

SOURCES OF HUMOUR IN FILMS. WHAT IS THERE IN A FILM THAT CAN MAKE US LAUGH?

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Abstract: Humour is a component of our everyday lives. Every day, as humans, we encounter hilarious circumstances and even humour itself. The humour we encounter makes us smile, laugh, and feel pleased, but why is this so? Why do we laugh when something comes across as amusing? We will find responses with some analyses and examples that will be given in this paper. The purpose of this study is to investigate how humour is employed in some selected films and what causes us to laugh when we watch these films. The examination of verbal humour is guided by Grice's maxim analysis of several selected conversations, as well as utterances from three films and four different episodes of one TV series. Furthermore, the discourse analysis approach is used to investigate the reasons for incongruity. Furthermore, speech act theories are employed throughout our research to investigate the details of how pragmatic variables impact and contribute to the formation of funny effects in film conversations or utterances. This approach demonstrates how language features may be used to construct, strengthen, or even undermine frames to produce comic results. Additionally, we use a pragmatic analysis approach to discover cultural references that play an active part in humour and how they impact the meanings of words to make them amuse. This research study reveals the various mechanisms by which language, cultural allusions, and framing interact together to elicit laughter, offering vital insights into the diverse origins of humour in films.

Keywords: humour, verbal humour, discourse analysis, Grice's Maxims, speech acts

Introduction

Humour is an essential component of human communication, taking numerous forms that amuse, entertain, and elicit laughter. Scholars have attempted to describe this complicated and multifaceted phenomena in a variety of ways. Linguistic studies on humour need a precise definition of the term as well as an understanding of the criteria used to classify it. However, there is no general consensus on how to categorize humour, as it goes by several designations, such as "humour," "comedy," or "ridiculous." This lack of agreement complicates theoretical discussions, making it critical to investigate crucial viewpoints on humour's nature and purpose (Attardo, 1994, p. 3).

The present definition of humour dates back to the 20th century (Galiñanes, 2017, p. 4). Previously, its connotation was narrower, frequently related with personal peculiarities rather than the wide comic interpretation we have now. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, humour became associated with a romanticized vision of comedy, emphasizing personal peculiarities rather than social criticism (Galiñanes, 2017, p. 4).

Several scholars have offered definitions of humour from various disciplinary viewpoints. Raskin recommends investigating humour in its broadest definition, which includes any phenomena that causes laughter or amusement. Duncan and Feisal (1989, p. 19) describe humour as "any type of communication that intentionally creates incongruent meanings and thus causes laughter". Similarly, Attardo defines humour as any incident or statement that causes delight from linguistic, psychological, and anthropological perspectives (qtd. in Attardo, 1994, p. 4). However, Montgomery stresses the cognitive part of humour, describing it as the ability to perceive and

appreciate ludicrous or incongruous features in a situation (Montgomery, 1997, p. 170). Holmes and Marra (2002, p. 1693) highlight the social and communicative aspects of humour, defining humorous utterances as those intended by speakers to amuse and perceived as amusing by at least some listeners.

Laughter, which is closely connected to humour, has also been studied in linguistic and philosophical settings. Plato saw laughing as a sign of superiority, where people find amusement in others' perceived flaws (Galiñanes, 2017, p. 5). Descartes' *The Passions of the Soul* (1649) examined the physiological features of laughing as a potential social control mechanism (Galiñanes, 2017, p. 7).

When we are talking about humour, we can see that humour may help to break down barriers and improve communication by making conversations more entertaining and engaging. It may be used as an icebreaker in new social situations, to increase openness and receptiveness, and to develop positive rapport among persons. Also, humour helps people to show their creativity, intellect, and wit via wordplay, irony, satire, and other humorous techniques. The capacity to create and understand humour is frequently regarded as a sign of social competence and intellect, which improves one's social position and interpersonal interactions.

Many films, especially comedies, rely heavily on humour to entertain and elicit laughter from their viewers. Understanding comic film components helps audiences enjoy and appreciate the storytelling experience. Humour may generate a variety of feelings, including laughter, enjoyment, empathy, and catharsis. Understanding how humour is employed in films enables audiences to connect more intimately with the characters and the tale, increasing their emotional attachment to it.

Patricia Keith-Spiegel offers a quick summary of several perspectives about humour and how it arises. These theories cover a broad enough range to encompass theories on the origins and purposes of humour. The biological, relief, and superiority theories are instances of the former. The latter is demonstrated by the ambivalence, surprise, and incongruity theories. (Akkaş, 1993, p. 7)

There are three approaches to humour that provide unique perspectives and complement one another rather than contradicting one another. Incongruity-based theories describe the stimulus itself, superiority theories describe the speaker-hearer relationship, and release/relief theories focus only on the hearer's emotions and psychology. (Attardo and Raskin, 2017, p. 50)

In this research paper, we will look at humour and what causes us to laugh when we hear amusing speech or discussions in films. There are vast gaps in the subject that must be addressed. Much of the extant research focuses on prefabricated jokes or discourses that are readily perceived as amusing by the majority of listeners. While there may be studies that examine humour in films from many viewpoints, such as psychological, sociological, or cultural, there may be a scarcity of studies that focus on pragmatic components.

