



## A Conceptual Analysis Of Irony In Shaping The Linguistic Picture Of The World

**Parmonov Alisher Abdupattayevich<sup>1</sup>, Shermatov Nodirjon Nosirjonovich<sup>2</sup>, Nasirdinov Oybek Abdubannonovich<sup>3</sup>, Raxmonova Ra'no Sheraliyevna<sup>4</sup>, Haydarova Gulhayo Akhmadaliyevna<sup>5</sup>, Rajapova Malika Akhmadali kizi<sup>6</sup>, Sharipova Sadoqat Abbosxon kizi<sup>7</sup>, Toshxonov Lochinbek Tursunbayevich<sup>8</sup>**

**Abstract:** This article explores the cognitive and conceptual characteristics of irony from a linguistic perspective. It highlights the role of irony in shaping the linguistic worldview, its manifestation in cognitive processes, and its semantic functions as a stylistic device. The study emphasizes the connection between irony, national mindset, and cultural values. Mechanisms of secondary nomination, conceptual structuring, and the functions of irony in literary discourse are discussed and supported with various illustrative examples.

<sup>1</sup>Parmonov Alisher Abdupattayevich, PhD, Associate Professor, Kokand University, Uzbekistan, parmonovalisher@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0007-0393-8933

<sup>2</sup> Shermatov Nodirjon Nosirjonovich, Teacher, Kokand University, Uzbekistan, shermatovnodirjon50@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0004-4475-6130

<sup>3</sup> Nasirdinov Oybek Abdubannonovich, Teacher, Kokand University, Uzbekistan, onasriddinov@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0001-5436-1472

<sup>4</sup> Raxmonova Ra'no Sheraliyevna, Teacher, Kokand University, Uzbekistan, ranorahmonova872@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0009-2341-8219

<sup>5</sup> Haydarova Gulhayo Akhmadaliyevna, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Kokand State University, Uzbekistan, h.gulhayoxon90@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0007-8262-304X

<sup>6</sup> Rajapova Malika Akhmadali kizi, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Kokand State University, Uzbekistan, malikarajapova1993@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-0696-0497

<sup>7</sup> Sharipova Sadoqat Abbosxon kizi, Teacher, Kokand State University, Uzbekistan, sadoqatsharipova79@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0001-5889-1729

<sup>8</sup> Toshxonov Lochinbek Tursunbayevich, Head, Department of Foreign Languages, Andijan Institute of Agriculture and Agrotechnologies; Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Philological Sciences; Teacher, Kokand University, Uzbekistan, lochin@inbox.ru, ORCID: 0000-0002-1171-5402.

**Keywords:** irony, concept, linguistic worldview, ironic meaning, secondary nomination, cognitive linguistics, stylistic device, semantic thinking, literary discourse

## Introduction

In modern linguistics, considerable importance is attached to elucidating the content of such concepts as the “*world picture*,” the “*linguistic worldview*,” the “*conceptual worldview*,” the “*publicistic worldview*,” and the notion of “*concept*.” At the same time, the analysis of their interrelationships has increasingly attracted the attention of scholars worldwide [103]. Among these, the *concept* functions as a connecting bridge or key that integrates these notions.

Undoubtedly, the initial stage in the emergence of any linguistic unit is the reflection of perceived reality in human consciousness, its formation, and the subsequent cognitive processing, which ultimately leads to the creation of a concept [1, p. 16]. In other words, prior to the formation of any linguistic unit, an individual consciously processes it in their cognition, generates knowledge associated with the unit, and organizes the information within the center of perception before presenting it into reality.

In the process of comprehension and cognition, the central notion is undoubtedly the *concept*, understood as a mental construct. In contemporary linguistic studies, defining the conceptual domain and semantic field of language remains a fundamental and actual issue. In the interpretations of many scholars, this phenomenon is referred to as the *linguistic worldview* [2, p. 16].

This mental construct represents a conceptual framework, within which any linguistic structure must be refined before being presented in linguistic reality. In its transition into linguistic reality, the concept serves as the foundational basis; therefore, without a conceptual framework, the reflection of logical cognition in the linguistic worldview becomes impossible.

## Materials And Methods

The term “*concept*” first appeared in Russian linguistics in 1928 in S. N. Askoldov’s article “*Concept and Word*” [3, p. 267]. According to the scholar, a concept reflects “a mental formation that substitutes an indefinite set of objects of the same type, actions, and mental operations in the process of cognition” [3, p. 269].

Until the emergence of new approaches to the concept in modern linguistics, this definition remained one of the most influential and long-standing interpretations. By the end of the twentieth century, diverse perspectives on the concept began to develop among Russian scholars.

The term “*concept*” emerged considerably earlier than the development of linguocultural and cognitive approaches to its interpretation. This term was borrowed into Uzbek, Russian, and other languages from European languages: from German “*Konzept*,” from English and French “*concept*,” and from Latin “*conceptus*,” meaning “*notion*” or “*idea*.”

By examining the meanings of this unit across various dictionaries, it becomes evident that within this lexical system there exist numerous derivatives that are semantically related to it. For instance, in English: *concept*, *conceptual*, *conceptualise*, *conception*, etc.; in Russian: *концепция*, *концептуализация*, *концептологизация*, *концептуализм*, *концептуалист* [4, p. 16], etc.; and in Uzbek: *konsept*, *konseptsiya*, *konseptual*, among others.

