

Nouns Gender and Number Aesthetic Potential in the Aspect of the Comic¹

Wang Xiaoxu², Gulshat A. Hayrutdinova², & Zhang Xinxin³

Abstract

The article is devoted to the urgent problem for grammatical stylistics - the study of the aesthetic resources of the morphological categories of the gender and number of nouns. The aim of the work is a comparative analysis of the aesthetics of the categories of gender and the number of Russian substances in the aspect of the reflection of the comic. The following methods were used as the main ones in this scientific work: descriptive-analytical, semantic-stylistic, distributive and the method of component analysis. The material for the study was the texts of literary works included in the "national corpus of the Russian language". In the process of research, an analysis was made of nouns used in a literary text with the aim of creating a funny one. It has been established that the aesthetic resources of categories of the gender and number of nouns, considered in the indicated aspect, are realized thanks to the following methods: convergence of words (word forms) that have sound similarities, the use of synonyms, polysemants, grammatical means representing a deviation from the norm, playing out the semantics of the analyzed categories, varieties of language units. The most significant number of methods is associated with updating the aesthetic potential of the grammatical gender. However, aesthetic resources of the gender category are not realized when polysemants are used. In relation to another category - the number of nouns - examples of the use of synonymy were not found, not all varieties of grammatical deviation were presented, as well as one of the cases of playing homophony. A generalization of the results of a comparative analysis of the aesthetic potential of the gender and the number of substances indicates the wider possibilities of the grammatical the gender in reflecting comic phenomena.

Keywords: Aesthetic Resources of a Language; Category of Comic; Gender and Number of Nouns; Ways to Create a Comic Effect.

1. Introduction

The study of the aesthetic resources of linguistic units is one of the urgent tasks of modern linguistic stylistics. The problem of language aesthetics has attracted

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² Kazan Federal University

³ Jilin University of Finance and Economics

the attention of many scholars, but because of its complexity, it is understood ambiguously. Our research in this direction allows us to argue that in the study of the aesthetics of linguistic means, the widest approach, which provides orientation to the meta category of the aesthetic, is most appropriate. At the same time, the highest degree of realization of the aesthetic properties of linguistic units is typical for texts of literary works, as evidenced by the materials of many studies (see, for example, (Gibbs, 2001; Bochina & Starostina, 2016; Sadrieva & Erofeeva, 2016; Nurullina et al., 2017; Rakhimova, 2018; Tabatabaei, et al, 2014; Escalera Chávez et al, 2019). The analysis of literary texts shows that those linguistic units possessing aesthetic resources are capable of exerting an aesthetic effect on a person as a recipient of speech. In the process of such an impact, the reader experiences spiritual pleasure, the basis of which is aesthetic pleasure.

2. Methods

A study of the problem of aesthetics of a language can be carried out in a number of directions, one of which is a description of linguistic means that can participate in the reflection of aesthetic categories. The main object of our attention in this article are grammatical units, which are customary to describe within the framework of morphological categories of gender and number of nouns. The work of a number of scientists (Ionova, 1988; Gin, 1992; Bondarko, 1994, etc.) is devoted to the analysis of categories of gender and number, as well as their aesthetic capabilities, but they do not pose the task of a comparative analysis of these grammatical objects. Therefore, the results of our study are designed to fill those gaps that still remain in this scientific field. The purpose of this study is to analyze the aesthetics of the categories of the gender and the number of Russian substances considered in the aspect of the reflection of the comic. The following methods were used as the main ones in this scientific work: descriptive-analytical, semantic-stylistic, distributive and the method of component analysis. The material for the study was the texts of literary works included in the "National corpus of the Russian language".

3. Results and Discussion

Acquaintance with scientific works in the field of aesthetics and literary criticism indicates that two approaches dominate in the description of the comic: the essence of the comic is either a contradiction (inconsistency) or a game (Ryumin, 1999). From our point of view, the approaches under consideration are not mutually exclusive: they are aimed at exploring different aspects of the same phenomenon.

