

A PRAGMATIC STUDY OF COMMUNICATING IRONY IN DICKENS'S 'A TALE OF TWO CITIES'

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1- Introduction

Traditionally, irony has long been viewed as a rhetorical device and broadly identified by Sperber and Wilson (1986:24) as the use of words to express the opposite of their literal meaning. It has been amply studied in different disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, and literature. Irony can have an undermining effect and, consequently, even be destructive of a given text when comprehended oppositely. Modern pragmatics studies, especially within rhetoric, as Attardo (2000:34) points out, have distinguished four types of irony: 'Socratic' irony (the pretence of ignorance of a given topic), 'Dramatic' irony (where, for example, the audience of a play, or the reader of a novel knows something that a protagonist ignores), 'Situational' irony (a state of affairs in the world viewed as ironical), and 'Verbal irony' (when saying something and meaning the opposite). The present study has set itself the task of pragmatically investigating to the phenomenon of irony in one of Dickens's novels namely : 'A Tale of Two Cities'. It attempts to find out the various types of irony when used to deliver a thought or opinion, and the common strategies language users appeal to in the communication of this rhetorical device. The hypotheses that are put forward in relation to those aims are that verbal irony is the most common type used in the issuance of irony. Besides, there are many strategies language users exploit in their expression of irony. To achieve the aims of this study and verify or reject its hypotheses, the following procedures will be adopted: a) reviewing the literature of irony and its types, conversational principles, and politeness theory, b) collecting and analyzing samples chosen from the novel under study, c) using the model(s) developed by this study to analyze the data of the work, and d) using a statistical means to calculate the findings of the analysis .

2. Irony and the Interpretation of Indirection Irony has received much attention in pragmatics largely because of its indirect nature. It is considered by Sperber and Wilson (1986:43) as indirect in that there is what can be characterized as a mismatch between utterance and "meaning", which is also a distinction captured in Grice's (1989:36) definition of non-natural and natural meaning. He argues that this purported mismatch is of great interest for cognitive reasons and has led to many studies that have probed how hearers are able to discern and interpret the unspoken aspect of ironic messages.

The indirect nature is accounted for by asserting that ironic utterances "mean" the opposite of what they say. Searle (1991:536) writes "... the most natural way to interpret it is as meaning the opposite of its literal form." Irony is

often used as a catch-all term for a literary device in which there is tension between text and subtext, between what is said and what is actually meant. As a result, irony cannot be thought of in a very narrow sense.

2.1 Irony and Lying

Bansleben (1991:22) indicates that the ironist can also be better understood by being contrasted with the liar. The latter intends only the literal text and states the opposite of what he knows while the former implies a contradiction to what he says. When we refer to entire literary works as ironic, we are, however, no longer in the realm of verbal irony but rather in the literary one. This type of irony is far more complex, because the literary device here is more dependent on interpretation. (Cf. Gibbs and Colston, 2007:282).

2.2 Dynamics and Reconstruction of Irony

Irony is not easy to be defined adequately, as Lusk (1999:11) stresses, and it may be more profitable to turn from an attempt to define irony to a discussion of the inner workings of irony. Perhaps a more precise understanding of irony will emerge from an examination of its dynamics.

Lusk (ibid.) states that there are two features that are indispensable to all irony. First, it requires that there be two or more textual levels. Only one level is available to the victim (the hearer or reader) of the irony, but both are available to the observer (speaker or writer) of the irony. In general, these two levels can be referred to as text and subtext. The second feature of irony is a tension between these multiple levels in that they can be meaningful for the hearer when interpreted literally or non-literally (Cf. Goody, 1995:13).

As far as written texts are concerned, an examination of how ironic readings are deconstructed and then reconstructed can further help us understand how irony works and how it is identified. Hutcheon's (1995:35) discussion of the "clues" to the "reconstruction" of ironic intention and meaning in written texts outlines five kinds of markers: (1) straightforward hints or warnings presented in the authorial voice (titles, epigraphs, direct statements); (2) violations of conversational maxims (deliberate errors of facts); (3) contradictions within the work (internal cancellations); (4) clashes of style; and (5) conflicts of belief (between our own and that which we might suspect the author of holding).

Booth (1975:10) introduces a detailed description of this process. He outlines several steps in what he calls the "reconstruction" process. In coming across irony, the reader realizes that the plain meaning of the text must be rejected because it involves too many tensions or even contradictions. The reader may be aware of the irony because what is stated conflicts with a network of the beliefs of the author, or that generated by the text. In short, the reader realizes that "if the author did not intend irony, it would be odd, outlandish, inept, or stupid of him to do things in this way.

In order to judge if the writer is ironic as opposed to careless or stupid, Hutcheon (1995:165) argues that one must reconstruct, at least to some extent, the writer's network of beliefs or world view. If we find he could not have been serious, we must choose a new meaning. This may involve paraphrasing irony into non-ironic language as closely as possible. Choosing this new meaning

completes the reconstruction process. Of course, a good interpretation of the ironic statement will require choosing the meaning best in accordance with the author's known network of beliefs and the rest of the text (Cf. Swearingen, 1991:146).

Many types of irony are identified by pragmaticians as indicated below.

2.3 Types of Irony

The task of classifying irony into types presents its own challenges. Just as irony virtually defies definition, so types of irony virtually defy classification. However, many scholars have attempted to classify irony. One of the prominent attempts in this regard is that of Kreuz and Roberts (1997:45-76) who distinguish four types of irony; Dramatic irony, Situational irony, and Verbal irony.

2.3.1 Dramatic Irony

Kreuz and Roberts (ibid.) define *Dramatic* irony as the situation where the audience knows something that the character of a play, novel, etc., ignores. It is inherent in speeches or a situation of drama and is understood by the audience but not grasped by the characters in the play. The dramatic effect achieved by leading an audience to understand an incongruity between a situation and the accompanying speeches, while the characters in the play remain unaware of the incongruity. Dramatic irony, for example, is used extensively in the plays of William Shakespeare, such as in *Romeo and Juliet* where we are told in the opening chorus that the young lovers are doomed to die and thus we spend the play watching an unavoidable disaster.

