A PRAGMATIC STUDY OF TAUNT IN CORDEN'S *THE LATE LATE SHOW*

Dr. Wafaa Mokhlos Faisal

University of Babylon, College of Education for Human Sciencs, Iraq

DOI: http://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v12i04.026

ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to analyze the concept of taunt pragmatically in TV talk show. As taunt is found in daily talks, many people have no idea how it is working in the production. Taunt is defined as an intended words that contain humiliating, cruel, demeaning, or bigoted language thinly disguised as jokes. It includes laughter directed at the taunted, not with the taunted. The current study is concerned with identifying of speech acts using in taunt, analysing maxims that are flouted to create taunt, explaining the functions of taunt created through maxims violation expressed by speakers in TV talk show and showing the impoliteness strategies that used in creating taunt. The qualitative and quantitative methods are conducted in this study. The data are in the form of utterances done by speakers. The data are selected from the session of 'The Late Late Show' by James Corden on You Tube Channel. After being collected, the data are analyzed based on two levels: the pragmatic strategies of taunt, and functions of taunt.

The study is concluded that the speech act of criticizing and insulting are widely used in TV talk show. Taunt is used by the speakers to fulfill the functions of, mocking, and provoking, insulting and sometimes to laugh and criticize at the target. The maxims of quantity and quality are flouted by the speaker for the purpose of taunt. sarcasm is the most impoliteness strategy is employed by the speaker to put the target down and make laugh of him.

Keywords: *Pragmatics, Taunt, Speech act, talk show, social media.*

INTRODUCTION

Humans use different strategies and devices to challenge their opponents. Language manipulation such as irony, metaphor, sarcasm, and taunt etc are devices used to achieve the aims of the speaker. Taunt is one of these devices used by people to get their ends. According to John Baugh (2018:137), taunt is one form of insults incorporate offending comments that are provocative in nature. It is intended to harm and involves humiliating, cruel, demeaning, or bigoted language thinly disguised as jokes. Additionally, it includes laughter directed at the taunted, not with the taunted.

In television, many television shows usually deliver taunt to create a humorous situation. Some of the shows are situational comedy, cartoons, drama, and talk show. In this study, the researcher analyzed James Corden in The Late Late Show. This study emphases on one person who is James Corden, the host. James Corden is a humorous host. Another reason the researcher chose James Corden is James Corden, and The Late Late Show is rarely analyzed among other popular talk shows. The data analyzed was the honest headline. In this segment, James Corden presents actual news headlines and follows them up with what the article was trying to say.

This study is limited to analyse taunt on pragmatic level and tries to answer the following questions: (1) What are the speech acts of the taunt expressions used by James Cordenin The Late Late Show? (2) Which functions of taunt are most commonly employed in James Corden's" The Late Late Show"? (3) How flouting maxims done by James Corden in The Late Late Show were used to create humor?

The study aims at: (1) Identifying the most common speech act of the taunt expressions used by James Corden in The Late Late Show. (2) Specifying the functions of taunt used by James Corden in The Late Late Show. (3) Identifying the flouting maxim used by James Corden in The Late Late Show.

To fulfill the above-mentioned aims, the following steps will be followed: (1) Surveying the literature of taunt, its modes and functions. (2) Analysing the data which is represented five videos which are taken from utterances by James Corden in The Late Late Show. The Late Late Show is an American late-night talk show that is hosted by James Corden on CBS.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Taunt and Definitions

According to Coloroso (1991:12) taunt is always one-sided and represents an imbalance of power that is intended to harm by demeaning, ridiculing or dominating the target. It involves laughing directly at someone not with him. Usually with a sarcastic tone of voice involving cruel comments or humiliation and often exhibiting aggressive body language like shaking of the head, smirking or rolling of the eyes and this is called non-verbal taunt.

Taunting is one form of direct bullying behavior that can be engaged by boys more than girls. Some research has found that direct bullying behavior goes up during the elementary school years, peaks in middle school, and goes down in high school (Winkler, 2014:14).

Most criticism of people is mild and not done face to face. Taunting itself does not usually entail mentioning people's temperaments or personality traits, but rather jokes and pranks that potentially lead to angry responses. Repeated taunting of those known to become angry makes respondents rukkur (Gaffin,1995:151).

