

## **CARNIVAL FIGURE OF A FOOL-WISECRACKER IN THE MODERN LINGUISTIC CULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In the contemporary communicative socio-cultural space laughter and humor that take place in various spheres of human life play a significant role. They have already become part of our usual living and routine. The person is in the center of the comic which is not limited temporally or spatially. Modernity is reflected as a laughable reality, i.e., it acquires traits of carnivalization. Nowadays takes the form of a modern, long-lasting “carnival” without boundaries. It correlates with dialogism in the culture, the base of which is game. Carnivalization is a permanent, unlimited manifestation of the comic in the socio-cultural environment of today, extending to theater, circus, television, talk shows, mass media and Internet, workplace, home, family etc.

In carnivalization participants are in a direct dialogue not only with each other, but also share knowledge and experience with the world. The addressee is the carnival personality – a person who entertains. A wide nomination is the fool. But its exteriorisation is widespread: it includes professional and non-professional jokers, i.e., everyone who creates humor. The recipient in the carnival space is the audience as part of the linguocognitive society.

The main figure of carnivalization is a discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker. He leads the carnival process. A fool-wisecracker combines qualities of a fool as a person who makes a fool of his behavior – conscious recklessness, wit, cheerfulness; and a wisecracker as one who can mock, joke and make fun of others. A discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker has a special carnival worldview. His main purpose is to cheer the audience and create a comic, humorous effect. Thus, the carnival worldview of a discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker is the basis of dialogical relations and a way of influencing the addressee.

In the English-language carnival linguoculture to denote the concept of “fool” there is a lexeme *fool* (*weirdo*) known since 1275. It is borrowed from Old French *fol* “crazy” (modern French *fou*). The concept of *fool* came to the Old French language from Latin and had

several basic meanings: 1) a crazy, mentally ill person, an idiot; 2) a robber, a clown; 3) a skilled person who could handle black work on blacksmith bellows<sup>1</sup>.

Already in Old French ambivalence of this concept's meaning can be traced. It was determined by social, cultural and psychophysical characteristics of a fool. The word "fool" was included into English with meanings "clown" and "jester" only at the end of the fourteenth century.

Currently, the token *fool* is polysemantic and has a number of lexical variants. According to its lexical characteristics, it refers to high-frequency language tokens<sup>2</sup> with diffuse pragmatic potential and a variety of lexical and phraseological functionings. In our work, the notion of *fool* is considered in the space of the carnivalization of the present day, basing on the semantics distinguished by us: "to pretend," "to entertain," to "make jokes".

For the polysemant *fool* (*n*) central is an integral semen "foolery" that lies in the plane of perception of the personality in the world. The works of the English researchers S. Billington "A Social History of the Fool"<sup>3</sup>, E. Wellsford "The Fool: His Social and Literary History"<sup>4</sup>, and X. Davidson "The Hero as a Fool: The Northern Hamlet"<sup>5</sup> proves that semen "foolery" has been chosen correctly as the integral one. In these works, foolery is presented as a collective name for entertainment and exposure in medieval times<sup>67</sup>. It exists at the intersection of game, joke, wit, mockery and morality, criticism.

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<sup>1</sup> Vaan M. (2008) Etymological dictionary of Latin and the other Italic languages. Leiden, Boston: Brill.

<sup>2</sup> Crystal D. (1987) The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<sup>3</sup> Billington S. A. (1984) Social History of the Fool. London: The Harvester Press

<sup>4</sup> Welsford E. (1935) *The Fool: His Social and Literary History*. London: Faber and Faber.

<sup>5</sup> Davidson Hilda R. Ellis. (1984) The Hero as a Fool: The Northern Hamlet. The Hero in Tradition and Folklore. London: Folklore Society

<sup>6</sup> Otto B. (2008) *Duraki: Te, kogo slushayut koroli* [Fools: Those Kings Listen]. Saint Petersburg: Azbuka. (in Russian).

