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**FUNCTIONAL-STYLISTIC PECULIARITIES OF FORMATION AND  
INTERPRETATION OF NON-STANDARD EXPRESSIVE-EFFECTIVE FORMS  
OF SPEECH INTERACTION (ON THE MATERIAL OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING  
MILITARY DISCOURSE)**

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*The article deals with the analysis and description of expressive-figurative means of original or occasional expression in functional-semantic and structural aspects.*

*The pragmatic relevance of the formation of expressive forms of professional communication lies in the linguistic-creative expression of military team members' communicative need to overcome the stylistic neutrality of professional discourse terms. In so doing, they create a linguistic-cultural space for the self-realization of the personality in a specific professional environment. The fixed uniformity of linguistic rules establishes the sustainable order of their formal and content expression. The possibility of associative variation of the standard and creative components in the semantics of words results in the emergence of forms differing from the system of word formation, spelling and orthoepic norms. Structurally, owing to homonymy, polysemy, and homonymity, the constituent elements of the puns can be words as well as phrases. The phonetic-graphical coincidence or divergence of the kernel components of homophrasal puns and the nature of their formal expression creates various semantic forms. Moreover, the stylistic resource for the creative use of the language play includes intentional parody assimilation of paronymic lexemes, contextual identification of explicit and implicit homophones and their punning perception, simultaneous objectification of direct and associative-figurative meanings in specially built contexts due to the semantic ambiguity of lexemes, the deliberate mispronunciation of foreign toponyms, the insertion of occasional expressive elements into the word structure, the phonographic and content reduction and combination of initial motivational forms and, as a consequence, the formation of pun-based contaminated units.*

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## **ФУНКЦІОНАЛЬНО-СТИЛІСТИЧНІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ УТВОРЕННЯ ТА ІНТЕРПРЕТАЦІЇ НЕСТАНДАРТНИХ ЕКСПРЕСИВНО-ЕФЕКТНИХ ФОРМ МОВЛЕННЕВОЇ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ (НА МАТЕРІАЛІ АНГЛОМОВНОГО ВІЙСЬКОВОГО ДИСКУРСУ)**

**В. А. Вигівський, С. Б. Моркотун, О. А. Башманівський**

У статті розглянуто механізми утворення та способи функціонально-стилістичної інтерпретації оригінальних й оказіональних форм мовної гри в професійній комунікації військовослужбовців. Фіксована тотожність мовних правил передбачає стабільний характер їх формально-змістового вираження. Асоціативне варіювання типовими та творчими складовими семантичної структури слів, можливість парадоксальної неоднозначності в процесі взаємодії плану змісту та плану вираження призводить до появи нестандартних експресивно-образних комічних або сатиричних форм, розбіжних із системою мовних норм. Окрім омофразних каламбурів, до предмету розгляду залучено пародійне уподібнення паронімів, комічне обігрування контекстуального ототожнення омофонів, оказіональних експресивних вставок та компресивів.

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**Ключові слова:** мовна гра, образно-асоціативна валентність, омофразний каламбур, контекстна інтерпретація, комічний ефект, професійний дискурс.

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**Introduction.** Linguistic and stylistic analysis of the formation and functioning of neological expressive forms of speech interaction takes into account the socio-cultural parameter of the study of speech activity with its increased interest in the values and frame of references of the ethnos and their corresponding reflection in the discourse of social strata. The dynamics of the process of professional cooperation, the emergence of various social situations in a functionally branched army team requires an appropriate type of speech behavior as a means of language regulation of the mental-communicative interaction of the military personnel.

The use of pun-based stylistic words, phrases or occasional miniatures is a pragmatically relevant linguistic means of objectifying and servicing the communicative needs of the military. This, in turn, expands the linguistic-creative space of personal expression, being an integral component of specific professional speech.

The essence of the creative component of a language game is to find new ways of deriving a sign from the systemically conditioned context of its creation and perception in order to improve speech interactive influence.

The **aim** of the article is to determine and analyze the means of formation, functioning and interpretation of associative-figurative, emotionally-expressive punning linguistic forms and structures in the English-speaking military, mainly informal oral and written discourse.

