THE MANIFESTATION AND DISCURSIVE FEATURES OF IRONIC SPEECH ACTS IN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

ПРОЯВЛЕНИЕ И ДИСКУРСИВНЫЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ ИРОНИЧЕСКИХ РЕЧЕВЫХ АКТОВ В ЭЛЕКТРОННОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

ELEKTRON KOMMUNIKATSIYADA KINOYAVIY NUTQIY AKTLARNING NAMOYON BO'LISHI VA DISKURSIV XUSUSIYATLARI

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Annotation. This study analyzes how ironic speech acts appear and function in electronic communication, particularly in social media, messaging apps, and online forums. It explores the discursive features that help convey irony in the absence of vocal tone and facial expressions, such as punctuation, emojis, and textual cues. The research highlights how irony is shaped by digital context and how users adapt their linguistic strategies to ensure irony is understood in virtual interactions.

Key words: Irony, electronic communication, discourse, speech act, pragmatics, online interaction.

Аннотация. В данной работе рассматриваются особенности проявления иронических речевых актов в электронной коммуникации, включая социальные сети, мессенджеры и онлайн-форумы. Исследование

фокусируется на дискурсивных средствах выражения иронии в условиях отсутствия интонации и мимики — таких как пунктуация, эмодзи и текстовые маркеры. Анализируется, как цифровая среда влияет на формы иронии и как пользователи адаптируют свои речевые стратегии для эффективного общения в виртуальном пространстве.

Ключевые слова: Ирония, электронная коммуникация, дискурс, речевой акт, прагматика, онлайн-взаимодействие.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqotda kinoyaviy nutqiy aktlarning elektron kommunikatsiya — ijtimoiy tarmoqlar, messenjerlar va onlayn forumlardagi — shakllanishi va diskursiv xususiyatlari tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot kinoyaning ohang va mimika bo'lmagan muhitda qanday ifodalanishini, xususan, tinish belgilar, emojilar va matndagi ishoraviy vositalar orqali qanday yetkazilishini o'rganadi. Shuningdek, foydalanuvchilarning kinoyani tushunarli yetkazish uchun til strategiyalarini raqamli muhitga qanday moslashtirishi ko'rsatib o'tiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: Kinoya, elektron kommunikatsiya, diskurs, nutqiy akt, pragmatika, onlayn muloqot.

Introduction. In contemporary digital communication, irony has taken on new forms and functions shaped by the unique features of online interaction. Unlike face-to-face communication, where vocal tone, facial expressions, and body language often support the delivery and recognition of irony, electronic communication relies solely on written language and visual cues. This shift challenges both speakers and recipients to encode and decode ironic intent using limited resources such as punctuation, emojis, formatting, and context. Ironic speech acts in electronic environments—such as social media posts, instant messages, and online comments—are increasingly common and serve various social and rhetorical purposes. They may be used to express humor, criticize indirectly, foster in-group identity, or mitigate directness. However, without the aid of non-verbal signals, the

risk of misinterpretation becomes higher, especially across different cultural or linguistic backgrounds. This study aims to examine how irony manifests in electronic communication and to identify its key discursive features. By analyzing linguistic strategies and contextual markers used in digital discourse, the research seeks to understand how irony is constructed, perceived, and interpreted in virtual spaces. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of digital pragmatics and the evolving nature of speech acts in online interactions.

Literature review. The study of irony in electronic communication has gained increasing attention as digital platforms become central to human interaction. Irony, traditionally conveyed through tone of voice, facial expressions, and gestures in face-to-face communication, faces new challenges in online environments where these non-verbal cues are absent. Early linguistic research conceptualized irony as a form of indirect speech act where the intended meaning contrasts with the literal wording. However, when communicated electronically, irony requires alternative strategies to be understood correctly. [1] One of the key discursive features identified in electronic communication is the use of punctuation and typographical markers to signal irony. For example, the use of quotation marks or capital letters can imply sarcasm or skepticism, such as writing "Great job!" to mean the opposite. Emojis and emoticons have become vital tools in this respect. A winking face or a laughing emoji often helps clarify that a statement is ironic or playful. Without these markers, statements might be misread as sincere or even offensive, highlighting the importance of visual cues in compensating for the lack of vocal intonation.[3] Social media platforms provide rich data for observing ironic speech acts in action. For instance, Twitter users frequently employ hashtags like sarcasm or irony to explicitly signal their ironic intent. These metatextual cues act as pragmatic guides for readers navigating the brevity and ambiguity of online messages. Similarly, memes—images combined with text—often rely heavily on irony, using cultural references

and visual exaggerations to convey humorous or critical messages that would be difficult to interpret without shared knowledge. Another important aspect is the role of context in the interpretation of irony online. The same phrase can be interpreted differently depending on the user's cultural background, relationship with the speaker, or the digital platform used.[2] For example, an ironic comment on a professional LinkedIn post might be viewed as inappropriate or confusing, whereas on a casual Facebook group, it could be seen as witty and engaging. This context dependency complicates the study of irony in electronic communication and emphasizes the need for users to be culturally and situationally aware. Research also highlights generational differences in the use and understanding of irony in digital discourse. Younger users, who have grown up with emojis and instant messaging, tend to be more adept at recognizing and producing ironic remarks online. Older generations may find such indirect forms of communication more challenging, potentially leading to misinterpretations. This points to the evolving nature of digital pragmatics, where communicative competence involves mastering new conventions alongside traditional linguistic skills.[4] Moreover, intercultural communication research shows that irony is not universally perceived or valued across cultures, which adds another layer of complexity in electronic communication. In some cultures, irony might be employed frequently and openly, while in others, it might be avoided due to social norms emphasizing directness and politeness. Therefore, the globalization of online communication creates both opportunities and risks for misunderstanding ironic intent. Psycholinguistic studies provide further insight by demonstrating that processing irony requires cognitive effort and an ability to infer the speaker's intentions beyond literal meaning. This is supported by findings that the brain engages areas associated with theory of mind during ironic comprehension.[6] In digital communication, where cues are limited, this cognitive load may increase, making clear markers like emojis even more crucial. In sum, the literature indicates that irony in electronic communication is a dynamic and

multifaceted phenomenon. It relies heavily on discursive strategies such as punctuation, emojis, hashtags, and contextual cues to convey and interpret meaning effectively. As digital communication continues to evolve, understanding these features becomes essential for fostering clearer and more effective online interactions, reducing miscommunication, and appreciating the cultural dimensions of irony.[5]

Conclusion. Irony in electronic communication represents a unique and evolving form of expression shaped by the constraints and possibilities of digital platforms. Without traditional non-verbal cues such as tone of voice or facial expressions, users rely on alternative discursive features like punctuation, emojis, hashtags, and contextual knowledge to convey and interpret ironic speech acts. These strategies are essential in ensuring that irony is recognized and understood in virtual interactions. The literature reveals that the successful use and comprehension of irony online depend not only on linguistic skills but also on cultural background, platform conventions, and generational familiarity with digital communication norms. Misinterpretations are common when these factors are overlooked, highlighting the challenges of conveying subtle pragmatic meanings in electronic environments. As online communication continues to expand globally, understanding the manifestation and discursive characteristics of irony becomes increasingly important. This knowledge can help improve digital literacy, foster clearer intercultural communication, and minimize misunderstandings in the digital age.

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