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تحليل تداولي لاستراتيجيات الفكاهة في الرسوم الكاريكاتيرية السياسية: الاستلزام الحواري وتأويل الجمهور

م.م. زينب علاء عبد الحسن الساعدي
جامعة ميسان – كلية التربية – قسم اللغة الإنكليزية
zainabalaaabd@uomisan.edu.iq

المستخلص

يهدف هذا البحث بصورة رئيسة إلى بيان كيفية توظيف رسامي الكاريكاتير السياسي لأنواع مختلفة من استراتيجيات الفكاهة لإنتاج الدعابة ضمن إطار تداولي، وذلك باستخدام أدوات مثل الاستلزام الحواري، فضلًا عن استكشاف كيفية إدراك الجمهور المتلقي لهذه الاستراتيجيات؛ للكشف عن كيفية تواصلها وتأثيرها في القضايا الاجتماعية والسياسية ضمن الخطاب الإعلامي. اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج النوعي، وتكوّنت بياناتها من خمس رسوم كاريكاتيرية سياسية جرى اختيارها بعناية لتمثيل سياقات سياسية متنوعة. وقد شملت مصادر البيانات المحتملة الصحف المحلية، والمواقع الإعلامية الإلكترونية مثل CNN.com وAljazeera.net ومجلة The New Yorker وغيرها. ونظرًا لتعدد الطرائق الممكنة لاختيار حجم العينة، اعتمدت الباحثة أسلوب "العينة القصدية". واستندت الدراسة إلى النظرية التداولية، ولا سيما نظرية الاستلزام الحواري التي وضعها غرايس (Grice). وأظهرت النتائج أن استراتيجيات الفكاهة في الرسوم الكاريكاتيرية السياسية توظف وسائل تداولية لتوليد الاستلزامات الحوارية من خلال خرق مبادئ التعاون التخاطبي، مما يتيح للجمهور استنتاج معانٍ ضمنية من دون التصريح بها بصورة مباشرة. كما تتجسد آليات الفكاهة في السخرية، والمفارقة، والمبالغة، والاستعارة، وهي جميعها تكشف التناقض بين الواقع والأيديولوجيا السياسية، غير أن القوة الحقيقية الكامنة وراء هذه الآليات تتمثل في الأفكار الضمنية التي يبنيها الجمهور أثناء عملية التأويل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفكاهة، المفارقة، السخرية، تأويل الجمهور، النظرية التداولية.

A Pragmatic Analysis of Humor Strategies in Political Cartoons: Implicature and Audience Interpretation

Asst.Lect Zainab Alaa AbdulHasan Al-Saedi
University of Misan-College of education-Department of English
zainabalaaabd@uomisan.edu.iq

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to show how political cartoonists utilize various types of humor strategies to create humor within a pragmatics framework using tools such as implicature, and ultimately to explore how those audience members who view the cartoons perceive these strategies to demonstrate how they communicate and have an influence on social and political issues in media discourse. The study employed a qualitative approach. Dataset as composed of 5 political cartoons chosen to best illustrate various political contexts. The potential data sources can include local newspapers, online media sites such as CNN.com, Aljazeera.net, The New Yorker Magazine, and so forth. While there are many possible approaches to selecting a sample size, the researcher has used a method called "purposive" sampling. Pragmatic Theory, specifically the theory of implicature, was developed by Grice. The findings show that humor strategies in political cartoons use pragmatic means to create implicatures by violating the conversation maxim to allow the audience to create an inferred meaning where no explicit statement was made. The humor

mechanism can be satire, irony, hyperbole, and metaphors, which demonstrate the contradiction between reality and political ideology; however, the power behind these mechanisms is the implied ideas that the audience creates.

Keywords: humor, irony, satire, audience interpretation, pragmatic theory

Introduction

Humor strategies in political cartoons illustrate the impact of implicature and audience interpretation on the broader implications of images. While several authors, such as Noor et al. (2024), have argued that political cartoons operate as "condensed discourse," they also argue that the humor employed by these cartoons, and thus the political commentary within them, relies heavily on inference, irony, and common cultural reference points. Political cartoons use what Adeoti (2023) calls pragmemes—pragmatic acts that exist within specific contexts—to make humorous critiques of political realities. Humor in this format does not simply rely on visuals; it relies on the reader's ability to understand unstated implicatures, which highlight contradictions in governmental action or policies. In addition, Abouelenine (2024) states that caricatures use sarcasm and hyperbole to convey opinions regarding politics. Furthermore, he emphasizes that the pragmatic force behind caricatures is located in the way audiences interpret the implicit criticisms versus explicit statements made through sarcasm or exaggeration.

The way in which audiences interpret the implication of humor creates an environment for humor to be used as a communicative strategy to entertain and challenge authority simultaneously. On another level, researchers like Hirsch (2011) argue that cartoons contain layered meanings outside of their literal depiction and therefore require audiences to apply inferential reasoning skills to fully comprehend the intended humor. Therefore, the humor created in cartoons is an example of implicative humor based upon a social-political backdrop, where audiences share common symbolisms, metaphorical representations, and ironic expressions contained within the cartoon. As Kotthoff (2006) has stated, one of the main areas of study provided by pragmatic analysis demonstrates that humor strategies used in political cartoons are not universally applicable joke structures but instead represent context-specific forms of communication. Thusly, audience interpretation plays a crucial role when determining whether or not a political cartoon successfully conveys its message: in order for a political cartoon to be successful in conveying its intended message, its audience must first be able to decipher the implicatures contained within the cartoon in relation to their current political awareness.

