

Irony as a Means of Characterization in the Works of N.V. Gogol

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ABSTRACT

In this article, irony is considered as a conceptual category of a literary text, which includes the author's assessment in an implicit form. Ironic meaning as an integral component of a literary text is an evaluative and emotional way of representing the author's worldview and values. The means of explication of irony in the works of N.V. Gogol of various genres (epic, lyric-epic and dramatic genres) are determined. Consideration of the ways of actualization of irony in the author's characterization of Gogol's literary heroes showed that irony is realized both in the character and in the author's speech and is mainly aimed at assessing the character and behavior of the characters.

The very word "irony" came to us from the Greek language. "Eironeia" in translation means "malice, pretense". According to the explanatory dictionary of foreign terms, irony is a subtle mockery hidden behind a serious form or an outwardly positive assessment. The literary encyclopedia defines irony as a trope in which a negative phenomenon is pretended to be portrayed in a positive way (in the form of praise) in order to attract attention to it, ridicule or discredit this phenomenon.

"You're just a genius!" – a person who accidentally uttered something obviously stupid or naive can hear.

It is not difficult to guess that in fact, in these cases, no one means exactly what is being voiced. The use of an expression in the opposite sense of the direct meaning gives the situation a comic or adds an edifying note to the statement. In literature, this technique is known as irony and has been widely used by various authors since the earliest times.

Irony is the object of research in various humanities: philosophy, aesthetics, psychology, literary studies, linguistics. This fact testifies to the multifaceted and multifaceted nature of the category of irony, which, in turn, explains the steady research interest in it, as well as the presence of many directions in its study, reflected in the so-called theories of irony. The report examines

irony as a conceptual category of a literary text, which includes the author's assessment in an implicit form.

The relevance of the study of irony in the space of a literary text is determined primarily by its semantic content, which is characterized by the presence of not only explicitly expressed, represented in linguistic units, but also hidden information. At the same time, it is important to note that "the insufficiency of explicit expression and articulate signs does not at all hinder understanding."; on the contrary, as the number of words decreases, the expression becomes clearer and more convincing " This fact is explained by the fact that when recognizing implicit information, the recipient acts as an active subject, makes certain efforts to decode and further interpret the hidden meaning. This, in turn, determines the greater effectiveness of the implicitly presented information in comparison with the explicit one. In addition, in the content of a literary text, it is the implicit level of meaning that embodies the space of deep author's ideas, which are of paramount importance for the author of the work. The ironic meaning contained in the literary text is a critical, and therefore evaluative-emotional way of understanding reality by the writer. Thus, irony in a literary text is an implicit form of representation of the author's worldview and views, that is, the author's modality. In other words, it is possible, following I.N. Ivanova, to state that, "embodying the author's philosophical and aesthetic ideal, irony in a literary text penetrates into all its levels and layers." Describing irony in emotional terms, one can agree with N.S. Zinchenko, who interprets this category as "a language game based on sensually rational detachment from the object, elevation above it, the connection of the unconnected, a new vision of the situation." M.V. Nikitin, taking into account the evaluative component of irony, points out that in a situation "when a statement with a positive assessment obviously comes into conflict with a pre-textual foreknowledge of the object of evaluation or with post-knowledge of it arising from the text," it is legitimate to talk about the presence of an ironic meaning. At the same time, the positive assessment of the object of irony clearly presented by the author is pushed into the background, and the statement itself is perceived as "deliberate disparagement of the object of evaluation due to the fact that he has no right to the declared positive sign." Consequently, irony as a conceptual textual category is characterized by the presence in its content of two opposite assessments in relation to the object of irony, functioning nevertheless in the coordinates of the same text segment. There is no doubt that the producer of a work of art creates certain conditions for the reader to comprehend and adequately interpret the ironic meaning, namely, it is important to "take into account the situational context in the coordinates of background knowledge, which ultimately create a precedent background necessary for decoding irony." Moreover, markers of irony, that is, linguistic units indicating the presence of an ironic meaning in the text of the work, are both separate lexical and phraseological units, as well as syntactic structures and means of the text level, represented by intertextual phenomena, complex general textual repetitions, author's digressions, etc.

