Dynel, Marta

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Norrick, Neal R. and Delia Chiaro (eds.): *Humor in Interaction. Amsterdam and Philadelphia:* John Benjamins Publishing Company. Pragmatics & Beyond New Series 182, 2009, ISBN 978-90-272-5427-6, xvii + 238 pp.

Neal Norrick and Delia Chiaro's volume is a vital contribution to the linguistic literature on humour, proving that humorous phenomena transcend canned jokes. The book also testifies that there are numerous strands of research to be pursued as regards the workings and functions of interactional humour. The book conflates 10 heterogeneous articles written from independent linguistic perspectives and employing distinct methodological approaches, their common denominator being humour in interaction.

Humour in interaction, which the editors also refer to as conversational humour, is a concept embracing the whole gamut of humorous phenomena occurring in (oral) interpersonal communication. Nota bene, given technological developments, studies on human interactions and even conversations should not be restricted to spoken discourse constructed by interlocutors face to face. Interactions, inclusive of those abounding in humour, encompass also media talk, both spontaneous and scripted, as well as oral or written computer-mediated discourse, rendered between individuals or aimed at large audiences.

All the papers draw on discourse analytic approaches to empirical language material. The chapters are organised into four sections, depending on their themes and/or underlying theoretical approaches. The first section embraces research on humorous conversation in friendly and familial contexts; the second is devoted to gendered humour in the workplace; the third comprises studies on the production and perception of failed humour; while the last section pertains to humour in bilingual interactions. In their collaborative paper entitled 'The occasioning of self-disclosure humor', Susan M. Ervin-Tripp and Martin Lampert focus on humour and laughter accompanying self-disclosure among friends. The research is based on 102 conversations held by friends. Humour and laugher, which might perhaps have been clearly distinguished, for they are not always correlates (viz. anxiety-based non-humorous laugher and humour which does not elicit laugher), are shown as occurring in humorous rounds, narratives, troubles talk, self-revelation as entertainment, topic changes, and mitigation associated with an imposition, or as used in response to unfortunate events or teasing. The authors account for age (adult vs. child) and gender parameters affecting the application of what they call "self-targeted humour", also known in the literature as self-deprecating/denigrating humour (e.g. Norrick 1993, Kotthoff 2000, Boxer and Cortés-Conde 1997, Crawford 1995, Dynel 2008b). The authors thus testify to and expand their earlier research on similar issues (Lampert and Ervin-Tripp 1998, 2006). (Nota bene, the first reference is missing from the bibliographic section). On the whole, in conformity with earlier studies, self-deprecating humour is argued to promote solidarity among interlocutors, to lighten their concerns, or to mitigate socio-psychological threats underpinning self-revelation.

'Direct address as a resource for humor', Neal Norrick and Claudia Bubel's contribution, explores a novel topic, namely the use of direct address to generate humorous stimuli in canned jokes and types of conversational humour. The study discusses how forms of address can be humorously deployed by extending or even subverting the standard system of address. The categories distinguished embrace stock expressions couched in variously motivated inappropriate application of address terms, canned jokes exploiting forms of address (which either are directly responsible for a joke's humorous effect or strengthen it, e.g. thanks to tabooed vocatives), inappropriate address forms introducing a play frame (i.e. acting as contextualisation cues for a non-serious key) or reciprocal address forms in banter and teasing among friends, partners and family members. Overall,

the article sheds light on one so far neglected mechanism facilitating humour occurrence, whereby it indicates that there is still a lot waiting to be revealed about the workings of verbal humour, diversified as it is.

Helga Kotthoff's chapter, contrary to its title, 'An interactional approach to irony development', addresses not only irony but also teasing and joint fantasising, which the author claims to be related, since they are highly inferential and "communicate contrasts and pretenses" (56). The central point of attention is how these forms are deployed by children. On the whole, the study testifies that children can perform authoritative ironic voices, typical of adults, thus engaging in a play with supervising students. First, in the introduction, Kotthoff conducts a discursive and subjective survey of the literature, presenting a number of loosely connected ideas pertinent to research on irony, i.e. its theoretical conceptualisation (e.g. Giora 1995, 2003) and interpersonal effects it engenders. Kotthoff rightly dissociates herself from the view that irony must be imbued with politeness or aggressiveness. Ultimately, the approach to irony (whose relation to humour is left unaccounted for) and other humorous forms is anchored in Bakhtin's voicing. Based on German recordings made in homework settings, Kotthoff presents a few unrelated instances of data, such as stylistically marked irony (a formal tone used by a child, yet, admittedly, not ironic reversal of meaning per se), positive comments as critique, or prototypical echo irony. Nota bene, Kotthoff claims, "Echo or pretense irony only functions if one can rely upon the other to identify the source of the borrowed utterance" (67). This is at odds with what Sperber and Wilson (e.g. Sperber and Wilson 1981, Sperber 1984, Wilson and Sperber 1992) postulate in their account, asserting that the terms "mention" and "echo" when used technically are broader than their ordinary senses and capture all instances of irony. Uses of irony are mentions of meaning, which need not have been explicitly verbalised, while an echo need not be formally identical to the utterance echoed, but may only be interpretatively reminiscent of the former.

