

A PRAGMATIC STUDY OF HUMOR IN ENGLISH JOKES AND RIDDLES

ILHAM AHMED ABDULABBAS

University of Baghdad College of Physical Education.

ILHAM AHMED ABDULABBAS , A Pragmatic Study Of Humor In English Jokes And Riddles , Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 18(1), 5221-5230. ISSN 1567-214x.

Keywords: humor, the mode of study, jokes, riddles.

Abstract

The present study aims at checking and interpreting humor in English jokes and riddles addressing culturally sensitive areas and this is why they have not received a lot of academic attention from applied linguists. As we know language is a vehicle of communication whereby one person conveys messages to another for a range of different purposes, e.g., laughing, informing, persuading, criticizing, (im)politeness ...etc., whether directly or indirectly. This study is an attempt to see how much a pragmatic analysis can help in understanding humor in English jokes and riddles. Then, the study discusses pragmatically how humor violates all attitudes of Searle (1969). The study also discusses jokes and in which way their formation process is similar and different from riddles. Such study of this linguistic phenomenon confirms a proof that language is not only a reflection of the objective world but a process of social construction.

1. Introduction

Humor has the capability of making a more loosened up homeroom air which thusly could make understudies experience lower uneasiness and to be more persuaded (for humor as a method of "facilitating passionate knowledge in connective instructive settings(" see Davies 2004: 218). On the planet language study hall, where understudies frequently endure more significant levels of uneasiness because of the inconsistency between their intellectual capacities and their phonetic abilities, bringing down understudy nervousness would be considerably more valuable. Concerning observational exploration did in world language study halls, Schmitz (2002:).This paper talks about explanations behind utilizing humor in the insights

homeroom. Humor fortifies the connection among understudy and educator, decreases pressure, makes a course seriously fascinating, and, if pertinent to the subject, may even upgrade review of the material. The scientist gives instances of clever material to showing understudies such themes as engaging insights, likelihood and autonomy, examining, certainty stretches, theory testing, and relapse and gauging. Additionally, a few references, summed up techniques, and ideas for getting more clever in the study hall are given. The scientist contends that there is, undoubtedly, a requirement for research on the utilization of humor in language homerooms, yet until there are adequate investigations dependent on explores different avenues regarding humor in various showing circumstances, with various degrees of capability, diverse objective and source.

1.1. Definitions of Humor

Humor is a significant device to accomplish certain reason. Humor is from the outset a kind of language behavior,(attardo,2003) characterizes humor by two measures: the first is whether the occasion evokes chuckling or grinning; the subsequent one is whether it was created with the expectation of inspiring giggling or grinning. Despite the fact that humor, as etymological and interactional, measure has all the earmarks of being a widespread human wonder ,it is more clearly inserted in situational sociocultural setting than most other correspondence. "humor assumes an exceptionally evolved mind .

Humor is the sort that makes something ludicrous or entertaining ;

entertainment factor, and it is likewise gainful to specify the definition by sedova (2012,s.427) as she makes reference to that it very well may be identified with both perception(i.e. Silly response) and creation (for example Clever activity) of something entertaining.Humor is the most ideal approach to manage the pressure occasions, and since lexical vagueness is the center of language, based jokes, this paper looks at and surveys this equivocalness and the diverting impact by introduced (homonymy, paronym).

Humor can be useful apparatus during the time spent instructing and learning unknown dialects. It is favorable and fundamental for learning just as giving the language, meaning of etymological marvels and outlining them with models straightforward and retain.

1.2.Linguistics of Humor

The etymology of humor has taken tremendous steps forward somewhat recently and a half and supplanted the brain research of humor as the most exceptional hypothetical way to deal with the investigation of this significant and all inclusive human workforce. This new assertion by one noted etymologist and humor analyst depicts, from his viewpoint, contemporary semantic humor research. Etymologists study words, how words are hung together to fabricate sentences, how sentences make meaning which can be conveyed starting with one individual then onto the next, how our association with one another utilizing words makes talk. Jokes have been characterized above as oral story in which words and sentences are designed to work toward a climax. The etymologist's inquiry is: what precisely makes the turn of phrase interesting? This inquiry centers around how the words utilized in the turn of phrase make humor, as opposed to the therapist's anxiety (see above) with the crowd reaction

to the climax. The evaluation of humor by clinicians "is produced using the person's point of view; for example the wonder related with reacting to or making humor and not a portrayal of humor itself. Phonetics, then again, tries to give an exact depiction of what makes a book interesting .

