A Pragmatic Analysis of Humour in American TV Talk Shows

Instr. Hanan Khatab Omer *
University of Babylon- English Dept. -College of Education of Human Sciences
E-mail: hananeng@tu.edu.iq

Prof. Dr. Qasim Obias Al-Azzawi
University of Babylon- English Dept. -College of Education of Human Sciences
E_mail: quda61@yahoo.com

Keywords:	Abstract
- Humour - Pragmatics - Violation - Maxims - Affiliative **Article Info** **Article history:** **Received: 22-12-2020**	This research is conducted to study the phenomenon of humour pragmatically in TV talk shows. Though humour is found in daily conversation, most people ignore how it is working in the production. The concept of humour indicates both positive (non- aggressive) and negative (aggressive) affects which may unify or divide people, but it is more preferable to take positive humour into the consideration of this research to narrow down the topic. The objectives of this research are to analyze the maxims that are violated to create humor, to describe and explain the production of humour by examining the pragmatic structure of humorous transcripts, and to explain the functions of humor created through maxims violation expressed by speakers in TV talk shows. This research is conducted by using qualitative method. The data are in the form of utterances done by speakers. The data sources of this research are selected from the videos on You Tube Channel. After being collected, the data are analyzed based on three levels: the initiation of humour and its purpose, the pragmatic strategies of humour, and

* **Corresponding Author:** Inst. Hanan Khatab Omer , **E-Mail:** hananeng@tu.edu.iq
Tel: +9647701851554 , **Affiliation:** University of Babylon _ Iraq

Accepted: 16-1-2021	functions of humor. As a result, criticism is the essential purpose of using humour. Additionally, all Leech's maxims are relatively violated among the speakers with special focus on tact and approbation maxims whereas the violation of Grice's maxims is highly found in quality more than other maxims because of the lack of truth in the humourous utterances. Finally, Affiliative function is the most preferable one attracted by speakers to reach simply their goal behind humour.
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تحليل تداولي للفكاهة في البرامج الحوارية التلفازية الامريكية

م. حنان خطاب عمر

جامعة بابل _ قسم اللغة الإنكليزية _ كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

ا. د. قاسم عبيس العزاوي

جامعة بابل _ قسم اللغة الإنكليزية _ كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

الكلمات الدالة: -	**الخلاصـــــــة:** يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراســـة ظاهرة الفكاهة تداوليا في البرامج الحوارية التلفزيونية. على الرغم من وجود الفكاهة في المحادثة اليومية ، إلا أن معظم الناس يجهلون كيفية عملها. يشـــير مفهوم الفكاهة إلى كل من التأثيرات الإيجابية (غير العدوانية) والســـلبية (العدوانية) التي قد توحد الناس أو تقسـمهم ، ولكن من الأفضـل أخذ الفكاهـة الإيجابيـة في الاعتبـار في هـذا البحث لتضـــييق نطـاق الموضـــــوع. تتمثل أهداف هذا البحث في تحليل الثوابت التي يتم انتهاكها لخلق روح الفكاهة ، ووصـف وشـرح إنتاج الفكاهة من خلال فحص البنية البراغماتية للنصـوص الفكاهية ، وشـرح وظائف الفكاهية التي تم إنشـــــاؤها من خلال انتهاك أقوال المتحدثين في التلفزيون في البرامج الحوارية. تم الحصـــــول على بيانات هذا البحث من مقاطع الفيديو على قناة يوتيوب. بعد جمع البيانات ، يتم تحليل البيانات بناءً على ثلاثة مســـتويات: بدء الفكاهة والغرض منها ، والاســـتراتيجيات العملية للفكاهة ، ووظائف الفكاهة. لقد توصـــلت النتائج الى ان النقد هو الغرض الأســـاســـي من اسـتخدام الفكاهة. اضـــافة إلى ذلك ، تم انتهاك جميع مبادئ ليج نسبيًا بين المتحدثين مع التركيز بشكل خاص
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	التوفر على النت
على مبادئ اللباقة والاستحسان ، في حين أن انتهاك قواعد كرايس موجود بشكل كبير في الجودة أكثر من القواعد الأخرى بسبب عدم وجود الحقيقة في الأقوال الفكاهية. أخيرًا ، الوظيفة التبادلية هي الوظيفة المفضلة التي يستخدمها المتحدثون للوصول إلى هدفهم وراء الفكاهة.	

1. Definitions of Humour

Humour remains a mystery due to the complex interaction of the social, psychological, linguistic, philosophical, biological, historical, and etymological factors that characterize it. This is why the study of humour occupies an important place in English researches and has attracted the interest of researchers for centuries since Plato and Aristotle foundations of humor. Humour is a very complex phenomenon, but it is thought to be a perfect tool for monitoring the behaviour of other participants through interaction. However, if a participant in a humourous interaction deviates from the conversational or social norms, the other participant may turn to practicing humour in a less threatening manner so as to highlight the other party's transgression (Drew, 1987: 44; Schnurr & Chan, 2011). The word 'Humour' is defined by The Random House Dictionary of the English Language as "the faculty of perceiving or expressing what is amusing or comical" (Turner 1986: 1-2). This definition addresses the purely verbal aspect of humour. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines humour as "that quality of action, speech, or writing which excites amusement" (DiCioccio, 2012: 5). These sources suggest that humour is a form of communication by expression, or speech used to excite amusement. A more comprehensive definition of the term is given by the *MacMillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (2002: 702) which defines humour as "the quality that makes a situation or entertainment funny".