The difference between teasing and taunting is almost clear. Teasing based on a close relation and emotion between the

teaser and the target. There usually be a friendly ends to make laugh with the target. Taunting on the other hand, based on hate, hostility to harm and make laugh and fun at the targets not with them. For example, proper teasing says, in effect:

1. "I know all your little oddities and faults, but as they are part of what makes you special, I find them charming."

Taunting, in contrast, makes only the harsh statement such as:

2. "I have noticed what is wrong with you."

Based on the above investigation, taunt is a means of criticism to hurt and humiliate others by using two modes of taunt; verbal, such as acts of laughing at the target, hurt jokes, name calling etc. Non-verbal mode of taunt which employs body language like shaking of the head, smirking or rolling of the eyes.

Modes of Taunt

Taunt has two modes, verbal and non-verbal. Verbal taunt is more effective on the target than the other one. People usually use non-verbal form of taunting as a way of showing their bullying on someone.

Non-Verbal Taunt

This form is represented by gestures. There are many forms of gestures to taunting others. For example, "beckoning sign" (Index finger sticking out of the clenched fist, palm facing the gesturer. The finger moves repeatedly towards the gesturer (in a hook) as to draw something nearer. It has the general meaning of "come here", although it is normally seen as condescending or anyway impolite.

Verbal Taunt

Another mode of taunt is the verbal one which is represented by (verbal attack or verbal assault) is the act of forcefully criticizing, insulting, or denouncing another person. Characterized by underlying anger and hostility, it is a destructive form of communication intended to harm the self-concept of the other person and produce negative emotions. This way of taunt is more affective on the recipient and it can be aggravated by the media, for example: criticizing and insulting comments on Youtube, Twitter or Facebook. The present study is limited to the verbal mode of taunt which is achieved by James Corden in The Late Late Show.

The Functions of Taunt

Taunts include insulting remarks that are provocative in nature. people do not merely mock a person(s), but they jeer at the recipient(s) in ways that frequently contain sneering sarcasm that might trigger hostile physical reactions by those who have been taunted. Accordingly to what has been mentioned, taunting can perform many functions as insulting, attacking, provoking, mocking, criticizing, and laughing.

Searle's Speech Acts Classification

Searle (1969) suggests five types of speech acts: declarations (e.g, appointing), representatives (e.g. asserting), expressives (e.g. thanking) , directives (e.g. requesting) and commissives (e.g. promising). The principle according to which he classifies the five categories concerns the illocutionary force of the speech act. That is derived from the essential conditions of an act (the condition that defines what the act 'counts' as). Thus, the following is the classification of speech acts according to Searle (1969):

1-Declarations: speech acts that serve to change the world or a given reality via their utterance.

2-Representatives: speech acts that the speaker uses when he believes to be the case or not. Therefore, they convey statements, assertions, conclusions and descriptions.

3-Expressives: speech acts that state what the speaker feels (psychological states), for example, expressing pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy, sorrow, etc. They can be caused by something the speaker does or the hearer does, but they are about the speaker's experience. In using an expressive the speaker makes the words fit the world (of feeling).

4- Directives: speech acts that when speakers use, they get someone else to do something. They express what the speaker wants. As orders, requests, commands, suggestions, etc. They can be either positive or negative. When using a directive, the speaker attempts to make the world fit the words (via the hearer).

5-Commissives: speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some future action. They can be uttered to express what the speaker intends to do. For example: threats, promises and refusals. They are produced by the speaker alone or as a member of a group. When using a commissive, "the speaker undertakes to make the world fits the words (via the speaker)".

Pragmatic Aspect of Taunt

Pragmatics has an important role in creating taunt. It is because context and intention are needed to understand the utterance. Soedjarmo et al. (2016) stated that to make jokes in school jokes, the use of reference and maxim in pragmatics are noteworthy. The importance of reference is measured to see whether the speaker and the interlocutor share the same referent or not (Soedjarmo et al., 2016). Soedjarmo et al. (2016) also stated that taunt is created when it is purposely unrelated to the object meant, and it also means that the speaker does not follow the cooperative principle. Regarding disobedience of cooperative principle, Qadir (2018) stated that breaking the maxim is one of the mechanisms which arise humorous sense in a comic situation. Raskin and Attardo (cited in Anggraini, 2014, p. 14) state that taunt, on the one hand, involves some degrees of violation of the Cooperative Principle, but, on the other hand, taunt is also a cooperative act because it can convey information.

