

FEATURES OF THE DYSPHEMISMS IN ARTISTIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract. This article describes the specific features of the dysphemisms used in the artistic discourse. We examined the history of the study of the concept of discourse, disassembled the differences between the concepts of "discourse" and "text," and also identified key features of the artistic text. The term "dysphemism" is defined in the work and its differences from vulgarisms and explicit language are singled out. We have established a special role of the dysphemisms in the framework of artistic discourse. Within the framework of artistic discourse, dysphemisms have a specific goal: to demonstrate to the recipient the emotional state of the hero and his attitude to a particular phenomenon. From this perspective, we examined the different types of dysphemisms used in artistic discourse and selected examples from English fiction prose.

Keywords: Artistic discourse; Artistic text; Dysphemism; Euphemism.

Introduction

Recently, the interest of researchers in the problem of dysphemisms in modern language has increased. The freedom of speech and absence of restriction resulted in frequent use of more coarse words and expressions in everyday language. A certain problem in the allocation of dysphemisms is caused by the difficulty of separating them from slang and vulgarisms. The difference in this matter lies not in the lexical composition, but in the goal of using gross expressions. Vulgarisms are used by the speaker because of habit or low cultural level, most often their choice and application have no motivation. Dysphemisms are specifically chosen by the speaker instead of the neutral expression, which is quite appropriate in this context, to achieve a certain effect. Dysphemisms can be found in many kinds of discourse, but in the artistic discourse they are of particular importance. This article describes the peculiarities of dysphemisms within the framework of artistic discourse.

Methods

To achieve the goal of research, we used the method of structural analysis, the content analysis of artistic texts and the descriptive method.

Main part

First of all, it is necessary to define the concept of dysphemism. O.N. Rezanova defines the dysphemism as "intentional use of a taboo language form or words of a reduced style that do not correspond to a given speech situation for the solution of a given communicative task" [11]. T.V. Matveeva considers dysphemism as "an intentionally sharp form of expressing an emotional assessment, replacing a stylistically neutral word or expression with a gross, lowered one" [9]. As we can see, these definitions are alike, therefore we can deduce from them the definition of dysphemism, on which we will rely in this work. In the framework of this study, we understand dysphemism as a special application of stylistically reduced words and expressions, instead of more suitable neutral words and expressions in this context with the aim of transmitting a negative attitude or creating an expression [3].

E.A. Sidelnikova, analyzing the texts of scientific-journalistic discourse during the economic crisis, proposed the following classification of dysphemisms in this area:

1. Direct indication of negative economic events.
2. A gross or obscene designation of a concept that was initially neutral, in order to enhance expressiveness.
3. Former euphemisms that have become obsolete over time.

As we see, this is not a complete classification, because it considers only one sphere of application of dysphemisms [14].

L.N. Mosievich divides the dysphemisms into semantic spheres of their use:

1. Indication of social status.
2. Characteristics of mental and intellectual states.
3. Names of biological properties.

Analyzing dysphemisms in Russian and English, L.N. Mosievich came to the conclusion that their use strongly depends on the world view, and also allows to determine the degree of problematization of a certain phenomenon in a given society. The more dysphemisms are used, the more acute and urgent is this problem [10]. As we can see, this classification is much more complete, and it covers all areas of dysphemism. However, the defined groups are too broad, which makes it difficult to distribute specific speech phenomena.

We think that the most complete approach can be found in the works of A.N. Rezanova. It offers the classification based on lexical-semantic categories:

- 1) dysphemisms that denote the concepts of "death", "illness", physical and mental deficiencies;
- 2) dysphemisms related to a wide range of the criminal sphere;

- 3) dysphemisms that denote the vices and demerits of the human nature;
- 4) dysphemisms from the area of national identity;
- 5) dysphemisms denoting God, the devil, words associated with various religious rituals, curses [11].

As a result of our study, we came to the conclusion that the dysphemisms of the religious group are used in an artistic text in two cases. In the first case they are used to strengthen the statement and demonstrate the emotional state of the hero. Most often it is panic, irritation, anger and other negative emotions. For example, "I do hate goddamn junkies, and I especially hate rich goddamn junkies" [6]. In the second case, dysphemisms are used to ridicule religion and everything that is associated with it. For example, "And in a society ruled by money and false morals, these grey people still often win, in the ceaseless struggle between personal profit and the common good: the ignorant, illiterate, hypocritical Town Council, the blinkered planning officers, the successful local speculators (nicknamed the Mafia) who flew their own flag over their local headquarters, as if they were a private army - all the Holier than Thou brigade" [4]. Blasphemy refers to this subspecies.