Pragmatic competence is defined by many scholars. For instance, it is defined as a “knowledge of how to use language appropriately in different contexts,” which includes pragmalinguistic competence (the ability to choose appropriate linguistic forms) and sociopragmatics (to understand the social norms and expectations.) (Kasper and Rose, 2002, p. 2) Moreover, we can observe that pragmatic competence is defined as an ability to see meaning beyond the literal words, such as irony, sarcasm, and indirect speech acts. (Bachman, 1990, p. 94) In addition, in the framework for the analyzing of humor linguistically, we can observe that Thomas (1995, p. 22) makes a clear difference between “speaker meaning” and “utterance meaning,” highlighting that humor arises from the results of pragmatic mistakes or

misunderstandings. This is an identical idea to Grice's (1975, p. 49) Cooperative Principle, which holds that in order to generate humor in the conversation, conversational maxims, namely quantity, quality, relevance, and manner, must be violated or flouted.

Understanding humour in film dialogues involves examining the pragmatic features and linguistic elements that contribute to comedic effects. This study aims to respond to this concern by investigating two main research questions: Firstly, which pragmatic features of film dialogue, such as irony, sarcasm, and ambiguity, are most essential for creating comedic effects? By analyzing these precise language strategies, we hope to reveal the key components of amusing speech in films. Secondly, how do pragmatic elements, such as Grice's maxims, conversational implicature, and speech act theory, contribute to creating humorous effects in film dialogue? This inquiry goes into the theoretical roots of humour in cinematic situations, examining how pragmatic theories influence the development and understanding of funny moments onscreen. This research intends to provide fresh insights into the mechanisms that create humour in film conversations by exploring the relationship between linguistic theory and cinematic practice, as well as a full knowledge of the function of pragmatics in cinematic comedy.

Literature review

Understanding comedy relies heavily on pragmatics, the study of language usage in context. Pragmatic theories describe how speakers use language to express meaning that extends beyond literal interpretation. According to Verschueren (1999, p. 1), pragmatics studies language occurrences in terms of their communication purposes. Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP), which is made up of four maxims: quantity, quality, relationship, and manner, is one of the most important pragmatic ideas of comedy. According to scholars, comedy frequently emerges when these maxims are purposefully violated. For example, breaking the Maxim of Quality by telling lies or exaggerating might have humorous consequences (qtd. in Attardo, 1994, pp. 174-176).

Sperber and Wilson's (1996, pp. 118-163) Relevance Theory (RT) extends Grice's concepts by claiming that communication is directed by cognitive rules of relevance. According to the idea, comedy emerges when speakers construct statements that require the listener to analyze inferentially, resulting in funny interpretations. Austin (1962, pp. 20-96) and Searle's (1969, pp. 22-53) Speech Act Theory divides utterances into three types: locutionary (literal meaning), illocutionary (intended meaning), and perlocutionary (impact on the listener). Humour frequently emerges from the interaction of direct and indirect speech actions, in which a speaker transmits an unexpected or humorous meaning (Cutting, 2002, pp. 16, 19). Functionalist discourse analysis investigates humour's social and interactional roles. Early study in this field concentrated on humour's roles in the workplace, where it might support or challenge power dynamics, reduce stress, or promote group cohesiveness (qtd. in Schnurr and Plester, 2017, pp. 309-310). However, other research studies argue that this method oversimplifies the complicated nature of humour in relationships.

Several empirical research have used these theoretical frameworks to examine comedy in films and other media. Anggraini (2014, p. 58) studied *Modern Family* (Season 4) and used Grice's Maxims to assess comedy in character interactions. The information suggested that violating the rules of quantity, quality, relevance, and method were the key approaches for creating funny effects. The study found that irony, sarcasm, overstatement, and teasing were the most common kinds of humor, with spontaneous conversational humor playing an important role in producing amusing moments. Similarly, Marfo and Hill (2015, pp. 15-22) examined humor in professional encounters, indicating incongruity, sarcasm, and self-enhancement as common comic methods.

Their findings highlight the affiliative role of humor, stressing how it promotes social connection and group cohesiveness while occasionally including negative humor (e.g., sarcasm and irony). But while humor in movies often beyond workplace interactions, embracing more general society and cultural concerns, their studies concentrate just on humor in professional settings.

Fubara (2020, pp. 76, 93) uses the General Theory of Verbal humor to Nigerian memes shared on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, demonstrating that humor in digital communication typically depends on sarcasm, witticism, and puns. His findings expand pragmatic humor theories beyond traditional spoken and written media, revealing how audience interpretation and cultural context influence humor in online conversation. However, while this study focuses on the use of humor in digital spaces, it does not analyze conversations that appear in films, which makes it impossible to compare humor's significance in scripted cinematic conversation. Meanwhile, Abbas and Ibraheem (2016, p. 80) employ Kant's Incongruity Theory and Gricean maxims to investigate humor in literary works, demonstrating that defying, infringing, and breaking maxims contributes to humorous effects. Their research focuses on the function of linguistic deviance and faulty language in producing comedy, particularly through unintentional or incidental meanings. Even if their study is highly important for understanding better humor in written communication, it literally ignores the multidisciplinary characters of the films, in which visual and audio features affect the efficiency of the humorous conversations and their delivery. Furthermore, Sartika and Pranoto (2021, pp. 1-5) apply Relevance Theory to humor in *The Big Bang Theory*, finding that humorous situations are frequently generated by relevant communication signals that need viewers to recognize implicit contextual meanings. Their research emphasizes the sitcom's focus on everyday interactions, friendships, and workplace relationships, which makes humor accessible in familiar social contexts. However, we can mention that the humor in sitcoms is different than the humor in the films since the amusing tone of the sitcom is influenced by genre-specific features like slapstick, dark comedy, and satire.

