

UDK 811.111.81'42

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32342/3041-217X-2025-1-29-6>

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## **COGNITIVE AND PRAGMATIC MECHANISMS OF GENERATING SITUATIONAL AND ECHOIC IRONY (A CASE STUDY OF THACKERAY'S NOVEL *THE HISTORY OF PENDENNIS: HIS FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES, HIS FRIENDS AND HIS GREATEST ENEMY*)**

*Метою* статті є виявлення когнітивних і прагматичних механізмів генерування іронії в романі Теккерея *Історія Пенденніса, його удач і нещасть, його друзів і його найлютішого ворога*. Комплексна методологія дослідження включає модель інтегрованої прагматики О. Дюкро, метод ехоінтерпретації іронії в межах теорії релевантності, метод інференції дискурсивних імплікатур та інструменти аналізу іронічних метафор і порівнянь. Основний висновок праці полягає у виявленні спільності когнітивних і прагматичних механізмів породження ситуаційної та ехоіронії.

Когнітивний механізм генерування іронії базується на зіткненні скриптів, що позначені іронічними висловлюваннями і пов'язані поміж собою завдяки оstenсивним стимулам. Відмінності між двома типами іронії ідентифіковані у типах оstenсивних стимулів, специфіці актуалізованих скриптів і типі порушених пресупозицій, що лежать в основі їх зіткнення. Остенсивні стимули ситуаційної іронії охоплюють метафору, авторський метатекст, порівняння та імпліцитну антитезу як тригери переходу між колізійними скриптами, які базуються на «зразках зіставлення» у порівняннях, на джерельному та цільовому просторах метафор або на фреймах, утворених групами контрастних образів. Перехід між скриптами уможлиблюється завдяки спільним рисам термів порівняння, елементам родового простору метафори, приписуванню оцінно-контрастних характеристик одному персонажу та посиленням через авторський метатекст на промінантні позиції в тексті, які пояснюють імпліцитну антитезу.

Колізія скриптів, що генерує ситуаційну іронію, базується, з одного боку, на порушеннях семантичних і синтагматичних пресупозицій, пов'язаних з обмеженнями на семантичну сполучуваність мовних одиниць, із проекцією на онтологічні аномалії – суперечності загальним властивостям реалій і подій, і, з іншого боку, на порушеннях каузальних зв'язків у логічній структурі пресуппозиції, що проектується на логіко-прагматичні аномалії – порушення прагматичних пресуппозицій щодо природних відносин між реаліями чи подіями.

Остенсивні стимули ехоїчної іронії включають базовані на алюзіях порівняння, гіперболи та персоналіфікацію, що зв'язують колізійні скрипти. Розбіжність універсальних культурних сценаріїв із «буденними» призводить до порушення нормативно-ціннісних пресупозицій. На додаток до оstenсивних стимулів, ситуативна і ехоїчна іронія підтримуються інтенсифікаторами, що актуалізують периферійні компоненти скриптів, що сприяють посиленню протиріч, є додатковими засобами переходу між скриптами та актуалізують локальні іронічні конотації.

Прагматичний механізм генерування іронії ґрунтується на порушенні кооперативної максими релевантності – через зіткнення сценаріїв, і якості – через використання семасіологічних стилістичних засобів. Відхилення від максим актуалізує іронічну імплікатуру та моралізаторську мета-імплікатуру, що встановлюють когерентність скриптів та підставу для їхньої узгодженості.

*Ключові слова:* ситуативна іронія, ехоіронія, когнітивний, прагматичний, механізм породження іронії, скрипт, Ostenсивний стимул, інтенсифікатори іронії.

**For citation:** Kravchenko, N., Kryzhko, O. (2025). Cognitive and Pragmatic Mechanisms of Generating Situational and Echoic Irony (A Case Study of Thackeray's Novel *The History of Pendennis: His Fortunes and Misfortunes, His Friends and His Greatest Enemy*). *Alfred Nobel University Journal of Philology*, vol. 1, issue 29, pp. 103-117, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32342/3041-217X-2025-1-29-6>

## Introduction

The study of Thackeray's irony, especially in his novel *Vanity Fair*, remains a priority topic in both linguistic and literary studies. However, in our view, the novel *The History of Pendennis: his fortunes and misfortunes, his friends and his greatest enemy* [Thackeray, 2005] has unfairly been overlooked by researchers. Published two years after *Vanity Fair*, it was regarded the author's creative failure [Hannay, 1970, pp. 24–25], falling short of his other works in terms of depth and irony. This article, exploring the mechanisms of irony generation in *Pendennis*, will attempt to demonstrate the opposite. Specifically, the novel is shown to incorporate various techniques for creating both situational and echoic irony. However, these techniques are oriented not towards the typification of vices embodied by characters, as in *Vanity Fair*, but rather towards their individualization, revealing the ambiguity of their feelings, and actions. On this matter, Thackeray himself wrote in his letter to Lady Blessington that with each passing day, he is increasingly ashamed of his former misanthropic attitude [Harden, 1996, p. 175].

The novelty of this article and its contribution to the theory of humor and irony are determined by the chosen framework for the analysis of irony. It is not approached merely as a stylistic device but as a pragmatic and cognitive resource within the context of the cognitive theory of verbal humor [Attardo, 2002; Brock, 2004; Gruner, 2000; Krikmann, 2006; Raskin, 1985; Veale, 2004]. According to this theory, humor and irony are generated by specific regularities based on the collision of opposing scripts, made “compatible” through a common trigger – an ostensive stimulus that facilitates the transition from one script to another. Such an approach implies the utilization of inferential-pragmatic mechanisms, represented by the cognitive pragmatics of relevance theory. In this perspective, irony is seen as reinterpreted “echoes” or references to other statements, norms, values, and expressions are interpreted as ironic in the optimal cognitive context. On a pragmatic level, the transition from an expected to an unexpected scenario is initiated by a violation of cooperative maxims, triggering implicatures. These implicatures are not only intended to restore logical coherence, truthfulness, or unambiguity of information but also to generate, alongside the ironic, a certain moralizing sense.

