

**IRONIC UTTERANCES IN LITERARY TEXTS: A COGNITIVE-PRAGMATIC ACCOUNT**

У статті досліджуються іронічні висловлювання на матеріалі роману Джейн Остін «Гордість і упередження» у когнітивно-прагматичному аспекті; аналізується, яким чином теорія релевантності розширює можливості літературної прагматики, надаючи читачеві інструменти для кращого розуміння художньої та естетичної цінності літературних текстів.

**Ключові слова:** когнітивна прагматика, теорія релевантності, вербальна іронія, літературний текст.

In recent years, the most influential study of irony from the pragmatic perspective is Sperber and Wilson's echoic interpretation theory of irony [5; 6; 7; 8]. They introduced the notion of «echo» and defined verbal irony as a variety of echoic interpretive use, in which the speaker dissociates himself/herself from the opinion echoed with accompanying ridicule or scorn. Therefore, for the identification of verbal irony it is essential to find the echoic quality of the utterance and the speaker's attitude of dissociation towards this utterance.

Verbal irony always occurs in a context, which is viewed in relevance theory as a psychological construct that has to be established and developed in the course of interaction in order to select the correct interpretation, «a subset of the hearer's assumptions about the world» [7, c. 15]. Not all the assumptions available from the potential context are equally accessible at any given point in time and hearers will naturally start out with those contextual assumptions that are most easily accessible to them.

The initial context can be extended in the search for a relevant interpretation in processing the proposition from the interlocutor's utterance. «It is relevance which is treated as given, and context which is treated as a variable» [7, c. 142]. People generally assume that the assumption being processed is relevant, and they try to select a context which will optimize relevance. It is the notion of optimal relevance that constrains the potentially infinite search for context. When there is an optimal selection of context, an adequate amount of contextual effects, and little processing effort, relevance is optimal.

It is hypothesized that human beings have an inherent capacity to access simultaneously the information provided by different contextual sources, and that the more contextual sources are activated, the faster the identification of irony is bound to be. Yus [10] proposes seven contextual sources relevant to irony:

- A. Encyclopedic, factual information.
- B. Mutually manifest physical environment (setting).
- C. Speaker's nonverbal behavior.
- D. Addressee's background knowledge of addresser's biographical data.
- E. Mutual knowledge.
- F. Previous utterances in the conversation.
- G. Linguistic cues.

The main claim of Yus's work is that the hearer's simultaneous access to (one, several, or all) contextual sources A–G outlined above helps the hearer to grasp the ironic interpretation of utterances. Yus makes a distinction between the leading contextual source and the supportive contextual sources. The contextual source whose information is more accessible than other contextual sources is labeled the leading contextual source, whereas those whose information reaffirms the hypothesis of an ironic interpretation and provides a high degree of informative support are called the supportive contextual sources. Yus [10] then describes the criterion of optimal accessibility to irony as follows: «The processing effort required for the interpretation of the intended ironic meaning of an utterance decreases in proportion to the increase in the number (and quality) of incompatibilities (detected by the addressee) between the information supplied by the inferential integration of simultaneously activated contextual sources (leading or leading plus supportive) and the information provided by the proposition expressed by the utterance» [10, c. 50].

When the incompatibility detected between the proposition expressed by the utterance and the information provided by one or several contextual sources reaches a certain level of redundancy, the hearer infers that the speaker is being dissociative towards this proposition, and then a so-called irony trigger is activated. The activation of a particular context is determined by the search for optimal relevance. Which of the contextual sources A–G outlined above are activated and how many contextual sources are activated depend on what kind of evidence the hearer is looking for in the interpretation of irony. Therefore, the ironic communication is not different in kind from the normal way of communication: it follows the same principle of the best balance between effort and effects. The first ironic interpretation that is consistent with the principle of relevance is always the best interpretation. All other interpretations will cost the hearer's unnecessary processing effort or cause misunderstanding.

