

## THEORETICAL PHILOLOGICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF IRONY: MAIN DIRECTIONS OF STUDY

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the theoretical interpretation of irony by modern philological science. The authors consistently present the main directions of studying irony as a phenomenon. In the broadest sense, irony is the caustic intonation of a statement, often identified with ridicule or with humor hidden under the mask of seriousness. In ordinary consciousness, irony has a reduced form, whereas for a scientific study of this phenomenon it needs to be considered in detail as a process. The ontology of the comic defines the status of irony as a device among others – parody, grotesque, burlesque, travesty. It is also important to understand irony, along with humor and satire, as an aesthetic attitude. Specificity of irony is fixed by its axiological system and structure, as well as by the dialectics of interaction between the negative and positive components of evaluating subject-object relations. The comic in irony has the form of a triad: the axiological structure is represented by an external statement, an inner negation and an end statement. Irony also has a simultaneous bi-directionality to the object and subject (self-irony), while it is emotionality that is the way to express the relationship between the subject of irony and the environment. On the basis of studying various concepts of irony, the authors of the article come to the conclusion that for an adequate interpretation of irony, a recipient often needs a complete artistic text. The context that connects deep-seated socio-cultural and historical-literary meanings to the interpretation of the text is also important.

**Keywords:** irony, interpretation of irony, modality of discourse and text, implication of irony, linguistic means, context, linguocultural aspect, semantics and pragmatics of ironic text, explicitness and implicitness.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Centuries-old development of irony as a general cultural phenomenon lead to it becoming an umbrella term: it represents a speech figure as a rhetorical phenomenon, particular situations (irony of history, irony of fate, etc.), and the ideas put forward in various eras of the development of philosophy (the irony of Socrates, romantic or postmodern irony). Irony can predetermine the development of various associations, becoming the basis for a variety of interpretations [Gurewitch, 1994]. Many definitions of irony determine 'sign change' as the main criterion of creating and understanding it: "The ironic statement is a meta-assessment, the modus of which, denying or questioning the

proposition, that is, the original judgment, is replaced by the opposite modus, either explicitly or implicitly (by default) confirming this judgment" [Kazantsev, 2007, p. 172]. In our view, the above-mentioned definition explicates the common approach to irony research, which is characterized by one-sided understanding of its essence: irony refers to only those cases in which the proposition statements are at odds with reality. Nevertheless, a significant number of cases of irony are qualified by the carriers of linguoculture as ironic yet not interpreted a contrario. It is for this reason that L. Amoli, describing the diversity of phenomena united by the term 'irony', uses the metaphor of a family resemblance – 'the irony family' [Amoli, 2002].

Unambiguous definition of the boundaries of irony is absent because of the external (formal) and internal (content) heterogeneity of ironic utterances. Semantics and pragmatics of ironic discourse exhibit a certain difficulty, which, however, does not receive a clear parameter setting, thus irony is understood as "... the ability of the ironist to glide over the surface..." [Osinovskaya, 2007, p. 41] or "... a metalanguage game, a statement squared" [Eco, 1997, p. 637], and ultimately as "... a clear consciousness of eternal mobility, of an infinitely complete chaos" [Schlegel, 1983, p. 360], "irony is inherently confusing. Not only are its definitions confusing; it is confusing by definition" [Thompson, 2011]. The imagery of the above definitions is not closer to understanding the mechanisms of producing ironic discourse and does not give answers to the question how a native speaker and carrier of linguoculture recognizes the irony in the discourse / text.

## 2. METHODOLOGICAL BASIS

(The reference list is given in the order of appearance – A.K).