Attardo (1994: 4) states that "linguists, psychologists and anthropologists and sociologists have taken humour to be an encompassing category, covering any event or object that elicits laughter, amuses or is felt to be funny". This statement comes with agreement to Bremmer's and Roodenburg's view that humour is a message transmitted through different media, including action, writing, speech or images, and it evokes smile or laughter (1997: 1). Needless to say, definitions of humour are manifold ranging from a communicative activity with positive emotional reactions in perceivers to an individual's trait whose sense of humour or cheerfulness one's has. Scholars in the fields of pragmatics and linguistics, for instance, have attempted to define humour in terms of specific research environments, study samples, or phenomena. That is to say, definitions that apply to a certain context may not apply to other contexts in which humour occurs. Therefore, there has been a need for a general definition of humour that may be applicable in all types of context (Keltner, et al., 2001:232). Accordingly, our working definition in which adapted to serve the aims of current work encompasses humour as a communicative process that includes incongruence and evokes a variety of emotions, either in the producer of humour, in the receiver of humour, or in both. So, humour is seen as multidimensional that includes the abilities to produce, recognize, and appreciate the implied meanings in humourous texts.

2. Humour and Other Related Terms

Wit, amusement, laughter, and humour which are closely interrelated terms are familiar in everyday conversation. As a result of their overlapping, it is important to identify each term separately to show the extent of their relations. 'Wit' is associated with laughter and comedy. Sir Winston Churchill , for instance, was a witty man whose speech is characterized by quick, witty comments or replies. (website // source 1). Though there is no clear-cut of difference between humour and wit, a distinction is made by certain researchers. The term 'wit' is reserved for the clever end of the humour and people who are regarded as witty are those who produce clever utterances and opinions as introduced in the following transformation:

(1) *What is the difference between a warder and a jeweler?*

   One watches cells and the other sells watches.

With wit, one is able to see a situation in a unique way and to respond with a relevant comment. Humour, in contrast, always involves amusement manifested by a smile, chuckle or laughter. As such, wit is not just funny but there's some meaning behind the humour and it's expressed in a clever way in rapid spontaneous response whereas humour is just funny and doesn't necessarily have to be clever.

Another term must be recognized is 'Laughter'. Laughter is often synonymous with humour; both of them are used for causing laughter. In order to understand the objectivity of humour, a distinction is important to be made between them. Laughter is a physiological occurrence due to a reaction to humour and the latter is only stimulus that creates laughter. So, humour is a potential stimulus, and laughter is a potential reaction (Gimble, 2018: 10 McDonald, 2012: 11).

In addition to what have been stated above, Barrey claims that Laughter arising out of humour is conditional and unconditional. Conditionally, it depends upon the person's intellectual ability, state of mind and level of happiness and life satisfaction. Unconditionally, laughter can be achieved when they laugh without any cognitive ability to help them in comprehending humour and their laughter is a result of playfulness. In fact, laughter and humour share a cause-and-effect relationship. They cannot be separated and one leads to another.

To understand the relationship between humour and joke, we need clearer notions for both. Jokes are a form of humour. They are told in both private and public settings communicated with the intent of being humourous. They are also created by the teller and being strongly context-dependent. It is a statement that provokes laughter (Gruner 1996, 288). Humour, on the other hand, is a person's ability to make others laugh. Consequently, conversational humour refers to productions intended by an actor to cause amusement to denote all funny things all sources of amusement. To conclude, in the modern world, humour has transferred from specific meaning 'laughter' into a general synonym for joking, comedy, amusement and laughter.

 3. **Pragmatics and Humour**

 In communicative situation, we notice a lot of laughter which is caused by breaking the pragmatic rules of language. This pragmatics studies language in relation to the contextual background features. It studies the context, text, and function (Cutting, 2002:2). In the area of pragmatics, linguists are interested in the way humour is communicated in everyday conversation and the functions of humourous communications, such as joke-telling, teasing, and irony, in interpersonal interactions (Norrick in Martin, 2007:89). In order to make a successful conversation, speakers should observe the four cooperative maxims, but noticeably high percentage of humourous conversations is established with the violation of one or more of Grice's maxims of Cooperative Principle. That is, speakers may violate the maxims on purpose in the process of conversation in order to arouse the hearers' laughter (Attardo, 1994: 14). Besides, violating politeness principles in a conversation could also create humourous utterances. Through the norms of pragmatics, aspects of incongruity are explained in linguistics both textually and interpersonally (Wijana, 1995: 8). Textually, the incongruity is done by violating The Cooperative Principle (henceforth CP), whereas the interpersonal incongruity is done by violating The Politeness Principle (henceforth PP) as will be explained in the following subsections.

As human beings, we have the ability to engage in sophisticated forms of humour which is closely linked to pragmatic abilities that require higher meta-representational thought, such as handling non-literal uses of language, or interpreting metalinguistic negation (Trask, 1994: 226). The principle of incongruity as a humour -inducing technique can be extended to cover situations where there is a mismatch between what someone says and what he means. This extended pragmatic sense equates with the certain strategies of humour like irony. In the example below, the form of irony is situated in a discursive opposition between what is asserted and what is meant, as embodied in an utterance such as:

(2) *You're a fine friend!*

when said to someone who has just let you down. The irony here is located in a departure from Grice's maxim of 'truth' although not all irony is explicable within the Gricean model (Simpson, 2003: 337).

4. The Pragmatic Structure of Humour Production

As far as this research is concerned with the production of humour, this section concentrates on examining Grice's conversational maxims and Leech's maxims of politeness which participate in humour creation.