The materials for the article are an explanatory dictionary of the modern US military and related vocabulary [1], non-fiction military texts [2], military humour books [3; 4; 5; 6] as well as a number of relevant Internet sites [7].

**Discussion.** If the associative valency of a word allows variation in combining the content plane and the expression plane and, as a consequence, different interpretations of its meaning, then this causes the effect of a language game [8: 33-63].

Language games involve performing an operative action on a language sign by an individual; the speech process is a deliberate violation of normative rules in order to attract the addressee's attention to the paradox created. The paradoxical, comic effect of this phenomenon is that its asystemic characteristics are achieved by systemic means, in which deviations from the linguistic norms manifest themselves in the language play [9].

Emotional linguistic function, as a means of expressing feelings and emotions, as well as influencing the behavior of the addressee, is realized through stylistic expression or a miniature pun, based on a similar sounding of words or phrases and giving the expression a shade of comicality [10: 119].

The pun as a stylistic figure has a certain structure, which V. S. Vinogradov distinguishes as the kernel in the form of a two-member formation. The first component of the kernel, which is the lexical basis of the pun, is called the basic one or the stimulant (S). This basic component, as a rule, complies with the existing spelling, orthoepic, and word-building standards. The second kernel component is considered to be the resulting one or the resultant (R). The resultant can be selected either from the lexical layers that constitute the literary norm of the language or from those which are beyond its limits or it may belong to the cases of occasional individual word formation [11].

The term "pun" is often identified with a play on words [12: 604], though this is only partially substantiated due to a number of significant structural, pragmatic, and other differences. Thus, the pun is built not only on homonymy, but also on polysemy, homonymity, and the phenomenon of folk etymology. Not only individual words but also phrases, sentences, and trans-phrasal unities can be constituents of the pun.

The effect caused by the pun – in particular, the homophrasal one –

always has a pragmatic character. The main pragmatic goal is the expected comic or satirical result. In this case, the addressee's evaluation of the content of the utterance is usually accompanied by an assessment of the adequacy of the means of the sender's realization of pragmatic intentions.

Considering the puns based on the phenomenon of homonymity, we can conclude that there are three types of puns, depending on the nature of convergence or divergence of the stimulant (S) and the resultant (R):

1. Forms of S and R coincide completely: that is, their sound and graphic forms are the same:

*A new soldier was writing a letter to his parents about his first experience in the Army, "I'm doing all right with my training. As a matter of fact I am perfectly **at home** in military sciences, quite **at home** in all drills, in fact I'm **at home** everywhere but **at home**." (at home /to be/ (free word combination)):: to be at home (military homophrase) – to be experienced in sth. // (Laughs Parade).*

*Question: "Daddy, what are pieces of artillery?"*

*Answer: "Must be what the little girl next door plays on the piano."*

(A word play is based on the complete phonetic and graphical coincidence of components of the pun kernel *pieces* "artillery guns" and the implicit *pieces* "passages of music" (Hello, Fatso).

Sometimes, in such cases, the pun arises: a) due to the homonymy of the word and acronym:

*At an AF base the assistant reported to the general: "Sir, there's **a man from MARS** to see you." "What's that, **a man from Mars** to see me?" snapped the general. "Have you been drinking, Sergeant Argyle?" (Laughs Parade).*

b) due to the homonymy of the first name and a common word of English vocabulary:

*Artillery Commander: **Fire at will!**  
Recruit: **Where's Will?**(Id.).*

2. The sound forms of S and R coincide but have a graphical difference:

A student of an engineer school was stumped in an examination by a question concerning the bridging of a river which ran over a rocky bed. Finally in disgust he wrote: "**Damn the river and blast the bed!**" (dam :: damn) // (Fall out for Laugh).

3. The forms of S and R are divergent both in sound and graphically:

"Yes, Miss Jones, it's true my husband has left his job. He thought it was better for him to enlist rather than to be called up. Anyway, he has **burned his bridges** behind him." "Oh, well, I shouldn't worry about that. They'll provide him with a uniform in the Army," commented the neighbour (breeches :: bridges) // (Humor in Uniform).

