



LITERAL STYLISTIC DEVICES IN "PRIDE AND PREJUDICE"

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7457758>

ABSTRACT: In the article author tried to open one of the masterpiece of English literature "PRIDE AND PREJUDICE" stylistically. In addition to this, basic features of the novel and analysis of stylistic devices were given.

KEY WORDS: *portrayal, technical mastery, modern critics, hypocrisy, property, irony, stylistic devices, Visual imagery.*

Pride and Prejudice, probably the most popular of Austen's finished novels, was also, in a sense, the first to be composed. The original version, First Impressions, was completed by 1797, but was rejected for publication — no copy of the original has survived. The work was rewritten around 1812 and published in 1813 as Pride and Prejudice. The final form must have been a thorough rewriting of the original effort, for it is representative of the mature Austen. Moreover, the story clearly takes place in the early nineteenth century rather than in the late eighteenth century. Austen's works, including Pride and Prejudice, were barely noticed by critics during her lifetime. Pride and Prejudice sold fairly well — the first edition sold out at about 1,500 copies. Critics who eventually reviewed it in the early part of the nineteenth century praised Austen's characterizations and portrayal of everyday life[1]. After Austen's death in 1817, the book continued to be published and read with little attention from critics for the next fifty years. The few critical comments made during that time continued to focus on her skill at creating characters, as well as on her technical mastery. In 1870, probably the most significant nineteenth-century critical article on Austen was published by Richard Simpson; in the article, Simpson discussed the complexity of Austen's work, including her use of irony.

Modern Austen scholarship began in 1939 with the publication of Jane Austen and Her Art, by Mary Lascelle. The scope and vision of that book prompted other scholars to take a closer look at Austen's works. Pride and Prejudice began getting serious attention in the 1940s and has continued to be studied heavily since that time. Modern critics take a variety of approaches to the novel, including historical, economical, feminist, and linguistic. Various critics have consistently noted that the plot development of Pride and Prejudice is determined by character — coincidence exerts a major influence, but turns of action are precipitated by character. Although human weakness is a prominent element, ranging from Miss Bingley's jealousy to Elizabeth's blind prejudices, outright evil is little in evidence. Austen maintains an attitude of good-humored irony toward her characters. Pride and Prejudice continues to be popular today not only because of its memorable characters and the general appeal of the story, but also because of the skill with which it is told. In Pride and Prejudice, Austen displays a masterful use of irony, dialogue, and realism that support the character development and heighten the experience of reading the novel. Jane Austen's irony is devastating in its exposure of foolishness and hypocrisy[2]. Self-delusion or the attempt to fool other people is



almost always the object of her wit; note how she has Elizabeth say that she hopes she will never laugh at what is wise or good.

The reader finds various forms of exquisite irony in *Pride and Prejudice*: Sometimes the characters are unconsciously ironic, as when Mrs. Bennet seriously asserts that she would never accept any entailed property, though Mr. Collins is willing to; other times, Mr. Bennet and Elizabeth serve to directly express the author's ironic opinion. When Mary Bennet is the only daughter at home and doesn't have to be compared to her prettier sisters, the author observes that "it was suspected by her father that she submitted to the change without much reluctance." Mr. Bennet turns his wit on himself during the crisis with Wickham and Lydia — "let me once in my life feel how much I have been to blame. I am not afraid of being overpowered by the impression. It will pass away soon enough." Elizabeth's irony is lighthearted when Jane asks when she began to love Mr. Darcy. "It has been coming on so gradually that I hardly know when it began. But I believe I must date it from my first seeing his beautiful grounds at Pemberley." She can be bitterly cutting, however, in her remark on Darcy's role in separating Bingley and Jane. "Mr. Darcy is uncommonly kind to Mr. Bingley, and takes a prodigious deal of care of him."

The author, independent of any character, uses irony in the narrative parts for some of her sharpest — but often unnoticed — judgments. The Meryton community is glad that Lydia is marrying such a worthless man as Wickham: "and the good-natured wishes for her well-doing, which had proceeded before from all the spiteful old ladies in Meryton, lost but little of their spirit in this change of circumstances, because with such a husband, her misery was certain[3]." Austen uses irony to both provoke whimsical laughter and to make veiled, bitter observations. In her hands — and few others are more capable and discriminating — irony is an extremely effective device for moral evaluation. Dialogue also plays an important role in *Pride and Prejudice*. The novel opens with a talk between Mrs. Bennet and her husband: "'My dear Mr. Bennet,' said his lady to him one day, 'have you heard that Netherfield is let at last?'" In the conversation that follows, we learn a great deal — about Mrs. Bennet's preoccupation with marrying off her daughters, Mr. Bennet's ironic and sarcastic attitude toward his wife, and her self-pitying nature. The stage is effortlessly set for the family's introduction to the Bingley group, and the dialogue has given us information on both incidents of plot and the attitudes which drive the characters.

The pieces of dialogue are consistently the most vivid and important parts of the novel. This is natural because novels were mostly read aloud in Austen's time, so good dialogue was extremely important. We learn of the major turning points through the dialogue, and even intense inner change like Elizabeth's famous self-recognition scene ("How despicably have I acted!") is related as a person talking to herself. Each character's speeches are individually appropriate and the most telling way of revealing what each is like. Elizabeth's talk is forthright and sparkling, her father's is sarcastic, Mr. Collins's speeches are tedious and silly, and Lydia's fountain of words is all frivolity and no substance[4]. On the other hand the novel covers many stylistic devices. Now, we will see some of them.

✓ *Inversion*. In most English verb tenses, when we want to use inversion, we just move the verb to before the subject. If there's more than one verb, because a verb tense has auxiliary verbs for example, we move the first verb "She performed her part, indeed, without much graciousness" (page 40, line 2) Describes Lizzy's annoyance at the situation.

✓ *Visual imagery* is most likely what people think of when they hear the term imagery. It uses qualities of how something looks visually to best create an image in the reader's head. To describe Lydia's appearance: "... A favourite with her mother, whose affection had brought her into public at an early age" (page 40, line 10)

✓ *Personification* occurs when a thing or abstraction is represented as a person, in literature or art, as an anthropomorphic metaphor. The type of personification discussed here excludes passing literary effects To describe how and why Lydia was introduced to the public so early "... A favourite with her mother, whose affection had brought her into public at an early age" (page 40, line 10)

✓ *Metonymy* (/mɛ'tɒnəmi/) is a figure of speech in which a thing or concept is referred to by the name of something closely associated with that thing or concept. To describe their town as the "public" "... her own easy manners recommended her" (page 40, line 14)

✓ Many people use *hyperbole* as a figure of speech to make something seem larger or more important than it actually is. Such exaggeration or distortion can help express strong meaning. To describe how much Lydia wanted Mr. Bingley to keep his promise "His answer to this sudden attack was delightful to their mother's ears," (page 40, line 19).

To conclude our opinion we should emphasize that *Pride and Prejudice* is widely regarded as a masterpiece of world literature. It is one of the best-loved books in English literature, continually ranking as the most loved and one of the most favored novels of all time. It has been adapted into numerous stage productions and even more films. *Pride and Prejudice* has never gone out of style nor has it ever fallen out of the public imaginations. It is, in short, one of the most loved novels in all literature. It is considered part of the genre of the novel of manners. It has been critically accepted as a novel which plays out the manners and customs of the age in which class, gender, and social standing were rigidly prescribed.

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