In her paper, 'Multimodal and intertextual humor in the media reception situation: The case of watching football on TV', Cornelia Gerhardt analyses humour in a reception situation, a most interesting yet so far hardly investigated area. Specifically, the author concentrates on humour and laughter in viewers' reception of football broadcasts. Gerhardt thus discusses laughter as a manifestation of viewers' appreciation of the match, as a response to humour in the media text, and multimodal and intertextual humour (and laughter consequent upon it) viewers create against the backdrop of what is happening on the screen. The two labels (occurring also in the article's title) purport to be counter-intuitive, for by "multimodal humour" the author means viewers' humorous utterances in reference to non-verbal stimuli on the screen, while the epithet "intertextual" pertains to humour produced on the basis of verbal stimuli in the media talk. Otherwise, multimodal humour may be deemed as covering humorous verbal-visual or verbal-auditory stimuli (and the like), while intertextual humour is commonly deemed as allusion-based humour. The author conducts meticulous analyses of examples, describing how the events develop, yet not discussing the workings of humour in the light of pertinent literature. Gerhardt rightly concludes that shared laughter serves as a contextualisation cue (Gumperz 1982) helping negotiate viewers' viewpoints on the media programme.

In their contribution to the volume, 'Using humor to do masculinity at work', Stephanie Schnurr and Janet Holmes investigate humour in the context of normative masculinity, which is explored and exploited in the workplace, conceptualised as a community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992). The article opens with a selective overview of ample literature on gendered discourse, with marked attention focused on humour and workplace issues (e.g. Holmes and Stubbe 2003a,b; Holmes 2006). Drawing on data recorded in New Zealand professional organisations among colleagues, the authors argue that humour demonstrates that gender representatives are fully aware of the stereotypical communicative patterns and support or challenge them. It is particularly masculine (competitive) humour (e.g. Hay 1995, Jenkins 1995, Ervin-Tripp and Lampert 1992), such as jocular abuse (e.g. Coates 2003; de Klerk 1992, 1997), humour-oriented solidarity-building imprecations (e.g. Daly et al. 2004) or contest of wit (Collinson 1988; Lampert and Ervin-Tripp 1998, 2006; Hay 2000; Coates 2003), that is deployed to contest workplace norms or to "express face-threatening messages in a relatively direct way" (119). However, the authors

fail to discuss the ramifications of the last type of humorous communication, not addressing its twofold nature. The emergent question is whether overtly aggressive, critical utterances are indeed perceived as carrying humorous potential from the perspective of the hearer to whom they are addressed, and whether they are meant to be thus, as evidenced by some of Schnurr and Holmes's examples. The humorousness of such comments can then be perceived only from the perspective of another ratified participant in the interaction, while the butt may hardly be amused (cf. Dynel 2010). On the other hand, as other examples show, overtly aggressive utterances may actually be benevolent and indicative of the play frame (Bateson 1953, 1972; Fry 1963; Norrick 1993, 2003; Hay 2000, 2001; Everts 2003; Chovanec 2006; Coates 2007; Rogerson-Revell 2007; Dynel 2009a,b), which indeed mitigates the face threat of an utterance, insofar as the speaker need not (but may) intend to communicate criticism (or other content inimical to the hearer's face) which the humorous utterance seems to convey.

The next article entitled 'Boundary-marking humor: Institutional, gender and ethnic demarcation in the workplace' also examines the problem of social identity building humour in a workplace context. Bernadette Vine, Susan Kell, Meredith Marra and Janet Holmes study boundary-marking humour in workplace meetings of Maori and Pakeha women in one New Zealand government department. Specifically, the research is dedicated to boundary-making humour highlighting the divisions between different institutional groups, sexes, and ethnic groups. The analysis of a few examples shows that it is especially minority and marginalised members that deploy boundary-marking humour to bring to light their distinct identity and simultaneously forge in-group solidarity and rapport.

