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Scientific interests: cognitive linguistics, humour, multimodality

ON SOME HUMOROUS ASPECTS OF CONCEPTUAL BLENDING IN POLITICIZED DISCOURSE

In this paper, a very dynamic linguistic phenomenon, humour, is analysed on the basis of the Theory of Conceptual Blending developed by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (2002). It was discovered that in Lithuanian politicized discourse during and after the period of elections (2012, 2016) the majority of political events and personalities were given an evaluative implicit assessment through humour/irony, which can be seen as an emergent result of blending processes. In the paper, the tendency to ridicule politicians and political events on news websites is discussed focusing exceptionally on the processes of blending at the lexical level. The research reveals that the coinage of new lexical units by fusing at least two source words or splinters follows certain patterns. The structural analysis is based on the works of Anita Lehrer, Michael Kelly, Stefan Gries, and Ekaterine Bakaradze. The main claims of the paper are supported by 362 blends collected from the headlines and comments of delfi.lt, lrytas.lt, and blogs, during the period of 2012–2016.

KEY WORDS: cognitive linguistics, conceptual blending, humour, irony, splinters.

Introductory remarks

Nowadays the prevalence of humour (including irony) both in everyday communication and in public discourse, is a characteristic feature of language which is manifested at different levels, including headlines of news reports and readers' comments on the Internet. Throughout the centuries humour, and irony in particular¹, has been analysed from different perspectives, within the framework of such theories as Echo Mention (Sperber and Wilson 1981), Pretence Theory (Clark and Gerrig 1984), General Theory of Verbal Humour (Raskin and Attardo 1991), Graded Salience (Giora 1998), etc. However, despite a variety of different approaches, humour and, especially, irony open up a broad field for further investigation. Contemporary linguistics approaches humour with the tools of cognitive science, i.e. the Theory of Conceptual Blending.

¹ Relying on Anolli, Ciceri, and Infantino (2002), the functions of irony and humour in many cases overlap, and humour can be seen as a function of irony, however, not all humour is ironic and not all irony is humorous. While the main function of humour is to entertain, irony focuses on giving critical evaluation.

The emergence of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's Conceptual Integration Network Theory, or 'Blending', as it is more commonly known, has been a significant development in human information processing in recent years. As Fauconnier and Turner (2002) explain it, blending is a scientific model that is capable of capturing and explaining many apparently divergent phenomena, from talking donkeys in cartoons to complex numbers in mathematics. The major claims of Fauconnier and Turner's theory are related to the theory of mental spaces (Fauconnier 1985), and the concept of blending is defined as a process of conceptual mapping and integration, i.e., two input spaces are connected, and having undergone selective projection, form a blended space.

In this study, the scope of investigation is limited to humorous blends at the lexical level with the focus on the blends found in politicized discourse. On-line news headlines, articles and article commentaries have served as the source material for the investigation. The data of 362 instances was collected during the period of 2012–2016 on *delfi.lt*, *lyrtas.lt* and a few minor news websites (a full list presented in the list of references).

At the lexical level, blending has been approached as a frequent and productive word-formation process that is defined by Stefan Gries as involving "the coinage of a new lexeme by fusing parts of at least two other source words of which either one is shortened in the fusion and/or where there is some form of phonemic or graphemic overlap of the source words" (Gries 2004, p. 639). However, as blending has been approached from a variety of perspectives, this is not a singular definition. Ekaterine Bakaradze suggests that along with the term 'blending' the terms of 'portmanteau' or 'telescopy' can be used, as they, similarly to the term 'blending', "imply the way of word formation when words are formed by splicing or merging two other words together" [...] thus producing a new word whose meaning "partially or wholly describes the meaning of the components which were used for the creation of the word" (Bakaradze 2010, p. 87). Despite the fact that the terms 'portmanteau', 'telescopy', and 'blending' can be employed interchangeably, in contemporary language studies, the term 'blending' has been applied most commonly.

Algeo (1978) proposed dividing blends into three groups: 1. Phonemic Overlap: a syllable or part of a syllable is shared between two words; 2. Clipping: the shortening of two words and then compounding them; 3. Phonemic Overlap and Clipping: the shortening of two words to shared syllable and then compounding.

