

LECTURE 4

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Irony is one of the most important tools in Austen's oeuvre. The narrative point of view in *Pride and Prejudice* is informed with Austen's irony and humour. The 'light and bright and sparkling' texture of the novel facilitates Austen's comic/ironic stance. Austen uses irony as a means of highlighting the quirks of small-town life and her observations reveal the contrast between appearance and reality. The object of irony is obviously those characters whose lack of awareness regarding the implications of their words and actions makes the novel rich in its comic content. The other function of Austen's irony is moral judgement. As a chronicler of country life her narrative voice is often judgmental and satirical but it is not didactic in any way.

- Types of Irony-verbal irony-where words are used in a manner and the implied effect is different from the apparent meaning.
- Irony of situation-where a certain incident gives rise to an entirely different outcome.
- Ironical revelation of a character—here the object of irony is not conscious of the effect he is creating on others.

For each of the above you have to substantiate with textual examples.

Verbal irony-first sentence.

Irony of situation-when Lady Catherine visits Longbourn House hoping to learn about the status of Elizabeth and Darcy's relationship, but comes away without learning anything. This visit also happens to be the reason Darcy returns to Longbourn to propose to Elizabeth a second time.

Character Revelation-Mr Collins...he is entirely unaware of the effect his pompous attitude has on everyone else.

(For each type multiple examples are required from the text)

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