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ENGLISH ANECDOTES: SOME LINGUISTIC PECULIARITIES AND THE EXAMPLE OF LINGUISTIC ANECDOTE ANALYSIS

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Modern anecdotes are a multifaceted phenomenon, which is the subject of literary criticism (aesthetic), culturological, semiotic, sociological, psychological, historical and political analysis.

V. Karasik claimed that an anecdote is a joke, a short funny story, no doubt, it deserves special linguistic study [3, p. 39]. As any linguistic phenomenon an anecdote has its specific peculiarities.

Under stereotyping of the structural and content pattern of anecdotes one implies the presence of common plots and emergence of similar plot schemes in different situations. It should be stated that an anecdote is not re-created, but reproduced, transmitted from one narrator to another (reproducibility). Anecdotes can be told in many variants (variability). An anecdote itself lacks the author, but in this case one should say about the creative activity of linguistic community which is changing as well as the life itself [5, c. 73].

One of the major topics to be investigated in this field is the difference between an anecdote and related genres. Thus, M. Kagan believes that the content itself serves as a characteristic feature underlying the differentiation of such genres as a fairy tale, a fable and an anecdote [2]. In traditional folklore, for example, the main subjects of the image are everyday life of the people, in fairy tales – mythological fantasies about an ideal life; the world of anecdotes encompasses three characteristic genre spheres of the intelligentsia: political, ethical and erotic [2]. In other words, according to the subject matter such types of anecdotes as obscene, political, everyday anecdotes, and children's ones are distinguished [1]. G. Slyshkin proposes a classification of anecdotes on the basis of identifying the basic concepts of the laughing picture of the world,

according to which all available anecdotes can be divided into four groups as for the concepts expressed in them: «ridiculous», «terrible», «forbidden», «pretentious» [6].

V. Samochina has singled out anecdotes according to the principle of structural typology, based on the form and volume of an anecdote. According to such a grouping there are dialogic anecdotes, anecdote-monologue, expanded in volume anecdotes alongside with maximally collapsed in volume ones (pseudo-definition anecdotes, anecdotes-aphorisms, anecdotes-mystery) [5, p. 270-275].

The group of Chinese scholars considers anecdotes «as a structured tuple, including person, story and implication. The story describes the factual information about the story of specific persons. The implication indicates the meanings and significance of the story» [10].

Telling anecdotes is not easy narrative, that is a mini-presentation where the narrator uses the entire arsenal of nonverbal means (narration «in person», the usage of paralinguistic means of communication); that is the imagery of an anecdote. Intertextuality is one more specific feature of an anecdote as its inclusion in texts of general or special purpose, in which an anecdote as an intertext can perform a set of different functions that accompany the comic effect: either recreational, game, satirical, or moralizing. The narrator's knowledge of who and which anecdote can be told reflects its situationality and relevance. Therefore, the category of relevance is one of the main categories of an anecdote in terms of its functioning [4, p. 347].

On the site «Indatyaspearry» we find some descriptions as for typical structure of anecdote text: «abstract, orientation, crisis, reaction, coda» [7]. Among linguistic peculiarities one can point out such as the usage of various signs of punctuation (exclamatory, question as well as quotation marks), linking words, time and causal connectors; the action verbs as well as ones denoting feeling and thinking; the words reflecting the author's modality.

Moreover, there are linguistic anecdotes. They are those in which features of the language are played out; that is usually called a language game. To understand a linguistic anecdote, you need to be fluent in the language, therefore such anecdotes cannot be translated into other languages due to lexical polysemy and homonymy. In fact, comic effect in anecdotes can be created by means of all language levels.

Let's analyze the anecdote about linguistic misunderstandings in the European Parliament under the title «A question of timing»: «*One story is from my colleague Michel Rocard MEP. When he was French Prime Minister, he had a summit meeting with Mrs Thatcher as British Prime Minister. He raised the issue of the single currency. Thatcher responded, «Not in a thousand years». Rocard said, «I'm delighted to hear you say that! You're not opposed to the principle – it's just a question of the timing!»*» [9]. We observe Michel Rocard's literal understanding of Mrs Thatcher's reply – «*Not in a thousand*

years». Actually, this is an idiom meaning «not at any point, under absolutely no circumstances» [8]. Mrs Thatcher denied the matter of the single currency, but for Michel Rocard «not in a thousand years» meant «when?, at what time?». As a result, the final statement is «it's just a question of the timing». Moreover, Michel Rocard didn't perceive Mrs Thatcher's absolute denial. His thesis «You're not opposed to the principle» proves it.

The perspective vector of investigating linguistic anecdotes is the analysis of their narrative schemes.

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