

Irony in Selected Articles by Galal Amer

Submitted by

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Abstract:

This study aims at expressing how irony is discovered and understood in GalalAmer's verbal utterances. Of concern in this study is to explain how a reader successfully comprehends the speaker's implied meaning in an ironical verbal utterances. The Relevance Theory has been used to shows how this happens. The researcher collected data by reading a book written by the famous sarcastic writer GalalAmer named the *Brevity of Speech* and selects the most ironical quotes to be analyzed and illustrates how verbal irony interpreted in these utterances. Two postGricean accounts of irony have been used to express the irony in these utterances. These are the echoic and the pretence accounts. In an echoic account, the speaker does not explain his own thoughts but echoes a thought that he refers to someone else, and simultaneously explains his mocking skeptical or opprobrious attitude to the thought by showing this with saying ironical utterances. According to the pretence account, the speaker of an ironical utterance is not performing a real speech act but pretending to preform it, while expecting his readers to see through the pretence and understand the skeptical, mocking or opprobrious attitude behind it. The researcher groups data according to the source of echoes. Three main sources of echoes were identified. These are echoes of stereotypes, echoes of societal expectations on an individual and echoes of the immediate context. Since various accounts of irony have different ways of finding out the ironic influence



in utterances, the researcher detects how each account deals with the different utterances. Some irony is obvious when treated as a case of pretence while another comes out better when treated as an echoic. The echoic account is for instance better appropriate for echoes of stereotypes as well as echoes of societal expectations on an individual. The pretence account is best appropriate for echoes of what has been said previously, in a given context.

Key Words: Grice, Conversational Implicature, Relevance Theory, Wilson&Sperber, Irony, Pretence Theory, Galal Amer.

Introduction

Irony is traditionally studied as a figure of speech in which the speaker utters the opposite of what he/she intends to say. It has been studied as another literary trope, that is, utterances in which figurative meaning, contrasted with literal meaning, should be decoded. Wilson (1995, p. 1723) explains that “in metaphor, the figurative meaning is a comparison based on the literal meaning, but in irony it is the opposite of it.” As explained in the previous quotation, there are rhetorical devices that are used in everyday communication for achieving persuasion. In everyday communication, people occasionally use indirect forms of communication to achieve some pragmatic effects. One of such rhetorical devices is verbal irony that is often used to express some negative evaluation on the part of the speaker. For example, in a situation where a



couple has planned a trip for the weekend for which the weather forecaster predicts a good weather but it is proved to be bad, the wife could ironically express her disappointment saying, “*What a beautiful weather we have today!*” In this example, the woman uses the word “beautiful” but she does not mean that the weather is beautiful literally; she means that the weather is very bad to go out as it is raining. In other words, she means the opposite of what she actually says.

In linguistics, irony is a topic related to the Gricean Maxims. According to the Standard Pragmatic Model Grice(1975; 1978), the hearer primarily needs to know the literal meaning of the ironically intended remark. Then, this meaning is tested against the context. Once the hearer realizes that there is an obvious violation of the maxim of quality (i.e., one of the Gricean maxims, meaning that the speaker should make his/her contribution to the conversation true), the hearer needs to find some alternative figurative interpretation. The process to restore the intended meaning involves inferential reasoning in which the hearer infers the opposite of what the speaker literally utters. Irony is one of the most important tropes that attracts the attention of rhetoricians and literary scholars (Booth, 1974; Muecke, 1970; Tittler, 1984). According to the classical review, irony means the opposite of what is said, but recently pragmatists and cognitive psychologists have challenged this view. To review the



traditional and recent accounts of irony, the researcher will give some examples of ironic discourse.

1. (A speaker goes for a picnic and it rains.)

“What a lovely day for a picnic!” (Sperber& Wilson, 1986, p. 95)

2. (To someone who is arrogantly and offensively showing off knowledge)

“You sure know a lot!” (Glucksberg& Brown, 1995, p. 4)

In this study the researcher will show what irony and its three types are and how someone differentiates between the ironic and the literal meanings of an utterance through the three theories of irony, namely, the Gricean Maxims (Grice, 1975), the Pretense Theory (Clark & Gerrig, 2007), and the Relevance Theory (Wilson&Sperber, 2002).