The 16th-century understanding of "humor" contributed to its eventual application to describe any form of a departure from social norms. Ibraheem and Abbas (2016) report that individuals who deviated from the norm were referred to as "humor", implying they are perceived as oddities or laughed at. This association of "humor" with being an object of laughter/ridicule is the first step towards associating "humor" with fun. Martin and Ford (2018) state that the word 'humor' enters into the realm of comedy. From a linguistic perspective, the concept of humor can have many aspects but has distinct characteristics

through which it is developed. These include: puns, irony, sarcasm, wit, and contrastive statements relative to the speaker(s) that produce them. Humor is characterized by the dominance of non-linguistic features of the situation and how humor is delivered.

Research Problem

The research problem of this study is situated within the gap between the ways in which linguistics examines humor in political cartoons and the manner in which audiences use implicature to interpret those meanings from political cartoon humor. The political cartoons have long been viewed as effective satirical and critical instruments for social commentary; however, there has been little scholarly attention toward developing a systematic pragmatic explanation of how humor (e.g., irony, exaggeration, metaphors) generates additional implied meaning beyond what can be determined by analyzing the literal text or image. Many studies treat cartoons as purely visual and rhetorical artifacts, neglecting the pragmatic process involved in interpreting unstated messages in light of sociopolitical contexts. Therefore, this study addresses the need for a systematic examination of the role of pragmatics in examining the relationship between humor strategies used in political cartoons and how implicature influences audience interpretations and, therefore, contributes to the effectiveness of the cartoons as forms of political communication.

Research Objective and Question

The main objective of this research project is to show how political cartoonists utilize various types of humor strategies to create humor within a pragmatics framework using tools such as implicature, and ultimately to explore how those audience members who view the cartoons perceive these strategies to demonstrate how they communicate and have an influence on social and political issues in media discourse. By doing so, this project will look at two aspects of the issue: linguistics/pragmatics (the way humor is created), and interpretation/audience (the way audiences see and react). This approach provides balance to each aspect of the study – the creation of the text vs. the reaction to it. The major research question is: How do political cartoonists use pragmatic mechanisms like implicature in developing humorous strategies in their work, and what do the audiences viewing these cartoons infer from those strategies as far as how they contribute to communicating social and political messages and issues?

Research Significance

The significance of this research is due to its creating a connection between theoretical studies of pragmatics and media discourse (humor strategies used by political cartoonists), through analysis of the ways in which these use implicature and reader interpretation to create effective communication acts. Through the investigation of how readers interpret implied messages, the study creates an enhanced understanding of how cartoons are utilized both for entertainment purposes and for political commentary and raising public awareness.

literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research is based upon the principles of Pragmatic theory, specifically the theory of implicature developed by Grice. As stated by Wilson and Sperber (2022), implicature theories help explain how indirect means are used to infer meaning as opposed to direct verbal or written statements. Political cartoons utilize this mechanism extensively as they frequently create their humorous effects through implication, rather than depiction. Using Adeoti's (2023) concept of pragmas, this theoretical model identifies cartoons as pragmatic acts in a specific social context. Humor mechanisms serve as communicative devices employed within a critical strategy. As Abouelenine (2024) has indicated, caricatures use extreme representations and sarcasm to convey an indirect form of criticism, emphasizing the relationship between humor in cartoons and the reader's interpretation. This is consistent with the premises of Sperber and Wilson's (2024) Relevance Theory, which identifies the reader's contextual knowledge as being applied to inferentially interpret the intended meaning. Therefore, the success of the humor is dependent on interpretation. Additionally, Abbas (2019) demonstrated that humor mechanisms used in discourse depend on implicature, where the inferred unstated meaning is derived from the sociopolitical contexts. Therefore, the theoretical framework combines Gricean implicature, Relevance Theory, and pragmatic acts to provide explanations for how humor mechanisms used in political cartoons work. Moreover, it establishes that the interpretation of the audience will be the deciding factor in achieving the communication and critical purposes of using humor mechanisms. In combination, these theoretical frameworks provide a perspective for analyzing cartoonists' creations not just as visual forms of satire but as pragmatic texts requiring active inferential engagement.

Humor is as old as language communication and has been present in all forms of verbal and non-verbal expression throughout history. Humor has the potential to evoke laughter from the audience either consciously or unconsciously. According to Ross (1998: 2), “Humor creates an atmosphere of relief from anxiety, anger, and pain; its profile is high in society” – as Humor plays a lot of role in human society. Matos (2012) states that Humor brings people together under shared laughter. This suggests that, unlike being an individualized phenomenon, Humor is a collective phenomenon. Thus, it acts as a method of bringing people together. Moreover, Humor also plays some sociological roles. Tsakona and Popa (2011) contend that there is no complete sociological consensus concerning the sociological roles of Humor. Despite this, Humor functions as a tool for social inclusion and exclusion. Political Humor refers to any type of humorous content that does not just refer to politics but works towards achieving a political purpose via addressing political issues, individuals, processes, events, or institutions. It has been identified as a resource for identifying, highlighting, and mocking the inconsistencies that arise from political discourse and action. These inconsistencies are political shortcomings that deviate from political norms, and therefore, because of this nonconformity, they become obvious sources of information for the mass media. LoCastro (2013) indicates that political humor informs its audience about the political realities and shows them that this is indeed a reality characterized by inconsistencies.

