

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2022.29.1.28>**СЕМИОТИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ И ПРОЦЕССЫ В АВТОРСКОМ ИРОНИЧЕСКОМ ДИСКУРСЕ**

Научная статья

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**Аннотация**

Статья посвящена рассмотрению понятия иронического дискурса, его структуры, закономерностей, месту и роли иронии, а также семиотических процессов в нём. Цель работы – рассмотреть структуру иронического дискурса, связь с когнитивными процессами участников коммуникации и уточнить, что оказывает влияние на восприятие адресатом сообщения. В результате исследования выяснено, что иронический дискурс соотносится с когнитивными процессами в сознании коммуникантов и внеязыковая информация вместе с совокупностью языковых средств оказывает влияние на восприятие адресатом сообщения. Его основная задача – восприятие, анализ зашифрованного автором иронического послания. Процесс коммуникации тесно связан с семиотикой, где знак понимается как двусторонняя сущность. Результаты данного исследования могут быть применены в различных дисциплинах и исследованиях по филологии, литературоведению и языкознанию. При этом были использованы методы дистрибутивного, компонентного, дифференциального, текстового анализа, индукции и дедукции.

**Ключевые слова:** семиотика, знак, вербальный, экстралингвистический, текст.

**SEMIOTICAL ASPECTS AND PROCESSES IN AN AUTHOR'S IRONICAL DISCOURSE**

Research article

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**Abstract**

The article is devoted to irony as a culture phenomenon, which is examined by various aspects of science. The term of an author's ironic discourse is examined and the peculiarities of ironical communication. Also in this article language is studied as a sign system with an author's illocutionary intention and a recipient's perlocutionary reaction, and also the influence of extralinguistic factors, including the way of organizing a text communication and an author's consciousness peculiarities. Also the influence of the inner and outer contexts on the recipient's understanding of the information is examined in the research. Examples are given from works of English authors.

**Keywords:** semiotics, verbal, extralinguistic, text, sign.

**Introduction**

Irony has been studied and used for several centuries. It is becoming more and more a separate intellectual discipline and has become an object of examining by the Humanities. V.M. Pivoev in his work "Irony as a cultural phenomenon" thinks possible to speak about philosophy and linguistics of irony, speaks about a big potential of changes of it under the influence of social – cultural conditions of realization of it. He finds irony a polifunctional phenomenon, belonging to the sphere of examining of linguistics, philology, literature studying, esthetics and philosophy, semiotics and psychology [Pivoev 2000: 50].

An author's ironical discourse, demonstrating superiority, presents a communication event and at the same time a process, connected with the cognitive processes in communicators' consciousness, on whom extralinguistic information influences, and which are expressed by the totality of language and extralinguistic means.

An author's ironical discourse always realizes an author's subjective modality and has mostly a personal character. In modern researches there is an opinion that in the process of an ironical communication there is the necessity of an active intellectual, laughing and playing contact of the participants. The effectiveness of the communication depends on the correlation of subjective and traditional, implicit and explicit components in the utterance semantics.

**Discussion**

A communicative structure of a text, which must carry a definite sense, determines the model of communication chosen by the author, his interconnection with the receiver and definite speech strategies. The system and structure of an esthetic utterance themselves as a communication act suppose a receiver of the information, an addresser – a reader. He is, first of all, a participant of the agreement, who took a number of conditions-obligations. Among them the main is – decoding the author's many – side codified report, which is addressed to the reader, provoking him to take part in the game, in understanding the true meaning of the text, in enriching the report got with his own pictures and meanings. First, the receiver pays attention to the verbal component. It is here, where he looks for signals of irony. The key to the utterance as ironical is behind the limits of the utterance itself. That's why the receiver must appeal to the outer context, which can contain signals of a various difficulty. The outer context is a situation, in which all the three sides: the speaker, the addresser and the irony object take part. Quotation marks may be a true signal of irony (they become assistants of un verbal signals, helping an addressee to understand an author's

true opinion of an irony's object), the changes of the inner context, the appearance of a new referent, intertextual connections or the utterance. Sometimes it is necessary for defining who or what is the object of irony, in other cases – to understand what kind of attitude exactly to the irony object the speaker has. According to Orlova, the variety of irony verbal signals provides understanding of the speaker's hidden intention. The choice of a text organization characterizes not only the genre nature of a text, but also the author's consciousness specialties [4].

