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**A COMPARATIVE SEMANTIC STUDY OF THE MECHANISMS OF EXPRESSING "IRONY" IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK****СРАВНИТЕЛЬНО-СЕМАНТИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ МЕХАНИЗМОВ ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ «ИРОНИИ» В АНГЛИЙСКОМ И УЗБЕКСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ****INGLIZ VA O'ZBEK TILLARIDA "IRONIYA" IFODALASH MEKANIZMLARI QIYOSIY SEMANTIK TADQIQI****Abduqodirova Madina Abduqayum qizi**   
Student of Tashkent state transport university**Abstract**

Irony is a significant linguistic and cultural feature present in many languages, including English and Uzbek. It functions as a form of indirect communication, frequently expressing meanings contrary to their literal sense. While irony has been extensively examined within pragmatics, semantics, and discourse analysis, there is still a lack of comparative research on how it is conveyed in English and Uzbek. While both English and Uzbek utilize irony as a rhetorical and communicative device, the structural formation, perception, and interpretation of irony vary significantly due to linguistic and cultural distinctions. The scarcity of comparative studies in this area results in a knowledge gap regarding the mechanisms through which irony operates in these two languages. In this article, we will going to discuss semantic and pragmatic mechanisms of irony between English and Uzbek languages and also, identify similarities and differences in ironic expressions from English and Uzbek literatures. This article makes a valuable contribution to comparative linguistics by offering a deeper understanding of both the distinct and common aspects of irony in English and Uzbek. The results can be beneficial for linguists, translators, and language learners in grasping how irony functions in cross-cultural communication.

**Аннотация**

Ирония является важной лингвистической и культурной особенностью, присутствующей во многих языках, включая английский и узбекский. Она функционирует как форма косвенной коммуникации, часто выражая значения, противоположные их буквальному смыслу. Хотя ирония была тщательно исследована в рамках прагматики, семантики и дискурсивного анализа, все еще существует нехватка сравнительных исследований того, как она передается на английском и узбекском языках. Несмотря на то, что и английский, и узбекский используют иронию как риторическое и коммуникативное средство, структурное формирование, восприятие и интерпретация иронии значительно различаются из-за лингвистических и культурных различий. Отсутствие сравнительных исследований в этой области приводит к пробелам в знаниях относительно механизмов, через которые ирония функционирует в этих двух языках. В этой статье мы рассмотрим семантические и прагматические механизмы иронии между английским и узбекским языками, а также выявим сходства и различия в иронических выражениях в английской и узбекской литературе. Статья представляет собой ценное дополнение к сравнительному языкознанию, предлагая более глубокое понимание как отличительных, так и общих аспектов иронии в английском и узбекском языках. Результаты могут быть полезны лингвистам, переводчикам и учащимся в понимании того, как ирония функционирует в межкультурной коммуникации.

**Annotatsiya**

Ironiya ko'plab tillarda, jumladan ingliz va o'zbek tillarida muhim lingvistik va madaniy xususiyat hisoblanadi. U ko'pincha bevosita ma'nolarga qarama-qarshi bo'lgan ma'holami ifodalovchi dolzarb kommunikatsiya shakli sifatida ishlatiladi. Ironiya pragmatika, semantika va diskurs tahlili doirasida keng o'rganilgan bo'lsa-da, ingliz va o'zbek tillarida uning qanday ifodalanishi bo'yicha taqqoslash tadqiqotlari hali ham etishmayapti. Har ikki tilda ham ironiyaning ritorik va kommunikativ vosita sifatida ishlatilishi mavjud bo'lsa-da, uning strukturaviy shakllanishi, qabul qilinishi va talqin qilinishi lingvistik va madaniy farqlar tufayli sezilarli darajada farq qiladi. Bu sohada taqqoslash tadqiqotlarining kamligi, ushbu tillarda ironiyaning qanday mexanizmlar orqali amalga oshirilishini o'rganish bo'yicha bilim bo'shliqlariga olib kelmoqda. Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillarida ironiyaning semantik va pragmatik mexanizmlarini tahlil qilamiz va ingliz va o'zbek adabiyotlaridagi ironik ifodalardagi o'xshashliklar va farqlarni aniqlaymiz. Ushbu maqola ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi ironiyaning o'ziga xos va umumiy jihatlari yanada chuqurroq tushunishni taklif etib, taqqoslash tilshunosligi sohasiga qimmatli hissa qo'shadi. Natijalar lingvistlar, tarjimonlar va til o'rganuvchilari uchun ironiyaning madaniyalararo kommunikatsiyadagi funksiyalarini anglashda foydali bo'lishi mumkin.