Political humor typically develops into political satire jokes or other types of humorous text or images that often accompany the commentaries made during comic sketches aimed at ridiculing the mistakes of government officials: their actions, behavior, or attitudes, which can include incompetence, recklessness, or corruption, among others. However, the study of cartooning as a form of communication was justified by artists who utilized their sketchy lines to describe complex events and articulate messages that painstakingly summarized thousands of words into one image. LoCastro (2003) notes that the culturally and socially outraged responses generated by such forms of art demonstrate the ability of cartoons to act as indicators of levels of political freedoms within societies and to show "cultural attitudes and values" while recording and maintaining many common beliefs. Such visual artifacts have the capability to quickly create short criticisms that point out the shortcomings of their subject matter and, therefore, can usually provide quicker commentary than articles written in newspapers that address similar topics. For all these reasons, cartoons have long been a staple of the curtain in both Nigerian newspapers and magazines.

An overview would indicate that virtually every daily newspaper and weekly magazine publishes numerous cartoons and comic strip publications. Virtually all Nigerian newspapers published cartoons and comic strips focused on social-political-economic matters of concern in Nigeria or as illustrations of some editorial content. Political cartoons are a very powerful form of virtual communication in Nigerian newspapers. Walker (2003) Political cartoons serve as a means of informing, educating, and entertaining people on societal occurrences in humorous ways. Political cartoons are part of history and were specifically developed for a certain viewing audience in a very specific time frame. Political cartoons represent the popular culture. They give insight into the current social trends and illustrate how particular events will develop a shared understanding of particular issues for a specified social group. They are repositories of what has been jointly understood by the community. Cohen (2018) notes that a significant characteristic of political cartoons is that they are largely satirical. They entertain their audience through humor that is easily acceptable and resistant-free, impacting their audience due to the spontaneous way the message is conveyed. Generally speaking, political cartoons lampoon public officials and/or parties, demonstrating the differences between those privileged members of society and those who are less fortunate. Therefore, political cartoons' unsubstantiated accusations display the irony, absurdity, or inefficiency of circumstances. Thus, cartoons and humor have historically provided irrefutable evidence of their presence and impact in the communication process of the old social institution called politics. Cartoon humor derives its base from a variety of societal problems, whether negative or positive. Humor is utilized not only politically but also economically.

Empirical Studies

The following empirical studies show a clear idea about the content of this topic. Alam (2025) studied humor as soft power: caricature and the ethics of political criticism in contemporary media. This study examined how visual humor plays a part in the dynamics

of political communication, representations of power, cultural diplomacy, and the ethical problems associated with the use of visual humor in the digital media age. By using an integrated literature review approach, this study synthesized 34 academic articles from several disciplines, namely, political communication, visual studies, media ethics, and international relations. Five primary themes were identified through an analysis of the articles. These include: humor as a strategy for political communication, caricatures as visual representations of power, humor as soft power in cultural diplomacy, the ethics and responsibilities of visual humor, and the changes in visual humor caused by the digital media age. The results also indicate that visual humor can be both an effective and sensitive method for changing public opinion, creating images of power, and facilitating relationships among nations geographically apart. However, it has been shown to have the potential to violate the principles of ethical representation. This article introduces a conceptual framework called "Ethical Soft Power Framework for Visual Humor" as a theoretical tool to examine the role of visual humor in modern-day politics.

Abouelenine (2024) investigated the extent to which people can express their opinions, in writing, but also visually by means of a caricature or an illustration. Political cartoons, often used to satirize political situations, may help provide an example of this type of expression. The current research aimed to analyze four different caricatures published in four different online newspapers, namely The Guardian, The New York Times, The Arab Weekly, and The Week. The caricatures illustrated and described a single event in Gaza over ten years. From a pragmatic point of view, using Speech Act theory, Gricean maxims, irony and rhetorical devices, as well as characteristics of political caricatures, were applied to analyze these caricatures. The results showed that all caricatures included various types of both explicit and implicit speech acts related to themes such as death, hunger for revenge, violence, etc. Furthermore, the research demonstrated that violations of Gricean maxims of Quality and Quantity had a major effect on enabling each caricature's message to be expressed. Finally, it has been found that exaggerations and analogies enabled cartoonists' opinions to be understood via irony. Cartoonists were able to convince their audience through ethos, pathos, and logos.