2.3.2 Situational Irony

This type of irony describes a discrepancy between the expected result and actual results when enlivened by perverse appropriateness. It involves a situation in which actions have an effect that is opposite from what was intended, so that the outcome is contrary to what was expected. The following are some examples of situational irony:

- 1- A couple appears in court to finalize a divorce, but during the proceeding, they remarry instead.
- 2- A woman is nervous about attending a wedding because she is single, but she goes there and meets her future husband.

2.3.3 Verbal irony

This is a linguistic phenomenon. It is a statement in which the meaning that a speaker employs is sharply different from the meaning that is ostensibly expressed. The ironic statement usually involves the explicit expression of one attitude or evaluation, but with indications in the overall speech-situation that the speaker intends a very different, and often opposite, attitude or evaluation. The present study will make verbal irony as its basic concern for its broad use and great effect connected with particular contexts. An example of verbal irony can be seen in a situation when A tells B, who has behaved very badly:

(1) *You are a real friend*

A means that B is not a real friend and that the statement can be perceived contrary to what is said and similar to the context of the situation them.

The importance of the verbal irony to the present study lies in the fact that it can be variably delivered in single or some texts as in some respect opposite to the other two types which require understanding of the whole situation occurring between the participants. To comprehend how this type is constructed, some detail on the cooperative principles is thought to be necessary.

2.4 Irony and the Cooperative Principle

Grice (1975:40) assumes that some implicatures arise by breaching some conversational maxims. This happens when what a cooperative speaker so patently violates a maxim that the hearer must infer that the speaker is implying something different. Irony is thought to arise from flouting the maxim of Quality. Juez (1995:25) explains an example of irony between two friends; Candy and Alan. Thus Candy might answer Alan ironically as follows.

(2) Alan: Are you going to Paul's party?

Candy: I don't like parties

If Alan knows full well that Candy is a party animal, he could reason that if she meant what she said, she would be lying, thus violating Quality. So she must have meant something else. If she meant that she does like parties, then she would be in conformity with the maxim. And via Relation, she would have answered Alan's question indirectly. This reasoning, however, takes Candy's belief that she loves parties as given, and infers what she must have meant to be cooperative. There is also the possibility of using another figure of speech. For example, Candy would have made a suitable contribution to the conversation if she had been engaging in understatement instead of irony, meaning and believing that she hates parties. In this way, irony can be adjusted by flouting other maxims rather than Quality. To be carefully attested, ironical adjustment in maxims flouting will be discussed below.

2.4.1 Maxim of Quality

The fact that Brown and Levinson (1987:133) think that irony occurs via violating only the Maxim of Quality is very consistent with their view of irony as meaning "the opposite" of what is said, since in this way it is clearly seen that one is not "making a true contribution." Brown and Levinson's (ibid) view of irony is proposition-oriented. This would include typical examples of irony such as "John's a fine friend" or "John's a genius," meaning "he's not a good friend" and "he's stupid" respectively, where the literal meaning of the proposition is not true. But in most cases irony goes beyond "meaning the opposite" and it covers a wider scope of verbal phenomena. Thus it seems that it can also go beyond the flouting of the Quality

2.4.2 Maxim of Quantity

Grice (1975:44) expresses this maxim as follows: (1) Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange, (2) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Brown and Levinson (1987:218) give an example of "understatement" violating the Quantity Maxim which seems to be also perfect as an example of ironic utterance. This is the case of "a teenage girl that might say 'He's all right' as an understated criticism implicating 'I think he is awful' or as an understated compliment implicating 'I think he's fabulous". In this way the Maxim of Quantity is violated by avoiding the lower points in the case of a criticism and by avoiding the upper points in the case of a compliment or admission.

Juez (1995:26) cites an example (taken from a TV series called The Golden Girls) in which Dorothy is being ironical about Blanche's "experience" with men, and by not making further comments or not arguing any longer (i.e. saying less than it seems to be required), she implies that Blanche has a reputation for having dated a lot of men:

(3) Blanche: *You think Dirk looks at me and sees an oíd woman? He sees a young, vibrant, passionate contemporary.*

Dorothy: *Blanche, you haven't even been out with him yet.*

Blanche: *My instincts are infallible about this. Believe me. I know men.*

Dorothy: *No arguments here.*

2.4.3 Maxim of Relevance

Grice (1975:45) states that the way of carrying out this maxim is by "making your contribution relevant." This has been interpreted differently by different scholars. Brown and Levinson (1987:213) believe that there are some off record strategies in which the Maxim of Relevance is violated, such as (a) "giving hints," (b) "giving association clues" and (c) "presupposition." The interpretation given is the following: "If the speaker says something that is not explicitly relevant, he invites the hearer to search for an interpretation of possible relevance" (ibid.). this is something that can also happen when someone is being ironical. Brown and Levinson(ibid) show that one way of violating the Maxim of Relevance is by using euphemisms.

In the following dialogue, cited in Juez (1995:27), Dorothy uses a euphemism ("pillow talk") to be ironical towards Blanche, and Sophia goes even further with this irony:

(4) Rose: *Your date is over?*

Blanche: *You sound surprised.*

Dorothy: *it's just that your dates usually end with a little—pillow talk.*

Sophia: *Yeah, like, "What did you say your name was again?"*

2.4.4 Maxim of Manner

Grice (1975:45) mentions that this maxim states that in order to achieve efficient communication we should be "perspicuous" and specifically:

(1) Avoid obscurity (2) Avoid ambiguity

(3) Be brief (4) Be orderly

It is obvious that when going off record and in a great number of instances in which the speaker chooses verbal irony as a strategy s/he does not avoid obscurity and ambiguity. Especially if s/he is using irony with the intention of

criticizing, s/he may tend to be ambiguous and obscure in order to minimize the Face Threatening Act (FTA)¹ or to avoid responsibility.

Juez (1995:28) presents an example taken from the London Lund Corpus of English Conversation, two female secretaries are talking about a woman.

