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Functions of irreverent images in English Poetry

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## INTRODUCTION

**Relevance of research.** Modern science considers discourse as a complex phenomenon formed from the participants of communication, the text, and the communication situation. Based on this, it can be said that discourse is an abstract invariant description of structural and semantic features implemented in specific texts. The ideal to strive for in the process of communication is the maximum possible correspondence between discourse as an abstract system of rules and discourse (or text) as a concrete verbal embodiment of these rules.

So, the spheres of human communication are the characteristics of discourse: the type of discourse can be combined with its various varieties - conflict, humorous, etc. Since the division of discourses into political, scientific, and medical discourses and their structuring is the task of discourse varieties, which are considered a component of different types of discourse.

The functioning of comic discourse in fiction deserves special attention, which, given the comprehensive penetration of English-language literature into the everyday life of society, plays an important role in the development of intercultural communication

A special means of creating a humorous and satirical effect in English poetry is the use of irreverent images. These artistic images are deep generalizations of human flaws embodied in portraits of individual people. The use of irreverent images deepens the essence of poetry, allowing not only to make fun of one or another human flaw, but also to teach the reader in a vivid example how one should not behave.

In modern linguistics, little attention has been paid to the problem of the use of irreverent images in English poetry. Despite the existence of a few studies dedicated to English humor itself and the regularities of its embodiment in poetry, there are currently no specialized studies of irreverent images. Such a situation determines the relevance of the research topic.

**The object of research** is the phenomenon of irreverent images in linguistics

**The subject of the study** is the functions of the use of irreverent images in English poetry.

**The purpose of the work** is to identify the peculiarities of the use of irreverent images in English poetry.

To achieve the goal, the following tasks were set:

1. To consider modern approaches to defining the concept of “image”;
2. To highlight the typology of means of the use of irreverent images in English poetry;
3. To single out the lexical-semantic features of the use of irreverent images in English poetry;
4. To characterize the structural and grammatical features of the use of irreverent images in English poetry.

**Research methods:** the method of image analysis; method of linguostylistic analysis; the method of text analysis.

**The practical significance** of the conducted research is that the obtained results can be used in further research on stylistics, lexicology, and cultural studies.

**Structure of work.** The work consists of a table of contents, an introduction, two chapters, conclusions, and references.

## CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF STUDYING IRREVERENT IMAGES

### 1.1. The concept of literary image in poetic text

If the main unit of artistic content is an artistically mastered characteristic of life, the main unit of artistic form is an image (Бацевич, 2004, с. 85). An image is, first of all, a category of aesthetics that characterizes a special way of mastering and transforming reality, unique only to art (Андрієнко, 2002, с. 11).

The approach to the image as a living and integral organism, which is most capable of understanding the full truth of being, is especially characteristic of modern domestic works on literary studies, since it not only exists (as an object) and not only means (as a sign), but is something that means. An artistic image is a system of specific sensory means that embodies the actual artistic content, that is, an artistically mastered characteristic of real reality (Воробйова, 2011, с. 39).

The specificity of the pictorial principle of literature is largely determined by the fact that imagery in this case is framed in words. A word can mean everything, which is in the field of vision and worldview of a person.

With the help of the word literature, the mind understands the integrity of objects and phenomena. A word is a conventional sign, that is, it does not resemble the object it denotes (Ковалевська, 2016, с. 132).

Word pictures are intangible, with their help the author appeals to the reader's imagination. That is, there is imagery (subjectivity) in literature, but there is no direct clarity of images.

Being immaterial and devoid of visibility, verbal and artistic images at the same time depict a fictional reality and appeal to the reader's vision. This aspect of literary works is called verbal plasticity (Кисилиця, 2021, с. 16).

In this aspect, the image can both facilitate and complicate the perception of the subject, explain the unknown to the known or the known to the unknown. The purpose of an image is to transform a thing, to turn it into something else – complex into simple, simple into complex, but in any case to achieve the highest semantic

tension between the two poles, to reveal the interpenetration of the most diverse planes of being (Жуланова, 2014, с. 55).

A deeper understanding of the image in fiction can be obtained by considering a literary work as a structural model, presented in the form of a core surrounded by several shells. On the outer shell is the verbal material that directly makes up the work.

The immanently considered material is a text endowed with artistic content. The structural “shell” of a work becomes artistically significant only when it acquires a symbolic character, that is, it expresses the spiritual information contained within it (Солощук, 2022, с. 11).

The very core, which includes the theme and idea of the work, that is, what the writer depicts and what he wants to say about what is depicted, has, unlike the content of everyday, business, scientific and other texts, a two-sided structure, since art learns about life and at the same time evaluates it. The need to organically combine the verbal shell with the spiritual core, making it extremely expressive, poetically meaningful, leads to the appearance in the structure of two intermediate shells, which are usually called the inner and outer forms. The internal form is a system of images, and the external form is the organization of the language fabric, which allows you to activate the sound side of the text, which makes the text a carrier of new, artistic information, which is embedded in the subtext of the work (Селіванова, 2011, с. 265).