Therefore, we can distinguish the characteristic features of religious dysphemisms in artistic discourse. First, the dysphemisms of a religious group have a rather peculiar character. Most often they do not replace the neutral concept but are inserted into the sentence for an additional emotional effect. Only in a small number of cases when the dysphemisms of this group are used to express blasphemy, they are used as dysphemisms of other groups. On the second hand this type of dysphemisms has become extremely widespread in artistic texts.

Another important group is dysphemisms, which denote death and physical defects.

In the older preschool age, a person begins to realize his mortality. The fact of the finiteness of life frightens and bewitches simultaneously. In the process of growing up comes the awareness of the fragility of the human body, the threat of serious illness and disability. To function properly, the human psyche triggers protective mechanisms that help to cope with such fears and lead a normal, full life. However, this does not mean that the problems of death and physical infirmity become insignificant. They simply go into a less conscious part of human existence, forming a taboo for an open discussion of these issues and a whole network of rituals for interacting with such events in real life [1].

One of such mechanisms is the appearance of euphemisms and dysphemisms in the speech. Despite their opposite orientation, both these phenomena in this case pursue the same goal: to reduce the frightening effect of these gloomy events. The use of euphemisms when it comes to death or a serious illness is quite obvious and easy to understand. In speech, words that cause negative mental stress and can provoke resentment of other people are replaced by softer synonyms.

Let's have a closer look at examples of dysphemisms that denote death, illness and physical disabilities in artistic discourse in English.

"The pathologist looked at his own hands and stripped off his surgical gloves, dropping them into a plastic bag. 'I'll organize the meat wagon once David Bailey here's finished'" [12]. A rather familiar attitude to death is the word "meat wagon" used by pathologists. In the following example, the choice of this particular dysphemism by the character testifies to the psychological mechanisms of the acceptance of death, specific to police officers and doctors.

"He had fought the intruder and there would be samples on his knuckles and in his fingernails of his aggressor's skin and blood. 'If you can hit your killer's face before you croak we can probably get him,' SOCO said helpfully, as he examined a gory piece of Sellotape before slipping it into one of his brown paper bags and carefully labelling it" (Rutherford, 1990). In this example, we can also trace a cynical attitude of a police officer towards the death. In speech, he replaces the word "to die" with dysphemism "to croak".

"And now that I'm an old crock and he's an old buffer, we have our daily skirmishes - he wants the window closed, I want it open" [5]. In this example dysphemism reflecting a person's physical deficiencies, is designed to show the irony of the heroine's attitude toward her own old age. She demonstrates deliberate contempt for her own physical disabilities.

After analyzing artistic texts in English, we came to the conclusion that the use of dysphemisms of this group is not so common as the use of similar euphemisms. In Russian the choice of the dysphemistic notation for the term "death" is much broader and more diverse. Perhaps this is due to the traditional stronger religiosity of the British, for which matters of illness and death are something sacred and not subject to derision. Most often, the use of dysphemisms is observed in the speeches of professionals who regularly face death and have developed a cynical attitude towards it.

Another major group of dysphemisms are the designations of physical disabilities and infirmities. They are used more often, but typically they are directed to the speaker himself, emphasizing his boldness and ability to laugh in the face of his own problems. Another goal of such dysphemisms is to demonstrate a negative attitude towards a subject. In this aspect they do not differ from the dysphemisms of the remaining groups.

Artistic discourse is a special area for the use of dysphemisms. This is caused both by the peculiarities of this kind of discourse, and by the stylistic functions of dysphemisms. Let us dwell in more details on this issue.

The study of any kind of discourse is based on the identification of its distinctive features. Let us analyze how the artistic discourse differs from other types of discourse. It would be wrong to seek the uniqueness of a work of art only in its linguistic features and the specifics of its structure. In the modern literature there are works which, according to these characteristics, practically do not differ from the texts of other genres. From the point of view of grammar and semantics it is impossible to draw a line between such texts. Therefore, in the study of artistic discourse, the main attention will be paid not to linguistic features directly, but to the functions of the text [2].

