

An Analysis of Humor in the English Books

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ABSTRACT

In English language, there are many elements of humor that are included in the content of English books which are adapted or taken from everyday conversation. It is because Humor has been a part of our daily life and use in everyday communication. Humor is effective at gaining students' attention and holding their interest, and that is one of the primary reasons to use humor as a teaching tool in the college classroom. The composition of humor contained in the book English with a Smile and Awsome Humor Book is centered on the verbal humor, although we may find some elements of picture and visual humor. To create humorous contents, the elements of humor are used such as wordplay, the changing of phonological aspects, and the deviations of an utterance from pragmatic principles. These are some aspects that bring laughter and provide the essence of humor in the books.

Keywords: *Humorous contents, English books, incogruity*

1. INTRODUCTION

Humor has been a part of our daily life. Humor and laughter have been described as culturally universal as the famous Soviet-American comic Yakov Smirnoff once said: "Everybody laughs the same in every language because laughter is a universal connection." Humor is a universal phenomenon that occurs everywhere, even in everyday communication. When we communicate with each other we often used humor as one of the forms of communication [1]. In fact, language lends itself to humor. Some words sound the same as others, which allows for puns, some sequences admit of more than one interpretation which allows for ambiguity. This example is appropriate and related to humor concepts that have entertainment purpose. In English language, there are many elements of humor that are included in the content of English books which are adapted or taken from everyday conversation. The book of awesome humor is a collection of stories about many interesting people and funny events. The stories in this book are based on commonly encountered humorous incidents and experiences. Each story develops listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through a communicative approach. The stories are presented in meaningful contexts that persuade a

variety of activities to foster students' interaction. Wanzer at.al states that humor leads to enhanced information processing as a result of the positive affect experienced in humorous situations [2]. The theory suggests that when humor is provided in an appropriate manner, it creates a positive influence which then attracts students' attention and automatically increases their ability and motivation to learn in the classroom [3] [4] [5].

In an English book, language can be used as a serious business to a source of amusement. The material for the English books comes from both the artificial materials and the real-life materials. Language play is part of normal language use, a majority of people relay jokes [6]. In fact, most people use pleasantries and other light-hearted remarks as part of getting along with others. Exploiting the humorous possibilities in language obviously provides entertainment, but people also use verbal humour for other ends: to establish harmony or rapport, to ingratiate themselves, to lighten the mood when contentious issues are raised, and to soften the force of criticism. Humour plays a bigger part of our normal experience of language than most people probably recognize. We perhaps, start the day listening to a breakfast session on the radio, and some of the lyrics

include alliteration, puns, and allusions. On the way to work or school some funny events may occur in the street and we laugh. Finally, before bed we often watch television program and it shows a couple of sitcoms, a comedy movie, and finally a stand-up comedian. Humor and laughter have become the part of our life and therefore, cannot be separated from our daily activities. The English book "English with a Smile" and "The Awesome Humor Book" are adapted from the normal daily life that consists of a lot of colloquialisms and stories that have humorous contents. Thus, this paper wants to explore the humorous based content in the English book entitled English with a Smile and The Awesome Humor Book.

1.1. Humor Concept

There are numbers of definition on humor concepts, but in a very simple explanation, humour can be seen as the ability or quality of people, objects, or situations to evoke feelings of amusement in other people. The term encompasses a form of entertainment or human communication which evokes such feelings, or which makes people laugh or feel happy. McGhee states that there are various theoretical approaches towards the studying of humour and the concept of humor can also be defined in different ways. In most cases, something is perceived as humorous when it contains an element of surprise and takes an unsuspected twist at the end, all of which cause a pleasant feeling [7]. Humor is a discourse unit consisting of two parts, the set up and the punch line. The set-up is normally built of a narrative or/and a dialogue, while the punchline is the final portion of the text, which engenders surprise and leads to incongruity with the set-up. Humour as "a specific type of communication that establishes an incongruent relationship or meaning and is presented in a way that causes laughter." The fact that Berger includes laughter as part of his definition reflects the fact that he holds the audience's interpretation to be important in the definition of an event. Definitions tend to focus on either speaker intention or audience interpretation. The purpose and end result of humour, much like that of language, is the externalization of human thought and conceptualization [8].

1.2. Humor in Education

Humor in education field is an important, though in the past time humor is largely overlooked, area of study. Students and teachers have often unwittingly neglected humor in their teaching and learning process, even though humor can improve students understanding to the lesson or material given. There

is a surprisingly large and growing body of literature on humor in classroom college which is a good starting point for the growth of humor used in education. Literature has demonstrated several important uses and impacts of humor in the teaching learning process. Humor is effective at gaining students' attention and holding their interest, and that is one of the primary reasons to use humor as a teaching tool in the college classroom [9]. According to Tomlinson, there are two elements necessary for a great class: engagement and understanding [10]. She believes that students have an inherent understanding of what engagement is. She likens classroom engagement to a magic magnet that attracts and holds students' attention, which elevates students' understanding of the material. The attention-gaining power of humor can also be tied to information processing theory, which is an approach in the study of cognitive development. Within information processing theory, attention is the first step. Information must first be attended to, processed through the short-term memory, and then stored in the long-term memory [11]. Using humor as an instructional tool, classroom material can be presented in such a manner as to engage students' attention, and thereby begin the learning process. In a college classroom humor can take many forms such as as jokes, riddles, puns, funny stories, humorous comments and other humorous items. While to create an incorporate humor in class such forms can be used such as cartoons, top ten lists, comic verse, and phony or bogus experiments.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study is designed to analyze the humor based content in the English book entitled English with a Smile and Awsome Humor Book. Therefore, this research is a qualitative research, in which data tend to use words and languages as measurement in deciding the conclusion. In conducting this research, the researcher used the mechanisms of humour theories (incongruity, superiority, and release theory) and the types of humour, using some of the categories: insult, wordplay, self-deprecation, and irony. Qualitative methods are more research based on phenomenological philosophy that prioritizes appreciation (verstehen). Qualitative methods seek to understand and interpret the meaning of an event of interaction of human behavior in certain situations according to the perspective of the researchers themselves.