Cooperative Principle

Communication needs the effectiveness and efficiency of delivering the contribution of information that is easier for the speaker and the addressee. In 1975, the cooperative principle was introduced by a philosopher of language, Grice and Yule (2006) state that "cooperative principle is about making the speaker contribution such as is required, at the stage in which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you engage." Based on the cooperative principle, the speaker and the addressee should be cooperative. In cooperative principle, there are sub principles that the speaker has to obey to respond to each other and make an exchange in a conversation. If the speaker and hearer follow the cooperative principle, they will get a successful conversation.

Maxim

Maxim is part of the cooperative principle. Maxim is a general principle underlying the efficient cooperative use of language, which jointly expresses a general cooperative principle. Maxim is a basic guideline that should be obeyed by the speaker and the hearer to make a successful conversation. According to Grice (1975), the maxim is classified into four types. The four types of the maxim are maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of relation, and the maxim of manner.

Maxim of Quantity: According to Yule (1975), the maxim of quantity has two rules. First is the speaker should make the

contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange). Second is the speaker does not make their contribution more informative than is required.

Maxim of Quality: According to Yule (1975), the maxim of quality also has two rules. The speaker should give a contribution to truthfully and sincerely. The speakers should not say what they believe to be false or say anything. They know that it has a lack of evidence.

Maxim of Relation: The maxim of relation asks the speaker to be relevant. The speaker should relate clearly to the utterance he or she means. It is required to be relevant to the context and situation in which the utterance occurs (Thomas, 1995).

Maxim of Manner: In following the maxim of manner, the speakers are required to be perspicuous. They should specifically avoid obscurity of expression, avoid ambiguity, say briefly (avoid unnecessary prolixity), and say orderly.

Flouting Maxim

A situation called as flouting maxim is when the speaker intentionally disobeys maxim principle because the speaker assumes that the hearer is able to infer the implied meaning of what is said (Amianna

& Putranti, 2017). It means that the speaker adds another meaning besides the literal meaning. The conversational implicature added when flouting is not intended to deceive the recipient of the conversation. The purpose is to make the recipient look for other meanings (Thomas, 1995). Flouting a maxim also signals to the hearer that the speaker is not following the cooperative principle (Cruse, 2000).

Impoliteness Theory

Culpeper (2010:233) describes impoliteness as a negative attitude to specific actions that exist in certain situations; It is reinforced by social interpersonal perceptions, preferences and/or values, like, actually how the personalities of one individual or group are represented in contact by others. Situated attitudes are interpreted negatively because they contrast with how one perceives them to be, how one wants them to be and/or how one believes they should be.

According to Culpeper (2010:356) , these actions always have or are assumed to provide emotional effects for at least one person, i.e. they offend or are supposed to cause it . Different factors that intensify how an impolite action is considered to be , for example, whether

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or not one considers a behaviour is being intended . Culpeper sets forward a set of impolite super strategies like bald-on-record impoliteness, off record impoliteness, negative impoliteness, positive impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness, and without hold politeness.

THE ANALYSIS

The Model of Analysis

This study eclectics a model to analyse taunt pragmatically which basically depends on Searle's (1969) model for classifying speech acts, Grice (1975), Martin's (2003) aggressive humor, and Culpeper's (2010) impoliteness theory.
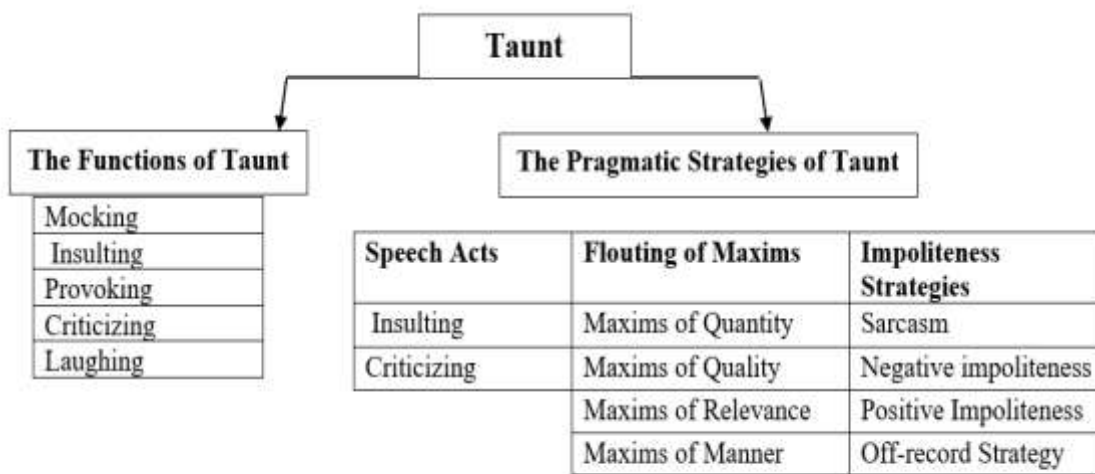

