

## Productivity of Irony In the Work of English Authors

**Jayson A. Dela Fuente**

*Associate Professor, State University of Northern Negros, Philippines*

**Mohira Amanturdievna Eshkuvatova**

*Department of Theory and practice of translation, Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature named after Alisher Navoi, Uzbekistan*

### Abstract

The article's section discusses the dramatic and phenomenological nature of irony, characterizing it as a super-functional form of discourse. The subsequent survey makes it possible to solve the above-mentioned research goals - to evaluate the impact of particular indicators on irony productivity. The overall assumption of the research is that irony is an extensive show-window for showing the human workspace - what people do, how they adjust actions, regulate behaviors, and share norms of speech with others. Its interactivity and meaning reinforce each other, making irony adjustable through insightful praise or recognition towards the probable recipient. Nineteenth-century novels of the English written language are characterized by an abundance of forms of the speech of literary characters, including irony. Against this background, the article analyzes the situational factors of the increased or decreased productivity of irony and the author's speech in general, the surface and deep structure of irony, its implementation. The conclusions make it possible to draw on conceptual conclusions about author's speech, allied to the norms of language and textuality, ideology and style, world understanding, those who use various realizations of irony, its different types and techniques. They help to reveal the individual style of an author and to approach theoretical problems with regard to its specific rendering.

**Keywords:** irony, productivity, super-functional form, English written language.

### Introduction

Aristotle traces the first mention of irony to Socrates, who said that he made an oracle's revelation that he is the wisest of all men due to his unique ability to pretend to be a fool and show his wisdom to honorably ridicule when it's really worth it. This concept of irony as a tool for exposure in the work. Subsequently, many writers have practiced irony to the fullest. It is not the thing itself to be comical; on the contrary, irony is a weapon with which to take aim at external comic objects. Then how can such authors penetrate their discussion without becoming ridiculous? Here again irony comes into play, and is employed as a mask, with which to pretend that the writer is not seriously propounding ideas or criticizing the existing system. If he is taken at his surface value, he is not to blame; it is his own fault if people do not think the better of him for his serious and moderately expressed views. (Lytra, 2021)

### Definition and Types of Irony

Such a definition of irony was proposed and substantiated by logical views by V.V. Ivanov, who worked out and introduced in a critique a special term to name it – the critical irony. According to V. V. Ivanov, irony is "a particular realization of artistic negation that expresses the author's position with respect to the content of the statement being negated". "Aesthetic negation can have both de-social non-expressive nature, i.e., irony in the same verse, fiction genres (the oxymoronic stereotype of the critic is all that funny, practiced prettier from phraseology), and specific forms with various marks caused by affirmation inequality (the so-called 'irony')."

The paper focuses on studying the productivity of verbal irony in the work of English authors of the past and its relationship with author-valued stylistic resources. Special attention is paid to such a component of artistic irony as a lie. The object of the study is an author-specific selection of linguistic and stylistic means, including the use of irony as a specific form of epithet, characteristic, and idiom. The subject of the analysis is the specific means of creating an ironic positioning of the author through the use of a system of general and author-specific linguistic expressive means, as well as the latter's implementation in the form of author-specific forms of hypostyle. (Aguert, 2022)

### **Historical Context of Irony in English Literature**

The opposite side of longstanding stereotypes considered the problematics of irony in a fairy tale. The effect of its interpretation, as a rule, was negative, since there is no initial setting in favor of applying a different modern idea. In an adult ironic story, everything can be exactly the opposite. The reader understands many of these situations and motivations out of the literary context, and the effect of such ironies is not less than the second grade. A new word was the Gradual classification of literary-ironic techniques invented by stylistics of the late twentieth century. Due to different levels of humor, the irony system in literary text has formed a discourse that makes analysis possible using the conceptual apparatus of interdisciplinary communications.

Irony is inherent in the language and thought process. In everyday speech, it fulfills a significant didactic function by hinting at something while the level of consciousness argues in the opposite direction. Under these conditions, the cognitive efficiency of irony depends on the rigidity of stereotypes in the consciousness of the speaker's audience. Whatever the price a person has paid for already established associations, the speaker clearly rarely seeks to change them. The need for the recipient's involvement in the demonstration is satisfied; however, no influence is made on the structure of stereotypes. Nonetheless, the naturalness of many ironies leads numerous scholars to the conclusion of its unbreakable connection with the language. (Fuchs, 2023)

