

Lexical Ambiguity Represented through Wordplay from @Epicdadjokes Instagram Posts

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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with lexical ambiguity in the @epicdadjokes Instagram posts that is perceived stylistically. This research has three objectives: (1) to identify the forms of lexical ambiguity, (2) to interpret the meaning of lexical ambiguity represented through wordplay, and (3) to find out the effects of lexical ambiguity represented through wordplay on the meanings from posts of the account. This research employed a descriptive qualitative method. It was concerned with the posts from the @epicdadjokes Instagram Posts. The primary source of the data was the posts. The primary instrument was the researcher who acted as the data collector, data analyst and data interpreter. Then, the secondary instrument was the data sheet. In collecting the data, she selected the data, categorize and classified the data into three data sheets. In analyzing the data, she identified the data into the categorizations, and interpreted each datum based on the theories. The findings of the research show there are homonymy (83.33%) and polysemy (16.67%). Meanwhile, among the three sub-types of homonymy, only two of them occur, absolute homonymy (37.50%) and homophone (45.83%). The absent type is homograph. Then, there are three types of wordplay that occur in the posts i.e. Homonymic pun (25.00%), homophonic pun (29.17%), and the recursive pun (45.83%). Meanwhile, homographic pun, compound pun and visual pun does not occur. Finally, the two effects of lexical ambiguity are humorous (83.4%) and ironic effects (16.6%).

Keywords: stylistics, lexical ambiguity, pun and wordplay

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini berkaitan dengan ambiguitas leksikal dalam unggahan Instagram @epicdadjokes yang diteliti secara stilistika. Penelitian ini mempunyai tiga tujuan: (1) untuk mengidentifikasi bentuk-bentuk ambiguitas leksikal, (2) untuk menafsirkan makna ambiguitas leksikal yang direpresentasikan melalui permainan kata, dan (3) untuk mengetahui pengaruh atau dampak dari ambiguitas leksikal dalam bentuk permainan kata terhadap makna-makna dari ambiguitas leksikal pada unggahan akun tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Hal itu berkaitan dengan unggahan dari akun Instagram @epicdadjokes. Sumber utama datanya adalah foto yang diunggah oleh akun tersebut. Instrumen utama adalah peneliti yang berperan sebagai pengumpul data, analisis data, dan penafsir data. Kemudian instrumen sekundernya adalah lembar data. Dalam pengumpulan data, peneliti menyeleksi data, mengategorikan dan mengklasifikasikan data ke dalam tiga lembar data. Dalam menganalisis data, peneliti mengidentifikasi data ke dalam kategorisasi yang ada, dan menafsirkan setiap data berdasarkan teori. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat homonimi (83,33%) dan polisemi (16,67%). Sedangkan dari

ketiga sub tipe homonimi hanya terdapat dua sub tipe yaitu homonimi absolut (37,50%) dan homofon (45,83%). Tipe yang tidak ada adalah homograf. Lalu, terdapat tiga jenis permainan kata yang muncul pada unggahan tersebut yaitu permainan kata homonim (25,00%), permainan kata homofon (29,17%), dan permainan kata rekursif (45,83%). Sementara itu, permainan kata homograf, permainan kata majemuk, dan permainan kata visual tidak tersedia di akun tersebut. Terakhir, dua dampak ambiguitas leksikal yang terjadi adalah efek humor (83,4%) dan efek ironis (16,6%).

Kata Kunci: stilistika, ambiguitas leksikal, pun dan permainan kata

A. Introduction

Lexical ambiguity is phenomenon which can be analysed in many different approaches of study. Stylistic is one of the approaches that can be used to feel ambiguity. Stylistic observes the study of style of language. Related with that, ambiguity may appear in many ways. Through stylistic, wordplay is the appropriated one to be used as the way to find out the phenomena of ambiguity. Especially in lexical ambiguity. It means puns, as a type of wordplay can be used to analyse ambiguity.