Objective of the study

The study is guided by the overall objective to discover how irony can be detected in verbal utterances. The specific objectives are:

- 1- To examine the echoes in GalalAmer’s ironical verbal utterances.**
- 2- To detect the implied meaning behind GalalAmer’s ironical verbal utterances.**



- 3- To investigate whether ridicule or mockery appears better in pretence or the echoic accounts.
- 4- To find out the context that shows irony of echoes.

The linguistic expression of irony

The study of irony has a long tradition in philosophy, literary criticism and linguistics. The study of the linguistic category of irony requires to consider the term etymology in the context of the historical and cultural conditions. Interest in irony is easily understandable since it has several connotations. During the developments of the society irony needs different categorical status: from *trope* in the ancient world to the way of thinking and *attitude towards* reality these days.

A review literature of Irony.

The origin of the term irony raises in the ancient Greek Philosophy and literature meaning '*feigned ignorance, dissimulation*' Liddell & Scott (1996, p. 2438). Marika Muller states that the ancient origin arguing that the root of the ironic expression originates from Aristophanes, Socrates and Homer's works. Irony was commonly used by ancient philosophers to describe the rhetorical reception '*cheat a friend*', when "*a man calls things with opposite names*" Muller (1995, p. 5). On the other hand Aristotle defines irony as "*a statement containing a mockery of those who*



really think in such a way". For Aristotle, irony is extreme, which is also far from the truth, as well as boasting.

During the centuries, historical and contemporary studies of irony can be found in fields as diverse as anthropology, literature studies, linguistics, cognitive, social, language, and clinical-psychology, philosophy, and cultural studies Colston (2007, pp. 97-134). In the sequence of time irony improved vast acceptance in rhetoric, when speakers actively used this technique to improve the produced effect on the listener. Irony created a sustainable influence on the listener when the speaker did not simply paraphrase opinion of the opposition but brought together the last word with his statement. This technique required from the speaker high-level and declamation qualities, ingenuity and serious preparation for the debate, therefore, as a result, had a significant impact on the listener. Traditional stylistic explanation states that irony is a secondary notion that follows on the principle of substitution. As a result of this reason it sets it apart from stylistic means such as metaphor, and metonymy that depend on the use of opposites. Akhmanova illustrates that irony is a trope, which consists in the use of words to mean the opposite to the literal purpose of the small and hidden mockery- "mockery, consciously embodied in the form of positive characteristic or praise" Akhmanova (1969, p. 67).



Harald Weinrich (1966, p. 271) refers to a *standard elementary model of irony*. This model is developed from the dialogues of Plato, in which the speaker carries on a conversation with the listener, while the curious audience listens to the conversation. According to this pattern, the victims of the irony usually become those who are unable to understand the true meaning of ironic utterances, for example, the opponent of Socrates. This view is not commonly shared between researchers, as in most cases the aim of criticism expressed ironically is to make the listeners understand the disapproval.

Moreover, Clyne, a linguist and scholar, also states that a 'victim' of irony is not aware of implied meaning of an utterance (1975, p. 23). Furthermore, Clyne was the first one who established a mismatch between different levels of communication as a constructive feature of irony and mentioned the need for non-linguistic information without which perception of irony is impossible.

A different feature of Loffler's study, that was limited to rhetorical irony, communicates a common language with the common spiritual, cultural and ethical background knowledge as a basic condition for irony understanding. As a consequence, he considers that one of the essential functions of ironic statements is 'linguistic groups separation mechanism' (1975, p. 120).



Clark and Gering, for instance, analyze verbal irony as a pretense. Clark and Gering (1984) and Glucksberg and Brown (1995) see allusion in irony within the theory of speech acts. Salvatore Attardo (2000) proposes irony as a significant incongruity, and finally Wilson and Sperber (2004) considers irony as an echo of what has already been written or said by someone else.

Clark and Gering analyze irony as a pretense. This theory depends on the ideas that irony discovered from the ancient Greeks and the ideas of Paul Grice. The theorists suggest that irony is a way to achieve a particular communicative role: to address the uninitiated, naïve audience and to be understood correctly. Recognizing the role by the addressee is the main condition for understanding the speaker's ironic intention (Clark and Gering, 1984, p.46).

An additional pragmatic concept of verbal irony, the theory of irony as allusion, has been observed. The idea is that irony is a reference to the expected, but not performed situation. From a pragmatic viewpoint, an ironic utterance abuses the maxim of sincerity, and this violation makes the addressee to interpret the utterance as ironic. (Glucksberg and Brown, 1995).