<sup>7</sup> Reed Cory A. (2015) The Ingenious Simpleton: Upending Imposed Ideologies through Brief Comic Theatre by Delia Méndez Montesinos. *Comparative Drama*, no. 49, pp. 101-104

All the values of the polysemant *fool* (*n*) are grouped by the radial-chain type which determines presence of the complete common semantic component and its extensions in the lexical structure of the concept.

Here are the most common lexical meanings (hereinafter referred to as “LM”) of the polysemant *fool* (*n*). They are built on the base of semantic interpretations from the most authoritative lexicographic sources of English<sup>8910</sup>: LM 1 – a stupid person; LM 2 – a person with a mental disorder; an idiot; LM 3 – a folklore fool who is a character of fairy tales; LM 4 – narrow meaning of *fool* (*n*) – a form of describing a person who performs acts for the sake of fun and must seem ridiculous to society due to his socio-professional position; LM 5 – narrow meaning of *fool* (*n*) – a professional clown who lives in a royal or noble household; LM 6 – relational meaning of *fool* (*n*) – a person who often entertains others and is derided; LM 7 – relational meaning of *fool* (*n*) – a person who criticizes order and surroundings, causing disagreement.

LM 1 and LM 2, which describe foolery as a negative quality, are not considered in this study because they do not correlate with its object, namely a carnival discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker.

LM 3 is a fiction manifestation of a fool’s figure in the carnival space. Folk fool is an object of mockery, but over time, mockery benefits him; thanks to his wit and temper, he finds his happiness by being smarter than he seems. But LM 3 is also excluded from nominations of *fool* (*n*) a carnival discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker, since modern real speech space is being explored.

Thus, a carnival discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker is represented by LM 4, LM 5, LM 6 and LM 7. These LMs are considered by scientists as various meanings related to a personality of a fool. However, they are a complex system of carnival communication of a carnival discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker with the world. A fool-wisecracker is a basic element of a carnival culture that seeks to entertain and make fun of others.

Based on the analysis of lexical-semantic meanings, a fool-wisecracker is a discursive personality with a non-standard carnival worldview. His basic feature is stupidity which takes forms of intellectual

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<sup>8</sup> Lexicon Publications (1993) New Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus of the English Language. New York: Lexicon Publications

<sup>9</sup> Longman Dictionary Online. Retrieved from: <http://www.ldoceonline.com/>

<sup>10</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Retrieved from: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/American>

comism, joke and mockery. A fool-wisecracker is a clown by his socio-professional position; a professional jester at court, a philosopher clown; a joker, a critic. These subspecies are divided by institutional parameter into socio-professional and non-professional spheres.

The socio-professional sphere (class, profession) of the carnival discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker combines: creation of a new image with an entertaining function, socialization of a person in a certain society – a social and professional status, demonstration of modesty, self-importance, influence and significance; use of brightness and variety in language. According to the analysis of direct vocabulary notions, the types of carnival discursive personalities of a fool-wisecracker corresponding to LM 4, LM 5 and LM 7 are the clown, the jester and the trickster.

In the non-professional sphere the behavior of the carnival discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker demonstrates unpretentiousness, high moral, simplicity, high appreciation of his own merits. It serves as a differential sign of cunning. LM 5 and LM 6 by direct vocabulary notions correspond to the categories – the buffoon and the trickster

### 1. Clown and jester

Peculiarities of the communicative behavior of the clown and the jester in the linguistic culture of the USA and Great Britain are determined by their social and professional spheres. Being a fool-wisecracker is their job, a certain professional duty, responsibility.

**I. Clown.** In modern communicative space, the clown is a circus, variety or theater actor. His main techniques to create humour are grotesque and buffoonery. The carnival personality of the clown is also determined by his physical qualities used during the play – balance, juggling, mimicry.

