group discussion. Topical variety and authenticity of individual authorial style make vlog an interesting object of stylistic analysis.
T.V. Shmeleva views lingual realization of the genre as lexico-grammatical resource of it, its “spectrum of potential”. In this spectrum, she outlines the following poles: cliché/individuality, minimum/maximum of verbal expression [2]. Individuality occupies by far the dominant position in the genre. As for the verbal expression, the rates may vary, though a video message posted on a vlog-channel generally consists of 2500-3000 signs and lasts for approximately 10 minutes.

T.V. Shmeleva outlines the model of a speech genre which consist of the following things: communicative objective, image of the author, image of the recipient, image of the past and present, linguistic realization of the speech genre. It is necessary to characterise vlogs in accordance with the model provided:

1. **Communicative objectives** of videoblogs are rather diverse. As a rule, a vlogger mainly pursues informative and evaluative aims. Self-presentation, being a means of human consciousness manipulation, is the most common communicative objective of a vlogger.

2. **Image of the author** is many-sided: it may be a real personality or a mask. Application of the latter is motivated by common desire to false-inform by presenting yourself in good light. Contact data are prevalent means of authorial self-expression: name, surname, social status and occupation. On the linguistic level, image of the author is most vividly expressed in the style (grammatical structures arrangement, choice of vocabulary, peculiarities of stylistic devices and expressive means application), topical component, emotional and evaluative tonality, as well as in intensity of visualization means (self-portrait, picture of the author).

3. **Image of the recipient** is not specified. The author appeals to collective audience. Every person willing to participate in communication may become one of the recipients.

4. **Image of the past** is activated on the basis of the topic under consideration of the vlogger. Image of the past is usually connected to additional
information on previously expressed opinion or is the reaction to external opinions (video response). The latter way of activation may be considered a continuation of the dialogue.

5. *Image of the future* is represented by the expectancy of the author towards an upcoming discussion of the suggested topic, which is commonly expressed by means of comments or video-responses.

6. *Linguistic realization of the genre* is occurs on the level of language means and ways and shows unrestrained freedom of their arrangement. Videoblog embraces the widest range of linguistic means and their arrangement in the text according to the speech culture the author belongs to. The most common linguistic characteristics of vlogs are the following:

- colloquial style;
- application of degraded words;
- frequent usage of interjections and exclamations to emotionally colour the speech;
- numerous neologisms;
- elliptical constructions (in speech and comments), absence of punctuation (merely in comments);
- various kinds of contractions to optimize writing (acronyms);
- application of emojis (smiles) as a way of visual representation of emotions.

According to the typology suggested by G.S. Melnik [3], vlogs belong to the following types of mass-media texts:

1. Texts intended for a certain individual or collective audience;
2. Texts offering immediate response of a person (commonly a comment or a video-response);

On the basis of the typology of mass-media texts suggested by T.G. Dobrovolskaya [4], videoblog can be characterized as follows: by way of production – original; by form of creation – oral or written (in case of subtitles present); by channel of spreading – mass-media texts; by functional peculiarities
– journalistic, analytical; by topical dominant component – this or that media topic (e.g. beauty channel).

According to N.S. Bolotnova, videoblog can be placed among both monological and dialogical genres by types of linguistic realization, and only among dialogical ones due to its address to collective audience [5].

Consequently, vlog appears to be a non-synchronic genre of Internet-communication, which presupposes posting video messages in chronological order or in accordance with their topical category, and gives opportunity for the audience to comment in a written form or by means of a video-response. Vlogs belong to mass-media texts, which are interconnected, creating together the so-called vlogosphere.

Videoblog is a genre category of a blog, but its classification has not been developed by modern scholars. According to Rebecca Blood, vlog’s main feature is its content [6]. Thus, on the suggested assumption, vlogs can be classified as follows:

1. **Interactive vlog**. Such vlogs not only inform the audience, but engage it into interplay and common activity. Video channel is abundant with hyperlinks, which create the illusion of choice, redirecting the user to different videos in accordance with the link chosen;

2. **Video Education** vlogs (How to vlogs) are among the most wide-spread kinds of vlogs. A vivid example of this category of vlogs are popular beauty vlogs, the main attention of which is focused on practical advice on appearance (make-up, style);

3. **Review vlogs**. This type of videoblogs presents itself a test review of a recently purchased article of trade. The main objective of these vlogs is advertisement.

4. **Advice Vlog** is one of the most popular type of videoblogs. These vlogs deal with a particular problems and effective solutions;

5. **Series Vlogs** appear to be the most effective way of impacting the audience. All vlogs of the type are united by the same topic and there is al-
ways a recommendation to continue watching in the end of each. Information is strictly portioned;

6. **Viral vlogs**. The characteristic feature of this type is impressive character of the content. The objective of these vlogs is mainly attracting attention;

7. **Music vlogs** are reviews of recently released music videos by famous performers with commenting on each and every detail. This type is known for the humorous character of speech (frequent application of irony);

8. **Sales vlogs** offer you different articles of trade suggesting make-believe stories as a way of creating intimacy;

9. **Impersonal vlogs** (often referred to as screencasting) presuppose a demonstration of things going on the user’s screen. The most common subclass of impersonal vlogs is video manuals teaching how to use different computer software.