Two significant new etymological speculations have been created and tried inside the most recent many years. The first was progressed by Victor Raskin in "Quite a while of Humor", distributed 1985. While being a variation on the more broad ideas of the incoherency hypothesis of humor, it is the principal hypothesis to recognize its methodology as solely etymological. The Script-based Semantic Theory of Humor (SSTH) starts by distinguishing two etymological conditions which make a book clever. It at that point proceeds to recognize the systems associated with making the climax. This hypothesis set up the semantic/logical establishment of humor just as the humor fitness of speakers .

Quite a while later the SSTH was fused into a more extensive hypothesis of jokes set forth by Raskin and his partner Salvatore Attardo. In the General Theory of Verbal Humor, the SSTH was relabeled as a Logical Mechanism (LM) (alluding to the system which interfaces the distinctive phonetic contents in the joke) and added to five other free Knowledge Resources (KR). Together these six KRs could now work as a multi-dimensional expressive mark for any piece of comical content.

Linguistics has grown further methodological devices which can be applied to jokes: talk examination and discussion investigation of kidding. Both of these subspecialties inside the field center around "normally happening" language use, for example the examination of genuine (generally recorded) discussions. One of these examinations has effectively been talked about above, where Harvey Sacks depicts in detail the successive association in the making a solitary wisecrack. Talk examination accentuates the whole setting of social kidding, the social association which supports the words.

1.3.Humor in the Educational Process

it was at that point expressed that humor happens each day in person's life in various structures, Cf.Gregar(2013,s.6_7).Humor therefor additionally impacts the instruction as remarked by Mcneely who states "when instructors share a snicker or a grin with understudies, they help understudies feel more good and open to learning. Utilizing humor excitement, good, sentiments, and idealism to the study hall ."

1.4. Humor in Our Life

Humor is fundamental in our life, a few of us feel and accept when humor is conveyed in the life blocks their reasoning. For instance, a ton of understudies accept that humor can both increment their arrangement and cognizance of the topic and make them persuaded to go to class. White (1992) proposes that one of the beneficial outcomes of humor in the homeroom is that it expanded participation in class. Humor in the Classroom When understudies were found out if humor is working decidedly in the homeroom or not (for example Questions 7, 8 and 9), their reactions were that humor is an open and learning gadget. In their reactions, 98 understudies (90.7 percent) reacted that it is a learning instrument. None of the understudies expressed that humor is an upsetting device nor it was an exercise in futility. At the point when understudies were gotten some information about the significance of humor in the

homeroom, 94 (87.7 percent) reacted that it should be present or felt at times in the classroom environment. Only six students (5.6 percent) believed that it should be there at all times. When students were asked to specify other choices not listed in the questionnaire, only six students (5.6 percent) came up with choices that humor has a pleasant effect; others indicated that humor is motivating.

1.5. Types of Humor

Different scientists (e.g., Shade, 1996; Chee, 2003; Ziyaeemehr and Kumar; 2014) have made various classifications of humor structures. Shade (1996) has classified humor into four fundamental sub-classifications as (I) figural humor (for example funny cartoons, kid's shows and personifications), (ii) verbal humor (e.g., jokes, story, spoof, limerick, enigmas, parody, plays on words, incongruity), (iii) visual humor (e.g., pantomime impressions, joking, pragmatic jokes, and so forth) and (iv) hearable humor (e.g., pantomimes, impressions, commotions and sounds). Chee (2003) has arranged humor structures into four fundamental gatherings as (I) text based structures (e.g., stories, jokes), (ii) pictorial structures (e.g., kid's shows, funnies), (iii) verbal structures (e.g., quips, word games and abbreviations) and (iv) activity/games (e.g., theater, video, pretend, challenges). Ziyaeemehr and Kumar (2014) have distinguished humor as verbal humor, nonverbal humor and consolidated verbal and nonverbal humor. Jokes, entertaining models/stories, enigmas, comic incongruity, word plays, exaggeration, content related jokes involve verbal humor. Educators who mean to build up a positive study hall climate for their understudies ought to be acquainted with these various arrangements of humor. The idea of humor doesn't just incorporate entertaining jokes and funnies and kid's shows as it is by all accounts on a superficial level. It has various structures going from puzzles to quips, word games and theater, and so on In this vein, the current examination focuses on that instructors ought to build up their humor fitness by acclimating themselves with various types of humor.