The conceptual picture of the world emerges through the cognitive processes of structuring, organizing, compressing, and generalizing knowledge about the surrounding reality in a convenient and efficient manner. This dynamic process is continuously realized through both linguistic and extralinguistic factors at a rapid pace; therefore, it is understood as a broader notion than the linguistic worldview.

In turn, the *linguistic worldview* is interpreted as a representation of an individual’s cognition, that is, a depiction of a particular conceptual system. From a functional perspective, it is understood as a system of signs that influences the formation of situations and phenomena through language.

At present, among researchers, such notions as the *conceptual picture of the world*, the *national picture of the world*, the *scientific picture of the world*, and the *linguistic picture of the world* have become widespread and are being studied as research objects based on various approaches, methods, and principles. However, among these representations of the world, the *conceptual picture of the world* is considered the dominant perspective. As noted above, in any situation individuals inevitably form certain mental representations, which, as units of knowledge, are transformed into concepts within cognition and undergo conceptualization.

As a result, these concepts, once linguistically encoded, give rise to the *linguistic picture of the world*. Nevertheless, the linguistic picture of the world constitutes only a part of the broader conceptual picture of the world.

Irony is a stylistic device used to express meaning through the employment of words and expressions in a sense opposite to their literal meaning, often realized through sarcasm or mockery. Words, phrases, or sentences functioning as carriers of irony are typically manifested in speech through ordinary tempo and intonation. However, for the listener to perceive or interpret irony correctly, a sufficient level of communicative competence is required, along with at least minimal background knowledge about the person or object being described.

A specific type of irony, known as *antiphrasis*, is also distinguished. In this case, a positive characteristic attributed to a person or object is negated through a humorous or ironic intonation.

In a speech act, a speaker who intends to express irony must refer to objects or phenomena of the surrounding reality. In doing so, it is necessary to identify their salient features and to take into account the practical demands arising from the evolving attitudes toward these objects in everyday life. This requires analyzing the properties and characteristics of a given object or phenomenon, isolating its essential features, and employing them for description.

Accordingly, the speaker must be capable of perceiving, recognizing, comprehending, and internalizing the system of features conventionally accepted by the speech community, as well as mentally reconstructing the object or phenomenon being described.

Furthermore, a speaker capable of producing irony relies on knowledge grounded in linguistic and experiential generalizations. Based on this knowledge, the speaker identifies certain shared properties and features between one object or individual and another. By determining the nature of the relationship between them—namely, the dominant feature that unites them—the speaker assigns a linguistic label through their expressive resources.

As a result, a new meaning emerges within the designation of the first entity (the primary referent), and on this basis, a new designation is formed for the second entity (the secondary referent).

## Results And Discussion

The cognitive nature of irony is inherently complex. In this process, a single cognitive operation simultaneously leads to functional expansion both in meaning (the designation of the primary referent) and in form (within the semantic structure of the secondary referent). Any newly emerging concept that underlies the creation of irony is formed on the basis of a series of judgments, while each judgment, in turn, relies on existing concepts.

Thus, any new concept generated through irony reflects the essential relationships between the primary and secondary referents and serves as a foundation for drawing inferences and forming judgments.

Secondary or more complex notions formed in the process of communication differ from those generated through nomination, as well as from basic psychological forms of cognition such as sensation, perception, and imagination.

Sensation represents the reflection of individual properties of objects in human consciousness. If no reflection of reality occurs in the mind, then no sensation is experienced, as consciousness fails to register any aspect of reality at that moment. Therefore, even if a speaker employs an ironic word or expression to describe a person or object, the intended irony will not be realized if the listener fails to perceive any ironic elements. In such cases, the speaker is unable to convey their communicative intention to the listener's cognition.

This demonstrates that the creation and interpretation of irony is not a simple linguo-cognitive process, as it may appear, but rather a complex and cognitively demanding phenomenon.

Perception is the holistic and integrated reflection of objects in human consciousness. Therefore, in comparison with sensation, perception represents a more complex form of human psychological activity. Consequently, sensation alone is insufficient for the recognition and interpretation of irony; perception is also required. Only when the listener possesses a well-developed perceptual capacity can they fully grasp irony, accurately process the information conveyed, and respond in an adequate manner.

The use of irony in speech cannot be reduced merely to the process of secondary nomination. A newly assigned name may convey little or no meaning to the listener or reader. The speaker must possess a higher level of cognitive capacity, that is, a level of consciousness capable of performing judgment and inferential reasoning. If the listener is unable to establish a judgment regarding the similarity between the features of objects, or fails to recognize their shared characteristics, they will not perceive the meaning or functional load of irony. As a result, the communicative intention underlying the use of irony will not be achieved, and the message will remain misunderstood.

From the perspective of cognitive linguistics and the theory of the linguistic worldview, in such cases irony fails to construct a linguistic representation of the world in the recipient's consciousness, and communication does not occur. No effective contact is established between the participants of the speech act. Consequently, the listener does not understand the irony. In other words, the linguistic-ironical representation of the world fails to be formed in the consciousness of the listener or reader.

The analysis of the role, status, and function of the *concept*—one of the key notions of cognitive linguistics—in the creation of irony demonstrates that, as a complex form of cognition, its essential characteristic lies in its generalizing nature. Unlike sensation, perception, and imagination, which are based on concrete representations of objects and phenomena, the concept is characterized by abstraction and generality.

