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**Metalinguistic ironic expressions in Polish and Russian (based on literary texts study)**

## Abstract

The presented study focuses on the metalinguistic aspect of verbal irony. The direction and nature of the research therefore follow from the need to examine phenomena that occur when the linguistic reflexivity and the verbal irony – two very substantial for the use of natural language issues – interact. This thesis proceeds from the premise that the link between these two entities is deep and multi-faceted. An ironic / sarcastic utterance itself creates an additional level of interpretation, therefore it itself turns into, in a sense, a metamessage (see Haiman 1998). The natural medium of an ironic message may often take the form of somebody else's utterance quoted by an actual speaker (Wilson, Sperber 1992; Бахтин 1994). Metalinguistic units could be used as the practical and effort effective "containers" of the author's attitude towards the speech of a character and the author's judgement regarding their communicative behavior.

Within this work, I analyze so called ironically used metalinguistic expressions in Polish and Russian; the main object of analysis is the metalinguistic units impact on creating and signaling of an ironic effect within literary, mainly narrative, texts. The most important goal of this study is to identify how the presence of irony is signaled in extracts from the Polish and Russian literary texts that incorporate ironic metalinguistic expressions. The research is carried out based on two corpora of 200 Polish and 200 Russian ironically used metalinguistic units.

The main theoretical challenge emerges from the fact that the basic terms used in the thesis title are all problematic; this applies to the term *irony* as well as terms *metalinguistic* and *literary text*. Identification of relevant aspects of their designata requires from researcher to describe and analyze various theoretical approaches proposed in academic literature so far. Accordingly, the first chapter provides a comprehensive literature review on verbal irony, linguistic reflexivity and specific character of a literary text as a communicative event.

Given there is no universal agreement on effectiveness of the methods of studying irony ("no single correct way to approach the study of irony exists" and, at the same time, "different approaches benefit when juxtaposed with other methods" (Colston, Athanasiadou 2017: 11)) I use in this study a wide range of methodological tools proposed within different frameworks that deal with verbal irony as well as within various linguistic traditions that may focus on figurative use of language as their main object of inquiry. The conclusions presented in the second chapter are based on the results of the semantic and pragmatic analyses that were supported by the use of

discursive methods when needed. In addition, corpus-assisted study of irony allows to venture beyond the area of simple examples invented by researchers themselves and adjusted to the artificial environment inside the laboratory (see Partington 2006: 189) and makes it possible to analyze authentic instances of irony. Furthermore, the data field within the study does not consist of few isolated examples, it provides a sufficient number of data to establish certain patterns and dependencies.

Systemization of data collection that this study is based on leans on three main criteria: the type of metalinguistic unit (criterion of form and meaning), the type of incompatibility that signals the presence of irony (criterion of meaning), and the type of the context (criterion of form and meaning). In this respect, the study appears to gain additional scientific knowledge on the functioning of verbal irony in literary texts.