The theory of irony as a significant irrelevance has been characterized by Attardo (2000). Moreover, the rational concept of relevance forms an essential idea of the



theory. An utterance is considered to be relevant if all its expectations are compatible with the assumptions of the context in which the utterance is used. Irony takes place when an utterance or its element are contextually inappropriate. These elements draw attention and therefore carry more information compared with relevant elements. So, a gap between assumptions conveyed by the utterances and the context that provide a base for irony understanding.

Wilson and Sperber provide their version of theoretical understanding of irony. It depends on the importance of the difference between primary and iterative repeatable mentioning of the utterance. Wilson and Sperber state that irony emerges, like an echo, as a reference to what has been said before, but in the new context. In this case, the speaker tries to distance himself from the utterances which referred to and insures his negative attitude to it. (Wilson and Sperber 2004, pp. 53-76).

Giora and Fein (1999) discover that salience of meaning is the main criterion in order to interpret the utterance as ironic.

An instance of how a certain theory is used in experimental studies of verbal irony is proved by Curco (2000). The author distinguishes the explanatory power of the two theories: the theory of irony as echo presented by Wilson and Sperber and the theory of irony as a hidden negation proposed by Giora and Fein (1999). Curco determines that



Wilson and Sperber's theory has more expressive explanatory power because it describes more accurately the cognitive operations necessary for realizing irony in speech.

The work of Wilson and Sperber (2003) "Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction" arouse a lot of strong discussions between linguists. The authors suggest a new approach, a theory of relevance, according to the fact that any ironic statement is considered as a kind of echo mentioning. The speaker uses the utterance with the ironic component not in the conversational sense but as quote. It helps in expressing a negative attitude towards the source of the quote, which can be a person, an event or a specific situation.

Furthermore, it is worth to be noticed that there are no obvious differences about the boundaries between irony, sarcasm and satire. Colston (2007) considers sarcasm a term that is generally used in describing an expression of verbal irony. Gibbs emphasizes that "sarcasm, combined with devices such as jocularity, hyperbole, rhetorical questions, and understatement, are just types of irony" 'Gibbs (2007, pp. 97-134). Moreover, Gibbs and Colston (2007) propose that irony is usually compared to satire. According to Reyes: "while irony courts ambiguity and often exhibits great subtlety, sarcasm is delivered with a cutting or withering tone that is rarely ambiguous" (2012, p. 32).



Theoretical approach

In order to interpret irony in GalalAmer's verbal utterances, this study will use the Relevance theory. This choice is motivated by the ability to emphasize how a hearer realizes the implied interpretation of an utterance. This plan suggests that there is always a gap between conveyed meaning of an irony and an ironic verbal utterance meaning, and this can be clarified by using the relevance theory. Relevance theory can emphasize how a particular problem can be solved in order to achieve the speaker's meaning. The main goal of this pragmatic theory is to describe the factors instead of the knowledge of sentence meaning that affects the understanding of utterances.

Relevance theory

Relevance theory was formerly established by Sperber and Wilson. It is a theory of human communication and cognition. It is an inferential theory of communication, which illustrates how communication happens. The speaker aimed at expressing some information and produces a motivation that allows the addressee to detect the information that the speaker intended to express. It intends to express how the hearer interprets the speaker's implied meaning. This study will take into consideration the main assumptions of the theory, the definition of relevance and two principles of relevance; a cognition principle and a communication principle.



Theoretical propositions of Relevance Theory

Relevance theory deals with the assumptions that:

Every utterance has many linguistic possible interpretations, all suitable with decoded information. Not all of these interpretations are considered acceptable to the hearer. The hearers are equipped with single general standard in order to evaluate the interpretations as they take place to them and agreeing of refusing them as hypothesis about the speakers meaning. This is strong enough to eliminate all except the interpretation that satisfies the hearer's first hypothesis Schroeder (2007)

Relevance and cognition

According to Sperber & Wilson (1986, p. 251) Relevance is a possible property of an input. According to relevance theory, an input, as an utterance, raises expectations of relevance because the search for relevance is a basic characteristic in human cognition, which communicators may extract. In relevance theoretic terms, any exterior motivation or interior representation that supplies input in the cognitive process may be relevant to a person at some point.

The concept of relevance is evaluated in terms of cognitive influence and processing effort; the better the positive cognitive influences accomplished by processing an input,



the better the relevance of the input to the person, the better the processing effort extended, the lower the relevance of the input to a person.