However, classification of types of blends is not standard among all linguists.

Anita Lehrer (2007) analyses blends giving a deep insight into the development of the process of blending and the strategies that blends employ during the formation process. In her research, the term 'splinters' is adopted to refer to the constituent parts of blends. The scholar claims that although the word 'splinters' came into usage as early as the 15th century, the same processes can be traced in the development of languages at present. In Lehrer's study, splinters are seen as separate morphemes that usually cannot stand as individual words, but when joined together in the process of conceptual blending, they contribute to the increasing amount of occasionalisms (that, later on, developed into neologisms) exhibiting the lexical creativity of language users.

In general, splinters do not follow a single regular pattern. While Ginzburg addresses splinters as “irregular fragments of several words” (Ginzburg 1979, cited in: Bakaradze 2010), Michael Kelly describes them as word components that are snipped and stitched together “through simple concatenation or through concatenation coupled with overlap of shared phonological segments” (Kelly 1998, p. 1). Meanwhile, Lehrer (2007) provides a detailed analysis of the possible patterns that fall into the following four categories: a) a full word followed by a splinter, as in the case of *chatire* (chat + satire); b) two splinters (one is taken from the beginning of the word and the other from the end), as, for instance, in *hurricoon* (hurricane+ typhoon); c) two splinters (both of which are the beginnings of the words), as in the case of *sitcom* (situation + comedy) or *biopic* (biographical + picture); d) overlap of constituent parts, as, for instance, in *sexpert* (sex + expert).

It is worth noting that the results achieved during the current analysis of humorous blends in politicized discourse are in line with the theoretical insights of the above mentioned scholars, and, simultaneously, provide a different perspective since only the splinters of humorous blends were selected with the emphasis on the types of mental input spaces used for the purpose of politicized ridicule. The author holds the view that for the purposes of politicized ridicule the splinters instantly recognizable for the target audience were deliberately selected.

Patterns of evaluative humorous blends in Lithuanian politicized on-line discourse

1. Proper name /proper name pattern

Here the parts of both mental input spaces contribute to the final structure of the blend with the emergent humorous element, as in the reference to the President Dalia Grybauskaitė as ‘Grybašenka’ (**Grybauskaitė** + **Lukashenka**) after her visit to Belarus, or in the reference to the Mayor of Vilnius Artūras Zuokas as ‘Zuokulas’ (**Zuokas** + **Dracula**), found in news headlines and commentaries:

1. Valinskas: „Tuoj turėsime kreiptis į Josios Ekscelenciją „**Grybašenka**“ (lrytas.lt);
2. A. Valinskas: „Į prezidentę reikia kreiptis Jūsų E. **Grybašenka**“ (lrytas.lt);
3. Grafas **Zuokulas** ir mergelė (delfi.lt);
4. Labai aiškiai matyti, kad Straipsnio autorius dar neišgijo nuo **zuokulo** pučiamos euforijos, jog visos **zuokulo** reformos yraskirtos žmonių gerovei. Labai jau aiškiai kyšo pono **zuokulo** ausys iš po šio autoriaus teiginių (lrytas.lt);
5. Bande **zuokula** kazkada tvarkyt reikala bet gavo spyri i sikna... suvare sutrype... dabar **zuokula** jau nebando matyt otkata ir jam pasiule... (delfi.lt);
6. Geriau **Zuokula** su tanku cia butu papozaves... (delfi.lt).

Though none of the above mentioned names actually exists, the reconstruction process of the blending mechanism exploited in the headlines is undoubtedly comprehensible as

a double scope network where each input space contributes to the final blend with the emergent structure of ridicule, i.e. if taken separately, neither the name of Grybauskaitė nor the name of Lukashenka are perceived as humorous; nevertheless, when blended into a single mental space, they generate a humorous effect.

The pattern can be traced both in the news headlines and in public discussions that occur in the form of article commentaries. In them, the speakers exploit similar blends, where spelling mistakes are made either deliberately or due to a poor linguistic competence as, for instance, is observed in the following case:

7. ...*Savivaldybeje visur prikabinti cesnaku, kad nesiveistu vampyrai, o pagrindiniam Zuokalai sermuksnini kuola ismeigti..... (delfi.lt).*

The counterfactual ‘Zuokula’ is a completely unnatural coinage, but within the given context it does not look ambiguous. On the contrary, the reader achieves a benefit of being given an evaluative attitude and a deeper insight due to the compressions enabled in irony by the blending mechanism. It is worth noting that the blend was not a single-use case but retained its usage until the present day. This could be explained by the fact that the referent is still an active and much criticised figure in the political life of the country.

