Multimodal Language of the Intertitles in the Trailers of American Romance-Comedy Feature Films

Multimodalinė intertitrų kalba amerikiečių romantinių komedijų anonsiniuose filmukuose

SOCIOLINGUISTICS / SOCIOLINGVISTIKA

Daiva Šidiškytė

PhD student at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty of Humanities, Lithuania.

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Film trailers are regarded as a truly unique form of film advertising constructed on the basis of specific narrative and promotional structures. By means of adequate mini-narratives presented in intertitles, they not only convey some twists of the plot in various comedies, but also create a specific discourse which is marked by the interplay of different elements: language, topography and colour. From the perspective of multimodality, these elements are semiotic modes with a specific communicative potential. The analysis of the interplay between the contents of the intertitles and their typographic elements has shown that typographic variations, especially the ones related to the size and form of typefaces and to their regularity, are often employed to produce a targeted message. Colour can be considered an effective referent to the key words, semantic units or contrastive emotions in the intertitles. Due to existing temporal and spatial limitations and the multiple goals of film trailers, the interplay of semiotic modes noted in these visual products is even more intensive, salient and outspoken. In fact, this phenomenon is seen at its best in the intertitles giving the title of comedies.

KEYWORDS: multimodality, semiotic modes, comedies, intertitles, typographic elements, colour.

Abstract

Film trailers are considered as a unique form of advertising, governed by specific structural norms and complex goals. Like most forms of telecinematic advertising, they are clearly bound by length. At the same time they are targeted at staying the most informative and appealing. A clear and uniform structure of a film trailer cannot be identified since it varies greatly, depending on the genre, rhetoric of a film, audience and some other factors. Nevertheless, there are some scientific attempts to understand in much more depth the interplay of different elements in film trailers and their contribution to meaning making and marketing success.

Even though film trailers are the main and rather typical form of film promotion, the research related to them has not been extensive so far. It is mostly related to the investigation of the elements of appeal and attraction (Devlin et al., 2011; Finsterwalder et al., 2012; Iida et al., 2012; Jerrick, 2013).

Introduction

Researchers point out to various elements of film trailers as crucially important in the production of an engaging film trailer. Takayuki Iida's et al. (2012) study of emotional responses to different elements of film trailers have shown that viewers can be impacted by changing the brightness of the picture, and by skilful changes in the soundtrack and sound effects. On the basis of these analytical results, as far as trailer elements are concerned, the researchers make a proposal that picture, content and role are the three most important factors of the appeal in film trailers (Iida et al., 2012, p. 381). Betty Noad and Len Unsworth (2007) emphasize the importance of sound as a means of attraction not only in film trailers, but also in any other form of spoken language. Applying T. van Leeuwen's theoretical modelling of social semiotic and sound resources for meaning making in the analysis of the *The Queen* film trailer, they have revealed that "selective amplification of speech and music" (Noad and Unsworth, 2007, p.18) may serve as an effective tool for meaning making. M. Flanagan (2012) supports the idea that music performs an informative and emphatic role in films as well as trailers and claims that music allows to understand the contents of the film much faster and more effectively. George E. Belch and Michael A. Belch (2007), in the meantime, stress the general affective nature of film trailers without pointing out to their specific elements, but stating that they are products of self-satisfaction in themselves.

Some attempts have also been made to treat film trailers from an experimental point of view. Thorsten Hermes and Christopher Schultz (2006) suggest a pilot model of the automatic trailer generation system which is based on the selective segmentation and summarization of film shots. In contrast, Tianming Liu, working together with a group of researchers from the University of Georgia, is carrying out pilot studies on brain functions in response to the colours, music, sound effects and rhythm received in film trailers. This interdisciplinary approach to trailer analysis, combining brain science, psychology, computer imaging and cinema studies, is claimed to present new insights into the correlations between brain activity and spectator responses to visual and audio stimuli (Tianming Liu mentioned in Marr, 2014).

Film trailers should be also considered as a marketing product whose success depends not only on their internal, structural or compositional elements, but also on external factors. David Jerrick's research (2013) into the audience of Canadian college students and their preferences for the film choice has shown that action and comedy film trailers are quite popular among this age group. In addition, his survey has demonstrated that young people consider film trailers most effective when they are shown on television. It is also important for students to be familiar with various elements usually presented in a concrete film trailer such as actors, music or plot (Jerrick, 2013, p.10). Similarly, Michael B. Devlin et al. (2011) have researched the influence of the state of mood on the choice of film trailers and they have revealed that the interaction between mood, type of a trailer and gender exists; men tend to show higher appeal and "purchase intentions for trailers whose genre (serious or comedic) differed from their mood (positive or negative), while women showed a pattern of congruency" (Devlin et al., 2011, p. 581).

A general overview of the scientific studies devoted to film trailers shows that in most cases their analysis is mainly guided by marketing goals. The in-depth linguistic and semiotic analysis of meaning making in film trailers is avoided and the preference is given to mostly commercial tools of their research. In addition, there is a clear lack of the systematic analysis of the constituent elements of film trailers: the performed research mainly focuses on specific elements of film trailers, but not on their interactions.