### **Theoretical Frameworks for Analyzing Irony**

Here we have it virtually nonexistent, or quite off the public record, in the specifically theoretical works coming from other easier. And despite the longevity and the much broader agreement which the topic has commanded in moderation or practice, there is just as much disagreement about what it is and how its elusive nature is to be depicted or displayed. As a first and obvious distinction, does irony always rely on the telling of a lie, on speaking the truth with intent to deceive or mislead? This distinction provides the now-classical triad of naive falsehood, the speaker knows the truth but talks of

contradictions, and hypocrisy, speech in the service of a secret, concealed from the audience. (Kreuz, 2020)

Since (like fiction, I suggest) irony is an artifice, an antithetical disposition, perhaps it is no more idle to imagine that it might lead to lively and more comprehensive fulfillment than it is to indulge with fiction. The possibility of this "achievement" must, at any rate, as in fiction, be an ultimate concern in any viable theory. In recognizing the advances, despite the separation from fiction, which recognition now makes feasible a sequential alignment of discussion with that of the preceding chapter. The fact of hypocrisy lies in ambiguity, and literary usage implies only a wider spectrum. Similarly, in a closely related central chapter, Monnier has occupied the grounds of modern science fiction, which would elsewhere have served as an introduction to the present. It can hardly be said that English scholars have been thrifty with the scarce and spare instances.

### **Irony as a Rhetorical Device**

In every language, there are specific means, such as the use of irony, to influence the emotions of the reader or listener, capture his or her attention, and express stylistic individuality. Irony combines the logical content and the emotional overtones of the sentence to create an intricate composition that often lacks a clear and logical connection between the speaker's real intentions and the words that he or she uses. In many respects, this is what makes irony so special, as well as an excellent means to evoke a range of emotions, from humor to drama. In other words, the above qualities of irony are why the academics and linguists and philosophers have conducted so many discussions about its unique contribution to effective differentiation in the content of the original text, the way in which the text shows the characters' internal processes, and the way the author influences the emotions and consciousness of the reader. (Pfeifer and Lai2021)

### **Irony in the Context of Postmodernism**

It is very common to see irony in the work of English authors. This fact attracts the attention of researchers and encourages them to explore its productivity, originality, and deeper layers of meaning. Firstly, one must note that making the text one's means of expression presupposes the creation of parody, ironic or otherwise. This is mostly done for those characters who must be described through the form of verbal representation and for whom educated speech is typical. High style and irony are akin; they share a number of properties. Stylistic choices result from the worldview of the writer, who may use the creation of parody, irony, and high style as an integral intellectual enterprise to shape characters after their speech. Typically, irony is a deliberate revelation of the world, reflecting in it the nature of social order and the eye of the writer, their approach, and understanding.

The ability to grasp irony and use it in one's work helps generate ideas and enables artists to make creative observations of the world. Even though fiction genres differ in their content, specificity, and direction, irony remains an integral feature for every artist and in every genre. It is these differences that help authors shape their individual voices, make talent manifest itself, and influence readers. However, if the irony of a writer is natural and properly employed, only a sophisticated reader can actually appreciate its nuances.

### **Irony in the Works of Shakespeare**

As noted by K.M. Walshim, Shakespeare's characters, including these tragic heroes, report to another merchant - money and goods can take away from a person's human form of appearance and the magnitude of moral significance. So when Mr. Richard Bury reaches the point of his virtuous selflessness, he finds it easier to get down with his waistcoat (only two rows) and go to dinner, and Richard is transformed into a swine or a fool. However, this giving of representations of characters with all the advantages of existing species, and even its essential features, does not lend a playful principle - borrowed from him, stability, and contempt. (Knapp, 2024)

Shakespeare proclaims the greatness of man in his "beta" characters, and this is completely consistent with his commitment to progressivism as no longer being the driving force behind scientific and productivity issues. "Alpha" heroes, noble, bold, and self-sacrificing, are inadequate and unfit for the seventeenth-century hero. "And for the ideologists of the Restoration, the characters of tragedies of heroes who had been torn from the genre of the heroic work of the higher classes were poorly turned out."

### **Irony in Shakespeare's Tragedies**

The opposition of romantic desire and tragic strife is the conventional structural principle of Shakespeare's tragedies. Development of these tragic patterns reveals irony as an organizing principle and presiding intellectual force. Shakespeare surely explores the destructive consequences of human action and passion, but not to explain the tragic archetype, not to account for desire-strife. Such has been the fruitless endeavor of past criticism, which interprets Shakespeare's tragedies as dramatized explanations of tragic conflict, as attempts to express the causes, emotional or moral, of tragic strife. No, Shakespeare's characters perpetrate violent acts because they long for fulfillment, moral if not physical; they live in a world of constant desire, a world where their cherished beliefs, social order, moral certitudes, and ethical desires are constantly betrayed by their world. The proper accent of tragedy is irony, not a classical or traditional irony by which one doubts the effectiveness of knowledge or threatens the reign of truth, but before anything else, a poetic irony of voice.