The lack of clarity in the criteria for parameterizing irony, naturally, does not allow structuring the definition of irony which would describe all the possible forms of its representation. Yet V. Yankelevich points out in this connection that "... if irony cannot be determined, still its presence does not become less self-evident; <...> you cannot analyze its structure, but you can undoubtedly describe its movement and 'habits'; in short, we are able to talk about qualitative features" [13, p. 28]. The essence of the phenomena united by the term irony becomes clearer when referring to the history of the development of ideas about irony in European philosophy and aesthetics. Ideas long ago put forward by scientists continue to influence modern linguistic and cognitive theories of irony. that is why the consideration of irony in the philosophical and aesthetic paradigms and the study of forming representations about it seems very productive. The philosophical basis of the present work consists of laws and principles of materialistic dialectics: the law of the transition of quantitative changes to qualitative changes, the law of unity and struggle of opposites, actualized in the conceptual principles of establishing universal connections of phenomena in nature, society and consciousness, etc.

It is well known that language is characterized by contradictory relations between the content plane and the expression plane; the known autonomy of forms and meanings is partly determined by the incomplete interdependence of the elements of the linguistic sign. A.A. Potebnya pointed out in this connection that "significant sound combinations in the language are incomparably less than the values they represent, since one such combination often has several meanings. In other words, the variability and mobility of thought in the language is much more than the variability of sounds" [10, p. 21-22]. The

justification of the asymmetric dualism of the linguistic sign [7, p. 90] was the incongruence of the functional and content planes of the language. So, E.S. Aznaurova points out that "the polyfunctionality of the expression plane and the homonymy of the units of the content plane are based on the lack of correspondence between the content plane (more extensive and numerous in terms of structural organization) and the simpler and 'smaller' expression plane" [1, p. 89]. The asymmetry of the linguistic sign is manifested in the fact that the semantics of the sign consists of the actual nominative value (fixed by paradigmatics) and the 'increment of meaning' (determined by syntagmatics). The variety of the linguistic sign asymmetry is also found in its structure, in the language system, and in discursive processes. In addition, the asymmetrical duality of the linguistic sign influences the formation of a literary norm and anomaly that is significant in specific communicative situations. Let us also emphasize that the implication of various textual and discursive phenomena is also a consequence of the functioning of these phenomena.

One form of implication is irony as a particular case of asymmetry between form and content. That which does not have a complete verbal implementation or is only partially realized is implicit, while for its comprehension it requires the involvement of the communicative-pragmatic potential of a text / discursive unit explicitly manifested, of micro- and macro-context as well as other extralinguistic factors. Irony cannot be qualified only as a linguistic phenomenon: it is sufficiently determined by the national picture of the world, by the mentality of the ethnos, by the national character. This allows speaking about the relevance of the study of irony as a linguistic phenomenon which has a specific historical and social character. An important methodological aspect in the study of the various manifestations of irony is the doctrine of the language personality, which predetermines the reference to the categories of the addresser and addressee and which clarifies the parameters of the communicative-pragmatic and suggestive potential of this multidimensional phenomenon. The study of irony cannot be limited to the parametrization of specifically ironic vocabulary: it is often possible to talk about lexicosyntactic means of its implementation, since irony is manifested in utterances, where an important role is precisely the syntactic structure, as well as word-forming and stylistic means.

An important aspect of the study of irony is the modality of discourse and text. As a kind of subjective modality, the ironic modality (in its essence equal to the estimate [3]), is described by the formula  $A r B$ , where  $A$  is the subject of irony,  $B$  is its object, and  $r$  is the critical estimate. The specificity of the ironic modality is the presence in one discursive or text segment of two controversial evaluations of one object or phenomenon. The polysemy of language units and their expressiveness as a combination of emotional and evaluative relations of the subject of irony to its subject defines the linguistic cognitive potential of irony, therefore the study of irony confronts the problem of 'increment of meaning' of the text. This view of irony is obvious, because the formation and implementation of irony would not be possible if each lexical unit had a single value. Another defining language phenomenon for irony is enantiosemia as the possibility of expanding the initial semantics of the lexeme to the opposite one. Undoubtedly, enantiosemic significance can be not always ironically reinterpreted, but the specificity of ironical enantiosemia is in the synthesis of the basic word meaning (actualized in the syntagmatics of the sentence) and the derivative meaning (conditioned contextually).