The inner context principally differs from the outer and is a ground for numerous interpretations. The outer context functions as a set of limits, allowing to interpret the utterance as ironical.

Both contexts play different roles in the interpretation of irony. Moreover, both contexts dynamically interact with each other. That's why more often in the process of interpretation of an ironical utterance the addresser relies on both the verbal component and the knowledge of the outer situation. Their role is to say to the receiver about the additional meaning.

Finally, the suitable for the author's idea reader becomes a creative founder of his own sense, the world picture of the work of art and even his own image system. That means that the reader recodes and, in the known degree, appropriates the work of art in the indefinite limits. The variety of verbal signals provides understanding of the speaker's hidden intention. In an ironical text, according to N.N. Chuich, language units get an unusual interpretation, and situations are gone to somewhat unexpected categories. An irony interpretation is a difficult pragmacommunicative task, demanding to differ the meaning of the utterance and the meaning of the speaker. It is still complicated by the fact that a receiver creates relations between himself, the utterance and the object of irony, which can have different aims: setting the relations of commanding, critics or praising of the irony object, aggression, etc. So, the receiver must not only identify the speaker's ironical intention, but also decide, what the aim of irony is in this situation. The signals and markers of irony can contain elements of different levels of a communicative context – linguistic, psychological, cultural, which transfer the active dialogue of an author and a reader into a communication with the cultural context [7].

Semiotics is closely connected with processes of communication, artistic as well. Ch. Morris and R. Carnap understand a sign as some material carrier. F. de Saussure and L. Elmslev think a sign a two – side essence: a material carrier is called meaning and what it presents a meaningfulness of a sign.

The structure, in its turn consists of the signs themselves and the relations between them. So, an ironical image gives a feeling of the sense multidimensionality of the space, available to the mind in the sign meaning, facing the paradoxes, which sharply change the way of the thought. It doesn't let the mind concentrate in the frames of some known meaning of the described, that means it creates the principal multidimensionality of the senses and their units. The smallest semiotic unit of irony is the semiotic code which is formed by the sender of the ironical utterance under the influence of the receiver's expected reaction and extralinguistic factors. The false decoding of the ironical code leads to the misunderstanding of the implicit sense of the utterance and the communicative failure. The code represents a system, which includes a structure of signs and rules of its functioning. According to U.M. Lotman, an artistic space of a text presents an individual(author's) model of the world and exists in connection with the appropriate for a given culture semiotic sphere. Then the sender is called an author, the receiver is a reader and signs are esthetic language signs. So, a text space is a semiotic space, made by signs. It, in its turn, joins the large semiotic space of a given culture – a semiosphere, representing many languages. An artistic text is a model of a semiosphere, which is a semiotic model of the world, set in a given culture [2].

The greatest private disciplines in the modern language knowledge and the theory of text and discourse are: *paralinguistics* (studies sound codes of un verbal communication), *auscultation* (studies hearing perception of sounds and people's audio behaviour in the process of communication), *okulesics* (studies eye language and people's visual behaviour in the communication).

In the fragment below the author's estimation of the conditions in which *Oliver Twist* was born, without decoding his ironical intention can seem unreal: as if he really thinks that the baby would surely have died if while his birth there had been caring grannies, wise doctors, experienced nurses, and not a drunk beggar – woman and a parish surgeon. So, the main character in Ch. Dickens' novel "*Oliver Twist, Or, The Parish Boy's Progress*" was born in a working house despite all the obstacles and claimed about his birth with the soul – breaking cry [9].