Integrating relevance theory with Yus's criterion of optimal accessibility to irony, we can elaborate a relevance-theoretic framework for the interpretation of irony: at the stage of irony comprehension, relevance lies in the multidimensional mismatch. In Yus's terms, what alerts the addressee to the ironic interpretation of an utterance is the

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incompatibility between the information provided by contextual sources and the proposition expressed by the utterance. It is the addressee's responsibility to choose and access some subset of contextual assumptions in the recovery of the intended interpretation of the utterance. Such contextual selection and activation are guided by the principle of relevance.

The resulting communication will be stronger or weaker, but it will not be different in kind from the communication of standard implicatures. In either case, the interpretation process will involve the inferential processing of newly presented information in the context of assumptions accessed by the addressee. What makes communication weak is the addressee's greater responsibility in recovering the set of assumptions. So forming hypotheses about the addresser's informative intention, the addressee has a very wide range of contextual assumptions to choose from. These contextual assumptions assist the addressee in recognizing the addresser's communicative intentions. In the process of ironic communication, the principle of relevance governs every step of irony comprehension: relevance leads the addressee to figure out the relevant properties embedded in and beyond the utterance, to find out the possible mutuality between the addresser and the addressee. After the addressee perceives incompatibilities between the contextual assumptions and the propositional content of the utterance, it is again relevance that guides him/her towards the conclusion that the mismatch is deliberate, that the utterance should not be understood as an assertion, exclamation, directive, question or imperative, etc. in the normal sense, but should be understood as a critical commentary or evaluation, and that the utterance should not be taken as the surface value but as conveying dissociative attitudes such as satire, sarcasm, ridicule and banter.

In general, contextual resources are prone to a high degree of variation among individuals and conversational settings. However, as Yus claims, three prototypical cases of verbal irony may be isolated: fast identification of ironic intention, slow identification of ironic intention, and non-existent identification of ironic intention [10]. The basic claim in this article will be illustrated with these three prototypical cases by analyzing ironic utterances in «Pride and Prejudice». The aim is to show how the relevance-theoretic framework of verbal irony puts us on the right track in describing and explaining the particular kind of pragmatic processing and mental representation that is peculiar to ironic communication in literary texts.

A high level of manifest information provided by multiple, simultaneously activated contextual sources leads to a fast identification of a mismatch between contextual information and the proposition expressed by the utterance, which foregrounds the speaker's dissociative attitude underlying the ironic interpretation of the utterance without much mental effort [10, c. 53]. In theory, the (highly salient) incompatibility provided by the leading contextual source is enough to set off the irony trigger, but its access may be accelerated by the identification of incompatibilities found in the information supplied by other supportive contextual sources. When the multidimensional incompatibility reaches a high level of redundancy, the hearer infers that the speaker is being dissociative towards the proposition expressed by the utterance.

An example of rich contextual support is Mr. Bennet's ironic utterance about Kitty's coughing in Chapter 2 of «Pride and Prejudice». As we know, Mr. Bennet refuses his wife's suggestion to visit Mr. Bingley, the single man with a good fortune. This makes his wife very angry and disappointed. Later on, he does visit Mr. Bingley but keeps his wife in the dark. In the evening Mr. Bennet keeps talking about Bingley, which throws his wife into even greater wrath. She vents her anger on one of her daughters Kitty who happens to keep coughing at that time:

(1) «Don't keep coughing so, Kitty, for heaven's sake! Have a little compassion on my nerves. You tear them to pieces» (Chapter 2: 3).

But when Mr. Bennet tells her that he has already visited Mr. Bingley, she immediately brightens up. She then begins to speak well of her husband. Under such circumstances, her husband says:

(2) «Now, Kitty, you may cough as much as you choose» (Chapter 2: 4).

And, as he speaks, he leaves the room, fatigued with the raptures of his wife.

From the relevance-theoretic standpoint, in order to reach the ironic sense of this utterance, the hearer/reader is expected to label it as an echo towards which the speaker has an attitude of dissociation. Indeed, there is no problem for the effective interpretation of the ironic sense of the utterance, since the contextual information invalidates any chance that the speaker intends to communicate, as an explicature, the proposition expressed by (2). Mr. Bennet is ironically echoing Mrs. Bennet's previous criticism for her daughter's coughing (previous utterances). Therefore, reaching the ironic interpretation is minimally effort-demanding and provides the only relevant information available.