2. Proper name/common name pattern

Splinters of proper names can also be blended with common noun splinters. The best example might be the reference to the leader of the Labour party Victor Uspaskich, whose surname is reconstructed into Agurkichas, which conceptually is a multiple blend since the elements composing it come from at least two overt and two implicit mental input spaces including the political career, entrepreneurship experience, personal habits, and pickled cucumbers as the main products produced by Uspaskich’s companies together with the idea of reference to people as vegetables². The constructed blend enables high compression of the informative evaluative load to generate ironic effect and give a rich insight into the attitude towards the nominee, as seen in the following headline:

8. *Agurkichas šoka pergalės šokį (miestolegenda.lt);*

9. *Agurkichas mėgsta agurkus! (lrytas.lt);*

10. *Pirmojo Seimo rinkimų turo rezultatas suveikė kaip išblaivinantis vėjo gūsis, parodęs jaunimui ir didmiesčių gyventojams, kad sovietžmogiai ir jų mylimas Viktoras “Agurkichas” niekur nedingo (delfi.lt);*

11. *Agurkichas jau senai cypeje sedėti turejo, o tas spektaklis tegul eina jai jam Maskvos pinigų negaila. Cia jau kaip Meksikieciu serealas ar Santa Barbara kaz kokia. 55978 serija, pasilikite musu kanale...(greitas.eu).*

It should be noted that the resulting blend can serve as a further input space for a more complex blend (the established Agurkich blend that has been enhanced by the printed and on-line media can generate further blends), or in terms of splinter analysis the blend can

² The blend was first used on Lithuanian TV, in a political satire “Dvyračio zynios” (started in 1995).

grow into a construction containing three splinters. Consider the following commentary where ‘rusagurkichas’ is derived from the inputs of rusas (**Russian**), **agurkas** (cucumber), and Uspaskich:

12. *rusagurkichas nebesigaudo kur randasi maskvoj ar lietuvoj. (delfi.lt).*

Here the mention of the Russian nationality alludes to Uspaskich’s Soviet world outlook, and a possibility of his relations with Russia. The blend so common in articles comments 5–4 years ago, now is hardly detectable in printed articles or comments, though still widely used in everyday communication. Its scarcity in written discourse coincides with the end of the politician’s active career in politics.

The same pattern of blending is traced in the address to the MP A. Salamakinas as ‘Salamakakinas’³ (Salamakinas and makaka (macaque)) both in the headline and in the article commentaries:

13. *Kubilas, Salamakakinas, Blinkė, Brazas ir kiti (delfi.lt).*

Assumingly, the reference to the Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius as Kubilas (tub) in the headline above also represents the blending of an atypical pattern that leads to the shortening of the word as the constituent elements of both splinters overlap completely (**Kubilius** and **kubilas** (tub)). Irony is felt in paralleling the PM with an empty tub implying the lack of brain. The etymological overlap can as well be traced in the references to Vėsaitė, where the first part of her surname **Vės-** coincides with the adjective ‘**vėsus**’ (cool) and leads to a ridiculing reference of *Atvėsaitė* (cooled down).

3. Proper/common names/splinter ‘-oid’

Another pattern of blending at the morphological/lexical level encompasses the splinters of proper or common names adding a regular suffix ‘-oid’ (Gr. *eidos* – shape), which can be regarded as a splinter of droid (a word built by Aaron Allston to refer to robots in his ‘*Star Wars*’ series). Droid is viewed as a robot, especially one made with some physical resemblance to a human being. The same item droid, can be explained not only using phenomena of modern pop culture, but also looking at the etymology and strategies of word formation in Greek, Latin, and English: the results are loan words or borrowings in Lithuanian. In this special case, droid comes from Greek *anthropos* (‘human being’), then a loanword in Latin *andro* extended with the suffix -oid; *android* (‘in shape or manner of a human being’), later a loanword in English, and at last the first syllable was deleted to get *droid* (‘loss of human characteristics’) to use it as a name of robots.