The Objectives and Subject of the Study

Referring to the previous overview of the existing research into film trailers, it can be claimed that a more detailed analysis of these telecinematic products is necessary. The discussed scientific papers show that even though film trailers are analyzed, there are few studies devoted to specifically investigate the written text in film trailers, i.e., intertitles. In most cases, intertitles of film trailers are excluded from the research of film trailers or considered as a constituent part of film trailers which cannot be investigated separately. Acknowledging the

fact that intertitles do interact with other parts and elements of a film trailer, there are no reasons to argue that intertitles are impossible to research independently. Firstly, intertitles, as a constituent part of a film trailer, are easily identified and distinguished since they usually interrupt the visual presentation of a film in a trailer. Moreover, they are also marked by specific means of communication, namely, written language, which distinguishes them from the remaining video material of a film trailer.

 Even though intertitles present a specific written text, it is presumed that their reading functions in a multimodal manner, i.e., both visually and aurally. The wide application of different colours, fonts, the organisation of a text and accompanying music in the intertitles of film trailers allows a logical assumption that these variations in the presentation of a text are meaningful and mediate a specific message. This way, it can be claimed that the reading of intertitles is very different from a normal, bookish text since, similarly to posters, it is based on the multimodal perception of its constituent elements.

On the grounds of the presented assumptions concerning the multimodal nature of the intertitles of film trailers and existing limitations of the previous research, the objectives of this study can be set. The analysis of the interplay of different written or, to put another way, visual modes, the language of intertitles, the choice of typefaces, colours and graphics have been chosen as the **object** of this study.

The **aim** is to analyse the interaction of the mentioned modes in the intertitles of American romance- comedy feature films released from 2010 to 2014 (the scope of the research covers 70 films and 47 of them contain intertitles). The study also sets the following objectives:

_ to investigate the multimodal interplay in intertitles between the contents of a film trailer and typographic elements;

_ to analyze the multimodal interplay in intertitles between the contents of a film trailer and colours;

_ to illustrate how each mode contributes to the production of the targeted meanings.

Theoretical Background

The analysis of telecinematic discourse cannot be confined to linguistic research since it is based not only on verbal but also on visual means of communication. A number of scholars (Maier, 2009; Wingstedt et al., 2010; Piazza et al., 2011; Bateman, 2011) support the position that such elements of communication as sounds, music, colours or the use of graphics contribute to the production of new, specific meanings, especially in accordance with their interaction with the language. Therefore Roberta Piazza, Monika Bednarek and Fabio Rossi claim that cinema and television are important "examples of integrated multimodal (verbal and visual) fictional narratives" (Piazza et al., 2011, p.1). Similarly, Maier argues that "no single semiotic mode is supposed to carry the whole or only evaluative information of a shot or scene. Visual, verbal and aural evaluative devices are co-deployed to maintain or subvert each other's evaluative both on the diegetic and non-diegetic level" (Maier, 2009, p. 172). Referring to this multi-layered nature of telecinematic discourse, it can be stated that film trailers require an interdisciplinary multimodal approach to analysis.

Multimodality, as a theoretical approach to text analysis, originated and developed within the field of social semiotics, which stresses the role of human cognition and interpretation when dealing with the semiotic resources of meaning making (van Leeuwen, 2005, pp. 26, 48-49). Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen define multimodality as "the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 20). Similarly, C. Jewitt describes multimodality as "approaches that understand communication and representation to be more than about language, and which attend to the full range of

communicational forms people use – image, gesture, gaze, posture and so on - and the re-lationships between them."(Jewitt, 2011, p. 14)

The above-mentioned definitions of multimodality reveal some of key features of this theore-tical approach to text analysis. First of all, semiotic resources and their interactions are con-sidered to be the central objects of multimodal research. In Kress's terms, multimodality deals with *semiotic resources*, the exploration of their *semiotic affordances* and *meaning potential* to produce *motivated signs* (Kress, 1993, pp. 169-191). Secondly, even though the linguistic level of text analysis is not eliminated in multimodal analysis, the language is treated as one, and not necessarily the main means of communication. Consequently, it can be stated that a logocentric approach to text analysis is abandoned in the domain of multimodal research. Finally, the incorporation of such non-linguistic means of communication as sounds, music, gestures, colours and graphics into text analysis reveals that multimodality is undoubtedly an inter-disciplinary research method, based on the findings of different fields of studies.

This study will focus on specific aspects of multimodality, namely, the interplay of typographic elements and colour with the contents of film intertitles in the sphere of the production of the targeted meaning. This has been determined by the fact that the theoretical background for the multimodal analysis of these elements is widely developed. As a result, it offers the most trustful tools for the research. In order to achieve the best possible uniformity, the research methods and their classifications developed mostly by Kress and van Leeuwen will be applied.

Typographic Elements as Semiotic Modes of Meaning Making

Typographic elements have been used to attract attention, signal or convey important in-formation or the mood of the text for many centuries. According to Serafini and Clausen, "typography is the art and technique of arranging type to make language visible" (Serafini and Clausen, 2012, p. 4). As van Leeuwen states, typography allows verbal text to become most eloquent and persuasive with the help of visual effects such as "size, colour, contrasts, movements, or indeed anything that can make a word or phrase or clause stand out from others (different font, different set, different weight etc.)" (van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 144-145). According to the theorists, this interplay of the text with its visual presentation becomes successful and meaningful since it is based on connotations or experiential metaphors. It is claimed that the variation in size of the letters or the choice of particular colours for the text can result in the construction of a specific message.

The extent of the application of typographic elements in the rendering of certain meanings has substantially increased recently due to refinements offered by the IT technologies and the gro-wing importance of advertising. Thus van Leeuwen argues that typography is becoming more and more multimodal since it is starting to encompass not only the interplay of the size and fonts of letters, but also videos, three dimensional or aural elements (van Leeuwen, 2005; 2006).

