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LANGUAGE MEANS OF REVEALING POSTMODERN LUDIC ABSURD IN ENGLISH LITERARY TEXT

Abstract

The fiction politics of contemporaneity reflects diversified patterns of language forms and their functions. This has brought to life experimental (postmodernist) writing the key principles of intertextuality, fragmentation, destruction, play. Postmodernist aesthetics caused a blurring of traditional genre canons that led to contamination of syncretic genre compounds through a grotesque transformation of traditional genre models and created an 'estrangement' effect. The phenomenon of ludic absurd is viewed in three aspects: 1) linguo-philosophical; 2) cognitive; 3) poetic. The present study focuses on the analysis of ludic absurd; the role of graphic, phonetic, morphemic, word-forming, syntactical, semantic mechanisms, based on the intentional deviation of language norm, play on words; cognitive mechanisms, generated by ad-hoc way of thinking. The conducted linguopoetic analysis of American postmodern short stories suggests that ludic absurd as a stylistic device of postmodern poetics manifests itself at all language levels (lexical, syntactic, semasiological, and textual) and is realized via the semantic asymmetry of lexical units, using illogical, but grammatically correct syntactic constructions, syntactic mismatch of sentences and whole text fragments.

Prospects for further studies consist in clarifying the pragmatic role of ludic absurd in the postmodern literary text; expanding the taxonomy of lexico-semantic, stylistic, and syntactic and paragraphemic means of ludic absurd.

Keywords: ludic absurd, language means, linguo-philosophical, cognitive, poetic aspects, language levels.

Introduction

The world's progress of the second half of the XX century is viewed as informational development of the Western civilization, which has both its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, people received modern technology, improved quality of lifestyle, and on the other hand, boundless and sometimes even fantastic innovative possibilities have negatively influenced the psychological and moral state of society. As a result, the general alienation increased, objective reality turned into "*a mechanical puppet theatre, where Mr Mechanism was the director*" (Foucault, 1977, p. 123). Urbanization, the dominance of information technology, and the prevalence of virtual reality have led to the depersonalization of a human being who feels "*very uncomfortable in the cold Universe*" (Babelyuk, 2017, p. 23).

All this leads to profound shifts in social consciousness at various levels: the world is shown threateningly, multidimensional in its manifestations, chaotic, paradoxical and disorganized (Babelyuk, 2017). Therefore, a person experiences a cognitive crisis and perceives it as chaos, an absurdity that does not obey the laws and plays according to violence and terror rules. In

other words, postmodern society is characterized by *ludic absurd (LA),* which reflects the particular style of spontaneous nonlinear thinking, life, worldview and, as a result, fiction (Koliasa, 2015, p. 109), writing in *ad hoc style* (Koliasa, 2016, p. 384).

Besides, postmodernism as a multicultural phenomenon is understood as a long-term process involving the consumer culture growth and symbolic simulacra goods expansion, which in their turn caused the aestheticization of life, where there are no nature and true self. Postmodernism as a social phenomenon is to be identified with the lifestyle of as "new middle class" who have the necessary dispositions and sensibility that would make them more open to emotional exploration.

The affirmation of the postmodern worldview – the ludic attitude to objective reality – gave the impetus to the formulation of a new principle of postmodern poetics, in which game becomes an artistic and aesthetic dominant, creating a particular ludic space of freedom, creativity, and innovation form the relevance of the research.

Material and Methodology

Speaking about methods used in this research, the key one is the method of active interpretation (Derrida, 2016). This method was introduced by a French philosopher Derrida (2016), who meant a form of critical writing under this notion. In the context of our research, active interpretation is understood not as an act of reading but much more as an act of creative writing, when different language elements of various linguistic status form a pretext condition for the imaginative play and production of new text meanings. Among the above-mentioned language elements, we distinguish pun, wordplay, original metaphors and metonyms, metabolas, pastiche, etc. They reflect a special manner of writing – the deconstructive manner. Therefore, active interpretation is a definite device to challenge the claims of logic and

traditional rules, according to which it was a literary critic that presents the essential meanings of the text to the reader. As a result of these violations, a text is presented as a multiple meaning source. Hence, we can sum up that in PLT, there is no main or the key meaning to any text, but a plurality of possible meanings.

Another method coined by Derrida (2016) in *Of Grammatology* is deconstruction. Here he explored the interplay between language and the construction of meaning. The three key features making deconstruction possible are as follows:

1. inherent desire to have a centre, or focal point, to structure understanding (logocentrism);

2. reduction of meaning to set definitions that are committed to writing (nothing beyond the text);

3. reduction of meaning to writing captures opposition within that concept itself *(différance)*.

Différance refers to the fact that meaning cannot be regarded as fixed or static but is constantly evolving. It simultaneously embodies the desired meaning as intended by the author and the constraints placed on that meaning through the act of interpretation of the text. In this regard, meaning is defined equally by what is included in the institution and what is not.