Thus, implication plays an important role in creating an image. Subtext is the hidden meaning of the statement, which is the relationship of verbal meanings with the context. Usually subtext is a means of psychological characterization, but it can also provoke visual images. It can be safely asserted that subtext is something that lies beyond both the literal and figurative meaning of the word (Самохіна, 2010, с. 21).

In an artistic image, a real life characteristic appears no longer by itself, not simply as an object of evaluation, but in a creative synthesis with an author's attitude

to it, that is, as a creatively transformed characteristic and therefore is a part of a special, different, artistic reality.

It should be noted that there are two different approaches to the study of the nature of the artistic image in domestic literary studies from the 20s of the last century until now. Some scientists interpret the artistic image in literature as a speech phenomenon, as a property of the language of artistic works. Others see an artistic image as a more complex phenomenon - a system of specific sensory details embodying the content of an artistic work, and not only details of the external, linguistic form, but also the internal, subject-artistic and rhythmically expressive ones (Самохіна, 2006, с. 134).

So, for example, there is an opinion of researchers about two types of images. One variety is called literary images, which mean images of characters in literary works (Полюжин, 1999, с. 15). Another variety is linguistic images, i.e., figurative and expressive properties of the national language: catchphrases, similes, tropes, etc. At the same time, the actual artistic value of a literary work is achieved primarily due to speech imagery (Омельчук, 2015, с. 26).

However, this definition does not take into account that figures of speech are inherently a feature of a literary text. In addition, the artistic text is not always full of language images. Linguistic images, like language in general, acquire artistic significance only when they become a means of embodying the actual artistic content, in particular, the characters of the heroes of epic works as a result of artistic and creative mastering of real life collisions.

An artistic image is not reduced to the imagery of language, it is a more complex and more capacious phenomenon that includes, along with language, other means and performs a special, properly artistic function. An artistic image can be considered as a complex interrelationship of details of a specific sensory form, as a system of figurative details that are in a state of complex mutual reflection among themselves, thanks to which something completely new is created, which has a colossal content capacity (Омельчук, 2015, с. 63).



The specificity of artistic imagery is ultimately determined by the specificity of artistic content. Therefore, the artistic image is often defined, first of all, by the general features of the artistic content: “The artistic image is a creative synthesis of universally significant, characteristic properties of life, the spiritual “I” of a person, the generalization of his ideas about what is essential, important in the world, the embodiment of the perfect ideal of beauty. In the structure of the image, the synthetic mastering of the surrounding world, the emotional attitude to the object of creativity, the instruction on the inner perfection of the artistic generalization, and its potential influence on the recipient are in close unity” (КОВАЛІВ, 2007, с. 211).

### **1.2. Typology of irreverent images in English literature**

The artistic form, in turn, acquires clarity in the fact that the system of concrete-sensory forms (articulated and imaginary) forms something individual, in this case the image of the hero of an epic work. So, at the center of the literary image is a person in the life process, shown in the complexity and multidimensionality of his relationship with reality (Кушнір, 2013, с. 66).

**Irreverent images** are literary and artistic devices that are used to ridicule the shortcomings, contradictions, stupidities or immoral actions of people, groups or society as a whole. They help writers of satire convey their critical position, provoke laughter from the audience, and provoke reflection on the problems of society.

In literature, several types of irreverent images can be distinguished:

1. A caricature is a depiction or description in which certain features or details are exaggerated or minimized to create a comic or critical effect. Caricatures can be in the form of pictures, comics, or descriptions in literature.

2. A political character is an irreverent figure that portrays politicians or other public figures in a funny or unflattering light. This type of satire allows authors to ridicule their actions, words, and appearance, as well as highlight their shortcomings or contradictions.

3. An allegory is a satirical figure that uses a symbolic image or metaphor to express a critical thought or idea. Allegories are often used to covertly criticize a political system, social problem, or social phenomenon.

4. Irony is an irreverent image in which the author expresses his position or independence regarding a topic, creating a comic or sarcastic effect. Irony can be used to ridicule illogicality, stupidity, or contradiction in society or people's behavior.

The role of irreverent images in modern society is to draw attention to problems that require change or reform. They help raise issues that people may find uncomfortable or counter-intuitive and motivate society to think critically and act. Through the use of satirical imagery, authors can provoke laughter and reflection, which promotes reflection and change in society.