The primary feature of the salient characteristics that serve as the material, basis, and object of irony is their objective nature. Objects and phenomena of reality are reflected in a similar manner in the consciousness of individuals who speak the same language. In this way, the specificity of world cognition and the nature of the linguistic worldview are explained.

At the same time, certain features of objects and phenomena that are considered significant for speakers of one language may not hold the same significance for speakers of another language. This becomes evident through comparative analysis of the processes and outcomes of primary nomination across different languages.

For example, the English word *coat* corresponds to the Russian *пальто* and the Uzbek *to'n*. However, in actual usage, one would not say, "*Since it was winter, our minister was wearing a black to'n,*" because the word *to'n* carries a lower sociolinguistic status and may have negative connotations within the linguocultural context. An ordinary person may wear a *to'n* at home or within their local community; however, appearing in such attire at an official reception would violate established dress code norms. Nevertheless, in informal speech, a person who has purchased a *пальто* may say, "*I bought a to'n.*"

Each concept within a language reflects the worldview of its speakers. Differences in the meanings and functions of ironic words and expressions across languages can be explained by variations in the conceptual systems and modes of thinking characteristic of the respective speech communities.

As in irony, all forms of secondary nomination involve the formation of new meaning, the reinterpretation of the primary meaning of a word, and the reconfiguration and processing of its conceptual structure. In this process, identifying the dominant meaning of a word becomes essential, as it functions as a mechanism for developing the proximity of the features being expressed. These features are already present in the initial semantic structure of the word and acquire a derivative character in the formation of new meaning. This, in turn, ensures a smooth transition from one meaning to another.

*Uning mish-mishidan ranjimang aslo,  
Nima bo'lsa asli, naslida bo'lgan,*

*Ona qornidan o'zi ham hatto,  
Asli mish-mish bilan dunyoga kelgan.*  
(A. Oripov, "Yuzma-yuz," p. 333)

(Meaning: *Do not be offended by his gossip; whatever he is originates from his very nature. Even from his mother's womb, he seems to have been born with gossip itself. The irony lies in exaggerating gossip as an inherent, almost biological trait.*)

In the first and second lines of this quatrain, a neutral poetic narration is presented. However, in the third and fourth lines, pure irony becomes evident. A. Oripov, as a master poet, employs irony in such a simple, folk-like, sharp, and expressive manner that it leaves no room for ambiguity.

*Yorab, loyimni-ku qorgan o'zingsan,  
O'rish-arqog'imni o'rgan o'zingsan,  
Yomonmanmi, yaxshi, men qandoq qilay?  
Taqdir manglayini bergan o'zingsan.*  
(U. Khayyam, Rubaiyat, p. 25)

(Meaning: *O Creator, You shaped my clay and wove the threads of my fate. If I am good or bad, how is it my fault, when You have determined my destiny? The irony lies in questioning divine judgment by attributing all responsibility back to the Creator.*)

In this quatrain as well, irony is particularly evident in the third and fourth lines. The poet ironically questions: if a person is created and shaped by God, how can they later be judged negatively?

Consider also the following quatrain by Umar Khayyam:

*Ko'zamni sindirib, irg'itding, tangri,  
Hurramlik eshigin berkitding, tangri,  
Tuproqqa to'kding-ku gulgun mayimni,  
Bilmadim, mastmisan, na etding, tangri.*  
(U. Khayyam, Rubaiyat, p. 96)

(Meaning: *O God, You shattered my cup and cast it away, closed the door of joy, and poured my wine into the dust. I do not understand—are You intoxicated, or what have You done? The irony reaches its peak in the rhetorical question addressed to God, implying contradiction between divine power and perceived injustice.*)

In this quatrain, all lines contain ironic expressions. The rhetorical question in the fourth line serves as the central element of irony. By addressing God with the question "Are You intoxicated?", the poet intensifies the ironic effect, shaping it through rhetorical interrogation.

Such quatrains demonstrate Umar Khayyam's intellectual boldness and philosophical depth. Living in the 11th–12th centuries, during a period dominated by Islamic ideology under the Seljuk rule in Central Asia, Iran, and the Near East, Khayyam's thought reveals a remarkable degree of courage and critical reflection.

*Vaqif, yor jamoli yomon ofatdir,  
Ayriqliq zulmdir, zo'r qiyomatdir,  
Go'zallarda bunday xislat ofatdir,  
Biri iqrar, biri beiqror bo'lar.*  
(Mulla Panah Vaqif, p. 63)

(Meaning: *O Vaqif, the beloved's beauty is a terrible calamity; separation is oppression, a great catastrophe. Such qualities in the beloved are themselves a kind of affliction: one moment there is acceptance, another moment denial. The irony lies in describing beauty—normally a source of joy—as a "disaster."*)

In these lines by Mulla Panah Vaqif, irony represents the emotional state of the lover through a conceptual metaphor. The expression "the beloved's beauty is a terrible calamity" constitutes an ironic statement conveyed through metaphor with a high degree of expressiveness. Indeed, how can the beauty of the beloved—typically the ultimate aspiration and source of fulfillment for any lover—be considered a calamity?