Some other methods used in the research could be combined under the umbrella term "linguopoetic analysis", which comprises context analysis, interpretation method, and stylistic analysis at all language levels.

The spiritual situation of the present is characterized by profound shifts in various levels of social consciousness (Iljin, 2000; Hutchenon, 1988). The postmodern world is characterized by neglecting norms and rules, playfulness, entertainment and free leisure. In the postmodern absurdity mirror, the world becomes simultaneously chaotic, threatening and heterogeneous (Koliasa, 2015).

Philosophical postmodern ludic absurd interpretation implies the absence of any value criteria and semantic orientation in the world that I. Hassan (1968) called the "crisis of faith" in pre-

viously existing values (p. 170). A fundamental prerequisite for interpreting the world in the postmodern era is renouncing the idea of integrity, hierarchical structure, centring and harmonious ordering of the world: humanity lives without special markings and initial coordinates, in the labyrinths of lost events (Foucault, 1999). Because of the excessive postmodern ludic absurd, "the world lost its core…, it became chaos" (Deleuze, 1997, p. 47). Moreover, for the postmodern period, the program presumption of chaos achievement is typical.

Within the framework of the cognitive paradigm, the philosophical postmodernism concept is a product of chaos comprehension due to a particular style of nonlinear "absurd" thinking. As a result, a sense of instability, anxiety became a permanent state of humankind in general. A man feels a crisis of cognitive ability but deliberately struggles to survive in such an unstable world. Hence we can trace, on the one hand, the appearance of new, unknown before concepts such as SAFETY, TERRORISM, CRISIS, CONFLICT, SIMULACRUM, VIRTUAL RE-ALITY, AMBIVALENCE, UNCERTAINTY, and AMBIGUITY. On the other hand, we notice the essential changes of such fundamental concepts as GOOD/EVIL, FAITH, LOVE, HAPPINESS, FREEDOM, STABILITY, WOMAN, MAN, FAMILY, RELIGION.

> For example:
>
> *…today more and more people talk about the transformation of the concept WISE WOMAN. The problem is that not any modern woman will be satisfied with such state of affairs under which she is wise: WISE WO-MAN must adapt to her husband, give up*
>
> (Barthelme, 1991, p. 33).

The concept of WISE WOMAN (Nikitchenko, 2017, p. 12) in the postmodern era combines the following features: she is not fixed on men because she has something to love and to do to be interested in – her work, hobbies, family, and friends. Of course, in her life were, there are and will be men. Perhaps she already knows with whom she wants to live at old age, but she does not consider this moment to be crucial for her becoming a woman. She made herself as a woman – WISE WOMAN – SELFSUFICIENT WOMAN.

In real everyday life, to become a self-suficient woman, she must be a "*horsewife*" as well (a very vivid occasional word, formed by merging of two words, "*horse + wife*", means a housewife who usually performs excessively difficult homework, and therefore is compared with a horse using the suffix - *(e)ry*, from the word horsewife, a derived generalized noun, horsewifery ("*horsewives on horsewifery*") is created and means "the skill or work of a horsewife" (Barthelme, 1991, p. 34).

Subsequently, a deeper study of the self-organization phenomena (Karpa, 2003, p. 202), supported by the general mathematical *theory of nonlinear dynamics* by Poincare, formed the basis of a new scientific model of the world, where earlier frightening instability entered into the process of its evolution and was perceived as the main driving force. Since then, any science system's unstable, chaotic state is considered a creative, constructive phenomenon, which contributes to the accumulation of diverse opportunities in large numbers for its development. Therefore, today the obvious leader in the study of nonlinear processes is synergetic, which "removes linear glasses" and aims at protecting nonlinear processes in general, nonlinear thinking and nonlinear writing among them.

Similar tendencies are also evident in postmodern poetry, which is proved by a rapid development of linguosynergytics (Batcevych, 2009) as the leading scientific direction of modern poetological research. Under such conditions, PLT is interpreted as a complex, open, nonlinear system (Babelyuk, 2011, p. 12), which functions due to the interconnection of its elements and subsystems under the influence of regulatory mechanisms of self-organization (Batcevych,

2009, p. 8). The main feature of this type of text is that they give rise to the reader's "uncertainty" in the process of reading (Lodge, 1977, p. 45), which, on the one hand, promotes "essential uncertainty" (Hassan, 1968, p. 123). The narrative structure of American postmodernist stories creates an absurd rhizomatic narration (Babelyuk, 2017, p. 23), which reflects the perception of the world as torn, alienated, devoid of meaning, regularities and orderliness. On the other hand, the deliberate use of this technique contributes to the formation of a new genre of "story of the reader's versions" (Lodge, 1977, p. 3), the basis of which is the discrepancy in the cognitive competence of different types of readers.