In his article *Towards the Semiotics of Typography* (2006) van Leeuwen presents a prelimi-nary classification of the semiotic resources of typefaces. The theorist distinguishes seven elements of typefaces employed in the production of semiotic meanings:

1. Weight (a continuum of the boldness of typefaces);
2. Expansion (a continuum of the expansion of typefaces);
3. Slope (the right-leaning or left-leaning of typefaces);
4. Curvature (angular or curved typefaces);
5. Connectivity (the degree of connectivity of letters in a text);
6. Orientation (vertical or horizontal orientation of typefaces);
7. Regularity (the degree of regularity of typefaces in a text).

(adapted from van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 148-150)

Acknowledging that this classification is not definitive, the theorist still claims it may well serve for the analysis of the typefaces and their role in the production of targeted semiotic messages especially in a multimodal context (van Leeuwen, 2006, p.154).

Slightly differently from van Leeuwen, Hartmut Stöckl presents a more generic, stratified model of the classification of typographic resources. The theorist argues that there is a grammar of typography which is based on a four-level clustering of typographic resources:

1. Micro-typography (focusing on individual features of typefaces and letters (e.g. size, font, colour etc.);
2. Meso-typography (dealing with the configuration of typographic signs in lines and text chunks (e.g. position, spacing, alignment etc.);
3. Macro-typography (dealing with the overall organization of the document and its graphic structure (e.g. indentions, emphasis, paragraphs etc.);
4. Para-typography (focusing on the typographic media, such as instruments used in the production of typographic signs or surface materials used to present them (e.g. the quality of paper) (adapted from Stöckl, 2005, p. 210)

The practical analysis of the intertitles of romantic comedies will follow van Leeuwen's theoretical model on the level of micro-typography. At the same time, Hartmut Stöckl's insights into meso-typography and macro-typography will be also very useful while researching more general typographic elements.

Many studies into different aspects of colour have shown a certain potential in meaning making (Caivano, 1998; Crozier, 1999; Koolhaas et al., 2001; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2002; van Leeuwen, 2011; Ware, 2008; Pantaleo, 2012). It has been deduced that colour preference alters depending on the emotional or psychological context (Hemphill, 1996; Clarke and Costall, 2008; Maier et al., 2009), age (Birren, 1978), sex (Silver, 1988) or ethnicity (Jameson, 2005). As a result, it could be claimed that the potential of colour in meaning making relies on various aspects of human experience.

Colour has also been analysed by the pioneers of multimodality (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2002; van Leeuwen, 2011). Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) argue that "colours carry a set of affordances from which sign-makers and interpreters select according to their communicative needs and interests in a given context." (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001 p. 355).The theorists distinguish two types of affordances of colour which are the sources for meaning making with colour:

1. Provenance – background knowledge of the use of a certain colour in a specific cultural or historical context;
2. Distinctive colour features – values of colours on the range of scales (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 355)

Kress and van Leeuwen extend the theory of the phonology of a colour presenting six different values of a colour in the range of the following scale:

1. The grey scale (the scale of value ranging from maximally light (white) to maximally dark (black);
2. The scale of saturation (the scale of value ranging from most intensive, saturate manifestations of a colour to its most pale or dull manifestations);
3. The scale of purity (the scale of value ranging from the most pure to the most hybrid colour);
4. The scale of modulation (the scale of value ranging from entirely modulated to fully flat colour);
5. The scale of differentiation (the scale of value running from monochrome to the utilization of maximally mixed palette);

6. The scale of hue (the scale of the value of colours ranging from red to blue - the cold-warm continuum). (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001, pp. 355-357)

According to the theorists, these values of a colour reflect different meaning potential such as fundamental experiences or the level of emotive temperature (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001, pp. 355-357).

Research Methods

The choice of film trailers for the analysis of their inserts have been carried out on certain standards of uniformity. Firstly, it has been decided to research the trailers of a specific genre, romance-comedy feature films, all of which have been produced in the United States (2010-2014). Secondly, the list of trailers under investigation was compiled independently of personal preferences. To achieve that, a list of romance-comedy feature films has been chosen on the basis of the popularity charts presented in one of the most recognized and popular Internet sites, *Internet Movie Database* (See http://www.imdb.com). The data of the charts were extracted from the afore mentioned site in April, 2015. In most cases, American films are accompanied with a few official film trailers. In order to achieve certain clarity of my choice of film trailers, my study centred just on the analysis of the trailers of films presented in their official websites or, in rare cases, the official trailers presented on the *Internet Movie Database*. Acknowledging the fact that the choice of different trailers of the same films may produce different statistical results, the statistical analysis of trailers is not included in this article.

The practical analysis of the chosen film trailers of American romance-comedy feature films has been performed referring to the theoretical background presented in the previous sections of the paper. In order to register systematically all the chosen multimodal semiotic resources, a simplified version of A. Baldry and P. J. Thibault's multimodal transcription model (2006), in which each semiotic resource is transcribed individually, will be employed.

The Linguistic Aspects of the Intertitles of Film Trailers

The fact that intertitles are present in the bigger part of the analysed romantic comedies (47 out of 70) shows that they play an important role in the discourse of film trailers. Nowadays the intertitles of film trailers usually have a highly multimodal semiotic structure, which is produced by the interplay of different semiotic resources: the chosen language, music, the organization of the text on the screen, the use of typefaces or colours. Before starting the analysis of the interplay of different semiotic resources of intertitles, it is also very important to have a look at the stylistic devices and the linguistic expression of intertitles in film trailers since their analysis can help to understand the role of certain speech acts in the production of specific semiotic meanings much better.