Also an example of auscultation is comical-ironical dialogue of Mr Hamfield and an ass in the same book, when he himself pronounces ass sounds, teasing the animal. 9]

In the pseudo-dumb dialogue between a dog and a cat in the novel "*Three men in a boat*" the contrast between the danger, in which the cat was, and her calm behaviour, which surprised dog Montmorency, reflects in the intonation and character of their speech exchange: the cat behaves as a polite lady at a tea ceremony, though keeping the initiative in the conversation, and the dog is constantly trying to retire. The soundless dialogue gives an additional sharpness and paradox [Jerome 2005: 100].

Also *kinesics* (studies gestures and gesture movements, processes and systems); *gaptics*(studies touching language and communication); *gastics* (studies sign and communicative functions of food and drinks, eating, about cultural and communicative functions of drugs and treating); *olfaction* (studies smell language, given with the help of smells, and smell role in communication); *procemics*(studies communication space, its structure and functions) and *chronemics* (studies communication time, its structural, semiotic and cultural functions).

Lord Henry's original understanding of beauty in O. Wilde's novel "*The Picture of Dorian Grey*" positively contradicts to the traditional. He thinks that real beauty ends where an intellectual expression begins [12].

In W.S. Maugham's novel "*The Painted Veil*" the ironical and at the same time dramatic effect appears in the strain between the wife's artificial indignation, who doesn't love her husband, but suggests him reasonable, as she thinks, reasons of her refusal to go with her husband to Japan-and the simple-heartedness of the honest husband, disappointed by the wife's refusal from the trip. The ironical information can be explicated only with the help of intellectual efforts and the knowledge of the general sense of the novel and the context [11].

An ironical utterance can be connected with another text or an utterance. An outer signal of such a connection of two texts (and two situations) becomes a word game. So, even a few lines from G.G. Byron's poem "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" can't be read with understanding of the sense if you don't know who Brute and Virgil are [8].

In W. Thackeray's novel "Vanity Fair" the story-teller with the evident feeling of acciological superiority, and moral as well, tells, how greatly a relative of the mercenary characters changes the attitude towards the old lady, when they learn that she has got a bill in a bank: "What a dignity it gives an old lady, that balance at the banker's! How tenderly we look at her faults if she is a relative (and may every reader have a score of such), what a kind, good-natured old creature we find her!" [13].

G. L. Prokofiev speaks about the asymmetry of a speech act which is characterized by the lack of coincidence of the initial psychological state of the speaker and the direct meaning of the utterance, with the help of which this act is realized. In the terms of the indirect speech act it is understood in the next way: the illocutive function and the intention of the speaker disagrees with the basis illocution, which is the propositional content of the utterance [6].

For example, the method of ironical explanation. With the help of the introductory clause at least and the remark about his own version of the origin of the addresser's fortune, the author underlines his ironical attitude to the truth of the story [9].

So, in a very funny and, as it can seem, not demanding to the reader book by J.K. Jerome "Three men in a Boat" some dramatic and deeply hidden lyrical motives can be unexpectedly found, "laugh through tears". For example, in antithesis between the character's too careful attitude to his toothbrush, which became his demon power, and senseless, mean-spirited existing, which reflects him and his life insignificance [10].

In the next fragment from G.G. Byron's novel "Beppo" it's difficult to understand how exactly the author treats his country and the political institutes, if, on the one hand, his estimation contains ironical intentions, and, on the other hand, everything, said in the main text, is disproved in brackets:

"England! with all thy faults I love thee still,"  
I said at Calais, and have not forgot it;  
I like to speak and lucubrate my fill;  
I like the government (but that is not it);  
I like the freedom of the press and quill;  
I like the Habeas Corpus (when we've got it);  
I like a parliamentary debate,  
Particularly when 'tis not too late..." [8].