The poetic aspect of postmodern LA finds its expression in the specific manner of writing, which is called "metaphorical essayism" (Iljin, 2000, p. 198). Here we are talking about a phenomenon that is known due to Heidegger's (1984) theoretical substantiation and his attempt to start his own departure from the traditional "classic model of Western philosophizing" (p. 136). The reliance on the artistic method has become form-forming and meaningful for dominant the "poetic thinking" model.

Besides, the postmodern fragmentation and chaos of the world form a special attitude towards a literary text as a whole, which is understood as the "decay process of the world of things", which gives rise to "cosmic chaos" (Mankovskaya, 2009, p. 12). It is responsible for the instability of text semantics (chaos of values, chaos of codes that create meanings, chaos of quotations, etc.) as an expression and echo of "space chaos".

In postmodern poetics, LA reflects the senselessness of the world, chaotic, illogical, where entropy dominates, destructure, the absence of causative relationships. Thus, "anger, growing despair, paralysis of the present and future, the unsettledness of life, deceit, fanaticism, anger, hatred, violence, barbarism, constant feeling of anxiety, fear of responsibility, escape from freedom, lack of choice, devastation, mental fatigue, defenselessness, the absurdity of struggle, doomedness, infertility of efforts, lack of saints in life, total wine, indifference, loneliness, mutual hatred, the terrible sacrilege of the beautiful new world" become the main topics of the postmodernist absurdist works.

Stylistic mechanisms of ludic absurd's creation

The quite natural and radical guideline is a fundamental idea of postmodernism – *total semantic chaos*, which was indicated by Kristeva (2004) as confidence in the absurdity of being. Mankind is in the universe, where more and more information appears but with less and less content. In other words, in postmodernism, there is *a catastrophe of content*. According to M. Foucault, the modern mentality is characterized by a total lack of "belief in content" since all that was naively defined as a source of semantic certainty demonstrates an absolute opposite (Foucault, 1997, p. 168).

Postmodern LA has some stylistic and cognitive mechanisms that set the benchmark for chaos at all language levels: graphical, phonetic, lexical, syntactic, semasiological, and textual. The author of one or another piece of work strives not to interpret the content for the reader but to create uncertainty in what is happening. Therefore, in such works, there is neither structure nor structured content.

Graphic level

At the graphic level, the use of opposition analysis made it possible to identify a number of graphostylistic means creating LA in PLT, including the traditional punctuation overuse leading to levelling its functional load. For example, a graphical tool, "three dots", no longer indicates the interruption of information, but on the contrary, its absence. For example:

> *Vatricide. That crime of crime.*
> *Well it looks good for you, Bill. It*
> *looks good at you.*
> *SNOW WHITE THINKS: THE*
> *HOUSE*

... WALLS... WHEN HE
DOESN'T...
I'M NOT... IN THE DARK...
SHOULDERS
... AFRAID... THE WATER WAS
COLD
... WANT TO KNOW...
EFORTLESSLY...
SNOW WHITE THINKS: WHY AM
I...
GLASS... HUNCHED AGAINST
THE
WAL... INTELLIGENCE... TO RE-
TURN
... A WALL... INTELLIGENCE...
THAT
RETURN... HE'S COLD... MIR-
ROR...
"You have to learn to spell every-
thing right," Paul told Emily. "That
is the first thing I found intolerable,
in other countries."

(Barthelme, 1996b, 42).

One of the graphic means, "three dots", in the analyzed passage, firstly is viewed traditionally, indicating the omission of the corresponding lexical units that reflects partial interruption of textual fabric. However, as the result of its excessive use in the analyzed text fragment, the passage turns into a meaningless accumulation of pieces of narrative sentences: THE WATER WAS COLD…, WANT TO KNOW…, HE'S COLD…, negative sentences: I'M NOT…, HE DOESN'T…, questions: WHY AM I…, WHEN HE DOESN'T…, parts of phrases: WANT TO KNOW…, A WALL…, INTELLIGENCE…, TO RETURN and even the words: WAL… that create LA at the graphical level and are generally perceived as fragmented, "torn" stream of consciousness of the heroine.

Phonetic level

At the phonetic level, under the creation of LA in PLT we understand such phonetic techniques that violate stereotyped patterns of sound

combination and are based on an unusual phoneme combination due to phonetic norm-breaking, a cacophony of strange sound creation.

In postmodern works, both poetic and prose, in view of authorial experimentation and individualism, somewhat unusual or even "weird" phoneme combinations, each of which "expresses an ambivalent feeling" can be traced. Occasional words that open up to the reader an enormously diverse palette of unknown sounds. These are "special linguistic tumours, offered by the author as a new sound complex that has not yet been registered in the language, its semantics, predetermines phonetic meanings of sounds, their constituents, or context".