## Theoretical Framework

There is no consensus among scholars regarding the mechanisms of generation of ironic meanings. On the one hand, according to Sperber and Wilson, in ostensive (echoic) and non-ostensive or non-echoic (such as situational) types of irony, there is a commonality: “they all involve the perception of a discrepancy between a representation and the state of affairs it purports to represent” [Wilson, 1998, p. 291]. On the other hand, despite the conclusion that “ostensively ironical utterances exploit an echoic interpretive mechanism which is not involved in non-ostensive forms of irony” [Ibid], Sperber and Wilson assert that “an echoic account could deal with the full range of cases” [Ibid, p. 290]: the primary source of any irony is its echoic dimension, where irony involves the dissociative echoing of (possibly exaggerated) general desires or norms [Ibid, p. 285]. The emphasis on the speaker's dissociative relationship to the content of ironic utterances has been highlighted in several studies [Clark, Gerrig, 1984; Gibbs, 2002; Wilson, 2006]. In defense of this perspective, researchers point to the broad scope of what can be echoed by irony, including “general norms and desires, particular applications of

these to specific cases, attributed past, present, or even future thoughts, actual or imagined utterances”, etc. [Sperber, Wilson, 1998, p. 288]. In contrast to this approach, Cutler [1974] views ironic echoing as a minor but necessary addition to the semantic reversal mechanism considered fundamental.

These disagreements are reflected in the lack of scholarly consensus regarding whether ostensive and non-ostensive (situational, dramatic, romantic) forms of irony should be treated as invoking a unified or distinct set of cognitive mechanisms. While Hamamoto [1997] proposes a general cognitive mechanism based on the recognition of logical discrepancies between representations, Sperber and Wilson assert that ostensive and non-ostensive forms of irony involve different cognitive mechanisms and should not be treated together [Sperber, Wilson 1998, p. 291].

Integration of various approaches to interpreting the mechanisms of irony creation, in our view, can be achieved by understanding this phenomenon not as a literal-non-literal duality but as a dynamic process involving multiple levels and sources of meaning (see, for example, Kapogianni [2016]). The dynamic model of ironic meaning creation conceptualizes irony as an operation that affects both the semantic and pragmatic aspects of the literal meaning of an utterance as the ironic meaning is a product of pragmatic inference, in the process of which both the literal meaning of the statement and a multitude of derived meanings are engaged. Irony is capable of operating meaning, whether it is part of the literal content of the statement or not [Kapogianni, 2016; Camp, 2012]. The common denominator in this context is the presence of inconsistencies that produce the ironic effect, regardless of whether they are based on a reversal of meaning or on echoic reflection.

In this regard, to identify the mechanism generating irony, the fundamental premise of the general theory of verbal humor [Attardo, 2002; Brock, 2004] proves to be productive. This premise suggests that inconsistencies that generate a comic effect, including in humorous irony, are regulated by systematic regularities. An ironic text is necessarily constructed from two opposing scripts, made “compatible” by a common trigger. At the semantic level, triggers correspond to any devices that induce ambiguity.

A specific theoretical premise of the research is the theory of pragmatic presuppositions – background beliefs that are taken for granted [Stalnaker, 1974] and construct “unmarked” background information, forming a script that conflicts with verbal expression. Presupposition refers to a logically necessary condition which must be met for a particular state of affairs to be possible [Ping 1999, p. 133]. Similarly, Teun A. van Dijk equates presuppositions with “the knowledge or belief sets of speaker and hearer” [Dijk 1976, p. 77], as a subset of the cognitive context conditions [Dijk, 2012]. Presuppositions arising from the fundamental human ability to reason based on parallel cases and prototypes provide the opportunity to contextualize incongruent reality within the system of normative cultural and social stereotypes, familiar circumstances, scripts, and communicative conventions. Studies on the pragmatics of humor have identified general, conventional-communicative, and cultural presuppositions [Kravchenko, Pasternak, 2018, p. 125], serving as the background for key anomalies that contribute to the ironic effect.

On the pragmatic level, the transition from an expected to an unexpected scenario is initiated by disregarding cooperative maxims, with violations of the maxim of relevance dominating hierarchically, leading to the disregard of other maxims. Violation of maxims serves as the trigger for ironic implicature, aimed at restoring logical coherence, truthfulness, clarity, and completeness of information. In this regard, the pragmatics of jokes provides some new insights into the problem of a hierarchy of Cooperative Principles (CP) in terms of Gricean pragmatics: be informative, truthful, serious, etc. [Grice, 1975], integrating the traditional CP as “the lowest common denominator”, a humor-CP, and a “meta-CP” that regulates violations of the CP [Attardo, 2010, pp. 286–287]. When applied to irony, such a hierarchy can be presented as follows:

(1) Deviation from cooperative maxims, marked by an ostensive stimulus (in the case of ostensive irony) or a discrepancy between the presented situation and presuppositions about the normal state of affairs (in situational irony);

(2) Ironic implicature generated by the violation of maxims;

(3) “Meta-implicature” – a moralizing sense that regulates violations.

The objective of this article is to identify the cognitive and pragmatic mechanisms of irony generation in Thackeray’s novel, *The History of Pendennis: His Fortunes and Misfortunes, His Friends and His Greatest Enemy*, while distinguishing between situational and echoic irony regarding ostensive stimuli and collisional scripts.

## Methods

The article employs an integrative methodology that encompasses (a) the model of integrated pragmatics by O. Ducrot [1972]; (b) the method of echoic interpretation of irony within the framework of relevance theory [Sperber, Wilson, 1998], together with the method of identification of implicatures [Grice, 1975; Kravchenko, 2017]. Additional methods utilized include the analysis of comparison – ostensive stimulus of irony, using the comparison structure proposed by P. Hanks (quoted from [Niculae, Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil, 2014]), and the method of analyzing irony-generating metaphors based on explanatory tools of conceptual blending [Fauconnier, Turner, 2002].

