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## ПРОБЛЕМЫ ДИФФЕРЕНЦИАЦИИ АФОРИЗМА КАК РЕЧЕВОГО ЖАНРА

Научная статья

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## Аннотация

В статье говорится о дифференциальных признаках афоризмов (наличие в структуре слов-концептов, паспортизированность, воспроизводимость, лаконичность). Сложность лингвистической и литературоведческой характеристики афоризмов до настоящего времени не позволяет предложить однозначную дефиницию, вопрос о природе афоризмов остается дискуссионным. Афоризм как речевой жанр имеет специфику, его необходимо отграничить от жанров литературы, таких как каламбур, басня, притча, эссе, анекдот. Методологической основой исследования является функциональное исследование афоризмов.

**Ключевые слова:** афоризм как речевой жанр, каламбур, дифференциальные признаки афоризма.

## THE DIFFICULTIES OF DIFFERENTIATION OF APHORISM AS A SPEECH GENRE

Research article

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## Abstract

The article deals with the differential features of aphorisms (the presence of words-concepts in the structure, certification, reproducibility, brevity). The complexity of the linguistic and literary characterization of aphorisms still does not allow us to offer an unambiguous definition, the question of the nature of aphorisms remains debatable. Aphorism as a speech genre has its own peculiarities; it must be distinguished from the genres of literature, such as pun, fable, parable, essay, and joke. The methodological basis of the study is the functional study of aphorisms.

**Keywords:** aphorism as a speech genre, pun, differential features of aphorism.

## Introduction

Examining aphorisms as a speech genre, we propose to consider an aphorism as a short phraseological utterance in form, which has such properties as the presence in the structure of the main concepts of Russian linguoculture, passportization, reproducibility, separateness, brevity [5].

Aphoristics, being an integral part of the language and culture, reflects the value paradigm of the mentality of the people in synchrony and diachrony. Russian aphorism has preserved for centuries the national identity, the moral values of the people, and has the property of transmitting cultural and historical memory from generation to generation. In Russian aphorism (as well as, indeed, any other) there is a cultural and national flavor. Russian aphorism, however, reflects not only the uniqueness and originality of Russian culture and mentality, but also shows the commonality of cultural codes and the universality of universal values, as exemplified by the concepts of love, *Homeland*, *happiness*, *kindness*, *friendship*, *time*, etc., which are fixed in Russian sayings, structuring them.

Semantic analysis of Russian aphoristics, based on *the Dictionary of Aphorisms of Russian Writers* [4] and the study of composition of the key words of aphorisms show that the key words of Russian aphorism (the semantic basis of the utterance) coincide with the verbalized basic concepts of Russian culture, and the concept sphere of Russian culture almost coincides with the semantic blocks and phraseosemantic fields of Russian aphorism.

Russian aphorism concepts in the classical aphorism of Russian literature are its semantic dominant, include the utterance in any phraseosemantic field of Russian aphorism.

Aphorisms are considered as a speech genre in E. E. Ivanov's book *The Linguistics of Aphorism*: "... an aphorism can be qualified as a speech genre – a stable type of utterance, which has its own content, stylistic design, compositional structure", speech functioning" [2, P. 9]; the same point of view is expressed by L. V. Glukhanko in the article *Phraseological Approach to the Study of Aphorisms* [1], a different concept is presented in the well-known monograph *Aphoristics* [9].

Aphoristics should be considered as part of Russian phraseology with a broad interpretation; thus, in the concepts of G. O. Vinokur, N. M. Shansky, A. N. Tikhonov, V. M. Mokienco, both paroemias and aphorisms are included in the phraseology. When studying the linguistic nature of aphorism, taking into account the achievements of cognitive linguistics and linculturology, there are rich opportunities to identify the essence of the national picture of the world.

Among other optional features of aphorisms, we can enumerate subjectivity, originality, paradoxicality, unexpected wording, etc. Paradoxicality is quite an important property of aphorism, it is paradoxical aphorisms that are more often remembered, easier to reproduce, and cause a variety of emotions.

Not all aphorisms are paradoxical. Very often, aphorisms set out generally accepted truths, raise "eternal" problems and solve them within their own framework in a very traditional way. Sometimes we can even see not just a coincidence of the

subject matter of aphorisms, but also a coincidence of traditional views on their possible resolution in ancient and modern authors.

For example, about love:

*To love means to wish for another what you consider good, and to wish not for your own sake, but for the sake of the one you love, and to try to give him this good as much as possible* (Aristotle).

\* \* \*

*Любить – значит жить жизнью того, кого любишь. To love is to live the life of the one you love* (L. N. Tolstoy).

\* \* \*

Or, about respect for parents:

*Love for parents is the foundation of all virtues* (Cicero).