Consequently, in blends the mental input space of the splinter ‘-oid’ (droid) carries not only the informative but also evaluative load, and the proper name that is blended with the latter mental space takes the characteristics of having no potential for independent thought.

Consequently, the blends *paksoidai, asilodroidai, kolabordroidai, kubiloidai, kubilodroidai*, etc. generate the emergent meaning of the followers of a certain political power

³ This blend as well was first used on Lithuanian TV, in a political satire “Dvyracio zynios” (started in 1995).

unable to think independently and deserving to be ridiculed as in the article written by Eduardas Eigirdas:

14. *E.Eigirdas. Ar įmanoma perdiegti **kolabordroidus**?(delfi.lt).*

The same ridiculing and downgrading function is retained in the article commentaries of various websites, among which a few could serve as illustrations of phonetic-phonological similarity grounding in a common etymology, and a diversity of spelling varieties:

15. ***kubiloidas** tvirtino:pasitiki jis mentai-vagimis..... (15min.lt);*

16. *Juokingas tas **Kubiloidas** ir kaip jį reketuoja D. Grybauskaitė (criticisnoflife.com);*

17. ***Kubiloidas** yra **kubiloidas**, kaip pasake taip ir bus, Nu ir kas, kad svajones ar pasakeles, kad ekonomistai kitaip sako, **kubiliodui** atrodo kitaip (ziniur.lt).*

Phonetic-phonological similarity also serves as a basis for *Atvėsaitė*, where the verb 'atvėsti' (to cool) is blended with the surname of the politician Birutė Vėsaitė.

An interesting case of a double rhyming blending can be observed when both the name and the surname of a politician are blended with the same splinter, as when referring to the PM Andrius Kubilius in the following commentary:

18. ***Androidas kubiloidas** (las-venturas.lt).*

However, it should be mentioned that such double blends are not frequent (the total of 3 rhymes in 362 blends were identified during the period of research).

4. Proper name / splinters ' -istas/-inis '

Another case of a similar pattern exploits a Lithuanian derivative suffix (or, in terms of cognitive linguistics, splinter) ' -istas ', which regularly operates in word formation to indicate the affiliation to an important political movement, as, for instance, in the cases of 'komunistas' (Communist), 'socialistas' (Socialist), 'marksistas' (Marxist), 'fašistas' (Fascist), etc. Here, this kind of affixation can be treated as blending due to the fact that the emergent meaning which is not present in either of the input spaces is created. A deliberate elevation of a proper name splinter to the category of a global movement results in a humorous effect (emergent structure) as this is an evident case of an inappropriate overestimation. Here the word part ' -istas ' is treated as a splinter, not as a regular suffix, relying on the fact that the resulting blend exhibits a clear emergent structure of ridicule/criticism, which is not typical in the cases of word formation by mere suffixation (i.e. 'Communist' – gives an idea of a person belonging to the movement, while 'viktorist' simultaneously generates the evaluative (downgrading) emergent structure).

Therefore, the blends *vagnoristai*, *paksistai*, *viktoristas*, and *zuokistas* through the pretended status elevation are, actually, the cases of irony. Consider the following example:

19. *Vuon kremlin **paxsistai ir viktoristai** (lrytas.lt).*

Similarly, the derivative suffix ' -inis ', in Standard Lithuanian employed to build adjectives, is used atypically in the blends of politicized discourse. The suffix ' -inis ' in colloquial

language is employed to refer to different criminal formations and gangs like *tulpiniai*, *daškiniai*, etc. and in politicized discourse this particular mental space is evoked and activated in the process of conceptual blending, the emergent meaning of the blend comes as a result of blending as it is not inherent in any of the inputs. Consequently, the references to the members of certain political parties by calling them ‘brazauskiniai’, ‘karbauskiniai’, ‘karbowskiiniai’, ‘liandzberginiai’, ‘lanzbergyniai’, ‘valinskiniai’ (ironic allusions to the former president Algirdas Brazauskas and leaders of different political parties) ‘patvoriniai’ (ironic allusion to the supporters of the political leader Neringa Venckienė, who used to gather at the fence (Lith. ‘patvoryje’) of her house, ‘garliaviniai’ (ironic allusion to the supporters of the political leader Venckienė, who lives in Garliava), ridicules their political beliefs and facilitates the implication of possible criminal activities, i.e. it is not the political beliefs that are emphasised, but the downgrading of the status of a political power to the level of a disorganised gang.

