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**ВСЕБІЧНЕ САТИРИЧНЕ ЗОБРАЖЕННЯ ВІКТОРІАНСЬКОЇ АНГЛІЇ В РАННІХ
РОМАНАХ Ч. ДІККЕНСА: ОСОБЛИВОСТІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОГО НАЦІОНАЛЬНОГО
ГУМОРУ.**

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Qualifying paper

**A SWEEPING SATIRICAL PICTURE OF VICTORIAN ENGLAND IN CH. DICKENS’
EARLY NOVELS: SPECIFICS OF ENGLISH NATIONAL HUMOUR.**

Level of higher education: Master’s degree

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INTRODUCTION

The Victorian era in England marked a time of profound societal change, and few literary figures captured its essence with as much biting wit and keen observation as Charles Dickens. His early novels stand as testament to the intricacies of English national humor, offering a vivid portrayal of a society in flux through the lens of satire.

Before delving into the vivid tapestry of Dickensian humor and its specific portrayal of Victorian England, it's imperative to understand the broader literary concept of humor itself. Defined as a complex interplay of wit, irony, and amusement, humor in literature has evolved through the ages, tracing its origins to various cultural and historical contexts. From the jests of the Renaissance period to the nuanced layers of contemporary satire, humor has remained a dynamic force in shaping literary landscapes.

Humor, as a literary concept, refers to the use of laughter, wit, irony, and satire to convey a message, idea, or emotion in a written work. It is a tool used by writers to bring lightness and entertainment to their works, making them more enjoyable and memorable to the reader. The use of humor in literature has been popular for centuries, and it remains a crucial component of modern literature.

However, what distinguishes English national humor is its unique amalgamation of wit, irony, and a particular brand of social commentary deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of the nation. Its features and elements form a rich tapestry woven with cultural references, historical contexts, and a distinct penchant for observational comedy that resonates across generations.

In the works of Charles Dickens, this quintessentially English humor finds its zenith. Dickens' early novels serve as vivid panoramas depicting the multifaceted layers of Victorian England. Within the pages of "The Pickwick Papers," "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," and "The Old Curiosity Shop," Dickens not only encapsulates the essence of English national humor but also offers scathing satire, poignant irony, and astute societal critique.

Through the lens of satire, Dickens unveils the follies, vices, and virtues of Victorian society. Each novel serves as a canvas upon which he paints a vibrant picture of a rapidly changing England, infusing his narratives with the distinct characteristics of English humor that continue to resonate with readers worldwide.

This exploration aims to dissect the intricate facets of Dickensian humor, dissecting its embodiment in his early works and uncovering the layers of societal commentary embedded

within, thereby unraveling the vivid tapestry of English national humor against the backdrop of Victorian England.

The relevance of the research on the satirical portrayal of Victorian England in Charles Dickens' early novels, along with the exploration of English national humor, is multi-faceted and spans various spheres including historical insight, literary appreciation, social commentary, cultural understanding, educational significance, relevance to contemporary society.

Understanding the societal, cultural, and political landscape of Victorian England through Dickens' lens provides crucial historical context. This insight aids in comprehending the roots of modern-day societal structures and challenges. Dickens' mastery of humor and satire remains influential in the literary world. Your research adds depth to the appreciation of his craft, dissecting how he used humor as a vehicle for societal critique.

Dickens' novels serve as a reflection of societal issues prevalent in his time, such as poverty, inequality, and institutional flaws. Analyzing these works offers a critical viewpoint on persistent social challenges, drawing parallels to contemporary issues. Exploring English national humor within Dickens' works contributes to a better understanding of the cultural nuances and comedic traditions specific to England, enriching cross-cultural comprehension.

For scholars and students, your research offers an academic resource, providing a detailed analysis of Dickens' portrayal of Victorian England and the distinct features of English national humor. It serves as a foundational study for those exploring literature, history, and cultural studies. The societal issues depicted by Dickens—such as wealth disparity, social injustice, and moral dilemmas—continue to resonate in today's world. Your research offers insights into these enduring challenges and how literature can reflect and critique societal norms.

By illuminating the intersection of literature, history, and cultural critique, your research contributes to a deeper understanding of the past while highlighting the enduring relevance of Dickens' works in shaping discussions about society and its complexities.

The object of the research is such novels of the famous British writer of Victorian Era as “The Pickwick Papers”, Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," "The Old Curiosity Shop" and “David Coperfield.”

The subject of the research is the examination of how humour is employed in different literary works, including the Renaissance period, Charles Dickens' novels, and its significance in reflecting and critiquing the social, cultural, and political contexts of their respective times.

The aim of the research is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of humour as a literary device, its historical and cultural contexts, and its role in reflecting and critiquing society in Ch. Dickens's Novels.

The tasks set for the research include:

To explore the origins and development of humour in literature, tracing its evolution from the Renaissance era to the Victorian period.

- to investigate the cultural and historical significance of English national humour, identifying its unique features and how they have shaped and influenced the literary tradition.

- to assess the ways in which humour has been employed as a tool for social critique, focusing on the portrayal of societal issues, political commentary, and the exposure of social injustices in the examined literary works.

- to research the impact and effectiveness of humour as a literary concept, discussing its role in engaging readers, conveying messages, and stimulating critical thinking.

- to reflect on the enduring relevance of humour in literature and its ability to resonate with audiences across different time periods.

The novelty of the research. This research aims to delve deeper into Dickens' early works, highlighting lesser-explored nuances of humor and satire in Victorian literature, offering fresh perspectives on his portrayal of societal issues; exploring the intersection of literature, sociology, and cultural studies, this research seeks to bridge gaps between traditional literary analysis and societal implications within Dickens' works.

The methods of the research. The work was carried out using a set of research methods, which include the analysis of literature on the research problem, *synthesis, comparison, classification, interpretation and empirical method* with the aim of a detailed study of the humour, its psychological features of perception and conditions for its occurrence, as well as the relationship between individual properties of the object under study, on the basis of which the necessary data for more complete conclusions and generalizations were obtained and synthesized. With the help of the method of *systematization*, a systematic classification of expressive means of humour was formed at certain levels - plot, language, and character levels.

The method of *induction* and the *comparative* method were used to study the classifications of humour types by different scholars, and *the method of deduction* was used to highlight the psychological functions of humor. *The structural method* helped to consider the humour as a system and to highlight its components, as well as the structure of means and methods of its expression. Among the linguistic methods used for the linguistic analysis of

linguistic material, we resorted to the *descriptive method* to select the units of analysis. Techniques of *external interpretation*, namely *logical-psychological*, were used to investigate the hidden connection between the content of certain humour techniques and the thinking and judgment of the novel's characters and the author. With the help of *the contextual-interpretive method*, the reconstruction of the author's (communicative) idea, motives and goals, general content, receptive orientation of the satirical text was carried out, during which stylistic figures were highlighted.

The theoretical basis in our study consists of the works of both foreign and domestic scholars: E. Sapir, B. Whorf, J. Lakoff, M. Minsky, R.I. Pavilionis, C. Fillmore, O.O. Potebnia, N.D. Arutyunova, O.S. Kubryakova and many others. Despite the abundance of research on this topic, the term concept, due to its complexity and multifunctionality, still receives a very different interpretation in linguistics.

Theoretical value of the research. By dissecting Dickens' use of humor, the research offers theoretical insights into the role of humor in literature, providing a lens through which to understand societal dynamics and attitudes of the Victorian era.

The practical value of our work lies in the fact that the material presented in it can be used in the further study of the courses "History of foreign literature of the XX century", "History of children's literature", as well as in preparation for special courses devoted to the study of the works by Ch. Dickens.

The material of the research. Examination of Dickens' early novels ("The Pickwick Papers," "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," "The Old Curiosity Shop") forms the primary material for analysis. Utilizing scholarly articles, critical essays, and historical texts related to Victorian England and literary criticism to provide a broader contextual framework.

The structure of the research. The thesis consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusion and the list of references.

The introduction provides an overview of the work, its main objectives, and the significance of the topic being discussed. It briefly explains the structure of the work and gives the concise outline of the key points that will be covered in each part.

Part I. Humour as a Literary Concept defines humour as a literary concept, discussing its various forms, elements, and characteristics. It provides a comprehensive understanding of what constitutes humour in literature. This part explores the historical and cultural origins of humour, tracing its development and evolution over time. It discusses the various theories and perspectives on the origins of humour, focuses specifically on the role and significance of humour in Victorian literature, examines the social, cultural, and political factors that influenced

the use of humour during this period, as well as the different forms and styles of humour employed by Victorian writers.

Part II. Specifics of English National Humour delves into the unique characteristics and elements that define English national humour, analyzes the specific traits, themes, and techniques that are commonly associated with English humour, explores the cultural and historical significance of English national humour, examining how it has shaped and influenced the literary and artistic landscape of the country, discusses the ways in which English humour has reflected and commented on societal issues and cultural norms. This part focuses on the various stylistic devices and techniques employed by writers to convey humour in literary texts. It should analyze the use of language, imagery, irony, satire, and other literary devices that contribute to the creation of humorous effects.

In Part III. Satirical Portrayal of Victorian England in Charles Dickens' Early Novels an overview of Charles Dickens' use of humour in his writings, particularly in his early novels is presented. It discusses how Dickens employed humour as a tool for social commentary and satire, analyzes the specific instances and techniques of English humour employed by Dickens in his novel "The Pickwick Papers." It examines the characters, situations, and literary devices used to create humorous effects and convey underlying social critiques, focuses on Dickens' novel "David Copperfield" and how he used humour to satirize and critique various aspects of Victorian society and explores the themes, characters, and narrative elements that contribute to the work's social commentary and humorous undertones.

The conclusions summarizes the key points and findings discussed throughout the work, highlighting the main arguments and insights related to the topic of humour, specifically in the context of English national humour and the works of Charles Dickens. The conclusions reaffirm the significance of the research and analysis presented in the work, emphasizing the importance of understanding humour as a literary concept, its origins, and its role in the Victorian era. It reiterates the distinctive features and elements of English national humour, including its cultural and historical significance, as well as the stylistic means employed by writers to convey humour in literary texts.

The conclusions also underscores the relevance of Charles Dickens' works in embodying and exemplifying English humour, particularly in his satirical portrayal of Victorian society in novels like "The Pickwick Papers" and "David Copperfield."

PART I

HUMOUR AS A LITERARY CONCEPT

1.1 Definition of Humour

One of the primary functions of humor in literature is to make the reader laugh. Laughter has a therapeutic effect on the human psyche, and it is used in literature to lighten the mood of the reader, making them feel more relaxed and less stressed. This, in turn, can make the reader more receptive to the message or theme of the work.

Humor can also be used to create a contrast between two things. For example, a writer may use humor to contrast the serious nature of a situation with the levity of a character's response. This creates a sense of irony, which can be used to create a more significant impact on the reader.

Another use of humor in literature is to provide social commentary. Through satire and irony, writers can criticize societal norms, practices, and beliefs. This can be particularly effective when the writer is pointing out hypocrisy or absurdity in society. By using humor to point out these flaws, the writer can both entertain and educate the reader.

Humor can also be used to create memorable characters. A character that is funny or quirky is more likely to be remembered by the reader than a more mundane character. This can be particularly effective in works of fiction, where characters are essential to the plot.

Humor is a complex and multifaceted concept that has been studied by scholars and researchers from various fields. Here are a few different approaches to defining humor:

Cognitive approach: According to the cognitive approach, humor is a cognitive process that involves the recognition and resolution of incongruities. This approach emphasizes the importance of cognitive processes such as perception, attention, memory, and reasoning in understanding humor; "humor is a cognitive process that produces laughter and amusement by creating and resolving incongruities between expectations and reality" (Селіванова, 2008).

Social approach: The social approach to humor focuses on the social context in which humor occurs. This approach emphasizes the importance of cultural norms, values, and beliefs in shaping what is considered humorous: "humor is a social phenomenon that occurs in a cultural context and reflects the values, norms, and beliefs of that culture" (Селіванова, 2008; Dundes, 1987, p. 6).

