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## PARAMETERS OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN OXYMORON AND CATACHRESIS IN RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH

Submission Date: June 05, 2023, Accepted Date: June 10, 2023,

Published Date: June 15, 2023

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ajps/Volume03Issue06-08>

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### ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the study of the correlation of extraordinary stylistic figures in Russian and English: oxymoron and catachresis. In modern linguistics, the communicative function of language and speech has become a very important problem. Because of this, stylistic methods and figures are increasingly popular among modern linguists. Many different works are devoted to oxymoron and catachresis, which indicates the interest of researchers in these phenomena. Oxymoron is referred to different stylistic categories as paradox, irony and catachresis. Some researchers also believe that oxymoron is one of the varieties of paradox.

A great number of researchers think that catachresis and oxymoron are very similar in terms of structure and semantics. Indeed, some even attribute the oxymoron to catachresis. Although the former is based on a combination of contrasting words, the latter is based on a combination of words of distant concepts. The article will attempt to find similar and distinctive features of the two figures of speech.

### KEYWORDS

Oxymoron, catachresis, trope, figure of speech, contradiction.

### INTRODUCTION

Many works consider oxymoron as a stylistic figure of speech, which is produced by combining two contrasting words. For example, cheerfully depressed, merry sadness, cold fire. Not a few writers give their preference to this particular figure. For example, Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" is full of colorful oxymorons of various kinds. "Loving hate. Anything of nothing first create." With these lines, the writer means 'to hate someone and love at the same time'. Traditionally, an oxymoron implies a stylistic phenomenon based on a combination of two lexical units that contradict each other. According to Professor Flayih, an oxymoron is a figure of speech in which opposite or contradictory words, terms, phrases or ideas work together to create a rhetorical effect in a paradoxical way. For example, "despairing hope, tender cruelty, glad mourning and sad joy" (Flayih, 2009).

Oxymoron consists of words of opposite meanings in various parts of speech, including both heterogeneous ("remember forgetting that" (Clara Barton)) and single-root words ("faith unfaithful" (Alfred, Lord Tennyson)), as well as associative opposite words ("Of melancholy merriment." (Lord Byron)). This feature distinguishes oxymoron from the usual antonymic figures and the stylistic figure of contradiction in particular. The presence of antonyms in a contrasting opposition is not always necessary, and the words

involved in this opposition are not necessarily antonyms (Glukhikh, 1995).

Based on this, we can say that oxymoron is not just an antonymous pair of words, but a special stylistic device that combines opposite concepts and creates a new, dialectically complex concept. Unlike antithesis, oxymoron creates something new and maintains a logical connection between its components. In addition, an oxymoron is a cultural and psychological phenomenon that overcomes a real contradiction through language, causing a momentary shock in the mind, which is accustomed to clichés and ordinary language constructions [Kagarlitsky, 1990]. In this sense, an oxymoron acts as a way to change our vision of the world and to have an exciting effect on the reader or listener. Moreover, the connection of oxymoron with such concepts as paradox, irony, contrast, absurdity is quite natural.

However, the question arises about the logic and paradoxical nature of the oxymoron. According to the literary encyclopedia, oxymoron is a type of paradox. R. Lachmann interprets oxymoron as something identical and opposite to itself, combining two mutually exclusive definitions [Lakhman, 1997]. However, the analysis shows that the illogicality and paradoxical nature of the oxymoron is conditional and ephemeral.

In fact, an oxymoron expresses the complex essence of a single whole, denoted not by opposite components. The formal and logical-semantic dual unity and at the same time the integrity of the oxymoron make it an extraordinary and individual stylistic device. An oxymoron is always catchy and non-standard, bringing a completely new perspective on phenomena to the presented world and scale.

Akhmanova defines catachresis as an “incorrect” use of a word or expression, “... which incorrectly explains the intended meaning...” (Akhmanova, 2001):

"The new CEO's strategy of leading from behind was met with skepticism by the board of directors." (Kim, & Mauborgne, 2005). This example refers to setting a strategy without being responsible for making decisions.