(5) C: *and uh, they don't seem to bother anybody*

A: *NO*

C: *they seem to know their way around*

A: *so it does seem a fairly self-contained unit on its own*

C: *it is very self-contained*

A: *YES*

C: *and I think one of the reasons Miss Baker suggested I show you around.*

I don't think you've met Nelly upstairs

A: *"NO*

C: *I won't pre- uhm, what's the word. pre-persuade you but uh, -she's not of the most helpful variety*

A: *(laughs—) Yeah.*

By saying that "she's not of the most helpful variety" they are being ambiguous (because they do not say that she is unhelpful) and at the same time they are ironically criticising her (the intonation with a falling tone on "helpful" and a rising one on "variety" as well as the laughing also help decipher the ironic interpretation). If we consider the majority of the cases of verbal irony, which seem to have an off record nature, it could be said that all these cases are ambiguous in some way or another, and that they consequently violate the Maxim of Manner.

3. Strategies of Communicating Irony

According to Hutcheon (1995:41), through irony people can negotiate the sense of an utterance by the prerogative (typical of indirect speech) of tingeing the borders of meaning. Hence, it is simpler to calibrate one's own action strategically according to the standards of social interaction in a certain culture.

Examining irony as a rhetorical figure or as a crafty linguistic device is considered by Gibbs and Colston (2007:362) as an important way of understanding this typical human process. In fact, irony appears to be a communicative strategy that aims to safeguard one's own image, leaving several degrees of freedom for managing both meanings and relationships. This section is intended to describe and analyze the variability of the pragmatic communication strategies of verbal irony as related to different interactive contexts. These strategies are discussed and advanced by many scholars as indicated below.

3.1 Sarcasm

Haiman (1998:12) claims that sarcasm and other seemingly dissimilar forms of indirection stem from, and give expression to, what we might call a model of personhood. Sarcasm, a variety of irony, is distinguished by aggressive or malicious speaker intentions. According to Haiman(ibid) the use of sarcasm

¹ See Watt (2003:27) for more details on FTA.

and other ironic expressions is a kind of metalinguistic use. Thus, in arguing that “I mean the opposite” of what is uttered, “we are using language to talk not about the world but about itself”. He(ibid) argues that literary excerpts such as (a) display such a stance.

(6) Man: *Is the pundit you are looking for, not so?*

Taxi driver: *Nah. We come all the way from Port of Spain just for the scenery*

According to Haiman’s (ibid) analysis, the taxi driver really means something like “Yes, of course, we didn’t come all the way to the Port of Spain just for the scenery.”

Bryant (1999:105) refers to sarcasm as ironic language directed at an individual or group of people for derogatory purposes. Most dictionary definitions of irony include sarcasm as a form of irony in at least one of their definitions, implying that irony and sarcasm are virtually synonymous. Conversely, most dictionary definitions of sarcasm include a mention of irony. Certainly there is a great deal of overlap between sarcasm and irony but there are also some crucial differences. Sarcasm can perhaps best be seen as a subset of irony, because, whereas all sarcasm is biting in tone, often times irony is more humorous than invective. Sarcasm usually does not aim to correct anything, but only mock, whereas irony, because of the reflection it requires to decode, usually does aim at reformation in some way (Cf. Lusk, 1999:27).

Shoaps (2007:300) considers sarcasm as “overt irony intentionally used by the speaker as a form of verbal aggression” toward either the addressee or non-present speaker. While sarcasm is perhaps more “aggressive” and negative, and is treated as a subspecies of irony,

3.2 Satire

Part of the confusion related to the concepts of satire results from the fact that it shares features of another poorly understood and frequently misinterpreted concept of irony. Satire has been defined by Beckson and Ganz (1989:65) as the ridicule of a subject to point out its faults. It has been used extensively in Western literature to lampoon subjects as diverse as British society. Satire has been used by those wishing to avoid censure for a more direct statement of their views. Kreuz and Roberts (1997:87) argue that satire is a literary genre whereas irony is not ; it is a complex rhetorical device sometimes used by this genre. For example:

Satirizing the awful German language, a man ridicules a German by exaggerating its complexities:

(7) *In the hospital yesterday a word of thirteen syllables was successfully removed from a patient*

Gibbs and Colston (2007:585) argues that satire is generally defined as a specific formal genre in which a person speaking in the first person attacks one or more individuals, institutions, or social customs. In many cases, satire is aimed at revealing the folly in someone holding particular beliefs.

3.3 Ironic Understatements

Understatements are traditionally analyzed by Davis (1995:76) by claiming that they are not the opposite of what is meant, but merely less than what is meant. For example, when we come upon a customer who is complaining in a shop, blind with rage, and making a public exhibition of himself. We can say the following:

(8) *He's upset.*

This is a typical example of ironical understatement. Though (8) is intuitively ironical, it does not communicate either (9a) or (9b), as the traditional definition of irony would suggest:

(9a) *We can't say he's upset.*

(9b) *We can say he's not upset.*

Gibbs and Colston (2007:410) claim that the ironic understatement usually involves the truth - just a severely truncated one. Saying "you've felt better" after being rushed to the hospital with appendicitis is true, but is also a form of irony, because you probably haven't ever felt much worse in your life. Gibbs and Colston (ibid.) proceed by saying that we use "antic" as a synonym of "madcap," stressing deliberate playfulness. But for most of its history the word referred to grotesque and ludicrous qualities, especially in drama and pageants. With a sort of ironic understatement, Hamlet uses "antic" not to mean "madcap," exactly, but something closer to "mad"—bizarre, irrational, threatening.

(10) *As I perchance hereafter shall think meet*

To put an antic disposition on—

That you, at such times seeing me,

Hamlet Act 1, scene 5, 168–180

Understatement correlates with irony in what Mey (2009:409) refers to as ironical understatement. This can be used ironically where the intention is to emphasize the opposite and render the flouting of both quality and quantity maxims, as when a lottery winner of five million pounds is described as having:

(11) *Tidy little nest-egg.* (meaning 'a very large sum')

This means that the winner has got a very large sum of money as opposite (irony) and above (understatement) what the statement reads.

