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**HOMONYM JOKES IN ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN**

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## Introduction

**Statement of the problem.** The spelling of a word in an alphabetic writing system reflects the word's phonological form. When trying to spell an unfamiliar word, people can often construct a plausible spelling based on the phonemes that the word contains. Much of the relatively small body of research that has been done on spelling has focused on how people construct spellings from phonological forms. For example, 25 researchers have examined how people spell phonemes that have more than one possible spelling, asking about the factors that influence their choices.

A consideration of the nature of English and some other 30 alphabetic writing systems suggests that people may be sensitive to morphology and not just phonology when selecting among spelling alternatives. Consider homophones: morphemes that have the same string of phonemes but different meanings. In 35 some cases, as with the /bæt/ that refers either to a flying animal or to a stick that is used to hit a ball, the two morphemes are spelled alike. The fact that the same spelling is used for a given phonological form, regardless of its meaning, is consistent with the idea that spelling 40 represents phonology. In other cases, as with site and sight, each meaning of a homophone has its own spelling.

Although patterns at the level of phonology become more complex when a phoneme is spelled differently in the members of a homophone pair, the regularity of the writing 45 system at the level of morphemes increases, in that each morpheme would have one and only one spelling. Many English homophones are spelled alike, but there are enough homophones with different spellings to suggest that morphology plays a role in the structure of English writing system and that this characteristic benefits its users. Indeed, in the historical development of English, it has been argued that spellers sometimes used different spellings for homophones intentionally, in order to show the distinction in meaning between them.

The theme of this term paper sounds as following: "Homonym jokes in English and Ukrainian". Generally, it can be characterized by the following:

**Topicality.** The actuality of this course paper caused by several important points. It must be said that the appearance of new, homonymic meanings is one of the main trends in development of Modern English, especially in jokes, which, in its turn at a high degree is supported by development and simplification of alive speech.

**Research object.** Homonym in English and Ukrainian.

**Research subject.** Homonym jokes in English and Ukrainian.

**Aim and objectives of the study.** Although this theme has been investigating for a long time, the aim of this scientific work is to fully investigate the sphere of homonyms, to define them by their classifications, sources, origins and so on, especially in jokes. Because there are lots of homonyms that are sure to make most people stop and proofread their work.

Having based upon the actuality and the aim of the theme we are able to formulate the **main tasks of** the term paper:

- (i) to show phonetic coincidence and semantic differences of homonyms;
- (ii) to study, analyze, and sum up all the possible changes happened in the studied branch of linguistics for the past fifty years;
- (iii) to analyze the difference between homonym jokes in English and Ukraine.

**Significance of the study.** It's ability to show the homonym jokes in English and Ukrainian on the examples.

**Theoretical framework.** There is an opportunity of using of this course paper as a theoretical material because it contains a good theoretical description of lexical stylistic devices.

**Methodology.** If we say about the methods of scientific approaches used in this scientific work we can mention that the method of typological analyses was used.

**Research materials.** Homonym jokes in English and Ukrainian languages.

## Chapter 1. Theoretical and methodological background

### 1.1. Phonetic coincidence and semantic differences of homonyms

Words identical in sound-form but different in meaning are traditionally termed homonymous. Modern English is exceptionally rich in homonymous words and word-forms. It is held that languages where short words abound have more homonyms than those where longer words are prevalent. Therefore it is sometimes suggested that abundance of homonyms in Modern English is to be accounted for by the monosyllabic structure of the commonly used English words.

Not only words but other linguistic units may be homonymous. Here, however, we are concerned with the homonymy of words and word-forms only, so we shall not touch upon the problem of homonymous affixes or homonymous phrases. When analyzing different cases of homonymy we find that some words are homonymous in all their forms, i.e. we observe full homonymy of the paradigms of two or more different words as, e.g., in seal a sea animal and seal—a design printed on paper by means of a stamp'. The paradigm "seal, seal's, seals, seals'" is identical for both of them and gives no indication of whether it is seal (1) or seal (2) that we are analyzing. In other cases, e.g. seal—a sea animal' and (to) seal (3)—'to close tightly, we see that although some individual word-forms are homonymous, the whole of the paradigm is not identical. Compare, for instance, the-paradigms:

1. (to) seal-seal-seal's-seals-seals'
2. seal-seals-sealed-sealing, etc.

