

## ШЕТЕЛ ТІЛДЕРІ ИНОСТРАННЫЕ ЯЗЫКИ

UDK 81'

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### **Language Humour in Agata Passent's Articles**

The article presents language humour shown in articles of Agata Passent. This humour is based on: vocabulary (the author uses here periphrases, ambiguity of words or neologisms), phrasal expressions (language humour is achieved by modifications of phrasal expressions), stylisation (A.Passent uses different genres and styles like: sport comentatory, journalist reporting, TV news, weather forecast, opinion poll) and syntax (achieved by syntax flow, word omission in an expression or sentences without subject –slogans).

*Key words:* humour, language humour, vocabulary, phrasal expressions, periphrases, ambiguity, stylisation, syntax, ironic style.

Agata Passent, born in 1973, is a well-known author and journalist; daughter of a poet Agnieszka Osiecka and journalist — Daniel Passent. She graduated from Warsaw University but studied also at Harvard University. Since 1997 she has worked for periodical magazine «TwójStyl» in which she published her articles. A.Passent worked also in Radio PIN where she presented her weekly discussions titled «Stacja Warszawa» (from 2005 to 2006). Her numerous articles printed in «TwójStyl» were published as a book «Jest fantastycznie» [1]. Also published as a book were her radio presentations. Apart from that Passent wrote as well: «Miastówka» (2002), «Olbiński opera» (2000) and «Pałacwiecznieżywy/Long live the Palace» (2004).

AgataPassent in her articles touches many common and social subjects, however most of her texts are devoted to Warsaw and as she says: «I write about the life of a middle city of our part of Europe». The author of «Jest fantastycznie» is a very good observer. Entertaining, funny and even ironic style is appreciated by many readers. Certainly, the popularity of her articles is caused by situation and language humour contained in her works.

The aim of this dissertation is to analyse language humour appearing in articles of Agata Passent. The analysed material comes from two books: «Jest fantastycznie» [2] (2004) and «Stacja Warszawa» (2007) [3]. Based on formal criteria there is distinguished humour rooting from phrasal expressions, vocabulary, syntax and stylisation. The order of presented linguistic means creating language humour is established by the frequency each of them appears in various texts.

#### *Humour rooting from vocabulary*

Vocabulary system of a given language gives unlimited possibilities of its use towards language humour creation. Parts of lexical system can be modified and used in different ways. Some means of building language humour based on lexicon are: periphrasis, euphemism, ambiguity of words, split of lexical connection, neologisms and also the use of lexemes belonging to ordinary style.

#### *Humour based on periphrases*

Periphrases and euphemisms can create language humour in various interesting ways. Mentioned linguistic means are a kind of metaphor. In articles of Agata Passent we may encounter many periphrases (I treat euphemisms as a type of periphrasis as well), which give more colour to the meaning of texts. At the same time they stand as an interesting source of humour, because they are often based on astonishing word connections. While reading those articles the reader meets extraordinary words put together which surprise

and which give a mystery to solve — how it has been modified or paraphrased — and the answer is hidden in context. In some cases words replaced with periphrases are lexically close, similar, thus it is easier for a reader to understand this humour.

#### *Humour based on ambiguity*

Most of the words in Polish language have more than one meaning. Words with multiple meanings are often exploited «in word games or when making puns» [4]. They are then introduced to a sentence with awareness. To understand humour based on ambiguity the context is very important, because the background of the word attracts our attention to one or more additional meanings.

#### *Humour based on the split of lexical connection*

«Lexical connectivity is the ability of a word to join and form connections with other lexical elements of the same system» [5]. In articles of A.Passent there are present word connections that violate traditional connectivity and this violation of normal language (obviously the violation done on purpose not as an effect of a mistake) is often the source of language humour. As a result of spoiling the linguistic connectivity of words we might get metaphorical connections.

#### *Humour based on neologisms*

Humour based on neologisms is widely used by the author of described articles. Giving the broadest definition a neologism is a completely new lexical unit. In the sample of presented articles, most often are neologisms rooting from word formation.