The objective of the artistic discourse is to influence the reader's "spiritual space," to change his system of values, attitudes, motives, and other deeply personal traits. In its essence, artistic discourse is communication, which occurs not directly, but is mediated by artistic text. However, in art discourse impact is seldom produced by information. We cannot say that a certain message of the author has changed certain traits of the recipient's personality. However, the words of the artistic text trigger the process of reflection and thoughts, as a result of which the reader's spiritual space changes. At the same time, the reader understands that this text is a product of the author's imagination, his vision of the world. Therefore, changes occur not under the influence of information, but under the influence of abstract ideas expressed in a work.

Thus, it is obvious that the concepts of artistic discourse and artistic text are inextricably linked. It is impossible to conduct a full analysis of an artistic text without understanding its discourse. However, in order to understand the very possibility of such an indirect act of communication, it is necessary to consider the means by which artistic discourse functions. Now we should dwell on the distinctive features of the artistic discourse, which make it unique and differ it from other selected types of discourse. The first one can be deduced from the characteristic of conceptual means. Artistic discourse uses the formal features of the concept to invoke certain responses in the recipient's mind based on associative chains.

However, the uniqueness of artistic discourse cannot be considered, relying only on linguistic features. As part of the general concept, it has similar features to other types of discourses, singled out by researchers, but at the same time differs from them in its purpose. The peculiarity of this goal is that the writer, with the help of his work, tries to make an impact on the recipient (in the case of artistic discourse - on the reader), who has its unique "spiritual space", that is, the established system of values, views, motivational and personal sphere. Through the work of art, the author tries to make some changes in the spiritual space of the reader. Thus, there is mediated communication between the writer and the reader, during which the ideas and judgments expressed by the author pass through the prism of the reader's consciousness, and then cause a certain response. Reflecting on the problems described in the work, the recipient acquires a new sensory experience, his concept undergoes some changes, or a new concept is formed.

The underlined aspect of communicativity is the following characteristic feature of artistic discourse, because it manifests itself most clearly in this type of discourse [8]. It clearly shows the process of communication between the author and his reader. Artistic work is always a reflection of the worldview of the writer, his system of values and motives. When reading, the recipient put all this through his worldview, values and attitudes. There is a very real act of communication. And communicative goals, such as impact, are expressed in artistic discourse much more strongly than goals of other types of discourse.

Another feature of the artistic discourse follows from the features of the work of art, which not only leaves the reader wide open space for his own reflections, but often carries a philosophical and psychological message. Under the author's influence, the recipient begins the process of reflection, introspection and internal changes [7]. At the same time the writer's point of view is rarely expressed directly, it is usually mediated and not obvious. From this follows another important feature of the artistic discourse - its multidimensionality and polysemy. This means that the reader is influenced not only in a direct way: through expressed ideas and beliefs, but also by choosing certain stylistic devices and figurative means that cause the certain associative connections and provoke the activation of various kinds of emotions and feelings. In this case, the impact on different readers may not be just unequal, but also directly opposite. The language tools chosen by the author cause different associations among different people, therefore, the images they represent will be significantly different. The author's virtuosity is in the skillful use of universal conceptual signs without the abuse of clichés, which practically do not cause any emotional response.

The main specificity of artistic discourse is that it depicts many other types of discourse without dividing into them. For example, the political discourse depicted by the writer still becomes artistic, since it does not belong to reality, but is the fruit of the author's imagination. In fact, the author of a work of art creates whole fictional worlds. And it's not just about science fiction. In any book, fictional characters communicate, watch movies, listen to politicians, read newspapers and talk about the economic situation in the country. It would be incorrect to say that in each book we can distinguish several types of discourse. In fact, this is the author's opinion about political, cinematographic or economic discourse [15]. This opinion does not pretend to be an absolute truth, like the whole content of a work of art. It has completely different goals, which we mentioned above. Therefore, events, facts and statements can be subjected to any manipulation by the writer for the purposes of the work of art.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that such a phenomenon as dysphemism existed from the very beginning of the development of society, from the moment of the appearance of taboos and social prohibitions, its scientific study began relatively recently. It's caused by the significant emancipation of modern man and the liberalization of speech and social norms. We examined the history of the study of the concept of discourse, disassembled the differences between the concepts of "discourse" and "text," and also identified key features of the artistic text. We have established that in the framework of artistic discourse, dysphemism plays the role of a stylistic device. They help the author to show the emotional state of the character, express his attitudes and values. This is a unique function of dysphemisms that is not inherent in other types of discourse.

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