\* \* \*

*Любовь и уважение к родителям, без всякого сомнения, есть чувство святое. (Love and respect for parents, without any doubt, is a sacred feeling)* (V. G. Belinsky).

It should be noted that the research material is presented in *the Dictionary of Aphorisms of Russian Writers* [4].

**Methods and principles of research:** semantic analysis of the corpus of aphorisms recorded in *the Dictionary of Aphorisms of Russian Writers* [4], as well as in the *Super-Almanac of Folk A&Forisms. The Golden Series* [8]. When extracting aphorisms from literary texts, to fix them in the dictionary, the method of selecting key words-concepts in the composition of the utterance was used.

## Text of article

### Aphorisms and puns

Puns, like paradoxes, should be distinguished from aphorisms, although there are very strong links between them. Of course, unlike the situation with the paradox, there is no indication that puns are considered a kind of aphorism. However, there is no indication of the fundamental difference between these phenomena.

Like the lexical unit "paradox", "pun" is interpreted in the dictionary of M. I. Mikhelson *Russian Thought and Speech. Your Own and Someone Else's. Experience of Russian Phraseology*. The author defines a pun as a play on words and gives numerous examples of the use of this lexeme in speech. As in the case of the paradox, the pun is not interpreted by M. I. Mikhelson as a term. The terminological nature of the pun was discussed later. In the dictionary of M. I. Mikhelson, a historical and etymological reference to the birth of this lexical unit and various hypotheses of its origin are given. However, unlike the dictionary entry on the paradox, the entry on the pun provides an example of this phenomenon itself.

The pun belongs to N. A. Nekrasov:

*Вперед играть решительно*

*Не буду в преферанс!*

*Я – правилами строг!*

*В нем «взятки брать» приходится,*

*Избави меня Бог!*

*(In the future I will not play decisively*

*The game of preference!*

*I am strict with the rules!*

*In it, "taking bribes" is necessary,*

*God save me!)* [7, P. 408].

In the *Literary Encyclopedic Dictionary* (1987), a pun is defined as "a play on words, the use of polysemy, homonymy or sound similarity of words in order to achieve a comic effect" [6, P. 145].

In the encyclopedic dictionary-reference book *Expressive Means of the Russian Language and Speech Errors and Shortcomings* (2005), the phenomenon of pun is investigated and interpreted in more detail. A pun is defined as "a kind of language game with a comic effect, which has stylistic figures as its constructive core, those are based on such paradigmatic relations in the vocabulary as polysemy, homonymy, antonymy and paronymy (in a broad sense, including paronomasia)" [10, P.149]. Then a classification of puns built on the basis of appearance is provided. All puns are divided into polysemic, homonymic, antonymic, and paronymic.

An example of a polysemic pun: *Соль жизни в том, что она не сахар.* (Interlinear translation: *The tag line of life is that it is not sugar.* In Russian "соль" (sol') means 1) salt, 2) a tag line, e.g. "the tag line of a story". Literary translation: *The spice of life is that it is not sugar.*)

An example of a homonymic pun: *Раньше в нашей стране все решали дедки, а теперь – «бабки».* (Interlinear translation: *Some years ago everything was decided by grandfathers in our country, and now – by "grandmothers".* In Russian «бабки» (babki) means: 1) grandmothers, 2) (slang) money).

An example of an antonymic pun: *Была бы жизнь дешевле – цены бы ей не было.* (*If life were cheaper, it would be priceless.*)

An important and convincing statement of the author of this dictionary entry, A. P. Skovorodnikov, is the thesis that "word-formation and phraseological contamination can have a punning character in cases where it is based on the corresponding paradigmatic relations" [10, P. 150]. A. P. Skovorodnikov gives examples of the most interesting for us punning phraseological contamination.

*Красота – дело нашивное. Это точно знает хирург-косметолог Римма Евтюшова, ведь свое лицо она сделала сама.* (Interlinear translation: *Beauty is a sewn-on thing. This is exactly what the cosmetic surgeon Rimma Yevtyushova knows, because she made her own face.* In Russian there is a phonetic similarity between the words "нашивной" ("nashivnoj"), sewn-

on) and “наживной” (“nazhivnoj”, adjective used to describe something that you can achieve, get, earn). Literary translation: *Beauty is something that we make ourselves. This is exactly what the cosmetic surgeon Rimma Yevtyushova knows, because she made her own face*.

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In this case, we see that a pun can be used within the framework of phraseology, this trait is common to a pun and an aphorism.

Despite the fact that puns are characterized by ambiguity, they can contain quite serious, important and even wise judgments in a witty and entertaining form. This trait brings together puns and aphorisms.

For example: *Пережили культ личности, переживем и культ наличности. (We have survived the cult of personality, and we will survive the cult of personal cash)* (N. Krasov, Voronezh, from the newspaper *Arguments and Facts*).