The educator (Scott, 1976), upgraded nature of the understudies/instructor relationship (Welker, 1977), higher showing assessments (Bryant et al., 1980), and emotional learning (Wanzer and Frymier, 1999a), which gives some proof that humor can be utilized fittingly in the homeroom. An issue entangling the investigation of humor is the immense range of humor types. Humor can be addressed as jokes, quips, conundrums, mockery, actual tricks, nonverbal practices, kid's shows, and jokes. Moreover, the subject of the humor can target essentially anything, bringing about various conceivable humor types that an educator could use in the homeroom, in this paper will examine two sort of humor:

1.5.1. Jokes

Jokes are an extraordinary method to keep understudies connected with and keen on learning English. They give a vehicle to present diverse social angles and situations. Also, they're extraordinary for allowing understudies the chance to utilize English in an all the more genuine world, ordinary setting .

With jokes, understudies will in any case be figuring out how to utilize the English language, yet will be taken out from the dryness of punctuation activities and course books. They give an amazing opportunity to rehearse inflection and articulation, and understudies will probably experience a What 'huge measure of new jargon as well .

Perhaps the best motivation to utilize jokes in the study hall is that they assist understudies with getting mindful of the nuances of the language. They will perceive how a few words have at least two implications or how a few words are homophones, similar to "red" and "read" in the conundrum *s high contrast and red all finished?*

-joke can be a useful device during the time spent instructing and learning unknown dialects .It is helpful and crucial for learning just as giving the language, meanings of etymological wonders and delineating them with models straightforward and retain .

-Jokes give a significant and valuable apparatus in getting, learning and remembering dialects. They serve to catch and protect the understudy's or student's consideration by making agreeable and loosened up air and encourage the way toward learning and securing another dialect .

-Jokes present a test and a trial of the student's language abilities: impression of a joke is brought about by the reality the beneficiary comprehends the language, yet in addition knows about buzzword expressions and contents. It requires a decent information and a generally excellent inclination for the language to value a joke .

- Jokes utilize phonetic uncertainty and there likewise seems a corpus of jokes that separates itself not by activities or circumstances , but rather dependent on certain etymological ascribes or " highlights of common language for their impact. These jokes are known as language-subordinate jokes, or all the more normally as plays on words" (Zabalbeascoa,1996:253). Equivocal explanations are a typical part of satire . Suls (1972:45) calls attention to that " phonetic vagueness is a typical way that humor gives ambiguity and likely goal". It is significant not misstep questionable explanations for dubious articulations in light of the fact that there is a sure contrast. Unclear explanations as a rule befuddle the crowd, though uncertain proclamations propose at least two unmistakable translations.

1.5.2. Riddles

Prior research on insight has zeroed in on learning, critical thinking and memory. In any case, the more perky side of discernment has been ignored (Shultz 1974). Puzzle is a significant phonetic classification that inspires humor, fun and diversion. To Pepicello and Green (1984:i), the enigma isn't simply a clever bit of diversion however "a complex phonetic and tasteful construction that, when exposed to orderly and logical investigation, uncovers an extraordinary arrangement about the significant human framework". For us in this paper, this framework is the intellectual framework. Conundrums are explanations, questions or expressions having vagueness. Conundrums can be utilized to accomplish various destinations in the homeroom. You can utilize them as warmers and icebreakers, as a component of a bigger exercise on a particular subject or as your end movement. Conundrums urge understudies to think basically and fill in as a group, where they should rehearse their English together to impart their thoughts, speculations and arrangements .

You can single out puzzles to zero in on various parts of English. For instance, a few conundrums may utilize the jargon you wish to survey with your understudies. You can likewise utilize puzzles to present new jargon in a fun and connecting way. Questions can likewise be valuable for articulation, spelling, rhyming or in any event, showing English figures of speech. The following are a few conundrums that are particularly pertinent for understudies.