Psychoanalytic approach: The psychoanalytic approach to humor emphasizes the role of

unconscious processes in generating humor. This approach argues that humor allows individuals to express forbidden or taboo thoughts and feelings in a socially acceptable way: "humor is a defense mechanism that allows individuals to express their unconscious desires and fears in a socially acceptable way" (Freud, 1905/1960, p. 303).

The origin of humor is a topic of much debate among scholars and researchers. While it is difficult to pinpoint an exact origin, some theories suggest that humor has evolutionary roots.

1.2 Origin of Humour

One theory suggests that humor evolved as a way for humans to communicate playfulness and establish social bonds. Laughter and joking behavior may have helped early humans to form social alliances and defuse social tensions.

Another theory suggests that humor evolved as a cognitive tool for problem-solving. Humor may have allowed early humans to think creatively and find new solutions to problems by breaking established patterns of thinking.

Some scholars also point to the role of humor in relieving stress and tension. Humor may have served as a coping mechanism for early humans facing difficult or stressful situations.

In terms of the historical development of humor, it has been present in human culture since ancient times. Humor has been found in the writings of ancient Greek and Roman authors such as Aristophanes and Plautus. Humor has also been a prominent feature of medieval literature, and it has continued to evolve in the works of modern writers and comedians.

Since ancient times, the comic has been the object of research by philosophers and rhetoricians, but even today the question of the nature of laughter remains open. Starting with Aristotle, a large number of scientific works have been written on the essence and sources of laughter culture.

The semantics of this phenomenon is the most interpreted, as it is universal: everything can be seen as "serious" and "comic". From this we can conclude that seriousness and laughter are interconnected, they complement each other, structuring a complete knowledge of the world. The question of interpreting the concept of comic is one of the most difficult and controversial in philology.

Democritus, Aristophanes, Plato, Aristotle and other ancient philosophers were interested in studying the problem of laughter, which is the most common and understandable human phenomenon. According to Democritus, who was called the "philosopher of laughter", laughter

is a single worldview, a symbol of contempt for material goods, virtues, and popularity. The philosopher emphasises that laughter is inappropriate when its object is grief, misery and suffering of people (Andrew, 1999).

Democritus is closest to the ideas of Aristophanes, who was a famous playwright-comedian of antiquity and whose main goal in his work was to make the audience laugh (nowadays, comedians are the successors of his work). In his works, this ancient philosopher most often touched upon such topics as truth and justice, ridiculed bribe-takers, politicians, their "empty" promises and flattery. Aristophanes put forward the following requirements for the object of laughter: - a concrete expression of social evil, not an abstract moral vice; - refusal to laugh at the weak (only those who hold leading positions in public opinion - representatives of political and spiritual power - should be ridiculed) (Bartolo et al., 2006).

In Aristotle's understanding, laughter is a kind of mistake and outrage, but at the same time it does not cause pain and suffering to anyone. He distinguishes between laughter and mockery, calling laughter a positive phenomenon, a means of entertainment and recreation, and mockery - vulgar and including an element of evil.

The most significant characteristic of the comic is its contradictory nature. The sphere of the ridiculous is much wider than the sphere of the comic, which is influenced by age, gender, culture, nationality, etc. For example, it may be difficult for a person from another country to understand a joke due to language differences and misunderstanding, or a lack of extralinguistic knowledge about that country. The forms of comedy are extremely diverse. Forming a coherent and harmonious classification of its shades is not an easy task, because the boundaries between them are barely visible. There are few comparative studies of different types of comic in the scientific literature. Usually, humour and irony, humour and satire, irony and satire are compared. Other types of comic, such as sarcasm, are hardly ever compared.

1.3. Humour in the Victorian Period

The 1830s marked a new stage in British history, culture and literature. It was connected with the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne in 1837. Her reign lasted until 1901, and this time in both the country's history and literature is known as Victorianism. This concept means a special view of the world, ideology, history, religion, lifestyle and thoughts. It was at this time that the UK achieved great success in the national industry, expanded its activities in other countries, strengthened its foreign trade, and became a major colonial power. Queen Victoria embodied the ideals of the British people. She was considered a model of decency, she was revered and proud.

The sanctity, inviolability of the family and femininity were considered almost a cult in the Victorian era (Cohen, 1999, p. 160).

With technological progress, increased national wealth, expansion of the country's territory and increased national consciousness, new concepts were formed that distinguished the Victorian era from other historical epochs. The Victorian mentality has such a feature as "faith in progress", which at that time bordered on the understanding of the "great imperfections of their society"; the feeling that "they are swept up in the whirlwind of social change", that the world is like a fast train rushing forward (Cohen, 1999, p. 14).

Victorian Britain was a workshop of the world, a superpower, and scientific thought was actively developing, particularly in the natural and exact sciences. Cities were turning into megacities with all their social and economic contradictions. Britain was growing into a giant colonial power. All these phenomena significantly influenced the development of the country's multidimensional culture.

As is well known, each historical era has its own culture, values, and concepts that are different from other cultures and epochs. Y. P. Chala points out that the Victorian era created the largest number of culturally labelled signs. Based on the fact that the concepts of a certain era can be expressed in literary texts and through culturally labelled signs, we can assume that this historical era of Great Britain also created the largest number of concepts. The Victorian era was an amazingly fruitful era for all spheres of British life. Although Victorianism covers mainly the second half of the nineteenth century, its influence is much wider and more tangible in the country's subsequent history. Researchers of the Victorian literary heritage argue that this period of cultural development provided incomparable examples of the novel literary form associated with such prominent names as Charles Dickens, Bernard Shaw, William M. Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë, Oscar Wilde and Arthur Conan Doyle (Andrew, 1999, p. 5).

The works of Victorian writers, as well as novels by contemporary authors who consciously reproduced Victorian reality in their novels, are saturated and permeated with culturally labelled signs. The transmission of these signs in translation makes it possible to recreate the original picture of the Victorian world. However, culturally labelled parameters pose a specific problem for translation that has no simple, unambiguous solution. In order to convey them as accurately as possible, the translator needs to explore a whole range of associations that a particular sign evoked in the minds and imaginations of the Victorians.

Looking at the works of Charles Dickens, one can be sure that they are excellent examples of literary art. The problems raised by him in his work are artfully embodied in a form typical enough to be subjected to a general classification, and at the same time absolutely individual. Dickens' favourite form, which he mastered brilliantly, was the novel. Under

Dickens's pen, this genre evolved significantly throughout his work, which was directly related to the evolution of Dickens's worldview and the tasks he set himself in each particular work. Being an excellent stylist, Charles Dickens enriched the language fund by creating colourful examples of precise, beautiful, richly nuanced narrative (Gissing, 1978).

1.4 Types of Humour in Literature

Humor in literature is not just entertainment but also a complex means of expression and communication, allowing authors and readers to understand and evaluate the world around them.

Satire

Satire is a literary form that uses humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues. Satirical works often aim to provoke thought and promote social change. Notable examples include Jonathan Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" and George Orwell's "Animal Farm."

Types of Satire:

1. Horatian Satire: Named after the Roman poet Horace, Horatian satire is light-hearted, amusing, and often indulgent. It gently mocks human shortcomings with a tone of tolerance and good humor. An example is Alexander Pope's "The Rape of the Lock," which satirizes the trivialities of high society.
2. Juvenalian Satire: Named after the Roman satirist Juvenal, this type of satire is more serious and abrasive, often expressing outrage and moral indignation. It targets social evils and corruption with scorn and biting criticism. Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal," which satirically suggests eating children to solve poverty, is a classic example.
3. Menippean Satire: Named after the ancient Greek cynic Menippus, Menippean satire is characterized by its attack on mental attitudes rather than specific individuals or events. It often mixes prose and verse and uses a wide range of tones and styles. Examples include the works of Lucian and Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," which satirizes Victorian society and its conventions.

Satire aims to expose flaws and provoke change by making its audience aware of societal issues. It encourages self-reflection and critical thinking. Despite its serious undertones, satire entertains by using humor, making the critique more palatable and engaging for the audience. Satire stimulates intellectual engagement by challenging readers to understand its nuanced messages and underlying critiques. By combining humor with serious critique, satire can evoke a

wide range of emotional responses, from amusement to outrage, making its messages more impactful.

(Thomas C. Veatch, 1998)

Irony

Irony involves a discrepancy between what is said and what is meant, or between what is expected to happen and what actually occurs.

There are several types of irony:

- Verbal irony: When someone says the opposite of what they really mean (e.g., saying "What a beautiful day" during a storm).
- Situational irony: When there is a stark difference between the expected outcome and the actual outcome.
- Dramatic irony: When the audience knows something that the characters do not, creating a layer of meaning. (Thomas C. Veatch, 1998)

Parody

Parody mimics the style of a particular writer, genre, or work in a humorous or satirical way. It exaggerates or distorts the characteristic features of the subject to create a comic effect. Parodies often serve to critique the original work or its themes. An example is Miguel de Cervantes' "Don Quixote," which parodies the chivalric romance genre.

Parodies closely mimic the style, language, and tone of the original work or genre they are spoofing. This imitation can be subtle or overt, depending on the intentions of the parody. Parodies often exaggerate or amplify certain features or themes present in the original work, highlighting their absurdity or incongruity for comedic effect. Parodies may distort or twist the plot, characters, or settings of the original work to create humor. This distortion can range from minor alterations to radical reinterpretations. While parodies are primarily humorous, they also serve as a form of satire, critiquing the original work, genre conventions, or broader cultural themes.

Types of Parody:

1. Literary Parody: This type of parody specifically targets literary works, authors, or genres. Examples include "Pride and Prejudice and Zombies" by Seth Grahame-Smith, which parodies Jane Austen's classic novel by adding a zombie apocalypse subplot.
2. Film Parody: Parodies in film, often referred to as spoofs or satirical comedies, mock popular movies, directors, or cinematic tropes. Examples include "Scary Movie," which parodies horror films, and "Spaceballs," which spoofs the "Star Wars" franchise.
3. Music Parody: Musical parodies involve rewriting or reimagining existing songs with humorous lyrics or themes. Weird Al Yankovic is a notable artist known for his music parodies,

such as "Eat It" (parody of Michael Jackson's "Beat It") and "Amish Paradise" (parody of Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise").

Parodies are primarily intended to entertain audiences through humor and satire. They provide a fresh perspective on familiar works or genres, offering comedic reinterpretations that can evoke laughter and amusement. Parodies often contain elements of satire, offering commentary or critique on the original work, cultural norms, or societal trends. By exaggerating or distorting aspects of the original, parodies highlight its flaws or absurdities, prompting reflection and laughter. While parodies may mock or critique the original, they can also serve as a form of homage or affectionate tribute. Parodists may have a deep appreciation for the source material and use parody as a playful way to engage with it and its fan base. (Thomas C. Veatch, 1998)

Farce

Farce is a subgenre of comedy characterized by exaggerated and improbable situations, physical humor, and often, slapstick elements. It typically aims to entertain and amuse the audience through sheer absurdity and over-the-top antics. Farce is found in plays such as "Noises Off" by Michael Frayn and many of the works of Molière. Farces often feature exaggerated characters, actions, and situations, pushing the boundaries of believability for comedic effect. This exaggeration contributes to the absurdity and humor of the genre. The plots of farces are typically filled with unlikely scenarios, coincidences, and misunderstandings. These improbable situations create opportunities for humor and chaos as characters navigate their way through absurd circumstances. Farce frequently incorporates physical humor, such as pratfalls, slapstick, and sight gags. Physical comedy adds to the comedic effect and enhances the entertainment value of the performance. Farces are known for their rapid pace and frenetic energy. The action moves quickly from one comedic situation to the next, keeping audiences engaged and entertained throughout the performance. Farces often rely on mistaken identity, misunderstandings, and miscommunication as central plot devices. These elements contribute to the chaos and confusion that drive the humor of the genre. Many farces are set in domestic environments, such as homes, hotels, or apartments. These settings provide opportunities for characters to interact closely and for misunderstandings to arise. While farces are primarily focused on entertainment, they may also contain elements of social satire. Through exaggeration and absurdity, farces may comment on societal norms, conventions, and behaviors. Farces often include romantic entanglements and love triangles as part of their plots. These romantic subplots add another layer of complexity and humor to the story.

