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## A PRAGMATIC STUDY OF FIGURES OF SPEECH IN MARK TWAIN'S BUYING GLOVES IN GIBRALTAR

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Statement of the Problem**

Writers, especially men of letters use certain linguistic expressions such as metaphor, simile, metonymy... etc. in order to add flavour to their writings and to attract the reader's attention to the ideas they want to convey through such use, or to maximize the stylistic effectiveness of their writings. These figures are not interpreted the same way like other linguistic items, because they do not convey the meaning of their linguistic components put together. Rather they have certain culture-specific meanings or some creative meanings invented by people with special linguistic knack and mental creativity.

### **Aims of the Study**

The present study aims at:

1. Illustrating the figures of speech in English
2. Identifying the most dominant types of figure of speech in Mark Twain's story 'Buying Gloves in Gibraltar'.

### **Limits of the Study**

The study is confined to the study of the investigation of figures of speech and its types in Mark Twain's work .

### **Value of the Study**

This study gives a very detailed account about relative the figures of speech in English language. Therefore, it is hoped that it will be of a great value for the students in the department of English.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Introduction**

A figure of speech is a word or phrase that possesses a separate meaning from its literal definition. It can be a metaphor or simile, designed to make a comparison. Figurative language comes in a variety of forms. To make a comparison between two things for instance, a metaphor or a simile can be used. Figures of speech can be used to create a dramatic impression by manipulating the sound system via alliteration. An impact can be induced by an exaggeration or a hyperbole. Figures of speech work effectively in poetry and literature in particular. They're also effective in speeches and movie dialogue. These devices can be found in almost every aspect of life.

## Metaphor

Metaphors have an impact on cognitive perception while at the same time even native speakers do not always realize the presence of metaphor in a speech or text. The sum of these two valuable features results in its power to influence people's opinions or thoughts and alter their vision on the world. Since politics are closely connected with ideology, metaphors share a great deal in influencing people's political conviction (Lesz 2011: 21).

In metaphor, the associations made between the focus and the frame can be very direct and easy, but they can also be very intricate and powerful in affecting people's attitudes. In organizing our perception of a certain issue, metaphor suggests a point of view on this issue and thus creates a context for dealing with it (Burkholder & Henry 2009: 100).

In this way, metaphor is able to affect the policy convictions of individuals, but also of complete nations (Burkholder & Henry 2009: 111). A metaphor is a powerful tool that affects the way people think and respond accordingly. This function of metaphor is highly influential and significant in political fields especially in speeches. Politics deals with complex materials that are sometimes difficult to grasp. That is why metaphor is an

indispensable and frequently applied figure of speech in political discourse: it helps people to understand complex concepts and functions as a persuasive tool (ibid: 100).

An example of metaphor is clearly seen here in this line taken from Twine's short story "Buying Gloves in Gibraltar"

-I was too much flattered to make an exposure and throw the merchandise on the angel's hands

## Types of Metaphors

### 1. *Cliché metaphors*

Metaphors are those that have become a mechanism in the language as proverbs and idiomatic expressions. Cliché metaphors can be placed between what is referred to as defunct and standard metaphors. They are fixed and used repeatedly without changing its linguistic form. Some metaphors are similar to idiomatic expressions, maxims or proverbs. They can be divided into two sub-branches (Newmark 1982: 99):

The first branch is simplex metaphor which consists of an adjective that has a figurative meaning; it is called figurative adjective, and a noun that has a literal noun e.g. Filthy lucre.

The word 'lucre' is a noun that occurs with its literal meaning. And the word 'filthy' is

an adjective that comes with its figurative meaning. It is not intended for this dirty money on the truth, but rather intended to be collecting money to dishonest crooked ways, i.e., illegal gain. The second branch which is called complex metaphor consists of a verb of a figurative meaning i.e., a figurative verb, and a noun of a figurative meaning, i.e., figurative noun such as: - Explore all avenues.