As a type of a fool-wisecracker, the clown's main task is to make fun of the audience he works with. The ways of its implementation are:

1) **Costume and external attributes.** Clowns activate linguosituative hyperbolization and grotesque in the carnival space: exaggeration of facial details and highlighting them in red, black (colouring of sad clowns (Auguste)<sup>11</sup>), white (colouring of cheerful

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<sup>11</sup> Schechter J. (2013) Popular theatre: A sourcebook. Great Britain: Routledge.

clowns (White clown)<sup>12</sup>) colors; tendency to choose clothes of a wrong size and tone; combination of too bright colors. Such a mixture of incompatible causes the recipient's reactio – laughter. The most notable clowns due to their colors and underlining exterior features are sad clowns: Albert Fratellini, Lou Jacobs, Greg and Karen DeSanto, Coco the Clown, and Charlie Rivel; fun clowns: Glenn “Frosty” Little, Joseph Grimaldi, George “G. L” (popularizer of Humpty Dumpty history), François Fratellini and Felix Adler.

**2) Caricature and grimace.** These characteristics of the clown implement techniques of linguistic situational stylization, demonstration of realities, mixing styles that lead to comic. For example, tramp or hobo clown stands out in the USA and UK. They play a role not just as a clown, but by their eccentric behavior they “clown” existence of certain layers of the population. The most popular role models for the English speaking space are the sportsman (Richard Martin “Rick” Hader), the baker (Peter Shub), the police officer (Harold Lloyd), the housewife (Barry Lubin) and the tramp (Avner Eisenberg “Avner the Eccentric”)<sup>13</sup>. These roles are chosen by clowns deliberately as they are the most social professions reflecting lives of ordinary Englishmen and Americans. The realities of these professions shown by clowns lead to absurd which results in paradox, contrast and a violation of the logics.

The ways that the clown refers to in displaying himself in a hypertrophied form and demonstrating an absurd image of the world to entertain the public, are summarized in the table (Table 1):

Table 1

**Basic techniques of the clown comism**

<b>Display</b>	<b>Language and stylistic devices</b>	
suit external attributes caricature grimace	hyperbolization grotesque realities mixture of styles	paradox contrast violation of the logics

Modern English-speaking clown space is characterized by variability in the use of the clown figure. These are: a) theatrical

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<sup>12</sup> Roberts J. (1991) Strutter's complete guide to clown makeup. London: Piccadilly Books.

<sup>13</sup> Praill A. (1998) The United Kingdom: A Modern Tradition. London: Darling Print

scaffolding, comedy-farce theaters where he plays himself: Druri Lane, Sandler's Wales<sup>14</sup>; b) stage shows: Clowning around, Friendly Clown; c) television shows (One day with Jim, Who is the Dumb?); d) stationary circuses (equestrian clowns, mimes, sad and cheerful clowns perform together) – Bozo, Cookie, Buttons, Rebo, Homer, Grock, Grandma, Weary Willie; e) Internet (circus clowns' blogs and vlogs, online clowns) – Tutti the Clown; Vanilla Swirl. The most widespread are clowns-mimes, monologue clowns (the spoken genre), musical clowns, carpet clowns that fill the gaps between theatrical performances.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, in the United States and the United Kingdom specific types of clowns are becoming more widespread:

- the **scary or evil clown** who is an embodiment of not only laughter but also horror. This clown is compared to a murderer, a demon, a Blue Beard, a thief. He is a negative character; his main weapon is black humor. He is eager not to make fun or improve the mood, but to scare, to hurt, to offend, to do harm. Negativity of this clown is also evident in its appearance: sharp lines on the face, use of poisonous colors, smug smile added to the makeup (Fig. 1). The role of the evil clown cannot be regarded as a kind of a fool-wisecracker because of incompatibility of their strategies and tactics with the latter. He is terrifying and is a complete antithesis of a fool-wisecracker.

- the **hospital clown or clown-doctor**. This type of clown is the main character in the hospital clown genre which was first identified in the USA as a way of creating laughing. Hospital clowning is a system of measures aimed at rehabilitation of patients undergoing hospital treatment with the help of clowning. Hospitals and wellness facilities are places of action for the hospital clown. Performers in the hospital clown genre can be both professional actors as well as amateurs who have undergone a special training to work with patients using humor, even doctors dressed in clown costumes (Fig. 2).