Our analysis showed that the ways to create a comic effect by updating the aesthetic possibilities of the gender and number of nouns can be different.

1. One of the commonly used methods is homophony, i.e. coincidence in the sound of grammatical units. Within the framework of this method, two types of

homophony can be distinguished: a) the similarity in the sound of the word base (or the root morpheme) and b) the sound similarity of the official morpheme - the ending.

1.1. The similarity in the sound of the root morpheme as a way of forming a funny one is revealed during the implementation of the aesthetic capabilities of both categories of nouns. If you keep in mind the category of the gender, then quite often there are facts of punctuation of the nouns of the masculine and feminine gender type *Granat- Granata*. Here is an example of punning connection between the substantives Drake "samec utki" and spleen - a human body organ which is located in the abdominal cavity (Ozhegov & Shvedova, 2007) in the structure of the artistic text: Flying Drake / to the far side / across the sea / Drake Looking for a spleen....

Let us turn to the consideration of the forms of numbers that realize the goal of creating a comic effect. The emotional perception of the text in this aspect is possible with the intentional convergence of two homonymous nouns that have sound similarities in terms of the basis of the word. So, in the poem B. Zakhodera's "About Caviar" reader's comic reaction is playing up two homonymous nouns: the words *caviar* (which implements the lexical meaning "the mass of fish eggs processed as a food product") and the substantive *ikra*, which expresses the meaning "rounded muscle on a man's lower leg" (Ozhegov & Shvedova, 2007). The first word, in accordance with linguistic norm, has the form of a singular, and for the second substantive, opposition in number is possible: *ikra-ikri*. The author's intention related to the transmission of the emotional tonality of the text is especially noticeable in the last two lines of the poem, in which the named homonyms are used in the form of R. p. unit: *Is it not strange? / Fish have sturgeon / No at all ikr, - / But still there is ikra! / But here, / Oh no matter how we are cunning, - / There are two ikri - / But often there is no ikri (caviar)...*

1.2. The source of the comic reaction can also be the sound similarity of the endings of nouns belonging to different gender groups. If we keep in mind this layer of vocabulary, then the inflection *-a* in the linguistic consciousness of native speakers of the Russian language is associated with feminine nouns (*sister, river, kindness*, etc.). In the class of masculine substances, the most frequent means of expressing the grammatical meaning of the genus is zero inflection (*brother, home, intellect*), while the ending *-a* is typical for a small group of personal nouns of the same gender like *grandfather*. The coincidence of the end of *-a* in the substantives of male and female can be played out as a result of the convergence of these words in the composition of alogism. It is absurd, for example, to combine a feminine noun *aunt* with a masculine name *Borya* when designating the same person, as well as a masculine noun *uncle* with a feminine *Katya*, despite the similarity of their endings. Nevertheless, in the text of the poem O. Grigoryev's "Firewood", such a combination of nouns is artistically motivated ("Everything went around ..."): *But I got a churbak! / Will not split in any way. / One-two, one-two, / It's like chopping wood with your head / Everything went around: / Sky, / Street, / Gate, / Field, / Chicken / And the house ... /*

Aunt Borya with uncle Katya / On the porch they bake a pie - Uncle Katya kneads the dough, / Aunt Borya eats cottage cheese.

A similar use of grammatical units, designed to create a comic effect due to playing out the endings of the singular and (or) plural of nouns, was not recorded by us.

2. In rather rare cases, the considered type of author's emotionality is embodied through the use of synonyms. For example, in the playful story by F. Krivin, "The gender of a noun," the comic effect is created not only by punctuation of several pairs of masculine and feminine nouns (*rumba - rumba, opor - opora, karier - kariera*), which reveal sound similarities root morphemes, but also through an intentional combination of the same-root synonyms *jar* 'znoi' and *jara* 'hot weather' (Ozhegov & Shvedova, 2007): *You can't change your gender. It seems that he has changed a little: everything is just a kind, - and you look, he himself has already changed. You have just plowed the seas, trying not to get off the **rumba**, and now you are dancing in the port **rumba**. You just rode at full **opor** - and now you need the **opora**. And you changed your easy and quick **karier** to your easy and fast **karieru*** ...

