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**Abstract.** This article focuses on the research of periphrasis as a functional-semantic unit of speech that serves as a mean of figurative and descriptive characterization and contextual synonym of words (in the area of political discourse in particular). Combination of lexical items and functioning of periphrasis in the English language are investigated in the work. The main focus is laid upon the process of formation of ironical periphrasis based on an associative component in the semantic structure. The author also highlights interaction between politics and language in which periphrasis is used as a method of verbal aggression serving the invective function in order to manipulate the consciousness of masses.

**Keywords:** associative periphrasis, irony, political discourse, verbal aggression, invective function.

The importance of political communication is permanently growing in modern society. Political issues are openly discussed and their solutions depend on the adequacy of interpretation. Under such circumstances politicians, journalists and other members of social and political communication get more freedom in speech. The interaction between language and politics takes place within the socially constructed communication in which two main aspects of their relationship are revealed: 1) the language serves politics as its main tool. 2) Politics is not only influenced by the language, but can also make an impact on its further development [3].

In political discourse of American media any political phenomenon is often described in an ironic context using the associative periphrasis. In treating periphrasis I will adhere to Ievsieieva who considers it to be a functional-semantic unit of speech which has a form of collocation and identifies one or more characteristics of an object or phenomenon, serving as a mean of figurative and descriptive characterization and contextual synonym of words [2]. In associative periphrasis associations are the source of contextual synonymy. Analysis of these stylistic devices and their semantic usage is the aim of the article. The number of analysed units constitutes 500 samples. Though this theme was investigated by scholars such as Ilina I.Z, Klauze D., Komarov S., Novikov A.V. the topic is far from being comprehensively studied. In this article I'll follow Ukrainian scholars Midjana T.M and Kaundykova M.A.

The ironic vision of life has become one of the main characteristics of interpersonal communication today. The term "irony" comes from Greek and means "apparent indifference" or "feigned ignorance". According to C.Colebrook irony is:

- a) the use of words to express something different and especially the opposite to the literal meaning;
- b) a usually humorous or sardonic literary style or form characterized by irony;
- c) an ironic expression or utterance [1].

Merriam-Webster defines irony as incongruity between the actual result of a sequence of events and the normal or expected result [1].

Irony is considered to be one of the most important attributes of verbal behavior, the universal trope which is used in almost every culture. In the linguistic definition irony combines two features: on the one hand, it involves the function of "distortion value" on the other contains a mockery as an integral component of its structure [7].

In political discourse irony is often used as a mean of verbal aggression, which primarily serves the invective function. Irony itself does not contain a defamatory nature, but this tool is characterized by considerable stylistic expressiveness, since it has an emotional and estimated perlocutionary effect. In speech irony always has bright expressive meaning [4].

It is important to differentiate between irony and humor. Depending on the situation, irony can serve as a mean of satire, but, unlike the latter, it encourages to independent ideation and is deprived of moralizing. Another important factor in the effective use of irony in media is the ability to disguise the opinion which means that irony is used to induce some figurative associations, to activate strong emotions and trigger a desired response in order to provide the rapid categorization of the political world concept [9].

A journalist resorts to ironic images to express the relation to the subject of speech and to describe mainly a negative verbal portrait of opponents. These statements are characterized by hostile attitude of the sender to the recipient followed by increasing tautness in communication, anger and conflict [8].

In order to give the utterance of speech an ironical meaning opponents use the situational and associative irony. The situational irony is created by combinations of different stylistic devices. The lexical level contains linguistic units that belong to the colloquial register of the language (vulgarism and swear words), barbarisms, hyperbole. The syntactic level includes different types of repetitions, oxymo-

ron and other emphatic constructions. The lexical-semantic level involves epithet, metaphor, antithesis, etc [6]. In this paper we are more interested in associative irony that arises from the use of certain associations of the object expressed by periphrasis [9].

The primary place in the list of American media objects of irony holds the incumbent President Barack Obama. Some ironic periphrasis are in short jokes. For example, in the phrase

- *What does Barack Obama call illegal aliens?*
- *Undocumented democrats* [11].

The attitude of the president to the members of the rival political force (the Republican Party) is displayed in it. In this instance he compares non-registered representatives of Republicans with extraterrestrials.

The figure of the president also occurs in the following example, where comparison with the God is made:

- *What's the difference between Obama and God?*
- *God doesn't think he is Obama* [11].

Or the next comparison of the president with students, which informs that he is immediately on the same level with them - "the graduate with multiple tails".

*"It was just announced that President Obama will speak at Ohio State's graduation in May. The president has a lot in common with those students. He's currently in his fifth year and swamped with debt"* [11].

