The Verbal Irony found in English Novel "Twilight"

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Abstract

Talking irony as one of the figures of speech has been commonly discussed not only in daily conversation but also in social media, contemporary fiction, and different works of literature. However, the study of irony itself is not widely discussed in the novel. This study aims to find the verbal irony that occurs in the novel and in what situations it occurs. The data were taken from the novel "Twilight" written by Stephenie Meyer. The theory is adapted from Winokur (2007) about the definition of verbal irony. This study uses a qualitative approach and data are collected by note-taking and classified into the types of irony. The findings of this study, there are 14 data of verbal irony occur in this study. This study also found that the ironic criticism in the novel appears to minimize the negative meaning of the message. So, it may reduce the level of criticism for the addressee to save face. Explaining Verbal Irony in the Novel is really different from what we communicate in real situations. We have to read the whole text to find the implicit meaning of the irony. For the next study, we can analyze the comparison between irony and humor in literary work, such as novels to have more sight into those signals.

INTRODUCTION

As a form of literary artwork, the novel contains a lot of figures of speech. Each language has its own way to express meaning through lexical items such as metaphors, similes, idioms, irony, and other figurative meanings (Ghanem et al. 2020). Nowadays, Irony has been discussed in other works such as situational irony from different works of literature (Khamdamovna and Khalimovna 2000); critical studies of irony in contemporary fiction (Woodend, 2019); the irony detection on social media Twitter (Nayel, Medhat, and Rashad, 2019; Sykora, Elayan, and Jackson, 2020); the irony detection on short messages in Spanish variants (Ortega-Bueno et al., 2019) and Portuguese language (Jiang et al., 2021); the study of a social robot with the ability to use irony in multimodal communication with humans (Ritschel et al., 2019); irony detection in a multilingual context (Ghanem et al., 2020); the methodology based on the neural network to tackle the use of irony in social media (Potamias, Siolas, and Stafylopatis, 2020); the comparison between irony and sarcasm in ethical perspective (Airaksinen, 2020). However, the topic of irony in the novel has not been widely discussed, so this research was conducted to find out the

types of irony that occur in the novel and in what situations it occurs.

Irony makes people have their own perceptions. The struggle will emerge when our desire doesn't happen. When we know the truth approximately, an unsafe circumstance and observe somebody approach that threat. When somebody says one thing and implies another, it makes complexity. So, it makes instability or pressure for writers to know the extent to which their work is understood or not by the reader (Baldó 2022; Khamdamovna, 2021; Khamdamovna and Khalimovna, 2000; Potamias, Siolas, and Stafylopatis, 2020).

The novel as a literary work has a different language structure and generally uses language that has implied meanings so it must be explored more deeply. So, understanding irony in the novel is really useful for those who want to create a narrative novel to make the character in their novel have characteristics where all figures present certain positions but do not really intend or mean what is said.

METHOD AND THEORY

This study uses a qualitative approach, and the data of the study were taken from the novel "Twilight" written by Stephenie Meyer. This novel was written by a famous author, and it contains some ironies that can be used to find data that belongs to verbal, situational, or dramatic ironies. In order to obtain the data, there are some steps; 1) carefully read the data source a number of times; 2) collected all the ironies found in the novel and classified them into the verbal irony and the social functions of irony; 3) the verified data was used as research data, which then analyzed the irony.

The theory of irony in which a speaker is being ironic when he or she is mentioning or echoing an earlier utterance, such as a weather forecaster's saying, "The weather will be lovely today", to express an attitude such as contempt or ridicule toward it (Gibbs Jr and Colston, 2007). The speaker is pretending to be an unseeing person, perhaps a weather forecaster, exclaiming to an unknowing audience how beautiful the weather is. The weather forecaster intends the addressee to see through the pretense – in such rain, she/he obviously could not be making the exclamation on her/his own behalf – and to see that she/he is thereby ridiculing the sort of person who would make such an exclamation (e.g., the weather forecaster), the sort of person who would accept it, and the exclamation itself.