1. Professor O. Jespersen calculated that there are roughly four times as many monosyllabic as polysyllabic homonyms. It is easily observed that only some of the word-forms (e.g. seal, seals, etc.) are homonymous, whereas others (e.g. sealed, sealing) are not. In such cases we cannot speak of homonymous words but only of homonymy of individual word-forms or of partial homonymy. This is true of a number of other cases, e.g. compare find [faɪnd], found [faʊnd], found [faʊnd] and found [faʊnd], founded ['faʊndɪd], founded [faʊndɪd]; know [nou], knows [nouz], knew

[nju:], and no [nou]; nose [nouz], noses [nouziz]; new [nju:] in which partial homonymy is observed.

From the examples of homonymy discussed above it follows that the bulk of full homonyms are to be found within the same parts of speech (e.g. seal(1) n—seal(2) n), partial homonymy as a rule is observed in word-forms belonging to different parts of speech (e.g. seal n—seal v). This is not to say that partial homonymy is impossible within one part of speech. For instance, in the case of the two verbs 'to be in a horizontal or resting position'—lies [laiz]—lay [lei]—lain [lein] and 'to make an untrue statement'—lies [laiz]—lied [laid]—lied [laid] we also find partial homonymy as only two word-forms [lai], [laiz] are homonymous, all other forms of the two verbs are different. Cases of full homonymy may be found in different parts of speech as, e.g., for [for]—disposition, for [fo:]—conjunction and four [fo:]—numeral, as these parts of speech have no other word-forms.

## **1.2. Classification of homonyms**

Modern English has a very extensive vocabulary; the number of words according to the dictionary data is no less than 400, 000. A question naturally arises whether this enormous word-stock is composed of separate independent lexical units, or may it perhaps be regarded as a certain structured system made up of numerous interdependent and interrelated sub-systems or groups of words. This problem may be viewed in terms of the possible ways of classifying vocabulary items. Words can be classified in various ways. Here, however, we are concerned only with the semantic classification of words which gives us a better insight into some aspects of the Modern English word-stock. Attempts to study the inner structure of the vocabulary revealed that in spite of its heterogeneity the English word-stock may be analyzed into numerous sub-systems the members of which have some features in common, thus distinguishing them from the members of other lexical sub-systems. Classification into monosynaptic and polysemantic words is based on the number of meanings the word possesses. More detailed semantic classifications are generally based on the semantic similarity (or

polarity) of words or their component morphemes. Below we give a brief survey of some of these lexical groups of current use both in theoretical investigation and practical class-room teaching. The following venn diagram shows the relationships between homonyms (between blue and yellow) and related linguistic concepts. Several similar linguistic concepts are related to homonymy. These include:

- Homographs (literally "same writing") are usually defined as words that share the same spelling, regardless of how they are pronounced.[note 1] If they are pronounced the same then they are also homophones (and homonyms) – for example, bark (the sound of a dog) and bark (the skin of a tree). If they are pronounced differently then they are also heteronyms – for example, bow (the front of a ship) and bow (a type of knot).

- Homophones (literally "same sound") are usually defined as words that share the same pronunciation, regardless of how they are spelled.[note 2] If they are spelled the same then they are also homographs (and homonyms); if they are spelled differently then they are also heterographs (literally "different writing"). Homographic examples include rose (flower) and rose (past tense of rise). Heterographic examples include to, too, two, and there, their, they're.

