JANE AUSTEN'S USE OF HUMOUR TO PORTRAY WOMEN'S ROLES

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Humour is a genuine mystery. Here is something every normal person has experienced. Undeniably, it constitutes an important facet of human life. Both in everyday speech and in theoretical literature, the term "humour" is used in many different ways. Abundant research into humour has underlined the central role of this phenomenon in both constructing and deconstructing meaning in everyday life.

Beyond, its relief function, humour is known to be a means of bringing power relations to the surface. Obviously, the focus of humour as a way to express grievances can also enrich the cultural analysis of social movements. Humour can play a role in both contexts – either as internal mode of communication or as a way to go public [1, p. 32].

For as long as good writers have been putting their quill pens or lead pencils or word processors to paper, they have tried to express themselves in the most colorful, imaginative, descriptive ways possible. One of the possible ways is humour. But it is hard to speak about humour taking into consideration only historical background and main theoretical peculiarities of this concept. The main purpose in the solution of this problem is to explain the main features of humour with the concrete literary examples i.e. to analyze the definite author and his/her works [2, p.76].

Therefore the author of this Diploma paper chose for the practical part of investigation works by English writer Jane Austen. The choice of writing this work was stipulated for the great interest and appreciation of some of the most famous Jane Austen's novels: Pride and Prejudice, Sense and Sensibility and Emma.

One of the objectives of the work was the following – to analyze the main stylistic devices that expose the main features of humour and to provide the appropriate examples.

We can distinguish the following stylistic devices that expose the main peculiarities of humour – zeugma, irony and pun. We will concentrate our attention on the last concept.

In its broadest sense, a pun is a form of word-play in which some feature of linguistic structure simultaneously combines two unrelated meanings, whereas the unrelated meanings in a pun are often situated in individual words, many puns cut across different levels of linguistic organization and so their formal properties are quite variable.

Speaking about the pun, during our work with Jane Austen's novel *Emma*, we analyzed such types of pun as homographic or antanaclasis puns,

homophonic or polyptoton puns, palindromes and pangrams.

Homographic or antanaclasis puns play on the multiple meanings one word may have. The following example from the novel will show this function: "…poor Miss Taylor" [3, p.9].

The pun in this case is the word "poor". The main character shows that Miss Taylor is poor because she left her friends, but she is not poor because of her husband's fortune and therefore her place in the society.

Homophonic or polyptoton puns play on words that sound alike, but mean different things. The following example from the novel will show this function: "My mother does not hear; she is a little deaf, you know" [3, p.118].

In this example we face with the homophonic example of the word "deaf". In writing we see its meaning and we see that it is an adjective, but when somebody tells us this sentence, we may think about the word "death" depending on the peculiarities of speaker's accent.

Pangrams are a special form of poetry that includes every letter of the alphabet, with as little repetition as possible. The following example from the novel will show this function: "Kitty, a fair but frozen maid, kindled a flame I yet deplore, The hood-wink'd boy I called to aid, though of his near approach afraid" [3, p.62].

Panagrams are especially seen in the expression "Kitty, a fair but frozen maid" and "the hood-wink'd boy I called to aid". Letters (k, i, t, f, m, z, d, u, y, e, w, h, c, a, etc.) show the structure of such stylistic phenomenon.

Palindromes are spelled the same, backwards or forwards, such as 'mom', 'race car', or 'deified'. Entire phrases can be palindromes. The following example from the novel will show this function: "You got Hannah that good place" [3, p.8].

The word Hannah also can be spelled backwards or forwards.

Recently, a growing number of scholars have undertaken researches in the field of humor. Yet, the definitions and concepts diverge at the various perspectives the scholars hold towards the term. Humour has many faces, for example mockery, heroism, naivety, cynicism, stupidity, cruelty, madness, nastiness, insults, viciousness, innocence, tears, the macabre.

It will be interesting for many other students to concentrate their attention not only on the structure of the context, and abstract meaning of the theme, but also on the work of stylistic devices, and especially on the work of humour in literature.

Bibliography:

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