Winokur, n.d. (2007) said that there are three types of irony, those are verbal, situational, and dramatic irony, but this research is focused on the verbal irony found in English novels. Here is the example from the data source: I don't want to be a monster. (p.187) said by the main character intends the opposite and the irony occurs because there is a contradiction between what is said and what is meant. The character (Edward) is a vampire who sucked the blood of living people. Before he was created to be a vampire, he was only a human who was able to feel sad and happy with other people without feeling fear or wanting to hurt people around him. He said that he did not want to be a monster but the fact, he was a monster. An author uses all the figures and conventions of a context while refraining from belief or commitment. Readers can imagine an author behind the work who presents certain irony but does not really mean what is said (Colebrook, 2004). The function of irony occurs in the example above is ironic criticism of offensive behavior. The function would be clear from the context of the story. The victim character (Edward) was a vampire who sucked the blood of living people. When someone changed to a vampire, he suddenly became a monster.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines a monster as a person who is very cruel and evil, but the fact victim character was only a person who had felt like a human being. Before he was created to be a vampire, he was only a human who was able to feel sad and happy with other people without wanting to hurt people around him. The victim character said that he did not want to be a monster but the fact he was a monster because his behavior has changed from human to a monster. He must control his desire to suck human blood and only attack animals. The expression above can be classified as verbal irony because there is a contradiction between what is said and what is actually meant. The above data is categorized as verbal irony because there is a contradiction between what is said and what is meant.

According to Dews, Kaplan, Winner in Gibbs & Colston (2007:314) there are three functions of ironic criticisms:

1) Ironic criticism about performances: Irony as Face Saving

The ironic criticisms about a person's performance may serve to mute the level of criticism conveyed by the remark in order for the addressee to save face. In uttering an ironic remark about poor performance, the speaker jokes about a sensitive subject. In doing so, speakers may succeed in minimizing the poverty of the performance, and thus, in reducing the addressees were not rated as less insulted and less defensive following ironic criticisms.

2) Ironic criticism about offensive behavior: Irony as Face Saving

When people make comments about another person's offensive behavior, the payoffs seem to benefit the speaker and the addressee equally. When speakers remark about the addressee's offensive behavior, the ironic speaker is seen as no less critical, but as less angry and more in control than the literal speaker. Addressees are just as defensive as when criticized literally but are less insulted and more amused by the ironic remark. Finally, the relationship is less negatively affected when the criticism is couched ironically rather than literally.

3) Ironic criticism about the situation: Irony as Humor

When people make comments about unpleasant situations that are out of their control, the payoffs found here for commenting ironically were that the remark is perceived as humorous and has a less negative impact on the speaker-hearer relationship. Two of our measures of how addressees perceived the remarks (how insulted and how defensive) were not applicable in the situation context because the object of the speaker's remark was not the addressee. Addressees have no reason to feel insulted or defensive as a result of remarks about situations that are not their responsibility.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

There are 14 data of verbal ironies found in the data source. The followings are the findings and the analysis of each data.

Analysis of Data (1): ". . . *Who were you, an insignificant little girl*" – (p.271)

The ironic statement is an insignificant little girl. The character who said the ironic expression was Edward. He said that to Bella, a young lady that was able to attract his attention. The function of irony here is ironic criticism of the performance. Considering the context of the story the character who said the ironic sentence here was Edward. He said the ironic statement to an insignificant little girl to express that he was able to fight her charisma. But what he said was the opposite of what was meant. Actually, he was attracted to her. As a vampire, Edward was able to find

girls easily, but when he met Bella, he considered himself a strange man. He ran away from her, forced himself not to wait for her, not to follow her from school. He took precautions, hunted, and fed more than usual before deciding to come back to see her again. He was sure that he was strong enough to treat her like any other human.

In this case, he was worried that Bella as a human would try to keep away from him if she knew that Edward was a vampire. Besides, Edward was a handsome boy that could easily get a beautiful girl but could not avoid the charisma of the new girl he met for the first time in his school. From the context of the story, the ironic criticism of the performance occurred when he tried to keep himself from her charisma, but he could not.

Analysis of Data (2): "*No, none of the boys have caught my eye yet*." (p.296)

The function of ironic criticism here is about the performance of someone. Considering the context of the story the character who said this ironic criticism here was Bella. Her father, Charlie asked her about someone special that could ask her to go to the dance party. Besides, she was in Forks for a few months, and it was time to have someone special that could accompany her every day. The speaker told her father that she was not attracted in with any boys in her class because they were so usual and the same as other friends she had. The speaker was interested in one of the boys in her class, but he was not a human like her but a vampire. She did not want her father to know about him personally yet. Charlie only knew that Edward was the son of the famous doctor in Forks, and he was Bella's senior in high school. Here the verbal irony was used by the character to cover her feeling toward Edward from her father.