An image is a concrete and at the same time generalized picture of human life, created with the help of fiction and endowed with an aesthetic value. It is worth paying attention to two significant features of the pictorial representation of life: on the one hand, it presents, as in science, a well-known generalization that establishes the characteristic features of life phenomena, and on the other hand, that these phenomena are depicted concretely, while preserving their individual characteristics, that is, as we see them in life.

The subject of an artistic image is a person in all the complexity of his relations with society and nature. The writer reflects in his work all the reality, all the complexity of life relationships, but demonstrates it in a certain refraction, as they are revealed in concrete human life (Ковалевська, 2016, с. 132).

The subject of figurative cognition is reality, the subject of the image is a person in his complex and multifaceted relations to reality, a person as a personality. Depicting a person as a unique individual in all the richness and diversity of his psychological and physical features, presenting his linguistic characteristics, social, domestic, intimate and natural context, literature creates an image in the entire integrity of the life process that determines the formation and development of character.

An image is a picture of human life. Reflecting life with the help of images means creating pictures of human life, that is, the actions and experiences of people, inherent in a certain field of life, allow us to judge it. An image as a picture of human life involves the artist's use of the words of all that is connected with a person in life, but it is precisely in the refraction of all this material through human perception that the originality of literature lies (Кисилиця, 2021, с. 43).

The concept of image is broader than the concept of character, since it involves the image of the entire material, animal and generally objective world in which a person is and outside of which he is unthinkable, but at the same time, without the image of character, an image cannot arise.

Reality is embodied in the word, and the artist (poet, novelist) carries out its secondary transformation. In the context of a literary work, a word can acquire an artistic meaning that is not recorded in dictionaries. The imagery of artistic speech consists in the casual use of language phenomena (expressiveness, individualization, tropes, etc.). Behind any verbal image is the person who created it.

Having considered the views on the concept of “image” available in literary studies and linguistics, we offer the following general definition of the concept of “artistic image”: “An artistic image is the basic unit of an artistic form, a system of specific sensory means that embodies a special, proper artistic content, i.e. artistically the mastered characteristic of real reality, which appears in a work of art as something concrete and is created with the help of verbal-linguistic and artistic-compositional techniques” (Лівицька, 2021, с. 33).

The subject matter of the image is divided into a number of layers that show through each other, like a big one through a small one. The first of them includes detailed images, minimal units of aesthetic vision. The detailed images themselves can vary in scale: from details, which are often denoted by one word, to detailed descriptions consisting of many details, for example, landscape, portrait, interior; but at the same time, their characteristic property is static, descriptive, and fragmentary.

The second figurative layer of the works grows out of them – a fabulous one, imbued with a purposeful action that connects together all the objective details. It consists of images of external and internal movements: events, actions, moods, aspirations – all dynamic moments unfolded in the time of an artistic work.

The third layer is the impulses that are behind the action of the literary work and determine its impulses - images of characters and circumstances, individual and collective heroes of the works, who are endowed with the energy of self-development and manifest themselves in the entire set of fictional actions: collisions, collisions and conflicts. Finally, from the images of characters and circumstances, as a result of their interaction, integral images of fate and the world are formed; this being as such, as the artist sees and understands it – and behind this global image, extra-subjective, conceptual layers of the work appear (Воробйова, 2011, с. 39).

### **1.3. The notion of stylistic function**

Lexical-stylistic and lexical-semantic means of creating irreverent images are widely used to create images of characters in artistic works. The choice of certain and often repeated stylistic and semantic means in the language of the characters makes their images more vivid and memorable. The use of these techniques for creating a comic effect is a characteristic feature of irreverent images.

Modern classifications of stylistic means began with the Hellenistic Roman system of rhetoric, within which all expressive means are divided into three groups: tropes, rhythm (figures of speech) and types of speech. G. Leech's classification is based on the principle of distinguishing between normative and irregular features of the language of literature.

One of the first linguists who attempted to modernize the Hellenistic Roman system of rhetoric and developed a modern classification was G. Leech, a famous British scientist. Based on the principles of descriptive linguistics, popular at the time, he tried to show how linguistic theory can be related to the task of describing such rhetorical figures as metaphor, parallelism, alliteration, personification and others in the study of literature (Leech, 2004, p. 44) .

According to G. Leech, writers and poets use language in non-standard ways and allow a certain degree of "poetic license". The language of literature as a whole is marked by a number of deviant features. Thus, G. Leech builds his classification on the principle of the difference between normal and deviant features in the language of literature (Leech, 2004, p. 44).

Among deviant features, he distinguishes paradigmatic and syntagmatic deviations. We first distinguish between different levels of linguistic function in which a figure must be identified and described. Based on this, these figures are classified as formal (grammatical or lexical), phonological, orthographic or semantic, or perhaps a combination of these categories.

Linguistic units are related syntagmatically when they are sequentially combined in a linear linguistic form. Paradigmatic elements enter the system of possible choices at one point in the chain. Syntagmatic elements can be viewed horizontally, paradigmatic ones – vertically.