At every moment, the mind is challenged with much more information that it can probably deal with. People only take information that is relevant to them, as long as it produces positive cognitive influences and less processing effort is needed in their processing.

Relevance is defined in terms of the ability to develop the individual's overall illustration of the world. The general aim of the human cognitive system is to develop individual's knowledge of the world as possible and then any information probably add to this aim by: increasing or building on existing information, correcting mistaken beliefs, giving confirmation of existing assumptions is needed. In Sperber and Wilson's (1995, p. 92) terms, this information produces positive cognitive influences.

Referring to Schroeder (2007, p. 6) there are three essential types of cognitive effects. The first one is the contextual strengthening whereby information is relevant to you if it interacts in a specific way with your existing suppositions about the world. New information reaches relevance when it strengthens or confirms existing supposition. The more suppositions it strengthens and the more it supports them, the more relevant it will be. When new and old suppositions opposed each other, the weaker of the two



suppositions is ignored. New information is relevant in any context in which it opposed and leads to the rejection of an existing opposition- the more oppositions it rejects and the stronger they were, the more relevant it will be. The last cognitive effect is the contextual implication in which new information is relevant in any context in which it has contextual effects and the greater its contextual effects, the more relevant it will be.

According to the inferential theory of communication, communication occurs in the following terms: a speaker means to produce some information and produces a motivation which allows the addressee to classify the information by understanding the speaker's intention to express it. This is referred to the ostensive- inferential- communication. An ostensive-inferential communication basic point is that the communicator intentionally provides evidence that he implies the audience to arrive at specific conclusions. It is not just a matter of implying to affect the thoughts of an audience; it is a matter of getting them to recognize that one has this intention. It thus includes an extra layer of intention, apart from the informative one. This is the communicative intention.

Verbal communication includes a code which conceptualizes the grammar of that language. What people say is the evidence that the listener should use to decode what is implied by the speaker. Therefore, this utterance cannot be just used to interpret the speaker's meaning. Interpreting an utterance includes more than just knowing the



meaning of the sentence uttered. Verbal communication then includes both coding and inference. In relevance theory, the relation between them is seen as follows: a verbal utterance is a motivation which the addressee can use as evidence in deducing the speaker's meaning. The information encoded in the motivation is treated as part of the evidence which, together with suitable contextual information, warrants the inference of what the speaker wanted to say.

If every single part of evidence obtained from a motivation can be potentially understood against a huge group of contextual assumptions, warranting various inferences, even alternately exclusive ones, so how does the inferential theory illustrate how communicators succeed in interpreting each other? The cognitive and the communicative principles of relevance theory will illustrate this issue.

The cognitive principle of Relevance

The cognition principle of relevance said that human cognition cares about being geared towards the maximization of relevance. Inferential communication occurs against this background. As expressed earlier, the communicator in the inferential model gives evidence of his intention to express a specific meaning which is deduced by the audience on the basis of the evidence given. An utterance is considered a linguistically coded piece of evidence. Its understanding includes an element of



decoding. Apart from the linguistic meaning improved by decoding there can be intended meaning which the hearer must realize from the evidence given.

Apart from the ability of human cognition to maximize relevance, humans are talented with the ability to achieve other people's thoughts and intentions which allows them making accurate expectations about specific interpretations likely to be relevant to others and use the expectations for many purposes.

As human beings are prepared with the mechanism to achieve the most relevant interpretation of a stimulus each act of ostensive communication produces in the audience an assumption that it will be relevant enough to be worth the audience's attention, thus the communicative principles of relevance is formulated.

The communicative principles of Relevance

Each act of ostensive communication communicates an assumption of its own best relevance Uger (2001, p. 5). This depends on the observation that an ostensive motivation is the best relevance to an audience if:

- a) It is relevant enough to be worth the audience's processing effort.
- b) It is the most relevant one which suits the communicator's ability and preference.



The communicative principle of relevance and the definition of best relevance proposed a practical procedure for performing all the subtasks which the hearer apply to create an assumption about the speaker's meaning. These subtasks are created into the relevance- theoretic interpretation procedures, that is to say: the hearer must take the linguistically encoded sentence meaning, follow a way of least effort in figuring cognitive effects and consider interpretations (implications, contextual assumptions, etc) in order of convenience and stop when his expressions of relevance are satisfied (Wilson and Sperber2004, p. 260).

A speaker who wants his utterance to be understood should formulate it (according to the limits of his abilities and preferences) thus the first interpretation to satisfy the hearer's assumption of relevance is the one he implied to express.