Adeoti (2023) carried out a pragmatic study of political humor within selected political cartoons. The study assessed humor related to corruption, embezzlement, health, and economic issues in Nigeria using selected political cartoons. The theoretical frame for this study was based on Jacob Mey’s Pragmatic Act theory. Twelve data points were purposively taken from three different Nigerian newspaper publications (The Daily Trust and The Vanguard) to assess the study. Political cartoons are used in order to create humor; however, they aim to correct societal evils by creating an act or a 'pact' that informs, castigates, ridicules, exposes, blames, etc. The study further explores the language used in political humor. This study employed a qualitative approach. The findings revealed that the ‘inference’, ‘reference’, and ‘inferred’ meanings of the ‘Shared Situational Knowledge’ were significant in the comprehension of how each 'pact' was interpreted in relation to the political cartoon. In conclusion, this study finds that humor created via political cartoons is

not just intended to elicit laughter but also to highlight the evil deeds of politicians and their mannerisms when using language in Nigeria.

Cohen (2018) studied the process by which individuals can learn pragmatics through either a native or a non-native speaker. This book is about how both non-native and native speakers of English may improve upon their own classroom methods to better prepare students in using the pragmatics of the TL. Although the main focus of this book is on the experience of instructors as they teach their students the pragmatic aspects of the TL, it does make note of those aspects of teaching pragmatics where being a non-native speaker may have some advantages over being a native speaker and vice versa. In addition, this book presents numerous suggestions on how both types of instructors could use alternative instructional approaches to offset potential deficiencies in their knowledge of pragmatics. Other topics covered in this book include: Ideas for motivating student interest in pragmatics; the potential for technological assistance in teaching and learning pragmatics; the development of learning strategies for pragmatics; assessing pragmatics; and how to research pragmatics. This publication would likely be of value to teachers, teacher-educators, and students interested in doing and/or enhancing research related to teaching and learning pragmatics.

Methodology

The methodology section includes research design, data collection, data analysis, and research procedures.

Research Design

This research uses an interpretive qualitative research design based upon pragmatic theory. Specifically, it employs Grice's theory of implicature. This type of research design allows for an emphasis on interpretive analysis. More precisely, it looks at how political cartoons utilize humor strategies to create implied meaning and how audiences are able to derive those implied meanings.

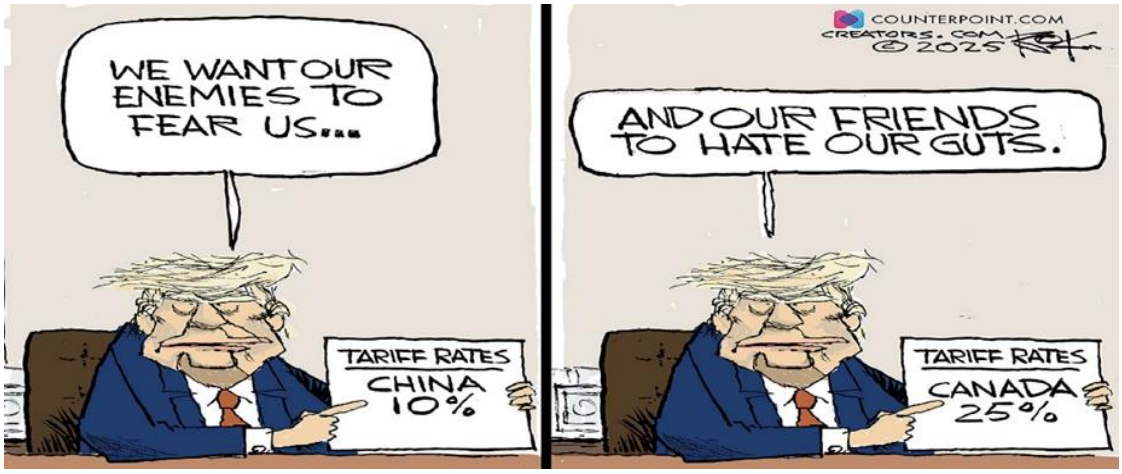
Data Collection

Dataset as composed of 5 political cartoons chosen to best illustrate various political contexts. The potential data sources can include local newspapers, online media sites such as CNN.com, Aljazeera.net, The New Yorker Magazine, and so forth. While there are many possible approaches to selecting a sample size, the researcher has used a method called "purposive" sampling. It has allowed me to select cartoons that represent different types of humor strategies (e.g., satire, irony, exaggeration, metaphor) and come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Alongside collecting these cartoons, he has also archived each with metadata related to its publication source, date of publication, and the overall political context in which it was created. This contextual metadata will be useful when analyzing my data.

Data Analysis

Each cartoon was analyzed through a way of pragmatic discourse analysis, using Grice's implicature framework. First, the categorized and specific humor strategies that appeared in each cartoon were categorized and identified (e.g., satire, irony, exaggeration, metaphor). Then, the researcher looked at each cartoon to see if any implicit meanings were being communicated to the audience via implicature. In order to understand the audience's interpretations of the cartoons, the researcher looked at each cartoon in relation to its particular political setting. As an example of how the audience understands cartoons' implied messages, the researcher will look at what forms of cultural knowledge the audience brings to their understanding of the cartoons, as well as any common assumptions that exist among audience members with respect to government or society. It will be demonstrated here how humor functions as a form of communication by means of inference rather than through direct expression. A total of 5 political cartoons were chosen from various sources, including local newspapers, online media, The New Yorker, Al Jazeera, Arab News, etc. Each cartoon was studied for the types of humor strategies employed (e.g., satire, irony, hyperbole, metaphor), as well as the perceptions of the audience toward these cartoons from varying political perspectives. This study investigated implicature and how the audience perceives it. Below is a pragmatic structure for analyzing the 5 political cartoons, including Grice's implicature model:

1. The first political cartoon is:



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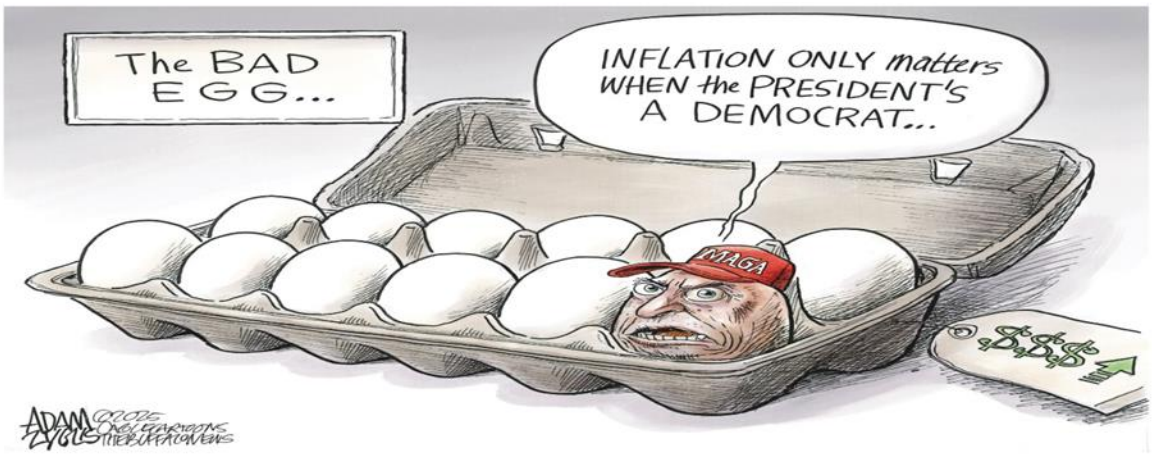
1. Regarding the context for political cartoons and types of humor used, this cartoon uses satire to ridicule the approach of the political leader shown and exaggerates the results of tariffs. It also uses irony when comparing two quotes ("Enemies should fear us" vs. "Friends should hate our guts") to show the illogic of alienating friends while trying to intimidate enemies. Exaggeration is used to further emphasize the irrational nature of the tariff levels (10% vs. 25%). Finally, metaphors are used throughout the cartoon when showing tariffs as an example of diplomatic warfare, where a weapon (economic policy) is being used as an instrument of aggression.

2. Implications from Inferences via Maxims Flouted: Using Grice's implicature model, we can see that the cartoon violates two maxims: relevance (relation) and truthfulness (quality), which creates several implicatures. For example, although the statement "They should fear us" is made about all nations that impose tariffs against the U.S., it implies that this policy has failed since many countries do not "fear" America anymore. Similarly, the implication of "they should hate our guts" implies that this policy has alienated other nations. Together, these implications create another implicature: that the leader's trade policy is not an economically based decision-making process, but rather a hostile one, that is damaging to America's relationship with both friendly and unfriendly nations.

3. How Audiences Interpret Political Cartoons: How well an audience interprets the content of a political cartoon is largely dependent upon what type of prior cultural and political information they have acquired. Individuals knowledgeable about current events surrounding trade disputes and/or tariff wars would likely perceive the disparity between penalizing allied nations and challenging rival nations. Most audiences would agree that friendly nations should be treated better than rival nations. The comedic effect of the cartoon takes advantage of this belief and increases its comedic value. An audience reading the cartoon as a commentary on the style of the leader's actions may view them as reckless, inconsistent, or uncaring about working with other nations.

4. The Pragmatic Function of Humor: Political cartoons use humor as a way to provide indirect communication regarding their message. While the cartoon does not directly state "the leader is irrational", it encourages viewers to infer this conclusion based on irony and exaggeration. Therefore, humor in political cartoons serves as a means to encourage an audience to make conclusions based on their own inferences rather than providing those conclusions directly. Humor also acts as a form of communicative shorthand that requires an audience member to infer a conclusion through the violation of conversational maxims such as coherence, quantity, manner, relation, and quality. As such, humor in political cartoons is not simply for amusement purposes, but for engaging an audience in interpreting messages actively and establishing persuasive arguments through implicature.

2. The second political cartoon is:



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1. Regarding the cartoon's use of satire, irony, exaggeration, and metaphor to depict an example of hypocrisy related to party lines on inflation;

The Satire: The cartoon satirizes how we selectively get outraged over inflation. It makes fun of how we have been using inflation as a means of attacking our opponent, showing us that we may be lying about the real concern of inflation.

The Irony: The "Bad Egg" (the egg with the angry face) is complaining because there is a democrat president. This highlights the fact that people do not complain about everything that happens; they only complain when their party line is being attacked.