The identification of implicit information also becomes an important research tool in studying irony. The differentiation of information into explicit and implicit is based on F. de Saussure's postulate on the duality of the linguistic sign: any linguistic unit is

characterized by the existence of an expression plane (material form) and a content plane (signifying and signified in certain ratios fixed by the language). The inconsistency of the signifier to the concrete signified contributes to the production of implicit information. As noted above, in the ironic utterance both positive and negative evaluations are presented, which determine their explication and implication, respectively, and the ironic intention is determined by the degree of manifestation of the contradiction between the verbalized and the implied. The implicit information presented in the text / discourse in a complex way is described by the term 'subtext' which means "the inner, implied, verbally expressed meaning of the utterance or of the text" [2, p. 331]. The interaction of the semantics of lexical and textual units determines the nature of the subtext which is realized as a whole at the level of superphasal units. The implication potential of the subtext is not in all cases fully perceived and evaluated by the addressee without communicative losses.

The ironic implication containing implicit information cannot be perceived outside the context as the minimum marker of the semantic space of the implicit element of discourse / text. The close interaction of the horizontal context as a discursive use of a linguistic unit, determined purely by linguistic factors, and the vertical context – the historical and philological coordinates of the existence of a given artistic text – allow perceiving information in full. The complexity of irony is determined by the breadth of context that is necessary for decoding irony. The discourse form of irony representation is the ironic act during which the verbalization of the worldview of the subject of irony, as well as its perception by the addressee, is carried out. The character of the ironic act is determined by those intentions that are determinant for its producer: it becomes either an interpretative [14] or an ironic [15] act. Certainly, the irony in the literary text is an element of the author's worldview.

New directions in the study of irony designate two perspectives in its understanding – irony as a stylistic device and as a result of the synthesis of different levels of aesthetic cognition [3; 4; 5; 6; 8; 11; 12]. A particular emphasis is placed on the textual level of the implementation of irony, which involves the interaction of lexical and grammatical means, text-forming factors and text categories, ultimately forming the main compositional dominants of the artistic text. An important role is played by the attention of the modern linguistic paradigm to the study of communicative processes, which makes it necessary to turn to comprehending the ways of broadcasting information.

### 3. RESULTS

In the process of work the following results were obtained:

a) the ironic narrative as a specific way of text formation is constituted by special categories, among which the semantic space of the artistic text is characterized by special significance. The idiostyle of an ironist is always marked in the communicative structure of utterance through narrative strategies, which in turn ensures the functioning in the ironic text of lexico-semantic and syntactical means that manifest irony as a special sign of the axiological system and worldview of its producer;

b) the basis of the integrative model of topos of irony is its cognitive-semantic and communicative characteristics, objectified in the cultural space. The main result of the functioning of the topos of irony is the production of a situational context in which the effect of 'frustrated expectations', fundamental for the ironic artistic text, is realized;

c) the multidimensional phenomenon of irony is based on the realization of precedence and intertextuality; metatext in this perspective updates the linguocognitive properties of the semantic space of the ironic artistic text, revealing the author's assessments and the system of values in general. As material signs of intertextuality, precedent phenomena have the ability to manifest the dominant characteristics of an elitist linguistic personality. A producer of ironic text/discourse, referring to precedent phenomena, gets the opportunity to focus the recipient's attention on implicit but decoding-oriented meanings.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

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Irony cannot be qualified only as a linguistic phenomenon: it is sufficiently determined by the national picture of the world, by the mentality of the ethnos, by the national character. This allows speaking about the relevance of the study of irony as a linguistic phenomenon which has a specific historical and social character. An important methodological aspect in the study of the various manifestations of irony is the doctrine of the language personality, which predetermines the reference to the categories of the addresser and addressee and which clarifies the parameters of the communicative-pragmatic and suggestive potential of this multidimensional phenomenon. The study of irony cannot be limited to the parametrization of specifically ironic vocabulary: it is often possible to talk about lexico-syntactic means of its implementation, since irony is manifested in utterances, where an important role is precisely the syntactic structure, as well as word-forming and stylistic means.