The Pretence Theory of Irony

According to the pretence theory a speaker who is producing an ironical utterance is not himself performing a speech act such as asking a question but pretending to perform a speech act to express a mocking, or critical attitude to the speech act itself, or to the one who would perform or take it seriously. On the other hand, a speaker who is performing to produce an ironical utterance is not performing a true speech act, but actually pretending to perform it, in this case the speaker is expecting that the hearers recognize through the pretence the mocking behind it.



Grice confirms an early version of the pretence theory, as he considers all the figurative utterances as “making as if to say”. Making as if to say has a clear connection to pretence. On the other hand, while differentiating between the phrase “to speak ironically” and “to speak metaphorically.” Grice (1989, p. 58) proposed that irony is a type of pretence: “to speak ironical is, among other things, to pretend.” Clark and Gerring (1984, p. 122) as stated in Wilson (2009, p. 198) assumes Grice’s suggestion and explained in a variety of more recent pretence based theory. Recanati (2004, p. 71) interprets Grice’s suggestion, and appears to agree with a similar version of the pretence theory. He clarifies a situation where a speaker says that Paul is really a fine friend in a situation which just the opposite is recognized to be the case.

Assume that the speaker says that Paul is a really a fine friend in a circumstance that the opposite is already known to be the case. The speaker does not say or declare what she wants to say. The power of serious declaration is lacking. What the speaker does in the ironical situation is only pretending to declare the content of her utterance. By pretending to say of Paul that he is a fine friend in a circumstance in which just the opposite is clearly true, the speaker finds out to convey that Paul is everything but a fine friend. She illustrates by her utterance how improper it would be to attribute to Paul the property of being a fine friend (Wilson 2009, p. 198).



Understanding irony, according to this form, however, includes the ability to understand that the speaker is pretending to perform a speech act and at the same time communicating a certain type of (mocking, incredulous) attitude to the speech act itself or to the one who might take it seriously.

The echoic account

The echoic account was proposed by Wilson & Sperber in (1981) and improved in Sperber & Wilson (1995). It is considered the main alternative to the pretence theory of irony.

According to this account, the point of irony is that the speaker is not showing her own thoughts, but echoing a thought she points to someone else, and showing her ironic attitude to that thought. Irony is more easily to be recognized when the thought the speaker is echoing is made more prominent by being clearly shown in a previous utterance.

The main point of irony is that to separate the speaker, the speaker dissociates herself from an ascribed utterance which she wants to suggest is more or less obviously false, or irrelevant as proposed by Wilson (2006, p. 1730).

An ironic utterance as 'he is a fine friend' which might be taken to illustrate the opposite, that 'he is not a fine friend'. It would be resolved differently on the echoic account: when we make a friend we have specific hopes or expectations about how



things will go; we might think that we have had a fine friend who will treat us well. The utterance then echoes expectations of friendship that are widely shared.

Therefore, in order to assert that verbal irony is a subtype of echoic is to assert two points; the first, that it is important to be attributive and second, that it is important to include the expression of mocking attitude to the referred thought. A successful situation of verbal irony would thus be the fact that some understandable person has shown a thought with similar content whose suitability would be worth noting on.

Cooperative principle

Cooperative principle proposed by Grice explains how conversation includes a specific level of “cooperation” among the communications. Meyer (2009, p.55) states by quoting Grice’s statement:” Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts; and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction.” (Grice, 1989: 26).

Grice in Yule (1996, p.37) mentions that in communication, cooperative principles make conversational contribution of participants as it is required at the stage at which it takes place by the accepted purposes of the talk exchange in which participants are involved. There are four types of cooperative maxims:



- **Maxim of quantity**

When someone tries to be as formative as it is possible, and gives as much information as is needed.

- **Maxim of quality**

When someone tries to be truthful, and does not give information that is false or that is not provided by an evidence.

- **Maxim of relation**

When someone tries to be relevant, and says things that are pertinent to the conversation.

- **Maxim of manner**

When someone tries to be clear, as brief and as orderly as he can in what he says, and where one avoids obscurity and ambiguity.

Implicature.

Definitions.

People have purposes when making communication with others using a language. They have implied meaning in their utterances. As what people mean left implied, the hearers are required to know deeply about the speaker's utterances to get the message.



Sometimes the unsaid information in a conversation is called implicature (Levinson 1983, p. 111).