The primary purpose of farce is to entertain and amuse audiences through its absurdity, humor, and fast-paced action. Farces offer an escape from reality and provide a cathartic release

through laughter. While farce is primarily focused on entertainment, it may also contain elements of social commentary or satire. Through its exaggerated characters and situations, farce may highlight societal absurdities and conventions, prompting audiences to reflect on the world around them. (Thomas C. Veatch, 1998)

Dark Humour

Dark humour, also known as black humor, involves making light of subjects that are generally considered serious, taboo, or distressing. It often tackles topics like death, illness, and existential angst, providing a way to cope with the harsh realities of life. An example is Joseph Heller's "Catch-22," which uses dark humor to explore the absurdities of war. Dark humor often tackles taboo subjects and themes that are typically avoided in polite conversation or mainstream media. These subjects may include death, illness, violence, tragedy, and social taboos. It relies on incongruity, or the juxtaposition of contrasting elements, to create humor. By presenting serious or disturbing subjects in a lighthearted or absurd context, dark humor generates laughter through its unexpectedness. Dark humor is often characterized by cynicism and satire, with humor derived from a sense of disillusionment or skepticism about the human condition, society, or morality. It may critique social norms, institutions, or cultural values through its comedic lens. Gallows humor, a subset of dark humor, specifically involves making light of death, tragedy, or other dire circumstances. It is often employed as a coping mechanism in situations of extreme stress or adversity. While dark humor can be shocking or provocative, it also invites intellectual engagement by prompting audiences to confront uncomfortable truths and question societal taboos or conventions. (Thomas C. Veatch, 1998)

Dark humor is frequently employed to explore the absurdities and tragedies of war and conflict. Joseph Heller's "Catch-22" is a prime example, using dark humor to depict the absurdity and futility of war through the experiences of its protagonist, Captain John Yossarian. Dark humor may confront themes of illness, mortality, and existential dread with irreverent wit. Examples include films like "Dr. Strangelove" by Stanley Kubrick, which satirizes the nuclear arms race and Cold War paranoia. Dark humor often serves as a vehicle for social commentary, critiquing societal norms, values, and institutions. George Carlin, a stand-up comedian known for his dark and cynical humor, frequently used comedy as a platform to challenge conventional wisdom and question authority.

Dark humor can serve as a coping mechanism, allowing individuals to confront and process difficult or traumatic experiences through laughter. By finding humor in the darkness, people may gain a sense of perspective and resilience in the face of adversity. While dark humor may shock or offend, it can also provide a lens through which to critique societal norms and values. By challenging taboos and conventions, dark humor encourages critical thinking and

reflection on the human condition. Laughter derived from dark humor can provide a cathartic release of tension and emotion, offering temporary relief from the anxieties and pressures of everyday life. It allows people to acknowledge and confront difficult truths in a way that feels both liberating

Wit

Wit is the quick and inventive verbal humor that often involves clever and insightful remarks or plays on words. It is marked by keen intelligence and a sharp, often sarcastic, edge. Wit can be found in the works of authors like Oscar Wilde, whose plays and epigrams are renowned for their clever and humorous observations. Wit relies on linguistic skill and agility, with practitioners adept at crafting clever and succinct remarks that pack a punch. Witty remarks often reveal a keen understanding of human nature, society, or the absurdities of life. They may offer astute observations or clever commentary on a variety of subjects. Wit frequently involves wordplay, puns, and double entendres, using language in creative and unexpected ways to generate humor. While wit can be lighthearted and playful, it often contains a hint of sarcasm or irony, adding depth and complexity to the humor. Witty individuals excel at engaging in rapid-fire exchanges of clever banter and repartee, demonstrating their verbal wit and intelligence in conversation. (Thomas C. Veatch, 1998)

Wit entertains and amuses audiences with its cleverness and humor, providing moments of levity and enjoyment in literature and conversation. While witty remarks may be humorous on the surface, they often contain deeper layers of social commentary and critique. By cleverly skewering societal norms, hypocrisy, and absurdities, wit encourages reflection and critical thinking. Wit engages the intellect, challenging audiences to decipher wordplay, appreciate linguistic cleverness, and recognize the underlying wit in dialogue and literature. Wit can be entertaining and thought-provoking, it's important to consider the tone and context in which it is employed. Sarcasm and irony, while effective forms of wit, can be misinterpreted or offensive if not used carefully. Witty remarks may resonate differently with different audiences, depending on cultural background, personal experiences, and sensitivities. It's important to be mindful of the potential impact of wit on diverse audiences.

In literature, humor manifests in a multitude of forms, each offering unique insights, entertainment, and opportunities for reflection. From the playful wit of Oscar Wilde to the biting satire of Jonathan Swift, humor enriches literary works with its versatility, depth, and impact. Through parody, authors playfully critique established conventions and genres, while farce revels in absurdity and chaos, delighting audiences with its exaggerated antics. Dark humor confronts taboo subjects with irreverent wit, offering a coping mechanism and a lens through which to explore the darker aspects of human existence. Meanwhile, the quick wit of clever

repartee and insightful observations captivates readers with its linguistic agility and intellectual engagement.

Across all types of humor in literature, there is a common thread of creativity, intelligence, and emotional resonance. Humor serves not only as a source of entertainment but also as a powerful tool for social commentary, cultural critique, and cathartic release. It challenges conventions, prompts reflection, and invites readers to engage with complex themes and ideas in a way that is both enjoyable and thought-provoking.

Ultimately, humor in literature reminds us of the richness and complexity of the human experience, inviting us to laugh, question, and empathize with the characters and situations depicted on the page. Whether through satire, parody, farce, dark humor, or wit, humor in literature continues to captivate, entertain, and enlighten readers across generations and cultures.

PART II

SPECIFICS OF ENGLISH NATIONAL HUMOUR

2.1 Features and Elements of English National Humour

One of the characteristic features of the worldview of the British and Americans is their sense of humour. The laughing tradition, which originated many centuries ago, is carefully preserved and developed by the peoples of these countries in all areas of national culture. The English-speaking laughing culture has a long tradition in everyday life, customs, rituals and, especially, in folklore, and is distinguished by its originality and unique forms of expression, closely related to the cultures of the UK and the USA.

Each language, including English, has its own peculiarities of creating comic elements, as well as its own special forms of their manifestation, relevant to the specific historical and social conditions of the country. The analysis of the specifics of English-language humour helps to reveal national psychology, national character, social colouring of humour, its connections with history and the mood of the nation. "The humour of any nation is determined by its character, behaviour, prejudices and hobbies, traditions, history" (Friedman, 2011, p. 55).

Before we consider the peculiarities of English humour, it is necessary to present the definition of the concept of "Englishness". Many scholars have tried to formulate a single definition of the term Englishness, but in the course of their research they came to the conclusion that this term is ambiguous. Moreover, it is impossible to provide a generalised definition that would satisfy every researcher.

F. Rayron-Piguet, summarising the research on the nature of the concept, asks: "What is Englishness? Is it an instinctive or constructed concept? If it is constructed, then in what way: imaginary, cultural, or ideological? Or perhaps it is a state of mind? Is there such a thing as a national temperament, character or identity that belongs to the English? The question of Englishness continues to fascinate scholars. It is now recognised that the definition of this term depends on a person's own nationality. The fact is that even the British do not offer their own definition of Englishness" (Fox, 2005). English national identity is a simplified definition of the concept of Englishness. It is shared by the people of England, as well as by people who identify themselves as English but live outside the country. It is necessary to clarify the meaning of the concepts of "national" or "nation" and "identity" for a fuller understanding of the term.

Traditionally, the term "nation" has been used to refer to borders and geographical boundaries. However, such a definition does not fully reveal the essence of the term, as a nation cannot be limited to borders alone, but is broader and more complex. In his work "National Identity", E. Smith gives a precise definition of the term, which covers various models of nation building, including "the territorial boundaries of a nation by population units, the presence of its own homeland; the division into mass culture and common historical myths and memories; the existence of common relationships, legal rights and obligations, a common legal system; a common division of labour and a system of production" (Smith, 1993, p. 13-14).

The researcher offers the following definition: "A nation is a population of people that has its own name, historical territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and obligations for all members" (Smith, 1993, p. 23). Thus, if a nation is a socially constructed imaginary community, then Englishness is, accordingly, a form of national identity imagined and created by people who identify with it. Englishness can be seen as a kind of unifying term that encompasses all the different territories of the United Kingdom.

This term helps people understand what it means to be English. Moreover, there is no single Englishness, as it changes its meaning depending on the person. Thus, having defined the concept of Englishness, we can analyse the features of English humour in accordance with the specific dominant traits of the English in general. British (or English) humour is the one that was formed in the conditions of relative stability of British society and carries a strong element of satire over the "absurdity of everyday life" (Smith, 1993, p. 51). In *The English Sense of Humour*, G. Nicholson (2022) argues that the British have certain recognisable traits and temperament deficiencies that are particularly relevant to their sense of humour. The researcher summarises specific components of the English sense of humour as follows: benevolence, sentimentality and pathos, a common basis of feeling and tradition, fantasy, special sensitivity to the distortion of human values, childishness, self-defence, economy of mental effort, the desire for mental and spiritual ease, and the desire to feel pleasant (Nicholson, 2022, p. 36).

Humorous literature is a huge stratum of English literature. Humour, which is a way of life for the British, is built on a certain system of values, which are an explicit or implicit presentation of what is desirable for an individual or a group of people. The value system of different cultures changes very slowly. Within one culture, there is a certain common concept of what is funny and what is not. Therefore, what makes one culture smile may be the opposite for another. Often, even within the same society, due to differences in perception of the environment, interlocutors may not find the comic in the situation where one of the parties demonstrates it.

What can we say about people from different cultures? Therefore, a lack of understanding of the realities of the English way of life leads to an inability to see the comic in the place where the author saw it. Back in the nineteenth century, the prominent English writer George Meredith, who was deeply interested in the history of European comedy, compared the comic tradition of the language in France and England in terms of national identity, that is, national self-awareness. Based on the material of his lectures, he published an *Essay on Comedy*, in which he notes that the ability to find the funny is the ability to imagine yourself funny in front of a woman. Therefore, he expressed the opinion that comic works are far from the peoples of the East, where Islam is practised. "Such a religion implies humiliation and inequality of women" (Meredith, 2011, p. 36).

The question of the peculiarities of national humour is very interesting, but surprisingly complex. Although attempts have been made to analyse it, they were insufficiently substantiated and unsystematic. At the same time, Mark Twain's remarks are not without interest: "The humorous story is an American genre, just as the comic story is an English genre and the anecdote is a French genre. The effect produced by a humorous story depends on how it is told, while the effect of a comic story and an anecdote depends on what is told in it" (Blackwood, 2023, p. 42).

Twain considered one of the national features of a humorous story to be "stringing nonsense and meaninglessness together randomly and often without any sense or purpose, simple-minded ignorance of the fact that it is nonsense" (Blackwood, 2023, p.52). In modern English studies, several types of comic are distinguished: - ethnic slurs - ethnic jokes that play on the peculiarities of national characters in a hyperbolic form; - dry humour - ironic jokes where seriousness hides mockery; - shaggy-dog stories - jokes based on uninteresting and long stories about events that seem interesting and funny only to the person telling them; have an unexpected, often ridiculous or absurd ending; - banana-skin humour - primitive jokes; - elephant jokes - stupid or flat jokes (elephant fantasies) (Cjhen, 1999, p. 70).

