

Universality of Humorous Tonality (as exemplified, in Texts by Ukrainian and German Authors)

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The article is devoted to the problems of tonal text construction. It presents a new direction in text research based on the concept of the text generation predetermined by the communicative activity factor, rhythm theory and the concept of psychic stereotypes of different kinds of activity. The extralinguistic factors determine the kinds of rhythm which find their embodiment in linguistic means and form the basis for text tonality as an emotional quotient of the text.

Tonalities and tones are elements of the polyphony of the text. The polyphony of a concrete text characterizes the dominant tonality. It can be a basic stylistic tonality (epic, lyric-epic, dramatic-epic) or its subtypes. The dramatic-epic basic stylistic tonality has tragic, pathetic and humorous tonalities. Like other tonalities the humorous tonality has some subtypes: pathetic-humorous (hollow pathetic subtype), satirical, ironic, sarcastic. And at last there are tones, which characterize the peculiarities of the text.

The textual category of "the humorous tonality" has the humorous aesthetic feeling as an extralinguistic factor. This feeling can be shown in various spheres of life, which means that it can be presented in texts of different functional styles: the belles-lettres style, the publicist and newspaper style, colloquial style and polemic genres of the scientific prose style (Іваненко 1999: 255).

The humorous aesthetic feeling is the unity of positive and negative traits in one phenomenon, but in the generated image the positive predominates over the negative (М'ясоїд 1998: 373). The Ukrainian psychologist Mjassojid regards the feeling as the third degree of the emotional phenomena (the second one is

emotion, the first - emotional tone). It means that the humorous feeling is based on the emotional tone of pleasure or displeasure and on the emotion: positive or negative. Depending on the views we have about our life we have a displeased or pleasant emotional tone concerning certain facts of being. When the emotional tone of pleasure about the whole occurrence which we notice in our consciousness, is closer to displeasure, our normal reaction is to restore the balance, for example with a joke. If the emotional tone of displeasure mounts to a degree of emotion by intensity, the negative reaction is stronger. But at last the positive emotion prevails over the negative one and we keep our balance by telling jokes to friends. If the displeasure reaches the third level of intensity - feeling, we keep balance with a joke addressed to a community. The humorous feeling means that we take the reality as it is, but we will change some aspects of it. The humor helps us and those who are concerned to change something without troubles and problems, and there is no need to say and do unpleasant things. It means that the aesthetic feeling has always a social background. The social position of the sender and the addressee can take the same level if by chance the addressee has the humorous feeling too, and owing to the joke of the sender he sees the shortcomings and laughs together with the sender. But the widely-spread attitude is to look down upon the addressee. The *disposition theory* explains that the humor is based on the permissible and socially accepted aggression (Hartung 1994: 115, 118). Vladimir Propp characterizes in this way the mocking laugh (Пропп 1997: 22). He considers the extralinguistic factors, which can provoke the mocking laugh. There are ridiculous things in the nature, the human physiological essence: the comic element of the likeness, the comic element of the differences, the person as an animal, the person as a thing, occupations as an object of derision, parody, comic exaggeration, making a fool of someone, paralogism, lie, comic characters, one in the role of the other and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Besides the mocking laugh he marks out the wicked, cynical, cheerful, ritual, rakish laugh (1997: 195-214). These types of laugh correspond to the tone subtypes. Jurenev proposes his own list of laugh types in his work about the comedy film:

“joyful and sad, kind and wrathful, clever and stupid, proud and sincere, condescending and ingratiating, contemptuous and frightened, insulting and encouraging, impudent and shy, friendly and hostile, ironical and simple-hearted, sarcastic and naive, tender and rough, significant and causeless, exultant and excusing, shameless and confused. [...] cheerful, mournful, nervous, hysterical, scoffing, physiological, animal. [...] crestfallen” (Юрeнeв 1964: 8).

We see that types of laugh by Jurenev demonstrate psychical peculiarities of human nature in its attitude to reality. These are more or less reflections of basic emotions or of their absence (**joy** - joyful, cheerful; **interest** - clever, encoura-

ged; **agitation** - nervous; of complex emotions (**enmity** - hostile) and of various kinds of feelings (**friendship** - friendly; **pride** - proud; **hatred + humor + comic** - sarcastic). Only the ritual laugh is a simulated one and it can have various nuances corresponding to social demands of a certain communicative situation. In spite of all this the simulation is based on the imitation of psychical models, which satisfy social requirements of a human being. It means that all kinds of laugh are psychical of nature. We can say the same about the humorous text tonality.