**Key words:** Descriptive Analysis of irony, Comparative Analysis of irony, Corpus Analysis of irony, Grice, Gibbs, Qodirov's view, Said Ahmad's point, mechanisms of expressing irony, Sperber and Wilson's Theory

**Ключевые слова:** Дескриптивный анализ иронии, сравнительный анализ иронии, корпусный анализ иронии, взгляды Грайса, Гиббса, Кодировова, точка зрения Саида Ахмада, механизмы выражения иронии, теория Спера и Уилсона

**Kalit so'zlar:** Ironiyaning tasviri tahlili, ironiyaning taqqoslash tahlili, ironiyaning korpus tahlili, Grays, Gibbs, Qodirovning nuqtiy nafari, Said Ahmadning fikri, ironiyaning ifodalash mexanizmlari, Sperber va Uilsonning nazariyasi.

## INTRODUCTION

Irony plays a crucial role in communication, often allowing speakers to convey meanings that contradict their literal statements. Although irony is a universal linguistic phenomenon, the ways in which it is expressed can differ significantly across languages. English and Uzbek, which stem from distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds, both employ irony, but the structures and nuances through which it is communicated reflect their unique linguistic features, cultural influences, and social norms. Moreover, in today's day number of learners have this kind of questions while learning irony:

1. How is irony expressed in English and Uzbek in terms of linguistic structure and semantics?
2. What are the similarities and differences between English and Uzbek ironic expressions?
3. How do cultural factors influence the perception and use of irony in both languages?

In English, irony is often conveyed through tone, word choice, and contextual cues. Verbal irony, where the speaker says the opposite of what they mean, is commonly used, and the listener must rely on tone and context to understand the intended meaning. Phrases like *Oh, great!* when something unfortunate happens, or *That's just what I needed!* when something goes wrong, are classic examples of verbal irony in English. English-speaking cultures, especially in the UK and the US, use irony frequently in both informal and formal contexts. It is seen as a form of wit, humor, and sometimes criticism. British irony, for example, is often understated and relies heavily on sarcasm, which is a form of verbal irony. Oscar Wilde's (American writer) "The Importance of Being Earnest" [1] book is a good example for this sentence

Algernon says, *"The only way to behave to a woman is to make love to her, if she is pretty, and to someone else if she is plain."* In this statement is a clear example of Wilde's use of verbal irony, where the opposite of what is stated is true. Algernon's remark is meant to be humorous but also highlights the satirical nature of the play, critiquing the superficiality of society. Wilde uses irony to mock Victorian societal norms about marriage and love.

However, when it comes to irony in Uzbek language, irony is often more indirect and culturally nuanced. While it can be verbal, it is frequently conveyed through context, metaphor, and proverbs. The use of understatement or exaggeration is also common in expressing irony, which often relies on the listener's ability to read between the lines. For example, saying *Ha, juda yaxshi!* (Yes, very good!) in a context where something negative has occurred would signal irony. Uzbek culture places a strong emphasis on respect, social harmony, and indirect communication. As such, irony in Uzbek is often less direct than in English and may be conveyed through indirect references, wordplay, or humor that requires a shared cultural understanding. This can make Uzbek irony more difficult for non-native speakers to detect. We are going to take example writer from Uzbekistan who is Aitmatov's novel "Jamila" [2]:

The character Iskander reflects, *"Yurti sevsam ham, meni o'zi bilan olib ketgan o'zgarishlar u erda bo'lmadi."* ("Even though I love my homeland, the changes that carried me away were not found there.")