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*Если человек знает, чего он хочет, он или много знает, или мало хочет. (If a person knows what he wants, he either knows a lot or wants a little)* (E. Efremov, Sterlitamak, from the newspaper *Arguments and Facts*).

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Puns are also a means of creating satire and irony.

For example: *Чем дальше ближний, тем он ближе. (The farther the close one is, the closer it is)* (G. Malakhovsky, Moscow region, from the newspaper *Arguments and Facts*).

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*Власть тем авторитетней, чем больше в ней авторитетов. (The power is more authoritative, the more authorities there are in it)* (L. Vorobyov, Krasnodar, from the newspaper *Arguments and Facts*).

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*Бизнес начинает поднимать голову, теперь ее легче снести. (Business is starting to lift its head, now it's easier to take it down)* (V. Kurukin, Kaluga Region, from the newspaper *Arguments and Facts*).

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Pun as a special stylistic tool is actively used in a variety of texts, but mainly in artistic and journalistic ones. Introductory aphorisms are most often extracted from such texts.

As a stylistic device, a pun is a sign of aphorisms. However, the use of a pun with stylistic purposes in an aphorism is not necessarily a specific feature of aphorisms. But it is possible and quite often used. So, when identifying and selecting introductory aphorisms from the novel *The Twelve Chairs* by I. Ilf and E. Petrov, we found quite a lot of similar aphorisms.

For example: *Время, которое мы имеем, – это деньги, которых мы не имеем. (The time we have is the money we don't have)*.

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*Ах, это очень плохо, когда магазин называется точкой! Тут обязательно выйдет какая-нибудь занятая! (Interlinear translation: Ah, it's very bad when the store is called a point! There will definitely be a comma! In Russian “точка” (“tochka”) means: 1) a punctuation mark at the end of the sentence, 2) a store. Literary translation: Ah, it's very bad when the store is called a spot! There will definitely be a stain on its reputation!)*.

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When using a pun in a particular context, two or more meanings of words that are simultaneously perceived by readers collide, intertwine. A pun is used to create a comic effect. Aphorisms do not always imply the presence of a comic effect. In the Russian tradition, aphorisms are rather associated with serious sayings, maxims of a moral nature. However, in recent years, a group of language aphorisms (in the terminology of Vereshchagin and Kostomarov) has been developing more actively, and there is a tendency to activate such a stylistic device as a pun in them.

In addition, aphoristics also uses such a technique as a pun rhyme, in which, with the help of an exact sound match, the possibility of a different reading of the ending of a poetic line is revealed.

For example:

*Над ним одним все нимбы, нимбы.*

*Побольше терниев над ним бы!*

(Interlinear translation:

*Above him alone are all halos, halos.*

*More thorns should be above him!)* (K. M. Simonov).

(In Russian there is a phonetic similarity between the word “нимбы” (“nimbi”, halos) and the combination preposition+pronoun+particle “над ним бы” (“nad nim bi”, above him)).

## Results

In general, it should be noted that the differences between puns and aphorisms in form are not so great, and the ironic, satirical content of such sayings does not contradict the main functions of aphorisms. In addition, puns are characterized by phraseological contamination. Pun as a stylistic device is actively used in a variety of aphorisms. Puns, as it was mentioned earlier, are generated by homonymy, homography, homophony (similarity of sound), comic etymology of words, as well as polysemy. The use of all the listed characteristics of puns does not come into any contradiction with the nature of aphorisms.

For example:

*Пчелы сперва садятся, а потом берут взятки в отличие от некоторых людей, которые взятки берут, но не садятся. (Interlinear translation: Bees sit down first, and then take bribes, unlike some people who take bribes, but do not go to prison. In Russian “садиться” (“saudit’s’a”, sit down) also means “go to jail”. Literary translation: Bees first spend time on the flowers, and then take bribes, unlike some people who take bribes, but do not do time in jail at all)* (I. A. Krylov).

\* \* \*

Therefore, puns can be considered part of the aphoristics.

### Conclusion

Aphorism is an ambivalent phenomenon, it requires different grounds for research. At present, there is a philosophical and literary understanding of aphorisms, a literary-journalistic and literary-artistic interpretation of aphorisms, etc.

We believe that aphorisms, both as a speech genre and as a language genre, should be studied from a linguistic point of view within the framework of phraseology. There are still several problems to be resolved, for example, the relationship of aphorisms and such phenomena as maxim, gnome, apophthegma, chria, which M. L. Gasparov considered to be the constituent structural parts of aphorism. [6, P. 43].

"We can assume that in aphoristics as a philological discipline, a systematic scientific view of aphorism is gradually being outlined – a linguistic one, which has every reason to develop into an independent field of knowledge about aphorisms, which can be defined as linguistic aphoristics" [3, P. 125].

### Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

### Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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