In many cases the intertitles of film trailers serve as summaries of the film. Due to the temporal and spatial constraints of the presentation of intertitles, these summaries are written using well- thought- out, concise phrases, mainly consisting of keywords in terms of the content of the story. In addition, the phrases are often segmented and presented in such a sequence of intertitles which is combined with the video material of a trailer. The example (table 1) illustrates the mentioned peculiarities related to the organization of language in film trailers.

As it can be seen from the example, the summary or the story is presented in a series of intertitles, most of which, taken individually, do not stand for a fully expressed grammatical sentence. Actually,

Table 1

The Intertitles of the comedy *Blended* (2014)

Film	*Blended* (2014)
1 intertitle	THEIR FIRST DATE...
2 intertitle	MIGHT BE THEIR LAST
3 intertitle	TWO FAMILIES STUCK TOGETHER
4 intertitle	WILL HAVE TO SURVIVE EACH OTHER
5 intertitle presenting the title of the film	BLENDED

the above-mentioned phenomenon can be observed in a number of film trailers (*It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2010); *Crazy, Stupid, Love* (2011); *Stuck in Love* (2012); *Celester & Jesse Forever* (2012); *Admission* (2013); *Drinking Buddies* (2013); *The Incredible Burt Wonderstone* (2013); *The Awkward Moment* (2014); *Two Night Stand* (2014) etc.). The current example of the textual organization in a film trailer reflects a specific juxtaposition: even though the totality of the intertitles is perceived as a summary of the plot of the film, individual intertitles lack syntactic coherence. As the transcription of the text in intertitles of this film illustrates, intertitles are even employed on purpose to break a uniform sentence (THEIR FIRST DATE MIGHT BE THEIR LAST) into two separate phrases. Taking a closer look at the written text rendered in the intertitles, it can be assumed that the segmentation of the text into phrases is a stylistic device, employed to reach not just a visual or aural uniformity, but also a textual one. This textual uniformity is achieved through a series of incomplete, abrupt phrases and sentences, which, for stylistic purposes, are not joined by any conjunctions in the inserts of the film. This way, a syntactic incoherence in individual intertitles serves for the expression of the general textual stylistic coherence. As a result, a unique discourse of the trailer is created.

Other forms of textual uniformity present in the inserts of trailers can also be examined. Differently from the previous example, the inserts of the comedy *About Last Night* (2014) demonstrate a textual uniformity of intertitles in film trailers which can be achieved with a help of a certain linguistic play on words or the repetition of the same keywords (table 2).

The first two intertitles of the trailer begin with the same phrase (IT'S ABOUT WHAT). Their repetition turns the phrase into an emphatic one. Interestingly, it can be observed that words in the fourth and the fifth intertitles also echo the word ABOUT found in the first two intertitles. In the fourth intertitle a variable use of the word ABOUT is presented. This different use of the word ABOUT not only creates a play on words, but also makes it a key word of the entire film trailer. The fifth intertitle, presenting the title of the comedy, is self-explanatory, justifying the employment of the variations on the use of the word ABOUT throughout the trailer. It is important to mention that this repetitive use of the same

Film	*About Last Night* (2014)
1 intertitle	IT'S ABOUT WHAT MEN SAY
2 intertitle	IT'S ABOUT WHAT WOMEN THINK
3 intertitle	FIND OUT
4 intertitle	WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT
5 intertitle presenting the title of the film	ABOUT LAST NIGHT

Table 2

The Intertitles of the comedy *About Last Night* (2014)

word additionally serves as a connective, unifying element of the inserts in the trailer. The same connective technique, namely, the repetitive use of certain keywords throughout the trailer, has been observed in a number of film trailers analyzed in the present study. In some cases a repetitive, patterned use of certain words or phrases is observed just in one part of the intertitles of a trailer (*Cyrus* (2010); *Hall Pass* (2011); *Think Like a Man too* (2012); *The First Time* (2012); *The Other Woman* (2014); *Two Night Stand* (2014); *About Last Night* (2014) etc.), which is usually interrupted by some unexpected shift of the plot of a film, whereas in other cases, the recurrent use of the same words or phrases is noticeable in all the intertitles of a trailer (*How Do You Know* (2010); *The Five-Year Engagement* (2012).

The experience of textual uniformity in the trailer of the comedy *About Last Night* (2014) is even more emphasized through the use of the phrase FIND OUT in the third intertitle, which is in rhyme with the ABOUT repeated in the following intertitles. The choice of the rhyming phrase in the third intertitle of the trailer, in the context of the entire text presented in the intertitles, resembles a little rhymed poem, which is based on certain semantic and structural relations.

The very same third intertitle of the comedy also reveals the commercial goals of film trai-

lers. The present analysis does not include the research of the intertitles of trailers presenting the film production company, famous actors and actresses acting in the film or the reviews about the film, as these elements are considered to be a part of the marketing strategy of the film (Jerrick, 2013, p.1). However, the presentation of the summary of the film and advertising of the product are sometimes closely intertwined. The phrase FIND OUT, even though expressed in an imperative manner, sounds more like a seductive invitation, addressed to the possible future audience, to buy the product, or, in our case, to see the advertised comedy. For example, in the intertitles of the trailer of the comedy *Braidsmaids* (2011), its producers go even further by addressing the audience directly and stating that all viewers should become a part of this show of bridesmaids and the entire comedy (YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED FOR A VERY SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT). The intertwined presentation of both the plot and all direct addresses to the audience with the aim to encourage people to see the film, have been employed in a number of the romance-comedy feature films (*Arthur* (2011); *Take Me Home Tonight* (2011); *Just Go with It* (2011); *Stuck in Love* (2012); *What to Expect When You're Expecting* (2012) etc.) analysed in the current study.