3.4 Echoic Irony

Wilson (2006:11) asserts that *Echoic use* is a technical term in relevance theory. It is, in the first place, an interpretive rather than a descriptive use of language⁽¹⁾. He (ibid.) differentiates between the two terms in that an utterance is descriptively used when it represents a possible or actual state of affairs; but it is interpretively used when it represents another representation (for instance, a possible or actual utterance or thought) that it resembles in content. Interpretive uses of language require a higher order of metarepresentational ability than descriptive uses. In order to understand an interpretively-used utterance, the hearer must recognize that the speaker is thinking not directly about a state of affairs, but about another utterance or thought. Echoic use, in the second place,

On descriptive and interpretive dimensions of language use, see Sperber and Wilson (1986: 1 chapter 4, sections 7-10).

according to (ibid.:23), is a particular sub-type of attributive use. The main point of an echoic use of language is not simply to report the content of the attributed thought or utterance, but to show that the speaker is thinking about it and wants to inform the hearer of her/his own reaction to it. Thus, an ironical utterance either echoes a previous remark ('explicit echo') or refers to general norms, popular wisdom, received knowledge, etc. ('implicit echo'). According to Sperber and Wilson (1986:35), ironic communication consists in "making people impose one idea on another idea". If someone asks *Did you remember to water the flowers?* after days of rain, s/he echoes and comments the interlocutors' anxiety to keep the flowers watered (ibid.). Luigi (2001:6) refers to implicit echo as an implicit mention of what one's interlocutor said or did. It is a way of showing one's attitude toward the thought or the action that the ironic comment refers to, or even toward one's interlocutor. In this sense, irony can refer to a specific subject, as well as to a category of people, or even to a social norm or a cultural trend. In ironic communication, as (ibid.) proceeds, implicitness works as a substitution of literal sense. For example, when someone says:

(12) *Today is a gorgeous day!*

while outside there is pouring rain, the implicit meaning of "hideous day" substitutes the literal sense (ibid.)

Within the echoic perspective, Sperber and Wilson (1986:243) call the explicit echo "tongue-in-cheek". It consists of an ironic background comment to the interlocutor's utterances. It is a continuous, shrewd and subtle comment, which is typical of the Anglo-Saxon culture. By means of such a mechanism, ironic communication implies an attitude of distance from the literal sense of an utterance, so as to provoke a doubling. For example:

(13) A: *Cats are the loveliest creatures of the world.*

Soon after, A got scratched by a cat and B says:

(14) B: *"Indeed. Cats are the loveliest creatures of the world."*

In (14), B echoes A's previous remark.

Gibbs (2007:8) mentions that ironic language is also processed faster if it explicitly echoes previously mentioned beliefs or norms. This indicates the importance of context in irony comprehension. For example, a speaker says:

(15) You sure are a bad basketball player.

after a player had said he was a bad player, but then played well. In this regard, verbal irony is a subtype of echoic use of language (ibid.).

3.5 Pretence

Luigi (2001:2) indicates that the Semitic root of this word is derived from the term "covering" by means of which irony appears as a device to avoid the direct impact of an explicit word. In this sense, in common use, irony is not necessarily bound to the rhetoric concept of semantic inversion. Rather, it can be defined as an alteration of a reference aiming at stressing the reality of a fact by means of the apparent dissimulation of its true nature.

Karla (2004:8) views sarcasm as a kind of pretence which produces a 'separate meta-message' meant to express hostility and ridicule on an interlocutor. Sarcasm is usually used to communicate an implicit criticism about

the listener or the situation. It is usually used in situations causing a negative effect accompanied by disapproval, contempt, and scorn.

Wilson (2006:18) argues that the central idea behind pretence accounts of irony is that the speaker is not him/herself performing a speech act such as making an assertion or asking a question, but pretending to perform it (or, in more elaborate versions, pretending to be a certain type of person performing it).

Suppose the speaker says:

(16) *Paul really is a fine friend*

in a situation in which just the opposite is known to be the case. The speaker does not really say, or at least assert the remark. What s/he “makes as if to say” (ibid.).

According to Shoaps (2007:301), what the speaker does in the ironical pretence case is merely to pretend to assert the content of her/his utterance. By pretending to say “Paul really is a fine friend” in a situation in which just the opposite is obviously true, the speaker manages to communicate that “Paul is everything but a fine friend”. S/he shows, by her utterance, how inappropriate it would be to ascribe to Paul the property of being a fine friend (ibid.).

3.6 Ironical Interjections

Sperber and Wilson (1992:2) claim that an interjection is an exclamatory or parenthetical word, often appearing at the beginning of a sentence or clause, and having little or no grammatical connection to the rest of the sentence. Interjections are often used to express surprise, excitement, or dismay (e.g., Oops!, ta da!, etc.). Some interjections are seen by Gibbs and Colston (2007:347) to communicate ironical meaning in particular contexts. ‘Oh!’, ‘ah!’, ‘O!’, ‘Dear me!’, ‘Oh dear!’, ‘huh’ are examples of ironical interjections. For example: A have invited B to visit him/her in London. A writes “London in May is the most beautiful place on earth”. B arrives London in a freak cold spell, wind howling, and rain lashing down. s/he says:

(17) *Ah, London in May!*

Ironical exclamations do not fit the traditional definition of irony. They do not express a complete proposition; hence, they cannot be true or false, and cannot usefully be analyzed as deliberate violations of a maxim of truthfulness. Moreover, it is hard to see what the opposite of the interjection “Ah, London in May!” would be.

4. Data Description, Analysis, and Findings

4.1 Data description

The data of this study are represented by (36) situations taken from Dickens’s “*A Tale of Two Cities*”. This novel is ranked by many scholars as the most famous work in the history of fictional literature¹. ‘A Tale of Two Cities’ is an excellent choice of reading material for senior high school students. It is probably the least “Dickensian” of his fourteen novels in that it has less of the grotesque, fewer characters, more big scenes, and a less complicated plot. These differences make it especially accessible to high school students. Much of the

¹ See Buchholz (1999:6) for further information¹

novel's value lies in its structure, creativity, and explorations of timeless themes. As a historical novel, it serves as an excellent example of this genre. The fact that Dickens is able to weave the simple lives of ordinary people into the mosaic of a cataclysmic historical event is an indication of his genius, and another reason to read the book. The reader of this study is supposed to be acquainted with this novel. So a short summery has been provided to help the reader recall as much of the overall plot, structure, characters, and settings as possible.