Analysis of Data (3): "That's a very nice effect." (p.449)

Based on the data example above *nice effect* did not mean a pleasant, enjoyable, or attractive result of something. Considering the context of the story, the character who said this ironic sentence was James, he was a bad vampire who wanted to suck Bella's blood. The ironic criticism here is about Bella's performance. From the context of the story, it was told that before James killed Bella, he gave her grievous bodily harm and he enjoyed doing that thing. The ironic nice effect in the story did not mean a pleasant result of something, but the condition of the victim, Bella was not happy with the situation. Her body was full of her blood because James struck her so hard, her head bashed into the mirrors and the blood spread crimson across her white shirt, pooling rapidly on the floor. His foot also stepped down hard on her leg and made it break. The situation in the story was horrible. The dance floor where the bad vampire tortured Bella was full of blood with some of the pieces of glass shattered and splintered on the floor. So, the sentence above can be classified as verbal irony because there is a contradiction between what is said and what is meant.

Analysis of Data (4): "Have fun, then." (p.247)

The key structure "have fun" in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary means enjoyment; pleasure; a thing that gives enjoyment or pleasure and makes you feel happy. The function of irony here is about offensive behavior. It can be seen from the context of the story. Considering the context of the story, the character who said this ironic structure was Bella who had a boyfriend that was a vampire. In this context, Edward, the vampire, wanted to go to the mountain and hunted with his sister, Alice to satiate the hunger or rather thirst. He liked to

hunt wild animals, such as mountain lions, bear rather than deer and elk because he liked to have challenges and have fun without impacting the environment with injudicious hunting. He expressed the horror of his hunting to his girlfriend with a smile and joke without seeing that she was shivering.

Here Bella as a human being said the ironic structure Have fun, then to cover her fright of the story, when her boyfriend told her that he wanted to hunt with his sister. The structure Have fun, was then categorized as verbal irony since there was a contradiction between what was said and what was meant. She said to her boyfriend to have fun in his hunting while on the other side she felt worried and afraid of losing him, although she knew that her boyfriend was immortal.

Analysis of Data (5): "Would you like a round of applause?" (p.300)

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary states that a round of applause means a short period during which people show their approval of somebody/something by clapping hands, and the specific noun applause means the noise made by a group of people clapping their hands and sometimes shouting to show their approval or enjoyment. The fact was the word applause here was not have the same meaning as in the dictionary but was an ironic expression of the character.

Considering the context of the story, the character who said the ironic sentence was Bella. She said this verbal irony Would you like a round of applause? to her boyfriend Edward. The ironic sentence here did not mean the activity of people clapping their hands to show their enjoyment, but the expression of the character to show that she disliked his arrogance when he showed his ability to attract human attention only by staring

somebody out. The ironic criticism here is about offensive behavior.

Analysis of Data (6): "I don't think a tank could take out that old monster." (p.120)

From the context of the story, the character Jacob said a verbally ironic sentence about the old truck which belonged to Bella. The truck was built in the early sixties or late fifties at the earliest. The ironic criticism about performance occurred in this situation. Charlie, Bella's father bought the truck from Billy, Jacob's father, and its run was very slow although the engine still worked well. Jacob told Bella that he was very happy when Charlie bought the truck so he could build another car, Volkswagen Rabbit 1986. Bella defended her truck and said to Jacob that her truck was running well and was great in a collision.

When he heard the argument from Bella, he said the ironic sentence that the tank could not take out that old monster. There was a contradiction between what he said and what he meant. Here, the real meaning of that verbal irony is that the tank would take out the truck easily.

Analysis of Data (7): "Your truck will be here, and the key will be in the ignition – unless you're afraid someone might steal it." (p.243)

The character who said the ironic statement was Edward. Considering the context of the story, Edward picked Bella up at her house and went to school together. But he couldn't accompany her back to her house because he had to leave with his sister after lunch. He did not want to leave her alone and walked her, so he told to Bella that he and his sister would bring her truck and leave it at school. The fact was Bella did not mind walking herself. She did not want to lose her time with him. Besides she did not bring the key because she was pretty sure

the key was in the pocket of a pair of jeans she wore, under a pile of clothes in the laundry room.

She thought that he would not be able to find the key even if he broke into her house, so she said to him that she did not mind walking. Edward as a vampire that had the ability to find everything even in a hard place persevered to find the key and brought the truck to her. The ironic sentence unless you're afraid someone might steal was said to Bella for her dependability. The irony means that nobody would steal the truck even if the key would be in the ignition because the truck was too old and outdated. Here the character criticized the performance of the old truck.