Such a contradictory expression is referred to in literary studies as an *oxymoron*. If the beloved's beauty were truly a "terrible calamity," why would countless lovers strive for it? This creates a deliberate opposition to the initial statement. Moreover, the very "calamity" that the lover describes as overwhelming becomes, in separation, a form of suffering (*zulum*). The beloved first enchants the lover with her beauty and then gradually withdraws, leaving the lover yearning for that very suffering. As a result, a metaphorical "doomsday" occurs: the lover renounces everything—wealth, life, even the self.

This state of the lover is vividly depicted by Jamol Kamol:

*Ishva birla yor agar-  
O'ldirsa, oshiq injimas,  
Kel, o'zing o'ldir Jamolni,  
O'zi o'lmasdan burun ...*  
(J. Kamol, "Umidli dunyo," p. 358)

(Meaning: *If the beloved were to kill the lover with her charm, the lover would not complain. Come, beloved, kill Jamol yourself before he dies on his own. The irony lies in the lover's willingness to accept death, provided it comes directly from the beloved.*)

In this example, the pain of love, described as a "terrible calamity," leads the lover to accept even death, with the sole desire that it be inflicted by the beloved herself. This creates a powerful ironic situation through the use of conceptual metaphor.

At this point, a natural question arises: "If the ultimate outcome is death—whether one loves or is loved, whether one attains or fails to attain the beloved—what is the purpose of this emotional turmoil?" The answer, however, is inherent in the tradition itself: "... such is the nature of the lover."

A similar conventional situation is also found in the epic “*Oshiq G‘arib and Shohsanam*”: “*Borsam o‘ldirarlar, bormasam o‘lam*” (“If I go, they will kill me; if I do not go, I will die”). If the protagonist goes, he will be killed by others; if he does not, he will die of his own accord. This paradoxical situation reflects an ironic conceptualization of inevitability.

Irony performs various functions in discourse. As a stylistic device, it adds expressiveness, vividness, and emotional elevation to speech. When words are used in an ironic (figurative) sense, their meanings undergo transformation.

English authors have made particularly effective use of irony in the poetic genre of limericks:

*There was an old lady of Harrow,*

*Whose views were exceedingly narrow.*

*At the end of her paths,*

*She built two bird baths,*

*For the different sexes of sparrow.*

*(Limerick, p. 136)*

*(Meaning: An elderly woman from Harrow, known for her narrow-minded views, built two separate bird baths at the end of her garden path—one for male sparrows and one for female sparrows. The irony lies in the absurd human projection of social distinctions onto birds, which are incapable of recognizing or needing such divisions.)*

This example illustrates how humor and irony are skillfully combined in the English limerick tradition. The ironic effect arises from the absurdity of attributing human social categories to animals: how could sparrows recognize or require separate facilities based on gender? Indeed, such an idea highlights the limited and misguided thinking of the character.

Another example can be observed in an epitaph:

*Epitaph*

*In the drinking well,*

*Which the plumber built her,*

*Aunt Eliza fell –*

*We must buy a filter.*

*(H. Graham, p. 186)*

*(Meaning: Aunt Eliza fell into a well that had been built for her and died before she could be rescued. The irony emerges in the final line: instead of mourning her death, attention shifts pragmatically to the need for a water filter, implying that the well is still useful despite the tragedy.)*

According to this epitaph, a well is constructed for Aunt Eliza. One day, she falls into it and, inevitably, drowns before help can arrive. The expected emotional response is replaced by an ironic twist in the final line: “*We must buy a filter.*” This reflects a strikingly pragmatic, almost positivistic mode of thinking. Regardless of Aunt Eliza’s death, the well remains functional, and thus the practical concern becomes the purification of the water. The irony is grounded in this shift from human loss to utilitarian reasoning.

Irony does not always function as a device that evokes laughter. Even highly serious and emotionally painful events may be represented in an ironic manner within literary works. For example: ... **Onam ba’zi vaqtlarda: «Yangi yor topganda, do’stlar, eskidan kechmoq kerak!» baytini o‘qib qo‘yar, men bo‘lsam ul vaqtlar buning ma’nosiga tushunmas edim. Ammo ... endi bu baytni kimga aytilganiga va uning ma’nolariga ko‘p tushunmaktaman. Tashlandiqlikning so‘ng o‘tinchi qilib sizdan shuni so‘rayman: uchinchi yor topganda, ikkinchi bechoraga ham shunday uyatsizlik qilinmasa edi! Bu tilagim uchun ajablanmangiz, chunki «pichoqni o‘zinga ur, og‘rimasa o‘zgaga sol!»** - **deydir.**

**Sizga yangi yor, menga uyatsizlikning qurboni bo‘lish muborak! Kumush emas, Tuproqibibi yozdim, 17 javzo, 1265. (A. Qodiriy, “O‘tgan kunlar,” p. 94)**

*(Meaning: The speaker reflects on a verse advising one to abandon the old beloved when a new one is found. Initially misunderstood, its meaning becomes painfully clear later. The irony lies in the bitter resignation: while the addressee gains a new beloved, the speaker becomes a victim of humiliation and abandonment. The closing statement, “Congratulations on your new beloved; congratulations to me on becoming a victim of disgrace,” encapsulates a deeply tragic irony.)*

The analysis of such examples demonstrates that irony must be studied within a broader interpretative framework. The collision of concepts at the end of the letter—*new beloved vs. humiliation, victor vs. victim*—reveals why A. Qodiriy is regarded as an exceptional master of artistic expression.