*Where is it, the former **jar**, prejny **pil**?*

***Jara, pil** ... I would like to drink kvasku and lie in the chill ...*

In terms of updating the aesthetic resources of the category of the number of nouns, this technique was not found.

3. A comic outcome may have the use of the same polysemous word. However, playing out the lexical and grammatical meanings of the polysemant is revealed only when considering the aesthetic potential of the category of number. So, in one of B. Zakhoder's poems the following two meanings of the polysemous word *interesare* played out: "special attention to something" and "nujdi, potrebnosti" (Ozhegov & Shvedova, 2007). In its first meaning, this token is used only in the singular. And in another sense it can be used only in the plural form. Thanks to the highlighting of these features of the lexical-semantic variants of a polysemous noun, the ironic coloring of the following poem arises: *Be gifted as God, / smart as a demon, - / You will not get glory / (That is, the press). / No dear! / To arouse **interes** - / patronut nujnu chi-ito **interesi**. "Glory"*

4. Rarer are cases of playing out the semantics of a grammatical unit. Thus, it is known that masculine personal nouns express a general concept of a person regardless of gender. Therefore, having met the word *people* in the text, the reader is psychologically tuned to his perception in the dictionary meaning, according to which persons of both sexes are included in the concept. However, the further development of the humorous story corrects readers' expectations regarding the semantic volume of this word: according to the author's intention, only males are included in it, which causes a comic effect: *Speaker in complete darkness: - Tovarishi! I am a simple*

*servant! Father is a turner; mother is also Russian. I can't think without tears today that our exemplary team of two hundred **people** and fifty women was awarded a rare award this year for their successes ... ("Solar eclipse").*

Realization of the aesthetic potential of the grammatical number can also be associated with playing out the semantics of this category. Here we mean those cases when plural forms are used in the meaning of multiple hyperbolic. In particular, the comic perception of the poem of Yu. Levitanskogo, containing an intertextual reference to the famous work of N.V. Gogol, is associated with the use of the plural of the noun *nosi* in the indicated (non-basic) meaning: *This is the same as other noses bloomed, / this is necessary as bloomed! / They didn't say goodbye to anyone, they didn't ask anyone, / they started hanging around Peter!* ("Crying about Major Kovalev").

5. The comic reaction of the recipient may be due to the phenomenon of variation of grammatical units. Within the gender category, nouns of the type *rels - relsac* can be analyzed. So, the noun of a female kind of a *botinka*, having colloquial stylistic coloring, is used in one of Sasha Cherniy's poems: *"Have you read Meterlink?" / "Yes. Thank you, I read ..." / And the landlady **botinka** / I was excited, as if in "шквал".* («On a visit»). As you can see, this generic version of the word is used not only to create end consonances, but also to form an ironic subtext.

The comic effect can also be achieved by updating the aesthetic potential of the number category. To confirm our conclusion, let us turn to V. Mayakovsky's poem "Give a isiachnuyu jism", which was written in connection with the campaign conducted by the Komsomol against philistine ideas about "graceful" life. The colloquial form of the plural of *volosa* (instead of the normative *volosi*) is used by the author not only as a means of versioning, but also for the purpose of satirical depiction of one of the inhabitants: *... v krachmali /tulovishe/ completely smeared. / On the head / sleek **volosa**, / posredine /probrita / lisaia polosa.*

6. Another way to create a funny is grammatical deviation. In terms of considering the category of gender, it should be noted the change in the gender of the word. For example, the transformation of the grammatical gender of the noun *meeting* was used by L. Filatov both as a way to create a comic and as a means of verbal stylization: *Voice: Ia lfdyj uj tut stoyu/U krilechka na krayu, / Jdu, pokamest ti sakonchish / **Soveshaniyu** svoyu!* ("About Fedot the Sagittarius, a daring young man").