It happens so, that the situation itself makes one understand a word or a phrase in a sense, directly opposite to the traditional. Putting them in another context changes the meaning onto the ironical. For example, Lord Henry's discussion about the paradox of out of place generosity in O. Wilde's book "The Picture of Dorian Grey". Lord Henry calls ironically "deep generosity" the situation, when a person gives away what he badly needs himself [12].

In the fragment below, taken from G.G. Byron's poem "Don Juan", an ancient, Renaissance and enlightening understanding of a person, on one side, as if coming back to the initial understanding of a person's place in the nature, is overthought. But Byron's man is not archaic, he is too, in the author's opinion, modernized. And modernized as much as allows himself incomprehensible entering in his own nature, changing himself in the worst way using the modern instruments. The playing, laughing and ironical atmosphere creates an antithesis "health" and "diseases" (indecent diseases); the "nature" and its ugly civilized analogues. The author himself is surely on the side of the healthy and natural person's nature-against its modernized and artificial distortions. And it can be seen in the use of the neutral and invective lexical material in the description of "strange" biological, medical, political and social innovations of the modern world [8].

Everything said before reflects the difficulty of the processes, which take part in the interpretation of the speaker's illocution, the receiver's perlocution and the ironical utterance itself.

The necessity of creating a text is conditioned by the need of communication, that's why, as any speech act, it is oriented to understanding by a definite communication partner. For the successful communication the pragmatic competence chosen by an author is very important. Every artistic utterance is closely connected with the present and past epochs, and an esthetics as well, with an individual consciousness and collective unconscious, has in itself a prognostic potential. And this everything makes what can be called a verbal – esthetic picture of the world, including an artistic code and peculiarities of a reception in the process of an artistic communication. It is not a fragment of nature and life, taken from their great context by a chance and replaced to the artificial space. It's a finished, relatively complete, potentially existing and coded semantic totality, where the conception of not only the artist, but his contemporaries as well, and/or brothers on humanity of the world and a place of a person in it is reflected [3].

### Conclusion

The results of the semiotic researches demonstrate the parallelism of a language semantics and other sign systems. Though a natural language is the most difficult, powerful and a universal sign system, immediate carrying of semiotic methods to linguistics has a problem character. But linguistics methods and a linguistic semantics as well influenced actively and continue influencing on semiotics developing, and on the traditional linguistic understanding of irony as well as a phenomenon, conditioned by asymmetry of a language sign and a way of the second nomination.

Rhetoric has worked out in details the principals and methods of keeping the receiver's attention, among which are the most interesting in linguistic attitude general-addressed appeals with the use of different sign systems besides the verbal one (intonation, mimicry, gestures, etc.)

Cultural-semiotic background, very important for the sense, and the structure, and the language material of the work of art composes as a system of precedent phenomena of different size and different un verbal components, called “languages” or “paralinguistics”/ “unverbal semiotics”. The term “unverbal semiotics” seems to us the most exact and also coming out of the space of scientific discussions about the term “paralinguistics” content.

Setting on getting the ironical effect is also typical for antiproverbs, where the speaker “plays” with a proverb form. All scientists mark their closeness to an anecdote. Antiproverbs can be considered as a realization of an esthetic task, even very modest: “an ordinary person often feels a conscious or unconscious desire not only to use the language in utilitarian aims, but also feel and make another person feel an esthetic feeling by the speech form itself. Most often this feeling is realized in an idea of setting on the comic effect.” For example, “The more firewood, the less forest is”, “It’s better to see one time than to hear a hundred times, because after hearing a hundred times, you can go crazy” [1].

Making conclusions we can approve that semiotic processes with verbal and un verbal components play a great role in creating a literary text and in the communication. Decoding the ironical effect allows to find the asymmetry or the antinomy of implicit and explicit means in the author – reader communication.

**Конфликт интересов**

Не указан.

**Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

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