Another joke concerns the working methods of the president, who implies to solve the unemployment problem by expanding basketball (the most popular sport in America) league to 32 thousand teams:

- *Did you hear about Obama's plan to end unemployment?*
- *He's gonna expand the NBA to 32,000 teams!* [11].

Another important method of work is described in the following example, in which the emphasis is made on the fact that the only way to close the affiliate of Guantanamo prison is quite usual process of "killing" any institution: to proclaim it a small businesses and to eliminate by taxation.

*President Obama held a press conference today. He said he still wants to close the Guantanamo Bay prison facility, but he doesn't know how to do it. He should do what he always does. Declare it a small business and tax it out of existence* [11].

The example of positive irony should be also noted. It is used to distinguish the positions of two competing parties, where the anti-discriminatory stance of Democrats is demonstrated:

- *Republicans: "Obama would not have won without blacks, Hispanics, gays or Jews."*

- *Democrats: "Or as we like to call them: Americans"* [11].

In the following instance the stable position of the Republican Party according to which the opposition is not ready to compromise and make joint decisions is veiled. Kitchen condiments perform the role of periphrased objects in it.

*"Last night President Obama hosted Republican senators for dinner at the White House. The president said he had to do without salt, pepper, and butter – because as you know, the Republicans refuse to pass anything"* [11].

Basically the struggles between two parties in order to get the public support lead to the result of series of ironic periphrasis authored by the "ordered" journalists.

In the example of Conan O'Bryan:

*"According to a new poll, most Americans think Santa Claus is a Democrat – which is really odd because when I think of a fat, old white man who hires unskilled labor, I think Republican* [12] a typical appearance of the Republican is described. He compares him with Santa Clause – a fat old man who hires dabsters.

In the following example by Jay Leno the comparison concerns cinema. The film "Lincoln" which in this joke is associated with the former president has won the "Oscar" in 12 categories. The journalist noted that this was the first time when "Hollywood" voted for a representative of the Republican Party":

*"Today was a big day in Hollywood. The Oscar nominations were announced. 'Lincoln' leads the list with 12 nominations. This is a first – not the most nominations, but the first time Hollywood has ever voted for a Republican president. That is amazing"* [12].

Ironic periphrasis is also dedicated to other political figures in the samples by Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert. Journalists described the admissions of Mitt Romney quite ironically, admitting that even money did not help him to buy a ticket to the Parliament:

*"In his first interview since losing the election, Mitt Romney says it kills him to not be in the White House. He said he'll always think of it as the one house he couldn't buy"* [12].

In the next example the authors characterize the "charm" of the politician comparing him with an uncompromising steward prohibiting to use the included services.

*"Mitt Romney spoke at CPAC for the first time since the election. He has not lost any of the warmth and charm that we have come to know. He still*

*sounds like the flight attendant that doesn't let you use the bathroom in first class" [12].*

The recently held in the Bush library exhibition entitled the "Decision Points Theater" was paraphrased to the "Disaster piece Theater" in accordance with the consequences of such decisions.

*"I guess that's better than its original title, Disaster piece Theater." (on the "Decision Points Theater" exhibit at the Bush Presidential Library) [12].*

Quite ironical is the attitude of the media representatives to the liquidation process held after the system malfunction in the airline schedule. The comment of Jet Blue, who said that the system would work only with a delay of 90 minutes, was paraphrased as immutable "just on time".

*"We are 24 hours away from massive across-the-board budget cuts. If the cuts go into effect, major airports could face delays up to 90 minutes – or as JetBlue calls it, an on-time departure" [12].*

The following paraphrasis generated by the proverb is also worth noting.

*"After withdrawing from public life Anthony Weiner is ready to stick it back in. Sadly, we know he has them" [12].* The return to the elite life with the back door, which takes a lot of courage (Folks that take balls) is reflected here.

The next thematic block is dedicated to the working process of the American government representatives. Describing the 51 minutes long review of John Carry about the critical state of the Washington government Jay Leno admits that such long performances are the main reason for the mentioned crisis.

*"In his farewell speech to the Senate this week, John Kerry spoke for 51 minutes about Washington being gridlocked. The cause of the gridlock? Senators giving 51-minute speeches" [13].*

Craig Ferguson is very ironical about the price increases for the post services up to 46 cents. The journalist notes that emails have been used to spread this information.

*"The price of a stamp goes up a penny today, to 46 cents. To make sure everyone received the news promptly, the U.S. Postal Service announced it by email" [13].*

Jim Fellon compares the retired senators with the out-dated clocks presented to them at the last conference.

*"Yesterday, the Senate floor was reserved for farewell speeches from retiring senators. Each senator received a fitting gift: a gold watch that stopped working years ago" [13].*

Fellon also describes the Congress work, mainly its absence. In the following example he proposed the politicians to work at home using their PCs as far as their presence in the parliament made no result in any case.