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To distinguish linguistic and verbal irony, the criterion of context becomes fundamental. Thus, for language irony, a minimal context is required, or its absence at all, due to the language competence of the native speaker; linguistic irony can be realized in the case of fixation of ironic semantics in the general meaning of the word, which is reflected in dictionaries (noted as irony). The possibilities of verbal irony are related to the degree of immersion of the addressee in the context of the utterance: its marker is the referentiality of the ironic utterance as its correlation with reality. As a special case of verbal irony, individual author's irony can be qualified, realizing an aesthetic function, structuring text / discourse. It is the worldview of communicants reflected mentally in the form of cultural and historical information, socio-cultural norms, individual

characteristics of the communicants themselves that determines the cognitive potential of irony, and the success of ironic communication is determined in many ways by the implementation of the conventional nature of the addresser and the addressee's relations.

Ironic discourse as a kind of transformation of neutral discourse is able to detect the normalization and conventionality of models for building cognitive irony. It is the vertical context that becomes the determining factor for deepening the cognitive potential of irony in an artistic text: this system of norms and rules of reflection and reception of facts of the actual reality functions on the mental level, which facilitates the explication of irony at the structural semantic and pragmatic levels through various cognitive models, first of all, through logical contradictions. Stylistic and pragmatic functions of irony, nevertheless, in the artistic text and discourse are obvious: through the ironic acts the author objectifies their attitude to the characters, plot relations, communicating an additional connotation to all these artistic levels and denoting the attitude to themselves and the world, to the real and artistic. Explication of the axiological component of the social behavior rules and norms as a whole can be adequately realized through an ironic discourse that also carries out a text-forming function. For the phenomenon of irony, the level at which it is most fully manifested becomes structural-semantic.

The discourse form of irony representation is the ironic act during which the verbalization of the worldview of the subject of irony, as well as its perception by the addressee, is carried out. The character of the ironic act is determined by those intentions that are determinant for its producer: it becomes either an interpretative [Hutcheon 1994] or an ironic [See: Muecke 1969] act. Certainly, the irony in the literary text is an element of the author's worldview. Thus, A.V. Kuznetsova emphasizes: "The well-known thesis that the artistic text does not always presuppose facts as the starting point of the narrative but also forms an artistic reality that comprehends them, determines the study of the artistic text in the cognitive paradigm as an aesthetically motivated model of reality and verbal embodiment of the cognitive components of the conceptual system of the creator, and also as a representation of the structure and type of consciousness of the author" [Kuznetsova 2011: 155]. The starting point of producing irony is the author themselves, forming the meaning of ironic utterance, ethos, logo and pathos of the text. Adequate analysis of irony is possible when referring to the category of the author's image, which allows diversifying and parameterizing the phenomenon of irony.

The goal of irony, like of the comic in general, is to regulate phenomena and processes normatively, since the subject of irony always has some notion of the ideal that forms the basis of the assessment. The object is criticized precisely from the standpoint of this ideal due to its inconsistency and the presence of internal contradictions. It is the ideal that, according to the subject of irony, should contribute to the movement of the object to self-improvement, to progress. The communicative-pragmatic potential of irony can be realized only if such ideal is recognized, since the ironical utterance is always dual in nature - it expresses both hopes for the prospects of realizing the ideal and doubting its possibilities. Irony is characterized by a three-level complex of representation means, the choice of which depends on the communicative situation:

1) paralinguistic means are represented by kinetics (gestures, facial expressions, pantomime) and intonation (melody of speech, timbre, pausation, stress). For the ironic discourse, the verbal-paralinguistic nature of the means of expressing irony is a priority: the verbal channel translates the encoded information/pseudo-information on the hidden meaning, the paralinguistics conveys the code of the implied meaning. Paralinguistic

means as markers of rational information retain their influence in the sphere of colloquial speech, being used to explicate values, assessments and emotionality;

2) linguistic, mostly stylistic or lexical, means: stylistic contamination, expressive means (primarily epithets), vocabulary of different levels (for example, neologisms and archaisms), fantastic forms of narration, which, in the case of the subject's lack of confidence that the addressee possesses the information, are often backed up by paralinguistic means;

3) artistic text, in which the communicative process is mediated, uses specific means of manifesting irony – author's instructions, remarks, quotes, italics, parody and puns.