Various theories of humour serve as a foundation for understanding how humorous effects are formed in movie dialogue. According to incongruity-based theories, humour develops from unanticipated departures from usual patterns of thought or language, hence shock is an important component of humour. Grice's (1989, pp. 26-29) Cooperative Principle and its four maxims (Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner) provide more insight into how comedy is frequently the consequence of purposeful transgressions of conversational conventions. Similarly, Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1996, pp. 118-163) emphasizes how humour is based on inferential processing, in which listeners actively interpret suggested meanings beyond the actual text. Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962, pp 20-96; Searle, 1969, pp. 22-53) helps to explain humour by examining how speakers utilize indirect speech actions to achieve humorous effects. Rather than communicating comedy directly, characters may use sarcasm, irony, or ambiguity to involve the audience in determining their actual intention. Superiority (qtd. in Attardo, 1994, pp. 18-19) and relief (qtd. in Attardo, 1994, pp. 53-57) theories help to explain the psychological and social influence of humour, demonstrating how it may be used for power dynamics, stress alleviation, and social bonding. This research investigates how humour is deliberately used in film language to entertain, hinder expectations, and reinforce cultural allusions by combining pragmatic and linguistic approaches.

Methodology

The study attempts to examine the humour that appears in the movies, the reasons behind these circumstances' amusement, and what makes us laugh when we hear these humorous

conversations in the movies. During the film analysis process, we employ qualitative analysis tools to analyze the language employed in conversation scenes. It is appropriate to analyze humour in films using qualitative analysis approaches in order to comprehend the context. Humour is largely contextual, relying heavily on cultural, social, and situational factors for perception. Researchers can evaluate humour within its larger context using qualitative approaches such as textual analysis and discourse analysis, which include the unique storyline, character dynamics, and cultural allusions in the film. Also, qualitative research methods are useful for interpretation of the meaning; since humour is subjective and interpretive, qualitative approaches are ideal for examining the many implications and interpretations of humorous aspects in movies. Scholars have the ability to analyze comedic speech in great detail, taking into account the goals of the filmmakers, the audience's responses, and humour's larger thematic implications.

The data utilized to evaluate humour will be conversations or utterances from the selected movie. In order to examine selected data, we gather screenplays from the films under analysis. Taking notes on scripts is an important technique we use when watching and interpreting films in order to grasp and assess amusing situations. The film set is distinguished for its wide range of genres, including drama, comedy, action, and others. Each film in the package has its own narrative, thematic, and stylistic components, which add to the collection's overall diversity and depth.

The selected films and TV episodes are not chosen for only their genres but also their cultural impact, variety of comedic styles that they apply to the conversations, and frequency of the amusing material. Cultural relevance plays an important role, since the chosen works reflected various social standards, language idiosyncrasies, and cross-cultural comedy. For instance, we can observe that *Borat!* (2006) uses cultural incongruity and satire to reveal stereotypes, while *The Sopranos* (1999-2007) subtly uses humor in some episodes of a criminal drama, emphasizing to us the way that humor may develop even in the most serious situations. In addition, a variety of humorous methods, such as satire, situational comedy, irony, and sarcasm, were taken into consideration in the study thanks to the diversity of the comic styles in the selected films and TV episodes. Moreover, we can see that while *War Dogs* (2016) employs sarcasm and absurdity to generate humor in the action-comedy film, *Groundhog Day* (1993) demonstrates character-driven and situational humor with its time-loop concept. This variation makes it possible for us to do a detailed analysis of selected conversations from the verbal and pragmatic perspectives. Also, we can mention that the frequency of the humorous content was another essential factor that encouraged us to select these films, since they offer us some features of linguistic comedy, including irony, sarcasm, and violation of Grice's maxims. *Groundhog Day* with *Borat!* rely mostly on wordplay and exaggeration for laughter, but *The Sopranos* finds humor in odd speech and character interactions. This study delves deeper into how language and culture impact what we find humorous on screen by selecting films and episodes with a variety of styles and scenarios. A defined set of criteria was used to select the films and episodes for analysis in this study, which aligned with the research's focus on pragmatic and linguistic mechanisms of comedy. One of the key concerns was genre priority, with a purposeful emphasis on comedy, dark humour, and comedic-infused drama. Comedies like *Groundhog Day* (1993) and *Borat!* (2006) were chosen because they rely heavily on dialogue-driven comedy and give obvious instances of sarcasm, wordplay, and conversational norm breaches. These genres naturally employ pragmatic methods such as defying Grice's Maxims, making them perfect for studying how comedy is created linguistically. Dark comedy and satire, as shown in *The Sopranos* and *War Dogs* (2016), were highlighted for investigating how forbidden issues, irony, and exaggerated speech defy societal

expectations. These works frequently use indirect speech acts or undermine politeness standards, providing enough material for examining humour's function in tense situations. Dramas with humorous elements, such as *The Sopranos*, were also included to study how comedy works within serious storylines, particularly in balancing power relations or relieving tension using incongruity and superiority theories.