In the polyphonic text system, the humorous tonality predominates over the hollow pathetic subtype and the satirical, ironic and sarcastic types. Owing to the fact that the ironic subtype of tonality indirectly expresses the negative evaluation it belongs to the humorous tonality, though its function is broader. But the subject of this article is the consideration of the dominant humorous tonality and its peculiarities will be shown in connection with the other subtypes.

The social background with its norms of conduct influences the type of humorous tonality. The creative credo of the well known Ukrainian humorist Ostap Vyshnja (proper Pavlo Hubenko) (1889-1956) is very important in this way. His feeling of humor was not crushed by ten years of Stalins Gulag. Above the desk in his study there hung a paper with the title "MY THRICE-CURSED «FRIENDS»":

bureaucrats, grandees, overcautious persons, humbugs, scroungers, suppressors of criticism, toadies, bribe-takers, speculators, twenty-four-hour talkers, complete fools, swagger ers, masked parasites, villains, litigious persons and trouble-makers, hack-workers, vulgar persons bores, swindlers, sanctimonious persons, poachers, rude fellows, persons, which put on airs, men paying alimony - birds of passage and some other sons of bitches and scoundrels.

ABOUT WHAT I, UNFORTUNATE WRETCH, HAVE TO THINK AND TO WRITE:

About hooliganism, roughness, ill breeding.

About breeding of idlers and loafers.

About thoughtless treatment of love, of marriage, of family.

About generous natures at the expense of the State.

About dogmatists and pedants in science.

About conservatives in agriculture and industry.

About destruction of the nature.

About, in one word, shit in all sorts!

Good God ! Help me!" (Вишня 1966: 11).

This list contains social phenomena which constitute the object of humor in any society, but in every country these phenomena possess special peculiarities. It depends on special possibilities, which are given besides the moral norms, traditions, ideals of a concrete society at a concrete time.

People who have the humorous feeling, are optimists in their perception of life, perception of the way of development which the society chooses, with the exception of satirical and sarcastic points of view in some cases (disbelief in achievement of some positive changes). This influences the type of humorous tonality of the concrete text, which is based on the emotion of "joy" as a part of joy of life. As in the story by Ostap Vyshnja "*Як варити і їсти суп із дикої качки*" (How to cook and to eat the soup of the wild duck) (1945). He dedicated this story to his friend, the great Ukrainian poet Maxim Rylskyj. In this humorous story he shows hunters in the industrial society. The writer hated the destruction of nature as a social phenomenon, but he laughed good-naturedly about the "social rudiment" of modern society - hunting. At the prehistoric time hunting meant the way to get food in order to survive. Today, hunting is the way to show that men are still men on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it forms a special community of men which women do not understand. Ostap Vyshnja was himself a hunter and laughed about this "weak point" of men from the authentic position of a hunter. The social function of hunting "to get food" has died out in modern society. Furthermore, there is not so much game in the forests which can be hunted. In addition, in all countries of the world game must be safeguarded by law. The hunters have to justify the righteousness and necessity of their hobby for the society and family everywhere. They make it in various ways, but the background for all their deeds is the modification of social functions of hunting:

- the function "to get food" is transformed into "to get food for gourmets";
- the function of men "to get food by hunting" is transformed into "to show I'm a he-man";
- the function "to defend the hunter together with the other men against the animal by hunting" is transformed into "to have good fellows by hunting".

Even the function of alcohol connected with hunting has changed nowadays. For ages it had been the way to draw animals' attention by a special smell and to overcome the fear of death. Today, the drinking of a glass of wine to hunting is viewed as following the old tradition.