Analysis of Data (8): "Time to visit the optometrist." (p.258)

In the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary optometrist is also called an optician, a person whose job is to examine people's eyes and to recommend and sell glasses. The function of irony here can be classified as an ironic criticism of the performance. Considering the context of the story, the character Bella did not need to go to the optometrist. Here the verbal irony occurred when her boyfriend, Edward, wanted to show her a beautiful meadow in the forest, but still, it was difficult for her to see that place clearly because it was too far from her sight. She could not see it not because she had a problem with her eyes but because she did not have the same ability as her boyfriend. The ironic sentence Time to visit the optometrist to herself does not have the real meaning of what the character should do but shows the inability of the character to see from a long distance.

Analysis of Data (9): "Don't forget to breathe." (p.464)

Every human being has to breathe that is to take air into his lungs and send it out again through his nose or mouth (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary). Here the character who said the ironic sentence was Bella, to her boyfriend, Edward. It can be ironic criticism of offensive behavior. Considering the context of the story, Edward was a vampire. He had an extra ability that was able not to breathe for a long time. For a human being, not breathing for a long time was a difficult thing to do. Here the character Bella used the ironic sentence to criticize his behavior when her boyfriend pretended to sleep while Bella's mother came to her room when she was in the hospital. Bella did not want her mother to consider that Edward had died because he did not breathe when he slept.

Bella used the verbal irony don't forget to breathe to remind her boyfriend to breathe while he pretended to sleep. Although she had already known that her boyfriend, Edward had the ability not to breathe for a long time, she wanted Edward to be like her, as a human being.

Analysis of Data (10): "You aren't concerned about my diet?" (p.186)

The ironic sentence You aren't concerned about my diet? can be understood if the reader reads the previous content of the story. In this context, the character who said this ironic sentence was Edward. He was a vampire, a dead person who left at night to suck the blood of living people. He talked with his friend, Bella about his personality. In Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the word diet means the food that we eat and drink regularly: a limited variety or amount of food that we eat for medical reasons or because we want to lose weight; a time when we only eat this limited variety or amount. In the context of the story, it was told that Bella was a young lady who was really interested in Edward, a vampire because he had saved her life twice. First, when a terrible car

accident befell her because her friend Tyler drove his car against her; second when there were some bad boys who wanted to disturb her, suddenly Edward came to her and saved her. She felt strange that Edward always knew everything about her activities. When she tried to get some information about him, her friend, Jacob said that Edward was a vampire. She found out on the internet about vampires and then asked him audaciously. She asked everything about his personality, and his family but still missed one question which was about his food.

The function of irony here is about the offensive behavior of Edward. As a vampire, he could kill all creatures in the world easily. When he had a close relationship with a human, he tried to explain his behavior to her. Here the verbal irony occurs in this data example because what is said is different from what is meant. The ironic sentence You aren't concerned about my diet? was said to Bella that she seemed enjoyed hearing any information from Edward, whereas as a human being she should be wary because as a vampire, Edward was very dangerous and if he smelled human blood, he suddenly became a monster and pounced like a predator. The fact of all the ironic things was she felt a little worried. She tried to keep her voice as even as possible when she asked him questions about himself. Although she knew that Edward did not hunt people and only hunted animals as he did not want to be a monster.

Analysis of Data (11): "There's no picture anywhere in that car." . . .
"Hmm," . . . "I guess I left it at home."
"Great." (p.353)

In Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the word great means extremely good in ability or quality and therefore admired by many people; very good or pleasant; important and impressive; having high status or a lot of influence; very suitable or useful for something. The fact was that the character who said this ironic word did not mean those explanations of the word great. The character who said the ironic word was Jacob. He was commanded by his father to get the new picture of Rebecca, his sister in the car. The picture was for Charlie, Bella's father. After a few minutes in the rain, Jacob did not find the picture. He told his father about that, but his father answered his question calmly that the picture was left at home. That's why the ironic word great was not to show a good thing but that he was fed up with his father for asking him to find something at one place that was at another place. Here the ironic criticism is about Jacob's father's behavior.

Analysis of Data (12): "Have fun at the beach . . . good weather for sunbathing." He glanced out at the sheeting rain." (p.108)

It could be seen from the word sheeting rain in the next sentence. In Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the phrase sheeting rain means rain very heavily. Considering the context of irony, the character who said the ironic structure here was Edward. He said the ironic statement because he was the only one that was not invited to the party that was held by his classmates in La Push, First Beach. The reason why he was not invited by his classmates was that he was not accepted in that environment. He always tried to keep his distance from others because he did not want to hurt them. He realized that he was a vampire, and it was very dangerous if he got too close to a human being.

