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IMPACT OF REALITY AND TALK SHOWS ON THE LANGUAGE SITUATION IN SLOVAKIA

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The author focuses on the impact of reality and talk shows on speakers and the general language situation in Slovakia. The speech of contemporary media actively influences literary norms and lingual preferences: on the one hand, it enriches the literary language with evaluative phrases and shapes aphoristic speaking style; on the other one, its negative effects should not be neglected. That is why the issues of shaping an informational and lingual culture in society as well as of preserving traditions of the nation's language and speech are very topical now.

Keywords: speech of reality and talk shows, literary norm, culture of speaking, democratization of language, dialectal words, vogue words, colloquial words, slang.

The analysis of contemporary postmodern culture in the narrow sense enables to present it as a mass media culture. In the current context of globalization and information wars, the problem of satisfying recipients' interests is of particular importance. Among all modern technological inventions, television has turned into a unique phenomenon, which has become an integral part of human existence and social culture. It has a powerful impact not only on the mind of the audience, but also on the culture of communication and the general culture of speaking. However, television truly reflects our life, our culture and the quality of our communication. This is why studying the language of contemporary television is important and relevant, as it reproduces the lingual portrayal of a specific period. M. Kryzhanovska stresses that media discourse is a popular area of research, as it is part of common cultural space, one of numerous significant factors of the modern lingual picture of the world and a vital agent that affects speech norms in society¹.

In the recent two decades, Slovak researchers have increasingly noted the low culture of language and speaking, the "alarming" situation of using the Slovak language in many areas of communication, especially in public (official) statements. Linguists prove this state by sociological studies, which display the failure of mass media to guarantee the purity of

¹ Крижановська М.В. Сучасні тенденції та підходи до дослідження дискурсу ток-шоу: антропоцентричний макронапрямок // Проблеми семантики слова, речення та тексту. Вип. 23. Київ, 2009. С.159.

Slovak and, thus, weaken the growing opposition between language usage and language standards.

Television generated a number of enormously popular genres like reality and talk shows. During the media dialogue, the doubling of the communication circle takes place: on the one hand, communication is between the moderator and an invited guest; on the other hand, the addressee of their conversation is a spectator. In the case of talk shows, there are two communication circles: 1) the audience which is present during the interview in the studio and has limited abilities to respond (usually by nonverbal means, i.e. laughter, applause etc.) and sometimes experts; 2) TV audience. A talk show is a form of conversational journalism that combines features of interviews and discussions and hinges on the personality of a moderator. This is a modern analogue of televised discussions, addressed "not for all, but for everyone", as described by V. Babenko². Most prime time is covered by reality shows, which are a special commercial television genre that is represented as a non-stylized reflection of reality³.

In the policies of private broadcasters, the determining factor is the pleasure / displeasure of TV audience. Most reality shows are aimed at specific target groups, like girls, students, college students, whose interests and professions are comparable to ages and professions of the participants of reality projects. They are oriented at the mentality and feelings of young people, reflecting their interpersonal relationships (relations with friends, first love, parents, and adults in general) as well as the privileged lifestyle that links fashion, music, cinema and IT. The main trend of this kind of shows is the moderator's efforts to modify their speech so that it was similar to the speech of potential recipients. This is manifested by using the second-person singular personal pronoun "ty" when referring to the guests: the situation creates not only the illusion of a friendly and trusting atmosphere, but it also weakens the social and age distance. Most discussions turn into informal conversations with vivid colloquial features and high expressivity (which, recently, has increasingly resembled vulgarity). In pursuit of entertainment, show organizers often traverse moral boundaries; this situation adversely affects the audience, most of which regards TV images as role models.

The analysis conducted has proven that the speech of reality shows is mostly uncodified. The frequent use of slang expressions has become normative, and it should reflect the lives of young people and represent their attempts to be different from the "conservative" rules of conduct (norms of thought and speech), followed by all other members of society. This tendency is well illustrated by the following samples from youth-oriented reality and talk shows: *infoška* (interesting information), *žiť šoubizovo a lifestylevo, fičiť* (is fashionable, brand new; relative of show business and the lifestyle of young people), *sólovka* (solo album), *albáč, doska* (new album), *open-air fešťaky* (open air music festivals), *pogovať* (jump to the rhythm of music, twist their heads and hop on each other).

The linguistic behaviour of show participants is recently dominated by:

a) simplicity and rigour in the statements, which mostly reveal attempts to achieve language economy at the levels of words and sentences. At the level of words, it is manifested in univertation and the use of acronyms; at the level of sentences, it involves ellipses and the compressions of sentence structures;

² Babenko V. Видовищні комунікації: методи та форми взаємодії, естетична форма видовищності // Вісник Львів. ун-ту. Серія журналістики. Вип. 34. Львів, 2011. С. 5.

³ Valček Peter. Slovník teórie médií A-Ž. Bratislava, 2011. S.274.

- b) exotic means of expression, used in speech as a result of the desire to be singled out among others at any expense or to show their affiliation to a subculture;
- c) vogue words, used due to the same desire to be "au courant", but not old-fashioned;
- d) a tendency to hack speech and vulgarization, because everything that requires deeper thinking slows down the whole process of interpretation and, thus, is unnecessary in communication; at the same time, crude, vulgar and emotional expressions are desirable in communication because they will definitely attract the attention of the recipient;
- e) colloquial vocabulary and phraseology as well as a variety of dialectal deviations from the standard pronunciation.