Videoblog embraces a wide range of activities: exchange of information, solution of problems, discussion, exchange of jokes, insults, getting to know a person, virtual sex. According to S. Herring, the following social objectives of vlogs can be singled out:

1. Receiving information;
2. Impressing a user-recipient;
3. Having fun [7].

E. Gorny outlines five main objectives of the recipient:

1. Keeping in touch with similar-minded people;
2. Getting information;
3. Entertainment;
4. Social opinion filtering;
5. Socialization [8].

In our research, we single out the following functions of vlogs:

1. Communicative;
2. Self-presentation;
3. Forming and keeping social connections;
4. Memoirs;
5. Self-development and reflection;
6. Psychotherapeutic.

The structure of videoblog is rather complex, though it can be roughly divided into the following constituent parts:

1. *Pre-communicative presentation* is a kind of business card for a user. It commonly includes a user name/nickname, avatar (picture representing a user), slogan (short characteristics of the channel), extended description, individual design. Nickname is used to falsely represent a user in a manner previously suggested and implemented in the nickname itself (antonomasia is frequently used to emphasize conspicuous features of the user, e.g. Gay God, Mr. Daily Vlog);

2. *Videoblog per se*. These include video messages posted on youtube channels together with the title and video description (content, date, tags);

3. *Dialogical part* includes comments and video-responses. Feedback appears from the very moment of posting a video. Depending on video-hosting, comments can be placed chronologically, or connected to one another (initial comment – response).

Vlog, as a mass-media text, is abundant with stylistic devices used for different purposes. Even though speech of a vlogger may seem to be spontaneous, texts are usually previously composed. Stylistic devices and expressive means are widely used by vloggers and their functions are rather diverse.

Stylistic device is a means of intentional and conscious intensification of a typical structural or semantic feature of a lingual unit, multiplying its expressiveness, which has reached generalized state and thus become a procreating model [9].
Metaphor is the most prevalent stylistic device constantly used in vlogs to perform a number of functions. Metaphor is a figure of speech the mechanism of which is based on using a word, denoting a class of objects, to name an object belonging to a different class, or naming another class of objects similar to this one in some relation. In broad sense, metaphor is understood as using words in their figurative meaning.

His spending time with me was an antidote against incurable illness [user: trishaVV].

There are moments when I strongly believe that life is a fashion show, and people are models walking by with wooden faces [user: jamieK].

Nowadays money is the blood of happiness, but honesty is the heart you can’t possibly survive without [user: GayGod].

Mariah Carey’s vocal chords are pieces of crystal which seem to be fragile up until they start producing powerhouse vocal resonance [user: lush].

As we can see from the examples above, metaphors are excellent image-creating tools, which help to vividly visualize the picture by means of expressive characterization of the object. Metaphor is widely used by vloggers in order to intensify perception of image.

Drug addiction is an adamantium wall – once you’ve let it cool down, it’s hardly possible to break it down [user: lush].

HIV positive people are not supposed to be socially stigmatized. HIV is more of a tattoo – you have it under your skin, but you can’t be forever hiding it for social acceptance [user: anti-aids].

The Bible is the rose-colored spectacles giving you a chance of afterlife to conceal your extreme fear of biological annihilation [user: shanedawson].

Obligatory education is a Succubus sucking out your desire to study by making you always attend classes you don’t even see a purpose of [user: FunEnglish].

Although metaphor is mainly used to expressively characterize an object, its function can often be manipulation of human consciousness. Examples
above clearly prove that metaphors can be used both to intensively visualize a picture, and to alter the way of perception of phenomena. Thus, using drugs is implicitly criticized, intolerant behavior towards HIV positive people is discouraged, and Christianity is intentionally mocked.

Humorous effect can be achieved by means of intentional use of genuine metaphors.

_I do like eating. Eating cakes and sweets is a sexual intercourse incessantly making you come back for more [user: lush]._

_Junk food industry is the tree of knowledge – once you succumb to the temptation and start consuming, there’s a long way back to heavenly gardens of body attractiveness [user: shanedawson]._

Such transference may happen to be unexpected and strange enough to produce a striking humorous effect. Furthermore, combining metaphor with the allusion to the Eden as in the latter example, the vlogger manages to simultaneously create an expressive image, humorous effect and ironic mood.

_Personification_ (subclass of metaphor) is giving inanimate objects characteristic features of animate ones. Vloggers commonly apply personification both for image-creating purposes and for humorous effect.

_I can still remember that dream I had, where cookies were serving me breakfasts and maple syrup was dancing sexually attacking my pancakes [user: lush]._

_When you find your self-control vacationing on the beach of mental disorders, go and consult a psychiatrist [user: shanedawson]._

_My memory seems to go for a walk every time a need to study for an exam [user: AnastasiaKey]._

_Metonymy_ – a stylistic device which consists in transference based on contiguity of objects existing in objective reality.