Here, 'explore' is a verb that contains a metaphorically intended meaning when combined with 'avenues' which is a noun that has its own metaphorical meaning. The metaphor that is created by the interaction of these words can be understood as 'exhausting all the roads for a certain purpose'.

### **2. Compound or Complex Metaphor**

This type, as can be inferred from its name, is a combination of two metaphors in order to create a new one with a new metaphorical meaning. For instance, the phrase "shed light" has two non-literal words: 'shed' and 'light'. The combining of these two metaphors create a new meaning: examining or investigating something thoroughly.

### **3. Dead Metaphors**

Even the title of this type is a metaphor since the word 'dead' does not mean 'not alive' but rather it refers to

metaphors that are frozen, fossilized or lexicalized. Over the course of time, these metaphors have lost their original and literal meanings and are stripped of their technical features. It has become hard to distinguish or differentiate these metaphors from literal expressions. This type of metaphor can be further divided into two subtypes (Newmark 1982: 85-86):

- opaque dead metaphors
- transparent dead metaphors

Opaque dead metaphors are difficult to trace their original meaning such as the expression "kick the bucket". On the other hand, transparent dead metaphors are words that their original meanings are known to all people but they have new metaphorical meanings such as the word 'wings' as in 'the wings of a plane' which is no longer associated with birds.

### **4. Extended metaphors**

Extended metaphors are types of figurative language in which the metaphor extends over many lines or paragraphs. In literature, for example, extended metaphors can extend over a whole poem or a story. They do not need to be complex but even simple metaphors can be used to create new comparisons. For example, Shakespeare's comparison of Juliet to the sun establishes a simple metaphor which is further developed and extended throughout

the whole play to the degree of using of using the qualities of the sun as if they were Juliet's.

### 5. *Implicit Metaphors*

Metaphors that have a borrowed name to it which is not authorized, but is understood implicitly e.g. I am burning. Here, 'passion' is implicitly understood and estimate the speech is: -"I burn inside me".

### 6. *Structural Metaphors*

Structural metaphors usually have two concepts embedded one is abstract and the second is concrete. The abstract is presented in terms of the concrete. Structural metaphors are often distinguished from other types of organizational metaphors. Structural metaphors build a structure within which a whole range of experiences are created similar in the concept. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) give the example of 'argument is war'. This metaphor, according to them, opens the door to use the metaphor of 'war' as a structure to build on all the concepts related to the field of wars and battles. The debaters are 'the fighters', the debate or the argument is 'the battlefield' and the winner of the argument is 'the conqueror'. Other examples related to war are presented by Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 14) such as:

- You cannot defend your claim.
- His argument was demolished

- I attacked the weakest point in his argument.

### 7. *Oriental metaphors*

Simply put, orientational metaphors are metaphors that involve some spatial indications such as in directions and specialization. Examples of words that are usually used with this type of metaphor are: up, down, in, on, out, front, back, deep, shallow and many more. These metaphors link semantic concepts which include space relations e.g. 'I can fit more information into this paragraph'. However, the words used as directional are only abstract in meaning and do not have anything in common with space. The words are also in line with the conceptual framework that linguistic expressions are 'containers'. The expressions have boundaries and limits such as physical containers like a glass or a cup and not mere 'abstract mental images' (Reddy, 1979: 286-288).

### **Metonymy**

This figure of speech occurs when an expression is replaced with something else which might be a part of it, associated with it, or an attribution to it (Crystal, 2008: 303). Metonymy is linked to the concept of contiguity. Metonymy is usually in the form of 'pair' relationship which can be in several ways such as:

- part / whole relation e.g. Jim has nice wheels.
- characteristics (attribution) / characterized (attributed) e.g. Courage can open closed doors.
- content / container relation e.g. He drank the whole bottle

Looking at the last example, the noun phrase ‘the bottle’ denotes container-contents relationship. The sentence means that ‘he drank the whole liquid in the bottle’.

Leech (1972: 218-219) adds that metonymic expressions which animate proper nouns have non-human reference:

- George threw his Shakespeare at Peter’s head.

