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## Abstract

As a means of communication, language leads to variations in humans' verbal exchanges. This research was aimed to determine how sarcasm, indirect messaging, is applied in a popular American situation comedy (sitcom) according to the classification of its purposes. The researcher employed discourse analysis technique to analyze sarcastic utterances in the American sitcom “The Big Bang Theory”.



Figure 1. The Big Bang Theory (tvguide.com)

## Introduction

- We can deliver our messages in a direct or indirect way (Searle, 1979).
- Three types of irony: verbal, situational, and dramatic (Arp & Johnson, 2012)
- Sarcasm is a form of irony which appears to be unfriendly and usually has an intention to hurt (Cutting, 2002).
- Sarcasm is a linguistic phenomenon that can be analyzed by examining its indirect or implied meaning in an utterance based on its context.
- Sarcasm is also a cultural phenomenon in the US.
- “The Big Bang Theory” displays the use of sarcasm among the main characters.

## Methodology

- Qualitative method → discourse analysis (Brown & Yule, 1983)
- Source of data → “The Big Bang Theory” transcripts from five seasons in Season 9 obtained from [bigbangtrans.wordpress.com](http://bigbangtrans.wordpress.com)
- Data gathering technique → analyzing the sarcastic utterances in the transcripts and classifying the data according to Attardo’s (2002) theory on six purposes of sarcasm

## Findings

Purpose of Sarcasm	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Sophistication	12	25.53%
Evaluation	11	23.4%
Tool for Politeness	9	19.15%
Persuasive Aspect	3	6.38%
Retractability	1	2.13%
Group Affiliation	0	0%
More than One Purpose:		
Sophistication and Evaluation	4	8.51%
Evaluation and Tool for Politeness	1	2.13%
Evaluation and Persuasive Aspect	3	6.38%
Sophistication, Evaluation, and Persuasive Aspect	1	2.13%
Evaluation, Tool for Politeness, and Persuasive Aspect	1	2.13%
Evaluation, Tool for Politeness, and Group Affiliation	1	2.13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 2. The Findings on the Purposes of Sarcasm

## Conclusion

- Sarcasm is not merely intended to offend an addressee as it expresses various purposes based on its contexts.
- Each purpose in the table is represented by sarcastic utterances in the sitcom, but the purpose to produce humor is the most predominant one, followed by the purpose to evaluate an addressee.
- English instructors and learners are encouraged to utilize popular TV shows as a source of learning English and American culture.

## References

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