_No matter where I am at, I am always up to listening to some Mariah Carey [user: lush]._


The United States show no interest in the Crimean issue, as the United States don’t even know what the Crimea is [user: manforman].

This figure of speech is generally used in order to visually depict phenomena of reality, create more perceptible conception of the notions described. Thus, the United States stand for inhabitants of the state, Mariah Carey – music of the songstress.

My husband bought a new car. Can you imagine my astonishment when I lifted up the garage doors and saw this cell? [user: trisha].

Once I happened to be in a gay club. Well, what can I say? I have never seen that many dicks gathered in one place to vivaciously make love [user: GayGod].

Conspicuous features of objects can replace the objects themselves in order to express personal attitude of the author. Therefore, dicks, being a conspicuous feature, stand for men, and cell, the smallest unit of the body, indicates an extremely small car.

When I was a child, that womb I love never allowed me to go out with friends [user: shanedawson].

Every time a mother comes home, she is destined to feed the monsters under her roof [user: MathewLA].

Metonymy is often used to render a wide range of emotions. Examples above vividly illustrate application of metonymy in order to express anger (womb for mother) and produce humorous effect (monsters for children, family).

Antonomasia is a stylistic device which consists in using proper names instead of common names and vice versa (He’s Don Juan).

Well, she can obviously sing, man, but this girl ain’t a Mariah Carey [user: lush].

I don’t know about your sexual life, but MY wife is calling me Mr. Break Condom for a BIG reason [user: Bestest].

Mariah Carey, a renowned songstress, is known to have set a standard of mastery vocals, thus an antonomasia with the singer’s name is used to de-
note a class of skilled vocalists giving a ground for comparison. In the latter example antonomasia discloses previously unknown features of the person described and together with graphon indicating peculiar intonation, creates humorous effect.

_Irony_ is a stylistic device in which what is expressed on the surface is opposite to what is meant in order to be funny. Vlogs are abundant with irony expressing humorous effect which may occasionally affect further perception of the phenomena described.

_I hate birthdays: what can be worse than people being nice to you, and restaurants giving you drinks on the house._ [user: shanedawson].

_My vlogs are vitally important for almost no soul_ [user: trisha].

_I’m the best son ever, I just habitually don’t visit my mother_ [user: lush].

Irony is intermittently used to express subtle shades of certain modality revealing the author’s attitude towards phenomena of reality.

_I’ve broken over a hundred dishes this month. I don’t just break dishes because of clumsiness, I do have hands. I also break dishes so that I never have to clean them_ [user: lush].

_Oxymoron_ is a figure of speech consisting of two diametrically opposed in meaning words disclosing the speaker’s subjective evaluation of the phenomena described. The basis is semantic incongruity.

_I’ve recently considered this concept of mortal immortality – deathless creatures with human emotions, would be fun_ [user: shane].

_Can faithful adultery be considered cheating?_ [user: lush].

_My mother keeps saying I’m druglessly tripping whenever I start laughing_ [lush].

Application of oxymoron provides artistic idiosyncrasy and dramatic character of the speech together with additional humorous effect.

_Hyperbole_ is an exaggerated statement which describes phenomena in contrast with the objective reality. Hyperbole is used to emphasize emotional
effect on collective audience, as well as to emphasize some features of the phenomena depicted.

*Her boobs are so big you can easily confuse them with air balloons [user: shane].*

*This burger is so tasty you will think you’re tripping on H as soon as you try it [user: shane].*

*When I found out I was HIV-positive, I was so shocked my heart skipped a succession of supposed-to-be-there beats sending my consciousness farther than the end of the universe [user: jeff].*

*Gosh, when I came out to my Mom, she was sobbing so intensively her tears were about to flood the Earth as our God once did [user: lush].*

*Zeugma is a stylistic device which syntactically combines two semantically incongruous sentence elements. Vloggers primarily implement zeugma to produce humorous effect.*

*I would like to have a cup of my favorite hot sex [user: lush].*

*Dysfunctional family is there to break standards and dishes [user: trisha].*

*She wanted me to pop up the question and her virginity [user: shane].*

Thus, vlogs are topically and structurally diverse. Being the most popular genre of Internet communication, vlog can pursue a number of aims, among which are information sharing, online integrated communication, manipulation of consciousness. Vlog unifies habitual elements of human interaction and media with new ways of operating online space (interactivity, non-complexity of online space entrance, incessant communication). They solidify conventional lifestyles and reveal new problems, one of which is elimination of the border between privacy and publicity. Executed stylistic analysis of the text fragments (overall representative selection – 250 fragments) clearly illustrates the characteristic features of vlogs belonging to colloquial style (peculiar choice of vocabulary, elliptical sentences and constructions). Stylistic devices of different types are used to shape up a number of functions, among which are: creating humorous effect, emphasis of the visual image, rendering sub-
jective attitude to the phenomena described. Thus, apart from being used to intensify and emphasize phenomena and images, stylistic devices may be applied to implicitly affect perception of reality, being an example of manipulation of human consciousness. Further on, an elaborate analysis is necessary to disclose and categorize ways of interference with consciousness by means of application of stylistic devices.

Список использованных источников