### **Irony in Shakespeare's Comedies**

The Taming of the Shrew, the other early comedy, on the other hand, is more ironic, mainly because of its subplot. Shakespeare separated it from its Italian sources and expanded it, inventively using the characters and the humor familiar to him from his Plautine comedy, which he still found good to borrow. By contrast, he let the main plot remain Italian and its irony tends to be less comic and more dark and sarcastic. The latter half of Henry VI, part 2, has moments of such ironic comedy, deriving largely from the mistakes publicly made by Gloucester whereby he falls into Somerset's trap, so that the double meanings within both the asides and the advice are crystal clear to the audience, and their amusement is aroused as the characters rush off to bring disaster upon themselves.

Shakespeare's comedies are generally more ironic than his tragedies, and some are more ironic than others. Of the earlier comedies, the Comedy of Errors is one of the least ironic. Its humor comes from its use of mistaken identity, the audience knowing what its characters cannot. The humor of its

complications, as the Syracusians and Ephesians continually confuse the two Antipholuses and two Dromios, does not depend directly on the verbal ambiguity beloved of the rhetoricians, and here Shakespeare was able to exploit to the full the comic possibilities of Plautus' original without having to resort to the tedious sophistries of logic. (Cartwright, 2021)

### **Irony in the Works of Jane Austen**

It could mean that in Jane Austen's time, a woman was supposed to be agreeably possessed, rich, and distinguished above all. Her natural appearance and luxury of clothes had to assure the greatest possible success because the only thing that could support her in a life of unhappiness was success. This type of woman was protected in a man's society but was not given (readiness and capability to follow passions). She had to dress in fine silks, paint herself gingerly, make conjectures, steal hearts, and play upon his fine feelings. At the same time, she was called to build and manage her man; she had to stimulate interest, amuse, comfort, and encourage her man—at the price of sacrifice, at the cost of degradation of her moral and spiritual dignity.

The aim of the research was to investigate what may underlie the use of irony in the texts under consideration by the authors and what features of it were employed to make the authors more convincing. The author's goal was to reveal the role of irony in the life of English society, and to stress that in the process of forming ideals the ironic impulse played a significant part. Examples from the novels of Jane Austen illustrate the thesis that the ideas about true ladyhood cherished by her protagonists could not have been described without irony, especially in relation to Emma who underwent considerable mental changes, because without irony her overvaluing and condescension, selfishness and egoism, self-righteousness and extravagance appeared finally offensive. Therefore, in the works of the writers, we find the authors' irony characterizing all the really educated people who are governed by high moral standards, strong will, and common sense.

### **Irony in 'Pride and Prejudice'**

As for Austen's irony, she is a master of irony in an objective modus, for whom, paradoxically, the image of the narrator is completely blurred - no markers, qualities, or characteristics associated with the author can be traced in the works. This objectivity of the comments can be creatively reassigned to the character, or to the author or to some other characters presented in the work, who, perhaps, become the objects of the evaluation of the author, expressed almost through the lips of the character. This is largely facilitated by the dialogism of modern prose, the presence of the author of an ironic-reader, as well as the ideal of democracy, also present in the work of Austen. There is no doubt that access to brief critical explication of the existing norms, overspace ideals, matches the cognitive interests of the generation of instant insults, and leads to a leveling of the relationship between a literary work and genre norms. At the same time, the lack of a didactic ending, which many readers skeptically attribute to the text and the genre, speaks of deep moral reflection, the author's faith in knowledge and the ethical potential of the reader.

Mastering language, authors have many lexical units, tens, or even hundreds of literary techniques at their disposal to create the effect that they are interested in achieving. One of the techniques of artistic discourse and, in our opinion, one of the most effective of them is irony. At the same time,

irony in professional criticism has little in its specific definition, which is especially evident in the difficulties of distinguishing between other stylistic figures, in particular comparing irony to such a similar figure as a paradox. Therefore, irony is most often understood as a speech act with an evaluative coloring, achieved by directly expressing a negative opinion opposing the objective state represented by the statement. Its distinctive features include contempt, substitution of values, and negation. Of course, in artistic texts, one can find irony of various views, and not only pejorative or humiliating in relation to any addressee.