At this level, the mechanisms of LA creation in PLT destroy stereotypical sound combination models as they are based on an unusual combination of phonemes via violations of the phonetic norm: "*Leo! Leeolee!*" – imitates the birds chirping; "*Yummyyum, Womwom!*" – cuckoo forging; "*Megeggaggegg! Nannannanny!*"; "*Mkgnao and mrkgnao*" – murmur of a cat.

Phonetic occasionalisms that indicate unpleasant sounds are perceived not only as a deviation of phonetic but also of the aesthetic norm.

The absurdity of phonetic innovations is revealed via non-stereotypical combinations of phonemes and contrasted in shape with generally accepted. Compare: mew-mew and sounds /k/, /g/ of a cat; tweet, cheep and sounds /l/, /e/, /o/ of a bird and sounds /w/, /m/ of a cuckoo.

It is appropriate to note that the widespread various sound effect use is absurd in PLT, such as *Poulaphouca Poulaphouca* (Barth, 1974, p. 448) (the noise of a waterfall); *flop, slop, slap* (the noise of waves crashing against a rock); *schlepps* (Barth, 1974, p. 40) (a sound of tides); *seesoo, hrss, rsseeiss ooos* (rustling of grass on the shore) is logically unjustified and leads to cacophony that only complicates the perception of the complete contradictions of the absurd-grotesque artistic world of PLT.

Given the analysis of PLT shows that quite unusual phonetic experiments have become

meaningless:

> Then they sat down and stared at the
> sloppy, slimy, sludgy, sticky, smelly,
> gooey, gluey, gummy, greasy,
> gloopy Glop

(Dahl, 1983a).

Gloopy Glop is an unknown dish expressed by a lexical innovation, modelled *A + N*. However, it does not convey any lexical meanings recorded in a dictionary. Therefore, only phonological ones make it possible to identify its characteristics created by alliteration.

The repetition of the consonants *sl, st, sm* reproduce the sounds of something viscous, sticky. The repetitions of the consonants *g* and *gl* convey the meaning of something disgusting. This is the combination of consonants that creates a phonetic disharmony. The unpleasant feeling is compounded by the convergence of nine close in the meaning epithets such as *sloppy, slimy, sludgy (slippery), sticky (dirty), smelly, gooey (sticky), gluey (gummy), gummy, greasy*, which in this case, unjustifiably, unduly emphasize the unattractive appearance of the unknown dish, however, do not contain any semantic load and rather serve as the author's trick on the reader in the language play form.

In PLT, the mechanism of LA creation is often a phonetic language game in which sound expression is more important than meaning itself. For example, in the text below, the mechanism of LA creation is quite unexpected. It tears the textual fabric apart and, on the one hand, is an absurd phonetic combination of words beginning with the letter *F* and, on the other, an intellectual entertainment/puzzle for the reader: the principle remains unclear whether it is a combination of words (except the same initial letter) or phrases or allusions to the famous novel of E. Hemingway's "Farewell to Arms":

> F=fire and femaleness, fertilization
> and fetal life, fall from favour and
> father atonement.
> Family firm finished; family infirmi-
> ty to be continued.

> Farewell to formalism.
> Father unknown; father unknowing:
> Oh, Angela!

(Barth, 1974, p. 768)

The widespread use of phonetic techniques of repetition and alliteration in PLT helps to reproduce unpleasant sounds that are usually not reflected in the traditional text as they were perceived as a violation of the phonetic norm and the aesthetic one. Including human physiological ailments: *cough blemblem* (Coover, 2005, p. 410), the feeling of nausea that the character is experiencing when he learns that his wife is betraying him:

> stuffiness of a nose ...*I ab bost fod of
> kissig, dor ever washed id all that
> tibe...*

(Barth, 1974, p. 65).

venting: "*Whizzpopping is a sign of happiness. It is music to our ears! You're surely not telling me that a little whizzpopping is forbidden among human beans?*"

(Dahl, 1983a, p. 58).

That is treated by PLT characters as a happiness norm and sign; person's physical disabilities, such as a fuzzy gurgle, articulated by a deaf-mute: *ggaghahest* (Barth, 1974, p. 350), speech signs schizophrenia (perseveration), i.e. automatic meaningless repetition of words:

> And apologized for my apology...
> And did, began to apologize,
> stopped that, reflected a moment,...
> apologized again... felt incongruity
> of my apology

(Barth, 1974, p. 76).

Phonetic means of creation of postmodern LA often emphasize the complexity and drama of the portrayed, the lack of harmony and beauty, which is a key feature of postmodern reality in general, and the absurdly grotesque world reflected in PLT.

Thus, a stylistic analysis of the linguistic implementation of LA in PLT at the phonetic level suggests that the phonostylistic mechanisms of

LA creation in PLT are alliteration, phonetic language play, phonetic occasionalism, which lead to a phonetic violation when their new sound expression contrasts with the accepted, stereotyped. They disturb the sound languages and thus create the effect of "amazement" and the cacophony of sounds.