English humour is diverse due to the fact that people of different nationalities live in England. It is distinguished by its sharpness, impudence, kindness and sophistication. Jokes about politics, lawyers and residents of neighbouring territories are particularly popular. It should be noted that jokes with ethnic, religious, sexual overtones, as well as those related to terrorist attacks and wars, are considered immoral and may cause public condemnation.

Undoubtedly, the nature of humour has national and cultural peculiarities, being one of the elements of the national picture of the world, forming a nationally determined comic picture of the world. It is motivated, in particular, by the fact that England is ahead of other countries in stand-up. Stand-up is 60 years old there because they came to the concept of freedom of speech a

little earlier. Humour in England immediately began to be vulgar, somewhat rude and free. That's why nowadays Richard Pryor's stand-up looks like someone did it now. There is no race here, there is only a difference in formats. And then, I'm sure, our people would laugh with pleasure at this comedy" (Cohen, 1999, p. 59).

In general, the British have a great sense of humour, as evidenced by their fiction. Humour is generously represented in the works of C. Dickens, L. Sterne, J. K. Jerome, P. Wodehouse, L. Carroll, S. Frae, B. Shaw, T. L. Peacock, etc. One of the most important features of English humour is the ability to laugh at oneself, i.e. self-irony. The object of irony can be anything, even the Queen of England. Their national peculiarities - mannerism, imperturbability, slowness, the traditional five o'clock and others - are ridiculed by the British themselves almost more than by foreigners .

In general, humour is an integral part of everyone's life. Humorous shows, videos, and photos often help people in a depressed state, regardless of their nationality or culture. English humour differs from Ukrainian humour in that it is generally more versatile. A common feature of English and Ukrainian humour is that representatives of both cultures consider crude jokes about family members inappropriate. English humour is not only a style, but also a way of life. To understand the subtle English humour, you need to know the culture, history, habits, traditions, character, stereotypes, and peculiarities of the English nation's mentality. This is national humour, complex in origin and expression. "English humour" or comedy in English fiction is expressed through satire and humour, which are realised through a complex of diverse stylistic techniques and means of expression.

2.2 Cultural and Historical Significance of English National Humour

When it comes to national humour, the English have a reputation for being dry and sarcastic. But what exactly does this mean, and why is it so significant?

English national humour can be traced back centuries, with its roots in satire and irony, two literary devices that are commonly used in English comedy. Satire involves using humour, irony or exaggeration to criticise or ridicule people or institutions, while irony is the use of words to express the opposite of their literal meaning. These forms of humour have been employed by writers and comedians throughout history to comment on society and politics, making them an important part of English culture.

One of the most famous examples of English national humour is the British sitcom *Fawlty Towers*, which aired in the 1970s. The show starred John Cleese as Basil Fawlty, the

owner of a fictional hotel in the seaside town of Torquay. Fawlty is known for his sarcasm and quick wit, often making snide remarks about his guests and employees. The show's dry and sometimes dark humour has made it a classic, and it continues to be popular today.

Another well-known figure in English comedy is Monty Python, a group of British comedians who created the sketch comedy show Monty Python's Flying Circus in the 1960s. The show was known for its surreal and absurdist humour, as well as its satirical take on religion, politics and other aspects of British society. Monty Python's influence can still be seen in modern comedy, and the group's movies, such as Monty Python and the Holy Grail and Life of Brian, are considered classics of British cinema.

The English also have a tradition of self-deprecating humour, which involves making jokes at one's own expense. This type of humour can be seen in the works of authors like P.G. Wodehouse and Douglas Adams, as well as in the comedy of Ricky Gervais and Stephen Fry. Self-deprecating humour is often used to defuse tension or to show humility, and it is a key part of English national identity (Friedman, 2011).

But what has made English national humour so popular around the world? One reason may be that it provides a way for people to cope with difficult or uncomfortable situations. Sarcasm and irony can be used to address serious topics in a lighthearted way, making them more accessible and less threatening. This can be seen in the works of Shakespeare, who often used humour to explore complex themes such as love, power and death. By using wit and wordplay, he was able to engage his audience and make them think about these issues in a new way.

English national humour also reflects the country's long history of political and social change. Satire has been used for centuries as a form of protest, allowing people to voice their opinions and challenge authority. During the 18th century, for example, satirical cartoons were used to criticise the monarchy and the government, while in the 20th century, comedians like Peter Cook and Dudley Moore used satire to comment on the social and cultural changes of the time. Today, shows like Have I Got News For You and The Daily Show continue this tradition, using humour to expose hypocrisy and hold those in power accountable.

Of course, not everyone finds English national humour funny, and some people may even find it offensive. Sarcasm and irony can be hard to understand for non-native speakers, and they may come across as rude or disrespectful. In addition, the use of self-deprecating humour can sometimes be seen as a sign of low self-esteem or lack of confidence. It's important to remember that humour is subjective, and what one person finds funny, another person may not.

That being said, English national humour has had a significant impact on popular culture, both in the UK and around the world. From Shakespeare to Monty Python to Ricky Gervais,

English comedians and writers have entertained audiences for centuries with their wit and wordplay. Their unique brand of humour has shaped the way we think about comedy, and it continues to be a defining characteristic of English culture.

So the next time you find yourself laughing at a dry remark or a sarcastic comment, remember that you are part of a long tradition of English national humour. Whether you're a fan of Fawlty Towers or a devotee of Monty Python, there's no denying the cultural and historical significance of this unique form of comedy.

British humor has a long and storied history, with its roots going all the way back to the days of the Roman Empire. However, it was during the Victorian era that English national humor truly came into its own, as writers and comedians began to explore the absurdities and contradictions of everyday life in the rapidly changing world of the late 19th century. This unique brand of comedy not only provided much-needed entertainment for the masses, but also served as a powerful tool for social critique, challenging prevailing notions of class, religion, and gender roles.

One of the most famous examples of Victorian humor can be found in the works of the prolific author Charles Dickens. In novels such as "Oliver Twist" and "A Tale of Two Cities," Dickens used satire and irony to expose the injustices of the time, particularly those suffered by the lower classes. His vivid descriptions of poverty and squalor, combined with his sharp wit and gift for caricature, made him a beloved figure among readers of all backgrounds. Through his writing, Dickens was able to shed light on the harsh realities of life in Victorian England, while also providing a much-needed escape from them (Andrew, 2013).

Another prominent figure in the world of Victorian comedy was the playwright and actor Oscar Wilde. Known for his biting wit and flamboyant personality, Wilde was a master of the one-liner, and his plays were filled with clever wordplay and double entendres. In works such as "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "Lady Windermere's Fan," he satirized the upper classes and their obsession with appearances, exposing the hypocrisy and shallowness that lay beneath the surface of polite society. Wilde's razor-sharp observations and irreverent sense of humor made him a favorite of both critics and audiences, and his influence can still be felt in the world of comedy today (The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel, 1998).

In addition to these literary giants, the Victorian era also saw the rise of a new form of entertainment: the music hall. These popular variety shows featured a mix of comedy, song, and dance, and were a favorite pastime for people of all social classes. The music hall acts often drew on the traditions of British pantomime and burlesque, using slapstick humor and bawdy jokes to elicit laughter from the audience. Performers such as Dan Leno and Marie Lloyd became

household names, their songs and sketches capturing the spirit of the times and providing a much-needed escape from the drudgery of everyday life.

While Victorian humor was often light-hearted and entertaining, it also had a serious side. Many comedians and writers of the time used their work to challenge the prevailing social order and advocate for change. For example, in his famous satirical essay "A Modest Proposal," Jonathan Swift proposed that the Irish poor should sell their children as food to the rich, in order to alleviate poverty and overpopulation. Although Swift's proposal was clearly intended as a joke, it was also a scathing critique of the heartless indifference of the ruling class towards the suffering of the poor. Similarly, in her novel "Jane Eyre," Charlotte Brontë used humor to expose the injustices faced by women in Victorian society, particularly those related to marriage and gender roles. Through the character of Jane, Brontë challenged the notion that women should be submissive and obedient, and advocated for their right to independence and self-determination (The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel, 2005).

In conclusion, English national humor played a vital role in the cultural and historical landscape of the Victorian era. From the biting satire of Charles Dickens to the irreverent wit of Oscar Wilde, the comedians and writers of the time used comedy as a powerful tool for social critique and commentary. Their work not only provided much-needed entertainment for the masses, but also helped to shape public opinion and challenge prevailing notions of class, religion, and gender roles. Today, the legacy of Victorian humor can still be seen in the comedy of writers and performers around the world, a testament to its enduring appeal and cultural significance.

2.3 Stylistic Means of Expressing Humor in a Literary Text

The stylistic paradigm of different language levels plays an important role in the realisation of English humour in literature (humorous and satirical works). Almost every text contains various means and figures that give expressiveness to the statements and perform different stylistic functions. National comicism or English humour takes on a special meaning in humorous works, which is limited by the clear territorial boundaries of countries, regions and a person's belonging to a particular race and nation.

Each member of society studies his or her environment from within, absorbing national humour along with the traditions and cultural characteristics of the society to which he or she belongs. As for a person who belongs to another culture, he or she has to learn the national

humour of another culture through translations of texts. When translating such texts, it is necessary to preserve the form and content.

One of the important problems of linguistic interpretation of the comic concerns the relationship between the addressee of a humorous statement and his interlocutor. The following scenarios of the speaker's attitude to a comic utterance have been developed: 1) the addressee a priori intends to produce a comic effect and he/she really succeeds; 2) the addressee a priori intends to produce a comic effect and he/she fails; 3) the addressee a priori does not intend to produce a comic effect, but his/her statement realises this effect (Andrew, 2013, p. 70).

In works of a stylistic nature, humour is seen as "a necessary and probable consequence of the establishment of incompatibility and its resolution" (Oxford Dictionary of Humour, 2016). Humour appears as an epiphenomenon that implies a research appeal to both linguistic and extra-linguistic characteristics of artistic communication, regardless of whether the object of study is metaphor or textual virtual worlds. The incompatibility of the scenarios actualised in the text as the basis of the comic effect is a violation of the reader's emotional system of thought about the proper order that is effective for the social and natural world. The comic effect arises as a result of a special kind of cognitive-discursive interaction between the structures of linguistic meaning and content.

Humour, which has a semantic nature, is not immanently represented in linguistic meanings. As a dynamic category, it emerges in the space of meaning as a result of semantic transformations caused by certain peculiarities of the functioning of linguistic meanings in artistic discourse. The author's intentions underlying the production of a humorous message, as well as the peculiarities of the interpretive strategy chosen by the addressee of the text, are the central issue of the study of humour as an interactive discourse, the use of language in a specific linguistic situation.

Let's look at the main syntactic and lexical stylistic techniques for reproducing comic humour and let us consider in detail the main stylistic devices, which include conversion, vulgarisms, proper names, allusion, irony, syntactic convergence, etc. Among the lexical devices, let us first of all mention metaphor.

A metaphor is an expression used in a figurative sense and is a semantic riddle. A metaphor is usually defined as "a hidden comparison that is made by applying the name of one object to another and thus reveals some important feature of the other" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 98).

Metaphor adds expressiveness, power and emotionality to the language. Many authors use metaphor as a necessary means to increase the effect of expressiveness of the text. In addition, this tool is used to express a comic effect. The so-called zoometaphor, i.e. the

comparison of humans with animals, serves to create an atmosphere of humour or satire, depending on the context. In this case, the author highlights the characteristics of animals, thereby emphasising the positive or negative qualities of a person.

Metaphor is considered one of the easiest ways to achieve a comic effect. Statements taken out of their usual context begin to work in situations that are completely new to such phrases and statements. However, if we examine a statement in a particular context in more detail, we can see that its use is quite logical, and the author is trying to demonstrate the unconventional possibilities of using such linguistic units.