2. The model of Study

The aim of the current examination is to find the manner in which humor are utilized inside the structure of the monetary news messages and to discover their motivations. Then again, it is fundamental to choose which discourse act is utilized more than the others since it speaks to the etymological attributes of the monetary news and the way that discourse demonstration decide the ideal significance. Thusly, the examination of the discourse demonstrations in the chose writings will be introduced by the scientist as indicated by the model of discourse acts presented via Searle (1969). Through breaking down humor words inside the sentences, the analyst can decide the sort of discourse acts generally utilized in the chose texts. The way toward dissecting the information will choose which of the discourse demonstrations has more event in the financial report detailing. Those discourse demonstrations will be brought up physically by the specialist. The discourse demonstrations utilized are Emphatic, Expressive and Declaratives. By dissecting them in the request they were introduced, it tends to be closed why some discourse demonstrations are more repetitive than others.

5. Analysis and Discussion

5.1. Instances of Jokes

Joke telling is a prime example of developmental levels at work.

Young persons are not able to understand jokes. Their brains just aren't ready for this kind of thinking. But they still like to be part of the activity, and will laugh with the family to get into the spirit of the activity. When a person starts understanding jokes, you can tell that they have moved into a new area of cognitive development.

Here are some examples can include in the following situation:

A-I will call you later.

-Don't call me later call me David.

Pragmatically, here, the ambiguity in the word (call) comes as it has double meaning, in the first sentence, it means "I will speak with you later"(next time).The word(later) in the first sentence is an adverb of time, while in the second sentence comes as a noun of person.

B- I went to the bank.

In the sentence (1), this sentence is ambiguous since the term bank would convey either a kind of financial building or an area of land next to a river. Pragmatically the sentence has ambiguity results when an utterance might have more than one interpretations.

C-Why did six afraid of seven

-Because 789 (7 ate 9)

In pragmatic analysis, the pronunciation of number 8 like the Pronunciation of the verb (ate). While Syntactically, the verb eat comes in the past tense, and the joke start with interrogative question(why)asking for reason.

D-Teacher: Tell me something that conducts electricity.

Student: Why—er—

Teacher: Very good—wire! Now, name a unit of electrical power.

Student: The what?

Teacher: Very good job—the watt is correct!

Here, the humor is pragmatically based on the fact that the teacher heard the student's confused responses, "Why—er" and "the what?" as correct answers because the correct answers have exactly the same sounds. Likewise, the sentence is indirect question as it starts with the phrase (tell me) in turn this structure give us a different interpretations.

E-What did the 0 say to the 8?

Nice belt!

Beside the syntactic analysis of the sentence in which the verb 'say' is usually used through people's speech when they talk to each other. While in this sentence "say" is used as a main verb by unanimated characters. Pragmatically, the two numbers have round shape, easily distinguished by a curve. The numbers metaphorically talk to each other.

F-What do you call a sheep with no head or legs?

A cloud!

In pragmatic perspective, the animal sheep of no legs and head is like a white cloud that hides rain inside.

G-Teacher: If I had 6 oranges in one hand and 7 apples in the other, what would I have?

Student: Big hands!

Pragmatically, this means that man has very big hands. Besides, this indicates that the speaker wants to help counting numbers correctly. In syntactic analysis: "orange", and "apples" are countable nouns. The sentence starts by "if clause" that has past perfect at first.

H-What is the longest word? Smiles - there's a mile between the first and last letters!

Syntactically the word "longer" is a superlative word to indicate two things one of them is longer than other. Pragmatically this sentence is distinguished by the letter "S" that differentiates between the meaning of Mile and Smile

5.2. Instances of Riddles

These riddles attempt to check, pragmatically, students' knowledge and understanding of different parts of speech, such as adverbs, and homonyms.

A riddle is usually a question or statement that has multiple meanings and that needs

to be solved. Riddles can be thought-provoking or funny brain busters. It is like a puzzle that you are trying to solve. Some of the best riddles get your mind thinking. Riddles can be super simple or complex, it is really up to the creator of the riddle. To create a riddle the first thing you need to do is understand the parts of a riddle and how a riddle works. The second thing to creating a riddle is to come up with the answer. Here we have some examples with meaningful and grammatical analysis:

A- What instrument can you hear but never see?