Similarly, in Sh. Boshbekov’s article “*Buyuk baxtiyorlik*” (“*Great Happiness*”), numerous ironic elements can be observed: **Bizda hamma narsa buyukdir: baxtiyorligimiz ham... Menimcha, dunyoda biror mamlakat rahbari yo‘qki, fuqarolari bizdek yuvosh, beozor va eng asosiysi, bizdek sal narsaga «baxtiyor» bo‘lib ketishni orzu qilmagan bo‘lsin. Axir o‘zingiz o‘ylang, xotinimiz ikki yumaloq kir sovun topganiga o‘zida yo‘q shod. Hamkasbimiz bolasini joylashtirganidan shunaqa baxtiyorki, anchadan beri xafalashib, bordi-keldi yig‘ishtirib qo‘yilgan qarindoshlarnikiga bir tog‘ora somsa qilib berib keladi. Bo‘sh avtobusni ko‘rsak ham baxtli bo‘lib ketaveramiz, yoki bu idoraga bir borishda ishimiz bitsa ham, xursandmiz. Sotuvchi jilmayib kutib olsa ham sevinib ketamiz. Mayli hech nima bermasin, hech nima olmaylik, qaytimi ham sadaqa, chunki jilmaydi-ku. Arzon garovga bir dunyo narsa xarid qilgandek, shunga ham ko‘nglimiz ko‘tarilib ketadi. Uni aytasiz, bir kilo mix olsak ham, baxtli bo‘lib ketamiz. To‘g‘ri, mix jonivorning ikki tomonida ham «qalpog‘i» bor; lekin topildi-ku, bu zormonda. Shunga ham do‘ppimizni osmonga otaveramiz. Albatta, boshqa mamlakat boshliqlari havas qiladi-da.**

*(Meaning: The author ironically portrays “great happiness” as the ability to derive excessive joy from trivial or ordinary situations—finding soap, completing a task in one visit, seeing an empty bus, or even buying a kilogram of nails. The irony exposes a socio-cultural critique: people have become accustomed to low standards of satisfaction,*

*presenting it as a form of exaggerated happiness. The final remark—suggesting that other nations might envy such “happiness”—intensifies the ironic tone.)*

In this example, irony is used not merely for humor but as a powerful tool of social critique. The exaggerated depiction of everyday “happiness” highlights underlying societal issues, revealing how irony can function as a means of expressing deeper evaluative and critical meanings.

As previously noted, rulers of any country would aspire to govern citizens who are easily content with what they have. Such a situation has existed since ancient times. The irony lies in presenting passive acceptance as an enviable quality. [6, p. 1]

In this context, irony is multi-layered. The first layer reflects the idea of becoming happy simply by finding a bar of soap, while the second reveals an attitude of disregarding life’s difficulties—or rather, becoming accustomed to bypassing them. In reality, such problems should be confronted and eradicated at their root; however, the narrative ironically portrays patience and endurance as virtues, suggesting that a person does not complain excessively over trivial matters.

Two main types of irony can be distinguished:

1. Situational irony
2. Associative (gradational) irony

Each type is realized within contexts structured according to specific communicative purposes, which allows for the identification of their defining parameters. These two forms of irony differ in their mechanisms and realization.

Situational irony is characterized by a clear and emotionally explicit form of irony that can be readily perceived. The contrast between the literal meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence and its contextual meaning becomes immediately apparent. This type of irony operates at both micro- and macro-contextual levels.

To produce situational irony, a wide range of linguistic means are employed, including phonetic-intonational, lexical, phraseological, and syntactic devices. Through these means, a context with a dual structure is formed, in which both the description of the situation and the evaluative stance of the author or character are expressed.

Within literary discourse, situational irony plays a significant role in conveying unexpected or subjective attitudes through vivid detail. This type of irony is most frequently manifested in dialogic forms of speech. For example: Yo‘lda ketayotgan mulla eshak minib ketayotgan afandiga:

— Ikkinchi, eshaging meni ko‘rganda hangrasa, ustingdan yozib, kovushingni to‘g‘rilab qo‘yaman, debdi. Afandi mullaning ig‘vogarligini bilib bo‘sh kelmabdi: — Ha, endi, eshak eshakni ko‘rganda hangraydi-da! (*M. Darveshov*) (*Meaning: A mullah threatens that if Afandi’s donkey brays upon seeing him, he will punish him. Afandi, understanding the provocation, responds cleverly: “Well, of course, a donkey brays when it sees another donkey.” The irony lies in indirectly calling the mullah a donkey through a witty reply.*)

In this speech fragment, the ironic attitude emerges unexpectedly within the interaction between the speakers. Afandi, having grasped the intention of his interlocutor, responds skillfully, employing irony to mock him and express his own evaluative stance.

Associative irony is a more complex type of irony in terms of its mode and means of expression within literary discourse. It is characterized by the indirect and gradual revelation of the speaker’s attitude, which initially remains concealed and unfolds progressively in the course of communication. In this type, linguistic units are employed in a figurative sense, and the speaker’s primary intention is disclosed step by step, in a graded manner. For this reason, associative irony may also be referred to as *gradual irony*.