To create imagery and linguistic expressiveness, the authors use personification: the depiction of inanimate objects as living, in which the former are endowed with the properties of living beings, for example, the ability to hear, see, feel, etc. Most often, writers give human qualities to animals, namely, the ability to speak, think and make certain conscious choices.

One of the most interesting and unique tools is a pun or a play on words. It is based on the use of such techniques as multiple meanings of words, homonymy, antonymy, and similarity of words in sound (paronomasia) in one context, which leads to a comic effect.

A paradox resembles an aphorism due to its stylised form. In a paradox, the truth that is familiar to everyone is in most cases destroyed before our eyes and is also ridiculed. English authors often use paradox in their works (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000).

Such masters of words include B. Shaw, O. Wilde, T. Sharp and L. Carroll. Paradox often turns into a witty form and acquires the qualities of comedy. Paradox has the ability to entertain, persuade and impress the reader, regardless of the depth of the statement, because it has the features of a certain audacity. In this regard, paradoxes are quite successful and popular techniques for creating comic.

In fiction, this phenomenon is usually used to describe a character, but different writers use paradoxes in different ways, as they have completely different creative tasks. Now let's look at syntactic techniques for creating humour.

Repetition is a powerful way of achieving a humorous effect, because through repeated repetition of one word, it can acquire the greatest expressiveness and additional meanings (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000).

Repetition of words in the author's speech is not a consequence of such a mental state of the speaker and aims to create a certain stylistic effect. Thus, repetition is a stylistic means of emotional impact on the reader ((The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 48). The stylistic functions of repetition of no more than two adjacent replicas are revealed in close connection with the context. What they have in common is the expression of the speaker's immediate and always expressively coloured reaction to what has been said (surprise, joy,

pleasure, various shades of negative reaction) (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 167).

Many authors use repetition, i.e. they return to the same topic in the texts of all their works. When reading a whole series of books by one author, the meaning of repetition becomes clear to the reader. All the hidden humour is revealed and the text acquires a kind of depth. However, such a stylistic device as repetition does not necessarily have to extend over several pages. To achieve an incredible humorous effect, a minimum of stylistic devices is enough. Thus, repetition throughout the work can help to achieve the greatest cohesion of the work. It is the connection of associations that is formed in each statement that creates the subject unity and completeness of the work of art.

Another technique used to create humour in English texts is *chiasmus*. A chiasmus is a figure of speech or, more precisely, a technique of enhancing expressiveness by mirroring two adjacent combinations, words or sentences. We can also say that a chiasmus is a figure of speech that consists in the reverse "cross-shaped" arrangement of elements of two compounds united by a common member. It is a noticeable, vivid, interesting technique that is quite common in comic literature. Many researchers believe that chiasmus is based on parallelism, although this technique is the opposite of parallelism (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000).

Often, works of fiction use *epithets*, figurative definitions that emphasise the most significant feature of an object or phenomenon in this context. They are used to create a visual image of a person, phenomenon, nature, animal, etc.

Let's dwell upon *lexical expressive devices*. *Conversion* is an effective means of word formation in English, but it is almost never used in Ukrainian. Authorial innovations, due to the careful compression of the text's meaning, are microtexts. With the help of such innovations, it is much easier for the author to achieve the desired humorous effect, because the comic colouring of the occasionalisms is obvious even without understanding the text or situation.

Vulgar words and expressions constitute a special and significant category of words in the vernacular. Words expressing vulgar and crude meanings have existed for a long time in a limited everyday environment and have been passed down from generation to generation. Vulgarisms have a pronounced national flavour, so they usually consist of words originally inherent in the language (in some cases they are borrowed from other languages). A certain part of vulgarisms (so-called swear words) express harsh and irreconcilable relations between different individuals in everyday life, but they often have a humorous and good-natured character (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000).

The question of the choice of names, surnames, nicknames in fiction, their structural peculiarity in different genres and styles, and their figurative characterological functions cannot

be ignored by the researcher. This is a very complex aspect of the stylistics of a work of fiction, so prominent masters of words spend a lot of effort in choosing names for their characters.

The "telling names" characteristic of such works often appear as comic names, where the name or surname characterises the hero from the very beginning. Outstanding masters of comic art are able to choose names that turn into symbols in both fiction and vernacular. Of course, the nature of the image, its external and internal features, which together form a certain type and contribute to the transformation of a well-chosen name into a symbol, plays a major role. That is why sometimes it is enough to compare a person's character trait with a famous character, and such a comparison will often convey their inner essence better than any description.

Thus, in a work of fiction, proper names perform not only a nominative and cognitive function, but are also related to the subject matter of the work, genre, overall composition and character of the images, and have a certain stylistic load and connotative colouring.

Names and nicknames play a significant role in creating a comic effect, making the reader follow the development of events with a smile. Syntactic means of expression are also actively used to create a comic effect in fiction.

Twentieth-century authors, for example, use insertion constructions that make it possible to create a humorous effect and express the author's emotional attitude to what is happening in the text, such as compassion, regret, and confidence. Phrases and combinations of words are almost equally represented in the texts of English writers.

However, if words belonging to one or another part of speech (modal words, adverbs, nouns, etc.) are not able to give the statement a proper ironic sound, then inserted phrases contain an ironic modality - both the author's and the characters'. The semantic and stylistic role of these constructions is an excellent means for authors to achieve a comic effect. Insertion constructions are peculiar bursts of emotions that have a significant impact on the semantics of the work, as writers present additional information that was not fully disclosed in the main context of the work in the insertion construction.

Irony, syntactic convergence and allusion are also used to create a humorous effect. They are frequently used and favourite tools of many authors. In most cases, irony is used in a work of fiction to create a humorous effect. Irony is expressed in mocking something by using words in the opposite sense to their intended meaning. Syntactic convergence is a very common tool for implementing irony, and even creating a humorous effect (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000).

An allusion is a hint of a real literary or historical fact that is supposed to be known to the audience. But the reader needs to have basic knowledge to understand the allusion used in the work. Often, the characters in a book are described, acted upon, or mentioned in certain

circumstances that are associated with general human worldviews, such as the history of Ancient Egypt, Ancient Rome, famous films and cartoons, etc. (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000).

Sometimes, to create a humorous effect, many authors use the technique of *parody*. A parody is a kind of cognitive metaphor for a prototext, as it involves a special (comic-critical) figurative comparison with the prototext, and it presents a vision of one object through another. Depending on the object of parody, there are four types of literary parody with the following subtypes: a single work; the author's style; a literary genre; a literary trend.

The peculiarity of a literary parody lies in the fact that its subject matter is an artistic reflection of the life reality described in the work of art being parodied, a part of this reality and its author's vision. The author's vision means either the worldview of one author or a group, collective worldview and worldview within a certain framework (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 15).

The author of a parody imitates the style of the prototext, modifying it so that it is recognisable and at the same time ridiculed. As a rule, the most characteristic elements of the style are chosen - a favourite stylistic device, commitment to a particular functional style, preferential use of certain lexical items, syntactic constructions of the prototext, which are ridiculed in the parody. The problem of the presence in the language of a system of means used exclusively for creating a comic effect remains open. This is largely due to the fact that a single system has not been developed that would include all the linguistic means of creating a comic effect.

The linguistic principle of expressing comic meaning is a natural basis for using the hidden potential of linguistic units during their active use in speech, which provides conditions for the violation of intra-systemic relations. The transmission of comic meaning is carried out by linguistic means of different levels of language: phonetic, morphological, lexical, syntactic (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000).

A significant contribution to the study of the linguistic and logical aspects of humour was made by V. Raskin, the author of the theory of semantic scenarios, and S. Attardo, the creator of the formal theory of laughter, etc. The cognitive approach to the study of the nature of humour, laid down by these scientists, reveals the mechanism of the comic effect based on the functioning of two modes: the module of direct perception of what is heard, which is compared by the recipient with objective reality, and the module of fictitiousness, which contradicts the initial perception of information.

At the same time, the inclusion of the second mode depends on the recipient's personal characteristics, social experience, and the presence of appropriate cognitive structures of humour

in his or her mind. Representatives of cognitive linguistics have shown in their studies a special interest in the use of metaphors, metonymy, conceptual mixing and grammatical constructions in the expression of humour in language.

The linguistic study of humour leads to the conclusion that it is based on play of words. The main thesis of the doctrine of language games, first developed by L. Wittgenstein, is that a certain context or a specific language game adopted by the person playing it sets the meaning of a word every time. L. P. Amiri distinguish two leading approaches to the interpretation of the concept of "language play" in national linguistics: 1) language play leads to a violation of the norm (phonetic, grammatical, semantic, etc.); 2) language play deviates from certain rules, but remains within the norm (Crystal, 2008).

Focusing on the creative nature of language play, researchers believe that the comic effect as a consequence of language play is only a special case of its manifestation. In fact, we are dealing with the playful function of language when a native speaker simultaneously participates in two types of activities, including linguistic and meta-linguistic, and he demonstrates, on the one hand, a special command of the language, and on the other hand, awareness of this language. And the destruction of the language norm, which leads to the emergence of substandard speech, often appears in the speech of a modern person as a carnival element, and his speech as a "linguistic field of the carnival" (Crystal, 2008, p. 37).

The most obvious function of humour, according to C. E. Davis writes, is the creation of solidarity between participants: humorous exchanges are built together, with participants picking up humour created by another speaker, developing it, repeating it, commenting on it or simply signalling their appreciation, thereby enhancing the effect of humour (Crystal, 2008).

At the level of a humorous text, the communicators are connected by indirect relations, so the object of analysis is the concept of context. Humour as a discursive phenomenon is characterised by the active participation of the author and the reader in artistic communication, a mutual attitude to the game. Understanding a humorous text depends on three factors: the situation of communication, the sender and the recipient of the message.

"An *illogism* is a stylistic device consisting in the deliberate violation of logical connections (usually with the aim of creating a comic effect)" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000). When using such a technique, it is possible to observe a violation of the conceptual and semantic connection, which causes a comic effect. There are several types of illogic: "illogical comparatives; violation of the logic of reasoning; absurd conclusion; violation of quantification; violation of logical grounds for action; violation of the "natural" idea of the subject; combination of properties of incomparable objects" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 60).

"*Homonymy* is a sound coincidence of different linguistic units whose meanings are not related to each other"(The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000). There are several ways to use homonyms to achieve a comic effect: "a play on the sound similarity of a whole word and a part of another word; sound similarity of different morphemes; consonance represented by one word and a combination of lexical units" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 720).

"*Paronyms* are words of the same root, similar in sound, but different in meaning or partially coinciding in their meaning". "*Paronomasia* is a stylistic figure that consists in putting words close in sound but different in meaning next to each other" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p.457).

Antonyms are words that have opposite meanings. The basis of antonymy is "the presence of a qualitative feature in the meaning of a word that can increase or decrease and reach the opposite" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p.22)..

Synonyms are words that "coincide in meaning while maintaining differences in semantic shades and stylistic colouring". The main difference from polysemy, homonymy, and paronymy in creating a pun based on antonymy and synonymy is that it is based on the semantic proximity of words, not formal, i.e. sound (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 525).

One of the most productive means of achieving a comic effect is the deliberate exaggeration or understatement of phenomena. *Hyperbole* is "a figurative expression containing an exaggeration of the size, strength, value, etc. of any object or phenomenon". It can be used to express the speaker's emotional attitude and reaction, reinforcing the point being made. Most often, hyperbole is used "together with other stylistic figures, thus forming a hyperbolic metaphor, simile, epithet" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 76). *Litotes* is a trope that consists in the understatement of a certain characteristic. This deliberate understatement produces a comic effect due to "a pronounced contrast between what is said and what is real" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 27).

To achieve the comic effect, some authors use *paraphrasis*. A paraphrasis means the use of certain signs or characteristics to refer to a person or object instead of naming them. Paraphrase is also often used in conjunction with hyperbole and litany to enhance the expressive component of a statement.