Moreover, we focused on the variety of comedy styles reflected in the selected works. The research sought to document a wide range of comic methods, such as linguistic comedy (e.g., sarcasm in *Groundhog Day*), cultural incongruity (e.g., stereotypes in *Borat!*), situational absurdity (e.g., misunderstandings in *War Dogs*), and dark humour (e.g., murderous insanity in *The Sopranos*). This diversity guaranteed that the study addressed a wide range of research topics, from pragmatic violations to cultural context, all while demonstrating how different comedy types interact with language theories. For example, *Borat!*'s exaggerated cultural stereotypes emphasized breaches of the Maxim of Quality, but *War Dogs*' confusing conversations illustrated disregard for the Maxim of Quantity.

The availability of pragmatic violations was another critical factor. Scenes were selected only if they demonstrated explicit deviations from conversational norms, such as Grice's Maxims or speech act theory. For example, *The Sopranos*' use of indirect threats and sarcasm illustrated how humour arises from implied meanings, while *Borat!*'s blatantly false statements underscored the role of cultural illiteracy in generating irony. Works were also evaluated for their cultural and temporal relevance. Films like *Borat!* and *The Sopranos* provided cross-cultural perspectives, revealing how humour relies on audience familiarity with societal norms. The temporal range of the selected films—spanning from 1993 to 2016—ensured the analysis reflected both classic and evolving humour trends, offering insights into how comedic strategies adapt over time.

This study will employ Grice's maxims, conversational implicature, and speech act theory to determine how pragmatic aspects influence and contribute to the creation of amusing effects in cinema dialogue or utterances. The discourse analysis is used to determine which pragmatic aspects of the film industry language, such as irony, sarcasm, and ambiguity, are most important in producing comic effects.

Analysis

As previously discussed, the study includes an examination of the humour found in films. Humorous situations are curated from a diverse array of films spanning multiple genres, including comedy, drama, based on a true story, action, and others. Some well-known films such as *War Dogs* (2016), *Groundhog Day* (1993), *Borat! Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan* (2006), and some episodes from the well-known American TV series *The Sopranos* (1999-2007). We will provide you with some conversation samples and their analysis.

The first conversation analysis is based on a scene from *The Sopranos* (1999–2007). Tony Soprano (James Gandolfini), Silvio Dante (Steven Van Zandt), Hesh (Jerry Adler), and Paulie Gualtieri (Tony Sirico) are in the hospital visiting mob boss Jackie Aprile (Michael Rispoli), who is fighting cancer. During the visit, they also discuss their own "business" (The noun "business" is between inverted commas because the people we are talking about are highly dangerous characters in TV shows, and their so-called business is illegal) with some Jews, and the following funny conversation occurs:

Season 1, Episode 3, 00:07:01 – 00:07:05

Silvio: The Jeeew, with black clothes and curls and everything?

Hesh: They're called Hasidim.

Paulie: I see them but I don't believe them.

Silvio's description of Hasidic Jews is formulated in an informal language and with stereotypical imagery, which violates the Maxim of Manner by lacking clarity and precision. While Hesh's correction is informative, it is also sudden and direct, which may be interpreted as a violation of the politeness principles. Also, Paulie utilizes wordplay that rhymes with the phrase "Hasidim," which creates an amusing impact while also violating the Maxim of Relevance. We can clearly observe that Paulie's phrase is unrelated to the topic that the rest of the individuals are discussing.

The second conversation selected is also from *The Sopranos* (1999-2007). The acting boss of the Sopranos crew, Tony Soprano (performed by James Gandolfini), is meeting an associate of the family, Bobby (portrayed by Steve Schirripa), on the outskirts of the town, in the middle of nowhere. It is because they are scared that they will be wired by the FBI indoors, and because of that, they choose this location, and the following funny conversation occurs:

Season 2, Episode 2, 00:28:51 – 00:29:02

(Bobby is barely getting of the car because of his weight problem and walking towards Tony Soprano to greet him)

Tony: I think it is time for you to start seriously considering salads.

Bobby: What do you mean?

(Bobby arrives and leans on Tony's car)

Tony: What do I mean? I mean, get off my car before you flip it over, you fat fuck.

If we pay attention to the conversation and analyze it from the perspective of speech act theories, we notice that the sentence that Tony Soprano uses, "I think it is time for you to start seriously considering salads," is an indirect speech act that states Bobby's overweight problem in a humorous and light-hearted way. Yet, Tony's follow-up remark, "What do I mean? I mean, get off my car before you flip it over, you fat fuck," can be considered sarcastic because he employs exaggerated rhetoric to criticize Bobby's weight and the notion that he might topple the automobile merely by leaning on it, which violates the maxim of quality, because what Tony intends to mean is not true and lacks appropriate evidence that one man can flip a car over.