4.1.1 Summary of the Novel

Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities deals with the major themes of duality, revolution, and resurrection in London and Paris. It is 1775, and Mr. [Jarvis Lorry](#) is travelling to Dover to meet [Lucie Manette](#). He tells her that she is not an orphan as she had been told from a young age. He now says that he will travel with her to Paris to meet her father, who has recently been released from the Bastille. Doctor Manette is housed in the Defarges' wine-shop and has lost his reason, but he starts to regain it when he meets his daughter and is transported back to London. Five years later, Charles Darnay is tried in London for a charge of treason for providing English secrets to the French and Americans during the outbreak of the American Revolution. The dramatic appearance of Mr. [Sydney Carton](#), who looks remarkably like him, precludes any positive identification and allows Darnay's acquittal. Darnay, Mr. Carton, and [Mr. Stryver](#) all fall in love with Lucie Manette, who was a tearful, unwilling witness for the prosecution. Although they all make an attempt to woo her, she favors Charles Darnay and marries him. Darnay has ominously hinted to Doctor Manette of his concealed identity, and he reveals to his father-in-law on the morning of his wedding that he is a French nobleman who has renounced his title. In France, Darnay's uncle, Monseigneur, has been murdered in his bed for crimes against the French people. This means that Darnay is next in line to inherit the aristocratic title, but he tells no one but Doctor Manette. At the urgent request of Monsieur Gabelle, who has been arbitrarily imprisoned, Darnay returns to Paris. He is arrested as a nobleman and an emigrant and thrown into jail. A spy named John Barsad drops into the Defarges' wine-shop to gather evidence regarding whether they are revolutionaries. They reveal practically nothing, although Madame Defarge is knitting a list of those whom she and the other revolutionaries intend to kill. Doctor Manette, [Miss Pross](#), Lucie, and her small child follow Darnay to Paris, where the Doctor is almost successful in using his power among the revolutionaries as a former Bastille prisoner--like the people, he was oppressed by the ruling regime to secure Darnay's release. But Darnay is once again denounced by the Defarges, a charge which is made even stronger by Monsieur Defarge's revelation of a paper document that he found in Doctor Manette's former cell in the Bastille. The document recounts that Manette was arbitrarily imprisoned by the Evrémondes for having witnessed their rape of a peasant girl and the murder of her brother. Darnay is brought back to prison and sentenced to death. Sydney Carton also has traveled to Paris because of the selfless love that Lucie Manette has inspired in him. He resolves to sacrifice himself to save her husband's life. He forces the help of John Barsad, having recognized him as

Solomon Pross, the dissolute brother of Miss Pross. Carton overhears the Defarges discussing a plan to kill Lucie and her child, and he figures out that Madame Defarge is the surviving sister of the peasant girl who was raped and of the boy who was stabbed by the Evrémonde family. Carton arranges for the Manettes to leave immediately. He uses his influence with Barsad (Pross), who also works as a turnkey, to get into Darnay's cell. He drugs Darnay and exchanges places with him, having Barsad carry Darnay out of the prison to safety. Madame Defarge knocks on Lucie's door to arrest her, but the Manettes have already fled to safety. She is instead confronted with the extremely protective Miss Pross, who comes to blows with her and accidentally shoots her dead with her own gun. Darnay returns with the Manettes to London in safety. Carton dies in Darnay's place at the guillotine, satisfied with the knowledge of his good deed.

4.2 Data Analysis and Findings

4.2.1 Method of Analysis

The model developed in 2.3 above will be used to analyse the types of irony. The categorization of the pragmatic strategies of verbal irony in 3 above is the eclectic model used to analyse these strategies in 4.2.2 below. Each example of the novel is considered as a situation and given the symbol (S) accompanied by the Text number (T) as illustrated in Appendix (1). The findings of the data analysis will be calculated by means of the percentage equation. The exact texts of situations will be listed in Appendix (1).

4.2.1 Types of Irony

This part of the study is intended to analyse the types of irony as conducted in 2.3 above. It is found that the three types of dramatic, situational, and verbal irony are all used. However, their use ranges in degree. It amounts to 30.55%, 22.22%, and 47.22% respectively. It seems that verbal irony represents, thus, the most prevailing type of irony of those used in the ironical situations in the novel under study. This finding fulfils the first aim of the study (*that there are various types of irony when used to deliver a thought or opinion*) and verifies the first hypothesis (*that verbal irony is the most common type used in the issuance of irony*).

Table 1 below provides a more illustrative idea about the results of the analysis referred to above.

Table (1)A Statistic Analysis of the Use of the Types of Irony

Type	Dramatic Irony	Situational Irony	Verbal Irony
Percentage	30.55	22.22	47.22

The aforementioned percentages can be shown in Figure (1) below as a histogram representing the frequency distribution of the types of irony of the data under study.

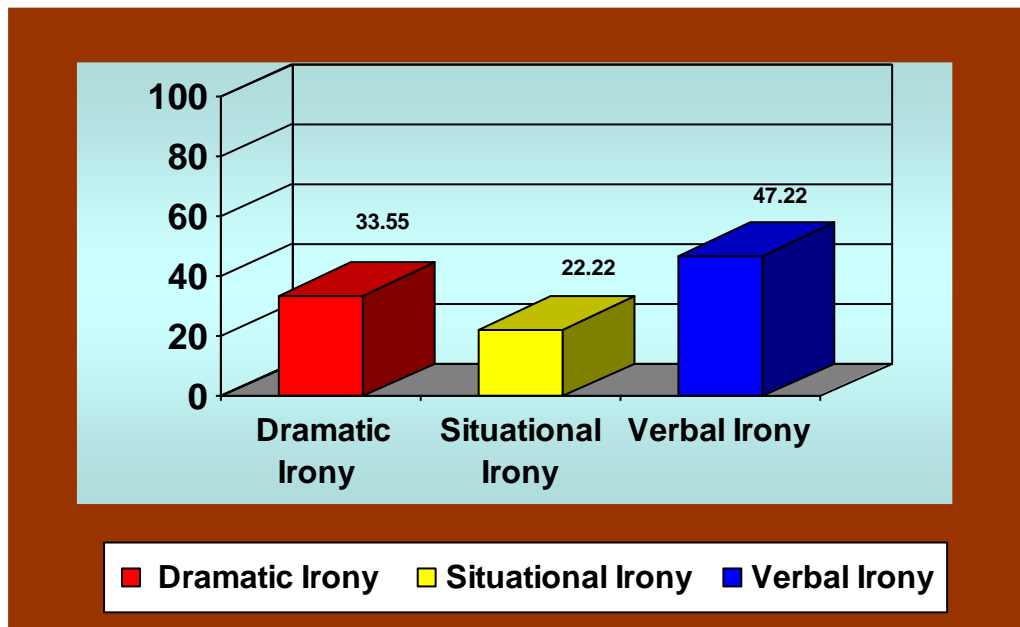


Figure (1) Histogram of the Types of Irony

To illustrate the findings of this part, six representative examples of the data analyzed are discussed below. Analogous data are represented by two examples per each (For the rest of examples, see Table 2 below).