4.1 Grice's Maxims

Through daily conversation people are supposed to observe the maxims to obtain the right information, but it is interesting to note that participants would not like to observe these maxims strictly all the time. Speakers can break any of these maxims in order to make humourous utterances. The most common claim of humour in the Gricean pragmatics (Grice 1975,1989) is that humourous effects arise as a consequence of the violation of conversational maxims. These intended violations render the utterance ambiguous or inappropriate in the context. Grice (1989:24) suggests that communication is a process that requires interlocutors to be cooperative with each other, and he

formalized the CP that guides speakers to make their contributions appropriate to the conversation. Speakers, as stated by Levinson should speak sincerely, relevantly and clearly, with providing sufficient information. He believes that in order to make the conversation progress well, speakers and hearers both abide by a principle that is the CP. Nevertheless, he continues, nobody speaks in such a manner the whole time. Grice's general view is that conversation is essentially a cooperative activity. Besides, he is interested in the effects that can be obtained when the maxims are violated in some way. Though his theory receives continuous alteration by different authors, it still constitutes a valid model for explaining humour pragmatically. In this case, Grice´s model is used to explain one of the most problematic aspects of language: humour.

The following table includes the four breaking maxims of Grice or what is called non-observance maxims as mentioned by Raskin (1985) to create humour:

Table (1): Conversational Maxims of Grice

Category	Super maxim	Maxim	Humourous effects
Quality	Say only what is compatible to the world of the joke	1. do not say what you believe is false 2. do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence	A: Why did the Vice President fly to Panama? B: Because the fighting is over"
Quantity	Give exactly as much information as is necessary for the joke	1. make your contribution as informative as is required 2. do not make your contribution more informative than is required	A: Excuse me, do you know what time it is? B: Yes

| Relation | Say only what is relevant to the joke | It requires the speaker to be relevant to the topic | A: How many surrealists does it take to screw in a light bulb?" B: Fish |
| Manner | Tell the joke efficiently | 1. avoid obscurity 2.avoid ambiguity 3.be brief 4. be orderly | A: Do you believe in clubs for young people? B: Only when kindness fails |

Consequently, when the speaker deliberately or indeliberately adapts at least one way to break any of these maxims, his or her language becomes indirect and sometimes humourous. However, in this study, the researcher has decided to use "violation" of maxim as a means of encompassing the five classifications of Grice's (Flouting, Infringing, Opting and Suspending maxims). The researcher holds that in whatever form the conversational maxims are not obeyed or duly observed, it can be generalized as a "violation" of the conversational principle. Whether it is flouting of a maxim or infringing of a maxim, opting out of a maxim or completely suspending a maxim, all these are variants of maxim violation.

4.2 Leech's maxims of Politeness

As far as pragmatics is concerned, there are other principles governing conversation besides Grice's CP. The most important of these is PP whose role is to preserve the social balance and the friendly relationships which enable us to assume that our conversers are being cooperative. With the non- observation of Leech's maxims humour is generated. It is important to mention that PP proves to be a necessary complement of the CP in the analysis of humour in this study, because it manages to explain more humourous instances than CP alone. So, it is important to shed light firstly on politeness and its relation with humour.

Politeness is a pragmatic phenomenon which lies not in the form and the words themselves, but in its function and its intended social meaning.   (Cutting, 2002: 51) Pragmatically, it is interpreted as a strategy used by a speaker to achieve a variety of goals, such as promoting or maintaining harmonious relations. Since humourous

communication breaks various societal norms, among them at of politeness, it makes sense to devote attention to the relation between humour and politeness.

The relation between humour and politeness theory can be seen in the difficulties that people encounter when they humourously utter during their communication, i.e., conversational confusion and ambiguity. According to Dynle, humour may not only give rise to politeness but also impoliteness. Impoliteness can be considered as a source of offensive and aggressive humour represented by disparagement, putdown and mockery (2013:107). These types encompass bitter and sharp markers of disaffiliation in communicative utterances that we try to get away from them in this research.

As far as humour is concerned, it is argued that humourous effect is obtained when an utterance is unexpected or unconventional, with violation of the maxims forming an important means of creating this unexpectedness. Certainly unexpectedness does seem to be a distinctive feature of much verbal humour. It is, however, necessary to note that not all instances in which the maxims are breached are always humourous. Sometimes they can be simply offensive without any humourous potential. Interestingly, some instances, in which exaggerated or reduced politeness can be considered inappropriate, are very amusing.

Since Leech's maxims are taken into consideration in this research, it is significant to show them in the table below:

Table (2): Leech's Maxims of Politeness

Category	Maxim	Examples
Tact Maxim	a) minimize cost to "other"and b)maximize benefit to "other".	*I would not mind a cup of coffee.*
Generosity Maxim:	a)minimize benefit to "self" and b) maximize cost to "self".	*I have a lot of candy pieces.*
Approbation Maxim	a) minimize disapraise of "other" and b) maximize praise of "other".	*What a marvellous meal you cooked!*

Modesty Maxim	a)minimizes praise of "self" and b)maximizes dispraise of "self".	*A: They were so kind to us.* *B: Yes. They were, weren't they?*
Agreement Maxim	a) minimize disagreement between "self" and "other" and b) maximize agreement between "self" and "other".	*A: This restaurant is very good, isn't it?* *B: Yes, I loved the main course, but the dessert was a little bit too sweet.*
Sympathy Maxim	a) minimize antipathy between "self" and "other" and b) maximize sympathy between "self" and "other".	*I am terribly sorry to hear about your cat.*

So what creates humour is the violation of polite maxims and What increases the significance of politeness maxims with humour is that both interest with the second or third part of communication. According to Leech, this would imply that politeness in conversation is more strongly focused on "other" than on "self"(1985: 133).

