



A Critical Discourse Analysis of Figures of Speech in Mark Twain's "Buying Gloves in Gibraltar"

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to critically analyze the figures of speech employed in Mark Twain's (1835-1910) story entitled "Buying Gloves in Gibraltar". The paper aims to find out the types of figurative devices employed in this story, their functions, and the ideologies intended to be conveyed via these devices. The study hypothesizes a frequent use of these devices in the target story, and the influence of power relations among characters upon the use of these devices. To achieve and verify aims of the study, two types of procedures have been followed: theoretical and practical. The theoretical part consists of presenting a brief theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis and figurative language. On the other hand, the practical part consists of surveying the figurative devices in the story to find out their frequency and analyze their uses in the light of an eclectic model based on (1) Leech's (2013) classification of figurative devices into metaphor, irony, simile, personification, hyperbole, oxymoron, metonymy, and (2) Fairclough's (1989) model which consists of three stages: description, interpretation, and explanation. The analysis of results has shown the frequent use of figurative devices in the story under study, and the influence of power relations among characters upon the use of these devices.

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المخلص

هذا البحث محاولة لتحليل الأشكال البلاغية المستخدمة في قصة " شراء القفازات في جبل طارق " لمارك توين (١٨٣٥-١٩١٠) من وجهة نظرتحليل الخطاب النقدي. ويهدف البحث إلى معرفة انواع الأدوات البلاغية المستخدمة في القصة ووظائفها والأيدولوجيات المراد نقلها من خلال هذه الأدوات. وتفترض الدراسة استخداماً متكرراً لهذه الأدوات في القصة موضوع الدراسة وتأثير علاقات القوة بين شخصيات القصة على استخدام هذه الأدوات. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة والتأكد من صحة فرضياتها، تم اتباع نوعين من الإجراءات: نظرية وعملية. ويتكون الجزء النظري من تقديم إطار نظري موجز لتحليل الخطاب النقدي واللغة البلاغية. اما الجزء العملي فيتكون من دراسة الأدوات البلاغية في القصة لمعرفة تكرارها وتحليل استخداماتها في ضوء انموذج انتقائي يستند إلى (١) تصنيف لبيتش (٢٠١٣) للأدوات البلاغية والمتكون من الاستعارة، السخرية، التشبيه، التشخيص، المبالغة، التناقض، والكناية ويستند أيضاً الى (٢) انموذج فيركلوف (١٩٨٩) الذي يتكون من ثلاث مراحل: الوصف،التفسير، والتوضيح. وأظهر تحليل النتائج استخداماً متكرراً للأدوات البلاغية في القصة قيد الدراسة، وأظهر ايضاً تأثير علاقات القوة بين الشخصيات على استخدام هذه الأدوات.

1. Introduction

Figurative language has often attracted scholars' attention in various areas, yet it can be argued that there still exists a clear research gap that requires the study of this phenomenon from the perspective of some approaches including Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with which this study is concerned. This paper is an attempt to fill in part of this gap. The problem addressed in this study is represented by the sort of ambiguity that may exist over the use of figurative devices in Mark Twain's story entitled "Buying Gloves in Gibraltar" and the way the author uses these devices to influence his readers.

In brief, this paper aims at finding out:

1. The main purposes of using figurative devices in the selected story,
2. The frequency of the figurative devices employed in the story, and
3. The ideologies and power relations that underlie the use of these devices.

The study is based on the hypotheses that (1) figurative devices are frequently used in Mark Twain's (1835-1910) "Buying Gloves in Gibraltar ", and (2) the author uses these devices to convey his intended ideologies, and (3) power relations among characters have an impact on the use of figurative devices.

2. Literature Review

2.1 On Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis is interested in the analysis of spoken and written texts to uncover the discursive practices of dominance, power, bias and inequality. It studies how people maintain and reproduce these discursive practices in a particular political, historical and social context (Van Dijk, 1998b: 12).