Morphological level

At the morphological level under the mechanisms of LA in PLT creation, we understand the intentional violation of habitual combination of morphemes in the word structure (the morphemic repetition, the destruction of the word form) leading to word destruction, as well as any violation of grammatical norm within morphological forms of words, grammatical (morphological) categories (case, number, gender, time, etc.), grammatical meanings on the background of general carnavalization of the language.

Usually, carnival protest against linguistic puritanism is embodied through language play, parody, and the creation of semantic and textual chaos for the conscious violation of aesthetic canons of language expression.

For example, in the following text fragment, LA is created through a deliberate violation of the grammatical norm. Separate violations are highlighted graphically (in italics), which additionally attract the attention of a reader:

> "Well, first of all," said the BFG, "human beans are not really believing in giants, is they? Human Beans Are Not Thinking We Exist."
>
> (Dahl, 1983a, p. 64).

In the direct speech of the character (Giant) we find violations of the grammatical and phonetic norm: *human beans – human beings*, grammatical: the agreement between third person plural and auxiliary verb *human beans is – human beans are*, the agreement between the third person plural and the auxiliary verb *is they – are they*, incorrect use of verbs *to believe, to think*. In such a way, the author expresses his irony about the conservativeness of human thinking. In addi-

tion, homonyms *human beans – human beings* reinforce the impression that people are fundamentally unable to step aside from habitual stereotypes and believe in something out of the ordinary, fantastic that could be quite nearby.

The morphological mechanisms of LA creation in PLT are constant violations of the grammatical norm, caused by the process of convergence of elitist and mass literature as a whole and carnavalization as a leading stylistic postmodern prose principle. For example:

> ...*sized with the deepest sadness, I don't know why; I am lost, my head whirls, I know not where I am; And no longer know where I am, what is this country*?
>
> (Barthelme, 1996a, p. 74)

The following text shows the violations of the grammatical norms for the construction of negative sentences (no auxiliary verbs in negative constructions) and the word order in a sentence.

> - *What is the moral?*
> - *Murdering. Thomas said.*
> - *Murdering is not correct. The sacred and noble Father should not be murderedred. Never. Absolutely not.*
>
> (Barth, 1974, p. 46)

The grammatical form of the Present Participle verb *to murder* is formed with the help of the morpheme *-ing*: (*murderning*) that is the violation of grammatical norms. In the next line, the repetition of this morpheme creates LA at morphological level that finds its expression in the ambivalent statement: *Murderinging is not correct* (to kill incorrectly /the word "murder" is incorrect). Such ambiguity engages the reader in the language game, creating a "marvel" effect because the context in which the word is used does not reject its ambiguity, but on the contrary, generates it.

Thus, the above morphemic violation draws the reader's attention to a kind of linguistic entertainment, training of intellectual skills.

The morphological and stylistic mechanism of LA creation is morphemic repetition in the

construction of verb forms, which is shown in the example:

In the sentence: *You're even making my misery miserabler* (Milligan, 2006), the attention of a reader is drawn by the alliteration of the phonemes [m] in words given one by one *making my misery miserabler*, and a grammatical violation in the formation of a higher degree of comparison of adjectives in the suffixal way *miserabler*, as opposed to grammatically correct form, analytical, *more miserable*.

Thus, the morphological and stylistic mechanisms of LA creation lead to the word form destruction, as well as constant grammatical norm violation through the reception of grammatism, which are within the language game, contribute to the creation of carnavalized language.

Word-forming level

At the word-forming level, when referring to lexical innovations or other structural types, as well as in the process of isolation of structural-semantic models of their creation was used structural method, represented by component and distributive analysis, as well as the method of direct components. The stratification analysis, which describes general tendencies of lexical creation of innovations as a manifestation of LA in PLT, presents the most productive ways of derivation and inventory of relevant word-forming models.

As a result of the use of the word-formation mechanism of LA creation, such lexical innovations arise that are aptly express emotions or individual signs for which it is difficult to find a common word, and therefore a lexical innovation is created. For example:

...then I got a look under the chairs of several pairs stockinged feet, square and completely toeless.

(Dahl, 1983b, p. 63).

A combination of words *several pairs stockinged feet* as a lexical innovation was created to describe the absurdly grotesque appearance of a witch who wore several pairs of tights at once.

An interesting tendency to update the vocabulary of modern English, which is reflected in PLT as one of the word-forming mechanisms of LA creation. An innovation is formed, according to the researcher, on the basis of three operations:

1. loan words;
2. rapprochement based on a language game (pun, paradox) borrowed nominative unit or component with a root, affix, in short, the phrase of the recipient language;
3. the creation of neosemic, neolexemes with various connotative markings (emotional, evaluative, expressive, paradoxical, humorous).