Similar examples related to the functioning of number forms are absent in our corpus of examples.

The reader's comic reaction is caused by grammatical deviations associated with a violation of the coordination of dependent words with a noun. In terms of the category of gender, we noted cases of deviation from agreement with the noun of the verb predicate, which is used not only as a means of verbal characterization of a

foreign character, but also as a method of comic, for example: *As it will be in Russian, / ain und tsvantsikh, / Bil bi sheia - est homut!* Yu. Kim "The Vralman Monologue").

Lack of grammatical coordination by number is also possible, which is one of the means of forming an ironic subtext: "**Comrade Ivan Vanych left zasedat** — / *the union of Theo and Gukon.*" (V. Mayakovsky. "Prosasedavshiesia").

Occasionalisms can also be used to embody the type of author's emotionality in question. So, the feminine grammatical meaning is expressed by an occasional lexeme *chizhikha*: - *Well, you, chizhik, do not sing, / How did you sing, what happened? / You take the upper notes, / You still have a lot of strength / And as before, you don't sing, / There isn't that vocals. / And **chizhikha** von tvoia / Jaluetsia toje.* Yu. Kim "Chizhik").

As for those occasional grammatical units that could be considered within the category of numbers, they are used very rarely. For example, in the poem by V. Mayakovsky "Good!" to create irony, and also for the purpose of versioning, the occasional plural form *tsiplienki* (instead of the normative form *tsipliata*) is used: *Khophonilis/ obivateli / sa kuhni / sa pelenki. / - Do not touch us - / we / **tsiplienki.** / Mi tolko moshki/mi jdem kormejki.*

An emotional reaction is caused by the use of elements of another language system along with the lexical units of the Russian language. This technique was noted by us in the humorous story of V. Slavkin "The cry of the soul" - some nouns of the text are replaced by lexical units of the English language. Due to the presence of definitions, each of the Anglicisms in the composition of macaronic speech acquires an unusual gender attribute in accordance with the grammatical gender to which its Russian equivalent belongs (cf. : **lasther** *time* - *time*, n.), which creates the illusion of a new linguistic reality. For example: *Recently **time** our neighbors completely finished us off with their sound insulation. Although we learned to sleep under the bubbling sound of their tape recorder, but our **life** is cracked. In addition, we got in our **family** a natural nervous disease - we talk nonsense. <...> And my **child** Kolia now carries around only fives of English, which also indicates his serious condition.*

Elements of another language system are also used in the implementation of the aesthetic possibilities of the category of numbers. For example, M. Saltykov-Shchedrin often used elements of the Latin, French, and German languages to satirically depict reality. As the central character of one of his satirical tales, the Eagle acts, the image of which clearly indicates the Russian Tsar. Describing Oryol's attempt under public pressure to promote the development of science, education and art, the author uses the German word *Kunststück* ('trick') in the plural form with Russian inflection *and*, which is one of the means of creating a comic: *On the other day for the eagle in the courtyard began the "golden age". Skvortzi pasuchivali gimn "Nauki yunoshei ptayut" <...> popugai novie **kunshtyuki** vidumivali.*

4. Summary

A generalization of the results of the analysis allows us to identify the following optimal list of ways to realize the aesthetic potential of these categories. These are homophony, synonymy, polysemy, actualization of the grammatical meaning of a word (word form), the phenomenon of variability, grammatical deviations. The vast majority of the indicated methods are associated with the actualization of the aesthetics of the grammatical genus. However, aesthetic resources of the gender category are not realized when polysemants are used. In relation to another category - the number of nouns - examples of the use of synonymy were not found, not all varieties of grammatical deviation were presented, as well as one of the cases of playing homophony.

5. Conclusion

Thus, the morphological categories of the genus and the number of nouns are quite broad in terms of reflecting comic phenomena. A comparative analysis of the two categories considered allows us to conclude: the aesthetic possibilities of the genus category in the aspect of comic reflection have a wider range compared to the category of number.

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