Here the verbal irony was used by the character to show his dislike because none of his classmates invited him except Bella. He was upset because of that and tried to express it through an ironic statement. The function of the irony

above can be classified as an ironic criticism of the situation. From those explanations about Edward's feelings towards his friends, he showed his feeling and gave his criticism about the situation that occurred at that moment.

Analysis of Data (13): "It didn't work out, okay? I really hate Forks!" (p.394)

In Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the word hate means to dislike something or somebody very much. Considering the context of the story the word hates here did not mean dislike something very much, because what is said was the opposite of what is meant. To save someone, the character criticized the situation of her life in that village. Based on the context of the story, the character who said the ironic sentence was Bella. She had to say that ironic sentence to protect her family from some bad vampires who wanted to hunt her. She said the ironic sentence to her father, Charlie. She told him that Forks was a terribly quiet place where her mother left him and gone to the big city. She really loved Forks, the place where she found someone special who really loved her and protected her from danger. In Forks, she found a new better life with her father, friends, and special boyfriend that was a handsome vampire. She said the ironic sentence I really hate Forks to protect her father from an evil vampire who wanted to hunt her. She planned to say it to her father so that the hunter would follow her and leave her father alone without hurting him at all.

Analysis of Data (14): "Well . . . I assumed it was some kind of . . . occasion. But I didn't think it would be some trite human thing . . . prom!" (p.496)

The character who said the ironic statement here was Bella. Trite means dull and boring. Meanwhile, prom means a formal dance, especially the one that is held at high school (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary). This event was held on graduation day, the act of successfully completing a study at high school, and had been waited by all students at Forks, the city where Bella and her father left. This special event for students at Forks was considered a banal or trite event for Bella, very ordinary, and had nothing that was interesting or important. The fact of this irony was Bella did not like to come to prom because she could not dance in the right way. She always fell, made chaos and confusion. That is why the ironic criticism about the situation is used to emphasize dislike.

Discussion

Verbal irony refers to spoken words only. Verbal irony occurs when a character says one thing but suggests or intends the opposite. The contrast is between what the speaker says and what he means. The statement is related to Airaksinen's study that verbal irony is like free irony depending on what the character says. The free irony is based on a freely chosen statement in its typical context (Airaksinen, 2020). Verbal irony is also marked from the literature in terms of language, facial expression, prosody, and gestures (Ritschel et al., 2019).

Talking about irony in the novel is an effective way to express the author's feelings about the character he creates in the novel. Meanwhile, the irony is not only enclosed in the author's feelings but appears also in everyday conversations (Ortega-Bueno et al., 2019; Kwon, et al., 2020). To minimize the criticism of irony the speaker sometimes jokes about a sensitive subject. The finding of this study found that there are three functions of ironic criticism, they are ironic criticism of performances, ironic criticism of offensive behavior, and ironic criticism of the situation. The

function of irony may reduce the level of criticism for the addressee to save face. Finally, the relationship is less negatively affected when the criticism is couched ironically rather than literally. This is in line with Woodend's study (2019) that the irony in Wallace's fiction is the way to locate a logic of access to an interpersonal effect as a resolution to non-affective irony, then proceed to map out an approach to increased feeling, sentiment, and empathy. The fact that the presence of irony in a text may reverse the meaning expressed (Cignarella, et al., 2020). To understand the implicit meaning of ironic utterances in the novel, we just need to read the whole content of the novel. It is in line with the study of Nayel, et al. (2019) that ironic statements are used to express the contrary of what is being said, therefore it is difficult to be solved by current systems. There is no agreement in the literature on how verbal irony should be defined. The same argument was told by Potamias, et al. (2020) that ironic expressions presuppose the processing of both the indirectly rejected and the implied message so that the difference between them can be identified. They also argue irony utterances will be more difficult to grasp than a non-ironic use of the same expression. Ghanem et al. (2020) also state that systems are not able to detect irony in languages where such filtering is not always possible.

CONCLUSION

Verbal irony occurs when a character says one thing but recommends the opposite. The difference is between what the character says and what he/she really implies. The ironic criticism also occurs in the character, i.e., ironic criticism of performance, ironic criticism of offensive behavior, and ironic criticism of the situation. In understanding each type of irony, the researcher must read the expression many times, to have the real

meaning of the ironic sentence. For future work, we are also interested in comparing the humor and irony in literary work, such as novels to have more sight into those signals.

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