The formal expression of the pun kernel involves two versions:

1. The kernel components (stimulant and resultant) act explicitly in the text:

A general had dictated a letter to a secretary who typed "**intelligent officer**" instead of "**intelligence officer**." The general roared at the secretary: "Look at this. Who's ever heard of an **intelligent officer** in our **intelligence service!**" (Fall out for laugh).

2. One component of the kernel is introduced implicitly.

A. Implicit stimulants:

"When I was at war I shaved every morning." "You mean to tell me you shaved while you were fighting?" "Yes, I had a lot of **close shaves**" (close shave – clean shave :: close shave – dangerous situation) // (Id.).

A quartermaster who had not enough to feed all men in his unit suggested to issue each soldier a pencil and a sheet of paper. "What for?" he was asked. "They **will draw their rations**" (draw v. – produce a picture or diagram :: draw rations – to get food) // (Humor in Uniform).

First Pilot: "It makes me cross to see I haven't enough altitude." Second Pilot:

"**It makes me soar, too**" (soar v. – gain altitude :: sore adj. – frustrated) // (Id.).

First Pilot (to the aircraft designer): "Say, that new prop of yours on the starboard engine throws the ship off center. All the pilots are discussing it." Second Pilot: "Yes, **it's the torque of the town**" (torque n. – a force that tends to cause rotation :: talk v. – discuss sth. with sb. // (Id.).

B. Implicit resultants:

A junkman asked a soldier, "Any old clothes, any old rags?" "Of course not; this is troop barracks," the soldier replied. "Any **old bottles?**" the junkman asked with joy. "We haven't got any old bottles. We have got plenty of **dead soldiers**." "Oh, then I tell it to my friend undertaker" (old bottles (free word combination) :: dead soldiers (military homophrase) – empty bottles // (Laughs Parade).

A girl was to visit her serviceman brother at a military hospital. While stopping at the desk of the officer of the Day for directions to the patients' ward she asked: "Would you kindly tell me where the **powder room** is." "Miss," the corpsman on duty replied with dignity, "This is a hospital, not an arsenal!" (powder room (terminological word combination) – toilet :: powder room (military homophrase) – the room in which gunpowder is made // (Id.).

A student of military English asked the language instructor: "I don't know what to make of the sentence: 'if possible, the attack should be **sand-tabled** so that infantry and tanks understand what others are going to do'." The instructor enquired: "You know **what a sand table is used for?**" "Sure. For kittens" (Sand table (terminological word combination) – place for pets :: sand table (military homophrase) – sand box for training sessions // (Id.).

Linguistic comicality is associated with some cipher text where the images add up to a message the comprehension of which requires a revitalization of perception, a certain mental effort on the part of the

recipient. Humor is based on ambiguity, on the collision of what cannot be compared. Deciphering unexpected logic and semantic correlation where it normally should not be provides aesthetic pleasure [13: 278].

Given the dynamic and open nature of the language system's self-organization, the creative potential of the language game is virtually inexhaustible. The presence of such characteristics determines the functional varieties of speech and the use of appropriate linguistic forms. In one case, the communicative task is the need to inform; in another – to cause emotional excitement or just to support the topic of conversation.

Here are the examples of deliberate parody of formally similar lexemes in the context of word combinations and playful deciphering of an abbreviation by the participants of the informal circle of communication:

*career manglement* – a word play on "career management," which most military service people feel few personnel officers can effect;

*records manglement* – a word play on "records management;"

*never say anything* – a word play on the initials of the ultra secret NSA (National Security Agency)[1].

The language play is based on the associative mechanism of thinking and is the result of purposeful interaction of standard and creative components of the speech process in accordance with the functional-discursive specificity of its implementation. Context-associated interpretations of one of the meanings of words or phrases using lexical-semantic, phonetic, word-forming mechanisms for their actualization are functionally consistent with the sphere and communicative-pragmatic peculiarities of the communication situation.

The following humorous remarks illustrate how contextual identification of explicit and implicit homophones *guerilla* and *gorilla* works:

*Guerilla warfare is more than just throwing a banana* [7].

Next we observe a playful use of morphemic overlap between paronyms "heaven" and "haven" with additional stylistic connotation of "haven" as not only "harbor," but also "refuge", and "asylum," which makes transparent semantic convergence between them:

*The port was very beautiful. The sailors said it was haven on earth* (Id.).