In accordance with O. Ducrot’s model of integrated pragmatics [1969], the pragmatic and semantic dimensions of linguistic content mutually complement each other, creating a cohesive meaning, which implies a close connection of implicitness with the concept of presupposition. In the text, presupposition, as a meaning included a priori, can actualize the implicature, making it accessible to communicants. Ducrot distinguishes three components in the semantic structure of the utterance: “presuppose” – presupposed, presupposition; “pose” – posited; and “sous-entendu” – implied. “Presuppose” is information in the content of the utterance that is assumed to be known to the communicators: about the situation, the state of affairs in the real world; “pose” is considered as new information communicated by the speaker; and “sous-entendu” is what the recipient must infer from the utterance [Ducrot, 1969, pp. 107–126].

Simultaneously, the scholar distinguishes the following types of implicitness: (a) Unintentional implicitness, which arises when the speaker/author does not imbue hidden meanings, and the listener/reader infers additional meanings based on their perception; (b) Intentional implicitness, which occurs when the speaker deliberately injects additional meanings into their words [Ducrot, 1972, p. 18].

In light of this differentiation, presuppositions are related to intentional implicitness, which is crucial for the methodology of our article, connected to identifying mechanisms of irony generation. Since presupposition cannot be suppressed by context, possessing the property of unremovability, “Presuppose” (in Ducrot’s terms), as a “normative” background, forms a collision script with “Pose” – information deviating from the normal state of affairs and conveyed through irony. On a pragmatic level, such a component corresponds to a deviation from cooperative maxims. The third structural component, “Sous-entendu”, is inferred by the reader as an implicature, which, in turn, can carry both a genuinely ironic meaning and an additional moralizing sense. The semantic trigger for the implicature is the means of ostensive irony, marking ambiguity, while the pragmatic trigger is the violation of one or more maxims of cooperation.

To elucidate the mechanism of generating ironic implicature as a collision between presuppose and pose, the article employs a classification of anomalies [Kravchenko, Pasternak, 2018, p. 125] based on the criterion of colliding explicit meaning with general, conventionally communicative, and cultural presuppositions. Anomalies include three main types: (a) Ontological (referential, semantic) anomalies based on the distortion of the world and its realities; (b) Logical-pragmatic mismatch of irrational conclusions that formally correspond to syllogistic reasoning and are considered true; (c) Value discrepancies that “look so basic and obvious that do not require verbal formulation” [Ping, 1999, pp. 133–134]. Cultural presuppositions embody the prototypical world of values, universal axiological norms and, therefore, constitute a “dichotomy test” for reversed values marked by ironic devices.

Additional components of the comprehensive methodology include the analysis of comparisons and metaphors generating ironic effects. Comparisons are analyzed based on structural components proposed by Hanks (quoted from: [Niculae, Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil, 2014, p. 2010]), including: the tenor that acts as the logical subject; the vehicle that acts as the object of the comparison; the eventuality: usually a verb, which sets the frame for the common property;

the common property that two entities share; the comparator – a marker of comparison (like, as, similar to, etc.). In comparisons, some of the elements may be presented, including the omission of the comparator. This is indicated, in particular, by M. Israel, J.R. Harding and V. Tobin [2004], who draw attention to various “forms which similes may take”, stating that “a fairly wide range of distinct constructions may in fact serve to express a simile” [Israel et al., 2004, pp. 124–125], even if they do not contain a comparative element. Considering the role of comparison as an ostensive stimulus generating irony, linking opposing scripts, the article introduces an additional element into the comparison analysis model – the “comparison sample”, which correlates with the script to which the tenor or vehicle refers.

Metaphors generating irony are reconstructed based on the method of conceptual integration theory [Fauconnier, Turner, 2002, pp. 283–304], identifying the input spaces, generic space of their common elements, and the blended space where meaning is reconstructed through matching elements of the generic space with presuppositions formed by the text or background knowledge, followed by the development and elaboration of the blend into the moralizing meta-implicature of the metaphorical ironic statement.

### **Situational irony: mechanisms, triggers, intensifiers**

Ontological and logical-pragmatic anomalies form the basis of situational irony while also incorporating signs of ostensive irony, as illustrated by fragment (1):

(1) *but suffice it to say, that through all the storms of life Jack had floated somehow, and the lamp of his nose had never gone out* [Thackeray, 2005].

The ostensive stimulus here is the metaphor “the lamp of his nose”. The source and target spaces of the metaphor – lamp and nose – are connected by common features of the generic space: a red nose and a red glowing lamp. The ontological anomaly generating the ironic effect arises from a violation of categorical semantic presuppositions associated with the verb “go out”, since it typically refers to extinguishing a fire or a light, which is not compatible with the action of a nose, which is thus beyond the scope of the applicability of the predicate. A breach of semantic compatibility of the verb creates a semantic incongruity that contributes to the ostensive irony.

At the pragmatic level, a violation of semantic presupposition through metaphor corresponds to a deviation from the maxim of quality, according to Grice’s interpretation of metaphor. He asserts that a speaker using a metaphorical expression disregards the principle of quality, thereby implying some further proposition, considering mutually shared presuppositions that become significant due to the conventional meaning of the constituent words and the context in which they are used [Grice, 1975, p. 53]. The connection between the violation of cooperative postulates and the emergence of ironic meaning was also pointed out by researchers such as G.N. Leech [1983, p. 80] and D.S. Kaufer [1981, p. 500]. Thus, the metaphor becomes a “trigger for implicature, which carries additional meanings” [Kravchenko, Pasternak, 2018, p. 151], in this analyzed case, referring to alcohol addiction.