The next humorous discussion is also from *The Sopranos* (1999–2007). The same Tony Soprano orders his two trustworthy crew members, Paulie Gualtieri (played by Tony Sirico) and Christopher Moltisanti (played by Michael Imperioli), to collect money from a Russian mafia associate who owes Silvio Dante (played by Steven Van Zandt). They arrive at the Russian mafia associate's residence, have an argument and fight briefly before knocking him unconscious and placing him in the trunk of the car to be killed in the Pine Barrens Forest. When they arrive at the destination and take him from the trunk to kill him, he escapes, and they start to search for him to kill him in the freezing cold. During the searching they remember that it would be better to call Tony Soprano and alert him of the problem, as they believe he can assist them. The telephone

connection is extremely poor throughout their talk, and as a result, they cannot understand each other. After a while, Tony Soprano phones Paulie again, and this amusing exchange occurs:

Season 3, Episode 11, 00:27:24 – 00:28:26

(cell phone rings)

Paulie: Hello?

Tony: It's a bad connection, so I'm gonna talk fast.

(static crackling)

The guy you're looking for is some kind of ex-commando or some shit. He killed 16 Chechen rebels single-handed.

Paulie: T.?

(static crackling)

T., that you?

Tony: Goddamn it.

Paulie: I didn't hear what you said, Ton'.

Tony: It's a bad connection, so I'm gonna talk fast!!! The guy you're looking for is some kind of ex-commando. He killed 16 Chechen rebels single-handed.

Paulie: Get the fuck outta here.

Tony: Yeah, nice, huh? He was with Interior Ministry. Guy's some kind of Russian Green Beret. This guy cannot come back to tell this story, you understand?

Paulie: I hear you.

(broken audio)

Tony: I'm serious, Paulie.

(static crackling)

Paulie: Ton'? Ton', you there?

Tony: Goddam—Fuck! Call me back!

(phone beeps off)

Paulie: You're not gonna believe this. He killed 16 Czechoslovakians. Guy was an interior decorator.

Christopher: His house look like shit.

Tony's initial assertion that the ex-commando killed 16 Chechen insurgents single-handedly is an exaggeration or a false statement. Tony violates the quality maxim by compromising truth to create dramatic impact when he uses hyperbolic language to highlight the seriousness of the issue. Violation of the quality maxim by giving incorrect information makes a humorous situation. Also, Paulie violates the Maxim of Relation when he is telling Christopher, "You're not gonna believe this. He killed 16 Czechoslovakians. Guy was an interior decorator." Because of the poor connection, he understands the word "Interior Ministry" as "interior decorator.". After that, Christopher's reaction, "His house looks like shit," shows us what Paulie says does not have any relevance, and it is absurd. Violation of the Maxim of Relation in this conversation gives continuous support to the situation to make the audience laugh.

Even if *The Sopranos* (1999-2007) is a TV series that focuses mostly on the lives of the Mafia members, it also focuses on their personal lives, relationships with their family members, and so on. Thus, the TV series tries to demonstrate that even if the characters are mob bosses, mafia members, and their associates, they have their own lives as the rest of the world. The next

conversation occurs at a family dinner in Tony Soprano's house with his own son, Anthony Jr. Soprano (performed by Robert Iler).

Season 1, Episode 11, 00:39:22 – 00:39:38

(Doorbell is ringing)

Tony: AJ, go see who's at the door.

AJ: I am eating.

Tony: Yeah, but you won't have any teeth left to eat with if you don't get up off your ass and go see who's at the door.

(Doorbell is ringing)

Tony: Make sure you know who it is before you answer it!

Tony's response to AJ's argument for not opening the door is sarcastic, and we can see that he utilizes indirect communication, implying that if he does not follow his father's demands, he would face serious consequences. This sarcastic comment brings laughter to the debate. We may also sense superiority and paternal authority, which is a common dynamic element in the relationship between parents and teens and provides laughter.

The next movie that we have selected humorous conversation from is *Borat! Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan* (2006). The main character is Borat Sagdiyev (portrayed by Sacha Baron Cohen). He is a Kazakh journalist; he cannot speak English well and travels to the USA to make a documentary about the American culture, but instead finds himself having a number of humorous and sometimes insulting interactions with some individuals. The film is known for its controversial humour, and it reveals cultural differences, stereotypes, and social taboos. The film is literally full of dark/black humour, but we can only give some examples of conversations and statements that occur in *Borat!* (2006).

00:02:35 – 00:02:46

Borat: This is my mother. She oldest woman in whole of Kuzcek. She is 43. I love her.

As we see, the statement used by Borat violates the quality maxim since it contains false and misleading information. 43 is not seen as elderly in the Western society, although Borat portrays it as such, and this creates an ironical statement. Borat honestly believes his mother is 43 years old, which is humorously contrary to Western societal norms.

00:06:48 – 00:06:57

Borat: I arrived in America's airport with clothings, U.S. dollars.....and a jar of Gypsy tears to protect me from AIDS.

In the excerpt above, Borat claims that Gypsy tears can protect him from AIDS, which is false and violates the Quality Maxim by providing inappropriate information, and we can interpret that it is ironically out of sync with reality and demonstrates his cultural illiteracy.

In the next example we see that Borat is with one car seller and tries to buy a car to go from New York to Chicago. Here is the conversation we analyzed:

00:22:28 – 00:22:38

Borat: If this car drive into a group of Gypsy will there be any damage to the car?