Speech Acts	Flouting of Maxims	Impoliteness Strategies
Insulting	Maxims of Quantity	Sarcasm
Criticizing	Maxims of Quality	Negative impoliteness
	Maxims of Relevance	Positive Impoliteness
	Maxims of Manner	Off-record Strategy

Figure (1) The Pragmatic Model of Taunt

Data Analysis and Findings

It is important to be mentioned that because of the limits of this study 'five videos' that include taunt expressions are tackled to test the workability of the eclectic model of the current study.

Extract 1 (19/03/2018)

- *It said foreign leaders showered the Trump family with over $140,000 worth of gifts.*

- *The honest headline should have said <u>'once again foreigners shower Trump'.</u>*

In the utterance above, Corden uttered taunt. He did it to emphasize that foreigners are the only people who shower Trump, while his citizens, Americans, would not do it. It is identified as aggressive action as he used taunt. The audience found it funny because they knew what he meant. The honest headline became taunting because everyone thought it was a mistake to

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shower Trump. Thus; the function of taunt here is to mock and criticize, insult and provoke Trump by his utterance. The most common speech act used in this utterance is criticizing speech act. James flouted the maxim of quantity because he was uninformative trying to make people seek the implied meaning of his speech. He also flouted the maxim of manner for the purpose of taunt. It is because he said less than is required. It is also obscure because he did not give any explanation. Sarcasm is used mostly as an impoliteness strategy because the speaker tried to put the taunted down.

indicated as aggressive action because he criticized the writer of the news. Speech act of criticizing and insulting are used mostly in this utterance. The speaker tries to criticize the writer of the news by the phrase *bleep*. Maxim of quantity is flouting by the speaker because the speaker talks too short, as well as, maxim of quality because the speaker uttered something not true tries to make a sarcastic statement. Concerning impoliteness, the speaker uses sarcasm to make fun of the writer of the news. In this strategy, he tries to put down the writer as he is nothing.

Extract 2 (30/01/2018)

- *It says 'swallowing pills felled with good poop effective in fighting potentially deadly disease'.*
- *The honest headline should have read 'whoever wrote that is full of [bleep]'.*

Corden uttered swear because the original headline talks about something strange for him. He thought that how people can eat pills felled poop. He thought that the writer of the news was irrational. The curses that released his thinking of the writer made the taunt to mock and laugh at the writer. It is

Extract 3 (14/06/2018)

- *Here is a headline from The Huffington Post that reads, 'Amazon admits Alexa device eavesdropped on Portland family'.*

- *That is the headline, but the honest headline should have read 'yeah, it was just this one family'.*

In the honest headline above, James mocked Alexa by saying as if Alexa only eavesdropped on the Portland family. It was widely known that Alexa could eavesdrop customers. It means that every customer of Alexa has eavesdropped. It

is identified as aggressive action because he taunted Alexa by mocking and provoking Alexa. Speech act of insulting and criticizing are used in this utterance. The maxim of quantity is flouted by the speaker because he was uninformative as required. Impoliteness strategies are used by the speaker for the purpose of taunt. The speaker used sarcasm and negative impoliteness to damage Alexa's face.

Extract 4 (04/04/2019)

- *Here is the headline from FOX News and it reads 'the town elects three years old goat to serve as honorary mayor'.*

- *The honest should have read <u>'Bernie Sanders reveals his running mate'.</u>*

The honest headline was funny because everyone thought Bernie Sanders made mistake in the last presidential nomination. Bernie Sanders lost the 2016 democratic presidential nomination. He was known for his obsession with presidential election. In the honest headline above, Corden ridiculed Bernie Sanders by saying that the goat was his running mate. It is identified as aggressive action. The function of taunt here is to insult and mock Sanders by

describing him as goat. Speech act of insulting and criticizing are used in this utterance. The speaker flouted the maxim of quality because he tries to make fun of Sanders. James employed sarcasm to insult Sanders by calling him 'goat'. Off-record strategy is used by James to insult Sanders in direct way by calling him a 'goat'.