Gradual irony is most often observed at the macro-textual level. In such cases, the macro-text may consist of a combination of several supra-sentential units, an entire literary work, or a particular structural component of it.

The formation of associative irony requires the presence of similarity or associative connections. Through these associative links, associative meanings are generated, which typically possess a metaphorical character.

In expressing associative (gradational) ironic meaning, complex microtexts are employed, whose components are interconnected through both contact and distant relations. Associative irony represents the most subtle and implicit type of ironic expression. Through it, the natural character of literary figures can be constructed, and the author’s personal evaluation of the characters—formed on the basis of their worldview—can be conveyed in an indirect yet expressive manner.

This type of irony contributes to the formation of an integral system within artistic discourse. For example:

A commentator, informing the audience about recent developments in world football, stated: “The following teams failed to advance to the next stage: the ‘Lions’ of Cameroon, the ‘Eagles’ of Nigeria, and our ‘Donkeys.’”

(*Meaning: While the first two teams are metaphorically associated with strong and noble animals (lions and eagles), the speaker ironically refers to his own team as “donkeys,” implying weakness, lack of skill, or poor performance. The irony is conveyed through metaphor and contrast.*)

This example is noteworthy in that irony is expressed through metaphor. If the judgments presented in the first part of the football commentary are expressed separately, the following pattern can be observed:

**“The Lions of Cameroon failed to advance to the next stage.”**

This is of no particular interest to us. Why should it matter?

**“The Eagles of Nigeria failed to advance to the next stage.”**

Such an outcome could be expected of them.

(*Kh. Nurullaev, Even When You Speak Playfully, Speak Thoughtfully, p. 68*)

Our reaction to both statements is essentially the same. These teams are distant from us; their paths do not intersect with that of our national team. Whether they succeed or fail is of little concern to us.

However, the third statement immediately draws our attention:

**“Our ‘Donkeys’ failed to advance to the next stage.”**

As is clear, the metaphor “*donkeys*” here refers to football players. At this point, the evaluative stance changes sharply. One begins to question: what have twenty-two players and several coaches been doing while consuming substantial state resources, traveling extensively, and ultimately delivering poor results—only to conclude with statements such as: “*This is our level. Let us wait another four years; perhaps something will change.*” Under such circumstances, how should the public respond—with satisfaction, or by celebrating such an outcome?

The commentator’s statement is contextually appropriate and effectively targeted. Consequently, millions of fans did not interpret it as an insult to the nation as a whole, nor did they ask, “*Why are you equating an entire nation with animals?*” This is because it is clearly understood that the reference is not to the population at large, but specifically to those twenty-two “donkeys” and their supervising “herders” (coaches).

From another perspective, the commentator who employed this ironic expression included the pronoun “*our*” within the context, thereby acknowledging his own involvement. As a result, no one could take offense at his statement. Throughout his professional activity, he had repeatedly praised those same twenty-two players, elevating them with expressions such as “*the pride of the nation*” and “*the future of the nation.*” The outcome, however, proved otherwise. The only thing that increased was the number of “donkeys.”

In summary, irony is a stylistic resource belonging to the category of speech phenomena associated with style. It is a purely discursive phenomenon and functions as an effective stylistic device. Irony enables the speaker to convey meaning to the listener in an impactful manner through sarcasm and mockery. The semantic content of any linguistic unit expressing irony is typically characterized by a subjective and negative evaluative stance. Thus, in irony, a word reflects a subjective-negative attitude through a meaning that is opposite to its nominative (literal) meaning.

The emergence of such evaluative meaning is largely determined by the communicative context and intonation, which play a decisive role. In contrast, in enantiosemia, the opposition of meanings is embedded within the semantic structure of the lexeme itself.

In contemporary developed languages, including within literary discourse, the category of irony is widely and actively employed. The fundamental essence of irony in cognitive linguistics lies in its capacity to create a powerful and expressive effect by juxtaposing the linguistic representation of real-world phenomena with an imagined, constructed, or alternative linguistic reality generated by the speaker or writer.

The coexistence of two linguistic representations of the world—the primary objective and the secondary subjective images—demonstrates the multifaceted nature of reality and highlights the powerful reflective capacity of language. By generating two different types of information about a single denotatum, these dual representations reveal the complexity of the world and the expressive potential of linguistic means. This phenomenon is particularly evident in literary discourse, where the creator and the recipient of the text never think in identical ways, do not employ the same linguistic categories, and where the external world perceived by an individual never fully corresponds to its mental representation.

The present dissertation aims to identify general and specific patterns that reveal similarities and differences between the cognitive-semantic and conceptual features of irony in the literary discourse of the languages under study. It also seeks to determine the linguocultural factors underlying the emergence of these features.

1. The average cost of rehabilitating a seal after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska was \$80,000. At a special ceremony, two of the most expensively saved animals were released back into the wild amid cheers and applause from onlookers. A minute later, they were both eaten by a killer whale.

(*W. Brandon, All Aboard, p. 68*)

(*Meaning: The example illustrates a paradox of good intentions. Despite significant financial investment and public celebration, the rescued animals immediately fall victim to natural predation. The irony lies in the contrast between human effort and the uncontrollable realities of nature.*)

This example demonstrates a simple yet profound truth of life: actions performed for the sake of appearance or superficial benevolence do not always lead to positive outcomes. In the aftermath of the tanker disaster, two fur-bearing animals struggling to breathe in oil-polluted waters were rescued at the cost of \$80,000 and released along the Alaskan coast. This act appears to be a striking example of human compassion and altruism.