5. Proper name / divergent irregular elements (graphological code switching)

A large number of humorous blends were found to contain a ‘foreign’ element that indicates not only the process of conceptual blending but also the cases of code switching. An authority in the field of communication studies, Giles (2007) tries to explain the cognitive reasons for code switching, and posits that a person seeks either to emphasize or to minimize the social differences between himself/herself and the other person in a conversation. This leads to the conclusion that while blending the names of politicians with ‘foreign’ elements in the processes of creative play on words, the speaker aims at creating or maintaining the distance between ‘them’ (the hostile political powers) and ‘us’ (the honest citizens). It should be mentioned that though ‘foreign’ elements are especially rare in news headlines, they are the most frequent cases of blending detected in article commentaries. Such references as *Qubilistanas*, *paxsistai*, *TamPaxas*, *WCkiene*, *qubilas*, *qubilistanas*, *b’bilius*, *q’Bilius*, *Karbowski*, etc. have been found. Consider the commentaries below:

20. *Bet šiaip, įdomu: Landsbergis atėjęs kolūkius sugriovė (o kam nauda?), q’Bilius – visą Šalį nuvarė (o oligarchai - klesti; jiems nuo kainos padidėjimo juk VISI 80% tenka!), taip kad – KAM tai naudinga? Kuri ten ‘partija’ turi teroristinės organizacijos bruožų, kieno naudai ji dirba? (www.ziniur.lt);*

21. *Pagaliau TamPaxas parodė tikrą savo veidą. O visi runkeliai kurie balsavo už šį parsidavėlį ir jo “partiją” su idiotu mazuronių likot apšikti ir aptapšnoti :))) (vz.lt).*

The blends involve a foreign element, which in the nomination performs an undermining and distancing function. The Lithuanian alphabet does not contain the letters ‘q’, ‘x’, or ‘w’, so their deliberate use in the nomination widens the gap between ‘us’ and the nominee (implying that he is not one of us, or he is not affiliated to the group). Here irony can be seen as humiliating as in many cases these are not only the foreign letters but mainly foreign words or abbreviations, as WC in the reference to Venckienė, or Tampax (a brand name of tampons) in the reference to the political leader Rolandas Paksas.

A similar function (to create ridicule and distance) is performed by a non-standard suffixation in the formation of toponyms, i.e. Lithuanian toponyms are formed with the suffixes that are typical of foreign languages ('-stan' like in *Uzbekistan*, *Kazakhstan*, etc., and '-grad' (derived from the Russian 'gorod' = city) as in *Novograd*, *Petrograd*, etc).

22. P.Saudargas. „**Zuokograde**“ vaikai nepageidaujami (delfi.lt);

23. **Qubilstano** vyriausybė pngali sau leisti, kad ją vertintų, kaip Zulusija, mat mes dar nepasiekiam Zulusų karalystės... (delfi.lt).

A further case of untypical blending is related to deliberate transformations of regular words into well recognizable nonce-words which provoke humour, simultaneously pointing at the victim of this humour or irony. They stand for the most extreme kind of truncation that a component of a blend can undergo, i.e. reduction to just one sound (or letter), usually the first. The case has been most widely observed in the discourse related to Darbo (Labour) Party and its leader, as is seen in the headline below:

24. Rinkimuose pirmaujanti Pravieniškių koalicija generuos skurdo **ikanomiką** (delfi.lt).

The interlocutor instantly notices the blend based on the phonological features: ekonomika + /i/ (the initial sound of Russian pronunciation of the word 'ikanomika' (economics), and presents a case of a cross-linguistic blending with splinters coming from different languages. It serves to ridicule the linguistic incompetence of the speaker (his Russian accent) and provides implications based on the functions of status downgrading and distancing. The ridicule at linguistic incompetence can be traced in the commentaries as well, when an extensive text is written by imitating the Russian accent, or as in the commentary below as a parody of Yiddish pronunciation:

25. Daugelis komentru net nesuvokia kas **ira Litovos Tijsmi**. Daugelis komentaru nebuvo susidure ir neturejo reikalų su **Litovos Tijsmis**. O gaila. (delfi.lt).