Identifying it as an echo is just one of the multiple incompatibilities that the hearer can detect simultaneously in several contextual sources, and whose contextual support triggers the ironic interpretation in the course of the conversation. Several contextual sources provide multiple incompatibilities with the proposition expressed by Mr. Bennet's utterance: there is an incompatibility with our commonsense assumption of coughing. We all know that coughing is by no means determined by advice or order. So this advice is unreasonable, lacking the sincerity on Mr. Bennet's (the speaker's) side.

From this we can draw the conclusion that Mr. Bennet is making an ironic statement. There is also an incompatibility with the current topic about visiting Mr. Bingley (physical setting). This utterance violates the principle of relevance for being irrelevant as a response to Mr. Bennet. However, he is not making fun of Kitty, but the third party – Mrs. Bennet, who is now very delighted and no longer cares about her nerves. The ironic sense is intensified by the narrator's complementary statement that Mr. Bennet is «fatigued with the raptures of his wife» [1, c. 4]. The reader cannot help feeling sorry for Mr. Bennet and his daughters because they have to make do with such a moody and irrational wife or mother.

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Moreover, both Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet have a tacit understanding of Mrs. Bennet's reproach (mutual knowledge): Mrs. Bennet's criticism for Kitty's coughing is obviously irrelevant to the topic about visiting Mr. Bingley. But the succession of the conversation shows that the principle of relevance is observed on a deeper level because Mr. Bennet understands the implicit import of Mrs. Bennet's criticism: she is angry with Mr. Bennet for his refusal of visiting Mr. Bingley for the sake of their daughters, but she cannot express her discontent explicitly. So she takes her daughter as a punching bag, using her «poor nerves» to arouse her husband's sympathy. This mutual knowledge is also confirmed by Mr. Bennet's utterance «Kitty has no discretion in her coughs, ... she times them ill» [1, c. 3].

Finally, the word «choose» itself conveys senses of humor and irony in that coughing is out of the human being's control. You can never choose to cough or not to cough. Therefore, the combination of «may cough» and «as much as you choose» violates the selection restriction of normal directives (linguistic cues). All these incompatibilities guarantee the effective identification of Mr. Bennet's ironic intention in utterance (2). Mr. Bennet jeers at her because she even blames her daughter for the uncontrollable coughing when she gets irritated.

Consider the following example:

(3) Mr. Darcy with grave propriety requested to be allowed the honour of her hand; but in vain. Elizabeth was determined; nor did Sir William at all shake her purpose by his attempt at persuasion. «You excel so much in the dance, Miss Eliza, that it is cruel to deny me the happiness of seeing you; and though this gentleman dislikes the amusement in general, he can have no objection, I am sure, to oblige us for one half hour».

«Mr. Darcy is all politeness,» said Elizabeth, smiling.

Elizabeth looked archly, and turned away (Chapter 6: 18-19).

At the Lucas's ball, Darcy invites Elizabeth to dance on his own initiative. To his surprise, he is refused. There would be a highly salient leading contextual source in Elizabeth's nonverbal behavior (smiling, looked archly), providing the necessary incompatibility with the proposition expressed by the utterance «Mr. Darcy is all politeness». The addressee (Darcy/reader) effort-savingsly infers that Elizabeth is being dissociative towards this proposition and thinks that he is the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world. Although it is correct to claim that the leading contextual source is sufficient to lead to the recognition of ironic intention, this does not eliminate the possibility of enriching the context with supplementary information to make it easier to detect the speaker's attitude of dissociation towards the proposition expressed by the utterance.