Film	*Laggies* (2014)
1 intertitle	THIS FALL STOP LAGGING
2 intertitle	AND START LIVING
3 intertitle presenting the title of the film	LAGGIES

In some cases, the commercial goals become an evident priority in comparison to the presentation of certain pieces of information about the film or its plot as it can be seen in the example (table 3).

Even though the shots from the film combined in the trailer of the comedy *Laggies* (2014) allow to grasp that the story is about a young and confused woman, who needs some time off to figure out what to do with her life, the intertitles of the trailer serve as an indirect, secondary reference to the plot of the film. The actual message presented through the intertitles of the trailer (THIS FALL STOP LAGGING AND START LIVING) is a slogan, which is more targeted at the possible audience of the film, inviting them to enjoy life and watch the comedy rather than providing any textual information about the contents of the film.

It could be claimed that the usage of slogans is a widely popular technique employed in the intertitles of the trailers. In some cases the slogans take up the entire textual space of intertitles (*Sex amd the City 2* (2010); *Hall Pass* (2011); *Admission* (2013), *Think Like a Man* (2012) etc.), in other cases they are presented as the content of the comedy making a generalising conclusion ((*Date Night* (2010); *Take Me Home Tonight*, (2011); *LOL* (2012); *Safety Not Guaranteed* (2012 etc.). Sometimes the slogans are substituted for a piece of advice, which is based on the plot of the film. Such a technique is employed for the intertitles of the trailers of the comedies such as *Friends with Benefits* (2011), *Playing for Keeps* (2012) or *The First Time* (2012).

The Interplay between the Contents and the Typographic Elements of Intertitles

The research of the intertitles of certain romantic comedies has demonstrated that typographic elements are often employed to emphasize specific words or meanings. However, in H. Stöckl's terms (2005), it is usually done on the micro-topographic or meso-typographic levels. This can be explained by the fact that the intertitles of trailers, similarly to subtitles, are limited by spatial, temporal and reading constraints; they are shown for a very short period of time, they can contain just a limited number of words. It should be kept in mind that otherwise the audience will not be able to read them. In fact, the variations with macro-typographic elements, which are related to the overall orientation of the text and paragraphing, can be carried out with certain limitations. Finally, the use of para-typographic elements is out the question because of the limitations created by the medium of trailers.

The intertitles taken for the analysis from the trailers of romantic comedies have revealed

that the interplay between the weight of typefaces and the meaning of the text is widely employed in the production of specific meanings expressed through the intertitles of trailers.

The example of the transcribed intertitles with the original usage of the bold typefaces serves as a good illustration to this phenomenon (table 4).

The intertitles of the trailer of the comedy *Hit&Run* (2012) illustrate how the use of bold typefaces adds some emphasis to the key words in the text. Most words written in bold, stand in opposition or underline the opposites in their meanings. (For example, friends – enemies). Some of them are contrasted with very thin letters in the rest of the text used for inserts and emphasize the tense atmosphere created in the trailer. This way, the use of bold typefaces for certain words, correlated in a meaningful manner, create a recurrent pattern. As a result, the current example testifies that the use of bold typefaces may not only highlight the chosen keywords, but also help

Table 4

The Intertitles of the comedy *Hit &Run* (2012)

Film	*Hit & Run* (2012)
1 intertitle	WHEN THE PAST COMES **KNOCKING**
2 intertitle	GET READY TO **ANSWER**
3 intertitle	THIS **SUMMER**
4 intertitle	WITH **FRIENDS LIKE** THESE
5 intertitle	WHO NEEDS **ENEMIES**
6 intertitle presenting the title of the film	**HIT** & **RUN**

to perceive their semantic correlations. The same technique of the use of bold typefaces has been employed in the intertitles of the trailers of the comedies *Ten Years* (2011), *Hall Pass* (2011), *The Five-year Engagement* (2012), *One for the Money* (2012) etc. In other cases the emphasis of certain words or letters made through the use of typographic variations does not carry any semantic correlations. This is only a choice to highlight a specific item of information presented in the intertitles (*Arthur* (2011); *Take Me Home Tonight* (2011); *Bachelorette* (2012); *Drinking Buddies* (2013). For instance, the recurrent high-lightening and enlargement of the second line throughout the intertitles of the same trailer (*About Last Night* (2014) creates an emphatic impression in relation to what is presented in those lines even though their contents do not carry any clear semantic correlations.

In contrast, the disruptive pattern of typefaces or their presentation can also signal the change or turning point in the plot of the film. The transcribed intertitles of the trailer *Date Night* (2010) illustrate this change (table 5).