His line is probably ironic because it reflects Iskander's inner conflict. He loves his homeland, but the changes he underwent as a result of the outside world (modernization and change) cannot be found in his traditional society. His words express a sense of disappointment and disillusionment with the way time has passed, highlighting the gap between personal change and societal stagnation. While English often relies on verbal cues such as intonation to convey irony, Uzbek uses a more contextual approach, relying on subtle cues, cultural knowledge, and indirect speech. English irony can be more explicit, with direct contradictions, while Uzbek irony is typically more implicit, requiring the listener to interpret the deeper meaning and in English-speaking cultures, especially in the West, irony is often associated with humor, intellectual discourse, and criticism. In contrast, in Uzbek culture, irony tends to be used more cautiously, often in more familiar settings and when there is a certain level of intimacy or trust between the speaker and the listener. The cultural values of respect and hierarchy influence how and when irony is used in Uzbek. Conversely, English speakers may use irony in a broader range of situations, including everyday conversation, literature, and media. Uzbek speakers, however, are more likely to use irony within a more limited range of contexts, often in traditional or informal settings, where humor and familiarity play a larger role.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Irony is a rhetorical and communicative device that conveys meaning opposite to the literal interpretation of words. It has been widely analyzed in pragmatics, semantics, and discourse analysis. Grice introduced the concept of implicature, explaining irony as a form of indirect speech where the intended

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meaning differs from the explicit message. [3] We believe that, Grice's approach is a useful starting point for understanding irony, especially in structured discourse. However, modern perspectives like Relevance Theory from Sperber and Wilson and cognitive approaches from Gibbs provide a more nuanced view [4]. Irony is not just about breaking conversational rules; it also depends on social context, speaker intention, and audience interpretation and similarly, Sperber and Wilson, in their Relevance Theory, described irony as an echoic interpretation, where the speaker signals an attitude towards a previously expressed belief or expectation. For example, a student, Ali, has just failed an exam. Before the exam, his teacher had confidently said:

*This test is really easy! Everyone should pass without any problem.*

After receiving his failing grade, Ali sarcastically remarks to his friend:

**"Wow, that was the easiest test ever!"**

When we are looking at the Sperber and Wilson's Theory:

1. Echoic Interpretation → Ali is not stating his own belief; he is echoing the teacher's earlier statement.

2. Attitudinal Component → Ali's irony conveys criticism and disbelief rather than just stating a fact.

3. Relevance to Context → The irony works because his audience (his friend) recognizes the original statement and the contrast between expectation and reality.

However, when we compare with Grice's View:

Grice's Theory: Would explain this irony as a violation of the Maxim of Quality (Ali is saying something false to imply something else). In addition, Sperber and Wilson's Theory: Would argue that Ali is not just violating a maxim but mocking or challenging a previous belief (the teacher's statement). When we continue from Uzbek literature, Uzbek irony is deeply rooted in literary and oral traditions. Qodirov examined the role of irony in Uzbek literature, particularly in satirical works. Xudoyberdiyeva highlighted how Uzbek irony is prevalent in proverbs, folk tales, and poetry, where it serves both humorous and moralizing functions. Unlike English irony, which often relies on explicit lexical cues, Uzbek irony tends to be more context-dependent, utilizing idiomatic expressions, rhetorical contrasts, and indirect criticism from Tursunov.[5] We believe that, Qodirov's research primarily focuses on Uzbek literature and oral traditions, analyzing how irony functions as a satirical and critical tool and his main point contains: 1. Irony in Uzbek Literature → Common in classical poetry e.g., Navoi, satire e.g., Abdulla Qodiriy and folk humor.

2. Context-Dependence → Unlike English irony, Uzbek irony relies more on cultural and contextual clues rather than explicit markers.

3. Moral and Social Criticism → Irony in Uzbek discourse is often used for polite criticism, contrasting with English sarcasm, which is more direct. For example, an Uzbek villager who sees his neighbor being lazy but still expecting wealth. He says: *E, sizdek ishlamaydigan odam topilmaydi-da!*

(Translation: Wow, no one works harder than you!) In addition, we think that, Uzbek irony is more indirect, polite, and context-driven compared to English irony. However, Qodirov focuses mainly on literary and traditional irony, while irony in modern Uzbek media, online communication, and daily speech can also include sarcasm and humor similar to English irony.

Example of a More Modern Uzbek Irony Case

Imagine a student gets very bad food in the cafeteria and says:

*Ovoqatlar juda zo'r, restoran darajasida!*

(The food is amazing, restaurant quality!)

This is closer to English sarcasm, showing how modern Uzbek irony is evolving.