The main function realized by the hospital clown is **psychotherapeutic** function. The hospital clown communicates with the patient only in the key directed to positive emotions. He forms the setting of recovery for the future. Hospital clowning is directly applicable to patients who are already recovering and have a positive tendency in

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<sup>14</sup> Jewell P. (2005) Humour in Cognitive and Social Development: Creative Artists and Class Clowns. *International Education Journal*, vol. 2, no.6, p.200

treatment. The clown's actions are aimed at regularly assisting patients in coping with ongoing stress in the hospital at all stages of treatment<sup>15</sup>. In the non-verbal sphere comic play and pantomime are involved. In verbal, humor is expressed through language, stylistic and logic-speaking means (homonymy, repetition, shibboleth, polysemy, pun, allogism, etc.). To make patients interested and create an atmosphere of calm, the hospital clown uses humorous poems, humorous songs, jokes, anecdotes, limericks.



**Fig. 1. Scary or evil clown**



**Fig. 2. Hospital clown or clown-doctor**

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<sup>15</sup> Davidson Hilda R. Ellis. (1984) *The Hero as a Fool: The Northern Hamlet. The Hero in Tradition and Folklore*. London: Folklore Society

II. **Jester** is an actor with weird behavior, but in his jokes this comic discursive personality hides his true thoughts and experiences. Nowadays the jester performs as a stand-up comedian, humorist, monologue actor, satirist, parodist, etc. In his speeches he reflects funny moments of modern life, disadvantages of society. The jester ridicules others, especially those of a higher social status.

The main strategy used by the jester as the bearer of the comic element is to entertain the audience. His “stupidity” and disobedience are conscious. His misunderstanding and irrationality are artificial. The main tactic of the jester to implement his role as a fool-wisecracker in the carnival space is intellectual comism: he is a professional artist who is a part of everyday life – he combines roles of “entertainer” and “philosopher”. The jester presents the truth in a metaphorical, symbolic, veiled form. This truth is obvious to the public, but the latter prefer not to notice it because it is not to their benefit, it shows them in a bad focus.

The United States of America and the United Kingdom are two leading countries that have presented the largest number of jesters to the world<sup>16</sup>. There is a variety of their manifestations:

a) entertainment venues (cabarets, clubs, improvisation theaters) – Borscht Belt; Chitlin Circuit. The jester performs live in front of the public. His speeches are mostly satirical and sarcastic jokes, reprises and black humor;

b) comic theatre and television shows (The Wheeltappers, Shunters Social Club). The most striking manifestation is the stand-up comedy genre<sup>17</sup>, which now obtains the highest ratings on the USA and UK television. Comedian critic Brian Logan<sup>18</sup> states that since 2003, particularly during 2013-2016, there has been an “explosion” of stand-up comedy in the English-speaking countries. The proof of this is the increase in number of stand-up television programs: Stewart Lee’s Comedy Vehicle [BBC2 2009-], Live at the Apollo (BBC 1 2004-), Michael McIntyre’s Comedy Roadshow [BBC1 2009-] and Comedy Rocks with Jason Manford [ITV 2010-1; the growing number of

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<sup>16</sup> Nilsen A. P., Nilsen D. L. F. (2000) Encyclopedia of 20 th-century American Humor. Phoenix: Oryx Press

<sup>17</sup> Kothoff H. (2007) Oral genres of humor. *Pragmatics. Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)*, vol.2, no.17, pp. 263-296.

<sup>18</sup> Hyde L. (2017) Trickster Makes This World: How Disruptive Imagination Creates Culture. Edinburgh: Canongate Books



comedians who act as commentators on serious television talk shows as Question Time [BBC1, 1979-];

c) festivals and conventions (Leicester Comedy Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival);

d) Internet (blogs, vlogs, online meetings, streaming channels, skype meetings, social networks, etc.). The jester via the Internet comments on the most current issues in a live mode. For example, clowns Alan Carr, Lee Evans, Peter Kay, Jason Manford have their own Youtube channels and social media pages (such as Twitter, Facebook). They speak to their online followers, publish their humorous videos, organize online festivals or even comedian fights.