There are different interpretations of catachresis. It usually refers to stylistic devices, also called tropes or figures of speech. Catachresis, like many other figures, suffers from chaos in the terminology of stylistics. This disorder manifests itself in different terms used to denote the same technique, or, conversely, in a single term to denote different techniques. For researchers and readers of dictionaries, this presents great difficulties when several different speech phenomena belong to the same category of classification. (Skovorodnikov, 2004).

To include catachresis as a stylistic (rhetorical) figure, we have used definitions from several sources. They emphasize the figurative aspect of this rhetorical figure. According to the authors, catachresis is used to denote an idea that does not have its own word, so the word takes on a figurative meaning. "Catachresis is a figure of speech that is often considered a mistake, but in fact it is a deliberate and effective device used by skilled writers to achieve specific rhetorical effects." (Morgan, 2016)

The basic concepts of linguistic stylistics are "stylistic device", "syntactic figure" and "tropes". Many researchers have noted that it is necessary to clearly distinguish between these concepts, and even attempted to make such a distinction. Let's summarize the characteristics of an oxymoron and analyze them in order to determine the general and distinctive features of this stylistic figure of speech compared to catachresis.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

As mentioned above, oxymoron and catachresis have been of interest among many researchers for quite some time.

The greatest number of affecting works was found in dissertations and monographs of Russian researchers, such as G. Kopnin, and F. Artyomova, N. Pavlovich, E. T. Bochina, V. Ovsyannikov. Leading researchers G. Kuregyan, E. Shestakova L. Tatanova touch upon

oxymoron, emphasizing the linguo-stylistic interpretation and the antonymic correlation of this topic with other stylistic means. Also, E. Atayeva and G. Kuregyan devoted the topic to structural and semantic classification. All works are inherently different from each other and carry useful discoveries of the author. The work carried out by the Uzbek linguist V. Kamoliddinova, based on methodological and semantic features, also developed this topic deeper. Oxymoron and catachresis were also mentioned in the works of foreign researchers such as R. Gibbs and L. Kearney, D. Leach, K. Krippendorf, J. Shen, M. Flyich. The works of foreign writers focus more on linguo-stylistic interpretation and structural classification.

### MATERIAL AND RESEARCH METHODS

The article will use a number of methods of linguistic analysis, including the traditional descriptive method, the method of contextual analysis, the comparative method, the method of conceptual integration and cultural analysis in order to study oxymoron and catachresis. These methods will be used to gain a full understanding of the complexities of oxymoron and catachresis of their meaning. By combining these methods, the article aims to provide a multifaceted and in-depth analysis of stylistic figures.

There are two understandings of oxymoron: traditional (narrow) and wide. In the traditional sense, an oxymoron is a combination of words expressing

opposite and contradictory concepts, based on the use of antonyms proper. Some scholars view the oxymoron as a figure, others as a trope. At present, the problem of distinguishing between a path and a figure has not been fully resolved. In the Dictionary of Literary Terms, edited by L.I. Timofeev and S.V. Turaev, an oxymoron is described as an artistic trope that creates a new semantic quality, combining definitions and concepts that are opposite in meaning (Timofeeva; Turaeva, 1974).

It is important to use an oxymoron with full understanding. This will help to better understand the nature of the original images that contradict each other, as well as determine the place and meaning of the oxymoron among other stylistic figures and tropes. The definition of an oxymoron as “a stylistic figure that combines not only two contrasting, but also contradictory semantic words ...” (Stylistic Encyclopedic Dictionary of the RY, 2003) is the most common. The principle of a hidden ornament is used in an oxymoron, where one of its elements leads to another, and pairing and symmetry are mandatory features. This refers to the semantic or even syntactic ornament, and not to the sound.

Let us dwell in more detail on the meaning of oxymoron, which is associated with opposites. Opposites intertwined within the framework of an oxymoron cannot exist separately from each other, otherwise the contrast of the figure will be lost. They

not only mirror each other, but are strongly connected to each other. One image is hidden inside another. Between them there is a "sliding" value that moves between both poles - positive and negative. As R. Lachmann said, this doubled figure, or double-figure, is characterized by aggressiveness and a connecting point that connects two phenomena that are directly opposite to each other (Lachmann, 1997).

A significant difference between catachresis and oxymoron is that an oxymoron is built on the use of opposing units, while catachresis consists of words that do not combine.