Extract 5 (26/07/2019)

Here is a headline from New York Times and it, New York Times, and it says 'clown giving kids candy from car meant well, police tell a relieved town'.

The honest headline should have read <u>'killer clown is also a good liar'.</u>

In the honest headline above, Corden ridiculed the police. Corden's honest headline implied that the clown was giving kids candy obviously lied. It is identified as aggressive action because Corden taunted the police that just trusts what the clown said. James Corden released his thinking about how police could easily believe on what the clown said.

The function of taunt in the above utterance is criticizing, provoking and mocking. The speech act of criticizing is used widely by James to criticize the

police. The maxim of quality is flouted for the purpose of taunt and laughing. As well as, the maxim of relevance is disobeyed by the speaker. Sarcasm is employed by the speaker to taunt and make fun of the police.

Results of the Analysis

The findings of the analysis of the present study are mentioned by the following tables:

Table 1: Occurrence of the Functions of Taunt

Functions of Taunt	Frequencies	Percentage %
Mocking	5	39
Provoking	3	23
Insulting	2	15
Criticizing	2	15
Laughing	1	8
Total	13	100

Table 2: Occurrence of the Speech Acts

Speech Acts of Taunt	Frequencies	Percentage %
Criticizing	5	62,5
Insulting	3	37,5
Total	8	100

Table 3: Occurrence of the Flouting of Maxims

Flouting of Maxims	Frequencies	Percentage %
Maxims of Quantity	3	37,5
Maxims of Quality	3	37,5
Maxims of Relevance	1	12,5
Maxims of Manner	1	12,5
Total	8	100

Table 4: Occurrence of the Impoliteness Strategies

Impoliteness Strategies	Frequencies	Percentage %
Sarcasm	5	72
Negative Impoliteness	1	14
Off-record Strategy	1	14
Total	7	100

In most of the data in (table 1), James employs mocking five times (39%) to taunt the target, this shows that James tries to make taunting as a type of aggressive humor by putting down the target. Provoking is used three times (23%) by the speaker to show how the speaker used taunt to reduce the target. Insulting and criticizing are used equally (15 %) in the above table, Corden rarely used this style because, as host of a talk show, he attempted to be professional by using his words in front of the audience. Finally, laughing is used one time (8 %), and tht show the ability of the speaker to defame and reduce the target by using many words rather than laughing.

In table 2, James focuses on speech acts of criticizing and insulting to taunt the target. He used the speech act of criticizing about 5 times (62%), that shows the way of how the speaker can reduce the target by criticizing him/her in front of the audience for the purpose of taunt.

However, speech act of insulting is used only three times (37.5 %) to state that the speaker avoids the harsh style of taunting the target.

In table 3, the maxims of quantity and quality are flouted equally about three times (37.5%) each by the speaker, this shows that the speaker is not informative as it is required and he is not telling the truth all the time. However, the maxims of relevance and manner are flouted only one time (12.5 %) to show that most of the time the speaker is relevant and clear.

In table 4, sarcasm is used more, about five times (72%) by the speaker as an impoliteness strategy showing that the speaker taunts the target by reducing him/her and putting the target down. Negative impoliteness and off-record strategies are used one time equally (14%).

Conclusions

On the basis of the analysis conducted previously, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. According to the results the researcher reached that the production of taunt expressions is mainly used to employ mocking and provoking, while the less percentages are related to insulting and laughing, this is because James

as a professional host of talk show TV program tried to avoid harsh words or style in front of the audience.

2. James used criticizing and insulting speech acts mainly while producing the taunt expressions to taunt the target in a professional way without giving the chance to others to condemn him.

3. It is concluded that James flouted the maxims of quantity and quality about 75% both equally because Corden was not informative as it is required and he deliberately told lies that could make taunt because the audiences did not expect Corden would say such a statement. However, the maxims of relevance and manner have 25% of the whole percentage equally. It means that James attempted to, as much as he could, say something related and avoided ambiguity.

4. The analysis revealed that sarcasm is the most impoliteness strategy employed by the speaker which achieved about 72%. This is because James tried to taunt his target by using sarcasm for the purpose of insulting.

5. The previous results signal that taunt is one form of direct bullying

behavior that cause harm to the target by criticizing and mocking him/her to devalue, humiliate and defame him/her by using aggressive action and style of speaking.

Financial support and sponsorship: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None

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