S (1) T (24)

An example of dramatic irony (See 2.3.1) in this novel is seen when the reader thinks that Carton will only be a drunken bum with lots of talent for the rest of his life. *If it had been possible, Miss Manette, that you could have returned the love of the man you see before yourself—flung away, wasted, drunken, poor creature of misuse as you know him to be* It turns out that in the end that Carton becomes the hero of 'A Tale of Two Cities'. *It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known* This saying was Carton's life because he took Darney's place at the guillotine. He was able to take his place at the guillotine because they resemble each other very much. Their resemblance is also an example of dramatic irony. Carton gets Darney out of two tight spots; court case and most importantly the guillotine.

S (2) T (2)

Dickens uses dramatic irony when he writes about the French Revolution. The readers and some of the character think that the revolution will make things better:

Spiritual revelations were conceded to England at that favoured period. Arrangements were made for the swallowing up of London But in the end of the novel the revolution turns out to be a reign of terror.

it was much too much the way of native British orthodoxy, to talk of this terrible Revolution as if it were the only harvest ever known under the skies that had not been sown—as if nothing had ever been done, or omitted to be done, that had led to it—as if observers of the wretched millions in France

S (3) T (9)

Irony of situation is when the eventual outcome is completely different than the reader thinks (See 2.3.2). An example of this being that Dr. Manette who was wrongfully put into prison was a symbol of the revolution.

Doctor Manette, look upon the prisoner. Have you ever seen him before?

At the end of the book Madame Defarge wants to kill him because he is now the brother in law to one of the Evermonde brother who rape Madame Defarge's sister. This is ironic because Dr. Manette is expected to help the revolution out because he was wrongfully put into prison by the nobility. But that is not the case.

S (4) T (34)

Another example of irony of situation occurs when Dr. Manette ends up the father-in-law of Charles Darney who is the son of one of the Evermonde brothers.

The peasant family so injured by the two Evremonde brothers

This is ironic because Dr. Manette was wrongfully put in prison because of the Evermonde brothers. Not only were the readers shock but Dr. Manette was too because of the relation to the Evermonde brothers.

S (5) T (4)

Miss Manette, I am a man of business. I have a business charge to acquit myself of. In your reception of it, don't heed me any more than if I was a speaking machine-truly

Book the First—Recalled to Life (IV The Preparation)

This is a type of verbal irony (See 2.4.1). Mr. Lorry means the opposite of what he says. Throughout the novel, readers can see that he is very kind, hearted, friendly, and unbusiness like. Another example is:

S (6) T (26)

'No, Jerry, no!' said the messenger, harping on one theme as he rode. 'It wouldn't do for you, Jerry. Jerry, you honest tradesman,

This is another example of verbal irony. The messenger means the opposite of what he says. As the book progresses it is found out that Jerry Cruncher is not an honest tradesman but a sneaky resurrection man. He ruins his honesty title by lying to his son about his job saying that he is going fishing.

Table (2) below lists the types of irony in all situations. Each Text is given the symbol (†) to indicate its occurrence in the selected column.

Table (2) Types of Irony in all Situations

Text	Dramatic Irony	Situational Irony	Verbal Irony
1			/
2	/		
3		/	
4			/
5	/		
6		/	
7			/
8			/
9		/	
10			/
11	/		
12			/
13	/		
14		/	
15			/
16			/
17			/
18			/
19			/
20			/
21	/		
22			/
23			/
24	/		
25			/
26			/
27		/	
28		/	
29			/
30	/		
31	/		
32	/		
33	/		
34		/	
35	/		
36		/	

4.2.2 Strategies of Communicating Irony

The analysis of the various strategies of verbal irony reveals that the strategies of sarcasm, satire, ironical understatement, pretence, and ironic

interjection are used in various degrees. The analysis of the data , however, reveals 0.0% use of echoic irony. As for the other strategies their use amounts to 17.64%, 47.05%, 11.76%, 17.64%, and 5.88% respectively. The most frequently used one, thus, is satire .The findings of the analysis , here , fulfil the second aim of the study (that the common strategies language users appeal to in the communication of irony is satire) and verify the second hypothesis (there are many strategies language users exploit in their expression of irony).By using the statistical equation of percentage, the findings of this analysis can be illustrated in Table (3) and diagrammed in Figure (3) below.

Table (3) Strategies of Verbal Irony

Strategy	Sarcasm	Satire	Ironical Understatement	Echoic Irony	Pretence	Ironic Interjection
Percentage	17.64	47.05	11.76	0.0	17.64	5.88