The first four intertitles of the trailer have a specific recurrent pattern of the typographic and syntactic organization of the text: the phrases are written by way of capitalizing the first letter of the each phrase and putting the last words in bold for each intertitle and finally, emphasizing the importance of phrases in this subtle manner. However, the established pattern is suddenly disrupted and the last three intertitles shift to the use of both capital

Table 5

The Intertitles of the comedy *Date Night* (2014)

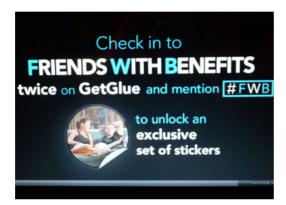| Film	*Date Night* (2014)
1 intertitle	These are the **Fosters**
2 intertitle	This is their **life**
3 intertitle	And this is the **night**
4 intertitle	They'll never **forget**
5 intertitle	*ONE NIGHT*
6 intertitle	*CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE*
7 intertitle presenting the title of the film	*DATE NIGHT*

letters and italics. Looking more attentively, it can be observed that the fifth intertitle (ONE NIGHT) indicates both a semantic and syntactic shift from the previous pattern. In our case, this shift is marked by the choice of an innovative typographic organization of the text. In addition, the new intertitles also are in an allusive agreement with the visual parts of the trailer marked by intense race scenes. Referring to T. van Leeuwen's theoretical remarks on multimodality (2006), it can also be claimed that the use of italics creates an allusion to race

not just due to the orientation of letters, but also because of the shared social semiotic experiences, where the titles of most of action films or computer games employ letters in italics.

It should be noted that the allusive choice of typefaces or their organization is widely employed in the intertitles, especially the ones which present the title of the comedy. For example, the title of the comedy *Moonrise Kingdom (*2012) is written on the intertitle using certain stylistically sophisticated typefaces which can easily be associated with the elaborate and sophisticated style of the ancient documents that were normally written by the servants of kings. The semantic meaning of the title is put to create an association with the style of writing that used to be typical for the kings. The same organization and choice of typefaces based on allusions and on our shared social and historic experience have been observed in the intertitles presenting the titles of the comedies *This Means War* (2012), *The Fve-year Engagement* (2012), *Warm Bodies* (2013), *The Incredible Burt Wonderstone* (2013) etc.

Photo 1

The final intertitle of the comedy *Friends with Benefits* (2011)

In some cases the contents of the intertitles, related to the physical or spatial experience, are also physically depicted in the intertitles of a concrete trailer. This technique of the visualization of the semantic contents is seen in the unusual organization of typefaces for the presentation of the title in the final intertitle of the trailer of the comedy *Friends with Benefits* (2011) (photo 1).

The presentation of the title of the comedy in a nearly joined sequence of words reflects a physical proximity which the semantic meaning of the word "with" carries. Thereby the atypical organization of words serve the purpose well since it emphasises the meaning of the words even through the choice of spacing, or, in Stöckl's terms (2005), the organization of meso-typographic elements. The interplay between the contents of the text in the intertitle and its spatial presentation has been traced in the intertitles of comedies *Happythankyoumoreplease* (2010), *Just Go with It* (2011) or *Friends with Kids* (2011).

The Interplay between the Contents and Colour in the Intertitles of Film Trailers

It could be claimed that the choice of colour of the typefaces in the intertitles of the trailers of romance-comedy feature films always carries a specific meaning. In can be assumed that the colour of letters, in some cases, serves a connecting visual element of different shots of a trailer. For instance, it has been observed that a specific colour employed for the typefaces of some intertitles are identical to the colours of clothing of the characters (*Greenberg* (2010); *Bridesmaids* (2011); *The Other Woman* (2014) or the prevailing background colour scheme seen in the shots of the trailer (*Birdman* (2014); *Warm Bodies* (2014). Thus, it can be argued that even though the choice of certain colours for the intertitles and typefaces in the trailers cannot always be easily explained, it still indicates some unwritten colour correlation rules that the producers of trailers and other manufacturers tend to follow.

On the other hand, colours are seen as a powerful semiotic tool which is employed in the intertitles of romantic comedy trailers to fulfil different tasks. For example, the changes of colours of typefaces or the colours employed in the background of intertitles can mark changes in relationships, atmosphere or the development of the story presented through a trailer. A good illustration of the interplay between the contents and colours is extracted from the script (table 6) of the intertitles of the comedy *The First Time* (2012).

As it can be seen from the colour script of the intertitles, every colour carries a few functions

here. First of all, in the first four intertitles the same colour typefaces visually serve as clusters for homogeneous parts of the sentence: proper nouns (DAVE, JANE, AUDREY etc. – white typefaces), verbs (WANTS- repeatedly written in yellow typefaces) and other repeatedly used phrases (IS WITH - repeatedly written in mint typefaces). Interestingly, the presented colour classification allows a clear distinction between the characters of the film but their names are given on differently coloured strips which create specific targeted connotations together with what is presented in the video material of the trailer. Jane's name presented on the green strip creates an allusion that she is not comfortable with sexual contact since the word "green" in informal language is widely used with this particular meaning (See http://onlineslangdictionary.com/meaning-definition-of/green). A completely different connotation is created with the presentation of Audrey's name on the fuchsia strip. All the shades of pink colour are associated with femininity or sexuality in the contemporary society (Koller, 2008). For this reason, even though both Audrey and Jane are presented as women with their names written in white typefaces, they are also portrayed with the use of different background strips as very different from each other.