5. Functions of Humour

In interpersonal interaction, humour not only has entertainment function, but it can function as a means to facilitate communication, develop interpersonal relationships, exert power and social control and transmit verbally aggressive messages and to express excitement or joy (Elizabeth, 1992:165–167). These functions may lead to the notion that humour is used to achieve and accomplish certain individuals' interactive goals. Martin et al, (2003: 23, 37) generally maintain that humour falls in two major categories as either positive or negative in type. Since this research intentionally scrutinizes the concept of positivity of humour, the self-defeating humour and aggressive humour as negatives are dismissed. Positivity refers to the positive intention of the writer or speaker where it aims to exaggerate intimacy, solidarity, entertainment, friendship, etc. Attardo in his book *Linguistic Theories of Humour* (1994: 323-329), has grouped the functions of humour on the communicative process into the following classes:

1) Affiliative Humour

Humour is used to create a friendly amusement to reduce tensions, and non-hostile self-deprecating jokes. It is a means of managing communality and intimacy. Socially speaking, this may function to strengthen social bonds and foster group cohesiveness (Long and Graesser in Attardo, 1994: 324).

2) Self-Enhancing Humour

Self- Enhancing or intimacy could be described as a humourous outlook on life or coping humour. The speaker in this style of humour is being able to laugh at himself or herself, such as making a joke when something bad has happened to him or her. It is related to

healthy coping with stress. Jon Stewart from the Daily Show often uses self-enhancing humour by saying things such as, "Maybe I just don't understand," or "I'm not the brightest guy."(Riggrio, 2015: 1).

3) Discourse management

In a conversation, humour can be used for managing the discourse. It can be used as a tool to make initiation, termination, topic shift and checking in a conversation (Attardo, 1994: 324). For example, in a rigid conversation, a speaker can perform humour by saying something that is not related to the previous topic in order to provoke laughter.

4) Deprecating

Another function of humour is deprecating which is , in turn, classified into self-deprecating and other- deprecating humour**.** In self-deprecating the speaker makes a joke in which the target of the joke is him or herself in a personal nature to demonstrate modesty, to promote solidarity among interlocutors, to lighten their concerns or to put the listener at ease (Norrick et al 2009: 7, 11). In contrast, other-deprecating humour is applied when the speaker makes a joke in which the target of the joke is anyone other than him/herself.

6. Data Analysis

This section represent the practical field of the current research where selective segments taken from **Two American TV talk shows** have been transformed into transcripts to be described and analyzed in line with the adopted model. In this respect, data collection of humour is presented, described, as well as analyzed in the genre of TV talk shows qualitatively. The data of humour were collected from 10 segments taken from two selected American TV talk shows through You Tube Channel, namely: 'Oprah Winfrey Show' and 'Jimmy Kimmel Live'. Each of the selected TV talk shows has been intentionally chosen to serve the aim of the adopted model for verbal humour. Television, basically, is filled with various different programmes that are partly or fully focused on amusement. So, one of the most popular humourous genres in television is talk show which is based on what is called "fresh talk" i.e., spontaneous.

7. The Model

Since this research deals with the production of humour, the eclectic model for analysis is structured into four levels:

Initiation Level: The first level starts with the violation of expectations or the lack of congruity as a central concept to humour both in psychology and in linguistics. Humour is evoked when a trigger at the end of the joke or humourous utterance, the punch line, causes the audience to abruptly shift its understanding from the primary (obvious) script to the secondary, opposing script. Such incongruity in conversational humour results the act of *criticizing*, *bonding*, *promoting solidarity* or *amusement* via saying humour on the target or third part. For these triggers and humour moves to be successful, they should be accompanied by some markers which are called 'contextualization cues'. These cues function as signals that may help the hearer to recognize the humourous frame indicating its initiation. So, the use of such cues is considered to be an essential matter in ensuring that the provocation is going to be seen in a humourous frame by the hearer. Hancock (2004), concludes that speakers use a range of cues to signal humourous intent, including

cues based on contrast with context, verbal and paralinguistic cues. Speakers also rely on cues provided by hearers regarding comprehension of humour as well. In the absence of such cues or markers, speakers may be less willing to use humour because of the risk of miscommunication, and hearers may be more likely to misinterpret humour.

Pragmatic Strategies Level: Humour can be created un/intentionally by means of specific pragma-linguistic rules. Thus, it can be achieved by the violation of Grice's maxims and violation of politeness maxims. As such, utilization of these processes marks the next third level of humour analysis.

Functions Level: the above two levels are manifested in achieving the functions of humour. Since humour serves a variety of functions in interaction, the researcher of this study intends to show the functions which represent the playful aspect of humour resorting to the affiliative function, self-enhancing, discourse management, and deprecating. The disaffiliative functions of humour which manifest the hurtful aspect are dismissed in this research. The latter can be represented in the exclusion of a member from the social group, the act of asserting power over the target, showing superiority, and shamming the target.

The model developed here can be sketched out via the following figure:
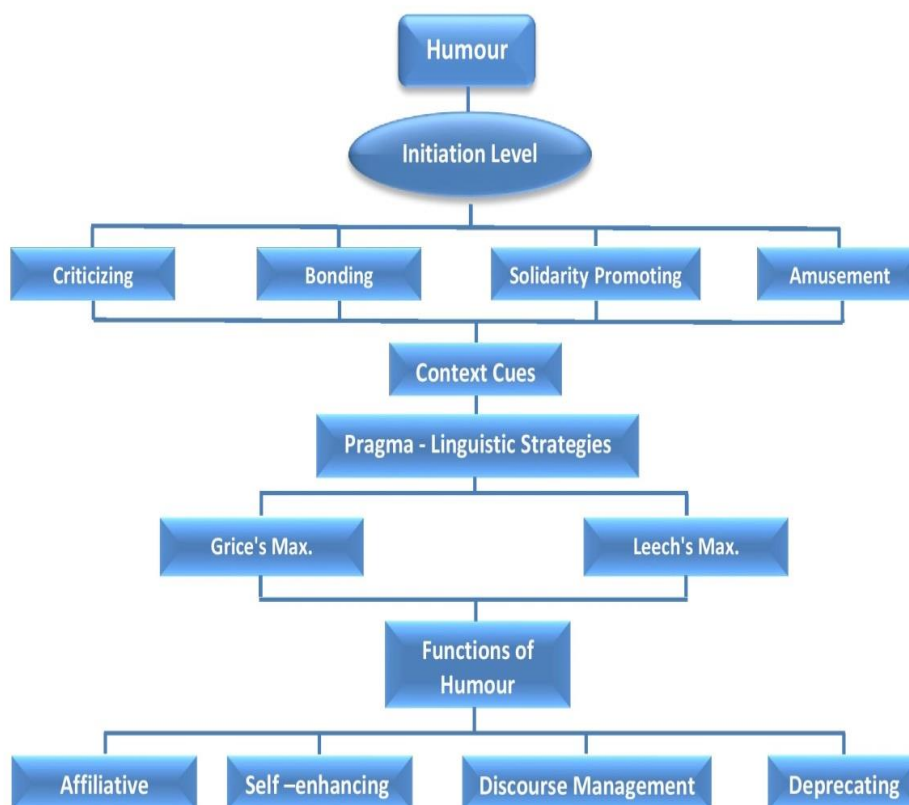