Fairclough (1992:135) indicates that CDA tries to discover ambiguous relationships of determination and causality between:

A) Uncovering ambiguous relationships between "Discursive practices, events and texts". B) To see how these discursive practices, events and texts arise and how power relations shape them ideologically, it is important to discover the opaque relations between the larger cultural and social processes and structures.

The goal of CDA is to show how "linguistic-discursive practices" are linked to the "socio-political structures of power and domination" (Kress, 1990:85). It focuses on content. According to Pennycook, discourses are the result of social struggle and ideology (2005:575). For CDA, language is a tool that enables the speaker or writer to affect and control minds of the recipients and create an ideology and preserve a political power (Rogers, 2004:7).

Fairclough and Wodak (1997 as cited in Van Dijk 2015:467) argue that the basic tents of CDA include (1) CDA deals with social problems, (2) Relations of power are discursive, (3) Society and culture are constituted by discourse, (4) Ideological work is done by discourse, (5) Discourse is historical, (6) The link between text and society is mediated, (7) Discourse analysis is considered both interpretative and explanatory, and finally (8) Discourse is a sort of social action.

Two basic concepts in CDA are ideology and power. The first refers to a group of thoughts, beliefs and values which people in a particular group share. This provides a restricted view of the world (Van Dijk, 1998:8). On the other hand, power indicates "a person's ability to influence the behaviors of other people" (Chiang, 2015).

2.2 On Figures of Speech

Generally, figurative language has often been viewed as that sort of communication which does not involve the use of a word in its strict or realistic meaning. Figurative language is viewed as saying something in an abnormal way (Perrine,1982:61). Similarly, Oxford English Dictionary views it as a departure from the literal use of a word (www.oxforddictionaries.com). It is usually used to add creative flourish to written and spoken language (grammarly.com). Metaphor, contrast, simile, paradox, personification, irony and imagery are examples of figures of speech.

Below is a brief account for the main figurative devices:

2.2.1 Metaphor

Metaphor is " a figure of speech that implicitly compares two unrelated things, typically by stating that one thing is another" (Scribber). Conventionally, it is one of several textual characteristics that should be analyzed to reveal discursive conceptions of reality. It can also be used to"

create vivid imagery, exaggerate a characteristic or action, or express a complex idea" (Holmgreen, 2006:95).

2.2.2 Personification

It is a figure of speech that occurs when the writer gives the qualities or feelings of human to abstract notions or inanimate entities as if they are considered as humans (Abrams, 1999:99).

2.2.3 Simile

It is a figure of speech where the comparison is explicit unlike metaphor which is implicit. Simile is usually distinguished by the items 'like' or 'as' (Cuddon, 1977:619). Bredin states that like metaphor, simile is a "semantic figure, a mental process playing a central role in the way we think and talk about the world, which often associates different spheres" (1998:68).

2.2.4 Irony

It is a figure of speech which occurs when "there are two contradicting meanings of the same situation, event, image, sentence, phrase, or story. In many cases, this refers to the difference between expectations and reality" (Literary Terms).

2.2.5 Hyperbole

It is a figure of speech that occurs when people exaggerate their speech for emphasis as in "I haven't seen you for ages"(Crystal, 1977:310).

2.2.6 Paradox

This is an expression or statement that contains self-contradictory and which leads the audience to seek for another meaning, interpretation or context that fits the case as in "I'm nobody, a wise fool" (Baldcrick, 2001:183).

2.2.7 Metonymy

It is a figure of speech that occurs when an expression replaces another one which could be a part of it, related to it, or assigned to it (Crystal, 2008:303).

2.2.8 Repetition

It simply means" the repeating of a word or phrase. It is a common rhetorical device used to add emphasis and stress in writing and speech" (Literary Terms).

2.2.9 Oxymoron

This device occurs when two expressions negate each other but they are used next each to produce a particular impact. There is a great similarity between oxymoron and paradox but the only difference between them is that in oxymoron words or phrases are juxtaposed (Macrson 2016:21).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 The Adopted Model

The model adopted in this paper is eclectic. It is based on Leech's (2013) classification of figurative devices, and Fairclough's (1989) model of CDA.