With the fifth intertitle the colour scheme changes a bit. However, the recurrent use of the same colours of typefaces as in the first part of the trailer creates a sense of continuity. On the other hand, new colours added

	The First Time (2012)
1 insert	**WANTS** (yellow typefaces, written on the white background)
	DAVE (white typefaces, written on the blue strip)
2 insert	**WANTS** (yellow typefaces, written on the white background)
	JANE (white typefaces, written on the green strip)
3 insert	**IS WITH** (mint typefaces, written on the white background)
	AUBREY (white typefaces written on the fuchsia strip)
4 insert	**IS WITH** (mint typefaces, written on the white background)
	RONNY (white typefaces, written on the green strip)
5 insert	**BUT THE WEEKEND** (white typefaces, written on the fuchsia strip)
	IS JUST BEGINNING (white typefaces, written on the mint strip)
6 insert	**THERE'S A** (fuchsia typefaces)
	FIRST TIME (mint typefaces)
	FOR EVERYTHING (fuchsia typefaces)
7 insert	**YOU NEVER GET** (yellow typefaces)
	A SECOND CHANCE (fuchsia typefaces)
8 insert	**AT YOUR FIRST TIME** (yellow typefaces)
9 insert/ title of the film	*The* (fuchsia typefaces)
	FIRST TIME (white typefaces on the fuchsia strip)

Table 6

The Intertitles of the comedy *The First Time* (2012)

to the previous colour scheme may also be considered as indirect or symbolic references to the development of the story and its news turns. The variations of the so-called warm and cold colours in van Leeuwen's terms, may refer to the intensity of various feelings. Van Leeuwen's theoretical suppositions support this idea since the scientist claims that a high differentiation of colours can stand for diversity (van Leeuwen, 2013 p. 68). In this case, the diversity is related to the development of the love story and the changes of emotions in its course. Similar techniques of marking different shifts of the plot or emotional state with variation of colours have also been observed in a number of inserts of film trailers (*Blended* (2014); *What to Expect When You're Expecting* (2012); *The Five-year Engagement* (2012); *Friends with Kids* (2011).

In correspondence with van Leeuwen's propositions, the variations of the red and pink are usually employed to portray warmth, energy and salience, whereas the variations of blue usually refer to cold, calmness and distance (van Leeuwen, 2013, p.67). For this reason,

other colours such as red, pink, purple or fuchsia depict the following words: LOVE (*Happy-thankyoumoreplease* (2010); *How Do You Know* (2010); *Stuck in Love* (2012)), REVENGE (*The Other Woman* (2014)), DATE (*Blended* (2014)) or HOT (*The Incredible Burt Wonderstone* (2013).

In contrast, different shades of blue are not so often engaged to portray emotions or emotional states in the inserts of the trailers of romantic comedies. Those few cases can be observed in the intertitles of the comedies *No Strings Attached* (2011), *Much Ado about Nothing* (2012) and *The One I Love* (2014). Blue is more often employed to portray the words on the basis of their historical or cultural context. Consequently, different variations of blue are used to present such words as MEN (*About Last Night* (2014)), EVERY GUY (*Just Go with It* (2011)) or HENRY'S CRIME (*Henry's Crime* (2010) since the blue colour is traditionally associated with masculinity and the male sex *per se.* The use of contrasting blue and red typefaces in different lines of an intertitle, referring to the two opposite sexes, have also been detected in a few trailers (*The First Time* (2012); *What to Expect When You're Expecting* (2012).

Making general remarks from the overview of the use of colour patterns and colour schemes indicated in the current article, it must be emphasised that the choice of colours to depict specific notions, objects or emotions has not been governed by any universal rules. The analysis has shown that the word LOVE or WOMEN can also be written on the intertitles using blue typefaces (*Crazy, Stupid Love* (2011); *Much Ado about Nothing* (2012); *About Last Night* (2014). That does not contradict the current analysis of colour use in the intertitles of trailers. As van Leeuwen claims, any "interpretation will emerge from, and be motivated by a detailed and exhaustive analysis of the way colour is actually used, rather than being based on a selection of just those features which fit into a pre-determined idea"(van Leeuwen, 2013, p. 70). To put it differently, the semiotic affordances of colour have not been fully explored. On the other hand, the above-mentioned instances testify a variety of combinations to produce multimodal meanings and, for this reason, proposed interpretations should never be bound by pre-determined analysis schemes.

Multimodality in the Intertitles Presenting the Film Title

The current analysis of film trailers has demonstrated that inserts, presenting the title of a romance-comedy feature film, usually demonstrate the densest interplay of the different semiotic modes: the textual organization, typographic elements or colours. The use of multiple modes in the production of certain meaning in the final intertitle, which includes the official title of a trailer, can have several explanations. A concrete intertitle, presenting the title of a film, can refer to the previous patterned use of different modes throughout the trailer. As a result, even more complicated, multimodal use of certain modes, relying on the established ways of their interpretation, is suitable and open for interpretation. For this reason, a number of intertitles, which include the official title of a particular film, repeatedly employ at least some typographic or colour elements which have already been used in the previous intertitle(s) of the trailer.

In a number of cases the intertitle, which manifests the official title of a film, can also be perceived as the final exposure and justification of the previously employed combination of different modes. For instance, this phenomenon can be examined through the development of colour meaning in the intertitles of the comedy *Silver Linings Playbook* (2012) (table 7).

The presented first four intertitles of the comedy do not give a clear hint to the interpretation of the meaning of yellow typefaces in the text. However, the use of the yellow colour with the word LININGS stands in a clear associated with the provenance and qualities of lining; it is usually made of silk and, in most cases, it is luminous. The yellow not only represents luminosity of linings, but also serves as a connective reference to the extraordinary relationships between Pat and Tiffany, the main characters of the film. The same phenomenon has been observed in the final intertitle-title of the comedies *The Backup Plan* (2010), *No Strings Attached* (2011) or *Hit &Run* (2012).