You were never eavesdropping again, you are nosy thing," snarled Mildew. "Nosy! Say say nosy!" Mayhem pointed at Cinder-Elephant. "Look at the shnozzola on you! What prince would ever want to kiss you?"

(Yolen, 2000)

Shnozzola, a neo-lexeme formed by means of composition of two borrowed words: hebrew שנאָבל *(šnobl)* – a beak and from modern German language *Schnabel*, to which is added Italian derogatory suffix *-ola*. Due to its strange sound and an unusual grammatical form that is a violation of the word-forming norm, such words are perceived as borrowings. However, they are not fixed in lexicographic sources.

As the analysis of the actual material showed, the unproductive word-forming mechanism of LA creation in PLT is *reduplication*, that is, a conscious recurrence within a specific speech segment of the same language unit of a certain word-form, grammatical, semantic, or stylistic. Two repeating elements can be completely or partially similar. In this regard, the reduplication involves two types: complete, i.e. repetition of the original element unchanged, or variative, in which the source element is with phonetic, grammatical or semantic changes. A combination of mechanisms of complete and variative reduplication for the creation of LA at word-forming level is found in the following example:

When a ladybird is walking across a

leaf, I am hearing her feet going clumpety-clumpetyclump like giant's footsteps.

(Dahl, 1983a, p. 68).

Reduplication of the word *clump* (a sound of heavy steps) creates LA describing unrealistically difficult movement of a ladybug on a leaf: *a ladybird is walking across a leaf. Clumpety-clumpety* is a lexical innovation (the original form is altered by adding a diminutive suffix *-ty*) that creates a logical contradiction (a sound of heavy steps cannot be diminished). In the variant form, the lexical innovation *clump* conveys the movement of an insect, which is absurdly compared to huge steps of giants: *like giant's footsteps.*

Lexico-semasiological level

At lexico-semasiological level, LA is manifested via the use of various semasiological stylistic means, including metaphor, metonymy, metabole, personification, oxymoron, and others.

The mechanism of semantic-logical contrast for the creation of LA in PLT combines the stylistic tools and techniques that combine unmatched, contrasting semes. These include metaphorical comparison:

A REAL WITCH gets the same pleasure from squelching a child as you get from eating a plateful of strawberries and thick cream.

(Dahl, 1983b, p. 24).

In this textual fragment, LA is created in a grotesque way of the expression of a comparison of the pleasure that a real witch gets from a massacre over a baby with the pleasure from squelching and eating a full plate of strawberries with thick cream. Undoubtedly, both components of this metaphorical comparison (the pleasure of beating a child) and (the pleasure of strawberries with cream) create grotesque images and contrast with the typical human idea of pleasure in general within the framework of common sense. The absurdity of the situation is exacerbated by the fact that the pronoun *you*, which intensifies the story, draws the reader's attention to the unusual emotional experience of figurative comparison.

Another way of creating LA is to use allogism, or in another terminology – a semantic anacoluthon, which provides a logical combination of grammatically correct sentences:

Once, twice and thrice upon a time there lived a Jungle. It started at the bottom and went upwards until it reached the monkeys, who had been waiting for the trees to them, and as soon as they did the monkeys invented climbing down. Most trees were made of wood, and were the rest

(Milligan, 2006).

The analyzed textual except begins with a fairy tale exposition: *Once, upon a time there lived…* However, later, breaking a reader's stereotypical expectations, this fabulous beginning is transformed grotesquely into a completely unforeseen sequel: *twice and thrice upon a time.* In addition, the appearance of animism *a Jungle*, which is used grammatically incorrect with an indefinite article, capitalized, like a proper name of a living being.

In this situation, the image of *a Jungle* becomes grotesquely hypertrophied. If to analyze the above sentences, it becomes clear that they are typical fabulous clichés:

Once… after a time there lived… It started… and went… till it reached… and as soon as they did… Most… were made of ….

(Milligan, 2006).

that have been transformed to illogical, contradictory, or semantically incompatible inclusions.

One more example of LA creation that is expressed with a pun *people are always late, like the late King George V,* which is based on an amphibole of *the late* adjective, which is combined with the verb *to be* is used in the sense of "being late", and in the phrase *the late King George V*, it is used in the sense of "dead". Repetition of words of the same type but with differ-

ent meaning disorients the reader and leads to the phenomena of malapropism:

> *...this Jungle was always on time. Some people are always late, like the late King George V*

(Milligan, 2006).

In the first sentence, through the personification of the jungle attributed to the permanent ability to be always on time without being late from the point of view of common sense is illogical. The second sentence contrasts in the content with the former one, expressing the antithesis that grotesquely emphasizes the imperfection of a modern man who opposes the complete harmony of wildlife.