The transformation of hunting functions is typical for the modern society in every country. For this reason the hyperbolic representation of hunting, fishing and their results is equally popular in stories everywhere. Differences can be found in the concrete facts of the hunting ritual in some countries, in the attitude of the families to wards hunting and in conditions of hunting. There are certain social facts which can not be known to readers in other countries. The humorist bases his work upon those facts (situational comism), but he does not explain the details, otherwise the point of the story would be destroyed. They are extralin-

guistic factors which influence the peculiarities of national humor. The linguistic means with humorous function are the same everywhere: hyperbole, euphemism, oxymoron, zeugma, pun, periphrasis, genuine metaphor, irony, etc. What is specific are the possibilities of the concrete language means to make a hyperbole or metaphor or pun.

For example, the extralinguistic factors which are characteristic of hunting in Ukraine in the 1950's are, according to Vyshnja, the following:

- beautiful lakes of Ukraine
- five hunters (roughly)
- brandy glass of a very simple form
- to be late for hunting in the gloaming
- hunting stories of other hunters
- to sleep in a haystack
- to buy the duck in the market

The peculiarity of Vyshnja's humorous tonality is based on the feeling of love to the beauty of Ukraine and its people. From that point of view he reveals the shortcomings of Ukrainians. He shows the essence of hunting as enjoying the beautiful nature in a company of good fellows by a glass of horilca (vodka). The origin of humorous tone consists in the likening of hunting function to picnic function and in the hyperbolic representation of this modification. The exaggeration takes place by means of enumeration. The author says what a hunter has to have: a gun, cartridges... and then a list follows of picnic foods typical for Ukrainians, which is remarkably longer than that of a few hunting things. The humorous tone arises also from the use of reduplication of the word *чмонка* - brandy glass of a very simple form. The humorist knows about the negative attitude to alcohol on the part of hunters' wives and writes euphemistically about drinking. He does not use standard words which describe the drinking, but he says that the brandy glass is very important for wild duck hunting. He explains its importance through the change of its function. The small glass would be needed for baling if the boot leaks. The high intensity of humorous potential of the other brandy glass function is based on the principle of the widest remoteness from the basic function: the more the higher. It is a kind of a hyperbole. This simulated brandy glass function is connected with the simulation of neck (of the bottle) function. It would also be needed for baling, but the author accentuates the fact that the neck of the bottle is not so good for this function. What it really means is that we enjoy drinking when we drink out of the brandy glass and not straight from the bottle. The word "bottle" was not used, but the repetition of "brandy glass" and "neck" as the leitmotif spreads the humorous tone over the whole text.

Another combination of facts which forms the humorous tonality of this story, concerns cooking and eating the wild duck soup when the hunter uses it as a bag or has bought it in the market. The author laughs about the hunting function of “getting food for gourmets”. He uses the repetition in the form of a frame (at the beginning of the story and at the end), which makes use of the opposition concerning the results of hunting: there are ducks on lakes and in markets. Because the author explains the second way of getting the duck, it means that the first way very seldom happens. In this way the author transforms the hunting function “to get food for gourmets” into the function of “to buying the duck or hen in the market”, which provokes a laughing reaction. The laugh grows up, because the duck/hen (unplucked) from the market would be given as a bag. The plucking of “ducks” is a result of bag simulation. The author considers the social background by choosing the stylistic means for humorous tonality. He keeps silence about the reaction of the family concerning the “duck” plucking (euphemistic silence), because it is very negative (who plucks ducks/hens in a city today?). He simulates the enthusiastic tone with short syntagms in an elliptical sentence: *Найперше й найголовніше - обскубити качку* (First and above all - to pluck the duck). The pause after this sentence is longer because the next sentence begins a new line. It is an euphemistic pause. The next sentence *Робити це краще в себе в кабінеті* (You make it better in a study) is based on the effect of a disappointed expectation: you pluck in a kitchen and not in a study. It means that the wife, daughter or mother (who usually cooks for the family) show their negative attitude to duck plucking in such a resolute way that the hunter does it himself in his own study and has to clean the room afterwards. The writer laughs about the laziness of men and makes “good devices” (simulated goodness): open all windows and doors - the wind blows feathers away. The humorous tone of this part of the text is connected with the irony tone (simulating a positive one) and is expressed by aposiopesis, a long pause for metaphor, parallel construction and alliteration: *...І качка обскубана, і кабінет - перина...* (Both the duck is plucked, and the study is like a feather-bed).