Here the deliberate 'mistakes' of pronunciation do not hamper the comprehension of the intended meaning; on the contrary, they facilitate the necessary implications and the evaluative aspect. The cross-linguistic blending of splinters can as well be motivated by the intention to ridicule the incompetence or ignorance as in *Coolvesaite* (after the politician Birute **Vėsaitė** opened her Facebook account with the name of *Birute Coolness* (cool = **vėsus**)), or the intention to communicate implicitly the evaluative attitude related to the current political issues as in *BalCHEATis* (in the post-electoral period promoting the opinion that cheating is an innate feature of the politician Zigmantas Balcytis).

6. Party name/common name pattern

Blends giving references to the main political parties in Lithuania follow the same pattern: two separate splinters, coming respectively from a party's name and a common noun, are joined to produce a reference that carries an undermining humorous attitude towards a certain political party.

Konservatoriai (the Conservatives) are turned into *Koncervatnykai*: **Konservatoriai/Koncervai + vatnykai** (here a phonetic-phonological similarity between *Konservatoriai* (conservatives) and *koncervai* (tinned food) was a primary blend that was further developed by adding a splinter *vatnykai* (a derogative term used to refer to those who support the politics of Russia).

Socdemai (the Social Democrats) are turned into *Ciocdemai*: **Socdemai + ciocé**, which is also a blend based on the phonetic-phonological similarity between the words ‘social’ and ‘ciocé’ (a derogative reference to a sneaky nosy woman).

Liberalai (the Liberals) are turned into *Liberastai*: **Liberalai + pederastai** (a derogative reference to pedophiles and gays), which is a blend that was first used in Russia by Ilya Smirnov in 1992 to give a derogative reference to the western society and culture (Saulius Stoma 2008). The blend being popular in Russia, has also become a catch-word in Lithuanian discourse.

Valstiečių partija (The Party of Peasants) into *Pezantai*, which can be regarded both as a Lithuanian adaptation of an English variant, and as a blend of *valstiečiai/peasants + pežėti*, as the colloquial verb ‘pežėti’ (to speak nonsense) has an obvious phonological similarity to the English equivalent of the party’s name.

According to Gries (2004), blending is a frequent and one of the most productive word-formation processes. It is a conscious process that defies the characterization by hard-and-fast productive morphological rules, and, according to Bakaradze (2010), follows one form of verbal economy law—the ‘principle of the least effort’, i.e. by employing humorous blends in discourse the speakers communicate their evaluative attitudes in a clear, amusing, and economical way.

Conclusions

The findings of the research support the major claims of Fauconnier and Turner (2002) who argue that creativity is the essential factor in blending. The morphological blending effectively demonstrates successful attempts at lexical creativity. Nevertheless, all of the above discussed blends can be referred to as nonce words in politicized discourse; they are related to a certain period in politics and cannot be expected to show a tendency of their long-term usage. Even more, they can be referred to as short-term formations, the meaning of which is accessible only for a short time since with the loss of the common knowledge of a particular situation/phenomenon/political figures the meaning of the blend might become incomprehensible.

In Lithuanian political discourse the major part of splinters that are employed for humorous purposes in conceptual blending are related to proper names. All the above cases of conceptual blending at the lexical/morphological level are found in the blends with the emergent humorous/ironic element, where the ridicule aimed at politicians functions as a means of an acute criticism and status downgrading, and therefore sometimes may be seen as vulgar and inappropriate humour.