Paradigmatic elements give the writer a choice of equivalent items that contrast with the usual choice. For example, some nouns can usually be followed by certain adverbs, a choice made based on their normal lexical valence. However, the author's choice of noun can disrupt the normal system and create the paradigmatic deviation that we find in literary and poetic language.

This approach was an attempt to consider stylistic devices with reference to linguistic theory, which would help analyze the nature of the stylistic function, considered as a result of deviation from the lexical and grammatical norms of the language.

The classification proposed by O. Shon is characterized by a high degree of detail (Шонь, 2003, с. 83). Its concept includes the following division of expressive means and stylistic techniques, based on a level approach:

- Phonetic means of expression and stylistic devices: onomatopoeia, alliteration, rhythm, rhyme.
- Lexical expressive means and stylistic devices.

- Stylistic devices based on the interaction of dictionary and contextual subject-logical meanings:

- Stylistic devices based on the interaction of subject-logical and denominative meanings: antonomasia (as a special case of metonymy) - two types: speech and language.

- Stylistic devices based on the interaction of subject-logical and emotional meanings: epithet, oxymoron, use of interjection, hyperbole.

- Stylistic devices based on the interaction of basic and derivative (including non-free) subject-logical meanings: word play, pun, zeugma.

- Stylistic techniques for describing phenomena and objects: periphrases, euphemism, comparison.

- Stylistic use of phraseology: sayings and proverbs; maxims (a proverb created not by the people, but by its individual representative – a writer, thinker); allusions, a mixture of words of different stylistic colors: terminological series, literary and colloquial words, poetic and literary sublime words, foreign words and jargon (Шоњ, 2003, с. 83).

O. Selivanova does not divide expressive means and stylistic devices into corresponding layers of language, like O. Shon (Селіванова, 2011, с. 361). She first divides stylistics into paradigmatic stylistics (or stylistics of units) and syntagmatic stylistics (or stylistics of sequences). Then it examines the level of language and considers all stylistically significant phenomena in accordance with these levels, both in paradigmatic and syntagmatic stylistics. It also clearly highlights another level. In addition to phonetics, lexicology and syntax, it adds semantics (Селіванова, 2011, с. 361).

Thus, we can summarize that there are different classifications of stylistic devices and means of expression. Three modern classifications of expressive means of the English language were proposed by G. Leech, O. Shon and O. Selivanova.

G. Leech's classification is based on the principle of distinguishing between normal and abnormal features of the language of literature (Leech, 2004, p. 44). He

identified paradigmatic and syntagmatic deviations from the lexical and grammatical norms of the language.

O. Shon based his classification on a level-by-level approach and identified three groups: phonetic, lexical, syntactic expressive means and stylistic devices (ШОНЬ, 2003, с. 83). The methodology of O. Selivanova (Селіванова, 2011, с. 361) demonstrates a combination of the principles of paradigmatic and syntagmatic division of G. Leech and the level-by-level approach of O. Shon.

### **Conclusion to the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter**

Image and imagery are key concepts of modern literary studies. The complexity of the problem of studying imagery is largely explained by the ambiguity of this concept, which is the subject of study in various scientific fields. Philosophy, psychology, aesthetics, art history, literary studies, linguistic stylistics, didactics and other sciences use the concepts of “image” and “imagery” according to their specifics.

There are five main groups of means of updating irreverent images. This is a modification or deformation of phenomena (exaggeration, tempo different from the usual); unexpected effects and striking juxtapositions; incompatibility in relations and connections between phenomena (anachronisms in the field of morality, views, language, ways of thinking, etc.); imaginary unification of completely disparate phenomena (inconsistency in the behavior of the heroes of circumstances, inconsistency between appearance and essence, between form and content and other inconsistencies); formation of phenomena that deviate from the logical or praxeological norm in essence or impression (absurdity of action or complication of a simple task; misunderstanding, error in judgments and associations; alogisms, absurd dialogue, logical inversions, meaningless statements).

## CHAPTER 2. THE STYLISTIC POTENTIAL OF THE USE OF IRREVERENT IMAGES IN ENGLISH POETRY

### 2.1. Construction of images in English limericks

One of the most common stylistic methods of enhancing imagery in limericks are tropes – lexical figurative and expressive means in which a word or phrase is used figuratively. The epithet is actively used as one of these means in limerick. In the broadest sense, epithets are understood as words that “artistically define an object or action” (Андрієнко, 2002, с. 7) and contribute to the strengthening of verbal imagery.