The intensifier of irony is the seme “constancy” in “had never gone out”, which semantically aligns with the first part of the ironic statement, “had floated through all life’s storms”, carrying contextual connotations of “resilience” and “steadfastness”. The seme of “constancy” serves as a trigger ensuring the coherence between the scripts “resilience in life’s storms” and “constantly burning/red nose”, which, ontologically, are not congruent. The incoherence between these scripts marks deviations from the maxim of relevance, reinforcing the ironic implicature of “persistence and constancy in alcohol consumption”, supported by the frame of “external signs of alcoholism”. Despite the fact that the seme of “steadfastness” implies causal connections between two parts of a complex sentence, the component “resilience to life’s storms” cannot serve as justification (argument) for “persistence in alcohol consumption”. Thus, the syntagmatic presupposition is violated as the conditionality of one sentence by another. It corresponds to the logical-pragmatic anomaly, where an irrational conclusion formally corresponds to the logical structure of the presupposition “if... then...” (if a person shows steadfastness, they show it in everything, including persistence in alcohol consumption), but contains a logical contradiction. With the trigger of transitioning between scripts, the seme of “constancy”, such an anomaly becomes a mechanism of situational irony.



The basis of the mechanism for generating situational irony on the collision of scripts, linked by an ostensive stimulus, is confirmed by other ironic statements.

(2) *They were led cheering into action by the portly Swallowtail, who waved his cap—the non-commissioned officers in the pit, of course, gallantly following their chiefs* [Thackeray, 2005].

The ostensive stimulus marking the transition from the “ovation” script to the “a military engagement” script is the metaphor “were led cheering into action”. The source and target spaces of the metaphor, “to give ovations” and “fighting in battle”, are semantically connected through the common features of generic space – ardor, enthusiasm, energetic participation.

The intensifiers of irony are present in the expressions related to the source space “a military engagement” – the nomination of the commander as *the portly Swallowtail*, where the meaning of “leader in a military battle” contrast connotatively both with the attribute “portly” and with the internal form of the anthroponym Swallowtail, denoting the species butterflies. Simultaneously, the anthroponym contains the component “cavalier” in its internal form (Swallowtail is a day butterfly from the family of cavaliers), linking with both “a military battle”, as cavalier refers to a knight trained in arms and horsemanship, and with the adverb “gallantly” (an attribute associated with the second meaning of the polysemous word), describing the officers’ behavior towards their superior.

At the pragmatic level, the mechanism for generating irony involves the violation of the maxim of information quality through metaphor, associated with ostensive irony, and the maxim of relevance due to the collision of scripts, marked by metaphor and producing situational irony.

A distinctive feature of irony in the novel is that the violation of the maxim of relevance resulting from the collision of scripts triggers an implicature associated not only with ironic connotations but also with a moralizing meaning. This aligns with Sperber and Wilson’s observation that irony tends to be “moral”, a frequently noted but never fully explained fact. It is precisely because of this tendency that irony more often implies condemnation through explicit praise than praise through explicit blame [Sperber, Wilson 1998, pp. 285–286].

In the example below, the mechanism of generating irony becomes the collision of scenarios “love and acceptance” and “aggression and rejection”, with the trigger of transition nominating the subject expressing elevated feelings and punishing the child, as the Muse.

(3) *“It may be”, the forlorn one said, “it may be, you will slight it, my pretty baby sweet, You will spurn me from your bosom, I’ll cling around your feet! O let me, let me, love you!” And behold the Muse was boxing the darling brother’s ears* [Thackeray, 2005].

The irony here lies in the contradiction between the expectation of tenderness from the character and the reality of her subsequent actions, which creates a logical-pragmatic anomaly based on the violation of pragmatic presuppositions about causal connections between events. The intensifier of irony becomes the meaning of the word “Muse”, symbolizing inspiration, creativity, and lofty ideals, which contrasts with the act of “boxing the ears”, contributing to implicit antithesis. Deviation from the maxims of relevance, based on the gap between expectation and reality, corresponds to a violation of syntagmatic presuppositions due to a breach of semantic compatibility of the verb “to love”: the syntagmatic series, which should realize the valence of the verb, combines such incoherent components as “cling around your feet”, with the nomination of the object of love as “my pretty baby sweet”, and “darling”, – and “boxing the ears”. Violation of the maxim generates a meta-implicature characterizing the heroine as a cruel and cynical personality, hiding her true self behind a mask of sensitivity.

A separate mechanism for generating ironic meta-implicature in the novel is the authorial metatext, facilitating the collision of the scripts of “sincerity” and “artificiality” and easing the transition between them.

(4) *As for Miss Fotheringay and her behaviour, the reader is referred to a former page for an account of that. She went through precisely the same business. She surveyed the house all round with glances of gratitude; and trembled, and almost sank with emotion, over her favourite trap-door (...). She seized the flowers and pressed them to her swelling heart — etc., etc. — in a word — we refer the reader to earlier pages* [Thackeray, 2005].

The script of “sincerity” is marked by metaphors like *sank with emotion, swelling heart*, and the phrase *glances of gratitude*, as well as by verbs of emotions. The script of “artificiality” is referenced by components such as “precisely the same business”, “favourite trap-door”, and the repetition of the authorial metatext, which refers to pages where the sequence of expressions of emotions by the actress is precisely reproduced: *the reader is referred to a former page for an account of that, and we refer the reader to earlier pages; etc., etc.* The authorial metatext simultaneously serves as a trigger for the transition between scripts, connecting contrasting images as components of an implicit antithesis.