Fig. (1): Levels of Humour Analysis

8. Data Analysis

The eclectic model above is utilized as the main instrument for analyzing humour in the American TV talk shows under investigation.

A. Oprah Talk Show

Script1. *The Queen of Jordan, Rania, joins with Oprah on her programme The Oprah Show on 17th of April 2006 talking about the Queen's Life and other personal stuff. One of the questions raised in the interview is what the thing makes her happy, but her answer provokes laughter.*

Oprah: *Okay, now tell me so what makes you deliriously happy?*

Queen: (taking her deep breath) *chocolate*

[laughter]

Oprah: Chocolate!!(with astonishment)[Cheerful and applause]

The following pragmatic structure underlies the above mentioned transcript:

The Initiation Level: Oprah, through her communication, shifts the political topic which is answered by the Queen concerning the struggle between American and Arab. To break the boredom, Oprah directs a question toward the Queen:' *Okay, now tell me so what makes you deliriously happy?'*. The Queen's answer is*: 'chocolate '*. As such, the word 'chocolate' manifests the unexpectedness that constructs the first level of this stage provoking amusement. Before her reply, she has taken a sigh for a moment. This context marker accompanied by smile indicates her shifting from feeling of deep pressure into amused moments since she was talking about political struggle. As such, humour here is an interactive strategy used to facilitate a shift towards informality.

The second level of humour analysis deals with pragmatic- linguistic strategies. From the pragma- linguistic view, the analysis of the transcript signals the use of the following:

i. Grice's Maxims: In the above mentioned humour, the Queen who violates the maxim of quantity seems to give too little information to Oprah by replying one word. Sometimes brevity will not make things clear enough to everyone and may cause ambiguity that leads to violate manner maxim.

ii. Leech's Maxims: Through conversation, The Queen violates the maxim of *approbation*; the speaker maximizes praise of herself by stating the most preferable thing for the most people in the world in a splurged style.

The above mentioned strategies, which comprise the second level analysis, participate in the realization of the following functions for the humourous utterance:

i. Self- Enhancing: This first function is marked by the Queen's utterance to improve her picture for the public to show her modesty and friendliness by choosing chocolate. She uses humour so as to shift from the boring topics into more relaxant one.

ii. Discourse management: Another function for humour is a topic shifting. This is obvious in Rania's selecting the unexpected reply to change the tense topic since chocolate is the symbol of relaxing.

Script2. *Leonardo DiCaprio joins great moments with Oprah in The Oprah Winfrey Show on 5ᵗʰ of December 2017. When they are talking on his adolescent period, Oprah arouses a question regarding his nickname.*

Oprah: didn't you like win second place in some competition

Leonardo: It is in the German yeah small

Oprah: ok your nickname is the noodle

[Laughter]

Leonardo: Oh, My God! oh yeah that's from way back when I was a little kid in my pop-locking days you know that.

 The following pragmatic structure motivates the above mentioned transcript:

The Initiation Level: This level is triggered by Oprah's utterance "*Ok your nickname is the noodle*" which signals the first level. As such, Oprah's humour takes the form of criticizing that is accompanied by a smile.

The second level of this analysis highlights Oprah's employment of pragma-linguistic strategies. In terms of the pragma-linguistic strategies, the following are signaled:

i. Grice's Maxims: In the above mentioned humour, Oprah who violates the maxim of quality seems to express negative sentiment and implies a positive one.

ii. Leech's Maxims: Oprah violates the maxim of *tact*; the speaker is supposed to use indirectness to be more polite, but she reduces profits to the hearer, instead. Another maxim violated by Oprah is to minimize *sympathy* towards Leonardo when she asks him about his dull behaviour through childhood.

The third level of analysis highlights the functions of humour. The only function which is signaled here is:

i. Deprecating Others: Oprah employs this strategy by deprecating other party who is Leonardo. She deliberately reminds him with expression "the noodle" when she shifts from the preceding topic.

Script3. *Oprah meets two famous artists Will and his wife Jada Smith on 23ʳᵈ of August 2013. She is asking them about the secrets of their long-lasting relationship and what the bigger vision is of their marriage.*

Oprah: I hear that you all really do set goals that there is a marriage business plan yes you could write a book about that and help a lot of people there's a marriage business plan……………………………………………………………………..

Oprah: that is so true ever so what is the bigger vision for your marriage what is the bigger?

Jada: well we had to figure that out because we're too big beings that came together yeah and I had my vision and he had his and so we had to join it and so we decided

Will: to just do what she says

[Laughter]

Jada: yeah this is the vision

As such, the above interaction is motivated by the following pragmatic structure:

Initiation Level: Oprah is talking to Jada asking her about the way they keep their love strong. Jada states that though each one of them has an individual vision concerning their personal stuff, they cooperate together for success. So, the trigger of the stage is motivated by implicit critique aroused with Will's utterance '*to just do what she says*' when he interrupts humourously Jade's saying: *'we decide'* to declare her own exclusive control on their stuff. As a result, this Will's comment arouses the incongruity to represent the first level of this stage. The contextualization cue accompanied humourous utterance is Will's laughter.