In other words, there are other simultaneously activated contextual sources to facilitate the identification of ironic interpretation. Specifically, Darcy's pride at the ball has been forbidding and disagreeable, extremely incompatible with the sociocultural norms (encyclopedic information); Elizabeth refuses to dance with Darcy at the Lucas's ball (mutually manifest physical environment); Elizabeth holds deep prejudice against Darcy's pride (the addressee's background knowledge about the addresser's biographical data); Mr. Darcy is polite in the sense indicated by grave propriety in previous utterances, that is, he shows the courtesy appropriate to a gentleman – which is the immediate, public meaning of Elizabeth's compliment and which is incompatible with the factual information on Darcy's pride (previous utterances). And perhaps a typical «all» (linguistic cue) also provides some informative support to the addressee, making the access to the speaker's dissociation even easier. All these show the important role of the multiple activation of contextual sources in ironic interpretation.

An example of fewer incompatibilities with contextual sources, but which still makes the ironic interpretation highly accessible, is Elizabeth's ironic comment upon Lady Catherine after she accepts Darcy's proposal of marriage.

(4) «Lady Catherine has been of infinite use, which ought to make her happy, for she loves to be of use» (Chapter 60: 283).

Lady Catherine does her best to prevent the engagement between Elizabeth and Darcy. Her attempts, however, only make Darcy realize that Elizabeth will marry him, so Lady Catherine achieves exactly the opposite of her intention. The reason for the addressee's optimal interpretation of Elizabeth's ironic attitude lies in a sufficient number of contextual sources activated and the level of redundancy provided by the simultaneous incompatibilities that arise during interpretation: there are incompatibilities with the addressee's knowledge of Lady Catherine's personal characteristics (factual information) since it is known that Lady Catherine always interferes in other persons' trivial; with the addressee's prior knowledge of Elizabeth's (addresser's) dissociative attitude towards Lady Catherine (biographical data); with interlocutors' shared opinions about Lady Catherine (mutual knowledge); and with normal, linguistic choice used in ordinary assertion, since the extreme adjective «infinite» greatly strengthens the satirical effect of Elizabeth's assertive irony.

Of these contextual sources, the mutual knowledge would be a good candidate to be labeled the leading contextual source (sufficient by itself to lead to the identification of Elizabeth's dissociative attitude), while the other supportive contextual sources simply make the ironic interpretation even more accessible. Therefore, an effort-saving access to verbal irony is predictable. (4) would clearly indicate Elizabeth's attitude of dissociation towards her utterance. The recognition of this attitude maybe speeded up by the overwhelming contextual information contradicting the proposition expressed by Elizabeth's utterance.

A low level of manifest information provided by the activation of a single or multiple contextual sources leads to a slow access to the ironic interpretation of the utterance. In this case, the hearer follows the same interpretive procedures as in case 1, but the lack of contextual support raises doubts about the speaker's endorsing/dissociative attitude towards the proposition expressed by the utterance. One possibility is that the hearer is cognitively aware of a literal/non-literal

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sequentiality. He/she is willing to and has the ability to put more processing effort to detect the mismatch so as to identify the ironic intention. This case includes typical ironic instances such as the so-called garden-path irony, which causes the hearer to read it first as an ordinary assertion, and after finding it irrelevant in the current on-going conversation, the hearer has to reinterpret it ironically (cf. [7, c. 242]).

This is a typical case illustrating the hearer's doubts about the speaker's intended interpretation and, even though the verbal irony is finally accessed, this happens only after an effort-demanding explicit – implicit sequentiality. If we bear in mind that further extensions of context are effort-demanding, why should the hearer do so? «That is because contextual support (however weak it may be) provides enough incompatibilities with the proposition expressed for an extension of the search for relevance to be worth it. In other words, contextual support, however weak, leads the hearer to hypothesize that the speaker's attitude might be dissociative, and that the relevance of the utterance lies precisely in this attitude.» [10, 56] Besides, the extra cognitive effort required for the extension of context will be offset by the additional contextual effects which will be unachievable from the explicit proposition (see [4] for the discussion of poetic effects). The contextual effects here refer to various shades of irony, that is, more or less bitter/angry/sarcastic/funny, etc. or mixture of them.