- Heteronyms (literally "different name") are the subset of homographs (words that share the same spelling) that have different pronunciations (and meanings).[note 3] That is, they are homographs which are not homophones. Such words include desert (to abandon) and desert (arid region); row (to argue or an argument) and row (as in to row a boat or a row of seats - a pair of homophones). Heteronyms are also sometimes called heterophones (literally "different sound").

- Polysemes are words with the same spelling and distinct but related meanings. The distinction between polysemy and homonymy is often subtle and subjective, and not all sources consider polysemous words to be homonyms. Words such as mouth, meaning either the orifice on one's face, or the opening of a cave or river, are polysemous and may or may not be considered homonyms.

- Capitonyms are words that share the same spelling but have different meanings when capitalized (and may or may not have different pronunciations). Such

words include polish (to make shiny) and Polish (from Poland); march (organized, uniformed, steady and rhythmic walking forward) and March (the third month of the year in the Gregorian Calendar). However, both polish or march at the beginning of sentences still need to be capitalized.

### **1.3. Diachronically approach of homonyms**

### **1.4. Synchronically approach in studying homonyms**

Synonymy, polysemy and homonymy in the language hierarchy are usually felt to be correlative notions: firstly because the criterion of synonymy is semantic similarity which is in exact opposition to the criterion of antonym—semantic polarity. Secondly, because synonyms and polysemantic words seem to overlap in a number of cases. For instance, when we speak of the words “daddy” and “parent” as synonyms, we do so because of the similarity of their denotational meaning and polarity of their stylistic reference (cf. daddy—colloquial, parent—bookish).

The problem of synonymy is treated similarity differently by different linguists. The most debatable problem is the definition of synonyms. Synonyms are traditionally described as words different in sound-form but identical or similar in meaning. This definition has been severely criticized on many points. Firstly it seems impossible to speak of identical or similar meaning of words as such, as this part of the definition cannot be applied to polysemantic words. It is inconceivable that polysemantic words could be synonymous in all their meanings. The verb “look”, for instance, is usually treated as a synonym of the following words: “see”, “watch”, “observe”, etc., but in another of its meanings it is not synonymous with this group of words but rather with the verbs seems, appear (cf. to look at smb. and to look pale). The number of synonymic sets of a polysemantism word tends as a rule to be equal to the number of individual meanings the word possesses.

## **1.5. Lexical, grammatical and lexicical-grammatical distinctions of homonymy**

## Chapter 2. Homonym jokes in English and Ukrainian

### 2.1. Homonym jokes in English

The game of words, based on homonymy - the creation of a comic effect due to semantic differences of homonyms. Example:

Waiter! – Yes, sir. – What’s this? – It’s bean soup, sir. – No matter what it’s been. What is it now?

The lack of understanding between the interlocutors causing a smile is based on the difference in the meaning of the words-homophones: the noun *bean* (квасоля) and the adjectival passive state of the verb *to be* (бути) – *been*.

A rather interesting way of forming a comic is simulation or onomatopoeia. An example is the following English anecdote:

*An Englishman wanted to imitate what the Russians say when somebody sneezes and concluded that if somebody sneezes in his presence he should say: “Boots are off” (like Russian “будь здоров»).*

*Then he understood that whenever a Russian wished to say to a girl: “I love you” (я люблю вас), he said a phrase that sounded in English like “yellow blue bus”.*

Such are the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the English anecdote.

Also, consider the jokes that occur in English:

How could the vampire's mum tell he had been smoking?

Because of his coffin!

What do you get if you cross a chicken with a parrot?

Foul language

Why is 6 afraid of 7?

Because 7 ate 9!

Why was the rabbit upset before he went to the disco?  
Because he was having a bad hare day!

Why did the bee sneeze  
Because he sniffed at the flour!

Why wasn't the clock hungry  
Because it already ate!

Why did the girl take a pencil to bed  
To draw the curtains!

What did one traffic light say to the other traffic light  
Don't look now I'm changing!

What did the big chimney say to the little chimney  
You're too young to smoke!

How many letters in the alphabet  
24, because the b flew away and someone drank the t!

