

## **THE ROLE OF IRONY REFLECTED BY NEOLOGISMS IN AMERICAN TV-SERIES ‘HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER’**

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The television series „How I Met Your Mother” (2005-2014) has a long history of generating new words, phrases and concepts. Many of the larger, repetitive concepts - Slap Bet, steak sauce, The Bro Code - have successfully penetrated pop culture, bearing the comic (ironic) meaning of a certain situation. Consequently, the research focuses on the word-building patterns of neologisms and their ironic effect on the language of the show.

To begin with, the paper was elaborated to demonstrate that language is a dynamic system that changes and develops all the time. The main arguments for choosing this subject are high topicality and importance of new words in our life. In particular nowadays, in mass media, a significant number of new words have appeared in the English language and a massive amount of them are still unfamiliar to many people. Moreover, it is very intriguing to cast ways of formation and development of neologisms, as well as to understand the process of their appearance in the given language; and to trace the impact of newly coined words on modern sitcoms.

In consequence, based on the theoretical material the two core definitions of new formations were extracted and taken as a basic criteria for detecting neologisms. The famous researcher P. Newmark claims that neologisms can be defined as “newly invented lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new meaning” [4]. Whereas in accordance with another researcher J. Algeo “the new word is a form or use of a form that is not recorded yet in common dictionaries” [1].

At the same time the irony is defined as first: mild mockery, disguised as forms of expression; and second: a stylistic device in which words are used in such a manner that their intended value differs from their actual value [2].

As to classifications of neologisms one of the most finest, regarding the style, was given by I. Galperin. The linguist distinguishes three types of newly coined words. The first one is terminological coinages or terminological neologisms – those which designate new-born notions. The second type is stylistic coinages, - words coined by

people, who look for expressive statements. And the third type is the nonce-words – these words are created only to serve the particular occasion and live only in the moment of speaking; what is more, they are not likely to be repeated [3]. Moreover, the work was concentrated namely on this type of new formations, as the gigantic part of newly invented elements live only in the series, to be there for an immediate need.

As for the irony, it was fully classified by N. Greben. In their work the researcher distinguishes: 1) defensive irony; 2) constructive critical irony; 3) friendly irony; 4) irony exhibiting superiority of a speaker over an addressee; [2] and further on, relying on these categories collected examples were separated.

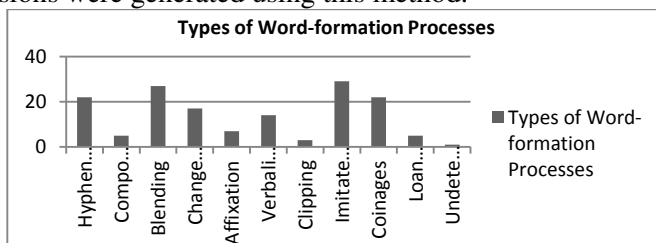
It is worth while mentioning that the formation of new words involve many morphological processes; it can be loan translation (claque), compounding, shortening, hybridization, or affixation, etc. That is why, the criteria for the examples were as follows: the words or expressions had new forms, new meaning or both; their absence in dictionaries; context dependency; and they were used in a funny trend line that would invoke laughter. To make sure that all of the selected examples were truthful, it was decided to check each word or expression in dictionaries (Merriam-Webster, Online Oxford Dictionary and Online Urban Dictionary).

For instance, imitative pattern, namely the phonetic model *wine... not* that imitates the existing question “why not”, in this comic way (using *friendly irony*) the character suggests to drink some *wine*. In the example of hyphenation *Lake No-One's-Going-To-Drive-That-Far* the personage tries to express the feelings of complaint and uses the whole expression as a proper name to demonstrate the sarcastic mood by not remembering even the signification of that place.

In the instance *a cock-a-mouse*, the characters in a very creative and humoristic manner name new and unknown animal or insect. They cannot detect whether it is a *mouse* or *cockroach* and in this respect they have blended these words into one, applying the *friendly* kind of *irony*. Verbalization was also seen in the data under investigation as a successful method of word-building. In the case of *don't Ted out about it* the proper name and the particle form a new verb with the meaning “to overthink”; the speaker coins it to show that the character is thinking too much. Next follows one more similar

invented verb - *Ted up* - to overthink something with disastrous results. To illustrate, clipping is still used in search of comic expressions and linguistic economy. Similar to these cases *Bro(s)* from brother, and *The Bro Code* again was coined from the brother's code using *friendly irony*. Another samples *Toot-a-loo* and *Toodles*, according to Urban dictionary are a shortened Anglicized version of the French phrase à tout à l'heure with the meaning „goodbye”, so the characters used it to express *friendly irony* to each other. Whereas the coinage *Falafel* has the meaning „I love you”; in episode the speaker tries to say that she is in love but instead murmured the unrecognizable word.

The bar graph below illustrates the number of words created by different word-building processes used to form humorous, ironic and sometimes even sarcastic neologisms and occasionalisms. From the total number of 151 examples the number of imitative patterns (see Bar Graph) applied here is one of the highest – 29 examples. Apart from imitation, the highest numbers show blending, coinages and hyphenated words ranging from 27 blended new formations to 22 coined and 22 hyphenated expressions. Additionally, the least successful procedure applied is clipping, only 3 new words and expressions were generated using this method.



Bar Graph.

Summing up the conducted research, we can say that the English language has enough potential to embrace the new creativities in the word-formation domain and that the given TV-series made a significant influx into modern language, particularly slang. However, there were instances in which some rules of English were breached what was convincing enough to be addressed to as the comic license by which the comic and ironic discourse could further set the goals.

#### References:

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