According to Setyaningsih (2019), wordplay is a clever and witty way of using words, exploiting similarity in form and differences in meaning to serve some purposes, for example creating jokes. While Tristan Miller (2017) described pun as a form of wordplay in which one sign (e.g., a word or phrase) suggests two or more meanings by exploiting polysemy, homonymy, or phonological similarity to another sign, for an intended humorous or rhetorical effect

Pun in wordplay which represent lexical ambiguity can be analyzed through several media, e.g. movie, novel, drama script, social media, etc. One of the interesting media which help to find out lexical ambiguity is the social media, such as an Instagram post.

There are a lot of Instagram account that posted meme that is include wordplay. But the researcher has chosen the @epicdadjokes Instagram account for study because there are many post that contains pun or wordplay in it. And in @epicdadjokes Instagram posts we can find a confusedness among the followers in the comment section, some of them sometimes debating what is the

meaning of the ambiguity word that @epicdadjokes posted and some of them often have no idea what is the point from the post. Besides, compared with another account with the same concept, this is the only consistent account that posting pun or wordplay. Furthermore, this account has 404 posts and approximately 135.000 followers. The first post of this account is on October 9, 2017.

B. Research Method

This research is qualitative research that use descriptive as an approach. A descriptive method is considered appropriate in approaching this study, because this method aim to create descriptions; meaning images, paintings systematically, factually and accurately about the data, properties and relationships of the phenomena studied. This method is also said to be the right method. Thus, the author set using descriptive writing method as a method of drafting this research. The result of this method involves the understanding and interpretation of the researcher rather than a result in the form of statistic data.

In this study, the data are in the forms of pictures that posted by @epicdadjokes. Those pictures which were taken as the data are the pictures which contains some words can be classify as ambiguous words. The contexts of the data are the dialogues and sentence in those pictures.

In collecting the data, tools and data extraction techniques is used as the object of analysis. The posts from Instagram post were sorted to get a specific post that contains pun in it. Then, note-taking technique was used in selecting the data. After that the data was classified into data sheets by selecting which

part of the post that can become the data, and then putting them into the data sheets.

Likewise, in collecting the data, this study uses two kinds of techniques, namely documentation and observation. After collected and selected, the data were analysed. The data were analysed by identifying the words from the post to categorize the forms of lexical ambiguity; the types of puns in wordplay represent lexical ambiguity then interpreted the data into data sheets and took conclusions based on the result of the study.

The phenomenon that is analysed in this study is the phenomenon of ambiguity. Related with those statements, ambiguity as the phenomenon that appears in language may be analysed by describing how it happens in language, especially in daily utterances. Ambiguity can be seen in many ways that the researcher needs to describe how it exists in sentence. Specifically, the phenomenon that was observed is the forms of lexical ambiguity in sentence by using the @epicdadjokes Instagram posts as the object of analysis.

C. Result and Discussion

Based on the analysis of the data that has been observed, there are 24 data of the forms of lexical ambiguity. There are two out of three forms of homonymy which occur in the posts i.e. absolute homonymy and homophone. Meanwhile, homograph is not found in the posts since there are no ambiguous words which have the same written forms with different spoken in the posts. Following homonymy, polysemy only occurs 4 times out of the total 24 posts from the posts.

Therefore, there are three out of six types of pun and wordplay which occur in the posts. Homophonic pun, homonymic pun, recursive pun. Recursive pun gets the higher position. It occurs 11 times from the total 24 data, while homophonic pun occurs 7 times and the last pun that occurred is Homonymic pun is occurs 6 times. Meanwhile homographic pun, compound pun, and visual pun does not occur in the posts.

Likewise, there are two effects which can be created through lexical ambiguity i.e.

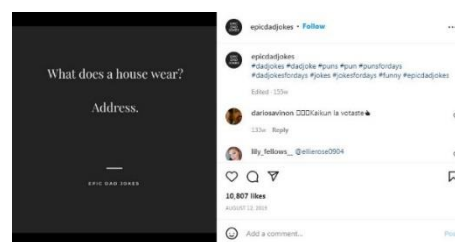
ironic and humorous effects. With humorous effect occurs 20 times from the total 26 data and ironic effect occurs 4 times in the posts.