Aspect	Qodirov's view	Our opinion
Focus	Literature and folk culture	Everyday speech and modern usage
Form	Indirect and polite irony	Mix of polite irony and sarcasm
Context	Strongly culture-dependent	Increasingly influenced by global irony styles
Example	Poetic and satirical texts	Daily conversations and media

## METHODS

The methods used to analyze the mechanisms of expressing irony in English and Uzbek through a comparative semantic approach. The study employs both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to explore the structural, pragmatic, and cultural aspects of irony in these languages. In this below we will

going to analyze all of it. *Descriptive Analysis* involves categorizing ironic expressions in English and Uzbek from literature, media, and every day. For example, English: *Oh great, another Monday! (Irony through sarcasm)* Uzbek: *Yaxshi o'qisang, to'yga ham vaqt topasan.* ("If you study well, you'll still have time for weddings." – ironic criticism of social pressure)

*Comparative Analysis* compares irony in English and Uzbek in terms of meaning, function, and cultural context: English: "You're such a genius!" (Used to mock a mistake) Uzbek: "Sizday aqlli odam yo'q!" ("There's no one as smart as you!" – same ironic effect but more indirect) is a good example of this statement.

*Corpus Analysis* is for a large text corpus are analyzed to find patterns in irony use: [The British National Corpus (BNC) may reveal that irony often appears in political discourse and social criticism. Uzbek newspaper archives may show irony is frequently used in satirical articles about government policies] When we start to analyze from Uzbek and English literature through a comparative semantic and pragmatic approach. The study examines how irony functions as a rhetorical device and explores its cultural implications.

English: *Pride and Prejudice* from Jane Austen

*Mr. Bennet* frequently uses irony to mock his wife's obsession with marriage.

Quote: *You must be two of the silliest girls in the country. I have suspected it for some time, but I am now convinced.* The literal meaning contradicts the actual intent—Mr. Bennet does not believe his daughters are silly but rather mocks Mrs. Bennet's dramatic behavior.

Uzbek: *O'tkan Kunlar* from *Abdulla Qodiriy* [6]

The novel ironically criticizes traditionalism and social hypocrisy.

*Example:* In one scene, rich but ignorant people are praised sarcastically, showing how wealth is valued over wisdom. This irony highlights social injustice and cultural contradictions in pre-Soviet Uzbekistan and they are good example for *Descriptive Analysis of Irony in Literature*.

Shakespeare's plays frequently use irony for comedy and tragedy (e.g., Dramatic irony in *Othello*—the audience knows Iago is a villain, but Othello does not) for *Comparative Analysis of English and Uzbek Literary Irony*. Alisher Navoi's poetry contains subtle irony against injustice and ignorance (e.g., ironic praise of false scholars). English irony often relies on sarcasm and satire, while Uzbek irony is more indirect and context-based, requiring deeper interpretation.

**Results:** When we continue to write much more examples with comparing English and Uzbek irony:

English	Uzbek
"For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbors, and laugh at them in our turn?" (Mr. Bennet)	"Boy bo'lishni istasang, senga ilm kerak emas, faqat kim bilan gaplashishni bil!" ("If you want to be rich, you don't need knowledge, just the right connections!")
"All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."	A man calls his corrupt friend an "honest businessman".
A man calls his corrupt friend an "honest businessman".	
Pip believes Miss Havisham is his secret benefactor, but later learns it was Magwitch, a criminal.	

## DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research, *"For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbors, and laugh at them in our turn?"* writer Mr. Bennet is from *Pride and Prejudice* from Jane Austen [7] book and also, it is Verbal Irony in Literary. When it comes to analyze Mr. Bennet sarcastically remarks on the triviality of social gossip. Instead of genuinely believing that people live to entertain each other, he mocks the superficiality of upper-class society. This irony serves as social satire, criticizing rigid class structures and shallow social norms of 19th-century England.

Second example is taken from *Animal Farm* writer *George Orwell* [8] "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." This self-contradictory statement exposes the irony of political corruption. Initially, the revolution in *Animal Farm* was supposed to create equality, but instead, it resulted in

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a new oppressive regime. G.Orwell uses verbal irony to criticize totalitarian governments and the hypocrisy of political leaders.