3.1.1 Leech's (2013) Model

In his book "A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry", Leech (2013) classifies figurative language devices into: metaphor, irony, simile, personification, hyperbole, oxymoron, and metonymy.

3.1.2 Fairclough's (1989) Model

In his famous book "Language and Power", Fairclough (1989) proposes his three-dimensional model to critically analyze a text or talk. It is divided into three stages:

3.1.2.1 Description (Text Analysis)

This stage involves analyzing the formal features of the text (1989:26).

3.1.2.2 Interpretation (Processing Analysis)

At this stage, the analyst focuses on "the relationship between text and interaction - with seeing the text as the product of a process of production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation" (ibid).

3.1.2.3 Explanation (Social Analysis)

At this stage, ideology and power relations are analyzed via analyzing "the relationship between interaction and social context - with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects" (ibid).

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Figurative Devices

Surveying the story under study has shown the use of the following figurative devices:

4.1.1 Metaphor

Mark Twain: *"I was too much flattered to make an exposure and throw the merchandise on the angel's hands"*

In this extract, Mark Twain describes the beauty of the young lady (i.e. the woman who says gloves) by metaphorically comparing her to an angel. The intended ideology is that the described lady is as innocent and beautiful as an angel.

4.1.2 Irony

This figure occurs four times representing the highest percentage among the other devices.

First, Twain uses irony when he says:

"Oh, certainly; you know how to put on kid gloves, don't you? "

Here, Twain makes fun of himself because he buys gloves of kids from the saleswoman although he knows that they do fit kids not him, so he buys them because of the handsome young lady.

Another example of irony occurs when Twain describes himself as "a *self-complacent ass*" because he satisfies with everything she says, he is easily

manipulated and convinced by the saleswoman. Irony also occurs when the saleswoman says to the man (Mark Twain):

"Oh, it is just right"

Here, there is irony because Twain knows that gloves do not fit him but she tells him that they fit him. The message she conveys is opposite to reality.

Irony is also used when she tells him:

"They are just right for you---your hand is very small--- if they tear, you need not pay for them" (There was a rent across the middle).

Here, Twain looks at his hand with a rent in the gloves, he creates irony of young lady speech.

4.1.3 Personification

Only one example of personification occurs in this story when Twain gives the human quality of absorbing to the abstract notion of interest:

"But I hated the other boys for taking such an absorbing interest in the proceedings"

4.1.4 Simile: The saleswoman shows a similarity between the gloves and Mark Twain's hands in:

"I did not want blue, but she said they would look very pretty on a hand like mine."

4.1.5 Oxymoron

This device occurs when Twain describes his conflicting feelings and thoughts:

"I was hot, vexed, confused, yet still happy,"

4.1.6 Metonymy

Twain uses metonymy in:

"I glanced furtively at my hand, and somehow it did seem rather a comely member I tried a glove on my left..."

In this line, Mark Twain refers to his hand secondly by using the word "left" so he replaces the word hand with the word left because it is associated to it.

4.1.7 Hyperbole

Mark Twain uses hyperbole in:

"She kept up her compliments, and I kept up my determination to deserve them or die"

Here, Twain exaggerates his readiness to die for the sake of the gloves. He also uses hyperbole when he says that "This one does very well; it fits elegantly. I like a glove that fits." He exaggerates the glove fitness in "very well" and "elegantly", while the size of the gloves were small for his hand.

4.2. Ideology and Power Relations

During the story discourse, specifically, the speech of Mark Twain and the young lady, ideologies such as beliefs and values are presented in the story. The main ideology that Twain wants to convey is that men can easily be

attracted to women who are very skillful in convincing men to do what they want. This becomes clear when the young lady convinces Mark Twain to buy gloves which are not suitable for him, he buys them only because she asks him to do so. The story also conveys the theme of constant compliment and its influence upon the decisions of people. This is clear when the saleslady keeps saying:

"Oh, it is just right" , " They are just right for you" and " Ah, you have had experience".