3. DISCUSSION

The composition of humor contained in the book *English with a Smile and Awesome Humor Book* is centered on the verbal humor. It is rarely to find non-verbal humour except for the assignment given by the teachers which is based on the books. We may also find a few parts of the books that contain pictures and symbols. To create humorous contents, the elements of humor are used such as wordplay, the changing of phonological aspects, and the deviations of an utterance from pragmatic principles. These are some aspects that bring laughter and provide the essence of humor in the books. In fact, most of the materials are adapted from the real-life situation that frequently consist of humorous aspects. The use of humor as teaching material is effective to improve the student's competence skill than the conventional material because all students found humor to be contributing to positive atmosphere in the classroom. Humor is influential from serious political situation to pedagogical used of humor. The humorous texts included in these books all made someone laugh and may spoil the immediate gut reaction of laughter.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: I see, but could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

This dialogue presents the type and style of humor that tend to use puns, wordplay, and have

an element of shock. We laugh at the unexpected sentence in the last part of the dialogue. Humour can occur in surprisingly serious contexts, as in sick jokes about death. In this quotation the use of pun in the last part brings an element of shock and have an intention to attack a specific target which make the humorous elements occur.

Marriage is a three ring circus: engagement ring, wedding ring and suffering

Have you ever noticed how so many of women's problems can be traced to the male gender? MENstruation, MENopause, MENTAL breakdown, GUYnaecology, Mmorrhoids.....

A man inserted an 'ad' in the classifieds: 'Wife wanted'. Next day he received a hundred letters. They all said the same thing: You can have mine.

Through these examples, you are more likely to respond to the clever use of language. The author uses the alphabetical and phone changes to create humorous element. The use of the word 'men' in representing the female's situation create a humorous effect as well as crudity in humor. The reason of using 'ad' in the classifieds create a humor after followed by the punchline. And the use of the sounds 'ing' in 'ring' brings the fact of the real-life situation as well as irony. There is an element of irony and detachment in jokes when people come up with the wedding topic.

A man had six children and was very proud of his achievement.

He was so proud of himself that he started calling his wife,

'Mother of Six', in spite of her objections.

One night they went to a party. He decided that it was time to go home, and wanted to find out if his wife is ready to leave as well.

He shouted at the top of his voice, "Shall we go home, Mother of Six?"

His wife, irritated by her husband's lack of discretion shouted back,

"Anytime you're ready, Father of Four!"

Verbal one-line puns derive their humor from the fact that both readings are equally plausible, as both acts as informative statements. From this example we can see that the element of humor

leads to a bizarrely unexpected notion rather than a surprisingly punchline.

A story pun is a form of punning humor in which a lengthy narrative is summarized with a statement that sounds like a well-known saying or cliché. While the humor of story puns requires the hearer to be familiar with the cliché it imitates (similar to the theories' respective requirements that the hearer be familiar with the secondary, obscure meaning of the ambiguous word), the format of story puns is, in and of itself, wholly unambiguous and therefore requires no clarifying element—the complementary opposite of the necessarily ambiguous one-line pun, which were chosen for their prominent popularity and/or critical reception.

We laugh at the unexpected or incongruous by breaking the normal expectations of language in use. The context of humor is crucial for determining whether an individual finds something amusing or not. Even so, it is possible to examine the features of language that have the potential to make people laugh. It states that humour is created out of a conflict between what is expected and what actually occurs. This accounts for the most obvious feature of much humor: an ambiguity, or double meaning, followed by a punchline.

The examples of humour in these English books use the possibilities for ambiguity in the words or structure of the language. In some of the reading texts, the appearance of incongruity refers to the possibility for two meanings being understood from the utterance. This is often called pun and the story mostly give us the surprisingly puns. Some spoken humor particularly relies so much on features like quality, tone of voice, and word play. Therefore, it is reasonable to understand that the humor based content in English books for college students emphasize on ambiguity, wordplay, phone changes, tone, and punchline.

4. CONCLUSION

The composition of humor contained in the book English with a Smile and Awesome Humor Book is centered on the verbal humor, although we may find some elements of picture and visual humor. The clever use of language such as the use of the alphabetical, morpheme, and phone changes are created to produce the humorous elements. We laugh

at the unexpected or incongruous by breaking the normal expectations of language in use. The context of humor is crucial for determining whether an individual finds something amusing or not. Even so, it is possible to examine the features of language that have the potential to make people laugh. In these books the humor based emphasize on ambiguity, wordplay, phone changes, tone, and punchline.

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