For example, in Chapter 52, when Wickham, who has become Elizabeth's brother-in-law, knows that Elizabeth has already visited Darcy's grounds in Derbyshire, he attempts to find out how much truth she has known:

(5) «I was surprised to see Darcy in town last month. We passed each other several times. I wonder what he can be doing there.»

«Perhaps preparing for his marriage with Miss de Bourgh,» said Elizabeth. «It must be something particular to take him there at this time of year» (Chapter 52: 242).

Wickham has told Elizabeth long before that Darcy is very polite to his aunt Lady Catherine and his cousin Miss de Bourgh because he attempts to marry the latter. But Elizabeth knows that Darcy does not plan to marry Miss de Bourgh at all. She also knows that Darcy goes in town in order to find her sister Lydia and Wickham. Wickham elopes with Lydia but he does not want to marry her. Darcy finds them in town and forces Wickham to marry Lydia so as to get Lydia's reputation in return. The addressee follows the same interpretive procedures as in case 1. However, besides the above factual information, there are no other contextual assumptions that are perceived as incompatible with the proposition expressed by Elizabeth's utterance.

The lack of contextual support raises doubts about the speaker's dissociative/endorsing attitude towards the proposition expressed by the utterance. More cognitive effort is required for the addressee to formulate a hypothesis as to whether Elizabeth really means what she is saying. On the basis of the factual information, the addressee will probably conclude that the ironic interpretation, instead of the proposition expressed, is the really intended interpretation – Elizabeth echoes Wickham's previous utterances and pretends that she does not know his behavior so as to show up his fraud indirectly.

Since the ironic utterance superficially observes the Politeness Principle, while its illocutionary force threatens the interlocutor's or the third party's face, verbal irony can be treated as a «veiled face-threatening act» [3]. It can keep aggression away from the brink of conflict, and therefore saves face for both the addresser and the addressee, neither of whom has to acknowledge the possible criticism when challenged. In the above example, after Elizabeth discovers Wickham's personality, on the one hand, she wants to get rid of him as soon as possible; on the other hand, she is «unwilling for her sister's sake, to provoke him» [1, c. 243]. So this ambiguous ironic utterance is used due to its ability to criticize implicitly, to save face and thus to maintain politeness on the surface.

Verbal irony is not inherent in the text but is ascribed to the texts by hearers during interpretation. Between any two interlocutors, there will always be individual differences in their cognitive environments. «A mismatch between the context envisaged by the speaker and the one actually used by the hearer may result in a misunderstanding.» [7, c. 16] Such misunderstanding often occurs when the interlocutors lack necessary level of mutuality. The hearer still activates incoming information from contextual sources in his/her search for relevance, but due to lacking contextual support, he/she is naturally led to a nonironic interpretation, with the speaker's attitude of dissociation unidentified.

For example, the dialogue in (6) is from the first chapter in «Pride and Prejudice», when Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet are talking about Mr. Bingley who has just rent Netherfield Park:

(6) «...But it is very likely that he may fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes».

«I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for as you are as handsome as any of them, Mr. Bingley might like you the best of the party.»

«My dear, you flatter me. I certainly have had my share of beauty, but I do not pretend to be anything extraordinary now. When a woman has five grown up daughters, she ought to give over thinking of her own beauty» (Chapter 1: 1–2).

When Mr. Bennet is required by his wife to visit Mr. Bingley as soon as he comes, he not only refuses the suggestion superficially, but also makes a counter-suggestion that Mrs. Bennet and their daughters might visit Mr. Bingley by themselves. We would feel that the proposition expressed by the utterance would be inappropriate in this particular situation, because it is incompatible with the sociocultural norms at that time – Mrs. Bennet and her daughters should not visit the new neighbor by themselves. Therefore, the propositional content of the speaker's directive utterance is by no means reasonable. The relevance of this utterance lies in that a normal legitimate evaluative standard to a state of affairs is misapplied by Mr. Bennet.