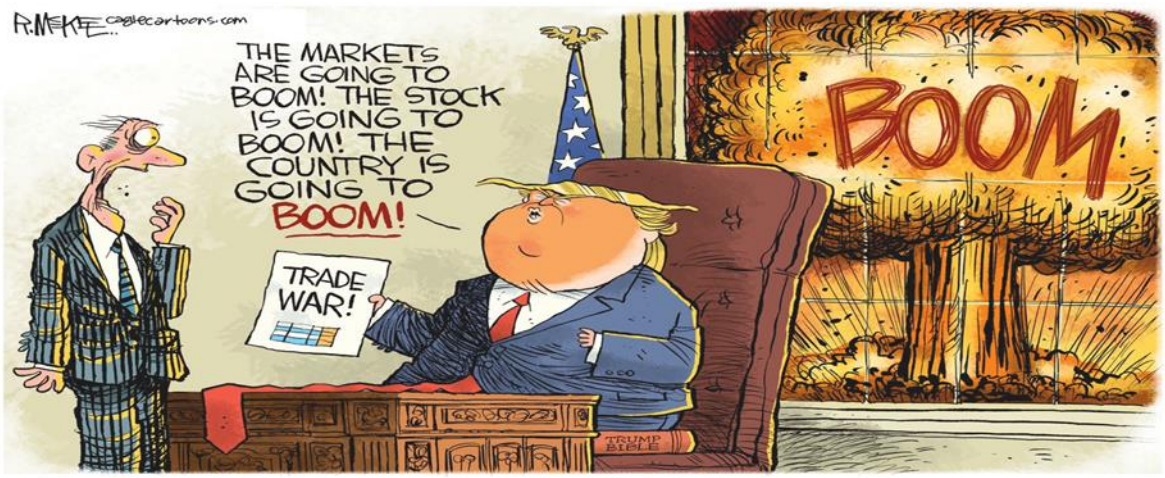
The Exaggeration: The Angry Face of the Egg and the rising price tag are examples of exaggeration. These items represent an extreme case of what happens during times of high inflation.

The Metaphor: The "Bad Egg" is an example of a metaphor. The Bad Egg represents a partisan voice or person who uses an event like inflation to further the goals of his own party line.

2. Concerning the implicit meanings created by implicature, Grice stated four maxims of communication. These maxims include Quality (to tell the truth), Relation (be relevant), Manner (say things undoubtedly), and Quantity (say enough). By violating two of these maxims, the cartoon creates an implicature. In addition to creating an implicature for why someone would be complaining about inflation, the cartoon also has another implicature, which states that politicians often take advantage of economic events such as inflation to attack their political opponents.

3. In the field of audience interpretation: When viewing cartoons, viewers bring some level of understanding into the process based on their past experiences. For instance, many Americans know that a MAGA hat represents a conservative/Republican point of view. As well, many understand that inflation is generally seen as something that should be addressed regardless of one's political views. Therefore, the cartoon is interpreted by many as pointing out a form of hypocrisy in addressing inflation as a partisan issue. Some viewers believe that the cartoon presents a perspective where politicians criticize inflation in order to gain an advantage politically, and therefore can be classified as opportunistic.

3. The third political cartoon is:



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1. Political context and the strategies of using humor: The cartoon is critiquing political rhetoric about economics and trade.

Satire: Satirically, the cartoon makes fun of excessive optimistic claims made by politicians regarding economic conditions by illustrating what happens when such conditions turn catastrophic.

Irony: In the cartoon, "boom" is used repeatedly; however, the word's repeated use is ironic since the explosion outside visually opposes the optimism of the word. Therefore, an extreme form of irony occurs in which a person says something opposite to his true beliefs.

Exaggeration: The explosion shown at the end of the cartoon dramatically exaggerates the idea that there can be no difference between successful economic development and actual physical destruction.

Metaphor: The term "boom" represents economic success; however, the cartoon redefines the metaphor as representing catastrophic events.

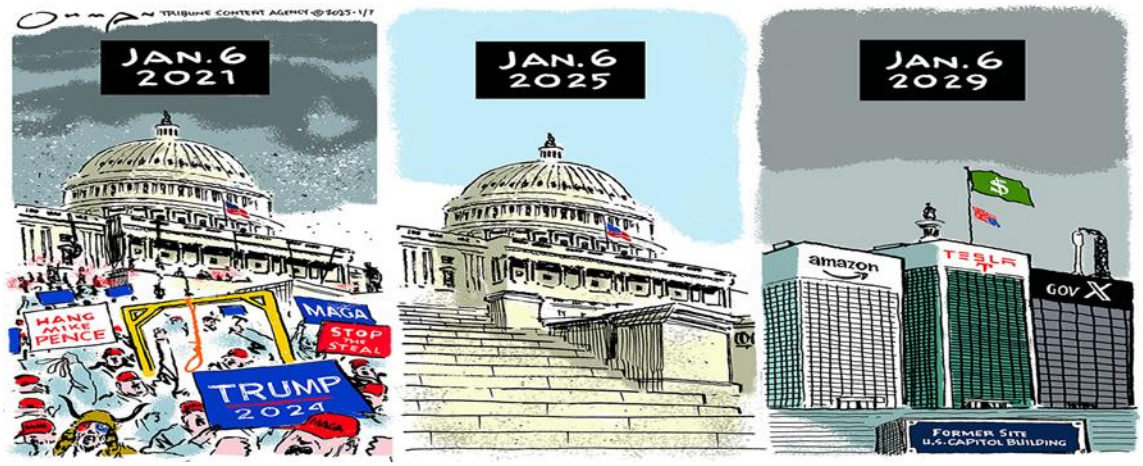
2. A political cartoonist uses implicit meanings via implicature: Political cartoonists generate implicatures from their cartoons by violating two maxims stated by Grice (i.e., maxims of truthfulness and clarity). Violations of these maxims create implicatures. For example, if a political cartoonist states that a politician has promised economic prosperity with "booms", then he or she has violated Grice's Maxim of Quality. Since quality means truthfulness and honesty, violation of quality implies that the statements made by the politician were likely dishonest. Furthermore, violations of Grice's Maxims of Manner (clarity) also imply that the politician was probably unclear about what was going to happen. Thus, it is inferred by the reader that the politician's statements were likely both dishonest and unclear about what would occur. Therefore, it is inferred by the reader that even though the politician said they would bring economic prosperity through "booms",