Intertitles presenting the title of a film are often accompanied with extra visual elements or special effects which are absent in the previous intertitle or in the trailer on the whole. As a result, the intertitle introducing the title of a film can be considered as a highly multimodal part of the trailer. A number of these intertitles contain a background marked by some key referent-object (*Laggies* (2014), view (*Valentine's Day* (2010); *It's Kind of Funny Story* (2010); *The Sessions* (2012); *Top Five* (2014), person (*The One I Love* (2014) etc. In some cases, the presentation of the title in the final intertitle of a trailer is performed with the help of objects – atypical typefaces. For example, the bigger part of the title in the final intertitle of the trailer of the comedy *The Incredible Burt Wonderstone* (2013) is presented or rather "written" using illuminative entertainment lights. This way the visualised presentation of the text serves a strong multimodal reference to the plot of the film which is developing in Las Vegas. The presentation of the title of the film employing different objects has also been noted in some other comedies (*Drinking Buddies* (2013), *Much Ado about Nothing* (2012), *Footloose* (2011). Finally, in some cases the visual elements and the title of the film are presented as intertwined, inseparable and forming a visual-textual unit of meaning. For instance, the title of the comedy *Admission* (2013), written in red, is presented with a tick on the letter "o" which gives an extra reference to academic life.

Film	*Silver Linings Playbook* (2012)
1 insert	YOU'VE NEVER MET A N Y O N E (all the words in white typefaces except for NEVER which is written in yellow)
2 insert	LIKE (yellow typefaces) PAT (white typefaces)
3 insert	HE'S NEVER MET A N Y O N E (all the words in white typefaces except for NEVER which is written in yellow)
4 insert	LIKE TIFFANY (LIKE – yellow typefaces, TIFANNY- white typefaces)
5 insert	SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK (all the words in white typefaces except for LININGS which is written in yellow)

Table 7

The Intertitles of the comedy *Silver Linings Playbook* (2012)

Conclusion

The aim of the paper has been to present a multimodal analysis of the intertitles of American romantic comedies and investigate the interplay of the contents, typographic elements and colour in the production of specific meanings.

The research of the language of the intertitles of film trailers has shown that these intertitles are marked by a specific linguistic expression. As syntactical units are often broken into separated intertitles, it can be claimed that the textual organization is often presented without compliance to the standard rules of punctuation. It has also been observed that intertitles are usually not only very concise from the textual point of view, but also employ shortened syntactical structures. In a number of cases the text of the intertitles may not be directly related to the plot of the film, but still convey different degrees of sloganism, which could be considered as one of the marketing techniques used for trailers.

The analysis of the interplay between the contents of intertitles and topographic elements has revealed that they are often co-deployed to produce specific meanings. Variations in size and form of words and letters serve as an emphasis of certain events in the plot or words, detection and grouping of keywords. In some cases a specific meaning is established with a help of the patterned, recurrent use of typographic elements, whereas in other cases it is produced by employing the violation of the previously established typographic pattern in the

intertitles of a particular film trailer. The violation of the previously established patterns usually signals a specific turn in the plot of the story told in the trailer of a film.

Likewise, the analysis of the interplay between the contents and colour in the intertitles of trailers has shown that colour is an effective tool to form and produce specific meanings. The research has demonstrated that colour can effectively refer to different emotions and feelings, especially, the contrastive ones. Similarly to typographic elements, the changes of colours of typefaces in the background of intertitles can also mark changes in relationships, the dominant atmosphere or even the development of the story presented in a trailer. Colour can also be used to create and emphasize keywords, recurrent syntactic units in intertitles or create semantic bonds in the text.

Finally, intertitles introducing the title of a film are usually marked by highly dense use of different modes which, in turn, are employed in a multimodal manner to refer to the culmination of the trailer. These intertitles are used not only to present the title of the film, but also to mediate its effective and affective the message through the dense use of different semiotic modes.

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Santrauka

Daiva Šidiškytė. Multimodalinė intertitrų kalba amerikiečių romantinių komedijų anonsiniuose filmukuose

Filmų anonsiniai filmukai yra unikali reklamos forma, išsiskirianti specifiniu naratyvu. Anonsinių filmukų intertitrų glausti pasakojimai ne tik atskleidžia filmo siužeto vingius, bet taip pat pasižymi charakteringu multimodaliniu diskursu, kylančiu iš skirtingų intertitrų elementų sąveikos. Intertitruose ši sąveika intensyviausiai vyksta tarp kalbos, tipografikos ir spalvos. Žvelgiant iš multimodalumo perspektyvos, šie elementai yra semiotinės raiškos priemonės, pasižyminčios skirtingu komunikaciniu potencialu. Intertitrų turinio ir tipografikos elementų sąveikos analizė parodė, kad tipografinės, su raidžių šriftu ar jų taisyklingumu susijusios variacijos yra dažnai pasitelkiamos norint perteikti tam tikrą tikslinę žinią. Teigtina, kad spalva yra efektyvus raktinių žodžių, semantinių vienetų ar prieštaringų emocijų referentas intertitruose. Minėtų semiotinių raiškos priemonių sąveika filmų anonsiniuose filmukuose yra ypatingai intensyvi ir ryški dėl laikinių ir erdvinių šių vaizdinių reklamos produktų apribojimų. Multimodalumo fenomenas yra geriausiai pastebimas intertitruose, kuriuose pateikiami filmų pavadinimai.

About the author

Daiva Šidiškytė

PhD student at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty of Humanities, Lithuania.

Research interests

Audiovisual translation, multimodality, linguistic pragmatics, cognitive linguistics.

Address

Department of Germanic Philology, Kaunas Faculty of Humanities, Vilnius University, Muitinės Str.8, LT-44280 Kaunas, Lithuania.

E-mail:

daivajordan@gmail.com