The second level resorts to the following pragma-linguistic strategies in order to indicate the functions behind the act of humour. Thus, the strategies used in this respect are:

i. Grice's Maxims: Will through his humour violates the maxim of quality. He communicates in a way that he reflects dishonest intention to reveal his opposite statement implying to her self- control and her privacy in making decisions.

ii. Leech's Maxims: *Tact* maxim is violated by Will when he deliberately interrupts his wife's speech to declare his opinion in front of the audience in a humourous way. Another violated maxim in Will's utterance is *agreement.* Thus, he shows his indirect disagreement and implicit resentment to his wife. As such, Will' performance reveals his negative politeness**.**

The third level of this stage deals with the functions in terms of the following:

 i. Affiliative: This function is manifested by the relation of marriage with Jada though they have terrible matters.

ii. Deprecating Others: This function of humour is signaled through Will's utterance to express some implicit details about his wife's control impolitely via deprecating her.

Script 4. *Oprah invites Dr. OZ and a man who turned blue on her programme The Oprah Winfrey Show on 3rd of September 2014 to discuss scientifically the rare case of the man***.**

Dr. Oz: well or light even or the same thing happened to you, you basically painted your entire body with this silver.

A blue man: Well that's gonna save me a lot of money at the tattoo parlor I think.

[laughter]

Dr. Oz: *yeah that's for sure*

Oprah: *that's for sure*

Dr. Oz actually the reason is catch a meal a little bit off guard is

Oprah: I love that something guys

Laughter

Initiation Level: This level is triggered by a blue man's utterance " *well that's gonna save me a lot of money at the tattoo parlor I think.*". Here a blue man tries to act humourous atmosphere by making amusement to break the boredom when Dr.Oz explains the scientific reasons behind the coulor of man for Oprah. As a result, the man's humour signals the first level of this stage making the lack of congruity accompanied by a laugh as a contextualization cue for the sake of amusement.

In terms of the pragma-linguistic strategies which represent the second level, the following are signaled:

i. Grice's Maxims: To Achieve a funny effect, a blue man violates the maxim of relevance. His utterance *that's gonna save me a lot of money at the tattoo parlor*' doesn't seem to bear much relevance to what Dr. Oz says *'well or light even or the same thing happened to you, you basically painted your entire body with this silver.*' concerning his case.

ii. Leech's Maxims: Through humourous utterance, the blue man violates the maxim of *approbation* since he maximizes the praise for himself by saying ' *that's gonna save me a lot of money* '. Therefore, breaking this maxim leads to negative politeness.

The third level of analysis concerns the functions of humour that come as a result of applying the previous strategies. Self- Enhancing is the only function noticed here:

i. Self – Enhancing: Humour here has been applied by the blue man on himself to reduce stress in this interaction. The nature of their discussion makes him feel so guilty and force him to feel that what he did was disgusting. As such, he tends to enhance the self in a benevolent, positive manner to look on the bright side of a bad situation.

Script5. *Oprah receives the Oscar winners Julia Roberts and Tom Hanks together to her show**. Through the interview, Tom and Oprah talk playfully about Julia's passion of her children and milk.*

Tom: excuse me I'm not Don Rickles I will eat with her adorable children just three we'd be done by no and

Oprah: then you could have like I was over at the hotel I was like was it Finn who came in and said: "mom can I have a cookie and some chocolate milk?" and she goes : "half a cookie" and he was he was satisfied with that I guess this is today's generation of children he came out Henry came and said: " mom may I have some cow's milk?" I go so what milk does the child normally have?

 Tom: *I know that Jullie does travel with her own cow*

Jullia: [*giggling***]**

Oprah: have you seen her with her children? It's uh I've never seen anything like this

Tom: no one else matters on the planet

Oprah: I was watching you with your children last night I was thinking it is so much love.

The following pragmatic structure underlies the above mentioned transcript:

Initiation Level: The first level of analysis is triggered by Tom's criticizing utterance about Jullia:*' *I know that Julie does travel with her own cow*'. It takes the form of bonding blended with a laugh to ensure that the target receives it as amusement. This positive side of humour cannot be achieved without the evidence of context cue; otherwise it would be misunderstood as mocking or offensive meaning toward the target. Tom imitates the way of milking a cow with his moved hands to portray the picture of offering milk for Jullia's kids accompanied with a smile.

The third level of this analysis is modified the pragma-linguistic strategies, the analysis of the transcript highlights the use of the following:

i. Grice's Maxims: Tom violates the maxim of quality since the hearer would not get assurance about the sincerity of Tom's humour.

ii. Leech's Maxims: Tom violates the maxim of **tact** when he accuses Julia to travel with a cow implying to the amount of milk that she consumes. He also violates the maxim of **approbation** by saying unpleasant thing about hearer.

As a result, the use of the above mentioned strategies often raise the achievement of certain functions. So, this third level of analysis states the following humour functions:

i. Affiliative: Tom's relation with Julia is too familiar for Oprah and the audience as well, since they act a number of films together. Their last film by which they win Oscar provoke their degree of intimacy in such away he threatens Julia's face with taboo phrase ' *her own cow'* through their interaction.

ii. Deprecating others: This function is manifested by Tom when he directs his intended humour toward Julia.

B.Jimmy Kemmil Sample

Script1. *Steve Harvey who joined with Jimmy Kemmil in 6ᵗʰ of September 2017 talks about many jobson Labour Day; he has strong opinions about BBQ. Through his humour, he reveals his thoughts on barbecuing and names bobby-q.*

Jimmy: Did you work on Labour Day?

