Lexical and structural ambiguity in humorous headlines in English electronic Newspapers = Sự không rõ ràng về nghĩa của từ và cấu trúc trong tiêu đề hài hước trên báo điện tử tiếng Anh.

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This study analyzes some forms of linguistic ambiguity in English in a specific register, English electronic newspaper headlines. In particular, the focus of the research is on examples of lexical and syntactic ambiguity that result in sources of unintentional humor. The study is based on a corpus of 52 humorous headlines originating from different electronic newspapers headlines especially the BBC and the New York Times from 2005 to 2011. The linguistic phenomena that contribute to create this kind of semantic confusion in electronic headlines will be analyzed and divided into the two main categories of lexical and structural ambiguity, and examples from the corpus will be discussed for each category. The result shows that ambiguity is the source of humor in headlines and it occurs popularly to two fields of language: lexicology and syntax. On a total of 52 ambiguous headlines, the majority was found to be ambiguous on a structural level (60.78 percent), while the rest (39.22 percent) presents some sort of lexical ambiguity. In any case, homonymy, polysymy and the distinctive features of newspaper headlines which often own loaded words and omit grammar signals are considered the origin of ambiguity in humorous electronic headlines.
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