Car seller: It depends on how hard you hit them.

Borat: Hard.

Car seller: Yeah, hard. You might.

The Maxim of Relevance is violated here by Borat's question, "If this car drive into a group of Gypsy.... will there be any damage to the car?" which does not have any relationship with the context of purchasing a car. It takes the discourse on an unexpected path and leaves a funny impression on the audience. It can be characterized as dark humour because it implies the death of a Gypsy group, which is a violent and taboo subject.

The following conversation analysis comes from the well-known film *War Dogs* (2016), which is based on a true story. The film portrays the lives of two main characters', David Packouz (performed by Miles Teller) and Efraim Diveroli (performed by Cona Hill). They are arms dealers that sell a wide range of weaponry to various organizations, including the United States Army. The movie tells us that they are notified that a container full of their weapons has been discovered and confiscated by the government in Jordan, because the Jordanian government considers that the gun consignment is illegal. They consider and agree that in order to get these weapons to the US Army military base in Baghdad, they have to go to Jordan and use their connections. They arrive in Jordan, solve the problem thanks to their contacts, and they find a truck driver to carry these weapons to Baghdad. They load all the weapons into the truck and start travelling. While they are traveling, the following conversation occurs:

00:39:11 – 00:39:38

David: Hey, seriously, is this safe? Driving to Baghdad?

Driver: Yes, very safe, 50-50.

David: 50-50? What, like 50% we live, 50% we die?

Driver: Yes. That is why we drive through night. This is much safer.

David: How much safer?

Driver: 50-50.

Efraim: Bro, what the fuck! Obviously, he doesn't know what 50-50 means.

In this exchange, humour originates from a violation of Grice's maxims, as well as misunderstanding between speakers, which results in a comical situation. The driver's response, which is "50-50," obviously violates the quantity maxims because it provides less information than expected about the current situation that they are in. Instead of a clear answer, the driver intentionally, maybe unintentionally, responds with ambiguity, and it creates an amusing segment of conversation. The following responses of the driver lead to more ambiguity, and the reaction of Efraim highlights the absurdity and ambiguity of the driver's statements and the comedic misunderstanding between the characters.

The next conversation analysis will be of a famous comedy film directed by Harold Ramis and starring Bill Murray and Andie MacDowell, "*Groundhog Day*," which was released in 1993. The plot focuses around a weatherman called Phil Connors (performed by Bill Murray), who

becomes trapped in a time loop, reliving the same day, Groundhog Day, again and over. Below there are some conversation samples that occur in the film:

00:09:02 – 00:09:19

Mrs. Lancaster: Did you sleep well, Mr. Connors?

Phil: I slept alone, Mrs. Lancaster.

Mrs. Lancaster: Would you like some coffee?

Phil: I don't suppose there's any possibility of getting an espresso or cappuccino this morning, is there?

Mrs. Lancaster: Oh, I really don't know, um...

Phil: (In a low voice) How to spell espresso or cappuccino. This looks fine.

Phil's answer, "I slept alone, Mrs. Lancaster," to Mrs. Lancaster's question "Did you sleep well, Mr. Connors?" can be regarded as an indirect speech act in which he indicates that he slept poorly because he slept alone. Phil might have simply answered Mrs. Lancaster's question about sleeping comfortably with "yes" or "no." However, he uses wordplay, and this makes the discourse humorous. Phil's request for an espresso or cappuccino at a small-town restaurant is sarcastic and ironic. It seems improbable that such a restaurant would serve those specialty coffees. His low-key remark about Mrs. Lancaster not knowing how to spell "espresso or cappuccino" adds to the irony and sarcasm, emphasizing the absurdity of his request in that environment.

The second chat takes place in Phil's hotel room, as he tries to figure out how to leave town. It is obvious that there is a blizzard outside, and he is unable to leave the town, but he does not hesitate to try his luck by contacting many airlines to find a way out of this little town. During the phone call, the following dialogue occurs:

00:16:44 – 00:17:02

Phil: Come on, all the long-distance lines are down?

(on the other side operator responds)

Phil: What about the satellite? Is it snowing in space?

(on the other side operator responds)

Phil: Don't you have some kind of a line that you keep open for emergencies or for celebrities?

(on the other side operator responds)

Phil: I'm both. I'm a celebrity in an emergency.

Phil asks a sarcastic question. "Come on, all the long-distance lines are down? What about the satellite? Is it snowing in space?" indicates the ridiculousness of the situation and mocks the absence of a dependable communication method. Phil's question, "Don't you have some kind of a line that you keep open for emergencies or for celebrities?" can be viewed as an indirect speech act, suggesting Phil's attempt to assert his importance, and this attempt makes the situation amusing.

Discussion

Violation or flouting of Grice's Maxims and how these violations contribute to generating humor in the selected conversations was examined in the current study. Moreover, the study

employs speech act theories to evaluate specific debates and remarks expressed by characters. The investigation includes three screenplays from three separate films and four scripts from different episodes of a television show. Almost fifty conversational models and utterances were analyzed using Grice's maxims and speech act theories to determine the linguistic mechanisms that create humor.