Combinations of words that contradict each other are not considered errors in the language, but are an opportunity to reveal the hidden possibilities of language forms. Such phrases as "grimly gay", "honour rooted in dishonor", "faith unfaithful", "falsely true" do not violate the logical connection between words, since they reflect the real relationship between objects and their features and are used as units of secondary nomination.

The logical-semantic law of disjunction regulates the understanding of attributive oxymoron combinations, where one of the contradictory features is subject to the combined semantics of the combinations, restoring its logical balance (Shishkina, 1991). An oxymoron is similar to an epithet in its linguistic nature, paying attention to certain features of what is being

described and expressing the subjective attitude of the author. But unlike the epithet, which concretizes the signs of an object or phenomenon, an oxymoron also opens up contradictions in objective reality. Oxymoron continues to be a separate stylistic device, being an attributive phrase.

Both figures, catachresis and oxymoron, are based on the stylistic technique of combining incompatible concepts, which allows expressing some aspects of the depicted subject. When forming a catachresis figure, the opposite sides of the object are combined in one phrase, and when using an oxymoron, the illogical or antonymic characteristic of one aspect of the object hits the eye, due to which both components of the figure become connected and mutually related as the main component and dependent components, respectively. For example, in the case of the phrase "magnificent catastrophe", the combination of words connects opposite concepts, which makes it an example of an oxymoron. Also, an oxymoron can include objectively existing characteristics and serve for their subjective assessment. As Khazagerov notes, an oxymoron is a complex figure of speech, consisting of the main and auxiliary parts, which are connected by subordination relations (Khazagerov, 1984). The main part of the figure compares two concepts, covering both similarities and differences, and the auxiliary part indicates contrasting features and is externally

connected with the main part, although it conflicts with it.

An oxymoron consists of words of opposite meanings in various parts of speech, including both heterogeneous (“remember forgetting that” (Clara Barton)) and single-root words (“faith unfaithful” (Alfred, Lord Tennyson)), as well as associative opposite words (“Of melancholy fun.” (Lord Byron)). This feature distinguishes the oxymoron from the usual antonymic figures and the stylistic figure of contradiction in particular. The presence of antonyms in a contrasting opposition is not always necessary, and the words involved in this opposition are not necessarily antonyms.

Based on this, we can say that an oxymoron is not just an antonymous pair of words, but a special stylistic device that combines opposite concepts and creates a new, dialectically complex concept. Unlike antithesis, oxymoron creates something new and maintains a logical connection between its components. In addition, an oxymoron is a cultural and psychological phenomenon that overcomes a real contradiction through language, causing a momentary shock in the mind, which is accustomed to clichés and ordinary language constructions. In this sense, an oxymoron acts as a way to change our vision of the world and to have an exciting effect on the reader or listener. Moreover, the connection of oxymoron with such

concepts as paradox, irony, contrast, absurdity is quite natural.

An oxymoron, like many stylistic figures, has many meanings, which are usually grouped together. The significance of the oxymoron syntagma depends on the context, and the opposition in the context plays a major role in the normative perception of this group of combinations (Pavlovich, 1982). The context fixes the presence of the effect of incompatibility of semantic features and contains a description of the conditions under which it can be eliminated.

We are dealing with an oxymoron form, which is a formal expression of an oxymoron, but its semantics does not imply opposition and interaction of opposites, which does not give a new reflection of the phenomenon (Shestakova, 1994).

When analyzing oxymorons, it is necessary to take into account the broad context and emotional and expressive mood of the poem. The oxymoronic form is close to irony, metaphor, euphemism and allegory, and the appearance of the oxymoronic form is due to the same reasons as the proximity of oxymorons to irony, i.e. the desire to use a phenomenon that causes a need, but does not violate a predetermined being.

As for catachresis, the meaning conveyed by catachresis depends on the personal perception of the reader and can be understood without any context. "The heavy silence pressed down on us like a weight".

Silence is neither heavy nor light. This example of catachresis is similar to an oxymoron in that the components of the phrase "heavy silence" are incompatible, at the same time there is no contrast in the combination of words, which distinguishes catachresis from an oxymoron.