The bitter irony and sarcasm are seen in the next excerpt, where the hypocrisy of people and the absurdity of human being is expressed:

> *One thing he never forgot was how to have wars and say, "Oh dear, how now," when children were killed by bombs. The animals left these things called men alone. In return for this kindness man killed them, cut off their skins and put them on the floor, cut their heads off and stuck them on the walls. But if ever an animal killed a man, it was in all newspapers*

(Milligan, 2006).

In this example, LA is expressed in a grotesque way where animals behave the way humans should: they stop attacking people. *The animals left these things called men alone.* However, human cruelty and thirst for profit do not know the limits. People cannot stop wars, despite the death of their children. Semantic top of this text is a statement about human cruelty to animals expressed with the help of sarcasm: *In return for this kindness man killed them, cut off their skins and put them on the floor, cut their heads off and stuck them on the walls*, which contrasts in the following content, reflecting all the tragedy and hopelessness of the bitter truth that comes to the following conclusion: if a person kills an animal is a norm, but if an animal

kills a person, it is the tragedy: *But if ever an animal was killed by a man, it was in all newspapers.*

The analysis of factual material shows that LA in PLT is created with bizarre images that cause the effect "*amazement.*" These images exist in the grotesquely absurd world of PLT, which is bizarre and unintelligible to a reader.

> *It was a lovely cross-eyed white crow (he had once been a black one, but he went color-blind making a rainbow*

(Milligan, 2006).

In this text excerpt, LA is created using a grotesque image of a strange crow – a fantastic creature that is described like *a lovely cross-eyed white crow* using oxymoron: *a lovely cross-eyed, white crow*. The absurdity of the situation is reinforced by the parenthetical construction, which explains what it is the crow who sees itself as white. In addition to its pale-eyed eyes, it also became colour blind when creating a rainbow. The grotesque image of the crow is enhanced by the reception of a semantic anacoluthon formed by a mismatch when it fails to find out what exactly led to the black crow's loss and how exactly it created a rainbow.

The substitution of constant utterances or components of phraseological units with the semantic-logic contrasting elements is another technique of LA creation in PLT at the semasiological level.

> *The tourists couldn't believe their eyes; some couldn't even believe theirs teeth*

(Milligan, 2006).

LA is achieved by replacing the words *eyes/teeth* in the fixed expression *to believe one's eyes*. Unexpected neoplasm confuses a reader, creates a "*wonder*" *effect* and makes it difficult to understand the text fragment as a whole. Note that this type of modification of phraseological unit functions as a kind of stylistic technique, in the content of which is intended to actualize speech expression, creates grotesque imagery,

adds new shades of meaning, and sometimes completely changes the meaning.

In the following example, we also see the example of meaning change, and as a result, we observe the effect of "*deceived expectation*":

> *...and he was so happy he married a Roman Catholic giraffe and lived happily ever after until the next day*
>
> (Milligan, 2006).

As a rule, fairy tales end with the phrase ... lived happily until..., their death parts them (and they lived happily ever after). In this case, we see the component replacement: *until their death* is replaced by *until the next day*. The language game of meanings is traced to the short duration of the marriage, whether from the fact that the predator-lion married a herbivorous giraffe or whatever the giraffe was of Roman Catholic faith and was not allowed to marry the representatives of other faiths.

The mechanism of semantic accumulation of LA creation in PLT leads to a verbal excess that caricatures the classic works. In order to create grotesque imagery, such stylistic devices are used as hyperbole, pun, graduation.

The following example describes the witch hunt for a baby, and a witch is compared with a hunter who sneaks into a bird's eye like a hunter stalking a little bird in the forest. Gradation is achieved using parallel constructions:

> *She treads softly designs. She moves quietly. She gets closer and closer, and ends with a "hunt" for his victim ... phwiss! ...and she swoops*
>
> (Dahl, 1983b, p. 23).

As for hunting, the phonetic occasionalism *phwiss*! is used, which expresses the moment of capture. The next sustained metabole describes all the chaos and grotesqueness of the situation: sparks fly, flames leap, oil boils, rats howl, and *skin shrivels*. And as a result, the baby disappears. Semantic text saturation with parallel constructions that make up a metabole formation conveys a horrible picture of hunting.

Let's look at another text excerpt, which serves as an example of the grotesque imagery created by stringing semasiological means, creating a description of the unusual appearance of the witch:

> *That face of hers was the most frightful and frightening thing I have ever had seen. Just looking at it gave me the shakes all over. It was so crumpled and wizened, shrunken and shriveled, it looked as though it had been picked in vinegar. It was a fearsome and ghastly sight. There was something terribly wrong with it, something foul and putrid and decayed. It seemed quite literally that be rotting away at the edges, and in the middle of the face, around the mouth and cheeks, I could see the skin all cankered and worm-eaten, as though maggots were working away in there.*
>
> *There are times when something is so frightful you become mesmerized by it and can't look away. I was like that now. I was transfixed. I was numbed. I was magnetized by the sheer horror of this woman's features. But there was more to it than that. There was a look of the serpents in those eyes of hers...*
>
> (Dahl, 1983b, p. 60).