Nancy Bell, in her insightful article 'Impolite responses to failed humor', explores the neglected topic of responses to humour, focusing on rude responses evoked by failed humour, so far also a neglected area of research (see Bell 2009). Bell first introduces the concept of impoliteness, criticising Culpeper's (1996) and Culpeper et al's (2003) model, recently developed by Bousfield (2008). Albeit supportive more of Spencer-Oatey's (2000, 2002, 2005) approach to (im)politeness, Bell decides to adopt the categorisation of strategies proposed by Culpeper (1996) and Culpeper et al. (2003), yet reorganising the hierarchical positioning of some of the strategies. Indeed, no verbal behaviour can be labelled as inherently carrying a certain degree of (im)politeness oriented to either face, depending heavily on second-order contextual norms and expectations (cf. Fraser and Nolan 1981; Fraser 1990, 2005; Holmes 1995; Culpeper et al., 2003; Mills 2003; Spencer-Oatey 2000, 2005; Watts 2003; Locher 2004; Locher and Watts 2005). Bell revisits the interdependence between humour and rapport management only to concentrate on her research findings based on data, where 44% of responses to contrived failed humour emerge as being impolite. Finally, Bell proposes four reasons explaining why humour recipients choose to issue aggravated face attacks, i.e. the disruptive nature of humour, the expectations hearers hold of the teller's behaviour, the characteristics of the study participants, and the hearer's identity concerns or face claims.

Beatrice Priego-Valverde tackles a similar topic in her chapter, 'Failed humor in conversation: A double voicing analysis'. Unperceived humour and rejected humour are analysed in accordance with the Bakhtinian double voicing approach. Introducing the concept of dialogism, the author appears to focus (unnecessarily) on dialogism as verbal interaction, whilst immediately relevant to her approach is that of dialogism as double voicing. In Bakhtin's rich output, dialogism is a multifaceted and poly-functional phenomenon manifesting itself in, for instance, existence, language, literary interpretation, and authoring (cf. Holquist 1990). What is important for linguists, Bakhtin's utterance (vyskazyvanie) is anchored in the compromise between a particular speaker's meaning and general requirements of language (which is reminiscent of, but significantly different to, the Saussurean parole vs. langue distinction, parole being a speaker's product and langue representing the set of rules holding for a given language). Simultaneously, each utterance is not original but dialogic, since it is pivoted on a number of other speakers' intentions and voices that have been heard before (see Holquist 1990). Priego-Valverde perceptively observes that humour entails double voicing, which can be observed from many a perspective, e.g. as a distance the speaker maintains from the discourse, as a contrast between the serious and the playful mode, or as a doubly-coded discourse. Nevertheless, this conceptualisation gives rise to some misgivings. For instance, the author states that double voicing entails "a speaker's ambiguous intention and an ambivalent utterance"

(168). Usually, the humorous speaker's intention is not ambiguous, even if twofold, e.g. say something funny and convey meaning germane to the ongoing interaction, while a humorous utterance need not be ambivalent but explicit and unequivocal. Also, the author claims that playfulness of double voicing "secures humor as benevolent. In connection with the distance produced ("what I am saying is not serious and maybe not even true"), it reduces or indeed cancels all of the possible aggressive, vexing, subversive or indecent literal meanings in a humorous utterance" (168). However, even if anchored in playful double voicing, humour need not be entirely benevolent. An utterance, humorous as it is, may simultaneously convey hurtful content, mitigated by the presence of the amusing element, as already observed. Moreover, the speaker may also emerge as being playful towards one recipient, while genuinely lambasting or ridiculing another party. It should also be mentioned that the relationship between literalness/implicitness and humour is more complex. A humorous utterance, whose content is ultimately regarded as non-serious, frequently rests on implicitness, not literal meanings, as Priego-Valverde seems to suggest. Finally, rather than refer the notion of a humorous/playful key (Kotthoff 1999, 2000; Lampert and Ervin-Tripp 2006; Holmes 2006) or frame (Bateson 1953, 1972; Fry 1963; Norrick 1993, 2003; Hay 2000, 2001; Everts 2003; Coates 2007; Rogerson-Revell 2007; Dynel 2009a,b), which her postulate resembles, the author mentions the unfounded concept of the non-bona fide mode, which, apart from being grounded in misunderstanding of the Gricean philosophy (see Dynel 2008a, 2009a) wrongly suggests that humour cannot be produced "in good faith". These reservations aside, double voicing is a most tenable approach describing the workings of humour, both successful and failed. In the case of unperceived humour, the hearer is at a loss to grasp which voice is speaking and, because of the resultant misunderstanding (e.g. perceiving the speaker's utterance as an attack), whether the speaker's utterance belongs in the humorous frame or the serious frame. On the other hand, rejected humour operates on the hearer's refusal to take into account the humorous voice, e.g. so as to continue the serious conversation, whereby humour fails.