In some parts there are also neo-semantic neologisms which means neologisms created with the use of existing lexical items but which are given a new meaning. In order to understand a funny neologism it is necessary to know a relevant lexical system, otherwise it will not appear entertaining to the reader. Sometimes though an isolated neologism can make the reader laugh, however to understand fully the reason of new linguistic formation made by the author and to catch the whole humour presented in a text it is inevitable to know the context. The Polish lexical system gives huge possibilities of such new linguistic formations to the authors.

#### *Humour based on lexemes belonging to ordinary style*

Ordinary style is a general functional style used in informal and spontaneous interpersonal communication. Because of the fact that this dissertation contains analysis of humour in articles, which is a journalist genre, it is worth noticing that everyday Polish language is often exploited too much in certain official genres (in newspapers as well as in public speeches) as way of making the expression more «common and close to real life» [6]. In articles of Agata Passent ordinary style is done mainly on the level of lexicon. The author describes Polish everyday life and social customs, and to depict this everyday language is perfectly fine. What is more, «Polish language is spontaneous, vivid and with outstanding expressive vocabulary and phraseology» [7], which adds up to building language humour.

#### *Humour based on phrasal expressions*

In articles of Agata Passent often appears humour based on phrasal expressions — the phraseology of the sender. A phrasal expression is a linguistic means used by a sender on purpose. There are distinguished the following phrasal expressions: proverbs, sayings, maxims, sentences and quotations from books, songs or films.

To enrich the text the author introduced phrasal expressions that were modified. The reader, accustomed to normal form of phrasal expressions, learns when reading that the form was changed and surprised tries to find out the reason why it was modified.

The types of modifying innovations were distinguished based on phraseology classification described by Stanislaw Baba [8], later elaborated in the works of Beata Grochala [9]. My classification recognises the following modifying innovations: exchangeable, developing, contaminative, regulating and also innovations based on more than one modification as well as on grouping different phrasal expressions.

Agata Passent by introducing those modifications to her articles makes them more interesting. Most often she uses exchangeable innovations to achieve funny surprising context. The author puts all her phrasal expression in a text purposely, thus her articles are witty, clear to understand and above all — funny, because the modifications of phrasal expressions are a great source of humour. It is worth noticing that in Passent's

texts there are often quotations from songs and literature. Those might be difficult to decipher for less educated people, however the majority of quotations comes from well-known Polish masterpieces (frequently these are of Adam Mickiewicz).

The amount of phrasal expressions in Polish is impressive, therefore it is worth to use that source when creating texts, particularly with humour language. A.Passent uses it eagerly which is shown in her works and because of it, to us readers, her texts are interesting, amusing and even surprising.

#### *Humour based on stylisation*

In the mentioned book by A.Passent there was also present stylisation, which in short means «a conscious use of linguistic means in order to give an expression a characteristic style and features different than the ones characterising the author» [10]. Stylisation can be partial or cover the whole text. In «Jest fantastycznie» we may find articles which are either styled partially or as a whole belong to a different style and literary kind. Those stylisations contain different elements of language humour e.g. neologisms, diminutive forms or slang. We have to stress here the fact, however, that only after reading the article beginning-to-end a reader can catch the full idea of humour in those stylisations. In «Jest fantastycznie» we can find longer texts styled as one kind, but also articles containing several stylisations in each of them (like TV news, documentary and weather forecast). All stylisations form a huge comic power.

#### *Humour based on syntax*

Humour based on syntax can be found in Passent's articles rarely. It is based mainly on the use of syntax flow, parallel syntax and short elliptic sentences. At each time introducing those linguistic means finds explanation in context. Humour based on syntax is connected with the effect of disappointment after waiting and its perception is quite easy.

#### *Summary*

Agata Passent is the author with great sense of humour which is clearly present in her texts. In order to show her negative attitude towards described matters she uses means creating language humour. Certainly the biggest group representing language humour is vocabulary. A.Passent, similar to other writers, likes to use phrasal modifications (and modified quotations), creates amusing periphrases, neologisms and puts together words — violating lexical connectivity. The latter of the linguistic means allows to achieve extremely amusing, new word connections.