Most often, epithets in limericks are not always figurative artistic definitions, expressed by an adjective or, less often, an adverb:

*There dwelt an old woman at Exeter,*

*When visitors came it sore vexed her.*

*So for fear they should eat.*

*She locked up all her meat,*

*That stingy old woman of Exeter* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

In this example, epithets are expressed by the adjective stingy and the adverb sore. The use of the last of them – sore is especially expressive, because in this form (in contrast to the traditional form “sorely – very much or very seriously” (Pierini, 2007, p. 29)) this word is usually used in a sublime and poetic sense: “sore – 3. adv . poet, cruelly, hard” (Hugh, 1969, p. 77), which seem inappropriate for this context. Taken together, the epithet stingy, endowed with a negative evaluative meaning (“stingy – 1. not generous, especially with money, when you can easily afford to be” (Lakoff, 2003, p. 119)) and the poetic epithet sore contribute to the creation of a comic effect in this limerick aimed at ridiculing excessive austerity turning into greed.

It should be noted that sometimes epithets in limericks contain elements of a language game. So, in a limerick, the author adds a suffix to the dictionary unit abruptions, which from the point of view of English grammar is a violation of the



rules: you cannot add another adjective suffix to the word abrupt, which is itself an adjective.

Thus, using as an epithet the word abruptious obtained as a result of a language game, the author seeks to increase expressiveness and create a comic effect.

The following example illustrates a case of using an epithet, which is based on a game with the meaning of the word:

*There was a Young Lady of Firle,*

*Whose Hair was addicted to curl;*

*It curled up a Tree,*

*And all over the Sea,*

*That expansive Young Lady of Firle* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

In this limerick, the epithet is expressed by the adjective expansive. According to the dictionary definition, the word expansive has two meanings: “1. friendly, generous, or willing to talk 2. including many things or a large area” (Шалаева, 2017, с. 189).

The comic effect of the epithet expansive is based on the “play” of these meanings. On the one hand, the young lady has so many curly curls that they are really able to cover many things or a large area, according to the second meaning of the word. However, the epithet expansive does not refer to the girl's curls, but to herself (expansive young lady). In this case, it would be appropriate to use the first meaning of this word, if in the context there was even the slightest hint that the heroine is friendly, generous, or willing to talk. Thus, the comic effect is created due to the inconsistency of the epithet expansive in the context of the limerick, and the object of mockery is the extravagant appearance of the main character.

Figurative epithets, which are usually associated with “the use of words in a figurative sense, are defined as metaphorical epithets” (Харченко, 2010, с. 123). This class of epithets is a kind of borderline phenomenon between proper epithets and metaphor.

Metaphor as a lexical-semantic stylistic tool is the use of a word or phrase “in a figurative sense to define an object or phenomenon on the basis of any analogy, similarity” (Фролова, 2009, с. 17). The role of metaphor in the process of artistic thinking consists in “supplementing the conceptual picture of the world with its figurative interpretation in linguistic consciousness as a special reality” (Ильченко, 2002, с. 49). So, the main property of a metaphor in a limerick is its ironic nature.

It should be noted that metaphor as such is a rather rare phenomenon in limerick. This is connected, as it seems, with the fact that the use of stylistic language resources in works of the comedy genre is connected with the creation of comic images. The main role of the metaphor is to create an artistic poetic image, which is not characteristic of a limerick. Thus, the few cases of metaphor use in limericks do not differ in particular artistic brightness and are closer to figurative epithets in nature, especially if we are talking about attributive words. In modern stylistics, it is accepted that a metaphor can be conveyed by any part of the language. Thus, an example of the metaphorical use of the verb is demonstrated in the following limerick:

*There was an Old Man of the East,  
Who gave all his children a feast;  
But they all ate so much,  
And their conduct was such*

*That it killed that Old Man of the East* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

In the literal sense, conduct cannot kill a person. Used figuratively in relation to the word conduct, the verb killed is a metaphor that enhances the pictorial, and in this case, the comic effect of the work. In this example, the use of metaphors “highlights” the qualities that are subject to ridicule: the main character of the limerick is so greedy and strict in relation to his children that their “good” appetite and probably not very decent behavior (*they all ate so much And their conduct was such*) is a fatal blow for him.

A metaphor “based on exaggeration is called hyperbolic” (Барсукова, 2014, с. 11). In this case, the metaphor is usually expressed by an emotionally colored adjective or adverb, which denotes “a high degree of any quality”:

*There was a Young Lady of Crete*

*Who was so exceedingly neat.*

*When she got out of bed*

*She stood on her head*

*To make sure of not spoiling her feet* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

The sense of exaggeration is embedded in the very meaning of the word “exceedingly – 1. extremely 2. an old word meaning 'very much” (Бабич, 1990, с. 19). Thus, the hyperbole in this case expresses an extremely high, almost absurd, degree of accuracy of the young lady. The reason for the absurdity of the situation is that the Young Lady of Crete is so neat that she prefers to stand on her head, just so as not to get her feet dirty.