The next step - cooking does not belong to the functions of a hunter and now the “wild duck” comes out as a hen. The author shows typical hunter’s lies expressed as if by Baron Muenchhausen. The answer to the question why the “duck’s” throat is cut? is given as: *Летіла, побачила, що я націляюсь, виходу не було, взяла й зарізалась. Що ж тут дивного?* (It was flying, saw that I aimed my gun, there was no other way out, and it cut its throat. What is here to wonder about?). The humorous tone is based on the genuine metaphor (personification) and is absolutely unexpected in this situation, but by association - hun-

ting story - lie story - fantasy story as stories about the adventures of Baron Muenchhausen by G. Buerger or by R. Raspe this metaphor expresses the attitude of the author to the hunting function "to show I'm a he-man". Ostap Vyshnja marks out the necessity to make excuses for hunting to one's wife, mother or daughter, *though in so laughable a way*. At last he suggests read reading Turgenjev's book about hunters as an ideal of hunting in order to reach peace of mind after the hunting fiasco.

The variety of humorous genres is very wide in every national literature. Some genres are more favored than the others. The humoresque expressed in verses is very important among the humorous genres of the Ukrainian literature (Rudanskyj, Hlasovyj, Kovinka, Olijnyk, Bilous, Kozak, Hryzenko, Tshetshv-janskyj, Taksjur. and others). The same tradition can be found in German literature. After Bush, Tucholsky, Morgenstern and Kaestner it is followed by such authors as Hart, Otto, Tushel, Hoerning, Rutsh and others. *It means that the variety of humorous genres is the same and it is universal*. But there are some peculiarities in the rhythm of the poetry as one of the means expressing the tone. Rhythm and rhyme help to accentuate the humorous tone. For example, two humoresques on the theme of "comfort":

Wilhelm Busch

Tröstlich

Nachbar Nickel ist verdrießlich,

Und er darf sich wohl beklagen,

Weil ihm seine Pläne schließlich

Alle gänzlich fehlgeschlagen.

"Unsere Ziege starb heut morgen.

Geh und sag's ihm, lieber Knabe!

Daß er nach so vielen Sorgen

Auch mal eine Freude habe."

(Humor, Lachen, Heiterkeit, s. 271)

Степан Гриценко

Ще не горе

– Чого ти так зітхаєш тяжко?

– Мене покинула Палажка.

– То це, сусіде, щє півгоря.

Моя он - повернулась вчора.

(Усмішка людину прикрашає, с.63)

The humorous tone of the both texts is based on special propositions of how to overcome the emotion of grief. The authors laugh about the peculiarity of human beings: you are not so sad if somebody is sad, too. Bush's proposition is to inform the sad neighbour that the she-goat of his neighbour died. It brings him comfort. The word *Freude*, which indicates the positive emotion, is used close to words of semantic field "grief" *verdrießlich, beklagen, Sorgen, fehlschlagen*, whose meanings are intensified by modal words: *wohl, gänzlich, alle, so viele*. The intensity of humorous tone is higher due to the fact that the distance from

the negative to the positive point of estimation in the meaning of above-mentioned words is very long.

In Hryzenko's poem one neighbour comforts another deserted by his own wife, with words: *То це, сусіде, ще ніггоря. Моя он - повернулася вчора* (That is not so bad. My wife came back yesterday). It means that he has more troubles. The words *зітхаєш тяжко* (you sigh heavily), *покинула* (deserted) express the emotion of grief, too.

One of the most popular humorous genres is a short story. For example in the anthology "*Humor, Lachen, Heiterkeit*", printed in 1961 in Germany under the pseudonym of Knapp there are published many very short humorous stories. To publish books under a pseudonym is very typical of humorists everywhere. Reasons are of social, psychological, historical (tradition) and trivial nature. This pseudonym corresponds to the type of genre, "*Knapp*" meaning - *short* or *short story* (Воробьева 1993: 122). A story *Psychologie* (Psychology) (Humor 1961: 185) considers the role of psychology in modern society. It shows that people do not trust their sensations (auditory sensation) and go right away to a psychologist and pay money for nothing. The theme is usual for humorous texts (occupations as an object of derision), the extralinguistic factor - illogical conclusion, which depends on the paradoxical situation of - the city is typical (apartment as a hen-house) and so are the stylistic means:

- the repetition in the form of a frame (in the title and in the last sentence *Psychologie - Psychologen*);
- the point (the first step of the point: the lady will know if there was a cock, she does not wonder about the paradoxical situation - apartment as a hen-house; second step: she shows her despair about her own behaviour - she did not trust her ears (... *weil ich mir einbildete, immer einen Hahn krähen zu hören*); the point - indignation about paying money for psychologist without a slightest cause;
- exclamatory words (*O Gott*);
- exclamation sentence;
- expressive words (*stöhnen, ausrufen, Frechheit, aufgeregt, überrascht, er-bost*);
- expressive sentence structure
- hyperbole (*ich lasse mich schon seit Wochen vom teuersten Psychologen New Yorks behandeln*).

The same is to be said about another humorous genre - aphorism. It consists of one sentence, sometimes (seldom) of two. The typical stylistic means are metaphor, pun, antithesis, parallel constructions, simile. For example, an aphorism by Knapp: *Die Statistik ist für den Politiker das, was für den Betrunkenen die*

Straßenlaterne ist: sie dient ihm zum Festhalten, nicht zur Erleuchtung. (Knapp 1961: 184). The meaning of this aphorism is close to the theme "occupations as an object of derision". The author laughs about statistics and its importance for politicians. The simile *Statistik - Straßenlaterne, Politiker - Betrunkene* expresses the negative attitude to the nature of statistics and the antithesis *dient zum Festhalten, nicht zur Erleuchtung* explains its real function. The humorous tone of this aphorism is based, on the one hand, on antithetical rhythm, which is indicated by:

- opposition of nearly equal parts - syntagmas (their length is presented in syllables): 12/14/7/5
- the number of stressed syllables: 3/3/2/2 (it is equal, too),
- the placing of the main stress at the end of a syntagm,
- the syntactic pauses,
- the fall-rise intonation for intermediate syntactic pauses.

On the other hand, it is based on the expressive means of vocabulary and stylistic devices. The intensity of expression is the higher if the distance between spheres of word usage is longer, for example *Statistik - Straßenlaterne, Politiker - Betrunkene*. The high intensity of the antithetical expression *dient zum Festhalten, nicht zur Erleuchtung* is caused by a pun. The word *Festhalten* actualises two meanings: direct and figurative. The same concerns the word *Erleuchtung*.

This example of an antithetical aphorism is not an isolated occurrence but corresponds to a general phenomenon in the genre. The Ukrainian humorist Volodymyr Holoborodko published his collected aphorisms (written 1965-1992) under the title *Thesis and antithesis* (1993). For example, the aphorism from this book *Якщо я мислю - я існую, якщо не мислю - я живу* (If I think - I exist, if I don't think - I live). The basis of this aphorism winged words by René Descartes: *cogito, ergo sum*. Holoborodko laughs about the role of thinking in practical life. He uses a pun:

- the word *існую* actualizes at the same time two meanings - to exist and to vegetate,
- the word *живу* also actualizes two meanings - to be alive and to be well off.

We have here two antitheses: *to think - not to think and to vegetate to be well off*. This aphorism has, as it is usual with aphorisms, a good rhythmic form. Four syntagms are nearly equal in length (5/4 syllables 5/3) and the number of stressed syllables is the same in the opposing parts: 2/1/2/1/. The rhythm of the first and the third syntagm is identical: - ' - - ' - - | - - ' - - | - ' - - ' - - | - - ' - ||

It is the same antithetical rhythm the one as used in the aphorism by Knapp.

If we consider the humorous genre of "joke", we can say that the texts of this genre have the same characteristic features both in Ukrainian and in German (a short-short story about nations, typical characters, children, occupations in everyday life, which has an obligatory point, exists rather in spoken language than in written form). As an example, we will analyse a joke about the typical personage of Austrian jokes - Graf Bobby from the time of Austria-Hungary. There are many jokes about him as a person of nobility, who is not very progressive. The people laugh at his ignorance, poor intellect and at the same time his cunning and the ability to present himself.