Answer: Your voice.

Here in the pragmatic perspective you can explore the different senses with this riddle. The sentence emphasizes two senses (Sight and Hearing). The sentence starts with interrogative words. It uses the modal verb of "Can" to examine the ability. The sentence contains subject pronoun (you), auxiliary verb (can), main verb (hear), and coordinating conjunction (but).

B- What occurs once in a minute, twice in a moment and never in one thousand years?

Answer: The letter "M."

The letter "M" is repeated in "minute" and in "moment", while it is not in "years". Here, the letter "M" pragmatically gives us an idea of confusing. Reviewing words for many times. Also, we can review the adverbs "once" and "twice," which are common phrases used in English.

- Which letter of the alphabet has the most water?

Answer: C (sea).
Pragmatically, the letter "C" has some meaningful indications such as (sight) or (water). Also, here students must explore the idea of homonyms (two words have the same pronunciation but different meanings and origins).

D- David's father has three sons: Snap, Crackle, and _____?

Answer: David.

Obviously, David is the first son of the father. So, he is the first one of the three sons. The apostrophe "s" of the father gives him the third name of his sons.

E- What room do ghosts avoid?

Answer: The living room.

Pragmatically, the word "living" indicates the place where people who are still alive are sitting in the living room, while ghosts are already dead, (ghost vs alive) so, they can't use things that do not belong to their status. The ghost does not choose which rooms should be avoided. The word "move around" is much suitable.

F- When is a doctor most annoyed?

Answer: When he is out of patients.

Because patients bring money to doctors. So, pragmatically the above sentence means

that if there is no patient, there will be no money. Here, the adjective "relieved" is more suitable to be used when the doctor has no patient or he finished checking his patients. So if the sentence was asked in opposite as : When is a doctor most relieved? The answer should be kept as it is : When he is out of patient.

6. Conclusions

The current study can presume that humor can be utilized to diffuse clash. A very much planned joke in a warmed contention can assuage strain. Giggling may improve the invulnerable framework, pulse, and blood stream. Individuals, particularly separated representatives, snicker less during the work week when contrasted and the end of the week. A great workplace can lessen representative turnover and burnout . As we know humor is a desired trait in leaders. Thus, humor assumes a significant part in our life. Humor can establish a positive learning climate, decrease the pressure of the two educators and understudies, improve correspondence among understudies and the instructor, and can build the measure of data consumed by understudies. The most recent day of class we may underline the significance of quantitative abilities with the accompanying: Three out of four, or 90%, of fruitful money managers quality their prosperity to numerical abilities. Thus, in short, the current study concludes that humor has a sober minded impact through the action words utilized in the content chosen, the motivation behind being brief and utilizing one discourse act more than other to work the feeling of illuminating.

References

- Abdulla, H. I. (1989). A pragmatic Analysis of Two Excerpts from Robert's Bolt's A Man All Seasons. University of Lancaster.
- Askildson, Lance. (2005). "Effect of Humor in the Language Classroom: Humor as a Pedagogical Tool in Theory and Practice. Arizona Working Paper". In Second Language Acquisition and Teaching (SLAT) 12: 45-61.
- Attardo, Salvatore. (2001). Humorous Texts: A Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joke>.
- _____ . (2003) "Introduction :The Pragmatics of Humor". Journal of Pragmatics.35:1287-1294.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). How To Do Things With Words. London: Oxford University Press.
- Chee, A. W. S. (2003). Humor in TEYL- reducing classroom anxiety. Retrieved August 25, 2015 from the World Wide Web: <https://www.researchgate.net/deref/http%3A%2F%2Fwww.teyl.org%2Farticle2.html>.
- Maurice, K. (1988). "Laugh While Learning Another Language: Techniques That Are Functional and Funny". In Teaching English Forum 26 (2), 20-25. International Journal.

Searle, J. (1969). *Speech Act*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shade, A. R. (1996). *License to laugh: Humor in the classroom*. Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing

Shultz, R. T. (1974) "Development of the Appreciation of Riddles." *Child Development*, 45 (1), 100-105. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1127755.6/1/12>.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ziv, A. (1983). "The influence of humorous atmosphere on divergent thinking". *School Psychology International* 1(2): 21-23. International journal.