However, Warren (1995:17) sees metonymy as a status of non-literal use of a word or phrase for the purpose of constructing a clear link between the referent of the mentioned word and the intended referent in a suitable context.

Lakoff and Johnson (2003:36) state that metonymy is not only a referential device but it is also used to serve as a function of ‘focusing’. For example, in ‘part-whole’ relation the part that can represent the whole is the metonymic expression. Which part the person picks out, that part determines which aspect of the whole the speaker is focusing on:

- We need some good heads on the project.

Here, the word ‘head’ is not only used as a reference to a person but rather the intelligence of this person. This means that when someone uses this type of metonymy, he or she choose a specific characteristic (intelligence) of the intended person.

### Personification

Abrams (1999:99) defines personification as giving human qualities or feelings to inanimate things or abstract concepts as though they are humans. In fact, personification is the main characteristic of the fictional works having a direct influence on the reader to make him/her comprehend important points that the writer wants to convey.

Here is an example of Personification taken from Mark's story where we can note the writer gives the quality of human ‘absorbing’ to non-human ‘interest’:

- but I hated the other boys for taking such an absorbing interest in the proceedings.

### Paradox

The term ‘Paradox’ is a statement or expression so surprisingly self-contradictory as to provoke the audience into seeking another sense or context in which it would be true

(Baldrick,2001:183). Some examples of paradox:

- I'm nobody.
- The innocent man killed his wife.
- A wise fool
- I'm a compulsive liar. I am lying when I say that.

The origin of the word 'paradox' is 'paradoxum' which is borrowed from the Greek "parádoxon". In literature, paradox functions as a composition tool which involves the examination of apparently contradictory statements and drawing conclusions either to reconcile them or to explain their presence (Crane1984:226).

Paradoxical statements are used contextually in literary works. Oscar Wild's "I can resist anything except temptation" is a fine example of such employment of this figure of speech.

However, it may be suggested that paradox is rather unnecessary and a simple statement might serve as a better tool to deliver information. The fact lies in the nature and purpose of literature. One function of literature is to make the readers enjoy reading. Readers enjoy more when they extract the hidden meanings out of the writing rather than something presented to them in an uncomplicated manner. Thus, the chief purpose of a paradox is to give pleasure (Baldick 2001:183).

e.g A rich man is no richer than a poor man.

e.g Nobody goes to that restaurant because it is too crowded.

Paradox also affects in that it seeks another sense or context in which it would be true (although some paradoxes cannot be resolved into truths, remaining flatly self-contradictory, e.g. Everything I say is a lie. Wordsworth's line "The Child is father of the Man" and Shakespeare's "the truest poetry is the most feigning" are notable literary examples. In the past, paradox was considered a mere figure of speech, but nowadays many critics suggest that it has a high importance as a mode of understanding by which poetry challenges our habits of thought. Paradox was cultivated especially by poets of the 17th century.

In poetry, paradox can create beautiful and pleasurable effects but it is not restricted to aesthetic purposes. Paradoxical statements are used to invoke ideas and feelings that are otherwise impossible to invoke by traditional figures of speech. For instance, paradox can raise the interest of readers and have a deep impact on their emotions. Furthermore, paradox in poetry are used extensively to propose a sense of irony from the poet.

An example of paradox in Twain's *Buying Gloves in Gibraltar* is clearly seen as in the following lines, here we can see a type of contrast between two things where the writer says he felt happy but he hated the other boys:

*I was too much flattered to make an exposure and throw the merchandise on the angel's hands. I was hot, vexed, confused, yet still happy, but I hated the other boys for taking such an absorbing interest in the proceedings. I wished they were in Jericho.*

### Irony

From a historical point of view, different scholars and linguists define and view irony differently. Some of them agree with each other's opinion, while others add more to this concept. Irony is defined as "saying what is contrary to what is meant" it means that irony is a set of words which is said by a speaker in order to convey meaning opposite to the literal one (Simpson, 2011:34).