It is obvious that the frequency of the use of irony by the author does not depend on the genre of the work of art, since irony conveys the author's attitude to the problem being covered in general or to the characters in particular. At the same time, the question still arises about the existence of features of the realization of irony in a certain genre of literary text, the importance of consideration and comparison of which is confirmed by the general role and place of irony in the system of the author's worldview, since only at the inter-genre level irony develops from the usual author's technique into a "way of seeing the surrounding reality". Russian national literature classic, outstanding master of artistic expression N.V. Gogol, uses irony in works of various genre orientation. Thus, the writer expresses his value positions through irony in the works of the epic genre – the cycles of the stories "Petersburg Stories", "Evenings on a farm near Dikanka", "Mirgorod"; the lyric-epic genre – the poem "Dead Souls"; the dramatic genre – the comedy "The Inspector". The object of irony in Gogol's works are, as a rule, the main characters, whose ironic characterization is given by the author with the help of an evaluative description of various aspects of their life. Moreover, irony is realized in diverse situations deliberately

modeled by the writer in the form of both exclusively author's irony and irony transmitted through the characters' speech. Let us consider at the inter-genre level the features of the realization of irony in the above-mentioned Gogol works by analyzing the ways of actualizing irony within the framework of the author's characterization of the characters. In the poem "Dead Souls", which belongs to the lyric-epic genre, in which "the narrative narrative of events is combined with emotional-meditative statements of the narrator, creating the image of the lyrical "I", the ironic meaning is actualized using means of various language levels – from lexical to textual.

For example, the portrait characterization of one of the main characters of the poem "Dead Souls" – the landowner Plyushkin – is carried out by means of an ironic description by the author of the situation of his house:

(1) "From the middle of the ceiling hung a chandelier in a canvas bag, made by dust to look like a silk cocoon in which a worm is sitting."

In this context, the chandelier is identified with a silk cocoon and a worm, which ironically represents both the character of the character, enclosed in his limited space, and his appearance, similar to a worm, and this naturally causes the reader to have a negative attitude towards the hero. Phraseological units have a low frequency compared to other means of expressing irony in the poem "Dead Souls". At the same time, in the aspect of the ironic characteristics of the heroes of the poem, the following example is noteworthy:

(2) "Right, like some kind of mongrel, without saying a bad word, that lies on the hay: she does not eat hay herself and does not give others."

Irony is contained in the speech of one character – Chichikov, but its object is another character of the poem – a Box. In the given context, the author describes the behavior and character of the Box by means of Chichikov's speech, using the technique of comparing the heroine with a mongrel in the hay. Comparison with the phraseological dog in the manger "someone does not use something himself and does not allow others to use it", the ironic meaning of which is revealed with the help of the author's phraseological occasionalism and does not eat hay herself and does not give others.

Thus, with the help of irony, the author reveals the avarice of the heroine, her desire to get more benefits.

Thus, based on the analysis carried out, it can be stated that irony appears in the works of N.V. Gogol as a personal feature of his manner and style of narration, which determines the vision of the world and the basic values of the writer and functions at the inter-genre level. Using a variety of means of expressing irony, the author destroys the positive assessment presented in linguistic units, implicitly emphasizing the negative qualities of the characters' character. Regardless of the genre of Gogol's works, irony acts in them as a means of semantic construction and ultimately serves to reveal the main theme of the author's text. However, within the framework of the use of markers of the ironic context, there are still some features inherent in a particular genre. Thus, phraseological units in the function of markers of irony are uncharacteristic for the story. At the same time, they are used by the writer in the poem "Dead Souls", and are especially frequent in the dramatic genre presented in this report by the comedy "The Inspector". At the same time, it is unusual for the comedy genre to use such a textual means as author's digressions and comments, which is due to the dynamism of plot construction and the presence of predominantly character-based, not author's speech. This fact testifies to the influence of the genre characteristics of the work on the author's choice of various means of representation of irony. The ironic characterization of the characters occupies a leading place in Gogol's works, since each of them embodies a certain image, through which the problematic aspects of the depicted epoch are outlined. Irony is aimed primarily at criticizing the behavior and lifestyle of the characters and,

to a lesser extent, their external shortcomings. At the same time, along with irony in the speech of the characters, there is an author's irony, presented in arguments, descriptions and appeals to the reader.

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