The intensifier of irony becomes the combination “favourite trap-door” due to the syntagmatic connection of incoherent senses: the denotative seme of the adjective “favourite” as “preferred to all others, liked or wanted more than anything else”, cannot be an attribute of the word “trap-door” (a hatch with a cover closing an opening in the stage compartment’s floor) because it is difficult to imagine a quality of a trap-door that would make it “preferred to all others” for the heroine. Consequently, the violation of semantic selectivity becomes a sign of deviation from the maxim of quantity and transparency of information, triggering an implicature that shifts the focus from evaluative characteristics of the trap-door to the chronotopic ones, which can restore completeness and compensate for ambiguity in information. The trap-door is the actress’s favorite locus in the sense that she always “sank with emotion” at a certain moment in time over exactly the same specific place, expressing her gratitude to the audience. The meta-implicature of the ironic statement is the idea of mechanization, rehearsedness, and artificiality of the actress’s actions.

Other intensifiers of irony in the passage include the proximity of the word “emotions” to the non-evaluative word “trap-door”, as well as the syntactic closeness of “trap-door” and “sank”, which allows the source space of the metaphor “sank with emotion”, linked to the meaning of “sink” (to fall or move to a lower level), to be associated with the seme of “a hole into which something is sank”, which may evoke a punning meaning “to sink into / fall down a trap-door from being sank with emotions”.

The meaning of “artificiality” gains contextual reinforcement through textual presuppositions related to the portrayal of the described character, who, devoid of natural talent, copied and mechanically repeated the movements shown to her by a teacher. This may intertextually suggest the story of Pygmalion and his creation, which is alluded to in one of the author’s meta-comments on the protagonist’s feelings:

(5) *Was Titania the first who fell in love with an ass, or Pygmalion the only artist who has gone crazy about a stone?* [Thackeray, 2005].

Irony becomes a means of semantic coherence, linking those prominent parts of the text where the actress is described through the implication of artificiality in her characteristics.

(6) *And after she had come out trembling with emotion before the audience, and looking so exhausted and tearful that you fancied she would faint with sensibility, she would gather up her hair the instant she was behind the curtain, and go home to a mutton-chop and a glass of brown stout; and the harrowing labours of the day over, she went to bed and snored as resolutely and as regularly as a porter* [Thackeray, 2005].

In the given fragment of situational irony, the ironic effect is generated by the collision of scripts: the Sublime versus the Mundane. The first script is marked by the means of the actress’s emotional manifestation (*trembling with emotion, exhausted and tearful, would faint with sensibility*) while the second script is based on nominations referring to her everyday preferences beyond the stage: *go home to a mutton-chop and a glass of brown stout*, which serve as metonymic symbols of the heroine’s lifestyle, pleasures, or preferences. The lexical marking of opposing scripts creates a technique of implicit antithesis, which serves as the basis for generating situational irony, since it is projected onto a logical-pragmatic anomaly – a violation of pragmatic premises about the natural relationships between things or events. Additionally, the irony is marked by ostensive stimulus – the comparison *snored*

*as resolutely and as regularly as a porter*, which involves terms of comparison – the actress (the tenor) and the snoring man (the vehicle), connected by the property – *resolutely and regularly*.

The intensifiers of irony include the discrepancy in the additional gender characteristics of the compared terms – the sensitive and sublime woman versus the snoring working-class porter, as well as the violation of semantic compatibility of the verb *snored* with an adverb of manner *resolutely* to describe this action, which, in addition, enhances the connotative meaning of masculinity and commonness.

Deviation from the maxims of relevance and transparency of information, based on comparison, in combination with lexically marked collisions of scripts and the violation of syntagmatic presuppositions due to a breach of semantic compatibility of the verb, generates a meta-implicature that characterizes the heroine as a narrow-minded individual with bourgeois views, hiding her inner life behind a mask of sincerity and sensitivity.

Thanks to irony as a text-forming category in the novel, it becomes possible to metaphorically reinterpret fragments that are not inherently metaphors. For example, in the excerpt below, the heroine performs a staged scene of Ophelia's death from *Hamlet*. However, due to the recurrent collision of scripts "sincerity" and "artificiality" in various parts of the text, the term "charming corpse" is reinterpreted as a metaphor to denote the actress's characteristics such as coldness and the absence of genuine emotional depth.

(7) *What an opportunity her splendid black hair had of tossing over her shoulders! She made the most charming corpse ever seen* [Thackeray, 2005].

As the analysis has shown, in the metaphor-oxymoron "charming corpse", the moralizing meaning is revealed in the space of the metaphorical blend. The mechanism of conceptual integration in this metaphor involves selecting shared attributes from the two input spaces (corpse and beauty) of their generic space. Common components, in our view, are linked to such a core element of the "corpse" frame related to the denotative meaning of this lexeme, as "lifeless" and "inanimate", coupled with the connotation of "coldness" and "artificiality" from the target conceptual space, which are projected into the blend's space. At the stage of developing the blend, these features associatively attract the meanings of "pretense" and "insincerity", which are not connected with the source space "corpse", but are related to other prominent positions of the text.

The intensifier of irony is the violation by a phrase *charming corpse* of (a) syntagmatic presuppositions, due to language restrictions on the compatibility of the adjective "charming" only with those nouns that can be described by this attribute, and (b) semantic presuppositions – due to the belonging of the lexemes "charming" and "corpse" to contrasting lexical-semantic groups "beautiful" and "ugly". Violation of presuppositions, enhanced by hyperbolization of *ever seen*, is projected onto the ontological anomaly: a corpse, as a lifeless organism, cannot possess attractiveness in the traditional sense of the word. The metaphor not only functions as a trigger for transitioning between the conflicting scripts of "sincerity" and "artificiality", but also serves as the basis for the collision of another group of scripts: beautiful and ugly, life and death, beauty and decay. Against the backdrop of other ironic fragments of the novel forming the frame of "artificiality", the first elements of comparison is equated with the second ones in terms of characterizing the inner world of the heroine as a living corpse in the aspect of emotionality and sincerity.