Lexical Ambiguity

Lexical ambiguity divided into two types, i.e homonymy and polysemy. Homonymy is categorized into three sub-categories. They are homophone, homograph, and absolute homonymy. The following is the analysis and further discussion based on the data found:

Homophone

Homophone is a situation where two or more words are spelt differently but pronounced the same. Murphy also explains that homophone as the opposite of homograph only concerns with the pronunciation of words which is the same but the written form is different, for example:

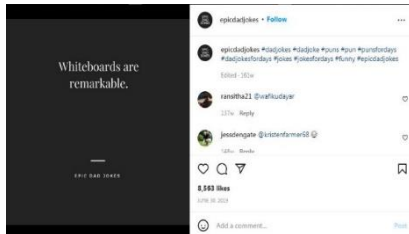


The interpretation from the post above, there is a question about what does a house wear? And of course, there is no answer for the question because house doesn't wear anything. It's a house. Why does it need something to wear? But the creator wrote "address" as an answer for the question. Why address? That was a very random answer. But in this context, to make a punning situation, address that has same pronunciation as "a dress" fit to answer that. Because "a dress" means a piece of clothing that usually wear by people. In this case the one who wear it is the house. And "address" usually represented the house sign or details of where somebody lives.

Absolute Homonymy

Absolute homonyms are unrelated in meaning, all their forms are identical in pronunciation as well as in spelling (citation forms and word forms) and those identical

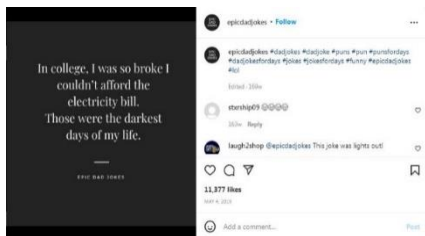
forms are grammatical equivalent. Grammatical equivalents belong to the same word-class, have the same syntactic function and occur in the same grammatical environment. For example:



The word “remarkable” from the picture is ambiguous. There are multiple meanings which appear as the response of human understanding. As in the paragraph, people can confuse about the meaning of the word “remarkable”. It can be interpreted as something extraordinary or astonishing, and also can interpret as re-mark-able i.e., that people can erase and rewrite on the whiteboard. Absolute homonymy is kind of ambiguity that represented from the sentence. Because the first meaning and the second meaning is not related to each other.

Polysemy

Polysemy is defined roughly as the existence of one lexeme with many related meanings. The fact that polysemy is a property of single words is what differentiates it from homonymy in principle. In polysemy, there are several meanings in a word but people might understand how the sense of those meanings is related. For example:



The second sentence: “Those were the darkest days of my life” in data above contain an ambiguous word that is “darkest”. Here, of course, the deliberate double meaning of the word darkest that constitutes a polysemy. The polysemy requires its listener to realize the first possible

meaning of the phrase, the second possible meaning, and the tension between the two. Based on the context on the sentence “I was so broke I couldn’t afford the electricity bill” then the first possible interpretation of “darkest” is the man’s room is dark, lacking of light cause no electricity in his house. In that sentence also tells that the man is broke, a circumstance where he having no money. So that’s create the second possible interpretation of “darkest” as a dark time in which he is feel frightened, unhappy, and sad or maybe depressed.

Wordplay

Wordplay can be based on several different features of the language involved. These features are pronunciation, spelling, morphology, vocabulary and syntax. In spite of its ubiquity, however, wordplay also appears to be to a certain extent ephemeral: the ludic character of utterances can get lost over time as they become reused in other contexts, and in many instances, ludic language use merely functions as a momentary pause inserted into a communicative exchange that pursues different aims.