Kristin Kersten's chapter, 'Humor and interlanguage in a bilingual elementary school setting', is devoted to spontaneous laughter and humour in an immersion-based language acquisition setting. The data, garnered in a German elementary school from interviewer-child interactions, are discussed in the context of functions of humour and laughter in encounters, a prominent type of which is coping with linguistic inadequacies. The analysis is preceded by a literature survey on child language acquisition and children's humour, notably its functions and developmental issues. Kersten discusses children's humour also in the light of the Cooperative Principle and maxims (Grice 1975), arguing that following the maxims is synonymous with being cooperative in accordance with hearers' expectations, which second language learners violate "in spite of themselves since their interlanguage system necessarily falls short of the required means of communication" (189). Indeed, it is undeniably the case that young second language learners do not have the competence typical of adult native speakers. However, linguists with interests in pragmatics would be sceptical about employing the Gricean model of communication in such an analysis, especially if not preceded by a necessary clarification and expansion. The model is, by nature, hinged on speakers' intentionality and rationality, while any departures from the maxims, whether legitimate and overt (flouts) or unratified and covert (violations), are purposefully employed to generate conversational effects, i.e. implicatures or deceits/lies, respectively (see Davies 2000, 2007; Dynel 2008a, 2009a). In its original form, the Gricean model does not account for unintended communicative failures, such as those produced by second-language learners. Additionally, Kersten views violation of expectations as incongruity, a concept central to humour research, both in psychology and in linguistics, with Kersten's use subscribing to the former perspective. Nonetheless, incongruity also occurs in three terms referring to categories of laugher, where the denotation of the term is different. Altogether, Kersten groups all instances of laughter and smiling into ten categories, which she carefully discusses, analyses statistically and compares to earlier research findings. The categories of laughter are diversified, being related to humour or non-humorous phenomena (joy or embarrassment, which occur very frequently), produced by the child or, in one case, only by the interviewer (encouragement), the child's reaction to a humorous stimulus (deprecation, pictorial incongruity) or the child's reaction to humour (s)he produces intentionally (meta-linguistic incongruity) or in-

voluntarily (involuntary incongruity). Despite some terminological shortcomings, the article is an important contribution to psychological humour research on children's use of humour.

The chapter closing the volume, titled 'Cultural divide or unifying factor? Humorous talk in the interaction of bilingual, cross-cultural couples', is Delia Chiaro's venture into a rarely investigated area of research. The article presents the findings of a cross-cultural, questionnaire-based and interview-based study of humorous talk (cf. Coates 2007) produced by bilingual couples, understood as two people with different mother tongues. Chiaro discusses a number of pertinent problems, such as language choice in humour production (and other forms of communication), types of interlocutors (friends or family), cultural differences in the sense of humour and the impact of language and culture on humour perception and production. Overall, the findings corroborate the author's assumption that humour in both languages is used for solidarity building and serves as a bonding instrument, helping overcome problems bilingual couples may face.

As the overview above shows, the volume is a representative sample of ongoing research on humour in interaction, pointing to a few of the multifarious directions of study that may be assumed in language studies on conversational humour and laughter. Substantiated by linguistic data, some of the papers propound new theoretical postulates, i.e. methods of humour interpretation, while other articles advance hypotheses on humour roles and functions, which may find support also in future research using more extensive language data.

On a critical note, many of the contributors to the volume do not appear to have been preoccupied with clarifying various terms denoting humour categories. The authors frequently employ labels, such as "banter", "teasing", or "sarcasm", neither explaining them, nor giving references to works which introduce them, as they see fit. Consequently, the reader is bound to assume that the terms should trigger folk-theoretic interpretations, which are vague and frequently depart from technical, academic definitions. This is not to suggest that conversational humour categories must be rigorously defined, which would be quixotic. However, it is because researchers are not unanimous about the scope of concepts, such as teasing (e.g. Norrick 1993; Hay 2000; Boxer and Cortés-Conde 1997; Lampert and Ervin-Tripp 2006) or sarcasm (e.g. Partington 2006; Norrick 1993, 1994, 2003; Dynel 2009b; Culpeper 1993; Culpeper et al. 2003) that each work should succinctly introduce the author's/authors' perspective on a chosen category of humour to guarantee the clarity of postulates. Similarly, several concepts central to humour research are not sufficiently explained, such as incongruity (e.g. Suls 1972; Forabosco 1992, 2008; Dynel 2009a) or a play frame, also known as a humorous frame (Bateson 1953, 1972; Fry 1963; Norrick 1993, 2003; Hay 2000, 2001; Everts 2003; Coates 2007; Rogerson-Revell 2007; Dynel 2009a, b). This lack of referencing, coupled with a few faulty/non-existent references (e.g. "Hay 1994" on page 107, "Bariaud Bateson" on page 183) or references missing from the bibliographic sections (e.g. Lapp 1992 on page 51; Alberts 1992 on page 108) may also emerge as being problematic in self-study. These minor flaws, however, by no means affect the general quality of the entire volume, which is bound to provide ample inspiration for future research.

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Marta Dynel

Address: Dr Marta Dynel, University of Łódź, Department of Pragmatics, Institute of English, Al. Kościuszki 65, 90-514 Łódź, Poland. [email: marta.dynel@yahoo.com]