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WORDPLAY OUT OF ONE APPROACH

The article deals with a game notion as a pattern of human behavior, the linguistic variant of this behavior – wordplay. The approaches to this linguistic phenomenon analysis have been defined and the main notions of these approaches and their correlation have been analyzed.

Key words: language game, wordplay, pun, ontological approach, aesthetic and cultural approach, cognitive approach, functional and semantic approach, linguistic phenomenon.

It is common known that a game is one of the oldest behavior patterns. It not only stimulates vital information adoption or important skills mastering, but also it encourages a person to enjoy a bunch of emotions, aspiration for which is inherent and can be regarded as an act of subconsciousness. That is why it is not surprising that the term «language game» introduced by Ludwig Wittgenstein, the Austrian-born philosopher, described the game as «a form of living». Under «language games» the philosopher understood «incomplete parts of a language, but as languages complete in themselves, as complete systems of human communication» [1, c. 82]. This definition characters any linguistic act and language interaction with a game. According to the theory, language units are meaningful only in terms of the particular game. So, their meanings can be disclosed just in the specific language mastering situations as they do not represent an abstract category.

But later the term penetrated into other scientific fields. Language play became an important and permanent element of linguistic reality. Due to the fact that it is many-sided, it constitutes linguistic problems as well as extralinguistic. It is an object of different scientific investigations, and researchers not only study and examine language play in terms of various life realia reflections in the language, but also try to implement it into practical use. This fact predetermines the topicality of the given investigation, which is aimed at mastering the principles of the approach separation and trying to focus on their importance for analysis of the linguistic phenomenon.

This phenomenon has been studied from different angles; some of them have been analyzed in our research. We can distinguish *ontological approach* (Ludwig Wittgenstein [1], Pierre Bourdieu [2], Vadim Rudnev [3], Eduard Spranger [4]), *aesthetic and cultural approach* (Hans-Georg Gadamer [6], Sigmund Freud [7], Johan Huizinga [5]), *cognitive approach* (Olesya Zhuravleva [8], Tatiana Gridina [10, 11], Boris Norman [9], Thorsten Schröter [12]), *functional and semantic approach* (Artur Shcherbina [14], Vladimir Sannikov [15], Vladimir Vakurov [20], Svetlana Mikheykina [19], Svetlana Izyumskaya [16], Aleksandr Skovorodnikov [18], Natalya Novohacheva [22]).

As the term was introduced by the representative of ontological approach, it has been decided to consider «wordplay» from this point of view. It is regarded as a variety of human activity because it exists on the edge between objective reality and relative virtual world created

by human consciousness. It is possible to find the most appropriate ways of solving life problem by means of leaving conventional stereotypes and limiting real circumstances behind.

Some of the works revealing this phenomenon within ontological approach are worth greater attention. They are «Philosophical Investigations» by Ludwig Wittgenstein, «The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger» by Pierre Bourdieu, «The Morphology of Reality: a Study of the Philosophy of the text» by Vadim Rudnev, «Two Kinds of Psychology» by Eduard Spranger.

Ludwig Wittgenstein writes in his Philosophical Investigations that language play emphasizes the fact that «using language in the process of communication represents a particular activity» [1, p. 88]. And this activity is an integral part of our life and it is reproduced in the language.

Pierre Bourdieu, studying the relationship between a philosopher and language, writes: «If it is the language that is dominant under a philosopher, but not the philosopher who is dominant under a language, if it is the words that are playing with the philosopher, but not the philosopher who is playing with the words, it means that wordplay is the language of being» [2, p. 182–183]. In other words, to his mind the language is dominant under a person despite the fact that it is a person who created it and now a person is dependant on it.

Vadim Rudnev shares the Wittgenstein's point of view but he considers that language plays can not be examined just as human activities in its narrow sense; the whole human life is to be treated as a combination of language plays [3].

According to Eduard Spranger's approach, the linguistic practice of the language play proves the form of being. It defines the sequence of living forms creation as the peculiar variants of «sociocultural articulation» which belong to human being. These variants are to have such distinctive features as conventional ground, rules standards and others [4, p. 349].

In order to play on words, as Wittgenstein states, we use different «symbols», «words», «sentences». But their usage can not be considered as stable, unchangeable and fixed. It is widely known that one types of language appear, others disappear. This enables to create new and various language games. And this process is constant, it can not be interrupted.