*"It was proposed this week that members of Congress use video conferencing and other remote technology to work from their home states instead of Washington. They figure they can get just as much 'not done' at home as they get 'not done' in Washington" [13].*

The reluctance to keep to the obligations as the essence of the real work process in Congress is paraphrased in the following instance:

*"Tomorrow President Obama gives his annual State of the Union address. If you're not familiar, the State of the Union is where the president faces Congress and asks them to work together and fix America's problems and Congress says, "No" [13].*

Finally Jay Lennon infringes on the security center of United States comparing its headship with "snakes".

*"Last night on 'The Tonight Show,' during the monologue Jay Leno called NBC executives 'snakes.' The response came quickly. 'Jay Leno has crossed the line and gone too far,' responded the snakes" [13].*

A lot of attention is dedicated to the international affairs of the USA. The problems of migration are criticized by Jay Leno. The author admits that the government has made the scheme to legalize migration. The journalist provides the general name for such a plan – "tunnel". The river Rio Grande which serves the way to illegal migration is implied by this term.

*"A bipartisan group of senators has unveiled a plan that would create a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants. Or as immigrants call that, "a tunnel" [11].*

Quite ironically Craig Ferguson commented on the Russian plans to explore the moon. The journalist noted that the American flag was the only thing they could find there.

*"Today Russia announced plans to send a probe to the moon by the year 2015. Russian scientists say they're excited to see what they could discover on the moon's surface. I'll tell you what they're going to discover – an American flag!" [11].*

In his joke Jim Kimmel convinces that Santa Claus is the Chinese as far as the majority of plastic trinkets are made in China.

*"The fact of the matter is Santa isn't a Democrat or a Republican. In fact, Santa isn't even an American. I have news for you. The real Santa is Chinese. You think elves are the ones making that plastic crap we give our kids? No. Chinese people are [11].*

The reaction of journalists to the upcoming presidential elections in Iran was also very ironical. It was mentioned that the rival would take place between Ahmadinejad and the "sham" candidate selected to create an imaginary competition.

*“Iran is gearing up for a big presidential election in June. Yeah, this year it's gonna be a tight race between Ahmadinejad and the guy they picked to lose to Ahmadinejad”* [11].

To conclude it is necessary to indicate that political interest is the source of ironic periphrasis, which can be defined as a linguistic mean used to influence the consciousness of social groups and individuals at understanding current political affairs. In other words, the goal of ironical periphrasis is not to describe but to blame and impose certain ideas and opinions in order to manipulate the masses.

Political irony is the device which is used within the political discourse in order to express criticism, denial or reproach. Ironic periphrasis is a stylistic figure used to complement the content of the object or subject which is periphrased. It is mostly veiled and used to describe negative attitudes or ridicule. The most commonly used stylistic figure in ironic pariphrase is simile.

The sphere of political discourse is extremely broad and covers a plenty of other means of disseminating information, which leads to the relevance of further study of periphrasis in the political aspect.

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#### **Байдак И.С. Иронический перифраз в политическом дискурсе американского медиа**

**Аннотация:** Данная статья посвящена вопросу исследования перифраза, как функционально-семантической единицы речи, которая служит средством образно описательной характеристики и контекстуальным синонимом слов (в конкретном случае понятий политического дискурса). В работе проведен анализ лексемного комбинирования элементов и функционирования перифраз в языке. Основное внимание сосредоточено на процессе образования иронического перифраза на базе ассоциативного компонента семантической структуры. Автор отмечает взаимодействие политики и языка, где в политическом дискурсе иронический перифраз используется как метод вербальной агрессии, выполняет инвективную функцию и играет важную роль в процессе манипуляции массовым сознанием.

Для того чтобы придать фразе иронического смысла противники используют ситуационный и ассоциативный типы иронии. Ситуационная ирония создается комбинациями различных стилистических приемов. Лексический уровень содержит языковые единицы, которые принадлежат к разговорной области языка: вулгаризмы и бранные слова, гипербола. Синтаксический уровень включает в себя различные типы повторов, оксюморонов и других эмфатических конструкций. Лексико-семантический уровень состоит из эпитета, метафоры, антитезы, и т.д. [6]. В этой статье более сконцентрировано внимание на ассоциативной иронии, которая возникает на базе определенных ассоциаций с использованием перифраза.

Иронический перифраз служит политическим инструментом, который используется в политическом дискурсе, чтобы выразить критику, отрицание или упрек. Иронический перифраз является стилистической единицей, которая используется как дополнение к содержанию объекта или предмета. В основном он завуалирован и используется для описания негативного отношения или насмешки.

**Ключевые слова:** ассоциативные перифраз, ирония, политический дискурс, вербальная агрессия, инвективная функция.