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Summary

In this paper, humour is analysed on the basis of the Theory of Conceptual Blending developed by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (2002). When analysing Lithuanian politicized discourse during and after the period of elections (2012, 2016) it was discovered that the majority of political events and personalities were given an evaluative implicit assessment through humour/irony, which can be seen as an emergent result of blending processes. In the paper, the tendency to ridicule politicians and political events on news websites is discussed focusing exceptionally on the processes of blending at the lexical level. The research reveals that the coinage of new lexical units by fusing at least two source words or splinters follows certain patterns. The cases of proper noun splinters blended with other proper or common noun splinters, the usage of divergent irregular elements, graphological or phonological aspects of irregular spelling in blends, and other characteristics are discussed. The structural analysis of humorous blends is based on the works of Anita Lehrer (2007), Michael Kelly (1998), Stefan Gries (2004), and Ekaterine Bakaradze (2010), yet some specific

patterns peculiar to Lithuanian politicized discourse have been distinguished. The main claims of the paper are supported by a variety of blending cases collected from on-line news websites, i.e. 362 blends in the headlines and comments of *delfi.lt*, *lrytas.lt*, and blogs, during the period of 2012–2016. The analysis of the collected data shows that the lexical/morphological blending is an effective tool of lexical creativity. All of the discussed blends can be referred to as nonce words in politicized discourse; they are related to a certain period in politics and cannot be expected to show a tendency of their long-term usage. However, as seen in the analysis some have been employed excessively throughout the period of four years. However, their usage and meaning should be seen as an integral part of an evaluative politicized discourse of a certain period since with the loss of the common knowledge of a particular situation/phenomenon/political figures the meaning of the blend might become incomprehensible.

KEY WORDS: cognitive linguistics, conceptual blending, humour, irony, splinters.

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HUMORISTINIAI POLITIZUOTO DISKURSO ASPEKTAI KONCEPTUALIOJO BLENDINGO ASPEKTU

Santrauka

Straipsnyje siekiama aptarti humoristinius politizuoto diskurso aspektus remiantis moksliniu konceptualiojo blendingo mechanizmo modeliu (sukurtu M. Turner ir G. Fauconnier). Tiriant politizuotą Lietuvos diskursą prieš ir porinkiminiu laikotarpiu Lietuvoje, pastebima, jog tiek patys įvykiai, tiek juose dalyvaujantys politikai dažnai yra implikatyviai vertinami juos pajuokiant. Straipsnyje daroma prielaida, kad ironija, ar humoras apskritai, neretai yra konceptualiojo blendingo rezultatas. Nors pripažįstama, jog tokie okazionalieji dariniai neturi (ar retai turi) potencialą įgyti neologizmų statusą ir įeiti į kalbos žodyną, visgi humoristiniai blendai neabetinai yra neatsiejama lingvistinio Lietuvos politikos peizažo dalis leidžianti giliau pažinti tiek socialinius, tiek kognityvius procesus mūsų kalboje. Tyrimo laukas straipsnyje susiaurinamas apsiribojant morfologinio lygmens tyrimu, aptariant mentalinių įvesties erdvių ir struktūrinių mechanizmų įvairovę, bei pasiūlant įžvalgas apie morfologinio lygmens konceptualiojo blendingo tendencijas. Atliekant analizę remiamasi A. Lehrer, S. T. Gries, M. Kelly, E. Bakaradze moksliniais tyrimais, tačiau pastebima, jog humoristinis Lietuvos diskursas morfologiniame lygmenyje vadovaujasi ir tokiomis konceptualiojo blendingo struktūromis, kurios nėra aptariamoms minėtųjų mokslininkų darbuose. Tai, pirmiausia, galėtų būti siejama su tuo, jog pajuokiantiems, vertinamąjį požiūrį išreiškiantiems blendams skirtų tyrimų mokslinėje literatūroje nėra. Tačiau reikia pastebėti ir tai, jog mūsų kalboje vykstantys konceptualieji procesai yra įtakojami ir mūsų specifinės kalbinės aplinkos (pvz., siekiant pajuokti nepopuliarų rusakalbį politiką į konceptualiąją struktūrą gali būti įvedami elementai turintys fonologinių rusų kalbos bruožų). Straipsnyje pabrėžiamas konceptualiojo blendingo procesams būdingas kūrybiškumas, o tyrimo įžvalgos ir keliamos idėjos grindžiamos gausiais pavyzdžiais iš populiarių žiniatinklų (*delfi.lt*, *lrytas.lt*, ir kt.) antraščių, straipsnių ir komentarų.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: kognityvinė lingvistika, konceptualusis blendingas, humoras, ironija.

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