Hyperbole, in accordance with the specifics of the comedy genre, is one of the main stylistic techniques used in limericks. As a stylistic device, hyperbole is based on excessive, often brought to the point of absurdity, exaggeration and involves “a highly exaggerated image of any properties, signs of an object or process, phenomenon to enhance the impression” (Жуланова, 2014, с. 55). Hyperbolic words are usually evaluative and are used to convince or impress the reader. Hyperbole can be expressed by “metaphor, and epithet, and proper name-symbol” (Солощук, 2022, с. 11), and a whole statement.

Hyperbole is used as a vivid characterization tool when creating a comic image or describing a comic situation. According to the requirements of the humorous imagery of the limerick, various elements of the poetic scenario are subject to hyperbolization: the appearance and actions of the characters, their manner of speaking, the very setting of the action, etc.

Most often, in an exaggerated form, images of the elements of material and physical life are created: appearance, clothes, food, etc.:

*There was an Old Person of Cassel,  
Whose nose finished off in a Tassel;  
But they call'd out, 'Oh well!  
Don't it look like a bell!'*

*Which perplexed that Old Person of Cassel* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

In the example, hyperbole refers to the description of the main character's nose, which is so huge that it only ends in the next town, which is actually absurd. The hyperbole in this example is expressed by the expression *finished off in a Tassel*, which in an allegorical form makes the reader understand the size of the nose of the old man from Cassel.

Also, hyperbole in limerick is used to describe the behavior, actions and moral qualities of the main characters:

*There was a spinster from Wheeling,  
Endowed with such delicate feeling  
That she thought any chair  
Should not have its legs bare.*

*So she kept her eyes fixed on the ceiling* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

The comic effect of this situation is based on the hyperbolic description of the “very delicate” old maid. The feelings of this lady are so refined that she cannot even look at the “indecently” bare legs of a chair (*any chair Should not have its legs bare*). As a result, the situation reaches an absurd point: in order not to offend her view, the heroine Limerick prefers not to take her eyes off the ceiling (she kept her eyes fixed on the ceiling). In this example, hyperbole is expressed not by one word or phrase, but by an expression spread over the entire text.

## **2.2. Didactic function of irreverent images in English poetry**

The creation of a comic effect is also served by such a type of hyperbolization as “downplaying the objectively small” quality of an object, phenomenon, process,

etc. (Солощук, 2022, с. 13). In a limerick, hyperbole as an increase in intensity towards “decrease” is usually expressed by tautology or simile:

*There was an Old Person of Dutton,  
Whose head was as small as a button.*

*So, to make it look big.*

*He purchased a wig.*

*And rapidly rushed about Dutton* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

The comparison as small as a button is a hyperbolizing description of the hero's ridiculous appearance and is the basis for creating a comic image of this character.

Irony is another stylistic means of creating a comic effect in a limerick. As a stylistic device, irony is one of the tropes, the essence of which is to transfer meaning by its opposite. A distinctive feature of this technique is “a double meaning, where the truth is not what is directly expressed, but its opposite, which is implied” (Солощук, 2022, с. 11). In a limerick, irony is usually expressed by an adjective in the function of meaning:

*There was an Old Person of Wilts,*

*Who constantly walked upon Stilts;*

*He wreathed them with lilies*

*And daffy-down dillies*

*That elegant Person of Wilts* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

The author uses the predicate elegant to describe the appearance of the main character. The definition of the word elegant assumes that “an elegant person is attractive and graceful in their appearance and behavior” (Солощук, 2022, с. 15). However, against the background of the context, the use of this word seems inappropriate: it is impossible to imagine that a person looks attractive and graceful, moving on stilts, even if they are decorated with flowers (*daffy-down dillies* – a humorous distortion of daffodillies). Thus, the essence of the ironic effect is that the statement has a meaning directly opposite to that intended by the author, and the object of mockery is the extravagant appearance of the main character.

Emphasized restraint of speech can also be a means of expressing the author's irony:

*There was an Old Person of Stroud;*

*Who was horribly jammed in a croud;*

*Some she slew with a kick,*

*Some she scrunched with a stick,*

*That impulsive Old Person of Stroud* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

By itself, the word *impulsive* seems quite neutral and out of context does not have an ironic tone. However, in a situation beyond her years, an active lady shows not impulsiveness, but rather aggressiveness of her character. Thus, the author's irony consists in the deliberate use of a word with a neutral color to describe the exclusively emotional behavior of an elderly lady, and the object of condemnation is the inability to control one's behavior.