Different situations provide the possibilities to play on words. One of the most common situations is the process of nomination (the process of 'naming' things) which is closely connected with the other spread language play – asking questions. It is thought to be a secret process that unites the word with an object denoting its meaning somehow. Moreover, as the founder of the notion believed, language games are certain models which empower us to come closer to language potential disclosure [1].

The given approach is limited by the language application as the tool not only for expressing the play element of human life, the absence of which makes impossible to consider the being, but also for expressing the life itself. It studies the interaction between the language and being and how it influences the nature of language games. But it does not consider the mechanisms of the language game creation; that is there is an absence of any ideas how to use such and such lexical means. As well it does not cover the idea how to parallel the culture and the people's mentality.

The philosophical practice of the language game study is not limited by only ontological approach, it also includes aesthetic and cultural one. This approach is based on the principle that a game is a factor of cultural life which is stipulated by aspiration for the beauty and perfectibility. What is more, a game in terms of culture represents a particular figure which had appeared earlier than the culture did. These two categories go through history hand in hand.

Let us take a look at some the most important works in this field in our view. They are «Truth and Method» by Hans-Georg Gadamer, «Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious» by Sigmund Freud, «Homo Ludens» by Johan Huizinga.

As to the game, it is considered to be a universal category of human being because it is the foundation of the culture and its factor [5, p. 25].

Furthermore, inclination and ability of the people to convert all life sides into games can confirm «objective integrity» of the creative drives which have been inherent from time immemorial [5, p. 13].

If we take a look at two notions – «game» and «beauty» – within the given approach, we will see that the culture finds the value of the game as soon as the later is connected with the

beauty. In other words, a game is to be united with an aesthetic effect in different forms and it is closely connected with the exploiting the linguistic potential.

As Hans-Georg Gadamer thinks, language games are not aimed at playing with language units or with the content of world experience or legends. It is aimed at «the game of the language and this game is playing with us, applying to us and calming down, asking us and is being realized in our answer».

In the meanwhile, the «game» notion brings us closer to the discovery of «truth» notion. The meanings of the words, which represent the elements of our understanding, are used in the process of a game, i.e. in the process of communication, in order to make a text clear for us by means of a game.

The philosopher draws the line between our ability to catch the meaning of the text and our aspiration for the beauty. The truth of the game has something that can be met in the experience of the beauty and in understanding the legends sense [6, p. 565–566].

To say it differently, the language is treated as the result of the game, and we are trying to reach the perfect as well as to reveal the truth.

Sigmund Freud in his «Jokes and their relation to the unconscious» says that playing observation is grounded on aesthetic freedom which gave rise to the specific kind of thinking, free from rules and restrictions. Due to this fact he believes that a language game is «a playful judgment», and if we observe the game of ideas, we enjoy aesthetic delight [7, p. 11].

In the process of a play «a speech spirit» leaves the material area and moves to the field of thought. Any abstract expression, to Johan Huizinga's mind, is «a figure of speech», or wordplay. So the people describe their being through two worlds –invented world and a nature's one [5, p. 24].

Our world is not perfect, but here we come across another, very positive feature of play. It creates order. Into an imperfect world and into the conclusion of life it brings «a temporary, a limited perfection». A play can be beautiful and perfect. It is the aesthetic factor that comprises a desire for «absolute and peculiar order which reigns in a play» [7, p. 29–30].

Philosophers and psychologists believe that a game is one of the fundamental features of human nature. This variety of activity does not pursue any specific practical objectives, that is why the main goal of the game in most cases is a pleasure. Language games do not constitute an exception; they are also aimed at reaching this goal. Moreover, they tend to make us feel aesthetic delight and search for the truth. They comprise the culture which has been created in the process of the game. The given approach as well as ontological one does not focus on the mechanisms of the wordplay creation and ways of world's cognition.

The main principle, which provides the grounds of cognitive approach to wordplay study, can be described in the following way: language can be mastered when playing, but you can play on words in order to cognize the world. In other words, the phenomenon can be regarded as a mechanism that enables a person to develop the thinking skill of self-observation by means of a language while the consciousness is the reflection of the language. When we play on words, there are two simultaneous processes – the manipulation of mind and the manipulation of language norms.

There are some researches whose works have been analyzed in our investigation. They are Olesya Zhuravleva [8], Tatiana Gridina [10, 11], Boris Norman [9], Thorsten Schröter [12].

Language game is considered to be a mental activity that allows us to use cognitive structures, or mental ones. In their turn these structures describes a particular way of the world's cognition (concepts, cognitive stereotypes).