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In other words, the ironist is inappropriately associating a state of affairs with a true standard. The critical misapplication may also consist in the association of a person, object, state of affairs with a false standard, as in the reason of Mr. Bennet's counter-suggestion: he says that Mr. Bingley might like Mrs. Bennet, the mother of five grown up daughters. Obviously, it contradicts our commonsense assumptions. Mr. Bennet echoes Mrs. Bennet's vulgar thought of hunting for a rich husband, conveys his attitude of disapproval and produces a wide range of implicit imports: mocking, ridiculing, fltering, persuading her not to harbor fantastic ideas, or perhaps all of them. Therefore, the ridicule of Mr. Bennet's counter-suggestion becomes comic factors, producing humorous effect: by his outrageous remark, Mr. Bennet is making as much fun as possible of his wife and exploiting his quick wit, sense of humor and talent to achieve his ironic intention. However, as for Mrs. Bennet, whose business is to get her daughters married, this commonsense assumption is, perhaps, the least accessible in her cognitive environment. In this case, no source of incompatibility in Mrs. Bennet's accessible contextual information can be found for interpreting Mr. Bennet's proposition.

Although Mr. Bennet echoes a social norm and dissociates himself from the proposition expressed by his utterance, the lack of contextual support on Mrs. Bennet's side explains why Mr. Bennet's ironic communication proves unsuccessful: it lies in the difference of their cognitive environments. Just as the comment provided at the end of Chapter 1 says:

(7) Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humor, reserve, and caprice, that the experience of three and twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character. Her mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper... (Chapter 1: 3)

The recognition of multidimensional incompatibilities is an essential factor in the identification of irony, and that relevance is the backbone in the process of irony comprehension. Just as we can set an upper limit of contextual support beyond which the speaker's ironic intention is immediately detected, we can also set a lower limit of contextual absence below which irony is not even identified as such despite the speaker's effort to convey an attitude of dissociation and foreground the echoic quality of his/her utterance. It is relevance that makes possible the recognition of properties of irony, the detection of incompatibility between contextual assumptions and the propositional content of the utterance, the judgment of the nature of irony, the assumption and confirmation of mutuality, the construction of relevant contextual assumptions and the determination of ironic interpretation.

It is also relevance that makes it possible to associate the ironic utterance with a variety of attitudes, feelings and impressions that vary from mild humor to bitter sarcasm. In this way, the relevance-theoretic framework for the interpretation of irony explains not only the identification of the speaker's attitude of dissociation, but also the fact that the hearer may not be easily led to an ironic interpretation, or even choose a different interpretation from the ironic one intended.

The identification of irony can be speeded up with the multiple activation of contextual sources, and may be easier or more difficult, depending on the number (and quality) of incompatibilities detected by the hearer in the multiple mental activation of the available contextual sources [10]. The activation of a particular context is determined by the search for optimal relevance. The more contextual assumptions are activated, the more effort is required.

Relevance theory argues that styles vary according to the extent to which the speaker/writer uses linguistically specific devices to constrain the hearer's/reader's choice of context, and according to the means the speaker/writer chooses. In each case, the speaker's/writer's decision is governed by his/her estimation of the hearer's/reader's processing abilities and contextual resources. In other words, it is a decision that arises out of the search for relevance. To the extent that he/she is taken to be engaged in communication, a writer is just like any other communicator in that he/she will be taken to have created a presumption of optimal relevance, and the reader is entitled to expect that his/her processing effort will be rewarded by a wide array of very weak implicatures, which he/she is encouraged to explore.

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The article offers a cognitive-pragmatic account of ironic utterances in Jane Austen's «Pride and Prejudice» and analyses how relevance theory extends the research range of literary pragmatics by providing the reader with tools for better understanding and appreciation of the artistic and aesthetic value of literary texts.

**Key words:** cognitive pragmatics, relevance theory, verbal irony, literary text.

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### **ТВОРЧИСТЬ ВОЛОДИМИРА ПІДПАЛОГО В КОНТЕКСТІ «ТИХОЇ ЛІРИКИ» УКРАЇНСЬКОГО ЛІТЕРАТУРНОГО ШІСТДЕСЯТНИЦТВА**

У статті розглядається постать В.Підпалого на тлі літературного процесу 1960-х років, розкривається поняття «тихої лірики» та досліджуються провідні мотиви творчості представників «тихої поезії» українського літературного шістдесятництва.