The cognitive mechanism of generating irony – the collision of scripts, pragmatically corresponds to a deviation from the maxim of relevance, marked by the metaphor-based violation of syntagmatic and semantic presuppositions. The resulting moralizing meta-implicature is created in the blend's space, simultaneously ridiculing and condemning the actress's pretense and artificiality.

The mechanism of generating irony can, in addition to metaphor and implicit antithesis, be based on such an ostensive stimulus as zeugma using one verb to modify two semantically incoherent words in two different ways, as in (8), oxymoron, which combines contradictory meanings, as in (9), and comparison in (10).



(8) *Doctor Portman was gone, with his gout and his family, to Harrogate* [Thackeray, 2005].

(9) *his success inspired him with a wicked good-humour* [Thackeray, 2005].

Zeugma and oxymoron are based on a similar mechanism of generating irony due to their creation of an ontological anomaly – a contradiction between the common properties of things or events. Linguistically, such anomaly is ensured by the violation of (a) categorical-semantic presuppositions by oxymoron due to the incompatibility of the semes “amiable” in the noun “good-humour” and “evil” in its attribute “wicked”, and (b) syntagmatic presuppositions in zeugma, marking the violation of logical-pragmatic presuppositions about natural connections between concepts: the verb “go with” ensures agreement between semantically heterogeneous members “gout” and “family”, creating a generating irony effect of deceived expectations.

In the pragmatic dimension, the ontological anomaly is ensured by the violation of the maxims of relevance and transparency of information by zeugma and oxymoron. While in the case of zeugma, the deviation from the maxims triggers an ironic implicature, oxymoron, in addition to its ironic meaning, contributes to the inference of a moralizing meta-implicature about the insincerity and pretense of the character, deliberately playing the role of a do-gooder to win the votes of the constituents. Such meta-implicature is supported by the textual context (Pendennis is running for Parliament) and is intended to restore logical coherence and unambiguity of information.

In (10) the mechanism of generating irony becomes the accumulation of several ostensive stimuli – zeugma and simile, in which one of the terms of comparison is a metaphorical expression.

(10) *she wrapped up Pen's letters, poems, passions, and fancies, and tied them with a piece of string neatly, as she would a parcel of sugar* [Thackeray, 2005].

In the excerpt provided, the terms of comparison linked by the comparator *as she would*, are *a parcel of sugar* (the vehicle), and the metaphors *wrapped / tied passions, and fancies* (the tenor). The peculiarity of the comparison lies in the fact that the verbs *wrapped up* and *tied* serve both as the eventuality, which sets the frame for the common property, and the explicit common property that the two entities share. The implicit common property is the association of sugar in the right term of the comparison with linguistic metaphors such as “sweet dreams”, “sweet pleasure”, and “sweet presentiment”, representing the state of being in love.

The ironic effect is based on the collision of scripts based on Comparison Samples, such as “emotions” and “grocery items”, with the trigger for transitioning between them being the comparison. The ironic implicature, based on the violation of the quality and relevance maxims, is associated with the excessive simplicity and ordinariness with which the heroine treats manifestations of feelings towards her. The moralizing meta-implicature is a negative characterization of the heroine, condemning her indifference and apathy towards the feelings of others.

The intensifier of irony is the zeugma device – the agreement of the verbs “wrapped up” and “tied” with the nouns “letters”, “poems”, “passions”, and “fancies”. By their semantic valences, the verbs can only relate to the first two components, thus violating semantic coordination with the other two components. The violation of syntagmatic presuppositions, projected onto ontological anomaly, generates the effect of deceived expectation, enhancing the ironic meaning.

Thus, the simile-based process of generating ironic meaning is elucidated by the juxtaposition of “Comparison Samples”, which are opposing scripts made semantically compatible through the ostensive trigger – comparison with a shared attribute of its two terms, thus facilitating the transition from one script to another.

The mechanisms for generating situational irony are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

The mechanisms for generating situational irony in the novel *The History of Pendennis*

Ostensive stimulus	Cognitive mechanism	Pragmatic mechanism
metaphor, authorial metatext, comparison, implicit antithesis, oxymoron, zeugma	collision of scripts - samples of comparison, input mental spaces of metaphor or frames formed by groups of contrasting images. Basis of the collision: logical-pragmatic anomaly – violations in pragmatic presuppositions about the natural relationships between things or events resulted from causal connections in the logical structure of presupposition; ontological anomalies – contradictions between the general properties of things or events based on violations of categorical semantic and syntagmatic presuppositions, associated with constraints on the semantic compatibility of linguistic units.	violation of the maxim of relevance and quality that trigger ironic implicature and moralizing meta-implicature

**Echoic irony: Value discrepancies based on cultural presuppositions**

In addition to situational irony, the novel contains fragments that create echoic irony. Examples of direct and immediate echo, commonly used in dialogues where one interlocutor sarcastically repeats or interprets what the other has said, are not found in the text. However, the article has identified the mechanisms for creating echoic irony, understood in a broader sense – as echoes of (real or imaginary) attributed thoughts and echoes of general norms or standards [Sperber, Wilson, 1998, p. 288].

This type of irony relies on universally recognized cultural scripts, with intertextual allusions serving as its ostensive stimulus. The ironic effect is achieved through a discrepancy between the source space of the allusion and the target space into which attributes of the intertextual borrowing are transferred, often resulting in an exaggeration of the situation whose inappropriateness in the context becomes obvious, as seen in (4).

(11) *As for John Pendennis, as the father of the family, and that sort of thing, everybody had the greatest respect for him: and his orders were obeyed like those of the Medes and Persians* [Thackeray, 2005].