In addition to tropes, the use of other stylistic techniques contributes to the creation of images to which the author's ironic attention is directed. Since the structure of a limerick involves a formal and, as a result, meaningful opposition of its parts, it is quite logical that one of the means of creating imagery is stylistic contrast. As a means of enhancing imagery, stylistic contrast is based on “a sharp contrast of various elements of the text in order to create a certain stylistic effect” (Солощук, 2022, с. 14). According to the principle of stylistic contrast, an antithesis is built – “a stylistic figure that enhances expressiveness due to the collision of directly opposite concepts in the same context” (Солощук, 2022, с. 14). The use of this stylistic device in a limerick contributes to the creation of a “carnival decline” and, as a result, a comic or ironic effect:

*There was a Young Lady of Bute,*

*Who played on a silver-gilt flute;*

*She played several jigs*

*To her uncle's white pigs.*

*That amusing Young Lady of Bute* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

The comic effect of this limerick is achieved by stylistically contrasting the concepts of silver-gilt flute and Jig. As a rule, the flute is associated with the performance of classical music in a concert hall or salon, and not with the melody of a sailor's dance. Both concepts, in turn, do not imply such a listener as white pigs. The antithesis in this case is designed to emphasize the absurdity of transferring relations that look natural in human society to the attitude towards representatives of the animal world.

The comic nature of the story can be formed, including, with the help of one of the types of nomination. Prominence in stylistics is interpreted as a way of formal organization of the text, which focuses the reader's attention on certain elements of the message and establishes semantically relevant relationships between elements of the same or different levels (СОЛОЩУК, 2022, с. 14).

The type of presentation that occurs in limericks is called betrayed expectation and consists in the fact that, against the background of continuous linear language, elements that have a low probability suddenly appear (СОЛОЩУК, 2022, с. 16). In language, a similar phenomenon can be expressed as a peculiar, unexpected vocabulary, as well as a violation of logical sequence. An example of this type of nomination is the following limerick:

*There was a young man who was bitten*

*By twenty two cats and a kitten,*

*Cried he, 'It is clear*

*My end is quite near.*

*No matter! I'll die like a Briton!* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008)

The rather sad beginning of the plot sets the reader in a certain way: since a young man was beaten by twenty two cats and a kitten, then one should not expect any heroic deeds from him. However, at the end of the pentagram, the hero of the limerick suddenly pathetically exclaims *No matter! I'll die like a Briton!*. Thus, the unexpectedly pathetic ending gives the limerick a specific humorous color.

It should be noted that in one and the same text, the achievement of a comic effect can occur with the help of the combined action of stylistic means. So, in the

example, this effect is produced by the antithesis within one sentence: *a young man // was bitten By twenty two cats and a kitten*. Collectively, these tools contribute to emphasizing what is excluded by the norms of behavior, that is, excessive and inappropriate manifestation of one's feelings and emotions.

A rather effective method of creating a comic effect in a limerick is silencing – a rhetorical technique that consists in constructing a statement in such a way that part of its meaning is conveyed not verbally, but subtext, with the help of a hint (Кисилиця, 2021, с. 14). The stylistic essence of this technique “consists in the depiction of an object, an action by naming accompanying phenomena, or immediately the results of events” (Ковалевська, 2016, с. 131). Silence allows the author to create a subtext of different emotional and expressive tonality, including a comic one: humorous and ironic. Using the technique of default, the author allows the reader to guess the “unspoken” for himself, activating his thoughts. This technique is actively used in the author's limericks:

*Said the vet as he looked at my pet,*

*'That's the skinniest bear that I met.*

*I'll soon alter that.'*

*Now the bear's nice and fat -*

*The question is – where is the vet?* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008)

The author of this limerick is silent about the fate of the veterinarian, giving the reader the opportunity to guess about it himself. The author's hint (*Now the bear's nice and fat*) contributes to the reproduction of the missing link. It should be noted that silence implies the omission of significant and, as a rule, basic information. So, in the given example, a key detail for understanding the essence is not verbally expressed: the bear therefore began to look fed and satisfied (*Now the bear's nice and fat*), that he simply ate a veterinarian who was too confident in his abilities (*I'll soon alter that*).

Allusion – a type of implication – is also used to create an ironic context in a limerick. The essence of the allusion is a hint at a widely known historical, political, scientific, cultural, etc. fact.



An example of an allusion can be the following limerick:

*There was a Young Lady named Bright,*

*Whose speed as much faster than light.*

*She went out one day*

*In a relative way*

*And returned in a previous night* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008).

In this example, the author jokingly alludes to Einstein's theory of relativity (Theory of Relativity – speed as much faster than light, In a relative way), comparing the speed of movement of a young lady with the speed of light.

Thus, with the help of an allusion to a fact known in science, the extraordinary activity of the main character is ridiculed. As a stylistic technique, the purpose of which is to achieve a comic effect, allusion is used mainly in the author's limericks.