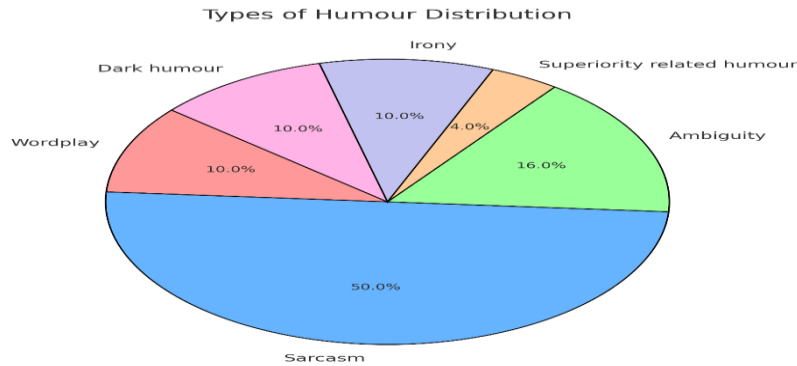


Figure 1. Types of humor in the selected films

Our findings show that humor in films takes several forms, with wordplay, sarcasm, ambiguity, superiority-related humor, irony, and black humor being the most common. Sarcasm featured the most frequently (25 times), defined by cutting or mocking statements based on irony. Ambiguity (8 occurrences) enhanced comedy by allowing for different readings of words or phrases. Puns and grammatical twists were used in five instances of wordplay, whereas superiority-related comedy came from a sense of superiority over others in two cases. Both irony and black humor occurred five times apiece, with the former containing unexpected twists and the latter addressing taboo issues such as death or tragedy.

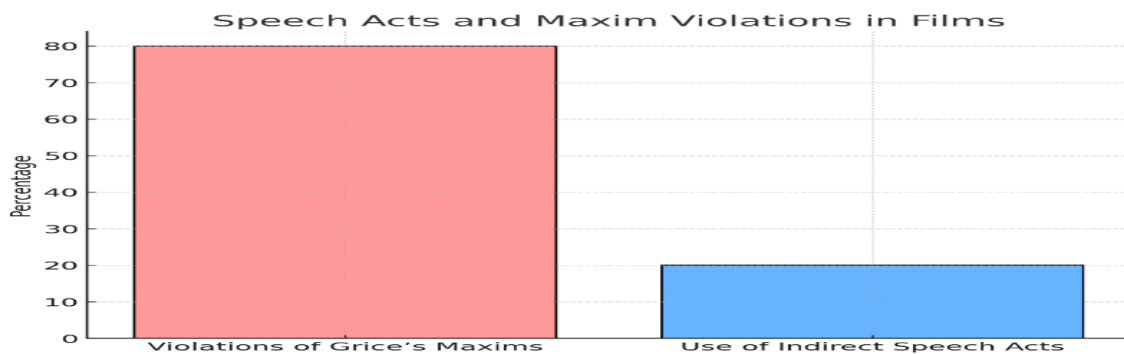


Figure 2. Distribution of humor mechanism: violation of Grice's maxims and Indirect speech acts

One important insight is that humor usually arises from infractions or flouting of Grice's maxims. Our investigation found that pragmatic breaches occurred in 80% of the discussions examined, emphasizing their importance in cinematic comedy. Such breaches result in pragmatic incongruity, in which the audience sees a mismatch between expectations and actual statements, triggering inferential reasoning that heightens humorous effect. For example, presenting too much or too little information causes confusion, but exaggeration and lying promote sarcasm and irony. Additionally, indirect speech actions, which account for 20% of investigated cases, play an

important part in comedy because they require listeners to infer meanings beyond explicit language.