Olesya Zhuravleva believes that the essence of language game can be explained by the fact that the system of symmetrical and stable linguistic components loses its stability and creates new linguistic structure. And this promotes to «the new step of evolution of the linguistic system» [8, p. 8].

It is happening due to the fact that a word loses its «symbolic essence». Making it clear we would like to say that it is connected with the process when a subject treats the word not as an inviolable element but as a thing which cannot influence and restrict its application. On the contrary, the subject can use it depending on his desires and intentions [8, p. 78].

According to the Boris Norman's point of view, the playful objectives of language games are the conditions of pseudo-utterances creation, or the creation of tongue twisters, counting-out rhymes and sayings. These pseudo-utterances summarize the living experience of the language community and stir up some linguistic patterns [9, p. 43].

Tatiana Gridina in her work «A Linguistic Play: Stereotype and Creative Work» offers an associative concept of the language game. The effect of linguistic play is predetermined by the sign inclusion into new associative context that provides the prediction of the linguistic units' perception. And this process is destined for a particular given reaction of the addressee (real or imagined). The linguist believes that it is better to mention a linguistic play as it is realized in the process of communication. It depends on the wish of the interlocutor to maintain conversation, so the results of the game are single and occasional [10, p. 6–7]. She distinguishes the lingo-creative activity as a basis for wordplay, and this activity represents «a desire for revealing speaker's competence in exploiting linguistic potential» [11, p. 26].

Among foreign linguists one can face the similar point of view. «Shun the Pun, Rescue the Rhyme?» by Thorsten Schröter describes the language play as an deliberate manipulation of the linguistic system peculiarities, and draws attention to these peculiarities, so it has a communicative and cognitive effect which goes beyond the utterance [12, p. 71].

Owing to the lingo-creative activity a person can play on linguistic units. The result of this process does not necessary reflect the reality, but it encourages the linguistic potential exploiting which in its turn promotes mastering the principles of language creation and emphasizes the interaction between a person and language. But to our mind the given approach does not focus on cultural differences which have an impact on the main tool – language. On the contrary, the attention has been paid to the human mentality and people's ability to communicate.

The presence of the great variety of the individual or author's neologisms in the literary texts gave an impetus to explain the reasons for the introduction of this device to the text as well as to stress the wordplay use as a peculiar feature of the literary text. As the term «language game» had penetrated into literary texts earlier than into the publicistic ones, it makes sense to study some literary notions which provided the ground for the further publicistic studies. Moreover, Aleksandr Skovorodnikov believes that the postmodern literature had a great impact on the newspapers' language. Some of the tendencies – intertextuality, the axiological and entertaining forms of the comic that are represented by the language games in most cases, aesthetics of the ugly – can be found in the publicistic discourse, but the differences in extralingual factors and the informative function of newspaper do not allow to follow these tendencies entirely [13, p. 69].

Functional and semantic approach has been used during the investigations of the wordplays in the literary texts (Artur Shcherbina [14], Vladimir Sannikov [15]) as well as in the publicistic ones (Vladimir Vakurov [20], Svetlana Mikheykina [19], Svetlana Izyumskaya [16], Aleksandr Skovorodnikov [18], Natalya Novohacheva [22]).

In this light the wordplay is considered to be a stylistic device which serves for producing a witty effect (not always of comical nature), expressing the author's attitude to the utterance and the readership, defining the characters with the help of language.

If we take a closer look at the literary wordplay we will see that it is not the expressive means, it is a indicator of the author's literacy, his/her perception of the world. The publicistic wordplay was developed due to the media democratization.

The greatest contribution to this linguistic phenomenon study was made by Artur Shcherbina. He was the first who paid great attention to the «language play» and introduced the classification of it in the literary texts. The linguist focused not only on the general language aspect, but also on the contextual one. According to this approach, wordplay is created due to the polysemy of the words and their meanings in a metaphorical sense, lexical homonymy, contiguous general language and contextual phenomena (the combination of consonant words in the context, the replacement of the anticipated word in the context by other word that is consonant with it, the substitution of the individual humorous word, the folk imaginary etymology and the deconstruction of the phraseological units) [14, p. 6].

But this study does not consider the distinction between «wordplay» and «pun», these are the interchangeable notions as to his point of view.

The development of the theory brought the new phase when metonymic principle is used in order to distinguish such terms as «language game», «wordplay», and «pun».

Vladimir Sannikov treats language play as a deliberate deviation from the norm which leads to the emergence of the second aspect that differs greatly from the first one. His wordplay is «a language application which is not common» and this process takes place in terms of linguistic experiment [15, p. 14–15].