The otherworldly horror of the witch's face is transmitted by the use of:

1. adjective-paronyms that describe the impression of contemplation of the witch: *frightful and frightening*;
2. excessive use of synonyms: *so crumpled and wizened, so shrunken and shriveled, a fearsome and ghastly horrible, foul and putrid and decayed, cankered and worm-eaten*;
3. grotesque comparisons, *it looked as though it had been picked in vinegar, so it looked as though maggots were working away in there*.

All the horror of what is seen is amplified by

the use of the first person, by which the text is being narrated. In describing personal impressions, the author uses a great number of exaggerations: *I have ever seen, it gave me the shakes all over* and resorts to graduation: *I was transfixed. I was numbed. I was magnetized.* Graphic tool three dots at the end of the description indicate that this is not a complete description yet, and the narrator is not all told about the horrors seen.

Syntactic level

To identify the syntactic mechanism of LA creation, we use distribution analysis with receiving the associative approximation of elements of the leading text to conscious violations of syntactic order and implemented by receiving the string of fragments: separate parts of utterances interact with the previous and the following at the same time. Through the accumulation of syntactic structures, the contradictory unity of a complicated syntactic statement that reflects the postmodern linguistic thinking in general and the syntactic destruction manifestation, in particular, are highlighted.

Under the syntactic-stylistic mechanisms of LA creation in the PLT, we understand the ways of intentional violation of the syntactic linguistic norm, among which we distinguish:

1. the transformation of the syntagma (inversion, anacoluthon, syntactic chiasmus);
2. the reduction of syntagma (ellipsis, aposiopesis, segmentation);
3. the syntagma expansion (repetitions (syntactic metabole/antimetabole), amplification, catalog series, pleonasm, concurrency, anadiplosis) leading to syntactic destruction. Let us consider in more detail the syntactic-stylistic mechanisms of LA creation in PLT.

As illustrated material shows, the transformation of the syntagma as a mechanism of LA creation in PLT is due to stylistic inversion (violation of a fixed order of words in a sentence), which in its structure can be full or partial, and the way of interaction – distant or contact.

Analyzing different examples of LA syntax expression in PLT, we want to emphasize that postmodern writers deliberately destroy the orderly syntactic compatibility of words, allow deviations from the usual construction of sentences, sometimes bordering on attempts to create a new syntax:

> *Who can spell Jeg fuler mig daarligt tilpas? I feel bad, and already know that. That I feel bad. If it had meant, for example, The South is folded under the darling tulips…*
>
> (Barthelme, 1996a, p. 172).

The following example begins with a question about the correct spelling of the absurd set of words *Jeg fuler mig daarligt tilpas* and engages the reader in a kind of graphical language game. The following sentence is intended to explain this linguistic conundrum (all that means that I feel bad), but it is also not devoid of any absurdity since it is unrelated to its content. Syntax violations of the interoperability of parts of this complex sentence cause the destruction of cause and effect relationships in general: And all it means *I feel bad, and already know that*. This is a duplication of one of the subordinate parts of the previous complex sentence: *That I feel bad*, which also violates the usual syntactic order and resembles "*verbal salad*" – schizophrenic speech of a character consisting of separate, unrelated sentences or words in sentences. The next sentence in the content contradicts the previous one, and the lexical and grammatical ambivalence of the pronoun *it*, together with the conditional form expressed in the past, leads to a double understanding of *it*: as the aforementioned linguistic mystery or as a morbid state of the character's health: *If it had meant, for example,….* This complex sentence assumes the possible variants of the proposed spelling puzzle, but due to the broken syntactic compatibility of words, it remains absurd in its content: *The jug is folded under the darling tulips…* (a pot is under your favourite tulips).

Conclusion

The contemporary world, reflecting human-kind cultural consciousness state, via the combination of heterogeneous phenomena and the simultaneity of different events, turned into a chaotic, paradoxical and threatening one. The phenomenon of ludic absurd is considered in three aspects:

1. philosophical – as a hyperemic perception of the world as chaos;
2. cognitive – as a concept, that is, as a reflection of fragmentary, collage reality in nonlinear clip thinking;
3. poetic – as a postmodern device, which transmits a specific spontaneous, nonlinear manner of writing.

The conducted poetic analysis of American postmodern short stories suggests that ludic absurd as a stylistic device of postmodern poetics manifests itself at all linguistic levels (lexical, syntactic, semasiological, and textual) and is realized via the semantic asymmetry of lexical units, using illogical, but grammatically correct syntactic constructions, syntactic mismatch of sentences and whole text fragments.

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