

LEXICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES: OXYMORON, HYPERBOLE,
ANTONOMASIA, ZEUGMA AND PUN

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Annotation

This article is devoted to the study of lexical stylistic devices in the English language, namely oxymoron, hyperbole, antonomasia, zeugma, and pun. The paper explores their linguistic nature, structural особенности, and stylistic functions in both literary and everyday discourse. Special emphasis is placed on their role in enhancing expressiveness, emotional impact, and semantic depth. The article also provides detailed examples and analysis, demonstrating how these devices contribute to the richness and flexibility of the English language.

Key Words

lexical stylistic devices, stylistics, oxymoron, hyperbole, antonomasia, zeugma, pun, figurative language, expressiveness, semantics

Introduction

Language is not only a средство of communication but also a powerful instrument of artistic expression. One of the key branches of linguistics that studies expressive means of language is stylistics. It focuses on how linguistic elements are used to achieve particular communicative and aesthetic effects.

Lexical stylistic devices occupy a central place in stylistics. They allow speakers and writers to manipulate meanings, create imagery, and evoke emotions. These devices are especially important in literature, where language serves not only to inform but also to influence and impress the reader.

Among numerous lexical stylistic devices, oxymoron, hyperbole, antonomasia, zeugma, and pun are particularly significant due to their frequency and versatility. The aim of this article is to analyze these devices, describe their structural and semantic characteristics, and illustrate their functions with relevant examples.

Main Part

Oxymoron

Oxymoron is a stylistic device based on the combination of two semantically противоположных or contradictory elements within a single phrase. This creates a paradoxical effect that attracts attention and encourages deeper interpretation.

Examples include: “deafening silence,” “sweet sorrow,” “cruel kindness.”

From a linguistic point of view, oxymoron reflects the complexity of human perception, where opposite concepts can coexist. It is widely used in poetry and prose to express inner conflict, ambiguity, and emotional tension.

Thus, oxymoron performs both semantic and expressive functions, enriching the text with additional layers of meaning.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a stylistic device based on intentional exaggeration. It is used to emphasize a certain quality or idea and to produce a strong эмоциональный эффект.

Examples: “I’ve told you a thousand times,” “He is the best person in the world,” “This suitcase weighs a ton.”

Hyperbole is common in everyday communication as well as in literature. It helps intensify feelings such as admiration, anger, or surprise. Despite its exaggeration, the listener or reader understands the intended meaning.

In stylistics, hyperbole serves to enhance выразительность and make speech more vivid and memorable.

Antonomasia

Antonomasia is a lexical stylistic device in which a proper name is used instead of a common noun or vice versa. It is closely related to cultural and contextual knowledge.

For example:

“He is a real Einstein” (a very intelligent person)

“Don Juan” (a womanizer)

Antonomasia highlights a dominant feature of a person by associating them with a well-known figure. It enriches language by adding evaluative and эмоциональные оттенки. This device is especially effective in public discourse and literature, where it helps create vivid and recognizable images.

Zeugma Zeugma is a stylistic device in which one word, typically a verb or adjective, is syntactically related to two or more words, but semantically connected to them in different ways.

Example: “She opened her door and her heart to the orphan.

” Another example: “He lost his coat and his temper.

” Zeugma creates a compressed and elegant expression, often producing a humorous or неожиданное effect. It requires the reader to interpret multiple meanings simultaneously. From a stylistic perspective, zeugma demonstrates the economy of language and the interplay between literal and figurative meanings.

Pun

Pun is a stylistic device based on wordplay. It involves the use of words with multiple meanings or words that sound similar but have different meanings.

Example:

“Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana

.” Puns are widely used in jokes, advertisements, headlines, and literary works. Their main function is to create humor, but they can also serve rhetorical and stylistic purposes.

Pun reflects the richness of vocabulary and the flexibility of language. It engages the reader intellectually and emotionally, making the text more dynamic and memorable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, lexical stylistic devices such as oxymoron, hyperbole, antonomasia, zeugma, and pun play a crucial role in shaping expressive and meaningful communication. They allow speakers and writers to go beyond literal meanings and create complex, vivid, and emotionally charged texts.

Each of these devices has its own structural and semantic features, but all of them contribute to the richness and diversity of the English language. Understanding and correctly using these stylistic tools is essential for developing advanced language skills and appreciating literary works.

Thus, lexical stylistic devices are not only linguistic phenomena but also powerful instruments of artistic expression.

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