One of peculiarities of jesters from the United States of America and Great Britain is their appearance on stage with the help of a pre-conceived opening statement<sup>19</sup>. It helps the public to navigate how to greet the jester or how the performance will be developing (whether it is possible to interrupt the jester or not).

Engaging the audience in the jester's game is vital for successful organization of performances. F. Scarpetta and A. Spagnolli define this practice as an "interactive context"<sup>20</sup>. This can be questions to the audience in order to encourage and evaluate the temperament and mood of the public; jargon; exclamations; analysis (engaging the audience in the preface with a joking comment and testing their response); references to the audience in performances (pags).

The list of modern clowns in the USA and the UK has more than 2065 people (according to the Internet). The brightest jesters who have been able to show themselves up in several professional spaces are Conan O'Brien, Dane Cook, Dave Chappelle, David Letterman, Frank Caliendo, George Carlin, Jay Leno, Jon Stewart, Lewis Black, Rodney Dangerfield, Sarah Silverman, Stephen Colbert, Steven Wright<sup>21</sup>.

In addition to the mentioned jesters, the main feature of the carnival space of the USA and the UK is a growing number of classic jesters. They are corporate and official ones. These types of jesters combine entertainment and satirical functions.

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<sup>19</sup> Rutter J. (2000) The Stand-up Introduction Sequence: Comparing Comedy Comperes. *Journal of Pragmatics*, no.32, pp. 463-483

<sup>20</sup> Scarpetta F., Spagnolli A. (2009) The Interactional Context of Humor in Stand-up Comedy. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, no. 42, pp. 210-230.

<sup>21</sup> Nilsen A. P., Nilsen D. L. F. (2000) *Encyclopedia of 20 th-century American Humor*. Phoenix: Oryx Press

1) **Corporate jester.** The sphere of his manifestation is offices, business organizations in which officially there is a jester job. For example, an ad appeared on *The Times* on August 5, 2014: “Jester wanted. Must be mirthful and prepared to work summer weekends. Must have own outfit (with bells). Bladder on stick provided if required”<sup>22</sup>.

There are many examples of taking a corporate jester to work. E.g. Pablo Birch was the corporate airman (jester) of the British Airlines in 1994. Birch’s responsibilities were developing creativity of the managers and convincing them in comic form that although they were principal, they were not always right. He could say out loud what other employees feared. In England, for example, today there are over 400 corporate jesters working full-time or part-time. The National Guild of Corporate Jestors was created and is led by Jonathan the Jester.

On the one hand, the corporate jester is a serious office worker by his appearance and demeanor, but, on the other hand, in his outward seriousness he disguises ridicule, subjugation, condemnation and joking others. His highly intelligent sense of humor seeks to self-criticize and sneer at himself and others. In addition to the comic means most often used by comedians, the corporate jester resorts to immorality in humor. He uses obscene vocabulary in his jokes<sup>23</sup>. Corporate jester sees it not as an invective or something offending, but as a mechanism for contact establishment and expression of true thoughts. S. Eggins and D. Slade state that obscene vocabulary is a way of establishing intimacy, involvement and affiliation<sup>24</sup>. Corporate jesters are prone to sharp satire and irony.

2) **Official jester.** For the communicative space of the United States of America and Great Britain official jester is a requiem of traditions – a great respect of the English and Americans to tradition. His place of work is government organizations, mayor offices, municipalities. Official jester is a tribute to history.

The most distinctive feature of the official jester is preservation of the traditional jester dress in the image (bells, a cap, a weird hat, a stick, tambourines) combined with linguistic acumen. For example, modern

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<sup>22</sup> Scruton R. (2015) *Fools, frauds and firebrands: Thinkers of the new left*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing

<sup>23</sup> Lee J. Y. (2013) *Enter Laughing: American Humor Studies in the Spirit of Our Times*. *Studies in American Humor*, no. 28, pp. 1-15