Pun

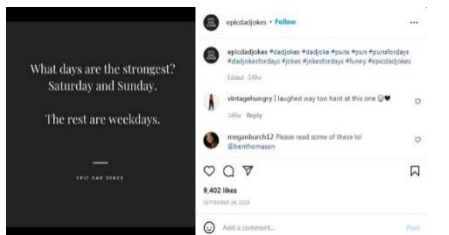
A pun is a form of wordplay in which a word suggests two or more meanings by exploiting polysemy, homonymy, or phonological similarity to another word, for an intended humorous or rhetorical effect.

Some experts have classified pun into several categories. Giorgadze (2014) classified pun into four categories. There are Homonymy (identical sounds and spelling), Homophony (identical sounds but different spellings), Homography (different sounds but identical spelling), Paronymy (there are slight differences in both spelling and sound). Giorgadze also cited Gottlieb classification of pun which he only added and singled out three categories of homonymy. There are lexical homonymy, collocational homonymy and phrasal homonymy.

To complete the classification, Bader (2014) added some other type of pun in which is summarized from different experts: homophonic pun, homographic pun, homonymic pun, compound pun, recursive pun, visual pun.

Homophonic Pun

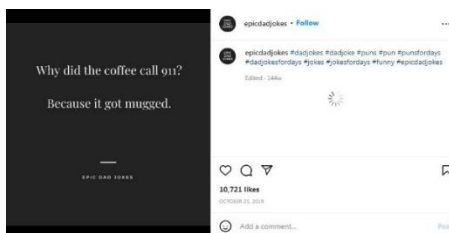
Homophonic pun is a kind of pun when a word has different spelt and meaning but have same pronunciation. Many instances of wordplay, especially puns, are based on homophony. The play on homophones can also involve elements of different languages.



Homophone also happening in data above. The word “week” above are the examples of homophone, likewise the word “weak”. The words “Week” and “Weak” are exactly different in spelling, but how they are pronounced is the same. “week” means a period of seven days, while “weak” means not physically strong. This similarity of how the words is pronounced can be a kind of difficulty to predict what word is actually

Homonymic Pun

These puns involve homonyms, word that have identical spelling and sound, but different meaning. Homonymic forms can also be used in their different meanings in different parts of an utterance. Homonymic puns arise from the exploitation of words which are both homographs and homophones.

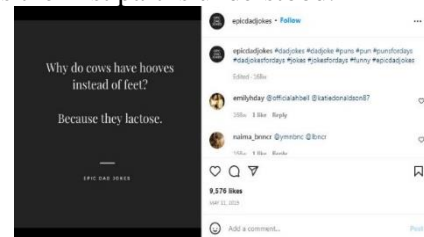


The data from the post it can be seen that the first sentence is asking “why the coffee call the 911?” The ambiguous word that can be seen from the post is “mugged” from the answer. The first meaning mugged is get attack by somebody violently in order to steal the money. And the second meaning of mugged is put in the mug. It’s created the

humorous effect because the coffee called the 911 because it got put in the mug, not because it gets an attack from somebody. But another interpretation of mugged would create a story as if the coffee gets robbed by someone that’s why it calls 911.

Recursive Pun

A recursive pun is one of which the second aspect of a pun relies on the understanding of an element in the first. The second part of the pun does not make sense unless the first part is understood.



While in the example above, there is the first sentence that is asking; why cows have hooves instead of feet? The answer “lactose” that is written in the second sentence is an ambiguous word. Lactose has similar pronunciation with “lack toes”, the word that should fill the answer. Lack toes describe that all cows that does not have a finger foot. While lactose means the sugar that found naturally in the milk that cows produce. Because, the author purpose is creating a humorous situation, they use lactose as an answer.

Thus, the same pronunciation between “lactose” and “lack toes” not always make them classified to homophonic pun. Because to interpret “lactose” in the second sentence, it needs to understand the context in the first sentence. So, this figure is classified to a recursive pun.

The Effect of Lexical Ambiguity

Lexical ambiguity in which two different meanings exist in a single word often has humorous and ironic effects. It means that ironic effect which specifically created through satire and parody can also be created through lexical ambiguity. The types of pun in which have two meanings are activated in a single word or sound, both of which are operated by the context either to

complementary or ironic effect. Thus, there are two effects that can be created in lexical ambiguity i.e. humorous and ironic effects.