The ironic effect is achieved through an unexpected contrast between the original text referenced by the biblical allusion, stating that “the king’s decrees are irrevocable, like those of the Medes and Persians” (from the Book of Daniel, Chapter 6), and the new context into which the allusion is inserted to emphasize the grandeur of Pendennis. The collision of scripts “Events described in the biblical text” and “The everyday life of John Pendennis and his family” is executed based on the meanings of “biblical grandeur” and “prosaic reality”. The trigger for the transition between scripts is the allusion-based comparison, creating the effect of ironic hyperbole. From a pragmatic point of view, this device indicates a deviation from the maxim of quality, while the script opposition marks a violation of the cooperative maxim of relevance. Flouting maxims triggers the ironic implicature: the humor or even absurdity of Pendennis’s “royal” decrees in everyday life, as well as a moralizing meta-implicature, condemning servility, submission, and the limitations of Pendennis’s surroundings.

A similar mechanism for generating ironic meanings involves a biblical allusion *a bull of Bashan* associated with a famous line from the Psalter: “Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me” (Psalm 22:12).

(12) *How came it that all of a sudden Mrs. Bingley began to raise her voice and bellow like a bull of Bashan?* [Thackeray, 2005].

Through the allusion as an ostensive stimulus, a collision of two scripts occurs: the grandeur and monumentality of the biblical situation, describing the king’s confrontation with mighty opponents, strong as the bulls of Bashan, and the insignificance and frivolity of the actress’s actions, who seeks to please the audience with modulations of her voice. The juxtaposition of scripts involves several semantic levels: the collision of the epic biblical situation and the actress’s

performance; the clash of peripheral components of the compared scripts: a woman-actress and a bull; the attempt at dramatic execution – the bellowing of the bull; the collision at the level of connotative meanings – the power and menace associated with the image of the Bashan bulls, and the weaker sex.

Among other sources of allusive borrowing that create an ironic effect, the article identified an appeal to the cultural script of the “status of the Pope and his cardinals” through two allusive comparisons, *as if he had been the Pope of Rome on his throne*, and *she a cardinal kneeling at his feet, and giving him incense*.

(13) *She spoke about Mr. Pendennis (a worthy little gentleman enough, but there are others as good as he) with an awful reverence, as if he had been the Pope of Rome on his throne, and she a cardinal kneeling at his feet, and giving him incense* [Thackeray, 2005].

The terms of the allusive-based comparisons, Mr. Pendennis (the tenor) – the Pope (the vehicle), and Mrs. Pendennis (the tenor) – the Pope’s cardinals (the vehicle), are verbally linked by the comparator *as if*. The comparison samples coinciding with the collision scripts involve, on one side, the grandeur of the Pope and the behavior of his cardinals, and on the other side, the behavior of a Victorian woman towards her husband. The incongruity of scripts associated with the comparison sample is based on the opposition between the “high” and the “mundane”: the high spiritual status and grandeur of the Pope contrasting with the worldly appearance of Mr. Pendennis, described as a “worthy little gentleman”.

In the first comparison – Mr. Pendennis and the Pope, the common property is implied, while in the second, it is verbalized with hyperbole “with an awful reverence”, semantically linking the scripts of “Mrs. Pendennis” and “the Pope’s cardinals”. Simultaneously, the hyperbole serves as an intensifier of irony, emphasizing the disproportion of the wife’s reverence for her husband. Another intensifier of the ironic meaning is the attributive component “kneeling at his feet”, which contradicts the ontological / existential presuppositions about the code of conduct of cardinals towards the Pope. Therefore, in addition to the cultural-normative anomaly, the irony is also stems from ontological anomaly – a distortion of reality.

The pragmatic mechanism of generating irony involves deviating from the maxim of relevance, resulting from the collision of scripts marked by an allusive comparison, as well as disregarding the maxim of quality, marked by allusive hyperbole. The ironic implicature triggered by violating these maxims casts doubt on the uniqueness or outstanding qualities of Mr. Pendennis. The moralizing meta-implicature manifests in the condemnation of subservience and adoration displayed by the Victorian wife towards her husband, emphasizing their senselessness and redundancy.

In the actualization of the ironic meaning related to the invocation of cultural scripts, the intensifier of echo-allusion can be the complication of allusive comparison through the technique of personification, as in (10):

(14) *As for her son Arthur, she worshipped that youth with an ardour which the young scapegrace accepted almost as coolly as the statue of the Saint in Saint Peter’s receives the rapturous osculations which the faithful deliver on his toe* [Thackeray, 2005].

The trigger for the transition between scripts “feelings of the son” – “feelings of the statue” is the adverb *coolly* as the common property for the terms of the allusive comparison. The irony intensifier is verbalized through components of the comparison terms, such as the verbs *accepted* and *receives*, equalizing, through personification, the feelings of the son and the statue, which *receives the rapturous osculations*. Personification violates the maxim of quality of information, triggering, in addition to the ironic sense, a moralizing implicature about the alienation of the son due to the mother’s excessive love and care.

Among other means of creating echoic irony, this paper has identified the use of a script associated with a universal narrative plot:

(15) *As Cinderella at a particular hour became, from a blazing and magnificent Princess, quite an ordinary little maid in a grey petticoat, so, as the clock struck one, all the thundering majesty and awful wrath of the schoolmaster disappeared* [Thackeray, 2005].

The irony arises from the collision of scripts “Fairy tale narrative about Cinderella” – “School classroom context”, with the trigger for the transition being the eventuality as the structural component of comparison presented by the verbs *became* and *disappeared*. Eventuality sets the frame for the common property “transformation” between the terms of the comparison: “became quite an ordinary little maid in a grey petticoat” (vehicle) and “all the thundering majesty and awful wrath of the schoolmaster disappeared” (tenor).

The intensifier of irony is the highlighting of additional terms of comparison due to the imposition of scripts: Cinderella – Teacher. Characteristics associated with Cinderella, tied to this precedent name – a cultural archetype symbolizing kindness and meekness, clash with hyperbolized attributes describing the teacher as “thundering majesty” and “awful wrath”. Additional ironic connotations are actualized through Cinderella’s gender affiliation, detailing her image by specifying a female garment attribute, while the teacher, as indicated by the local context, is male.