<sup>24</sup> Eggins S. (1997) *Analyzing Casual Conversation*. London, Washington: Cassel

official jesters are Baldwin the Fool and Godfrey Pugh, England's professional jesters; Peterkin the Fool, Bristol's Official Clown; Jonathan the Jester, Salisbury's official jester; Barry Levy the Jester, 2nd Official Clown of Hunford, Berkshire, Swindon and Salzgitter, Hanover; Jane the Phoole, Official jester of the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA; Fool Monty, a professional jester at Warwick Castle, United Kingdom; Kris Katchit, Derbyshire jester; Alex G, Montreal's professional jester; Nigel Roder, Aka Kester the Jester, England's official national jesters since 2004; Pocket the Fool, a professional jester at the Kentucky Festival.

Official jesters present themselves as intelligent jokers with a keen mind. Their humour is classic but mostly theatrical – they play jesters of past eras in the present. In language it is reflected by inclusions of precedent texts, updated aphorisms and quotations.

The defined features of the jester as a kind of the carnival discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker of the USA and UK reproduce a ridiculous perception of reality by the English-speaking culture. These means are focused on presentation of actual problems to the public in the context of carnival speech.

## 2. Buffon and trickster

In the linguistic culture of the United States and Great Britain buffoons always act as non-professionals while tricksters act in both fields – the non-professional and professional ones (they are not professional comedians, but the use of humor is a requirement of their employment agreement). Each person can acquire characteristics of a buffoon or trickster by his communicative behavior: giving reality features of frivolity, ambiguity, humor, interpretation of everyday life in an unusual perspective according to the code of comic tonality.

**I. Buffoon.** The basic strategy of this kind of a fool-wisecracker is to play, joke, be funny to others, and bring joy to others. To implement it the main tactic chosen by the buffoon is to change the atmosphere, setting; he makes the audience to play with him and follow his game. This is reflected in appropriate tactics:

- **Prepared improvisation**

The buffoon's humor is not evil; its purpose is joking, not ridicule. A characteristic feature of the buffoon's humor is his improvisation<sup>25</sup>. But

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<sup>25</sup>Apostolides M. (2016) From an Authorial Persona to a Postpedantic Philosopher, So That We Might Both Become Idiots. *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 216-223

this improvisation is a pretended one – the buffoon’s jokes do not come from a blank sheet. The buffoon is a well-known trick-player; his improvisations are prepared in advance; jokes corresponds the situation. Still he presents them to the audience as improvisation, every time in a new way.

- **Selection of the setting independently**

Among all his jokes thought up beforehand the buffoon chooses those that can be substituted or adjusted to the situation, i.e., he determines the time and place when this or that joke will be relevant and will be adequately perceived. The buffoon also thinks about the development of ongoing events. To make coherent jokes he needs information in advance: topics of future conversations, participants of communication, their goals, knowledge, and motives.

- **Interaction of the buffoon and audience**

This game is mutual. In this interaction the buffoon fakes (pre-made improvisations) while the audience plays to it: the buffoon’s jokes are a surprise to the audience, although this is obviously not the case. The modern buffoon is trying on the role of a person from whom something ridiculous is expected – actions, statements, scenes<sup>26</sup>. The modern buffoon is a hostage of his image.

Integral characteristics of the buffoon of the United States and Great Britain are erudition, socialization, humorousness, emotionality. But the mentality of the English and Americans imprint on the communicative preferences of the buffoon.

The British buffoon jokes about himself, his national traits and mentality. He brings the following genres to his speech: fictional noodle stories or bawdy stories. They are filled with comism and a focus on entertainment, humor and creation of a joking mood, i.e., the thing needed by the ordinary person at the time of leisure after hard, exhausting work<sup>27</sup>. These humorous stories are dominated by intellectual forms of humor, such as absurdity, pun, paradox<sup>28</sup>. Characteristic communicative features

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<sup>26</sup> Balcerzak S. (2013) *Buffoon Men: Classic Hollywood Comedians and Queered Masculinity*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press

<sup>27</sup> Reed T. (2013) *Book of Fools An Intelligent Person’s Guide to Fops, Jackasses, Morons, Dolts, Dunces, Halfwits and Blockheads*. New York: Algora Publishing

<sup>28</sup> Hamburg L. O. (2003) *Ser Dzhon Fal’shtaf, mister Pikvik, Dzhivs i vse-vse-vse... Angliyskiy yumor, ego literaturnye i real’nye geroi*. [Sir John Falstaff,

of the British buffoons are jokes, irritation, mockery, deception, paradox, hyperbolization, absurdity. The humorous tone causes an emotional response of the audience – laughter, smile, applause, and joke in response.