Catachresis, in turn, is interpreted in different ways. Some call it a trope, a figure of speech, or a kind of metaphor. "Catachresis is an extreme form of metaphor which uses an analogy that is so far-fetched and stretched that its literal meaning is totally distorted" (Harris, 2014). "She swam through the treacle of life" - This metaphorical expression is a catachresis, as life cannot literally be like treacle (a type of syrup). "The ambition to corporatize environmental activism has led to a form of greenwashing that obscures the true nature of environmental problems." In this example, "greenwashing" is used as a catachresis to describe the act of environmental hiding problems under a guise of corporate social responsibility.

Quintilian was the first to note the importance of distinguishing between catachresis and metaphor, since where there was no name at all, catachresis is applicable, and metaphor replaces one name with another. Catachresis fills in gaps in the dictionary using new meanings for old words. Some consider catachresis an abuse, but it can become a linguistic metaphor that is habitually used in speech. Metaphor,

on the other hand, transfers meaning from the named to the named, and catachresis if from the named to the completely devoid of a name (Freindberg, 1996).

Metaphors can wear off and become new meanings for old words, as their repeated use can create a catachresis. For example, the word "legs" in the expression "table legs" became the new meaning of the word "legs" as it was reused and worn out over time. However, some scholars see the use of obsolete metaphors as a sign of poor language and irrelevance, as it can lead to stylistic sloppiness. In addition, some scholars consider the use of obsolete metaphors to be comical and a vice of language (Molino 1979; Bally 1961; Gvozdev 1955).

We use M. Riffater's definition of a stylistic context, according to which it is a segment of a literary text disturbed by an element that is unexpected for a given context and creates a stylistic effect (Riffaterre, 1960). Riffater defines stylistic context through properties such as inseparability from a stylistic device, the ability to become the norm for other devices, and variability. He distinguishes between micro and macro contexts, which depend on the external or internal attitude to the stylistic device. Macro context can enhance or weaken the stylistic effect.

"Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,  
/ That I shall say good night till it be morrow"

This oxymoron combines two opposite concepts - "sweetness" and "sadness". In the context of the play, Romeo and Juliet love each other, but their love is impossible due to the feud between their families. Before parting, they talk about their love and how hard it will be for them to part. Romeo says: "Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow, / That I shall say good night till it be morrow" morning will not come."

In this context, "sweet sorrow" reflects the conflicting feelings of love and sadness that Romeo and Juliet experience when they part. The oxymoron enhances this contrast between the two concepts and helps to convey the complexity and contradictory feelings of the characters in the play.

Oxymoronic expressions always have a justification in the context or are explained further in the text. The task of the context is to facilitate the perception of unusual constructions, such as oxymorons, by combining them with actions and design. The context creates an emotional-semantic background that helps the reader understand the appearance of unusual expressions. The context also determines exactly which meanings are combined in an oxymoron and which alternatives are used in a given text.

## RESULTS

In the light of above-mentioned catachresis and oxymoron have a similar feature - the union of lexemes

that at first glance seem to be incompatible in meaning. However, the difference between them lies in the fact that catachresis does not contrast, and oxymoron contrasts the compared phenomena.

Word combinations that make up statements usually play the role of characterizing elements, often acting as a predicate.

The context plays a decisive role in revealing the semantics of an oxymoron, including its emotional-evaluative aspect, while the meaning of catachresis often depends on the reader's personal experience and the associations evoked.

The commonality of oxymoron and catachresis is expressed in the fact that they are both aimed at depicting unusualness and exclusivity, combining in the text what is incompatible in life.

Features of combinations of oxymorons, which are characterized by incompatibility of components in terms of the level of lexical semantics, determine their stylistic meaning and possible applications in the text, which convey the information invested by the author in such a stylistic device and cause a psychological reaction in the reader. An oxymoron is often used in poetry to describe human feelings, as it allows one to express the complexity and inconsistency of these states (Schuplyakova, 1995). The main function of an oxymoron is to convey the author's assessment or attitude towards the described object. He vividly and



briefly expresses the unusual or exceptional state of a person or ironically evaluates the events described, while creating a semantic-stylistic focus of the depicted image. The use of an oxymoron allows us to present the described object from a new and unusual side, and its multi-layeredness additionally expresses the author's consciousness. They are necessary to create emotional depth and include elements of dialogue in a one-dimensional world (Shestakova, 1994).

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