Steve: yeah, I worked. Yeah. I worked on labor Day. I missed it too because you know, it's the time where I put the -- I break out the grill and the smoker. But it's a little bit different. Secrecy I'm a professional.

Jimmy: as far as what? Cooking goes? Grilling goes?

Steve: Grilling.

Jimmy: whatever. Barbecue?

Steve*: I'm offended.*

 Jimmy: [laughing]

Steve: grilling is for amateurs. See, when I'm out there on the grill and the smoker it's not grilling, it's not even barbecuing! It's bobbycue. B-o-b-b-y-q. I bobbyq.[laughter]

see, a lot of people barbecue and grill. I bobbyq. They're totally different. If you go over to somebody's house, you want to come over to the barbecue? it's not going to be enjoyable.

[Laughter]

Steve: yeah, it's no longer pork.

The above mentioned script is clarified by the following stages:

Initiation Level: In this script, humour is triggered by Steve's amusement realized by his utterance *'I am offended'* when Jimmy asks him about doing house tasks like barbeque on Labor Day. Steve's utterance is accompanied by the contextualization cue of closed eyes and sad face so as to put his utterance in a humourous frame. Thus, Steve's humour is blended with a sad facial cue in an attempt to show his troubles in grilling pork. Therefore, he attempts to show his discomfort towards BBQ.

The second level of analysis highlights the utilization of the following pragma-linguistic strategies:

i. Grice's Maxims: Jimmy asks Steve about the jobs he likes to do on Labor Day, but the hearers abruptly receive unexpected response *'I am offended'*. In accordance, Steve violates the maxim of relevance to generate his humour by saying irrelevant information to what he really implies.

ii. Leech's Maxims; According to the Steve's hummour, maxims are breached through conversation. The only violated maxim remarked here is agreement. Steve implies to his disagreement to do BBQ because of his suffer from his own way of grilling. As such, his act is impolite.

The third level of the triggering stage is signaled by the following pragmatic functions of humour:

i. Self-Enhancing: Steve's humour is associated with his personality trait which being exploited by his family. He uses it to enhance his relationship with the audience in a positive manner.

ii. Self- deprecating: This function is marked by Steve's utterance when he is joking on himself in the sense of humour.

Script2. *Jimmy meets a Swedish professional footballer, Zlatan Ibrahimović, who plays as a striker for Serie club of Milan in 17ᵗʰ of April 2018. He is widely regarded as one of the best strikers of his generation. When Jimmy discusses certain stuff like playing for Los Angeles, his answers reflect his high confidence and arrogance.*

Jimmy: please welcome this Latin Ibrahimovic

Jimmy: you don't and maybe this is just some weird preconceived notion but you don't strike me as quintessentially Swedish I know you are Swedish but Swedes are not braggadocious in general.

Zlatan : yes they're too NICE

Jimmy: Is that what you were asked to leave the country ?

[Laughter]

 Zlatan: *I'm not the typical Swedish guy but I put Sweden on the maps* [Laughter]

[Applause and Cheering]

Jimmy: You have a lot of nicknames I was going I was reading through a bunch of your nicknames which one do you like is there one that you really feel strongly about.

The above mentioned situation is analysed by the following pragmatic structure:

Initiation Level: The first level of this analysis is initiated by Zlatan's act of bonding blended with amusement realized in his utterance: ' *I'm not the typical Swedish guy but I put Sweden on the maps* '. Zlatan provokes incongruity as a reaction for Jimmy's inquiry about the reason behind leaving his own country. As a result, the humour takes the form of bonding by praising his tasks on one hand and amusement accompanied by a smile as a contextualization cue to break the tension in a witty way.

Moreover, the second level highlights the speaker's utilization of pragma-linguistic strategies. The following strategies are realized:

i. Grice's Maxims: the maxim of quality is breached by Zlatan's exaggerated utterance because it is unbelievable to put a city on the map.

ii. Leech's Maxims: Zlatan violates more than one maxim to achieve funny effect. He is not tactful with Jimmy when he says ' I put Sweden on the map'. Saying so, he violates the maxim of modesty because he maximizes the expression of praise of himself.

The third level of this analysis highlights the functions of humour achieved as a direct consequence of the utilization of the above mentioned pragmatic functions of humour as in:

i. Affiliative: This function is marked by Zlatan to prove his great belongingness and intimacy towards his country though he plays for Los Angeles team.

ii. Self- Enhancing: This function is performed by the Zlatan to make the target laugh and reduce his tension.

Script3. *Yahya, an Egyptian old man, is a very humble and kind-hearted. His hobby is to take pictures with celebrities. Jimmy meets him in his programme in 2016 watching a lots of various pictures included Trump.*

Jimmy : Oh that was in New York! Then who is that man Yahya from what's his first name?

Yahya: Donalt

Jimmy: That's right.

Yahya: *donut with no coffee [laugh]* uh-huh I'm not too thick I don't know , he want to make problem for everyone

[Laughter]

Jimmy: *Okay alright next let's look at one more here who is this?*

[Laughter]

The above transcript is analyzed by the following pragmatic structure:

A. Initiation Level: The first level is triggered by The old man Yahya's amusement when he says: '*donut with no coffee* ' to reflect his intention to make fun of Trump in front of the audience. As such, Yahya's humour takes the form of a bonding. His humour is accompanied by shaping his hands as a form of sweet donut and blended with laugh as a contextualization cue.

