

Book review

Prodanović Stankić, Diana (2023) *Multimodal Humour at Play: A Cultural Linguistics Perspective*. Novi Sad, Faculty of Philosophy.

The monograph *Multimodal Humour at Play. A Cultural Linguistic Perspective* by Diana Prodanović Stankić contributes to an important field of humour research and its relations to discourse, translation and education studies. This relation is well reflected in the book structure containing opening remarks, four chapters, and concluding remarks.

As the author states in the “Opening remarks”, the book’s scope is “to view humour, as a specific type of language use in the social and cultural context and describe its main features both in the theoretical and applied sense” (p. 10). This general scope includes three interrelated goals: a) the deconstruction of the patterns multimodal humour is based on; b) the exploration of the potential of multimodal humour in social interactions; c) the analysis of applicability of the findings in the translation and education.

A very important point of the reviewed book is the outline of the ways language use, cognition and culture are interwoven and manifested in discourse from the perspective of Cultural Linguistics. The author is right in claiming that cultural conceptualisations and shared values of the particular speech community are related to the use of humour across different genres and languages.

Chapter 2 “Approaches to the study of humour in discourse” starts with an overview of various definitions of the concept *humour*. As the author argues, the definitions of this concept vary depending on the approach and level of generality. In the following paragraphs, functions of humour as well various taxonomies of humorous genres are analysed. This chapter also provides a detailed overview of linguistic humour theories and cognitive approaches to humour studies. These theoretical provisions are sufficiently clarified by specific examples.

Chapter 3 “Cultural conceptualisation of humour” reviews the theory and empirical research relating to cultural approaches to humour, and its interrelationship with language and cognition. This chapter contains a brief outline of the most relevant theoretical concepts related to theoretical and analytical tools of Cultural Linguistics. As the author claims, the cultural linguistic view on humour is based on schematisation and categorisation, and integrates the shared cultural conceptualisations underlying different forms of humour. These cultural conceptualisations are well applied to specific examples such as humorous videos, stand up comedies and memes, containing global and glocalised elements of humour, code-switching and language blending.

Chapter 4 “Humour in translation” deals with the relevance of humour translation for both Translation and Humour Studies. This chapter starts with the definition of the concept of *translation equivalence*, followed by a brief literature overview and some practical considerations of strategies and procedures used in humour translation. The core of this chapter is the statement that cultural conceptualisations can serve as a *tertium comparationis* in translating humour and they are based on the interplay of linguistic and cultural elements. This statement is well supported by the case study of English and Serbian translation of German satirical novel *Er ist wieder da*.

Chapter 5 “Humour in education” discusses the role of humour in education taking into account the pros and cons of humour usage in educational context, in general, and in teaching EFL, in particular. These advantages and challenges are analysed together with methodological and practical tools for developing the humour competence of EFL learners. As in the previous chapter, these theoretical and methodological foundations are exemplified by specific case studies. The author stresses the relevance of the context of teaching in higher education and provides the overview of useful resources to involve humour in the educational process. This might be useful for developing the so-called 21st century skills, which include humour competence and multiliteracy besides critical thinking, intercultural competence, team work, etc.

As author maintains in her “Concluding remarks”, the analysis of verbal and multimodal humour from the perspective of Cultural Linguistics can account for its universality and specificities in several ways: a) through the exploration of hybrid forms of multimodal humour combining different languages and relying on culture-specific elements; b) through discovering challenges of translating humour which is based not only on playing with language but on cultural elements as well; c) through examining the functions of humour in the educational process (teaching and learning), which depend on context and require intercultural competence.

On the whole, the monograph gives a positive impression of a coherent and well-structured study of one of the most relevant topics, i.e. humour, in particular multimodal humour. The reviewed book offers an optimal combination of theoretical and applied aspects and multi-dimensional view of multimodal humour research. This multi-dimensionality is well reflected in the reference list which includes more than 300 items. The rich empirical material based on Serbian, English and German together with the contrastive approach enables the comprehensive description of typical and recurring discursive patterns related to humour, as well as of cultural conceptualisations of it in the different speech communities.

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