Why did the skeleton cross the road  
To get to the Body Shop!

Name a Scottish singer who has two toilet  
LuLu!!

What did the fish say to the dolphin  
You have big mussels!

Why couldn't the skeleton go to the party  
Because he had nobody to go with!

What do you call a deer with no eyes  
No idea!

Why did the boy eat his homework  
Because he thought it was a piece of cake!

When is a door not a door  
When it's ajar!

As we see above, thanks to the game of words, English jokes acquire this character of understanding.

A man was locked in a prison cell with no doors or windows, just a table. How does he get out?

He rubs his hands together until they're sore - he cuts the table in half with the saw - 2 halves make a whole - he puts the hole in the wall and climbs out. He shouts and shouts until he's hoarse and rides off - he comes to a river and waits until 2.30 when the banks close and escapes.

What's black and white and red all over?  
A newspaper!

Do you know you have a lizard on your shoulder?  
Yes I call him Tiny!  
Why?  
He's my newt!

Why can't you starve in the desert? – Because of all the sand which is there.  
(sand which – пісок, який..., sandwich – бутерброд).

– Good heavens! What's this?

– It's bean soup.

– I don't care what it's been. I want to know what it is now! (bean – горох, been – був).

Yesterday I accidentally swallowed some food colouring. The doctor says I'm OK, but I feel like I've dyed a little inside. (dye – пофарбувати, die – померти).

– What did the grape say when it got stepped on?

– Nothing – but it let out a little whine. (whine – скиглити, vine – вино).

### *Phonological*

## **2.2. English and Ukrainian homonym in jokes**

Intercultural communication now takes an important place in studying of foreign languages, therefore the aim of our work is studying a problem of pseudo-equivalence in foreign languages.

The only way how to cope with homonyms is to improve your vocabulary, keeping in mind homonyms which a translator meets in English most often. The number of homonyms has grown lately because of borrowing from different languages. Therefore the topic about the use and the correct writing of English homonyms becomes more actual.

The part of them was formed because of borrowing from another languages and the meaning of the word in one of languages has been changed; but in other cases there wasn't borrowing at all, and words having the same root as in common original language have different meanings; sometimes the consonance is purely casual.

There are also the homonyms, whose lexical meanings coincide completely or partially at the expense of existence of the general signs, allowing to carry these words with these values to one sphere of the use.

Exactly the last case is connected with the greatest number of mistakes during the translating. For example, the English word "aggressive" has not only meaning "агресивний", but also "наполегливий, енергійний". Coincidence of the first lexical meaning of the word "aggressive" to a lexical meaning of Ukrainian can lead to that, for example, in translating the phrase "aggressive salesman" the second meaning of the English word which Ukrainian doesn't have, will be ignored and the phrase will be translated as "агресивний продавець" instead of correct form "наполегливий продавець" [3].

The other example is the word "electric". It means in English "електричний", whereas on sounding it coincides with Ukrainian "електрик". Both meanings have a direct attitude to electricity, and the knowledge of this fact by simultaneous ignorance of rules of word formation can be at the bottom of mix of meanings during translation.

- Галю. Ти козу доїла?
- Ще не доїла. Доїдаю.
- Haliu. Have you milked a cow?
- Still haven't eaten. I'm in process.
  
- І навіть якщо впав - вставай. Та йди до мети.
- Та зараз домету мамо, що ви вчепилися
- And even if you fell - get up. And go to the goal.
- Yeah, I'm ending sweeping now, mom.
  
- Як справи?
- Як справа, так і зліва
- How are you doing?
- How in the rights, the same in the lefts.

- Так, Івасику, вчимо англійське слово "book"!
- Ой, а нащо його вчити, бук в мене біля хати росте?!
- So, Ivasyk, we're learning the English word "book"!
- Oh, why we need to learn it if the beech grows near my house?!

негідник - людина, яка не дуже справляється із обов'язками гіда  
scoundrel is a person who does not really handle the duties of a guide

застаріти - підхопити зоряну хворобу.  
to outdate - to caught a star disease.