However, not every well-intentioned action results in genuine good. In reality, instead of presenting the rescued animals before an audience, the rescuer might have released them into one of the many rivers and streams flowing through Alaska’s forests, where their chances of survival would have been higher. Yet, as this example shows, the imagined or idealized world does not always correspond to real-world conditions. Even the act of preserving nature, such as protecting marine animals, must align with the natural order to be truly effective.

2. A psychology student in New York rented out her spare room to a carpenter in order to nag him constantly and study his reactions. After weeks of needling, he snapped and beat her repeatedly with an axe, leaving her mentally retarded. (*J. N. Young, The Wrong House, p. 101*). (*Meaning: The example illustrates a tragic paradox of intention and outcome. A scientific experiment motivated by curiosity and research ends in severe harm. The irony lies in the mismatch between the intended purpose—psychological observation—and the catastrophic result.*)

An ancient Indian proverb states: “*All evil deeds are committed with good intentions.*” From this perspective, it can be argued that many of the characters, situations, and actions that serve as the basis for irony follow this principle. The psychology student, presumably lacking sufficient discernment, chose an inappropriate subject for her experiment. Had she been more competent, she might have selected a more suitable individual for observation.

Nevertheless, the carpenter remains responsible for his violent reaction. The title of the story, “*The Wrong House,*” itself reinforces the ironic dimension: having entered the “wrong house,” it is unlikely that one would encounter rational and balanced individuals there. The irony thus emerges from the convergence of poor judgment, misplaced intentions, and unintended consequences.

3. In 1992, Frank Perkins of Los Angeles made an attempt on the world flag-pole-sitting record. Suffering from the flu, he came down eight hours short of the 400-day record, to find that his sponsor had gone bankrupt, his girlfriend had left him, and his phone and electricity had been cut off. (*F. Laing, The Big Chance, pp. 118–129*). (Meaning: The example reflects the irony of opportunity misinterpreted. What appears to be a great chance ultimately results in failure and personal loss. The irony lies in the contrast between expectation and reality.)

The title of this story may be interpreted as “*The Big Opportunity*.” The protagonist, Frank, had a seemingly extraordinary chance to surpass a 400-day record by aiming for 401 days. He prepared thoroughly; however, he interpreted the notion of “opportunity” only in its positive sense, failing to recognize its potential negative implications.

This deficiency in linguistic and cognitive interpretation led to the collapse of his endeavor. His sponsor went bankrupt, his partner left him, his health deteriorated, and he was left without basic means of communication or support. Although he failed to surpass the record, his story became widely known as an example of poor decision-making, even earning him notoriety in media narratives as one of the most misguided individuals.

The irony here lies in the discrepancy between the chosen “opportunity” and its incompatibility with real-life conditions. It demonstrates how misinterpretation and unrealistic expectations can lead to unintended and often unfavorable outcomes.

4. Two animal rights activists were protesting the cruelty of sending pigs to a slaughterhouse in Bonn. Suddenly, the pigs—all two thousand of them—escaped through a broken fence and stampeded, trampling the two helpless protesters to death. (*W. Brandon, Will of the Wind, p. 80*)

(Meaning: The example illustrates the tragic irony of misguided altruism. The activists sought to save the lives of animals but ultimately became victims of those very animals. The irony lies in the reversal of roles between savior and victim.)

The title of the literary work from which this passage is taken—“*Will of the Wind*” (metaphorically, “*Scattered by the Wind*”)—is highly symbolic. It reflects how the final actions of the two animal rights activists were, in effect, futile and “blown away.” The irony emerges from the fact that these individuals attempted to challenge a practice that had existed for thousands of years, perceiving it as inherently wrong, and sought to save the lives of the pigs.

However, instead of prioritizing their own safety, they focused on protecting the animals. The ironic outcome underscores a fundamental contradiction: in attempting to preserve the lives of the pigs, they failed to safeguard their own. Had someone warned them that they might one day be trampled to death by the very animals they sought to protect, they likely would not have believed it.

5. A woman came home to find her husband in the kitchen, shaking frantically with what looked like a wire running from his waist towards the electric kettle. Intending to jolt him away from the deadly current, she struck him with a plank of wood by the back door, breaking his arm in two places. Until that moment, he had been happily listening to his iPhone.

(*E. Wallace, A Case of Suspicion, p. 35*)

(Meaning: The example highlights the irony of misinterpretation. The wife, believing she was saving her husband from electrocution, instead causes him serious harm. The irony lies in the gap between perception and reality.)

This story, titled “*A Case of Suspicion*,” demonstrates how suspicion can become an object of irony. In real life, one might assume that a man would attempt suicide due to severe circumstances such as financial ruin, professional failure, family crises, betrayal, or incurable illness. The wife, however, misinterprets the situation and acts under the assumption that her husband is in mortal danger.

Although her intention is to save him, her action results in physical harm—she preserves him from a non-existent threat while depriving him of his well-being. This serves as a clear example of how suspicion, when based on false assumptions, can lead to ironic and paradoxical outcomes.