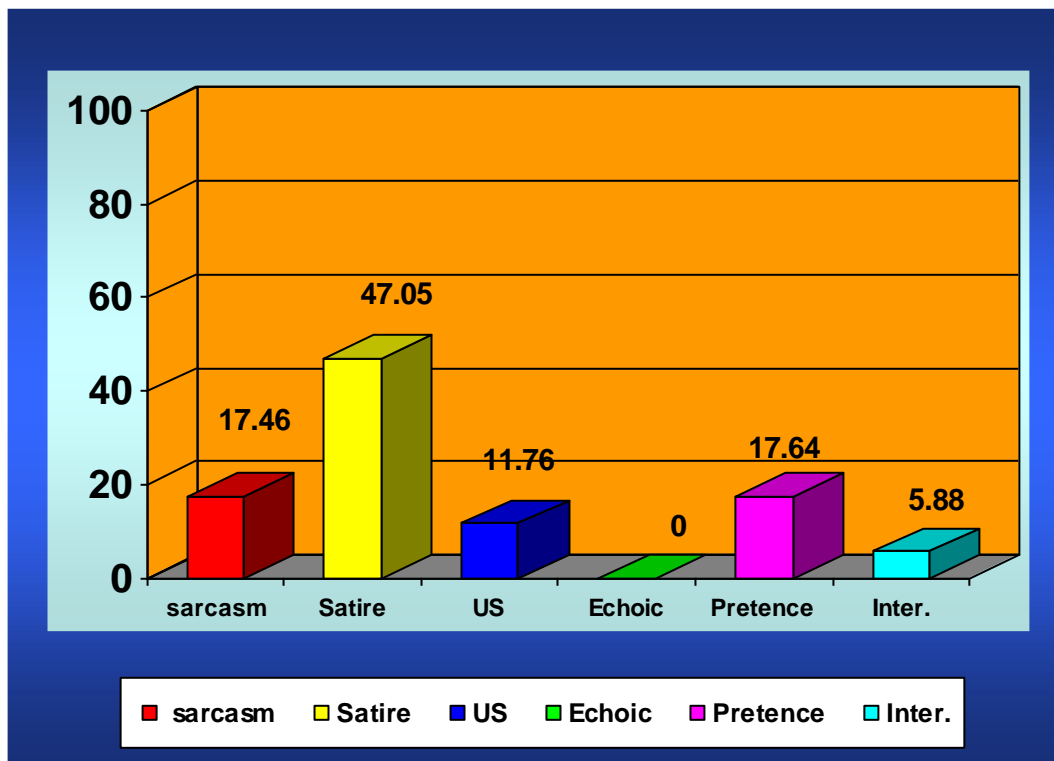


Figure (3) Histogram of the Strategies of Verbal Irony

Keys: US= ironical understatement, Echoic= echoic irony, Inter= ironical interjection.

To provide a clear idea of the findings of this part of analysis, five examples that are thought to be illustrative of the data are selected. Each example represents a strategy of its type as indicated below (for the rest of examples, See Table 4 below).

S (7) T (16)

It was impossible for Monseigneur to dispense with one of these attendants on the chocolate and hold his high place under the admiring Heavens.

Deep would have been the blot upon his escutcheon if his chocolate had been ignobly waited on by only three men; he must have died of two.

In this text Dickens expresses an equal disapproval for the aristocracy whose vile mistreatment of the peasantry contributes to the revolution. He uses sarcasm (See 3.1) to great effect as he describes the Monseigneur's ridiculous dependence on his serving men. It means that he must not serve them.

Dickens's choice of the word *escutcheon*, referring to a family coat-of-arms, is key to our understanding of Monseigneur. For this emblem represents what he sees as a power inherent to his family's bloodline, an innate nobility that he thinks justifies his absurd lavishness. Dickens undercuts Monseigneur's reverence for this symbol of his own power by commenting on his ridiculous fear that he might damage his reputation should he prove insufficiently ostentatious in the frivolous act of drinking chocolate

S (8) T (8)

That, for these reasons, the jury, being a loyal jury (as he knew they were), and being a responsible jury (as THEY knew they were), must positively find the prisoner Guilty, and make an end of him, whether they liked it or not. That, they never could lay their heads upon their pillows; that, they never could tolerate the idea of their wives laying their heads upon their pillows; that, they never could endure the notion of their children laying their heads upon their pillows; in short, that there never more could be, for them or theirs, any laying of heads upon pillows at all, unless the prisoner's head was taken off.

Dickens's description of the court case in England is satirical (See 3.2). It's so over the top that it begins to be humorous. The text above is an example of the lawyer's argument in favour of executing Charles Darnay. It's a serious subject, sure, but it's also good for a laugh. More important, spinning out court procedures to ridiculous lengths allows Dickens to demonstrate how, well, ridiculous the judicial system actually is.

Dickens' satirical treatment of the powers is more barbed. In the London court of law, where admission prices for spectators is higher even than at Bedlam, and where death is the sentence for such crimes as housebreaking, petty robbery, forgery, the uttering of bad notes and the unlawful opening of a letter, advocates use incomprehensible legalese to present their cases. When evidence is clearly stated it is irrelevant to the case at hand, and witness testimonies are admissible so long as they cannot be proven theoretically impossible.

S (9) T (12)

The character of [Sydney Carton](#) was presented as an alcoholic lawyer with very [low self-esteem](#). He progressed as a character and changed slightly in appearance mainly in Chapter 20 of Book the Second. In the preceding chapters, Carton is merely described as a drunkard, frequenting tavern and downing copious amounts of wine.

Charles Darnay used an ironical understatement (See 3.3) to highlight this ludicrous point. In his ranting, however, he makes his true feelings clear.

I think you have been drinking, Mr. Carton

Darnay's statement is ironically an attempt to disappoint the usual habit of Carton who is always drunkard.

S (10) T (7)

Ah! yes! You're religious, too. You wouldn't put yourself in opposition to the interests of your husband and child.

The interjection in this text is seen to communicate ironical meaning (See 3.6). The context of this text is that Mr. Cruncher betook himself to his boot-cleaning and his general preparation for business. In the proceeding of the story events Cruncher is not religious such as when he beats his wife for praying, which irritates him.

S (11) T (4)

Miss Manette, I am a man of business. I have a business charge to acquit myself of. In your reception of it, don't heed me any more than if I was a speaking machine-truly, I am not much else.

The central idea behind pretence which accounts for this ironical example is that the speaker (Mr. Lorry) is not himself performing a speech act such as making an assertion or asking a question, but pretending to perform. He talks about himself as being a man of business, rather, it is a type of irony because at the end of the book Mr. Lorry is very kind hearted and very friendly and not business like man.

Table (4) below lists the types of strategies of all situations. Each Text is given the symbol (+) to indicate its occurrence in the given strategy of the selected column.