their statements masked the reality that their policies would actually cause damage to financial systems and societal structures.

3. Reader interpretation in a political context: Reader interpretation is dependent upon shared knowledge of culture and politics. Readers understand "boom" as being related to common metaphors associated with economic growth. Readers also have prior knowledge that government officials are supposed to promote social stability and not instability. Readers interpret the cartoon as a critique of government officials' irresponsible promotion of economic policy as victory, implying that those same policies will ultimately lead to financial system collapse and societal unrest.

4. Humor as a pragmatic action: Humor is a type of pragmatic action that relies on inference rather than explicit statement. Rather than saying directly, "your economic policies will destroy our economy," the cartoon implies such through irony and visual contradictions. Using humor as a pragmatic action forces readers to recreate the implied message by inference. Therefore, this illustrates that humor in political cartoons is often used pragmatically to provide indirect critique based on shared cultural knowledge and inference.

4. The fourth political cartoon is:



https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=MSVwAJbM&id=F339B51B4AE7A5E2035C8C948C084CEAA4C112ED&thid=OIP.

1. Political context and strategies used in this cartoon are criticizing the progression of democracy within the United States from an era of political unrest to one of corporate control.

Satire: Ridiculing both political extremes and the gradual decline of democratic institutions. Irony: The "Boom" of Democracy is now depicted with corporate skyscrapers, illustrating that the power of decision-making has shifted from citizens to corporations.

Exaggeration: Dramatic representation of the fear of losing government accountability through privatization and private ownership.

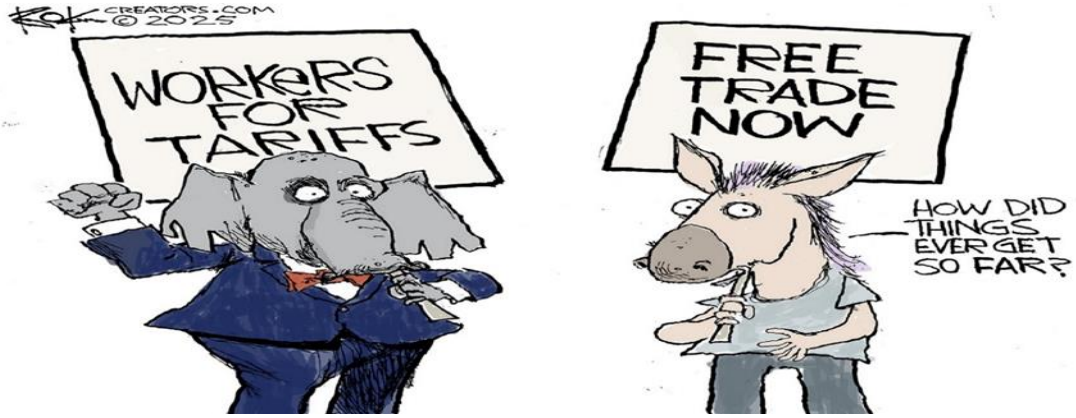
Metaphor: Representing the Capitol Building's transition into corporate-owned buildings illustrates democracy being consumed by corporate interests.

2. Using implicature as a method to convey implicit meanings in the cartoon. The cartoon uses Grice's maxims of relation (the relevance of what is stated) and quality (what is stated is true) to create implicatures. The reader infers that the violence of 2021 and apathy of 2025 created the conditions for corporate takeover in 2029. The reader also infers that democracy is fragile and susceptible to destruction from both extremist actions and large economic power.

3. How the interpretation of the cartoon occurs based upon shared knowledge of culture and politics. Shared knowledge of culture and politics allows viewers to remember the events at the Capitol on January 6th, 2021, and identify the corporate logos in the cartoon as representative of large economic power. Viewers generally expect democracy to be enduring, and the cartoon takes advantage of this assumption by depicting its demise. Readers of the cartoon can infer that the cartoonist's message is that unregulated extreme views and unchecked economic influence are threats to democratic institutions.

4. Humor as a form of communication: Humor within this cartoon utilizes inference over explicit statements. For example, the cartoon does not directly state "Democracy Will Collapse." Instead, it encourages the viewer to make this connection using irony and metaphors. Using humor, the cartoonist provides a communicative act encouraging the reader to reconstruct the intended criticism, which requires implicature to achieve the cartoon's desired impact.

5. The fifth political cartoon is:



https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=jZrQ0Fte&id=57049270DB8CCDF7703564CE686A176D4EC2AD40&thid

1. Political Context and Use of Humor: This cartoon makes fun of or criticizes changes in position or contradictions in policy based on the party.