In order to enhance expressiveness, the authors of limericks also use euphemisms – a softened expression used in certain conditions to replace a word or expression that the author considers inappropriate, tactless or insufficiently expressive. In limericks, euphemisms are usually used in texts with intimate themes or with the aim of “carnival reduction” of the topic of human death:

*A new servant maid named Maria,*

*Had trouble in lighting a fire.*

*The wood being green.*

*She used gasoline...*

*Her position by now is much higher!* (The Mammoth Book of Limericks, 2008)

In the above limerick, euphemism, as a means of creating a micro-imagery, allows you to “distinguish” a reprehensible quality, in this case – the hypertrophied stupidity of the main character. The use of an allegorical manner of reporting the outcome of events (*Her position by now is much higher!*) helps the author to avoid dark associations associated with the sacred theme. By creating an ironic context, the euphemism removes the feeling of tension and fear that could arise in this situation.

### **Conclusion to the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter**

Irreverent images as an element of the structure of the linguistic and cultural concept “humor” in English poetry is actualized in the planes of macro-imagery, text imagery and micro-imagery. At the level of the text, important for the formation of an irreverent image is a carnivalized attitude to life, reflected in the theme, plot, and characters, which, in turn, are the basis of macro imagery.

Irreverent images as a manifestation of a comic attitude to reality is a code for the verbalization of imagery. As a characteristic characteristic of representatives of this cultural community, irreverent images are characterized by restraint, paradoxicality, rationality and polytonality. In addition, evaluative, semantic and logical absurdity contributes to the formation of a kind of irreverent image at the text level. The means of creating micro-imagery irreverent images are language game techniques and a number of stylistic means of enhancing expressiveness, the use of which contributes to the realization of the author's ironic attitude to events.

As a result of the analysis, it was found that the most frequent means of creating irreverent images in limericks were hyperbole, metaphor, epithet, silencing, and euphemism.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Image and imagery are key concepts of modern literary studies. The complexity of the problem of studying imagery is largely explained by the ambiguity of this concept, which is the subject of study in various scientific fields. Philosophy, psychology, aesthetics, art history, literary studies, linguistic stylistics, didactics and other sciences use the concepts of “image” and “imagery” according to their specifics.

In literature, several types of irreverent images can be distinguished:

A caricature is a depiction or description in which certain features or details are exaggerated or minimized to create a comic or critical effect. Caricatures can be in the form of pictures, comics, or descriptions in literature.

A political character is an irreverent figure that portrays politicians or other public figures in a funny or unflattering light. This type of satire allows authors to ridicule their actions, words, and appearance, as well as highlight their shortcomings or contradictions.

An allegory is a satirical figure that uses a symbolic image or metaphor to express a critical thought or idea. Allegories are often used to covertly criticize a political system, social problem, or social phenomenon.

Irony is an irreverent image in which the author expresses his position or independence regarding a topic, creating a comic or sarcastic effect. Irony can be used to ridicule illogicality, stupidity, or contradiction in society or people's behavior.

There are five main groups of means of updating irreverent images. This is a modification or deformation of phenomena (exaggeration, tempo different from the usual); unexpected effects and striking juxtapositions; incompatibility in relations and connections between phenomena (anachronisms in the field of morality, views, language, ways of thinking, etc.); imaginary unification of completely disparate phenomena (inconsistency in the behavior of the heroes of circumstances, inconsistency between appearance and essence, between form and content and other

inconsistencies); formation of phenomena that deviate from the logical or praxeological norm in essence or impression (absurdity of action or complication of a simple task; misunderstanding, error in judgments and associations; alogisms, absurd dialogue, logical inversions, meaningless statements).

Irreverent images as an element of the structure of the linguistic and cultural concept “humor” in English poetry is actualized in the planes of macro-imagery, text imagery and micro-imagery. At the level of the text, important for the formation of an irreverent image is a carnivalized attitude to life, reflected in the theme, plot, and characters, which, in turn, are the basis of macro imagery.

Irreverent images as a manifestation of a comic attitude to reality is a code for the verbalization of imagery. As a characteristic characteristic of representatives of this cultural community, irreverent images are characterized by restraint, paradoxicality, rationality and polytonality. In addition, evaluative, semantic and logical absurdity contributes to the formation of a kind of irreverent image at the text level. The means of creating micro-imagery irreverent images are language game techniques and a number of stylistic means of enhancing expressiveness, the use of which contributes to the realization of the author's ironic attitude to events.

It should also be noted the verbal nature of irreverent images, designed to draw the recipient's attention to the text as an artifact, rather than an image of reality. A similar shift in emphasis from the signified to what it means, from the transmitted information to the originality of the linguistic design of the message, is characteristic of the discourse of irreverent images.

As a result of the analysis, it was found that the most frequent means of creating irreverent images in limericks were hyperbole, metaphor, epithet, silencing, and euphemism.

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