### **Irony in 'Emma'**

The evolution of a comprehensive literary style involves the synthesis of an appropriate system for the vivid communication of values, ideas, and ultimately relationships within the author's world, and the specification of the specific rules and parameters of actual structure and syntax. Austen's favorite author, Samuel Richardson, used the real language of real life, but associated enhancing its beauty to give a sender color to fables of his own invention. In his successful and unsuccessful rendezvous, crises, and sometimes at moments of pathos or high excitement, the fact of the truthfulness is enhanced by an ironical application of the language more appropriated to the ideal of the beauty of and sonalilteariness.

The central problem of Austen's Emma might, with equal justice, be regarded as a problem of style. In the conversation of the characters, snobbishness is often evidenced by sentences built up to obvious anti-climax. Decorum is suggested through a manner of verbal mutual evasion, while the vacuous confusion of Frank Churchill and Harriet Smith in their witty word-gums is smoothly advanced. It might be thought, however, that the use of such words accommodates the character of the individual within the conventions of a given milieu, and that the style serves as a vehicle for the meaningful communication of their universal relevance of the ideas expressed alongside the specific instance of their concurrence. It would not have been right, according to the principles of real probability and practice in the English language, to make anyone in Emma speak the whole time in blank verse, which the profession of the governess of characters would fit them for. But they would speak more to the purpose and to the probability.

### **Irony in the Works of Oscar Wilde**

Oscar Wilde lived an extraordinary life, even if his great success is sometimes over-exaggerated. He was born in Dublin, where his father, William Wilde, was Archivist and Superintendent of the National Gallery. His mother, Jane Francesca, a poet and folklorist, taught the young Oscar to believe in unfulfilled possibilities, including possibly the possibility of fairies. His education in Dublin and later at Oxford was exemplary, and his gift for paradox was already emerging: "I have explosive desires. Mere love doesn't express them, just as mere intellect doesn't. The genuine aristocratic love for a woman is that of a great woman for a little man. It is artificial, and even appears a little grotesque, for it is one that is great to take notice of one that is little, to stick to one that is ordinary. But I will love in the Platonic fashion, though with all the passions of a medieval knight. It became obvious to everyone that I was philandering with science. It belongs to the lambkins, and I was always a lambkin. I wanted to be an Arnolfini, not a Giotto, let alone a Queen Anne's tuppenny".



One of the sharpest and most prolific practitioners and analysts of irony was the author Oscar Wilde. Though most noted for his plays - "The Importance of Being Earnest" is the vessel through which many generations have encountered Oscar Wilde - some of his most original thought and the most surprising developments in the history of irony are found in his critical writing, such as "The Picture of Dorian Gray" and his essays. Wilde's life only occasionally lived up to the high expectations that his prefaces raised. He did write, however, that "a preface should be personal," and some of the same gifts that allowed him to explore irony so acutely also made his ethical and metaphysical problems more pressing.

### **Irony in 'The Importance of Being Earnest'**

Henry James, Gerald Weales has pointed out, loved the role of Chinese gong or whistle in his fiction. Wilde also believed art, for him mostly literature, to be the moral autobiography of its author, but he loved to see the artist not just "in relation" to his material but sending his voice forth in laughter and knowing that his laugh was redolent of a very different character. The reason James loved gongs was because the gong was a muscular expression of the work's tone, a musical way of rendering three-dimensionally the two meanings of the words about to be said. In irony, the latter meaning is usually expressed by a relatively dingy, "realistic" picture contained in the glowing, sunny, present picture.

When we speak of the irony of "The Importance of Being Earnest", we not only mean that the play contains a great deal of irony, but that it belongs in a special sense to the decorative or rhetorical class of ironies. That is, every one of Wilde's remarks about something is not what it seems. When two people say the same thing, they often mean something quite different. Irony, then, results in a degree of multiplicity of meaning, as opposed to a simple confusion of sign and thing. If something means two things at once, it suggests that at least one of the things meant is not what it seems - which would mean a form of growth, of "growth itself", Wilde's definition of art, a unity whose parts contain the principles of their unity.

### **Irony in Wilde's Social Satires**

In "The Importance of Being Earnest," a comedy is the gateway to the life of the social gentlemen of London. It is popular for its humor, easy, sparkling repartee, game, and revelation of love, warm-hearted laughter. The characters only appear to be engaged in a high social activity; in fact, they say nothing but their individualities, "conquering" the public, "competing in revealing everyday truths," necessarily delivering the "picking, scraped and birthing the whole truth of things." So, the characters act in a kind of hyperlink to the game of Fortune and Providence, whose means of work, as in the revolutions of a modern detective, remain in place until the moment of culmination, the moment of climax, and the disappearance of invisible sketches of the writer's lessons.