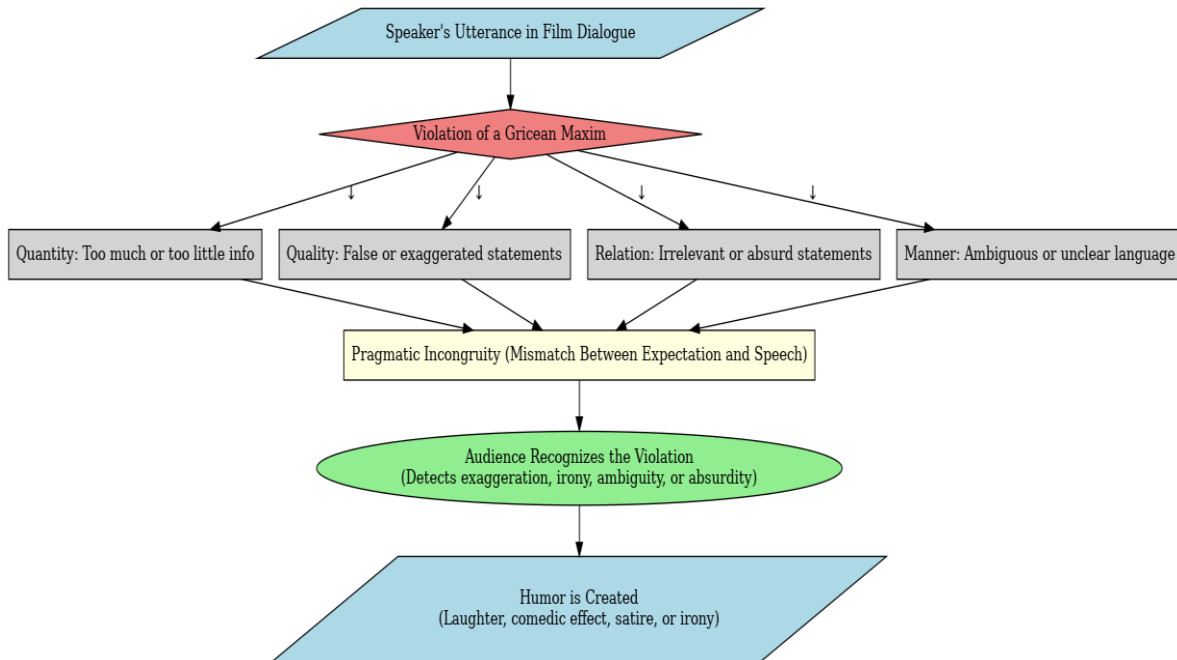


Figure 3: The Role of Conversational Maxim Violations in Humor

What is worth noticing is that humour in film speech frequently occurs when a character's remark violates one or more of Grice's Maxims. When a maxim is violated, it causes pragmatic incongruity, in which the listener notices a mismatch between what is anticipated and what is actually uttered. This unexpected variation compels the reader to determine the underlying meaning behind the sentence, which encourages inferential reasoning. Violations in these conversational rules generate several sorts of humour: providing too much or too little information generates confusion, exaggeration and lies provide irony and sarcasm, unconnected statements result in absurdity, and poor language causes misunderstandings. As the audience interprets these violations, they notice the inconsistency, which prompts laughter and humorous effects like satire or irony. This approach illustrates how films deliberately use language and pragmatics to generate comedy and engage viewers on a cognitive level.

Furthermore, the flow chart above illustrates the important components of the content we provided. It shows how indirect speech acts connect to pragmatics in movie conversation within the larger framework of humorous discourse.

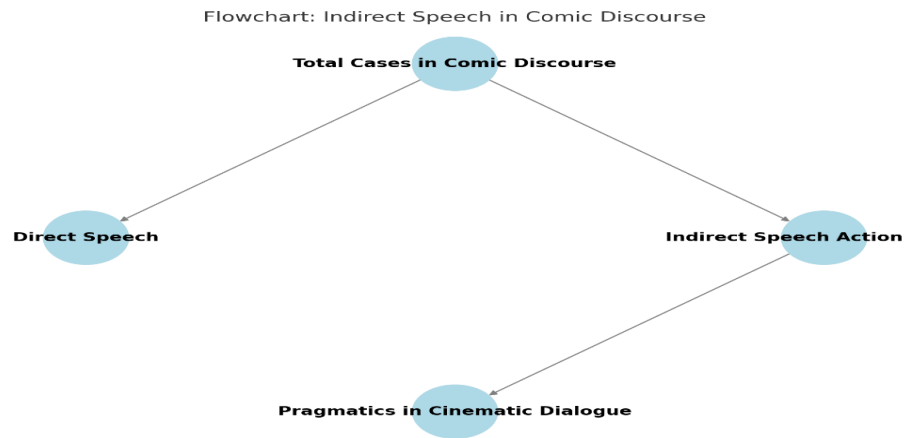


Figure 4: The Role of Indirect Speech Acts in Humor

Conclusion

In this study, we analyze the specific conversations and utterances via the tools of pragmatics to explore the mechanisms of humour in film dialogue. Using Grice's Maxims and Speech Act theories, we explored how violations of these principles, as well as the employment of indirect speech actions, contribute to the development of hilarious conversations and discourses.

Our findings demonstrated that humour frequently results from the purposeful violation of conversational rules such as relevance, quantity, quality, and manner, as defined in Grice's Maxims. Furthermore, the strategic employment of speech acts, particularly indirect speech acts, is an effective method for eliciting laughter and delight from audiences.

Through our research of several film situations, we saw how characters use verbal ambiguity, irony, and implicature to create a humorous impact. Filmmakers can create amusing encounters that appeal to audiences by violating communication boundaries and using speech acts in unusual ways.

This study paves the way for several avenues of future research that can further enrich our understanding of humour in both film and everyday communication. For example, as digital media continues to impact communication practices, future study might look into how linguistic techniques are adapted for new platforms and mediums, such as online videos and social media, in order to comprehend the changing landscape of humour in the digital era. By addressing these issues, future research can help us better understand humour as a complex language and social phenomenon with ramifications for communication, entertainment, and cultural studies. It can also assist us in studying black humour, which is often overlooked by linguists due to its darker aspect. Furthermore, some linguists consider it a challenging issue that is "difficult to access." (qtd in Schnurr and Plester, 2017 p. 309) Researchers can investigate how speakers deliberately violate conversational rules to generate dark comic effects by employing pragmatic theories such as Grice's Maxims and Speech Act theory. This investigation might look into the function of irony, sarcasm, and taboo themes in eliciting laughter and dealing with delicate matters.

Finally, this study adds to our knowledge of humour in film through a pragmatic lens, emphasizing the relevance of language analysis in determining the processes behind comic discourse. As we continue to explore the nexus of language, humour, and culture, we obtain insights that not only broaden our appreciation for comic creativity but also shed light on fundamental aspects of human communication.

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