The mechanisms for generating echoic irony are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

The mechanisms for generating echoic irony in the novel *The history of Pendennis*

Ostensive stimulus	Cognitive mechanism	Pragmatic mechanism
allusion-based comparison, allusion-based hyperbole allusion-based personification	collision of general cultural and everyday «mundane» scripts, compatible due to an ostensive stimulus; basis of the collision: cultural-normative anomaly – violation of normative-value presuppositions reflecting commonly accepted standards or evaluations; ontological anomaly – a distortion of reality violating existential presupposition	violation of the maxim of relevance and quality that trigger ironic implicature and moralizing meta-implicature

## Conclusions

Based on the analysis of ironic techniques in the novel *The History of Pendennis*, the article concludes that the commonality of cognitive mechanisms for generating situational and echoic irony, as well as about the incorporation of ostensive irony markers into both types of irony. The distinction between the two types of irony is identified in their triggers – ostensive stimuli – and in the specificity of the scripts involved, which create a collision with scripts verbalized through ironic statements. Situational irony is generated by the collision of scripts – “comparison samples” of similes, source and target spaces of a metaphor, or frames formed by groups of contrasting images. The transition between incongruent scripts is facilitated based on common features of comparison terms, elements of the generic space of metaphor, attribution of evaluatively contrasting characteristics to one character, and references through the authorial metatext to prominent positions in the text that justify the implicit antithesis.

The presuppositional basis of situational irony includes violations of pragmatic presuppositions about natural relationships between objects or events, including violations of causal connections within the logical structure of the presupposition “if... then...”, when the grounds for inference, verbalized by ironic statements, do not align with knowledge of cause-and-effect relationships between realities of objective world. It also involves violations of the categorical semantic presupposition, related to the constraint on the semantic compatibility of linguistic units.

Echoic irony in the novel is marked by ostensive stimuli such as intertextual allusions in the form of allusion-based comparison, allusion-based hyperbole, and allusion-based personification. Through these devices, cultural scripts are invoked, colliding with “mundane” scripts, leading to a disruption of normative-value presuppositions reflecting widely accepted standards or judgments, or a violation of existential presuppositions.

A pragmatic mechanism for generating ironic meanings involves the violation of the cooperative maxim of relevance – due to the collision of scripts, and quality – through the use of semasiological stylistic devices. Deviating from the maxim triggers ironic implicature and moralizing meta-implicature, establishing coherence between scripts and grounds for coherence.

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#### **COGNITIVE AND PRAGMATIC MECHANISMS OF GENERATING SITUATIONAL AND ECHOIC IRONY (A CASE STUDY OF THACKERAY'S NOVEL *THE HISTORY OF PENDENNIS: HIS FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES, HIS FRIENDS AND HIS GREATEST ENEMY*)**

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32342/3041-217X-2025-1-29-6>

**Key words:** *situational irony, echoic irony, cognitive, pragmatic, mechanisms of irony generation, script, ostensive stimuli, irony intensifiers.*

*The aim* of the article is to identify the cognitive and pragmatic mechanisms of irony generation in Thackeray's Novel, *The History of Pendennis: His Fortunes and Misfortunes, His Friends and His Greatest Enemy*, while distinguishing between situational and echoic irony regarding ostensive stimuli and collisional scripts. This goal is achieved through the application of a comprehensive *methodology*, including the model of integrated pragmatics by O. Ducrot and the method of echoic interpretation of irony within the framework of relevance theory, combined with the method of inference of discursive implicatures and tools for the analysis of irony-generating metaphors and comparisons. The article arrives at the main conclusion of the commonality of cognitive and pragmatic mechanisms in generating situational and echoic irony.

The cognitive mechanism is based on the incongruity and collision of scripts marked by ironic utterances, the connection between which is facilitated by ostensive stimuli. Differences between the two types of irony are identified in the types of ostensive stimuli, the specificity of actualized scripts, and the typed of the violated presuppositions underlying their collision. Ostensive stimuli in situational irony include metaphor, authorial metatext, comparison, and implicit antithesis as triggers for transitioning between scripts.

Collision scripts generating situational irony are based on "comparison samples" of similes, source and target spaces of a metaphor, or frames formed by groups of contrasting images. The transition between scripts is facilitated based on common features of comparison terms, elements of the generic space of metaphor, attribution of evaluatively contrasting characteristics to one character, and references through the authorial metatext to prominent positions in the text that justify the implicit antithesis. The collision of scripts that generates situational irony is based on violations of categorical semantic and syntagmatic presuppositions, associated with constraints on the semantic compatibility of linguistic units, and projected onto ontological anomalies — contradictions between the general properties of realities and events, as well as violations of causal connections in the logical structure of presupposition, where the basis of the inference lies in logical contradiction, which is projected onto logical-pragmatic anomalies — violation of pragmatic presuppositions about natural relationships between realities or events.

The ostensive stimuli of echoic irony include allusion-based comparison, allusion-based hyperbole, and allusion-based personification, marking the connection between collisional scripts that are based on the discrepancy of universal cultural scripts with “mundane” scripts. This leads to violations of normative-value presuppositions, reflecting commonly accepted standards or judgments, or violations of existential (ontological) presuppositions.

In addition to ostensive stimuli — triggers for transitioning between scripts, both situational and echoic irony are supported by intensifiers — units that actualize peripheral components of scripts, which contribute to intensifying contradictions, serve as additional means of transitioning between scripts, and actualize local ironic connotations through individual stylistic devices.

The general pragmatic mechanism for generating ironic meanings in situational and echoic irony involves the violation of the cooperative maxim of relevance – due to the collision of scripts, and quality – through the use of semasiological stylistic devices. Deviating from the maxim triggers ironic implicature and moralizing meta-implicature, establishing coherence between scripts and grounds for coherence.