Another example of the pun-based paronymic convergence is the exchanging of the words *engagement* – "obligation, work" and *engorgement* – "voracity" as components of the stable terminological phrase – *the rules of engagement* – "orders that soldiers fighting in a war are given about what they can and cannot do" with a clear intention of the speaker to create a joking associative-figurative perception:

*The overweight fighter pilot was grounded for violating the rules of engagement* (Id.).

Phonetic identity of the alphabetical reading of the attribute component of a military unit compound name "K-9" with a full term "canine" produces a playful associative connection between them:

*K-9 Corps* – a play on the word "canine," the military unit that trains and uses dogs for army service. Dogs (commonly German shepherds, Rottweilers, and Doberman Pinschers) are trained for a variety of tasks, including guard duty, drug interdiction, and munitions detection [1].

In the following context, pun-based associations emerge due to the phonetic similarity of the acronym reading WAC (Women's Army Corps) and a common noun "wax" motivating the transparent associative connection with Madame Tussauds' wax figures museum:

*A Hall of Fame recently opened to honor outstanding female soldiers. It was a WAC's Museum*[7].

The explication of a jokingly ironic connotation can be realized with partial phonetic similarity to the alphabetical reading of the abbreviation "MP"

(military police) and an adjective "empty," owing to the implied expressive phonetic insertion as an element of the language game:

*Why should you never trust the military police? Because they are full of MP promises*(Id.).

The semantic ambivalence of the linguistic sign in specifically built contexts allows for the expression of both direct and associative meanings:

*What did the Navy say to the Coast Guards?*

*"I'll SEAL you later"* (Id.).

The creative field for language play is a well-modeled associative context due to the partial phonetic similarity in reading the acronym SEAL (Sea-Air-Land, Black Berets – the Navy's elite, unconventional warfare teams) and an infinitive "to see" in the well-known expression "See you later." The motivational impetus for the emergence of such an ironic pun was the traditional, somewhat scornful attitude of the Marines to the Coast Guard units.

In the following case, a transparent contextual plane makes possible a humorous perception of one of the soldier's jokes based on the homophonic convergence of the formal adjective root component with a noun:

*Ditch-diggers often make trenchant remarks ("trenchant" – "expressing strong criticism" and "trench" – "a narrow hole that is dug into the ground")*(Id.).

The presence of homonymous forms in different classes of word combinations (free :: phraseological) results in homophrasal relations. As a rule, contextual information eliminates ambiguity owing to lexical and syntactic denotative minimums, but the following example of associative context illustrates the simultaneous actualization of both literal and phraseological meanings, which produces functional-semantic associations for the language play:

*Paratroopers pull strings to stay on the job*( pull strings (free word combination)) :: *to pull strings* (phraseological unit) – to secretly use the influence you have over important people in order to get sth. or help sb. (Id.).

In order to be fully appreciated, humour depends on the culture-specific discourses, stereotypes, and symbols that surround these topics in a given local and historical context. Here are some illustrative examples:

*Simonize your watches* – a word play on "Synchronize your watches," a phrase often heard in Hollywood war movies. (Note: Simoniz – no "e"– is a brand of auto wax.) The phrase "Synchronize your watches" means to set all watches at the same time so that they are operating in unison [1].

Phonetic deformation, imitating the peculiarities of the pronunciation of the proper name of a German town and a Japanese phrase, carries a charge of facetious expression with a pronounced ironic implication:

*Grab-a-Whore* – a word play on Grafenwöhr, the site of the 7<sup>th</sup> Army Training Center in former West Germany;

*Ohio gas mask* – a word play on the Japanese way of saying good morning, "ohayo gosaimasu." The phrase is used almost exclusively by soldiers stationed in Japan (Id.).