The expression of irony is determined by a complex of factors, among which the subjective and objective relationship between the value potentials of the object and the subject of irony should be singled out, as well as the moral measure and context, the nature of the relationship and the social status of participants in ironic communication, ethical and linguistic goals and objectives. Especially important for the realization of irony is the role of the context which can be broad and narrow. It is the awareness of the recipient of the context that constitutes the basic condition for the communicative success of irony. Let us also emphasize that, if linguocultural and/or socio-historical contexts are not taken into account, irony also does not reach its goal.

The criterion of the context allows distinguishing two types of irony – 'covered' and 'open', which differentiate in the degree of explication of the basic meaning. 'Covered' irony allows the subject to hide a negative attitude to the object behind the mask of positive evaluation while simultaneously pointing to it through the context. Such are the humorous or mocking irony, whose socio-critical pathos is significant, although it is hidden under praise and approval, often subject to fun and optimization functions. The 'open' irony does not try to hide the negative assessment when there is a contradiction in the direct meaning of the statement: one of the most widespread forms is rhetorical irony which does not have a specific individual addressee and is theatrical in nature – the subject, as it were, pronounces an unconverted monologue. Open irony is characterized on the broadest possible context understandable to wide public, which causes its proximity to satire and the development of accusatory pathos in its semantics.

New directions in the study of irony designate two perspectives in its understanding – irony as a stylistic device and as a result of the synthesis of different levels of aesthetic cognition [Vishnevskaya 2002; Ermakova 2002; Ivanova 2000; Kamenskaya 2001; Kuznetsova 2012; Pivoev 2002; Samygina 2013]. A particular emphasis is placed on the textual level of the implementation of irony, which involves the interaction of lexical and grammatical means, text-forming factors and text categories, ultimately forming the main compositional dominants of the artistic text. An important role is played by the attention of the modern linguistic paradigm to the study of communicative processes, which makes it necessary to turn to comprehending the ways of broadcasting information. Semantic multidimensionality, inherent in the artistic text, manifests itself in the implicit: a much larger volume of meanings is transmitted through the text than expressed in the direct and figurative meanings of lexical and syntactic units. In this respect, the study of irony is characterized by relevance and a significant heuristic potential.

The specific relationships observed in the structure of the linguistic sign reflect the correlations of the content plane and the expression plane which are characterized by a



certain autonomy of forms and meanings. Functional and substantial planes of the language are not congruent, which is determined by the 'asymmetric dualism of the linguistic sign' [Kartsevsky 2001: 81]. Researchers note in this connection that "the polyfunctionality of the expression plane and the homonymy of the units of the content plane are based on the lack of correspondence between the content plane (more extensive and numerous in terms of structural organization) and the simpler and 'smaller' expression plane" [Aznaurova 1977: 89].

The asymmetry of a linguistic sign from the standpoint of its systemic nature and functioning consists in the synthesis of the nominative meaning determined by its paradigmatics, and the 'increment of meaning' produced by the syntagmatics of lexical compatibility. The variety of forms of such asymmetry is due to its manifestation at all the levels of the language: from the sign and sign system to the processes characteristic of language and speech. The functioning of the linguistic sign determines the representation of asymmetric dualism in terms of norm/anomaly, and switching their registers creates the necessary stylistic marking. In this connection, the significance of implication and implicitness is immeasurably increasing.

Modern language science qualifies irony as one of the forms of implication, as it reveals the asymmetry of content and form, when the expression plane does not fully reflect the content plane. The implication can be implemented in the text partially or not verbalized at all, nevertheless, it is real and can be explicated. Implication is perceived by means of what is expressed in the text and context, but indirectly.