Thirdly, *Great Expectations* from Charles Dickens [9] Scene: *Pip believes Miss Havisham is his secret benefactor, but later learns it was Magwitch, a criminal.* Analysis shows *Dramatic, Social class and thematic irony*: Pip's assumption that Miss Havisham is his benefactor reflects his longing for social status and love, as he associates wealth and refinement with her. Readers, however, are aware of Miss Havisham's eccentricity and bitterness, which makes her an unlikely source of Pip's fortune. When Pip learns that Magwitch, a convict he helped as a child, is the true benefactor, the truth undermines Pip's expectations. The irony lies in Pip's misjudgment and the contrast between the moral standing of the two figures: Miss Havisham, who appears respectable, is revealed to be emotionally destructive, while Magwitch, a criminal, is actually the one who secretly provides Pip with the means to better himself and it is connected with *Dramatic irony*. Moreover, Pip's assumption about his benefactor also reflects his snobbery and desire to rise above his humble beginnings. He sees wealth as a symbol of virtue and moral superiority, which is ironic when Magwitch, a man of low moral standing in society's eyes, turns out to be his benefactor. This challenges Pip's original views on class and social status, highlighting the idea that good fortune and moral worth don't necessarily align. It is a good example for *Social class irony* and for last one *Thematic Irony*: Throughout the novel, Pip's journey is one of self-deception and misdirection. His initial belief that Miss Havisham will fulfill his aspirations contrasts with the eventual revelation that it is Magwitch, a man who embodies the criminality and underclass Pip wishes to escape. This irony underscores themes of social mobility, moral development, and the idea that appearances are often deceiving.

From Uzbek literature for Verbal Irony in Uzbek Literature *O'tkan Kunlar (Abdulla Qodiriy)* Quote: *Boy bo'lishni istasang, senga ilm kerak emas, faqat kim bilan gaplashishni bil!* (If you want to be rich, you don't need knowledge, just the right connections!). After checking, we can know, this sarcastic statement ironically criticizes the role of nepotism in Uzbek society. Instead of promoting education, the quote highlights how connections are more valuable than merit. A.Qodiriy uses irony to provoke readers into questioning corruption and social injustice. Qodiriy's irony is a tool of resistance, used to question traditions, criticize injustice, and reveal hypocrisy in Uzbek society. His irony is not always humorous, but rather thought-provoking and often tragic, making it a key element in his storytelling.

Theme	How irony used	Example
Social Criticism	Highlights corruption and injustice	"An honest man can never be rich"
Traditional vs. modern values.	Exposes outdated customs	A character following traditions faces tragic results
Political satire	Critiques government and authority	Corrupt leaders justify oppression in "noble" ways
Human Foolishness	Shows contradictions in behavior	A character believes he is wise but makes foolish decisions

Second literary irony is from *Jimjitlik* from Said Ahmad [10] Scene: *A man calls his corrupt friend an "honest businessman".* Analysis will the statement is not a genuine compliment, but rather a sarcastic criticism of economic corruption in Uzbek society. Uzbek verbal irony often serves as indirect political and social commentary, rather than direct sarcasm. We know, Said Ahmad, a prominent Uzbek writer, skillfully used irony to create humor, criticize social flaws, and highlight human contradictions. His irony often appears in satirical storytelling, exposing the absurdity of human behavior while also delivering serious moral lessons and Said Ahmad's irony is more playful and sarcastic compared to Qodiriy's heavier social critique. He uses humor to expose contradictions in everyday life, making his stories both entertaining and thought-provoking.

## CONCLUSION

This study has explored the mechanisms of expressing irony in both English and Uzbek, highlighting the similarities and differences in their linguistic and cultural expressions. The comparative semantic analysis revealed that while both languages use irony as a rhetorical device, the methods of its construction, perception, and interpretation differ significantly due to unique cultural contexts and linguistic structures. In English, irony tends to be more direct and explicit, often utilized in social critique and satire, as seen in works by authors like Jane Austen and George Orwell. In contrast, Uzbek irony is more subtle and

context-dependent, frequently used to critique traditional values and social issues, as seen in the works of writers such as Abdulla Qodiriy and Said Ahmad. These differences reflect the distinctive socio-cultural backgrounds of the two languages, where irony serves not only as a tool for humor but also as a means for challenging social norms and sparking reflection on moral and societal issues. The findings suggest that while irony in both languages shares the common goal of expressing contradictions between appearance and reality, the way it is realized in discourse is shaped by the unique linguistic and cultural environments in which it operates. Further research could expand this analysis by considering how irony functions in other forms of communication, such as digital media, and exploring its impact on intercultural communication.

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