Witty humor, coupled with a great ability to satirize human weaknesses, in Oscar Wilde's plays and epigrams, has been noted by many researchers. The publications of recent years are devoted to individual aspects and works of the writer. The analysis of the play "The Importance of Being Earnest" began to use Bakhtin's reflections on the dialogical nature of the artistic work, to take into account the national component in the artistic mastery of Wilde.

**Cultural and Societal Implications of Irony in English Literature**

The purpose of the given term is to detect the specific way it functions in English literary texts. Utilizing the indulgent linguistic model of the macro-genre "novel", the problem in question is to grasp the intensity and the multiple ways irony is at work. The detection of the intensity of irony provides us with implications for our reading of the text. It could also be a valuable tool to analyze the workings of irony in a variety of different types of text.

Many attempts have been made to define the concept of "irony", but these attempts have been in vain. Irony is a complex multi-layered phenomenon with various gradational shades. This infinite gradation accounts for the ability of irony to work in different contexts, to address different readers, and to perform various functions. It is a flexible and universal semantic mechanism with transcendent force. Irony is the main means of artistic cognition, revealing the nature and inner world of a person in their tendencies and aspirations. The logical object of irony's attack is human stupidity, but it can reach everything that catches the eye of the author of a literary work. In other words, the author can use irony against a specific person or against society as a whole.

**Irony and Class Distinctions**

The reason for this, observes Mr. Gosse in his entertaining little essay on minor moderns, is that irony consists in "exaggeration through an appreciative temper." Now an appreciative temper is all very well in its way, but it has no great place in creative art. Artists are joyous or are nothing, and joy is not born of discernment. The last thing that would ever occur to Shakespeare would be to laugh at the Shylocks and Malvolios. He is never jocular with the characters his instincts accept completely. They exist too genuinely for that. He quarrels a little with Falstaff, but he is a world away from the lengthy sympathies of Heinrich Heine. The "merchant prince of Venice" merely wrote about these overweight comedians. No, the men of mind who recognized that irony ran through life had some justification for it. Such very bright people had a right to be cynical in self-defense. Their reasonable self-love showed them the incomparable beauty of good taste for which, recognized or not, they must make an inward gesture. They made it, but I cannot forgive that they called it irony. The word signifies nothing much better than the infirmity of human wit to grasp the essentials of life. Few writers of any school have been so endowed with fineness of feeling and so much persuaded of their high origin and destiny as the French. Before Classicism, they put their fingertips to their forehead, back of which they found an ornamentation and swaying arch of verse expressive of full-hearted delight in life. Their art was not of the abstract, transcendental kind, and for moral ideas, they were a little ironical. As soon as Romanticism was introduced, their heroes were of transcendental importance, and no seriously sympathetic natures are so frequently ridiculed as those word heroes. Byron, his time and circumstances grant him some significance, has all the warmth of feeling which marked René a score of years earlier, and the same society with critical, observing sense calls him childish through being sonorous. Queens of melodrama appeared and played over very well until the Nineteenth Century was two-thirds of the way done with, and then a dear humorist at their expense was voted in. Jane Austen wrote a close copy of really charming people she knew, and when less discerning readers sighed over the rich caches deplored with real tears, she found amusement rather than increased sorrow. The ladies are not always; nay, the men rarely are;



but if a man's interior is too finely organized to retain serious affection for their frailer moments, I simply confess that something of the same defect is in myself.

Of all the destructive pests in the garden of literature, irony is probably the most insidious. No sooner does an author become conscious that he is engaged in a task lower than the highest to which he can attain, than he puts on the easy armor of the sardonic writer and waves gay adieus to all serious endeavor. He loses all sense of proportion and with the sense of proportion control of feeling and spontaneity. He sees jokes where no one else does. His view becomes jaundiced, and he represents to us a distorted and highly colored world.

### Conclusion

Detailed reasoning is shown, which supports the practice of many people that seems to be well-known by many, and which is characterized by the reliance when authors are chosen for reading requirements of a particular course on the level of natural selection for absurdly high number of employed meaning-generating tools with beloved irony, and the choice can be justified by the simplest developed relaxation reason.

The present chapter has taken a different approach to that of our previous paper, trying to demonstrate further advantage of the 'relaxation' in the tok culture, starting from a narrowed understanding, available for direct formalization. Making use of simple values of three numerical indices - the average number of irony per sentence decided, the rate of average sentence length and the independence of the two variables of each other - on a sufficiently large sample of works by English authors, we proved that highly productive work of all authors is based on high use of irony. At the same time, not all deeply philosophical works, which may formally be related to the neglect of reading by students, are about zeros of the indices.

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