'The increment of meaning' produced by the artistic text allows coming to judgments not verbalized in it, which is essential for understanding the emotional and evaluative text, but also allows making meaningful conclusions about the literary personality of its producer [Tynyanov: 1977]. The emotionality of the utterance is transmitted mainly through implications, while the series of events in it are explicit. The main purpose of implication is to create mystification of the independence of the reader's and the author's assessments, although, of course, the author's worldview and its components allow creating the text. The implicational in a literary text contains a hidden assessment, subjective in nature. Such a subjective assessment, often negative, is the foundation of irony.

Undoubtedly, the implicitness of irony is always indicated by certain markers, which allows N.K. Salikhova to introduce the term 'irony signal' which is characterized by "contextual irrelevance of what is being said, appearing on the semantic or stylistic level" [Salikhova 1976: 69].

Naturally, the implicitness of irony in an artistic text is formed by a specific context, which in turn allows the recipient to adequately perceive and interpret the ironic act fixed in the coordinates of the sentence, paragraph, and text. G.V. Kolshansky interprets the context as "a set of formally fixed conditions under which the content of a linguistic unit (lexical, grammatical, etc.) is unambiguously revealed; while uniqueness is understood as the manifestation under given conditions of only one specific content of the linguistic form (for example, one meaning of a word, one meaning of a grammatical form, etc.)" [Kolshansky 2010: 47]. According to G.V. Kolshansky, there are three types of contexts:

- microcontext, the boundaries of which are determined by the sentence or statement;
- macrocontext, which occupies the volume of a paragraph / dialogical unity;

- megacontext, which often coincides in its volume with the integral artistic text.

Irony as a stylistic device is realized, first of all, in the volume of microcontext – the context in the traditional sense of the term, by which the following is understood:

- 1) the linguistic environment of a given unit; conditions, features of the use of this element in speech;
- 2) a segment of written speech, finished in the semantic sense, establishing the meaning of the word or phrase included in it [Ahmanova 2004: 206].

As a component of the individual author's worldview, irony is realized in the mega context, which allows speaking about its structuring function that shapes the ideological and thematic sphere of the artistic text. The context actualizes the multidimensional relations of the word with other words, which objectifies the systematic character of the relations of linguistic signs. In an artistic text, contextual relations are characterized by multidimensionality and extreme complexity. The semantic space of an artistic text concretizes such an important property of the context as its selectivity, focusing attention on the polysemy of linguistic units. Different-level irony is always based on the 'deployment' of the word semantics. Particular importance in the implicitness of irony in the micro, macro and mega contexts acquires a connotative component in the structure of the meaning of linguistic units, which "expresses the speaker's attitude towards the subject matter in the form of emotion or evaluation of the denoter" [Sternin 2015: 84]. The semantic structure of connotation includes evaluative, expressive, emotional and functional-stylistic components: "connotations characterize words according to evaluative, emotional and stylistic parameters and reflect knowledge about properties" [Maslova 1989: 108]. The denotative core of the meaning of the word becomes 'overgrown' with connotations, which does not prevent considering the denotative and connotative components of the meaning as equal, and the context in this case includes the estimated and expressive components [Shakhovskii 1982].

According to V.N. Telia, connotation is considered by linguistics in narrow and broad sense: in the first case, it appears as a component of the meaning represented in the secondary nomination of the language unit, which "complements its objective meaning with an associative image of the designated reality on the basis of awareness of the internal form of the name" [Telia 1986: 193]. The connotation in this sense "corresponds with the everyday experience, the cultural and national knowledge of those speaking the language, with their worldview and expresses the rational or emotional (by the nature of the evaluation) attitude of the speaker to what is designated. Connotation in the broad sense is any component that supplements the subject-conceptual (or denotative) content of a language unit and gives it an expressive function" [Telia 1986: 193].