According to Grundy (2008, p. 92) implicature is a meaning that is expressed but not explicitly stated. In order to know the implied meaning of the speaker's utterances, the hearer must interpret it since the speaker's utterances usually have more than a literal meaning.

Horn and Ward (2006, p.3) explain that implicature is a constituent of the speaker's meaning that constitutes a feature of what is meant in the speaker's utterance without being part of what is said. So, according to the definitions above, implicature is the speaker's implied meaning which is left implicit and different from what the speaker literally said.

Types of Implicature.

1) Conversational implicature

Conversational implicature is the meaning expressed by the speaker and recovered as a result of the hearers' inferences (Cutting 2008, p. 35). People always do not clearly say what they mean in delivering their messages through language, so the hearer needs to make an inference of the speakers' utterances.

(Yule 1996, p. 40) explains conversational implicature in the example below"



Charlene: I hope you brought the bread and the cheese.

Dexter: ah, I brought the bread.

Dexter utterance illustrates that there is an intended meaning that Charlene needs to know. The implicature of Dexter does not bring the cheese.

1) **Conventional Implicature.**

Conventional implicature does not arise in conversations and does not rely on special contexts for its interpretation. Conventional implicatures are related to specific words and results in additional expressed meanings when those words are used (Yule 1996, p. 45).

Mey (1993, p. 104) illustrates that implicatures cannot be changed by invoking another context. They are stated as convention, and later called conventional. Mey suggests by quoting Levinson's statement:

“Conventional implicature are non-truth-conditional inferences that are not derived from superordinate pragmatic principles like the maxims, but are simply attached by conversation to particular lexical items”.

(Levinson 1983, p. 127)

Therefore, implicature of an utterance can be interpreted by the words literally said.

Definitions and general information about figures of speech



Figures of speech are tools that change the usual language use to an unusual one. They draw a line between literal and non-literal meaning.

Literal meaning points to a meaning that does not corrupt defined meaning, the meaning that coincides exactly to the meaning of individual words. Someone can for instance say that John is smart, or a mother can describe her child as dirty. The words smart and dirty do not corrupt literal meaning here.

Non literal meaning is when an utterance or a word means something other than the exact words in it. It is a kind of imaginative freedom of speech in which rules of logic can be impact for influences. Non- literal meaning is accomplished through the use of figures of speech. They reveal to us the apparently limitless flexibility of language itself and a probability that language can do for us everything we want.

Figures of speech point to the different rhetorical uses of language like metonymy, metaphor, and chiasmus that is derived from usual construction, order or significance. The use of the figures of speech intend that the use of the phrase or word exceeds its literal meaning. It can be a specific repetition arrangement of words in it or negligence of words with their literal meaning or phrase with specific meaning not depending on the literal meaning of the words in it as a metaphor, an idiom, simile, hyperbole and personification.



In figurative language thus, words are used in such a way that they differ from their usual signification in common place speech and transfer our meaning in more live and impressive way than when we use them in their everyday sense. Moreover, figures of speech make speeches more efficient, they beautify and confirm it. The figures of speech usually provide emphasis on freshness of clarity. Therefore clarity may also suffer from their use, like any figure of speech when presenting ambiguity between literal and figurative understanding.

The comprehension of the figurative language

Comprehending figurative language includes a specific process, which is not necessarily similar to comprehending ordinary language. The literal meaning needs to be processed first before the implied meaning. Prominent meanings are processed first before the implied meaning is derived. Prominence may be influenced by context.

The use of encyclopedic entries

To achieve the speaker's implied meaning the hearer uses the utterance as a starting point. The hearer then refuses the linguistic comprehension since it cannot have been done by the speaker as being optimally relevant to him. A new assumption depends on the predicate and depending on the nature of the referent formed.

The researcher would discuss that irony makes use of encyclopedic entries. It is worth observing that a single word in a phrase can make it ironical. The hearer will therefore



first access and evaluate the different meanings provided in this encyclopedic entry of the word. Together with context, the hearer will reject the proposition and pick out its opposite meaning.

General information about stereotypes.

Stereotypes are beliefs that people have about the others. They are the suppositions that have become part of people's belief. They are constant ideas or images that many people have about a certain type of person or thing, but which is usually not true in fact.

The content of stereotypes contain imagination about appearance, probable or improbable behavior, desires, mannerisms goals and motivations.

