

Universals in Humorous Word Play

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The topic of the universality of humor is generally assumed without discussion. Indeed, there are no reports of cultures lacking humor. However, the mechanisms that generate humor, much like the mechanisms of language, are varied. Moreover, the claim that there exist no specific humor linguistic mechanisms is generally accepted as true. I will begin discussing the universality of humor, but will focus on universals in puns (*jeux de mots* / *calembours*). I will conclude by a brief discussion of the psycholinguistic foundation of puns, i.e., the belief in a motivated linguistic system of signs (*Cratylistic fallacy*).