Connotation is always associative, which gives it a special status in the process of implementing the individual author's concept of the world: "The connotative attribute, according to the generally recognized opinion, serves as the semantic correlate of the associative attribute. This property determines the specifics of the phenomenon. Connotation does not point to the world but refers to the association, as it were, thus creating an 'invisible' world, but in itself is not an association. <...> Although connotation is realized by native speakers, it is implicit, and therefore is not reflected in the corresponding dictionaries" [Maslova 1989: 116]. The existence of complex

interconnections of the connotative component and irony is natural, since the context necessary for its decoding actualizes the connotations of linguistic units. Thus, for an adequate interpretation of irony, a recipient often needs not only and not so much a microcontext as an integral artistic text. The so-called 'vertical context' is also important [Hübbenet 1984], which incorporates deep-seated socio-cultural and historical-literary meanings into the interpretation of the text.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In the course of the study, the necessity of analyzing and describing the phenomenon of irony in an artistic text from the standpoint of the dichotomy of the categories of the *usus-individual-authorial*, rather than the *norm-anomaly* is substantiated, although aesthetic communication is fundamentally fixed on violations of the norm. To create an ironic effect and realize irony in an artistic text, there must be a deliberate violation in the sphere of the *usus*, which usually attracts the attention of the recipient and provides the necessary stylistic and pragmasemantic effect. An important meaning of irony in the semantic space of the artistic text is also conditioned by its ability to objectivate the author's and the character's modality. In addition, irony is usually necessary to convey in the artistic text the author's relationship to the surrounding reality, their dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs. The intensity of the text objectifies the worldview character of irony, forming the basis of aesthetic principles, dominant for the author of the text.

Two types of irony are of fundamental importance for a literary text: text-forming and conceptual irony; the contextual one is a separate sub-type of text-forming irony, and each of these has its own set of implementation tools, a complex of functions and a combination of components. The phenomenon of irony in the literary text is also realized through metatext. It can be noted in this connection that any text has a certain metatext potential, realized partially or completely, either explicitly or at the subtext level. The nature of the realization of metatext is determined by a complex of factors, and the level of the speaker's linguistic and textual competence has special significance here, as well as the ability to reflect on the word and be attentive to the interests of the addressee.

Irony, representing a form of critical perception of reality, has an evaluative character, arising and functioning as a result of the interaction of stylistic, communicative-pragmatic and metatextual potentials of ironic contexts. Decoding the ironic sense of the utterance is based on the perception and interpretation of the components of the artistic text, designed to realize a certain kind of potential. The linguistic and cultural aspect of the study of irony is based on identifying background information, in particular, on the analysis of precedent phenomena as 'bunches' of ethnospecific knowledge, manifested in the literary text. Contextual concretization of the ironic components of the discourse actualizes the linguistic cultural competences of the addressee, in particular, using extra-linguistic phenomena in this process, which carry out the connection of ironic situations among themselves. The language worldview on the cognitive basis of the language personality translates, among other things, the linguistic and cultural phenomenon of irony. Receptive-interpretative activity aimed at decoding the ironic text fits into the coordinates of the cultural and historical context with the determining value of the individual psychological characteristics of the recipient's personality, primarily their axiological system and life experience. It should be noted, however, that from the standpoint of society the irony is always characterized as an act of aggression, whereas

individually it is capable of causing sympathy usually due to the intellectual and cultural level of the recipient's development.

The hypothesis of the dependency of the individual ironist's worldview on personal characteristics is confirmed during the research. Specificity of the subject of irony is conceptually manifested in the text/discourse by means of various ways of representation of the producer's worldview, thanks to which the meanings significant for the elitist linguistic personality function implicitly/explicitly. The ironic narrative, in which the reappraisal of values takes place, reveals un verbalized negative evaluation semes in the semantics and concept of values embodied in the national axiological system. Hence, the speech-activity of the ironist is a synthesis of mental functions and actualization of various modifications, of contextual-reinterpreted linguistic and textual units.

## 6. RECOMMEDATION

The article is intended for professional linguists, philologists, historians and culturologists, as well as for the teaching staff of humanitarian institutions, for students and post-graduate students of these disciplines.

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