All these tendencies impact not only the general language situation, but also what is considered to be well-mannered phrasing. It is pertinent to mention the so-called **category of measure** that is formed by linking text-formation and practical stylistics. J. Findra states that in the process of communication, the speaker should "try to create texts which are inherently ethical, but aesthetic on the surface"⁴. In other words, journalists, editors, and moderators should feel on the basis of their intuition, flair for language and experience of style what is relevant to the context and what is undesirable and unacceptable.

The study has confirmed that in the contemporary Slovak reality shows, the category of measure is often violated. The shows do not conform to standard notions of language quality in journalism as they display disregard to any universal cultivated and communicative standards as well as basic rules of good manners. They often employ gross, vulgar phrases, although they are present in the live performance only implicitly, because they are replaced with audio signal (well-known traditional peep). However, the signal attracts more attention. Moreover, speeches of some respondents consist of incessant peeping without any meaning and context.

The analysed TV programs often accommodate colloquialisms, slang, other emotional, expressive, and dialectal words, which are considered non-standard (*fajné, neni, šak, dneskaj, ty koňo, furt, dnuka, tunak, velice, veľmo, išol, prišol, voláka*). The use of these words can partly be explained by the social origin of participants and the spontaneity (unpreparedness) of their speeches. However, their use indicates the low level of speech culture, especially concerning a journalist, editor, moderator.

Another noticeable trend in the current speech of reality and talk shows is the democratization of the Slovak language, including the overflow of borrowings, vogue words of predominantly English origin, due to which the speaker can look like a contemporary, up-to-the-minute person. These words are also exploited by the very editors. For example, the lexeme *kouč* has lately become a popular word meaning "a mentor, a teacher of singing"; *koučka* is the feminine variant. This term is heard in the singing talent show "Hlas ČeskoSlovenska". Most Slovak linguists believe that the words and phrases of foreign origin cannot seriously threaten the purity and functionality of Slovak, because they are temporary. However, the reality is that nowadays, one actually records the "invasion" of Anglicisms. How can this be explained? According to J. Dolník⁵, we basically read or hear that the reason is the reluctance of some speakers to search for appropriate standard Slovak phrases, entire lingual negligence, and disrespect to their own language. The reason of this state is as follows: it is natural that the declared views on the means of language should not

⁴ Findra Ján. Jazyková komunikácia a kultúra vyjadrovania. Martin, 2013. S. 27 □ 28.

⁵ Dolník J. Spisovná slovenčina a jej používateľia . Bratislava: Stimul, 2000. S.104.

correlate with the relations that actually appear in verbal communication. Why does he consider it to be natural? Because reflections are based on abstraction, when we abstract from various specific things that occur in certain communicative situations. A good example is the borrowed adjective *pilotný* in the combinations *pilotný projekt, pilotný film*. Most linguists argue that this is an unnecessary, excessive borrowing which does not enrich the vocabulary of the Slovak language. The Slovak lexeme *úvodný* is, thus, recommended to use in the combinations *úvodný projekt, úvodný film (prvý, úvodný film seriálu)*. Still, it often happens that the Slovak expression does not fully correspond to what is meant by the borrowed word. The English adjective *pilot* is "serving as a test", "innovative", "experimental." From the viewpoint of this meaning, the combination *pilotný film* denotes not only the first introductory film series, but a "test", "experimental" film which has to assess the interest and reaction of the audience. If in the language consciousness of speakers there appears a firm need to fix the meaning of "an introductory film which also aims at assessing the reaction of the audience to the series", the adjective *pilotný* can enter the Slovak lexis as a functional tool. If language practice shows that speakers are satisfied with the semantics of *úvodný*, the adjective *pilotný* will cease to be used.

Thus, the reality show is a contemporary phenomenon in the audio-visual culture. The Slovak ones are mainly borrowed analogues of reality shows, whose format is adapted to Slovak reality (*Zámena manželiek, Farma, Hlas ČeskoSlovenska, Česko-Slovensko má talent, Slovensko hľadá Superstar, Tanec za milión, Farmer hľadá ženu, Nevesta pre milionára, Mama, ožeň ma, Extrémne premeny* □ *Druhá šanca na život*). The comparison of these adapted Slovak reality shows and the foreign ones discovers that Slovak analogues are of lower quality from the viewpoint of universal and cultural, ethical and lingual aspects.

The problem of influencing the speech of contemporary speakers and their mentality directly relates to the mass media. That is why it is topical to shape society's informational and lingual culture as well as to preserve national traditions of language and speech. Today, more and more linguists emphasize the need to distinguish television broadcasting as a separate type of speech or as an autonomous style of speech. Finally, modern media actively influence the literary norm and lingual preferences: on the one hand, they enrich the literary language with evaluative combinations and aphoristic phrasing; on the other hand, they have a negative impact. Unfortunately, we must state that the time when mass media had a positive impact on the language situation in the country, is over.

**ВПЛИВ ТЕЛЕВІЗІЙНИХ РЕАЛІТІ- І ТОК-ШОУ
НА МОВНУ СИТУАЦІЮ В СЛОВАЧЧИНІ****Зоряна ГІЛЕЦЬКА**

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У статті простежується активний вплив мови сучасних ЗМІ на літературну норму, мовні вподобання: з одного боку, вона збагачує літературну мову оціночними зворотами, формуючи афористичну мову, а з другого – негативно позначається на її стані. З огляду на це, гостро постає питання про формування інформаційно-мовної культури в суспільстві, про збереження національно-мовних традицій і культури мовлення.

Ключові слова: мова реаліті- і ток-шоу, літературна норма, мовна культура, демократизація мови, діалектизми, модні слова, розмовні слова, сленгові слова.