Table (4) Types of strategies used in all situations

Text	Sarcasm	Satire	Ironical Understatement	Echoic Irony	Pretence	Ironic Interjection
1		+				
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						+
8		+				
9						
10	+					
11						
12				+		
13						

14					+	
15	+					
16	+					
17					+	
18			+			
19		+				
20		+				
21						
22						
23		+				
24						
25		+			+	
26		+				
27						
28						
29		+				
30						
31						
32						
33						
34						
35						
36						

5. Conclusions

On the basis of the findings arrived at through the analysis of the data under study , the following conclusions can be introduced:

1. The three basic types of dramatic, situational, and verbal irony are all used in the selected novel under study.
2. Verbal irony is the most common type of irony which is used by language users.
3. The prevalence of verbal irony indicates that in the overall speech-situations , the speaker intends a very different, and often opposite, attitude or evaluation.
4. The importance of the verbal irony to lies in the fact that it can be variably exploited in a single text or number of texts without requiring to understand long texts as is the case with the other types.
5. The strategies of sarcasm, satire, ironical understatement, pretence, and ironic interjection are the basic strategies which are appealed to by the language user. Echoic irony, however, does not seem to be an instrumental

one to them and this is manifest in the fact that they have shown no single instance of using it .

6.The most frequently used strategy is satire which indicates that language users prefer to express irony through a speech act than another strategy.

7.The extensive use of satire reflects the novelist's intention towards the ridicule of a subject to point out its faults as a reformation process.

8.In many examples, the ridicule of social customs or particular beliefs is carried out by satire as a means to reveal the faults and wrongdoings appealed to by the people of both societies (British and French).

Appendix: 1 Text of Situations

(P.3) **Text (1)** It was the best of times; it was the worst of times..."

Text (2) It was much too much the way of native British orthodoxy, to talk of this terrible Revolution as if it were the only harvest ever known under the skies that had not been sown—as if nothing had ever been done, or omitted to be done, that had led to it—as if observers of the wretched millions in France. (P:3)

Text (3) A stony business altogether, with heavy stone balustrades, and stone urns, and stone flowers, and stone faces of men (p.27)

Text (4) Miss Manette, I am a man of business. I have a business charge to acquit myself of. In your reception of it, don't heed me any more than if I was a speaking machine-truly, I am not much else (P:36)

Text (5) Madame Defarge, his wife, sat in the shop behind the counter as he came in.(P:55)

Text (6) That he had no recollection whatever of his having been brought from his prison to that house. (P:83).

Text (7) Ah! yes! You're religious, too. You wouldn't put yourself in opposition to the interests of your husband and child, would you? Not you!' and throwing off other sarcastic sparks from the whirling grindstone of his indignation (p.96)

Text (8) That, for these reasons, the jury, being a loyal jury (as he knew they were), and being a responsible jury (as THEY knew they were), must positively find the prisoner Guilty, and make an end of him, whether they liked it or not. That, they never could lay their heads upon their pillows; that, they never could tolerate the idea of their wives laying their heads upon their pillows; that, they never could endure the notion of their children laying their heads upon their pillows; in short, that there never more could be, for them or theirs, any laying of heads upon pillows at all, unless the prisoner's head was taken off.(P:114)

Text (9) Doctor Manette, look upon the prisoner. Have you ever seen him before?(P:125)

Text (10) Monseigneur was in his inner room, his sanctuary of sanctuaries. (P:134)

Text (11) Do you feel, yet, that you belong to this terrestrial scheme again, Mr. Darnay? (P:142)

Text (12) I think you have been drinking, Mr. Carton. (P:145)

Text (13) However late at night he sat carousing with Sydney Carton, he always had his points at his fingers' ends in the morning (P:149)

Text (14) There never was, nor will be, but one man worthy of Ladybird,' said Miss Pross; 'and that was my brother. (P:167)

Text (15) The Holiest of Holiests to the crowd of worshippers in the suite of rooms without. (p.181)

Text (16) It was impossible for Monseigneur to dispense with one of these attendants on the chocolate and hold his high place under the admiring Heavens. Deep would have been the blot upon his escutcheon if his chocolate had been ignobly waited on by only three men; he must have died of two.(P:182)

Text (17) Monseigneur, one of the great lords in power at the Court, held his fortnightly reception in his grand hotel in Paris. (p.183)

Text (18) As the tall man suddenly got up from the ground, and came running at the carriage. (P:192)

Text (19) Heralded by a courier in advance, and by the cracking of his postilions' whips, which twined snake-like about their heads in the evening air, as if he came attended by the Furies, Monsieur the Marquis drew up in his travelling carriage at the posting-house gate. (p.199)

Text (20) What man, pig? And why look there?' (p. 200)

Text (21) That I believe our name to be detested than any name in France. (P 214)

Text (22) The Fellow of No Delicacy. (P:261)

Text (23) He called himself for the plaintiff, there was no getting over his evidence, the counsel for the defendant threw up his brief, and the jury did not even turn to consider. (P:248)

Text (24) It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known. (P:264)

Text (25) Father,' said Young Jerry, as they walked along: taking care to keep at arm's length well between them: 'what's a Resurrection-Man?' (P:287).

Text (26) No, Jerry, no!' said the messenger, harping on one theme as he rode. 'It wouldn't do for you, Jerry. Jerry, you honest tradesman. (P:288)

Text (27) It is a long time,' repeated his wife; 'and when is it not a long time? Vengeance and retribution require a long time; it is the rule.'(P:313)

Text (28) There was a time in my imprisonment, when my desire for vengeance was unbearable.(P:333)

Text (29) Does everybody here recall old Foulon, who told the famished people that they might eat grass, and who died, and went to Hell?' (P 392)

Text (30) The house belonged to a great nobleman who had lived in it until he made a flight from the troubles (p.456)

Text (31) He had announced himself by name and profession as having been for eighteen years a secret and unaccused prisoner in the Bastille (P:478).

Text (32) That he was tied fast under the shadow of the axe; and that in spite of his utmost tergiversation and treachery in furtherance of the reigning terror,(P:534)

Text (33) Madame Defarge, taking her way, now drew nearer and nearer to the else-deserted lodging in which they held their consultation. (P:645)

Text (34) The peasant family so injured by the two Evremonde brothers. (P:605)

Text (35) It is a far, far better thing that I do than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known. (P:669)

Text (36) As the vengeance descends from her elevation to do it, the tumbrils begin to discharge their loads.(P:664)

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