Power is also exercised through this story. It is important to know that power means that one who has power can influence and control the minds and actions of others. In the story, the handsome young lady exercises power over the man who wants to buy gloves. Through her language and beauty, she could convince him to buy gloves although they are kid gloves. She has a clear impact and power over him including his decisions. This is clear when she offers Twain a pair of gloves and tells him they would seem very beautiful on a hand like his. This leads him to finally say:

" I kept up my determination to deserve them or die".

So, power relations exist in the story and the saleslady is the one who exercises power over the man " Twain".

5. Discussion of Results

Table (1) below shows the frequency and percentage of the figures of speech in the story under study.

No.	Figures of Speech	Frequency	Percentages 100 %
1	Irony	4	36.36%
2	Hyperbole	2	18.18%
3	Metaphor	1	9.9%
4	Simile	1	9.9%
5	Oxymoron	1	9.9%
6	Personification	1	9.9%
7	Metonymy	1	9.9%

As Table (1) irony is the most frequent device. It occurs representing four times representing 36.36 % of the total number of the devices used in the story. The next most frequent device is hyperbole which is used 2 times representing 18.18 %. In contrast, metaphor, simile, oxymoron, personification, metonymy are used only one time each representing 9.9 %. This variation in the frequency and percentage of the employed devices can be due to the nature of the story

and its theme, which requires the use of more irony and hyperbole to achieve comic effect on the reader.

The themes of human foibles, compliment. are the main ideologies conveyed in this story. Relations of power are also exercised by the saleswoman over the buyer.

6. Conclusions

In the light of the study findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The figures of speech employed in the story include irony, hyperbole, metaphor, personification, simile, metonymy and oxymoron.
2. The main purpose of using figurative devices in this story is to achieve a comic effect.
3. The main ideologies implied in this story are human foibles and constant compliment.
4. Power is exercised in the story by the young lady over Mark Twain.

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Appendix

- Mark Twain's Short Story: (Buying Gloves in Gibraltar)

A very handsome young lady in the store offered me a pair of blue gloves. I did not want blue, but she said they would look very pretty on a hand like mine. The remark touched me tenderly. I glanced furtively at my hand, and somehow it did seem rather a comely member. I tried a glove on my left, and blushed a little. Manifestly the size was too small for me. But I felt gratified when she said:

"Oh, it is just right!" yet I knew it was no such thing. I tugged at it diligently, but it was discouraging work. She said:

"Ah! I see you are accustomed to wearing kid gloves while some gentlemen are so awkward about putting them on".

It was the last compliment I had expected. I only understand about putting on the buckskin article perfectly. I made another effort, and tore the glove from the base of the thumb into the palm of the hand, and tried to hide the tear. She kept up her compliments, and I kept up my determination to deserve them or die.

"Ah, you have had experience!" (Yes, a rip down the back of the hand) "They are just right for you---your hand is very small---if they tear, you need not pay for them." (There was a rent across the middle.) "I can always tell when a gentleman understands putting on kid gloves. There is a grace about it that only

comes with long patience.” (Meanwhile, my efforts caused the whole afterguard of the glove to “fetch away,” as the sailors say, and then the fabric parted across the knuckles, and nothing was left but a melancholy ruin.

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. I felt exquisitely mean when I said cheerfully:

"This one does very well; it fits elegantly. I like a glove that fits. No, never mind, ma’am, never mind; I’ll put the other on in the street. It is warm here."

It was warm. It was the warmest place I ever was in. I paid the bill, and, as I passed out with a fascinating bow, I thought I detected a light in the woman’s eye that was gently ironical, and when I looked back from the street, and she was laughing to herself about something or other, I said to myself, with withering sarcasm: “Oh, certainly; you know how to put on kid gloves, don’t you?---a self-complacent ass, ready to be flattered out of your senses by every petticoat that chooses to take the trouble to do it. |