The phenomenon of a homonymy deserves special attention as it is one of global problems of linguistics.

## Conclusions

Homophony appears as a by-product of incessant sound change and language contact. Its membership is in a continuous flux, as new homophones arise and old homophones disappear.

Having analyzed the problem of homonyms in Modern English we could do the following conclusions: a) The problem of homonyms in Modern English is very actual nowadays. b) There are several problematic questions in the field of homonymy the major of which is the problem of distinguishing of homonyms and polysemantic words. d) The problem of homonymy is still waiting for its detail investigation.

It also must be said that whereas distinction between polysemy homonymy is relevant and important for lexicography it is not relevant for the practice of either human or machine translation. The reason for this is that different variants of a polysemantic word are not less conditioned by context than lexical homonyms. In both cases the identification of the necessary meaning is based on the corresponding distribution that can signal it and must be present in the memory either of the pupil or the machine.

Joke is a humorous story about a funny event. Joke is an independent humorous genre of mostly oral literature, which has a folklore origin. During the history of its development joke experienced a series of metamorphoses, in the process of which they lost their initial educational and educational functions. Modern anecdote is a primitive descendant of a serious historical genre, the main task of which was a recreational function. The anecdote is connected practically with all spheres of social life and reflects modern tendencies of development of the national spoken language.

**Abstract + Key words**

## Appendices

### *Homophone Jokes*

1. How many members of a convent does it take to change a light bulb?

Nun.

2. What did the chess piece say before bed?

Knight knight.

3. What do you call a deer with no eyes?

No idea.

4. What do you call a deer with no eyes and no legs?

Still no idea.

5. What does Santa say when gardening?

Hoe hoe hoe.

6. Why would a chess piece in charge of a city be like a bad dream?

Because it would be a knight mayor.

7. What did one homophone say to comfort the other homophone?

Their, there, they're.

8. What does a sheep's Valentine's Day card say?

I love ewe.

9. What does a Cyclops' Valentine's Day card say?

Eye love you.

10. What type of coin smells?

Cent.

11. Why was the pepper cold?

Because it was chili.

12. What is a golfer's favorite number?

Four!

13. Why couldn't the jockey speak?

He was feeling a bit horse.

14. Why does The Lord's Prayer ask for our daily bread?

Because it's something we knead.

15. Why was the mortgage sad?

Because it was a loan.

16. Why was the nighttime sad?

Because now it was mourning.

17. Why did the window glass cry?

Because it was in pane.

18. What's a cat's favorite button on a DVD remote?

Paws.

19. What is a Christmas gift's favorite type of music?

Wrap.

20. Why does the lion not enjoy cooked vegetables?

He prefers them roar.

21. What's a librarian's favorite color?

Read.

22. Why did the toolbox cry?

Because it felt saw.

23. What beverage do golfers like to drink?

Tee.

24. What is ice cream's favorite day of the week?

Sundae.

25. Why didn't the amphibian drive its car home?

Because it was toad.

What kind of party do plumbers go to? A tap dance.

Why did the cat come down from the tree? Because it saw the tree bark.

"Waiter, will the pancakes be long?" - "No, sir, round."

How do you make a sausage roll? - Push it

Why did John walk backwards to school? – Because it was back-to-school day.

What did Tutankhamun say when he got scared? – I want my mummy.

What do runners do when they forget something? – They jog their memory.

Why are movie stars so cool? – Because they have so many fans.

Why did the boy take the pencil to bed? – Because he wanted to draw the curtains.

Why did the king draw straight lines? – Because he was the ruler.

Why were the elephants thrown out of the swimming pool? – Because they couldn't keep their trunks up.

Did you hear about the policeman's holiday luggage? – It was an open and shut case.

Did you hear about the snake that could do sums? – It was an adder.

Why did the teacher wear sunglasses? – Her students were too bright.

Why are postmen unhappy? – Because they are given the sack every morning.