The second level highlights the pragma-linguistic strategies of humour. Through his humourous utterance, Yahya utilizes the following strategies:

i. Grice's Maxims: Yahya violates the maxim of relevance when he changes the president' name into a kind of sweet pie.

ii. Leech's Maxims: To provoke funniness, Yahya violates the maxim of tact. Yahya is the person who comes from another community which is far from America. So, it is impolite to joke on the president of the country he lives in. Moreover, he breaches approbation maxim because he dispraise Trump by playing on his first name.

Accordingly, the third level of the triggering stage highlights the following functions:

i. Affiliative: Yahya is an Egyptian old man who lives in America. He is fond of picturing with celebrities wherever he goes. When he utters his humour he attempts to prove solidarity and affiliation with American community thinking he has the right of talking humourously against Trump.

ii. Self- Enhancing: This second function is employed by Yahya. He intends to enhance himself in a positive manner to reduce his tension and to achieve the people intimacy since he stands on the stage with Jimmy in front of the audience.

iii. Deprecating Others: This third function is manifested by Yahya's humour. He tries to deliver the hearers a massage that Trump is not a lovely person for most of Americans.

Script4. *Jimmy Kimmel meets Al Pacino one of the most famous actor in the world in 17th of January 2020. Through the program, a guy outside the studio directs Al Pacino a weird question concerning Robert de Niro's smell.*

Jimmy: what would you like to ask Al.?

 Guy: I'd like to ask Al what does Robert de niro smell like?

 [laughter]

Jimmy: Oh. That's a good question.

 Al Pacino: *well, I had a cold. [Laughter]* I don't know. Really, i can't recollect that. I have -- I've never – I never smelled him. I should have thought of that.

 [laughter]

Jimmy: yeah.

Accordingly, the above situation is underlined by the following pragmatic structure:

Initiation Level: The first level is triggered by Al Pacino's amusement utterance '*:Well, I had a cold.*', which serves a bonding accompanied by a laugh as a contextualization cue.

On the other hand, the analysis highlights the utilization of the following pragma-linguistic strategies:

i. Grice's Maxims: Al Pacino intends to violate the maxim of relevance to escape from the guy's question in a humourous way.

ii. Leech's Maxims of: To achieve humourous effect, Al Pacino breaches the tact maxim. He has to explicate the truth, instead.

As such, the third level of analysis highlights the functions of humour. The following functions which are signaled in the humourous utterance are:

i. Affiliative: This function is realized in Al Pacino's humourous utterance. Here, he tries to deliver a message to the guy that he and De Niro have great bonds. This thing is confirmed by his comment:' *I hug him a lot, too. He always smells fresh'*.

ii. Self- Enhancing: This second function is marked by the speaker when he accuses himself of having flu in a funny way so as to defense for his friend De Niro implicitly.

Script 5. *Jimmy hosted Bill Maher who is an American comedian, political commentator, and television host in 19th of January 2017. Through his conversation, he talks humourously against Trump the president of America.*

Bill: I would add this. If you are going to have him on, he's a politician.

Jimmy: yeah.

Bill: I know he's actually a game show host from queens, but now he's the president of the United States. So if you're going to have him on, *this is everybody, hold his feet to the fire.*

[laughter]

[cheers and applause]

In consequence, the above situation is clarified by the following pragmatic structure:

Initiation Level: The first level of this stage is triggered by Bill's utterance ' *this is everybody, hold his feet to the fire.*' which signals his criticism towards Jimmy's idea for hosting Trump. As a result, Bill's humour takes the form of criticism that is accompanied with a laugh so as to ensure a safe delivery.

On the other hand, the following pragma-linguistic strategies are utilized:

i. Grice's Maxims: Bill's humour is generated by violation of relevance maxim. His utterance' *this is everybody, hold his feet to the fire.'* is a challenge to Jimmy to fulfill his promise and interview Trump on his program. Another violated maxim in Bill's humour is manner; it causes ambiguity for the hearers.

ii. Leech's Maxims: Bill is not tactful because he reduces the ability of Jimmy's invitation for Trump and discusses personal and political stuff with him. As such, Bill is impolite with Jimmy.

The third and final level of this analysis deals with humour functions that are signaled:

i. Affiliative: Bill's humour reflects the function of affiliation since Bill and Jimmy work to the same institute of casting and the same career. Bill is known by his enemy towards the president Trump. As such, he provokes Jimmy to receive Trump once.

ii. Deprecating Others: This function is marked by Bill when he reveals his serious desire to apply the literal meaning of the idiom on Trump by saying: *'Oh, If you could'*.

9. Conclusions

After analyzing the data, the researcher draws the conclusions as presented in the following:

1- Humour is pragmatically integrated. Through production, humor is seen as a violation of conversational maxims. Such pragmatic principles of production are suitable processes to understand how humour is working.

2- Humour in the genre of American TV talk shows is pragmatically based on three identifiable levels: Initiation Level, Pragma- Linguistic Strategies and Functions of Humour.

3- Criticizing is the most frequently used trigger of humour in the selected American TV talk shows among other triggers of humour such as 'bonding', 'promoting solidarity' and 'amusement'. That is to say, 'criticizing' is an intentional starting point of departure that speakers resort to in inviting the targets to engage in a humourous interaction in most of the selected segments.

4- Speakers tend to utilize laugh more than the other contextualization cues in the selected TV talk shows. The reason behind such tendency is that using laughter may allow speakers to reduce or underestimate something of relevance to the target in a playful manner. Thus, the use of this tool by speakers in the selected TV talk shows is to enhance the tense atmosphere and to deliver their massage smoothly towards the targets.

5- Speakers tend to utilize Affiliative function more than the other types of humour in the selected TV talk shows. The reason for such tendency is that using this function to allow speakers to facilitate interactions with the targets and to create a sense of fellowships. Accordingly, it can be inferred that Affiliative function is the most preferable one attracted by speakers to reach their goal behind humour.

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Source1:https://laughteryoga.org/relationship-between-sense-of-humor-and-laughter/