The American buffoon is a prototype of ironic and sarcastic perception of everyday life. The verbal component of his humorous speech is jokes on all occasions (religion, medicine, politics, economics, family values, public problems and shortcomings) and fables as a form of easy-percept humor. The humor of the American buffoon is light, sometimes somewhat transparent. He addresses absurdity, incongruity, exaggeration, parody, paradoxes in it.

The behavior of the English and American buffoons is determined by life situations and performs a number of functions: 1) to help himself and others to cope with life's difficulties; 2) to ridicule life and its absurdity; 3) to achieve communicative success (buffoons are souls of every society).

**II. Trickster.** The main strategy of the English-language trickster is to entertain others and harmonize relationships with the audience as a result of involving the comic. But the comic reinterpretation of reality with this kind of a fool-wisecracker is irony, sarcasm, and mockery. Characteristic features of the modern trickster are:

- **Folk reinterpretation of reality**

This technique is used by the modern trickster in production of humor. Humor is used by trickster as a subjective interpretation and usually hyperbolized projection of life and historical conditions that underlie them.

Topics for jokes are characterized by their diversity regarding eternal human problems<sup>29</sup>. The English-speaking trickster chooses real figures as referents of his considering them as folklore characters. The most prominent are John Barleycorn, Lady Godiva of Coventry, Hereward, Herne the Hunter, Punch. For example, during Halloween, people wear animal costumes or add zoomorphic attributes to their images: deer antlers, bat wings, cat mustaches, etc.

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Mr. Pickwick, Jeeves and all-all-all ... English humor, its literary and real heroes]. Kiev: Gramota. (in Russian)

<sup>29</sup> Dormann C. (2014) Fools, tricksters and jokers: categorization of humor in gameplay. *International Conference on Intelligent Technologies for Interactive Entertainment*. Springer: Cham, pp. 81-90

Zoomorphism in humor is used by tricksters not only during holidays, but also in politics. The following figures show a trickster presentation of the US and UK politicians (Fig. 3):



**Fig. 3. A trickster presentation of the English-speaking politicians:  
1 – J. Bush in the image of a hare; 2 – D. Trump as a bear**

A stylized video of relationship between D. Trump and H. Clinton in the images of *The Muppet Show Mashup* for the *Mahna Mahna* song has become popular online (Fig. 4):



**Fig. 4. D. Trump in the image of *The Muppet Show Mashup* on song  
*Mahna Mahna***

### • Trickster imagery and women's behavior

Traditional English-speaking tricksters have always been male, and even while having transformations, the latter image was always male. Modern carnival personalities of female tricksters are eager to break gender stereotypes – trying on male images. Men's gender peculiarities of women tricksters are observed in their appearance (short cut hair, choice of pants, not skirts, smoking a cigarette), as well as in speech – the use of obscene vocabulary and black humor more than men. This is provoked by their masculine image and democratization of society – women are allowed more. Embodying the role of the trickster, they show themselves as more characteristic and volitional personalities than they really are (Fig. 5).



**Fig. 5. Female tricksters**

When trying on masculine images modern female tricksters acquire figures of folklore tricksters. Their main feature is cunning. For the woman trickster all techniques are appropriate and acceptable to achieve the goal – attention from others. The woman trickster only pretends to be a trickster. Trick is her main technique. These characteristics are acquired by politician H. Clinton, political scientist and journalist S. Power, Presidential Advisor S. Rice, artist M. Brown. For example, H. Clinton has an inappropriate style of clothing (trouser suits), smokes cigarettes in public, uses jargon during debates, has unusual laughter that is surprising, because she is a typical trickster woman. She positions herself as a trickster, though she is not. All this is just an image, a mockery, a mockery to win the attention of the audience. Her appearance is only a

delusion, which is used as a tool to achieve the goal and assertiveness against the background of the audience.