The author's style is also defined by mixing formal and informal language. It is also characteristic that she creates completely new names for instance of drinks, companies, beers, wine houses (which adds up immensely to the amusing style in general).

In «Jest fantastycznie» numerous stylisations for different genres and journalist techniques. Those stylisations can cover the whole text, including also other linguistic means creating humour: neologisms, neo-semantic words, slang. Humour based on syntax is represented by the smallest group of examples, but this does not lessen its amusing value.

To sum up, Agata Passent is a columnist creating funny texts about the lives of people from Warsaw. In her articles we may find mentioned also her personal experiences. The author in order to mock, parody, make fun of certain people and events, but most of all to entertain the reader, uses various elements of language humour. Most of them were described in the presented dissertation.

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Дж.Галецки-Кубич

**Агата Пассент еңбектерінде юмордың берілу жолдары**

Мақалада Агата Пассент еңбектерінде юмордың берілу жолдары қарастырылған. А.Пассенттың юморы төмендегілерге негізделеді: сөздік қор (перифраздың қолданылуы, сөз мағынасының екіұштылығы, авторлық неологизмдердің жасалуы); фразеологиялық тіркестер (фразеологиялық тіркестерді модификациялау арқылы); стильдеу (А.Пассент еңбектерінде бірнеше стиль мен жанрдың араласуын байқауға болады: спорттық комментарийлер, тілші репортажы, телевизиялық жаңалықтар, ауа райы болжамы, пікірлер); сондай-ақ синтаксис деңгейінде (синтаксистік құрлысы, сөздердің түсіріліп қолданылуы, субъектісіз фразеологиялық тіркестер мен сөйлемдердің қолданылуы).

Дж.Галецки-Кубич

**Способы выражения юмора в статьях Агаты Пассент**

В статье представлены способы языкового выражения юмора в работах Агаты Пассент. Юмористическое в её работах базируется на: словарный запас (использование перифраз, двусмысленность слов, создание авторских неологизмов), кроме того, фразеологические выражения (главным образом за счет модификации фразеологических выражений), стилизацию (в работах А.Пассент наблюдается смешение различных жанров и стилей: спортивное комментирование, журналистский репортаж, телевизионные новости, прогноз погоды, мнение), а также на уровне синтаксиса (в частности, в синтаксическом построении, словесных пробелах, использовании бессубъектных фразеологических выражений и предложений).

UDK 81'373.72:39

U.I.Kopzhasarova, A.T.Kikimova

*Y.A.Buketov Karaganda State University***Reflection of culture by means of phraseological units**

The article deals with the problem of language and culture correlation. It is proved that language is the reflection of culture and mentality of the people. The most valuable source of cultural information is the phraseological fund of the language. The article defines the essence of cultural connotation concept. The sources of culturally significant interpretation of phraseological units are allocated. Authors defined the mechanism of reflection of culture in language, in particular in phraseological units. The analysis of the Russian and English phraseological units with a national and cultural component is carried out. On the basis of this analysis authors have come to a conclusion that phraseological units reflect culture of the people through correlation to stereotypes, myths, legends, standards, rituals, etc.

*Key words:* phraseological fund of the language, the internal form of phraseological units, cultural and national connotation, the resources of culturally significant interpretation of phraseological units, myth, symbol, rituals.

Language is a means of culture reflection. E.F.Tarasov notes that language is included in culture since a sign «body» (meaning) is a cultural subject in the form of which language and communicative ability of the person are subjected. The meaning of the language is also a cultural form which arises only in human activity. The culture is also included in language as it is modeled in the text.

According to V.A.Maslova, there are three main approaches to the problem of language and culture correlation. The first approach was developed mostly by Russian philosophers — S.A.Atanovskii, G.A.Brutyayn, E.I.Kukushkin, E.S.Markaryan. The essence of this approach is the following: the interrelation of language and culture is the movement in one direction. Since language reflects reality, and culture is the integral com-