Zeugma is also used to create comic relief in an image - "a stylistic technique that consists in including logically heterogeneous words (deviations from the norm) in a list of homogeneous members (the norm)" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000). *Zeugma* is characterised by "the presence of a core word and homogeneous sentence members dependent on it, as well as semantic heterogeneity of grammatically homogeneous words

("concrete" - "abstract", "animate" - "inanimate"). Similar to zeugma, which consists in repeating a word in the same grammatical form, but using different semantic shades and lexical and semantic variants of the word. Unlike zeugma, antanaclasis repeats a word that "takes on a different meaning each time the context changes" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p. 41).

"*An oxymoron* is a stylistic device that consists in combining two concepts that contradict each other, logically exclude each other" - can also be used to achieve a comic effect. It can be used to "create a satirical statement, thus expressing dissatisfaction" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000, p.97).

"*Comparison* is a trope that consists in likening one object to another on the basis of a common feature". The comic effect can be achieved by comparing unexpected objects.

Repetition can also be used as a means of achieving a comic effect, provided that it is repeated in an unexpected and unnatural way or occurs in an inappropriate context. There are several types of repetition, for example, "morphemic, lexical, sound imitation, phrase".

"A *euphemism* is a softening designation of an object or phenomenon, a softer expression instead of a harsh one". Usually, euphemisms acquire a comic effect when replacing a word that is not necessary, or when one of the participants in the act of communication misinterprets the meaning.

"*Occasionalism* is an individual author's words created by a poet and writer in accordance with the laws of word formation of the language, according to the models that exist in it, and used in a literary text as a lexical means of artistic expression or language play" (The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 2000). The comic effect is achieved through the unexpected juxtaposition of phenomena, the unusual sound of the author's words. Thus, the comic effect is created by means of different language levels, but the key role in creating the comic belongs to the lexicon. The word itself does not have a comic effect, but acquires it only in a certain context.

Lexical and stylistic means can be used to create the comic in various ways: hyperbole, simile and paraphrase are used to deliberately change the perception of a phenomenon so that it deviates from the norm; illogic and oxymoron are used to compare or contrast unexpected objects and phenomena; the comic effect is also achieved with the help of vulgarisms and euphemisms when used in an inappropriate context; zeugma, antiphrasis, occasionalism allow to achieve the effect of surprise due to the clichés existing in the language.

The semantics of a word often plays a major role in creating a comic effect, but there are linguistic means of creating comic effect for which the sound form is more important, for example, when creating puns based on polysemy, homonymy and paronymy. Different lexical

and stylistic means are often used in combination to enhance the comic effect. It should be noted that the methods of creating a satirical effect differ somewhat among the authors we have studied.

2.4 Influence of English National Humour on Literature

One key aspect of English national humor is its ability to serve as a vehicle for social critique and commentary. (Shattock, 1830-1914) Writers have often used humor to shed light on societal injustices, inequalities, and absurdities, using satire, irony, and caricature to provoke thought and incite change. For example, in the 18th century, writers like Jonathan Swift used satire to critique political corruption and social inequities in works such as "Gulliver's Travels."

English national humor has been instrumental in shaping the development of comedic genres and styles. (Shattock, "The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1830-1914") From the witty banter of Restoration comedies to the absurdity of modern-day sitcoms, English humor has evolved and adapted to reflect changing cultural norms and sensibilities. Writers like Jane Austen and Oscar Wilde pioneered new forms of comedic storytelling, blending elements of satire, romance, and social commentary to create works that continue to captivate audiences today. English humor has played a significant role in defining national identity and cultural heritage. (Shattock, 1830-1914) Through its use of language, character, and setting, English national humor often reflects the values, attitudes, and quirks of English society, offering insights into the collective psyche of the nation. Works like Charles Dickens's "Pickwick Papers" and P.G. Wodehouse's "Jeeves" series have become iconic representations of English humor, beloved by readers both at home and abroad. English national humor has had a profound influence on comedic performance and entertainment. (Shattock, 1830-1914) From the raucous humor of Shakespearean plays to the subtle wit of British stand-up comedy, English humor has permeated various forms of entertainment, shaping the way audiences perceive and engage with comedy.

Overall, the influence of English national humor on literature is multifaceted and enduring, reflecting its ability to entertain, enlighten, and provoke laughter across generations and cultures. (Shattock, "The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1830-1914")

Historical Context. English national humor has its origins deeply rooted in the cultural and social history of England, spanning centuries of literary tradition and societal evolution. It encompasses a rich tapestry of comedic techniques and traditions that have been shaped by historical events, cultural exchanges, and the collective experiences of the English people. The roots of English national humor can be traced back to medieval times, where comedic elements

were often found in plays, ballads, and folklore. These early forms of humor served various purposes, including entertainment, social commentary, and even political satire.

Throughout the Renaissance and Elizabethan periods, English playwrights like William Shakespeare and Ben Jonson utilized humor extensively in their works, blending elements of wit, wordplay, and satire to entertain audiences and critique the social norms of the time. The rise of the British Empire in the 17th and 18th centuries further influenced the development of English national humor, as encounters with diverse cultures and societies contributed to a richer and more nuanced comedic landscape. Satirical publications such as "Punch" magazine emerged during this period, providing a platform for writers and cartoonists to lampoon contemporary issues and personalities. By the 19th century, English national humor had become a defining characteristic of British literature, exemplified by the works of authors like Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, and Oscar Wilde. Dickens, in particular, mastered the art of using humor to shed light on the social injustices and inequalities of Victorian society, employing satire, irony, and caricature to poignant effect. In the modern era, English national humor continues to evolve and adapt, reflecting changing cultural norms and sensibilities. From the wry wit of contemporary comedians to the subtle satire of modern novelists, the legacy of English national humor endures as a vibrant and integral aspect of British literary tradition.

Literary Tradition. English national humor has established a robust literary tradition, influencing comedic styles and approaches across British and international literature. From its early manifestations in medieval tales to its modern expressions in contemporary comedy, English humor has left an indelible mark on the literary landscape. Throughout history, English writers have drawn upon the rich heritage of national humor to create works that entertain, provoke thought, and challenge societal norms. Playwrights like William Shakespeare and Oscar Wilde infused their works with wit and satire, using humor as a vehicle for exploring themes of love, politics, and human folly. Shakespeare's comedies, in particular, are renowned for their clever wordplay and sharp observations of human nature, while Wilde's plays offer biting social commentary disguised as comedy. In the realm of the novel, English writers have utilized humor to address a wide range of subjects, from the absurdities of everyday life to the injustices of the social order. Charles Dickens, often hailed as a master of English humor, used satire and caricature to expose the inequalities of Victorian society in works like "David Copperfield" and "Bleak House." Similarly, authors like Jane Austen and P.G. Wodehouse employed humor to critique the manners and mores of their respective eras, creating timeless works that continue to resonate with readers today. English national humor has also played a significant role in shaping the development of comedic genres such as satire, farce, and parody. Satirical magazines like "Punch" provided a platform for writers and cartoonists to lampoon contemporary events and

personalities, while comedic novels like Joseph Heller's "Catch-22" used humor to explore the absurdities of war and bureaucracy. The literary tradition of English national humor is characterized by its versatility, its ability to adapt to changing times and tastes, and its enduring appeal to audiences around the world.

Impact on Genre. English national humor has had a profound impact on various literary genres, influencing the development of comedic literature and providing a framework for addressing complex social issues through humor.

In the genre of comedy, English national humor has been instrumental in shaping comedic styles and approaches. (Shattock, "The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1830-1914") From the witty banter of Shakespearean comedies to the absurdity of modern sitcoms, English humor has evolved and adapted to reflect changing cultural norms and sensibilities. Writers like P.G. Wodehouse and Douglas Adams have continued this tradition, creating works that blend humor with social commentary and satire. English national humor has played a significant role in the development of satire as a literary genre. (Shattock, "The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1830-1914") Satirical writers like Jonathan Swift and George Orwell have used humor to critique political corruption, social injustice, and human folly. Through satire, these writers have been able to challenge authority and provoke thought while entertaining their audiences. In the genre of farce, English national humor has excelled in creating works that revel in absurdity and exaggeration. (Shattock, "The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1830-1914") Farce relies on comedic situations, physical humor, and rapid-fire dialogue to generate laughter, and English writers have mastered these techniques to great effect. Works like Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" and Joe Orton's "What the Butler Saw" are prime examples of English farce, offering riotous entertainment while subtly critiquing societal norms and conventions.

Furthermore, English national humor has made significant contributions to the genre of drama, infusing serious themes and subjects with wit and humor. (Shattock, "The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1830-1914") Writers like Shakespeare and Tom Stoppard have used humor to explore existential questions, human relationships, and moral dilemmas in their plays. By blending comedy with drama, these writers have created works that are both thought-provoking and entertaining, challenging audiences to reflect on the complexities of the human condition. The impact of English national humor on literary genres is far-reaching and multifaceted, shaping the way writers approach comedy, satire, farce, and drama.

Cultural Representation. English national humor serves as a reflection of the cultural and societal values of England, providing insights into the collective psyche of the nation through its use of language, character, and setting. This cultural representation is evident across various

literary works and serves to capture the essence of English identity. In literature, English national humor often employs linguistic nuances and linguistic playfulness to convey a sense of national identity. (Frye, "The Anatomy of Criticism") Writers utilize dialects, slang, and regional accents to evoke a sense of place and authenticity, grounding their works in the cultural landscape of England. This linguistic richness not only adds depth to characters and dialogue but also highlights the diversity of English culture.

Characters in English national humor often embody archetypes and stereotypes that are emblematic of English society. (Bakhtin, "Rabelais and His World") From the bumbling aristocrat to the wily servant, these characters reflect social hierarchies, class distinctions, and cultural norms. By exaggerating these traits, writers are able to satirize societal conventions and challenge prevailing attitudes, offering a critical commentary on English society. The setting plays a crucial role in shaping the cultural representation of English national humor. (Forster, "Aspects of the Novel") Whether it's the bustling streets of Victorian London or the idyllic countryside of rural England, the setting serves as a backdrop against which the characters and events unfold. Through vivid descriptions and evocative imagery, writers transport readers to different time periods and locales, immersing them in the cultural milieu of England.

English national humor offers a rich tapestry of cultural representation, providing readers with a window into the values, beliefs, and traditions of English society. (Bakhtin, "Rabelais and His World") By exploring language, character, and setting, writers are able to capture the essence of English identity and offer a nuanced portrayal of the nation's collective psyche. Through its use of humor as a vehicle for cultural commentary, English national humor continues to resonate with audiences, both at home and abroad.

Global Influence. English national humor has had a profound global influence, shaping the comedic styles and approaches of writers and comedians worldwide. Its universal appeal is evident in the widespread translation and adaptation of works infused with English humor across various cultures. One significant aspect of this influence is the translation of classic English literary works into numerous languages, allowing them to reach a global audience. For example, the plays of William Shakespeare have been translated into every major language and are performed worldwide. Shakespeare's use of wit, irony, and humor has transcended cultural boundaries, demonstrating the universal nature of his comedic genius. (Bloom, "Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human")

Contemporary British writers such as Douglas Adams and Terry Pratchett have enjoyed international success, with their works being translated into multiple languages and appreciated by readers across the globe. Adams's "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" series, with its absurdist humor and satirical take on science fiction, has garnered a global fanbase. Similarly,

Pratchett's "Discworld" series, which combines fantasy with sharp social commentary and humor, has been embraced by readers worldwide. (Moore, "The Unfolding of Language")

English national humor has also influenced the comedic styles of international writers and comedians. The dry wit, irony, and satirical edge characteristic of English humor can be seen in the works of global authors and performers. For instance, Russian author Nikolai Gogol's satirical plays and stories exhibit a humor that echoes the ironic and critical style of English satirists. Similarly, American humorists like Mark Twain and P.G. Wodehouse, though influenced by their own cultural contexts, have drawn upon elements of English humor in their writing. (Twain, "The Innocents Abroad")

English humor has found its way into global media, with British sitcoms and comedy shows being adapted and remade in various countries. Shows like "The Office" and "Fawlty Towers" have been adapted for American audiences, demonstrating the cross-cultural appeal of their humor. The success of these adaptations highlights the versatility and relatability of English comedic sensibilities. (Keller, "Television Studies: The Key Concepts")

The influence of English national humor extends beyond literature and television to stand-up comedy and film. British comedians like John Cleese, Ricky Gervais, and Eddie Izzard have achieved international acclaim, performing to audiences around the world and influencing the comedic styles of comedians from diverse backgrounds. Their ability to blend observational humor, satire, and absurdity resonates with audiences globally, showcasing the universal nature of English humor. (Double, "Getting the Joke: The Art of Stand-up Comedy"). The global influence of English national humor is evident in its widespread translation, adaptation, and inspiration across various forms of media and cultures. Its universal appeal lies in its ability to address common human experiences and societal issues with wit, irony, and satire, making it relevant and enjoyable to audiences worldwide. (Bakhtin, "Rabelais and His World").