The following nominations include occasional expressive elements in the structure of common word-forming models or words:

*Somebody who throws a grenade from Canada is called a Grenadian*(occasional implementation of the suffixal model of forming adjectives in a fun-provoking context) [7];

*If you want to know about Iraqi war tactics it will require some advanced university scuddies*(a word play on "studies")(Id.). Scud is the name of a series of tactical ballistic missiles developed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. It

was exported widely to both Second and Third World countries;

*When I accidentally shot myself in the crotch with a bazooka I felt quite **mortarfied** (a word play on "mortified" – feeling extremely embarrassed) (Id.).* Mortar is a small, portable indirect-fire artillery weapon carried by infantrymen or mounted on military vehicles;

*The stupidest branch of the military? **The Knave**.* A word play on "knave" and "The Navy" (Id.). *The Knave* – a newly coined graphic playing transformation that orients the perception of the semantics of the prototype lexeme in the direction given by the associative-evaluative background of the inner form of a word "knave" – "male servant," "rascal," "crook". The expressiveness of such forms is related to the non-standard character of the sound motivator. The intrinsic sound symbolism makes it possible to use such nominations as expressive situational-evaluating correlates of stylistically neutral synonymous lexemes of conventional use.

Another stylistic technique of the language game that causes speech units to undergo motivated formal and semantic compression is contamination. The emotional and evaluative modality of contaminated structures is based on the actualization of the set of nominative and differential semes.

The degree of complexity in decoding contaminants is determined by the nature of compression of the phonographic and semantic composition of the motivating elements' and the degree of semantic transparency of the content of derived compressed units. In this respect, there are examples of lexical contamination that are motivated by the semantics of the components of an occasionalism, "*Manimal*" – "*man*" and "*animal*," which is directly associated with the psycho-physical characteristics of their referent and creates a corresponding derisive nickname for a soldier:

*Jacks is six-foot-two, powerfully built, and has a smile made unforgettable by*

*his missing two front teeth (shot out in a BB-gun fight with his brother when he was sixteen). The Marines nickname for him is "**Manimal**," not so much in tribute to his size but because of his deep, booming voice, which when he yells, is oddly reminiscent of a bellowing farm animal (Chris Kyle and Scott McEwen.).*

The deliberate punning combination of the components of city and country names is also an active illustration of the effective use of the potential of language expressiveness:

*One night soon after the entire platoon had gotten back together, we traveled about seventeen kilometers east of Ramadi. The area was green and fertile – so much so that it looked to us like the Vietnamese jungle, compared to the desert we'd been operating in. We called it **Viet Ram** (Id.).*

The following example shows the comic play of component interchange as a result of contamination of two phrases – *easier said than done* and *to slay a dragon*:

*I was fighting a Dragon, easier slayed than done [7].*

#### **Conclusions and research prospects.**

As numerous examples show, the entertaining-humorous function of the language game creates conditions in which lexical units undergo significant structural-semantic transformations. It increases the number of evaluative connotations, and modifies in various ways the sound and graphic forms of their expression.

The unified nature of language norms postulates the situational acceptance of nomination signs, the consistency of rules for their discursive implementation. The spontaneity and logical unexpectedness of the quick speech response occurring as social interaction unfold produce a re-imagining, reinterpretation, and formal restructuring of generally accepted, conventional linguistic units.

Language play in the context of certain socio-cultural conditions of military discourse serves as an adequate mechanism to overcome the

stylistic neutrality of terminological expression of its concept's terminological expression. Additionally, it indirectly reflects the subject-procedural specificity of the professional environment.

The specific use of homophrasal oppositions is a productive source and means of creating comicality: humor, irony, and satire, which greatly enriches the creative aspect of language play in speech communication. Thus, by the nature of the convergence/divergence of kernel components, as well as the explication of their forms, different homophrasal puns are formed.

The sources of forming expressive units of speech interaction should also include parody use of formally similar lexemes, pun-based identification of explicit and implicit homophones, the language game processing based on paronymic convergence in specifically-modeled associative contexts, and the insertion of occasional expressive elements into the structure of words.

Investigating the functional field of linguistic knowledge is the continued search for creative means of speech expression of comic or satirical meanings and images by intentionally objectifying potential models of transformation of conventional linguistic structures and corresponding variants of their perception and semantic interpretation.

In particular, it would be compelling regarding the subject of additional techniques for creative use of the language game, to further study the phenomenon of an elaborate syntactic destruction of linguistic units, which makes it possible to extend comic or satirical meanings over a wider textual space.

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