Svetlana Izyumskaya emphasizes that this linguistic phenomenon is «a way of producing various comic effects – joke, mockery, sarcasm, irony». What is more, she believes that the comic is to be grounded on any contradiction. It is possible to reach it using the words of English origin in the general microtext [16, p. 75].

Within the given approach such foreign linguists as Eleni Antonopoulou and Kiki Nikiforidou follow the idea of «language play» та «wordplay» difference. But their notion of distinction is based on the fact that language play is realized through pragmatic and textual similarity, wordplay – through lexical one [17, p. 290].

Regarding the fullest and the most precise definition, to our mind, belongs to Aleksandr Skovorodnikov. He describes wordplay as a variety of the language play which produces a witty effect due to unconventional use of the words and phraseological units. It is represented in speech due to the pun as a variety of word-play which involves a wit as a result of unconventional use of polysemants, homonyms, paronyms, «pseudosynonyms» and «pseudoantonyms» [18, p. 86].

But Svetlana Mikheykina studies the levels where wordplay can take place, they are phonetic, phonosemantic, lexico-semantic, level of semantic transformation due to dominant concept marking-out, level of punning antonymy, level of onomastic pun, level of lexical repetitions, and level of meaningful elements division [19, p. 68–72].

As to the deconstruction of the phraseological units, Vladimir Vakurov identifies it as «a phraseological pun» that arises from the phraseological unit reconstruction – full combination or punning review of the independent components. This process is accompanied by «double actualization» [20, p. 41].

It is not a secret that lexical borrowing has become a widespread process. We can play on the combination of foreign and Ukrainian words or on the combination of foreign words. This game or an intentional manipulation with the «old» linguistic units is well-known especially in publicistic discourse [21, p. 126].

Occasional word-building as a way of new words or word-forms creation has been studied by Natalya Novohacheva. She defines some forms of its realization. They are play with the inner word form – syngraphemics, word-building play (with the help of affixation, compounding, blending) and morphological play (when the word is used in the field which is «strange» for it [22, p. 166–170].

Syngraphemics enables us to create «an occasional phonosemantic unit» that is a word, phonetically similar or identical, which is different from a customary one because it has another meaning pattern or even another meaning [23, p. 35].

To summarize we would like to mention that there are various mechanisms of wordplay creation from the functional and semantic point of view. This linguistic phenomenon is to be treated as a variety of the language play when linguistic potential is used in terms of linguistic experiment to produce a witty effect (not always of comical nature) due to unconventional word use. It is represented in speech due to the pun (as a variety of word-play which involves a wit as a result of unconventional use of polysemants, homonyms, paronyms, pseudosynonyms and pseudoantonyms), the deconstruction of the phraseological units and other precedent texts, occasional word-building not only within one language but also with the help of foreign language elements. In headlines case we should add syngraphemics and rhyme to the ways of word-play realization.

The given approach provides us with the general notion of the wordplay content and how it can be realized in speech. But it is not sufficient if we want to get the complete analysis of the linguistic phenomenon. If we are aimed at revealing its nature we need to pay attention to hidden motives for its creation, which are developed due to a particular culture, specific attitude

towards the process of communication, wish or desire to uncover anything by means of language units, even emotional state of the author is of great importance.

That is why we believe that the given linguistic phenomenon is to be studied in terms of several approaches which contribute to the complete picture of the perception and designate the principles of the creation, reveal the author's hidden motives and the effects produced, discover the nature of the origin and explain the cognitive processes that tend to express the aspiration for perfection.

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У статті розглядається поняття гри як виду людської поведінки, аналізується лінгвістичний прояв цієї поведінки – гра слів, виділяються підходи до вивчення цього мовленнєвого феномена. Подається аналіз основних позицій в цих підходах та їх взаємозв'язку.

Ключові слова: мовна гра, гра слів, каламбур, онтологічний підхід, естетико-культурний підхід, когнітивний підхід, функціонально-семантичний підхід, мовленнєве явище.

В статье рассматривается понятие игры как разновидности человеческого поведения, анализируется лингвистическое проявление этого поведения – игра слов, выделяются подходы к изучению этого лингвистического явления. Анализируются основные позиции в данных подходах и их взаимосвязь.

Ключевые слова: языковая игра, игра слов, каламбур, онтологический подход, эстетико-культурный подход, когнитивный подход, функционально-семантический подход, языковое явление.

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