Some other scholars have different points of view. Fowler (1965:295) suggests that irony is a kind of expression which have a double audience; one of

them is 'in the know' and aware of the speaker's (Henceforth, S) intention, while the other is inexperienced enough. So, they comprehend the ironic statement by relying on its surface face (the literal).

Wilson (2013: 45-46) states that there are three distinctive features of ironical utterances, these are the following: (i) the rule of attitude; (ii) the normative bias; (iii) the ironical tone of voice. Wilson (ibid) clarifies these features respectively as follows:

1. The first feature is the fact that irony is uttered with a special attitude; since the ironist's attitude has a special rule in the achievement of irony. Irony and metaphor can be considered as an equal tool. However, metaphor does not include a specific attitude. The common characteristics of ironical attitudes are usually; mocking, scornful, or contemptuous.
2. Sometimes irony is used to criticize or complain about a situation that has proved to be just the opposing of what was previously expected. Also he says that it is impossible to use irony in order to praise or reassure
3. Ironical tone of voice, it is similar to the first feature; it is not existed in metaphor.

All in all, Leech (1983: 82) considers irony as a second order principle, which comes after CP and politeness principle when he says "If you must cause offense, at least do so in a way which doesn't overtly conflict politeness principle, but allows the hearer to arrive at the offensive point of your mark indirectly by way of implicature".

### **Oxymoron**

Oxymoron is the figure that alludes to a pair of terms that negate each other, but are utilized together to form a particular and uncommon effect. It is similar to paradox but it is restricted to juxtaposed words or phrases. Poets have been utilizing paradoxical expression as a literary device to stimulate humor, extending a feeling or enticing a philosophical thought (Macrson 2016:21).

Oxymora are characterized by the fact that one or more of the features is the negation or the contradiction of the other. An examples of oxymoron is 'an honest thief', or a 'bitter sweet situation' (Ruiz 2015:202).

### **Simile**

As a figure of speech, simile has a very distinctive place in figurative language. It is defined as a figure of speech in which one thing is linked to another in such a way as to clarify and

enhance an image. It is an explicit comparison (as opposed to metaphor where the comparison is implicit) recognizable by the use of the words "like" or "as". It is equally common in prose and verse and is a figurative device of great quality (Cuddon 1977: 619).

Crystal (1987: 70) defines simile as "Two unlike things that are explicitly compared, to point similarity, using a marker such as "like" or "as". For Holman (1980: 113) simile is a figure of speech in which a similarity between two objects is directly expressed, as in Milton's :

A dungeon horrible, on all sides  
around

As one great furnace flamed

Here the comparison between dungeon (Hell) and the great furnace is directly expressed in the 'as' which labels the comparison 'simile'. Another way of expressing simile it is to say that in a 'simile' the Tenor and the Vehicle are clearly expressed and joined by an indicator of resemblance, 'like' or 'as' (ibid).

An example of simile in Twain's *Buying Gloves in Gibraltar* is clearly seen as in the following passages, as it is mentioned, simile is a direct comparison between two things or issues by using

words like 'as' and 'like' , as in the followings:

- my efforts caused the whole afterguard of the glove to “fetch away,” as the sailors say
- I did not want blue, but she said they would look very pretty on a hand like mine.

### CONCLUSION

1. A figure of speech or rhetorical figure is an intentional deviation from ordinary language, chosen to produce a rhetorical effect.
2. Figures of speech are traditionally classified into schemes, which vary the ordinary sequence or pattern of words, and tropes, where words are made to carry a meaning other than what they ordinarily signify.

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3. A type of scheme is polysyndeton, the repeating of a conjunction before every element in a list, where normally the conjunction would appear only before the last element, as in "Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!"—emphasizing the danger and number of animals more than the prosaic wording with only the second "and".

4. A type of trope is metaphor, describing one thing as something that it clearly is not, in order to lead the mind to compare them, as in "All the world's a stage."

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