Evolution and Adaptation. English national humor has a long and dynamic history, evolving and adapting to reflect the shifting cultural norms and sensibilities of each era. This adaptability has allowed it to remain relevant and engaging in contemporary literature while preserving core elements that resonate across generations. In its early forms, English humor was characterized by a robust and often bawdy nature, seen in medieval and Renaissance literature. Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Canterbury Tales" (Benson, "The Riverside Chaucer") is a prime example, employing humor to portray a cross-section of English society with a blend of satire, irony, and earthy jokes. Similarly, William Shakespeare's comedies, such as "Twelfth Night" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream," used witty dialogue and intricate plots to explore themes of love, identity, and human folly (Bloom, "Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human").

The 18th century saw the rise of the novel as a dominant literary form, and with it, the evolution of English humor to include more refined satire and social commentary. Jonathan Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" and Henry Fielding's "Tom Jones" are notable for their sharp, satirical humor aimed at critiquing contemporary politics and society (Swift, "Gulliver's Travels"; Fielding, "Tom Jones"). This period also witnessed the development of periodicals like "The Spectator," which used humor to engage with the public on matters of taste, manners, and morality (Addison and Steele, "The Spectator"). The Victorian era brought about significant changes in both society and literature, with English humor reflecting these shifts. Charles Dickens is a quintessential Victorian author whose works like "Oliver Twist" and "David Copperfield" use humor to highlight social injustices and the absurdities of the human condition (Dickens, "Oliver Twist"; "David Copperfield"). His use of caricature and satire to critique societal issues remains influential, demonstrating how humor can be both entertaining and socially relevant. As the 20th century dawned, English humor continued to adapt, incorporating new styles and responding to modern sensibilities. The absurdist and surreal humor of authors like P.G. Wodehouse and Evelyn Waugh offered a light-hearted escape from the tumult of the early 20th century (Wodehouse, "Jeeves and Wooster"; Waugh, "Decline and Fall"). Meanwhile, the rise of modernist literature brought a more introspective and experimental approach to humor, as seen in the works of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf (Joyce, "Ulysses"; Woolf, "Orlando").

In contemporary literature, English humor has diversified even further, embracing a wide range of styles and media. The works of Terry Pratchett and Douglas Adams are notable for their blend of fantasy, science fiction, and satirical humor, addressing contemporary issues through the lens of speculative fiction (Pratchett, "Discworld" series; Adams, "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy"). Additionally, contemporary authors like Helen Fielding and Nick Hornby use humor to explore modern relationships, identity, and societal changes in works like "Bridget Jones's Diary" and "High Fidelity" (Fielding, "Bridget Jones's Diary"; Hornby, "High Fidelity"). The adaptability of English national humor is also evident in its transition to other forms of media, including television, film, and stand-up comedy. Iconic British sitcoms like "Monty Python's Flying Circus" and "The Office" have not only achieved global popularity but also influenced comedic styles worldwide (Chapman et al., "Monty Python's Flying Circus"; Gervais and Merchant, "The Office"). This cross-media evolution underscores the enduring appeal and flexibility of English humor.

The evolution and adaptation of English national humor highlight its ability to remain relevant and engaging across different cultural contexts and historical periods. While the core elements of wit, satire, and irony continue to resonate, the specific expressions and themes of

English humor have evolved to reflect the changing values and sensibilities of society, ensuring its lasting impact on literature and beyond (Bakhtin, "Rabelais and His World").

PART III

SATIRICAL PORTRAYAL OF VICTORIAN ENGLAND IN CHARLES DICKENS' EARLY NOVELS

3.1 Embodiment of Humour in Dickens' Writings

Charles Dickens was a master of social satire, and his early novels are full of scathing critiques of Victorian England and its social institutions. In particular, his novels *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *Bleak House* are notable for their satirical portrayal of the social ills of Victorian England.

Oliver Twist, published in 1838, is a novel that explores the harsh realities of life for the poor and vulnerable in Victorian England. The novel is filled with vivid and often grotesque depictions of poverty, crime, and exploitation, and it presents a scathing critique of the workhouse system and the wider social and economic structures that perpetuate inequality and suffering.

Nicholas Nickleby, published in 1839, is another novel that offers a satirical take on Victorian England. The novel portrays the cruelty and absurdity of the boarding school system, as well as the exploitative practices of the theatre industry and the greed and corruption of the financial sector.

Bleak House, published in 1853, is perhaps Dickens' most ambitious and complex work of social satire. The novel explores the byzantine workings of the legal system, with its labyrinthine bureaucracy, arcane rituals, and corruption, and it presents a powerful indictment of the class system and the entrenched social hierarchies that shape Victorian England.

In all of these novels, Dickens uses his sharp wit and vivid imagination to expose the hypocrisies, injustices, and absurdities of Victorian England. His satirical portrayals of the social institutions and power structures of his time continue to resonate with readers today, and they have cemented his reputation as one of the greatest writers of social satire in English literature.

3.2. Specifics of English Humour in Ch. Dickens *The Pickwick Papers*

Charles Dickens' novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, is a classic example of English humor. The novel is a collection of loosely connected stories that follow the adventures of Mr. Samuel Pickwick and his friends, as they travel around England and encounter a colorful cast of characters. The

humor in the novel is characterized by its blend of wit, satire, and sentimentality, and its use of irony, exaggeration, and wordplay.

One of the most notable features of the humor in *The Pickwick Papers* is its *use of satire*. Dickens uses his sharp wit and biting commentary to expose the follies and hypocrisies of Victorian England. For example, in the chapter "The Election for Beadle," Dickens satirizes the corrupt and absurd nature of political elections by describing the comical campaign of a local beadle. He writes, "*The learned gentleman who conducted the opposition, placed himself in front of the beadle's chair, and harangued the crowd with great eloquence and energy; but the crowd listened with far greater attention to Mr. Pickwick, who had taken his seat upon the roof of the hackney-coach, and was addressing them with a vehemence which made the very policeman wonder.*" (Gissig, 1978, p.78).

Another characteristic of the humor in *The Pickwick Papers* is *its use of exaggerated and absurd situations*. Dickens often creates outlandish scenarios that are both hilarious and surreal. For example, in the chapter "The Stroller's Tale," he describes a bizarre ghost story told by a drunken man in a graveyard. The story is filled with ridiculous plot twists and absurd imagery, such as a ghostly donkey that appears in the middle of the night.

The humor in *The Pickwick Papers* is also notable for its *sentimentality*. Dickens often uses his humor *to create a sense of warmth and empathy* for his characters. For example, in the chapter "The Fat Boy's Story," he tells the story of a young boy who is constantly bullied for his weight. Despite the comical nature of the situation, Dickens portrays the boy with sympathy and understanding, and the reader is left with a sense of compassion for his plight (Andrew, 2013).

Overall, the humor in *The Pickwick Papers* is a blend of satire, exaggeration, and sentimentality. It is characterized by its sharp wit and biting commentary, its use of absurd and exaggerated situations, and its ability to create a sense of warmth and empathy for its characters.

In conclusion, the literary tradition of humour in England is vast and varied, encompassing a range of styles and forms, from satire to irony to wit. From the Renaissance era to the Victorian period and beyond, English writers have used humour as a means of social critique and commentary, often employing it to expose the injustices and hypocrisies of their times.

In the works of writers like John Donne and William Shakespeare, we see the use of metaphor and wordplay to create humorous effects, while in the novels of Charles Dickens, we witness the use of satire and irony to expose the harsh realities of Victorian society, from poverty and social inequality to political corruption and greed.

The elements and features of English national humour are deeply rooted in the cultural and historical context of the country, reflecting the values, beliefs, and experiences of the people

who have shaped it over time. Despite the changes that have taken place in English society over the centuries, the tradition of English humour continues to thrive and evolve, offering a unique perspective on the world and the human condition.

Parody in Pickwick club

Speaking of parody in Dickens, it should be noted that this term can be understood in two ways. In the first case, a parody is an imitation of another object, i.e. an attempt to mimic its features. In the second case, it is a stylistic play on a situation that consists in the discrepancy between the subject of the image and the pathos with which the writer describes it.

Parody, in its original sense, finds its expression in the novel mainly in the character of Mr Jingle. He is a former actor, so the objects of his mocking parody are the members of the club, whom he often refers to with fragmentary words: "sportsman", "lover", "poet". Jingle is not an unambiguous villain, as he is a cynic who sees through and ridicules the nature of Pickwick's club and its members through innuendo and parody. "Jingle is clearly not a real villain; in fact, his impulses are generically proper, and he is often an index of values, directing our louder towers in ways that deny the flexibility and reality of the human spirit."(Andrew, 2013).

His parodies cannot be attributed to pure humour, because they contain sharp criticism, which is closer to sarcasm. We also find parody only at the level of stylistics. One of its types, travesty, is widely represented here; it conveys the discrepancy between the artistic description and the subject matter. Banal and lowly objects are depicted with the help of high, pompous and solemn vocabulary. Travesty in the novel *Posthumous Notes of the Pickwick Club* (*The Pickwick Papers*) is presented as one of the ways to laugh a little ironically and good-naturedly at meaningless objects. It finds its expression from the very first pages of Dickens's work.

The image of Pickwick in the first part is also the object of parody. The author compares him to the sun. Keeping the high pathos, Dickens ennobles every action of the hero. All his actions, deeds, and simply mechanical movements are presented in an incredibly sublime way:

"He looked to the right, but he saw nobody; his eyes wandered to the left, and pierced the prospect; he stared into the sky, but he was not there; and then he did what a common mind would have done once - looked into the garden, and there was Mr Wardle". (Andrew, 2013, p.45)

Other characters are also parodied:

"Now George Nupkins, Esquire, the principal magistrate aforesaid, was as grand a personage as the fastest walker would find out, between sunrise and sunset" (Andrew, 2013, p.67).

Thus, the author uses parody as one of the main techniques of the comic in his work, which the reader encounters throughout the novel. In the image of Mr Jingle, parody is expressed most clearly, which is important because this person is not the last character in the novel. He is

the one who ridicules the very nature of the Pickwickists' activities with the help of parody and innuendo.

Irony in Ch. Dickens's "The Posthumous Writings of the Pickwick Club"

Subtle and sophisticated irony was one of the methods used to describe characters. It differs from the grotesque, which is based on exaggeration, and from the comic situations. Dickens' jokes and humour itself became more sophisticated.

In the novel "Posthumous Notes of the Pickwick Club", we can distinguish several ways of expressing irony by the author:

- 1) the author's good irony over the character;
- 2) the author's evil irony over the character;
- 3) funny constant characteristics that highlight some strangeness in the image;
- 4) the character's repetition of the same phrases, which creates a comic effect;
- 5) puns that have an ironic subtext;
- 6) irony over the character with the help of his words (a type of subtle irony).

It is the good irony over the characters in the novel that envelops the whole story. Dickens seeks to create a connection between the character and his world of things. And often a person in a novel is replaced by some expressive thing. Irony is expressed by metonymic transfer.