Origins of stereotypes

Stereotypes are an obvious part of culture. It is illustrated through agents of socialization like teachers and parents. Culture at times determines roles that give rise to a specific behavior. For instance, women are specified to the role of nurturing, while men are assigned the role of energetic approach. In the end, people may conclude that women are naturally more nurturing than men, but this may not be the truth.

Echoes of stereotypes in GalalAmer's ironical verbal utterances using Relevance and the Echoic accounts



Example 1:**1- Echoes of stereotype on punishment**

لا توجد محاسبة إلا في كلية التجارة

No accountability anywhere except at the faculty of commerce.

On an echoic account, there is an echo of social norms and values. According to any community, guilty people have to be heavily punished for their misdemeanors. The writer wants to illustrate his rejection by mocking towards these norms and values by asserting that there is no punishment in Egypt, but there is only the subject of accounting in the faculty of commerce.

In order to interpret this utterance correctly according to the Relevance theory, the reader will have to suggest that it is the most relevant utterance by the writer, and then do less effort to arrive at interpretation that will satisfy their expectations of relevance.

When a speaker says that there is no accountability except at the faculty of commerce in a situation where the opposite has happened, the reader will first access the encyclopedic entries in which the reader has to choose the most appropriate meaning from the list in his encyclopedic entries, as guided by the context. So according to the



context here the reader will access the encyclopedic entries of accountability or of being punished which may refer to:

- Accountability as a subject at faculty of commerce
- Accountability found only at the faculty of commerce
- There is no punishment except at the faculty of commerce

When the hearer combines the entries with the context of punishment and the faculty of commerce, the hearer will recognize that the speaker is in rejection of stereotype of not punishing the guilty people for their crimes in the Egyptian society. Relevance is achieved when the hearer realizes that the speaker is actually expressing his attitude of rejection to the truth of his assertion, and a mockery that there is no punishment in the Egyptian society.

2- Echoes of stereotypes on human insurance

في العالم العربي التأمين على الإنسان إختياري، والتأمين على السيارة إجباري

In the Arab world, human insurance is optional, and car insurance is compulsory.

An echoic account would indicate that the speaker echoes what the community has generalized about human life that human life is meaningless and there is no concern about it. However, the speaker dissociates himself from it. He shows an attitude of



rejection to this stereotype. In this context where human insurance is optional, and car insurance is compulsory, he expresses an attitude of contempt to neglect human life insurance and concern about insurance of cars more than human life. This illustrates how car insurance is more expensive than human insurance in the Egyptian society.

In Relevance Theory, the hearer, upon taking the utterance as most relevant as indicated by the speaker, will use a way in which he will use the least effort in its interpretation upon receiving the utterance, and the hearer will access his encyclopedic entry of the words optional and compulsory. The following might be some of the entries the hearer may have for the words.

- It is optional to make a life insurance for humans.
- It is obligatory to make an insurance for the car.

Within the utterance of human life is meaningless. The hearer will recognize that the speaker is in rejection of this stereotype, he will achieve relevance when he recognizes the speaker's implied meaning of refusing the stereotype of neglecting the human life in Egypt.



Echoes of stereotypes in GalalAmer's ironical verbal utterances using Grice's conversational and the Pretence theory

1- Echoes of stereotype on the whereabouts of the police.

ولا أعرف الشرطة مستخبية من ايه، ولا تظهر إلا في الانتخابات أو المظاهرات

I do not know the whereabouts of the police because they only appear in elections or demonstrations.

According to pretence Theory, the reader has to recognize that the speaker is pretending to emphasize that he is talking about the polices' disappearance, and they only appear in elections or demonstrations, but in fact, he is talking about lawlessness, and they always do not arrest the thieves or the people who harassing the women in the street or those who take drugs and drive the trucks on the high way, particularly the police know well that those drivers take drugs, but they do not punish them. Furthermore, the police only appear in elections and demonstrations attacking people with live bullets and tear gas. In this case, the reader is proposed to understand that the writer is only pretending and does not mean that. Build on the conversational implicature of Grice which shows how the reader manages to interpret the message when the writer means more than what he says, so according to Grice in the example above, the reader has to achieve the writer's intended meaning behind the word "whereabouts" as he means that the police do not take care of their work well and they only appear in elections.



2- Echoes of stereotypes on organs transfer

يرفض البرلمان قانون نقل الأعضاء إلا إذا كان نصفهم على الأقل من العمال والفلاحين.

Parliament rejects the law on the transfer of organs unless at least half of them are workers and peasants.