Humorous Effect

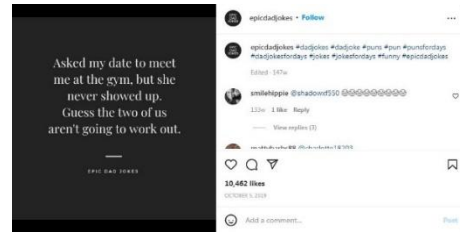
Humour inquires oddity in which it involves the situation when there is a mismatch between what someone says and what that person means. This oddity, of course not all of it is funny but the complex reasons as to why this is so will have to be left aside for now. For example:



“Where did the hacker go? I don’t know. He ransomware”. The ambiguous word in this sentence also kind of homophonic pun that play with similarity of the word pronunciation. Ransomware is the homophonic word here. Which is the word also sounding like the phrase “run somewhere”. From the context of the question in the first sentence, there are a linkage between hacker and ransomware. Ransomware is a type of malware (malicious software) that works with encryption methods, where hackers are people who expert on this scope. And “run somewhere” should be the correct or proper answer to the question. But, because the context of the sentence is about cyber-crime, and the purpose from the creators is to entertain their followers, then “ransomware” is fit to answer that cause this word still related to hacker or cyber world.

Ironic Effect

Irony is situated in the space between what the speaker says and what the speaker means. In other words, it means that irony is situated when what someone says is the opposite of what that person means. Irony is often implied by the speaker to show the opposite of what he or she feels to be the case. For example:



This is an example where the ironic effect is shown in the paragraph. There is the word “work out” which is an ambiguous one and it gives an ironic effect through the meaning. The first meaning of “work out” is to exercise in order to improve the strength or appearance of your body while the second meaning of the “work out” is to happen or develop in a relationship way. This is ironic because the girl is not coming to the gym so neither of the work out for the gym or for the relationship would be happen to them.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

With regard to the research findings above, it can be conclude that forms of lexical ambiguity in the @epicdadjokes Instagram posts are found. There are 24 data reflecting the lexical ambiguity that divide into two types, which are homonymy and polysemy. Then, there are two types of homonymy which are found. They are absolute homonymy (37.50%) and homophone (45.83%). Homophone is the most frequently occurring phenomenon of lexical ambiguity in the posts. The second position Absolute Homonymy (37.50%). And polysemy (16.67%) is found with the least form from the posts.

Regarding with the another objective of this research, which is to show the interpretation and how lexical ambiguity is represented through wordplay in the @epicdadjokes Instagram posts, it can be inferred that the ambiguous words are used on purpose in the dialogues or to evoke the reader or hearer. There are 24 data of lexical ambiguity which can be represented through pun as wordplay. Homonymic pun (25.00%), homophonic pun (29.17%), and recursive pun (45.83%) are the types of pun and wordplay which occur in the posts. There are the ambiguous words which are repeatedly used by the characters in the posts.

Furthermore, this research also finds the effects of lexical ambiguity represented through wordplay on the meanings in the @epicdadjokes Instagram posts. There are two effects of lexical ambiguity, humorous effects (83.4%) and ironic (16.6%). The dialogues mostly something which can create a humorous effect rather than an ironic one. The dialogues in the posts sometimes says something which is different or opposite from the reality. It creates an ironic situation. The dialogues often write about something which sounds funny. It creates the situation in which they talk jokingly or unseriously. This situation occurs in humorous effect. Thus, it can be inferred that the posts tend to convey the humorous side of the @epicdadjokes Instagram posts.

The study of ambiguity needs to be deeply analyzed with many different approaches and theories. This research only describes the forms of lexical ambiguity, the representation of lexical ambiguity through pun and wordplay, and also the effects of lexical ambiguity represented through pun and wordplay towards the meanings. Therefore, other researchers can explore ambiguity deeply which is related to grammatical ambiguity or the function of the use of ambiguous words. These limitations set the goals for future research

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