Satire: As an example of satire, it mocks or ridicules the "role reversal" of the Republicans (the elephant) now supporting tariffs while Democrats (the donkey) are calling for free trade.

Irony: The donkey's line, "How did things ever get so far?" is ironic because the situation (i.e., the Republicans supporting tariffs and the Democrats calling for free trade) is opposite from what was traditionally expected.

Exaggeration: The extreme or dramatic nature of the change in the parties' positions is exaggerated. That is, the parties appear to have switched completely in terms of their ideologies.

Metaphor: Using metaphors (e.g., the elephant and the donkey, as party symbols), the cartoon conveys confusion and uncertainty about political identity.

2. Implicit Meaning Via Implicature: Through violation of Grice's maxim of relevance (relation) and Grice's maxim of clarity (manner), the cartoon produces implicatures. In other words, the cartoon implies that the parties are no longer committed to their traditional views/ideologies regarding their economic positions/policies. The reader will also be able to infer that there is less consistency in the political discourse today, and economic policies are being developed more out of necessity/populism than out of any type of commitment to principles.

3. Political Cartoon Audience Interpretation: Viewers must share certain types of cultural/knowledge of political issues to interpret cartoons. For instance, viewers understand that elephants and donkeys are used as symbols for the two major U.S. political parties (Republican and Democratic). Further, as many assume Republicans support free trade and Democrats support tariffs, the cartoon exploits those assumptions. Viewers can therefore infer that the cartoon is commenting on the fact that party ideologies are becoming confused or opportunistic.

4. Humor as A Pragmatic Communicative Act: Humor, in this case, relies upon inference rather than explicit statement. In other words, it doesn't directly state "Party ideologies are confusing"; however, it encourages viewers to make that inference using irony and role reversal. Therefore, humor acts as a pragmatic form of communication because it forces the viewer to reconstruct the intended criticism, which emphasizes implicature as essential to its function. Thus, this illustrates how political cartoons use humor pragmatically; i.e., they utilize the common knowledge and inference of the viewer to provide indirect yet sharp criticism.

Research Result

The research question is: How do political cartoonists use pragmatic mechanisms like implicature in developing humorous strategies in their work, and what do the audiences viewing these cartoons infer from those strategies as far as how they contribute to communicating social and political messages and issues? Humor strategies in political cartoons use pragmatic means to create implicatures by violating the conversation maxim to

allow the audience to create an inferred meaning where no explicit statement was made. The humor mechanism can be satire, irony, hyperbole, and metaphors, which demonstrate the contradiction between reality and political ideology; however, the power behind these mechanisms is the implied ideas that the audience creates. Ironic situations could provide visual evidence of a leader's positive speech with images showing destruction, allowing the audience to infer the reckless nature of the leader. A metaphor (i.e., "a bad egg") represents moral/ideological corruption without making a direct accusation. Ultimately, the audience will interpret the cartoon based on its cultural context, its social reference points (i.e., knowing who and what the Capitol building is), and common assumptions about politics, economics, and government. These shared frames enable cartoons to communicate as a communicative act by critiquing in an indirect manner, involving the reader in creating his own inferential process and demonstrating how political issues affect society through the creation of instability, hypocrisy, and threats to democratic ideals. Therefore, humor strategies used in political cartoons are not simply for entertainment purposes; they are practical communication mechanisms of political discourse that influence our perception of public affairs through implicature.

Discussion

Grice's implicature model provides an explanation for how humor functions in political cartoons; i.e., through irony, satire, exaggeration, and metaphor, which are all forms of implication. Humor functions through Grice's model because it generally represents an example of implied overstatement or explicit communication. In other words, the audience has to use common sense and background information to understand what was intended. Furthermore, the relationship between implicature and humor supports this claim, as Attardo (2008) states that humor is based on making the audience aware of the incongruity through inferential processes. Thus, implicature is fundamental to understanding and interpreting humor. Additionally, Dynel (2013) states that irony and satire in cartoons also function based upon the pragmatic cues provided by the cartoonist, which assist the audience in determining the level of criticism of societal and political institutions being expressed. According to Hamukwaya (2016), humor in discourse can be viewed as a form of socio-political expression, as it may shape societal views and opinions regarding specific issues by providing critiques via indirect communication methods. Therefore, collectively, these researchers provide evidence supporting the conclusion that Grice's implicature model provides a basis for explaining the functioning of humor strategies and their communicative and socio-political effects.

Conclusion

This research concludes that the use of humor in political cartoons is based on pragmatic communication of implicature. Therefore, this type of communication allows for an indirect way to express a message and have it inferred by the audience. Political cartoons are able to convey layers of information using various forms of expression such as satire, irony, exaggeration, and metaphors. In doing so, they require both a common base of

understanding of politics and culture among their intended audience. Through the process of interpreting these political cartoons, humor is demonstrated as a form of communicative action that challenges those who hold power and govern society, as well as involves the audience in the interpretation of implied ideas. Thus, the study demonstrates that humor used in political cartoons serves as a social/political tool for influencing how people think about issues relevant to them, including how they view government or authority, and that it does this by providing very subtle cues that inform public opinion.

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