**Ключові слова:** «тиха лірика», шістдесятництво, поетичні твори, Батьківщина, мати, фольклор, природа.

Шістдесятництво як літературне явище яскраво висвітлене у працях видатних українських вчених – М. Ільницького, М. Наєнка, М. Жулинського, Є. Сверстюка, Н. Зборовської, І. Дзюби та ін. Однак малодослідженим аспектом в українському літературознавстві залишається поняття «тихої лірики» як складової частини українського літературного шістдесятництва.

**Метою статті** є спроба розкриття ролі та значення «тихої лірики» як явища в українському літературному процесі 1960-х років, а також дослідження провідних мотивів творчої спадщини В.Підпалого та інших представників «тихої поезії».

Шістдесятні роки ХХ століття створили вагомий ґрунт для відродження мови й традицій сучасної української держави. Формування і розвиток шістдесятництва як творчої сили відбувалися у складних умовах. Як зазначає дослідниця Т. Масловська, «поняттям «шістдесятництво» означають добу всезагального морального й духовного піднесення в країні, викликаного, як тоді уявлялося, докорінними змінами у внутрішній політиці влади, що їх реальним наслідком стало нетривале повернення суспільству ясного бачення загальнолюдських цінностей» [6, с. 33]. На літературній арені України з'являються неординарні особистості, життєве кредо яких виявляється у палкому бажанні повноцінного самоствердження в житті та творчості.

Однак після недовготривалої хрущовської відлиги країною прокотилася нова хвиля жорстоких політичних арештів та репресій. Настав час вибору – або відстоювати свої позиції до кінця, або пристосуватись до нових умов життя, або демонстративно замовчати. У зв'язку з цим у 1965 році відбувся розкол у поетичному колі шістдесятників, що призвело до утворення трьох умовних течій – групи письменників, що віршославили існуючий режим та вождів соціалізму, митців, що відкрито виступаючи проти політичного ладу, опинилися в опозиції, та поетів, що звернулися до «тихої лірики». Останні не йшли ні в опозицію, ні на співпрацю з режимом лише для того, щоб, занурившись у себе, у своє мистецьке «Я», розкошувати у власній творчості.

Отже, у другій половині 60-х років на противагу «голосній поезії» шістдесятників виникає «тиха лірика» (або «тиха поезія»).

Одним із яскравих представників «тихої поезії» українського літературного шістдесятництва є Володимир Підпалый. Він належить до тих поетів, які увійшли в українську поезію скромно, без гучної риторики, зайвого поспіху, оскільки пам'яттю своєю опиралися на віковичну історію народу, його багату духовність.

Уся творчість В. Підпалого – це любов і біль. Саме в цьому синтезі проглядається щемкий неспокій за долю рідного краю, поет карається його тривогами, живе сподіваннями кращої долі, у такий спосіб творчо вирішуючи проблеми, які виявилися ключовими в естетичній площині шістдесятництва. Як поет-шістдесятник, він виступає носієм особливого світобачення й світорозуміння. Митець, свідомо не прийнявши постулати радянської ідеології, перебуваючи в умовах вимушеної «внутрішньої еміграції», в час духовного і творчого розкріпачення понад усе прагнув віднайти можливості повноцінної реалізації у житті та поезії, залишаючись вірним своїм внутрішнім переконанням. Дослідниця творчості письменника М. Домчук зазначає: «Сповідуючи ідеали шістдесятників, поет не належав до відвертих нонконформістів, не бунтував проти старшого покоління, не гнався за поетичною модою» [13, с. 6]. Однак і в його поезії відчувався виклик офіційній ідеології, нехай негучний, але бунт проти стандартизації, спрощення, примітивізації людини. Видатний український літературознавець і критик М.Ільницький справедливо вважає, що Володимир Підпалый «один із найталановитіших представників покоління «шістдесят-