This utterance suggests that the writer is not performing an assertion but pretends to make it, that he pretends to talk about the transfer of the parliament members, but in fact he is talking about organs transfer of poor people, as nowadays some people or doctors are trading in people's organs, and the government does not judge them on this crime, furthermore, the writer wants to show that the government permits organs transfer specially of the poor people. The writer illustrates this act in order to convey a contemptuous attitude to the speech act itself. Then the reader is supposed to know from this pretence that the speaker is only pretending to assert this speech, but does not mean it.

According to the Gricean conversational implicature which is considered a message that is not found in the utterance and the speaker implies it, in this utterance the writer implies that he is talking about organs transfer of poor people specifying the workers and peasants, so that the reader has to work out this message by understanding the contextual information shared in the utterance.



Conclusion

In this study the researcher used two comparing post Gricean accounts of irony. These are the echoic and pretence accounts. The collected data was analyzed by using the two accounts at the same time to detect how the reader access relevance in ironic verbal utterances.

The cognitive impacts are accomplished in the ironic use of utterances especially when integrated with context to produce contextual implications. A contextual implication in regard to irony is accomplished if the reader finds out the dissociation of the writer from the utterance.

The study suggests that the echoic accounts work reinforcement of existing suppositions. This is because in contrast the pretence account where the reader has to depend on pretence and suppositions, the echoic in an echoic utterance relayed on something more real. It is thus easier to understand the contradiction between what is said in context with the echoic account than with the pretence account.

The researcher detected that each echo demanded various amounts of processing effort in implied meaning comprehension. The echoes of what has been said previously in a current context demanded less effort to process due to the modernity in use. The reader does not make effort to achieve the contradiction between word in use and context because the information is still fresh in their mind. Echoes of stereotypes,



principles and societal values, roles and expectations of the society on an individual demanded more effort since the readers have to use their encyclopedic memory to find meanings of terms then get the contradictions in the context within which they are used. The two accounts were also found to be complex since one has to look beyond the explicit meaning in order for the verbal ironic sentence to achieve relevance. The search for speaker dissociation toward the two accounts makes the processing effort more but it is clearer in the pretence account. This is because the reader produces more effort before recognizing that the speaker is pretending. In the echoic, the speaker has something to mention back to and thus less processing effort is used.

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دراسة تداولية للمفارقة اللغوية في "قصر الكلام" للكاتب جلال عامر

مستخلص الدراسة:

لقد مثلت عملية استيعاب المعنى مؤخرًا تحديًا فكريًا للعلماء والمنظرين العاملين في مجال اللغويات والبراغماتية. بالإضافة إلى كونها عملية عقلية معقدة للغاية ، يعني الاستيعاب أيضًا لمتغيرات متنوعة ، مثل السياق اللغوي ، والبيئة الثقافية التي ولدت في الكلام ، والخلفية الفكرية لأولئك الذين يتلقون هذا الكلام. تبحث نظرية الملاءمة ، باعتبارها علامة فارقة وفرعًا مهمًا في اللغويات والبراغماتية ، في آليات كيفية توليد المعنى وكيف يولد هذا المعنى طبقات أخرى من المعاني والتفسيرات. تستفيد هذه الدراسة من نظرية الملاءمة من أجل استكشاف كيفية قيام السخرية بتوليد طبقات من المعاني في كتاب جلال عامر بعنوان "قصر الكلام" مستوحاة بشكل أساسي من عمل غرايس في مجال البراغماتية ، يتم استخدام نظرية الملاءمة في هذا البحث لأنه يجسد الأساليب التي يتم من خلالها إيصال المعنى الذي يتم نقله في التصريحات المختلفة للقراء عبر السياق الاجتماعي وما لا يقال بدلاً من خلال الإدخال الحرفي الفعلي. يستخدم الباحث أيضًا نظرية التظاهر التي تنص على أن المتحدث يتظاهر بأداء فعل الكلام لإظهار المعنى الضمني الكامن وراء هذا الفعل ، ويشير أيضًا إلى نظرية الصدى وهي التقنية المستخدمة في نظرية الملاءمة ، والتي تعتبر أي مفارقة الكلام على أنه "صدى"

الكلمات المفتاحية: إيجاز الكلام ، البراغماتية ، السخرية اللفظية ، الضمني ، المبادئ التعاونية ، نظرية

الملاءمة ، نظرية التظاهر ، قصر الكلام.