Die Sterne

Graf Bobby und Baron Mucki gehen nach Hause. "Schau nur", sagt Mucki und deutet auf den klaren Sternenhimmel, "Ist das net schön? Wenn man zu diesen Millionen von Sternen nauftschaut, da sieht man wieder amal, daß der Mensch halt nur a Stäuberl ist in der Schöpfung... So viel Sterne!" - "Ja", sagt Bobby ergriffen, "und das sind jetzt erst die vom Landkreis Wien!" (Humor, Lachen, Heiterkeit 1961: 189)

The national colour of personages is shown by the use of some words typical of the Vienna dialect (*net* - nicht, *Stäuberl* - Stäubchen, *amal* - einmal) and geographical noun *Landkreis Wien*. The social status of figures is indicated by the use of their social rank *Graf* (count, earl) and *Baron*. The humorous tone is created by the superposition of romantic tones and the trivial, concrete Bobby's words. The discrepancy between general concepts of space, planets, human being and concrete things such as the district of Vienna is very great, so the humorous tone is intensive. It is expressed by the oxymoron *Sterne vom Landkreis Wien* in connection with prolepsis [*Sterne*]... *die vom Landkreis Wien* and is intensified by the exclamation sentence. We laugh at the count's narrow-mindedness and at remnants of imperial society.

It is also typical that the objects of jokes are men of high social position or rich people, especially nouveaux riches. In Ukraine there are many jokes about this social phenomenon of the "new Ukrainians", but I will only consider one joke by a Olexandr Ivtschenko. He wrote some jokes about a person named Kasbek. This name is a meaningful one. It is a brand of a cheap cigarette and it has the metonymical meaning concerning the name of the old man, who smokes this sort of cigarettes. Barbara Sandig says in such cases about "unernste Modalität" - not serious modality (1986: 286). The old Kasbek lives in the country and has his own opinion about all problems. A joke about him has the title "*Несправедливе міністерство*" (unjust ministry).

Якось навідався я до свого села. Іду вулицею, коли назустріч - дід Казбек:
- Сашко, дай-но закурити твоїх городських цигарок.

– Пригощаю діда, подаю пачку.
– Ти дивись, – жмуриться дід, – такі довгі, та ще й написано тут щось... Ага, бачу:
"Міністерство охорони здоров'я попереджає: куріння шкодить вашому здоров'ю". І ч
до чого додумалися! А на лопаті такого й не написали...
(Український народний календар 25.01. 2001)

This joke is about the State attitude towards smoking and the opinion of old Kasbek on this social problem. He laughs at the situation: the State produces cigarettes and gets money from this production, while it tells people on each packet of cigarettes that smoking is injurious to health. The humorous tone of this joke is expressed by a latent simile in the opposition: the warning is written on the packet of cigarettes and it is not written on the spade. The spade can be injurious to health, too. The high intensity of humorous tone is caused by the simile of two words, whose meanings lie very far from one another. The position of the old smoker Kasbek is clear: there are many things, which are injurious to health, but the ministry does not warn people about them. The humorous tone is intensified by the exclamation sentence and the long pause at the end of the text, which show the indignation of the old smoker to the "unjust" ministry actions. As we can see, the point of the joke belongs to the last part of the text as it is the case in all texts of this genre.

The texts considered show that the humorous tonality has the same regularities in German and in Ukrainian humorous works. The expressive means and stylistic devices are similar, too. There are the same humorous genres with the same characteristics. The humorous themes and objects are the same. The peculiarities concern the selection of concrete facts, known to the members of a given society, and finding concepts, whose meanings are very different, but in spite of the differences display clear logical connections.

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Універсальність гумористичної тональності (на прикладі текстів українських та німецьких авторів)

Тональність як категорія тексту надає широкі можливості для характеристики особливостей текстів різних типів. Так, тексти з гумористичною тональністю, екстралінгвістичними чинниками яких є почуття гумору і конкретні факти об'єктивної реальності, виявляють універсальність, що зображається представниками красного письменства різних країн за допомогою стандартних стилістичних засобів. Своєрідність текстів з гумористичною тональністю зумовлена насамперед конкретикою життя, спроможністю знаходження автором таких понять для зображення комічних колізій, значення яких щонайбільше віддалені одне від одного за умови прозорості смислового зв'язку. Інтенсивність гумористичної тональності твору залежить від цього фактору віддаленості понять, який, однак, є також універсальним.