At the same time, the husband is not entirely without fault. While listening to music on his phone, his movements unintentionally resemble those of a person in distress, thereby triggering the misunderstanding. Had the wife struck his head instead of his arm, the situation would shift from irony into the domain of *black humor*.

Here is your passage translated into **high-level academic English**, maintaining **precision, coherence, and Scopus-level scholarly tone**, with meanings clearly explained:

6. Iraqi terrorist Khay Rahnajet did not pay sufficient postage on a letter bomb. It was returned to him stamped “return to sender.” Forgetting that it was a bomb, he opened it and was blown to pieces.

(*I. S. Thompson, Final Break, p. 147*)

(Meaning: The example illustrates a striking case of self-directed irony. The perpetrator becomes the victim of his own violent method. The irony lies in the reversal of agency—what was intended for others ultimately destroys its creator.)

The title of this story, “*Final Break*,” may be interpreted metaphorically as a “final rupture” or “ultimate end.” The narrative suggests that the terrorist, weary of his violent activities, decides to abandon this path and adopt a peaceful life in accordance with moral and religious principles. However, before doing so, he resolves to carry out one final act, sending out a last batch of letter bombs.

After several weeks of living an ordinary life, he receives a returned letter, as the addressee is no longer at the indicated address. Having distanced himself from his previous actions, Rahnajet forgets the true nature of the letter and opens it without hesitation. The outcome is fatal. The irony lies in the fact that the very method he had repeatedly used against others ultimately becomes the cause of his own destruction.

In Uzbek discourse as well, numerous examples of irony can be observed.

Ubaydullo Zokoni, in his work “*O‘n fasl risolasi*” (“Treatise in Ten Chapters”), makes extensive use of irony in characterizing individuals, their traits, professions, and social roles. For example:

“Donishmand – tirikchiligini o‘tkazishga aqli yetmaydigan no‘noq odam.”

(Meaning: “A wise man is one who lacks the practical intelligence to sustain his own livelihood.” The irony lies in contrasting the conventional understanding of wisdom with practical incompetence.)

Here, irony emerges from the contradiction between the expected meaning of “wise”—a person possessing comprehensive knowledge—and the reality that many such individuals may struggle with everyday life.

“Mudarris – murodiga yetmaganlarning ulug‘i.” (Meaning: “A teacher is the most distinguished among those who have failed to achieve their goals.” The irony reflects a critical view of social roles and unfulfilled aspirations.)

Earlier, U.Zokoni associates unfulfilled aspirations with seekers of knowledge. In past societies, such descriptions were often perceived not as irony but as reflections of social reality. Even today, some individuals find it difficult to accept these characterizations as ironic, given their grounding in lived experience. Thus, in irony, the lexical unit is employed in a reversed or opposite meaning, shaped by a context that activates its implicit evaluative dimension.

## Conclusion

Various forms of irony emerge in representing the linguistic worldview through language units. Within the linguistic paradigm of scientific knowledge, irony functions as an emotional and evaluative factor in the verbalization of perceived spatial and temporal phenomena. Irony is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon through which the speaker expresses both an emotional and reflective attitude toward the object of discourse.

The study of irony at the level of different types of discourse that reflect various modes of perception contributes to revealing the structural and semantic features of its realization mechanisms.

Stylistic devices, particularly those manifested in the descriptive segments of a text, constitute one of the most effective means of expressing irony. In our view, this characteristic of irony is determined by the general principles governing human cognition: rather than merely conveying sequences of actions and changes, irony tends to foreground evaluative and often ironic interpretations in the depiction of objects.

Based on the analysis of the examples, two principal strategies for the construction of ironic meaning have been identified: lexico-semantic and logical-semantic, which serve as a foundation for the classification of ironic utterances. The former is associated with deviations from conventional or stylistic norms, whereas the latter is achieved through the deliberate violation of logic or departure from the established worldview, resulting in cognitive dissonance.

A comparison of source texts and their translations demonstrates that the strategy of translating irony is primarily aimed at conveying both explicit and implicit meanings that are often oppositional in nature, while preserving the relationship between them. This preservation is essential for achieving equivalence in translation. Depending on the linguistic characteristics of the source text, the translator may resort to explicating the subtext in order to prevent the loss of ironic meaning in the target text.

## References:

1. Кипенко М.В.Аксиологический аспект *Власть* в современном русском языковом сознании. **Автореф. дисс. .... канд. филол. наук.**Тольятти, 2012. – С.16.
2. Бабушкин А.П., Стернин И.А. Когнитивная лингвистика и семасиология. – Воронеж: ООО “Ритм”, 2018. – С.16.
3. Аскольдов С.А. Концепт и слово//Русская словесность: От теории словесности к структуре текста: Антология. – М.: Языки славянской культуры, 1997. – С.267-280.
4. Воркачев С.Г. Лингвокультурная концептология и её терминосистема //Дискуссии. Политическая лингвистика – Краснодар. №3.(49), 2014. – С.16.
5. Куронов Д., Мамажонов З., Шералиева М. *Адабиётшунослик лугати.* – Тошкент: Akadernashr, 2013. – 408 б.
6. <https://oyina.uz/uz/article/1884>
7. <https://predanie.ru/book/219873-o-ponyatii-ironii/>
8. <http://typesofirony.com/#google>
9. <https://uz.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antifraz>