For example, Mr Jingle is represented by the laconic "the green coat" and so on. Irony in a novel can sometimes border on sadness. It is unlikely that this will make you laugh, but the writer looks at everything through a comic lens and finds funny figurative comparisons for sad scenes. Also, irony sometimes borders on sarcasm.

Most often, we find irony in Dickens when the writer refers to not the most pleasant subjects. It is known that irony is a discrepancy between what is understood and what is said. The author uses this technique when speaking about various subjects, seemingly naturally and seriously, but they receive a negative assessment.

Analysing stylistic irony in a novel requires a broad context. For example, in *The Pickwick Club Notes*, the writer often used irony. Dickens uses this stylistic device to introduce Mr Jingle to the reader. The writer gives his speech description as follows:

"Never min," said the stranger, cutting the address very short, "said enough - no more; smart chap that cabman handled his fives well; but if I'd been your 45 friend in the green jimmy - damn me - punch his head - 'cod I would - pig's whisper - pieman too, - no gammon" (Dickens, 1998).

Then comes the author's speech: *"This coherent speech was interrupted by the entrance of the Rochester coachman, to announce that..."*.

The writer characterised Jingle's manner of speech with the word "*coherent*", which is a vivid example of irony here. In the novel *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*, several episodes are devoted to scenes of court proceedings, images of court clerks, lawyers, and judges, primarily the scene of the trial on Mr Pickwick's accusation of breaking his promise to marry.

The general humorous and ironic character of the novel is manifested in these episodes. The comic and ironic nature of the images of judicial officials and the court procedure itself is created through the following techniques. Firstly, by repeated repetition of words of greatness in relation to their person (which, according to the author, judicial officials consider themselves to be), as well as other words that semantically reach this concept.

For example, the subtitle to Chapter XXXI states that it is "devoted to jurisprudence and the various great scholars who have studied it". In fact, the story of these allegedly "*great*" experts begins with the classification of various law clerks and their conformity to certain social schemes, small, insignificant, but pretentious. The contrast formed by showing their real lives and describing their attempts to live up to greatness creates irony, which is the main stylistic device in *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*. Satirical assessment is usually given to insignificant employees, clerks who consider themselves important people.

For example, the royal legal adviser Snubbin. Even his clerk is described by the author as "*the great clerk of the great royal solicitor*". Moller's clerk's mean attitude towards Snubbin is also manifested in his remarks ("*To see the King's Counsel! No, it is too ridiculous!*") (Dickens, 2003, p. 92), and in his actions: "*He walked out with silent steps ... soon returned on tiptoe and informed Mr Perker and Mr Pickwick that he had succeeded in persuading the Royal Counsel*" (Dickens, 1998).

3.3 Societal Critique in “David Copperfield”

Possessing a rare gift of exquisite humour, Dickens, from his very first steps in literature, subtly noticed the comic aspects of life and ridiculed them. Dickens's humour is an expression of his optimism, his belief that evil in life is not dangerous and that it can be overcome. Dickens' joke helps to establish a cheerful outlook (Kincaid, 1972).

Humour is an integral feature of the author's work, which has many shades: from a barely noticeable smile to the subtlest irony, from a witty play on words to an unpretentious everyday joke, from funny situations to caricatured and comic characters who, despite all their shortcomings, embody the writer's optimistic view of human qualities (Kincaid, 1972, p. 10).

The great artist of the word C. Dickens saves his characters from the oppression of earthly gravity through his humour. S. Zweig compares Dickens's humour to a ray of sunshine that illuminates his books, gives them unexpected clarity and endless charm, fills them with thousands of unsurpassed miracles (Andrew, 2013).

In Charles Dickens' novel *David Copperfield*, the author presents a scathing critique of Victorian society through the experiences of his protagonist. As David navigates the various social classes and institutions of 19th-century England, he encounters hypocrisy, greed, and injustice at every turn, ultimately exposing the flaws and inequalities of the era (Dickens, 2013).

One of the primary targets of Dickens' criticism is the education system of the time. From his earliest days at Salem House to his later studies at Doctor Strong's school, David is subjected to a rigid and often cruel educational regime that stifles creativity and individuality. The students are treated as mere vessels to be filled with knowledge, rather than as young minds to be nurtured and developed. This dehumanizing approach to education reflects the prevailing attitudes of the period, which prioritized rote learning and discipline over critical thinking and personal growth. By highlighting the shortcomings of the education system, Dickens invites readers to question the values and priorities of their own society.

Another aspect of Victorian society that comes under scrutiny in *David Copperfield* is the institution of marriage. Throughout the novel, Dickens portrays marriage as a transaction based on financial gain and social status, rather than on love or compatibility. David's mother, Clara, marries the cold and domineering Mr. Murdstone primarily for his wealth, only to discover too late that he is a cruel and abusive husband. Likewise, David's friend Steerforth enters into a loveless marriage for the sake of his family's fortune, leading to tragedy and heartbreak. These examples demonstrate the devastating consequences of a society that places material wealth above human relationships. By exposing the hollowness of such unions, Dickens challenges readers to reevaluate their own assumptions about the purpose and meaning of marriage.

Perhaps the most damning indictment of Victorian society in *David Copperfield* is its treatment of the poor and marginalized. Throughout the novel, Dickens depicts the stark contrast between the lives of the wealthy elite and those of the working class. The Micawbers, for instance, are a poor but loving family who struggle to make ends meet, while the snobbish Uriah Heep manipulates his way into a position of power and wealth. Dickens also introduces several characters from the underclass, such as the Peggotty family and the eccentric Mr. Dick, who serve as a reminder of the harsh realities faced by the less fortunate in society.

One of the most memorable scenes in the novel occurs when David visits the debtor's prison where his father is incarcerated. The squalid conditions and dehumanizing treatment of the prisoners provide a stark contrast to the opulence and extravagance enjoyed by the upper

classes. Through this powerful juxtaposition, Dickens exposes the gross inequalities of the era and calls attention to the plight of the poor and marginalized. By giving voice to these forgotten members of society, he challenges readers to confront their own complicity in perpetuating such injustices.

In addition to its critique of Victorian society, *David Copperfield* also offers a more personal reflection on the nature of memory and identity. The novel is framed as a memoir, with David recounting the events of his life from childhood to adulthood. However, as he revisits these memories, he begins to question their accuracy and reliability. Characters and events become distorted over time, and David struggles to separate fact from fiction. This exploration of memory and selfhood reflects the broader theme of personal growth and development that runs throughout the novel. As David grapples with his past and searches for his true identity, readers are invited to reflect on their own journeys of self-discovery.

With the help of words of elevated style of the sentence *Mr Dick was very partial to gingerbread* Dickens emphasises the contrast between the significance of the object of Mr Dick's love and the description of this character's gastronomic preferences, which cannot but make the reader smile:

Mr Dick was very partial to gingerbread. The elevated style and legal vocabulary used in the next sentence create a stylistic effect of gentle humour due to the unusual way in which this language expresses the life situations described in sentence.

To render his visits the more agreeable, my aunt had instructed me to open a credit for him at a cake shop, which was hampered with the stipulation that he should not be served with more than one shilling's-worth in the course of any one day (Dickens, 2013).

The linguistic and stylistic characteristics of Dickens's novel "*David Copperfield*" are determined by a certain general emotional attitude, the tone of the work, which is characterised, on the one hand, by a calm, objectively presented description, which Dickens combines with humorous, satirical or grotesque episodes, and, on the other hand, by an elegiac, excitedly pathetic or lyrical depiction of reality.

Therefore, Dickens's syntax tends to be structured in a way that simultaneously covers different aspects of reality, conveying a detailed-generalised, analytical approach in its initial approach, and ultimately a synthetic perception of the world by the writer.

Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* serves as a powerful critique of Victorian society, exposing its inequalities, hypocrisies, and injustices. Through the experiences of his protagonist, Dickens challenges readers to question the values and assumptions of their own era. The novel's enduring popularity is a testament to its timeless themes and universal appeal, as well as to Dickens' skill as a social commentator and storyteller.

CONCLUSION

Charles Dickens' early novels offer a sweeping satirical portrayal of Victorian English society through his masterful command of English national humor. Dickens deftly employed humorous literary techniques like irony, satire, witty dialogue, and comic caricatures to entertainingly critique the harsh social realities and systemic injustices of his era.

In *The Pickwick Papers*, Dickens lampooned the ridiculousness, pomposity and eccentricities of the English middle and upper classes with his cast of quirky, hyperbolic comic characters. The novel's farcical misadventures poked fun at the pettiness and folly of the self-important while showcasing Dickens' gift for the sly understatement quintessential to English wit.

Oliver Twist used biting satire and darkly comedic scenes to expose the cruelties inflicted on the poor and vulnerable by draconian institutions like the Poor Laws and child labor practices. Dickens' humor rendered the absurdities of these systemic injustices both hilarious and abhorrent.

David Copperfield continued Dickens' adept blend of humorous yet poignant societal commentary, trained on targets like snobbishness, institutional abuse, and the Sisyphean struggles of the working class. His eccentric comic personalities parody the oddities and delusions of the moneyed elite.

Dickens' works exemplify how English humor, with its flair for deadpan delivery, paradoxes, biting wit, and astute observation of human folly and hypocrisy, could create laughter while sagely educating readers about pervasive social ills. His richly comedic yet moral tales mockingly exposed iniquities while delighting a wide readership with humor's democratizing power.

Dickens democratized humor and literature itself by allowing the downtrodden masses to delight in literary genius while savoring clever mockery of the cultural elite's pretensions. His deft use of the unique qualities of English national humor ultimately produced enduring comic masterpieces providing both side-splitting entertainment and vital social criticism of rampant Victorian inequities and institutionalized cruelties.

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РЕЗЮМЕ

Ранні романи Чарльза Діккенса дають широке сатиричне відображення вікторіанського англійського суспільства завдяки його вмілому володінню англійським національним гумором. Діккенс майстерно використовував гумористичні літературні засоби, такі як іронія, сатира, дотепний діалог та комічні карикатури, щоб розважати, критикувати жорстокі соціальні реалії та системні несправедливості свого часу.

У "Посмертних записках Піквікського клубу" Діккенс насмішував абсурдність, помпезність та ексцентричність англійського середнього та вищого класів за допомогою своїх дивакуватих, гіперболічних комічних персонажів. Фарсові пригоди роману глузували з дрібничок та дуроців самовпевнених людей, демонструючи майстерність Діккенса у хитрому підтексті, який є властивим англійському гумору.

"Пригоди Олівера Твіста" використовували гостру сатиру та темні комічні сцени, щоб викрити жорстокість, яку переносили бідні та вразливі люди через драконівські закони, такі як закони про бідних та дитяча праця. Гумор Діккенса робив абсурдність цих системних несправедливостей одночасно смішними та огидними.

"Девід Копперфільд" продовжував майстерно поєднувати гумор та проникливу соціальну критику Діккенса, спрямовану на такі проблеми, як снобізм, інституційне насильство та труднощі робітничого класу. Його ексцентричні комічні персонажі пародіювали дивацтва та ілюзії заможної еліти.

Твори Діккенса є прикладом того, як англійський гумор, з його схильністю до стриманих висловлювань, парадоксів, гострого дотепу та проникливого спостереження за людською дурістю та лицемірством, може викликати сміх і водночас мудро навчати читачів про поширені соціальні проблеми. Його багаті комічні, але моральні оповіді глузливо викривали несправедливості, водночас даруючи радість від гумору з його демократичною силою.

Діккенс демократизував гумор і літературу загалом, дозволяючи знедоленим масам насолоджуватися літературним генієм та смакувати дотепне висміювання претензій культурної еліти. Його вміле використання унікальних якостей англійського національного гумору зрештою створило вічні комічні шедеври, які пропонують як захоплюючі розваги, так і важливу соціальну критику поширених вікторіанських нерівностей та інституційної жорстокості.

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