• **Trickster positioning in historical space**

The modern US-UK trickster in his speech also manages to capture the characteristics of past eras. He forms the image of a trickster-intrigue. An organic example of acquiring trickster traits in a historical diachronic plane is L. Carroll who wrote *Alice in Wonderland*. This piece of art is filled with trickster characters – Rabbit, Cheshire Cat. They call themselves abnormal because they know that they are living in an abnormal world (the Rabbit is constantly in time, worrying that time ends but it cannot be true; he does not even understand absurdity of the situation, having a clock). Therefore, these characters are forced to be so, although they are very logical.

The Rabbit and the Cheshire Cat are cross-country guides to Alice's journey as well as a reader's. They bring balance to Wonderland, full of chaos and confusion. All their actions are thought out in advance, they know what they are doing; they give Alice the answers, but not the ones she wants to hear, they prompt her to take the right steps. Rabbit and Cheshire Cat are tricksters, scoffers; L. Carroll was able to present their images in a work of art, so he is also a trickster.

The US and UK trickster is an extraordinary carnival-ridiculous carnival personality who exposes and questions existing truths and stereotypes, innovatively approaches them in a humorous form and choice of stylistic means as well as encourages others to do the same.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

1. A fool-wisecracker is considered to be a discursive personality who is a leader of the carnival process; the one who puts on a comedian's mask. His purpose is to communicate with the public in the form of a comic play. In order to do it he uses witty verbal, non-verbal and supravertbal means.

2. A fool-wisecracker shows up himself in social, professional and non-professional fields. According to the analysis of direct vocabularies of lexical-semantic meanings corresponding to the figure of a fool-wisecracker the clown, the jester, and the trickster belong to the socio-professional sphere; to the non-professional sphere – the buffoon and the trickster.

3. In the modern communicative carnival space of the United States of America and Great Britain peculiarities of manifestation of a fool-wisecracker's types are:



- particular spread of a hospital clown (hospital clowning genre) as a tool of laughter therapy. Hospital clowning is a system of measures aimed at rehabilitation of patients undergoing treatment in hospital with the help of clowning techniques. An exceptional feature of a hospital clown is that he can be either a professional actor or an amateur after the courses undergone, or even a doctor in a clown costume;

- increasing number of authentic jesters at working places – corporate and official jesters. Peculiarity of the corporate jester’s humor is use of obscene and minor vocabulary as mechanisms of contact establishment; official jesters – copying of the ones in the present.

- usage of speech inclusions by the English-language buffoon to create a comism. A noodle story or a bawdy story states for the British buffoon; anecdotes and stories – the American buffoon. His improvisations are prepared and supported by the audience.

- transferring of the trickster’s zoomorphic traits to the modern communicative space in forms of reference and stylization of folklore characters, acquisition of masculine features by women (female tricksters).

4. The topic provides **prospects** for further study of discursive personalities of the clown, the jester, the buffoon and the trickster of the USA and Great Britain in comparison with their representatives in other cultures, in particular the English-speaking world. It also underlines problems of multimodality of a fool-wisecracker’s types in their representations in English-language artistic discourse and in virtual space.

## SUMMARY

The paper deals with a discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker. He is proven to be the basis of carnival culture. A discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker intentionally puts on the comic’s mask and draws the addressee to the comic play with his jokes, using clever verbal and non-verbal means. His main characteristics are focus on entertainment, pretending to be a fool, a critical perception of the world, language wit, expression of philosophical views and thoughts in a comic form. A discursive personality of a fool-wisecracker is characterized by a high speech culture which is expressed in the combination of verbal, non-verbal and supra-verbal means to create comic. In the English language space there are four basic types of a fool-wisecracker: the clown, the jester, the buffoon and the trickster. They are determined within professional and non-professional spheres of human life.

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