

UNIVERZITET U SARAJEVU - FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET

ODSJEK ZA ANGLISTIKU

ZAVRŠNI RAD

Nekongruentnost na primjeru dijaloga iz TV serije *That 70's Show*

Student:
Lejla Provalić

Mentor:
prof. dr. Selma Đuliman

Septembar, 2024

UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO - FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

FINAL DEGREE THESIS

Incongruity Observed on *That '70s Show* Dialogues

Student:
Lejla Provalić

Mentor:
Selma Đuliman, PhD

September, 2024

SAŽETAK

Ova teza istražuje složen odnos između humora i lingvistike, posebno ispitujući kako se humor ostvaruje kroz semantičku neusklađenost u televizijskoj seriji *That '70s Show*. Humor, univerzalni aspekt ljudske kulture, fascinira naučnike još od vremena Platona i Aristotela. Lingvistika je od suštinskog značaja u proučavanju humora jer je jezik često glavno sredstvo za izražavanje humora. Ovo istraživanje analizira specifične scene iz serije *That '70s Show* kako bi istražilo na koji način semantička neusklađenost generiše humor. Koristi se teorija neusklađenosti i njenog razrješenja, koja sugerira da humor nastaje kada postoji nesklad između očekivanog i stvarnog ishoda, zahtijevajući kognitivno razrješenje. Analizom scena, studija identifikuje primjere u kojima neusklađeni elementi proizvode humor, pružajući uvid u kognitivne procese uključene u razumijevanje humora. Ova teza doprinosi proučavanju humora ispitivanjem načina na koje lingvistički elementi stvaraju komičke efekte u popularnoj televizijskoj seriji. Analiza scena iz serije *That '70s Show* pruža praktične primjere lingvističke neusklađenosti u praksi. Dijalozi i interakcije u tim scenama otkrivaju kako humor nastaje iz neočekivanih elemenata i njihovog razrješenja. Na primjer, u 1. sezoni, 18. epizodi, interakcija između Hajda i njegove majke Edne prikazuje višestruke slojeve neusklađenosti, od Edninih miješanih signala do Hajdovog iznenađujućeg prihvatanja njenog lošeg roditeljstva. Slično tome, u 5. sezoni, 3. epizodi, Fezova nagla promjena stava prema mjestu koje je isprva mrzio pokazuje kako neusklađenost u reakcijama likova može stvoriti humor. Nadalje, u 1. sezoni, 2. epizodi, dinamika između Kiti, Reda i Erika ilustruje kako miješani signali i neočekivane roditeljske reakcije generišu humor. Redovo kontrastno ponašanje prema Eriku i Lori, u kombinaciji sa njegovim sarkastičnim primjedbama, naglašava neusklađenost između očekivanog roditeljskog ponašanja i njegovih stvarnih odgovora. Razumijevanje humora kroz različite teorijske okvire, posebno teoriju neusklađenosti, pruža dragocjen uvid u ljudska iskustva i složene načine na koje jezik oblikuje našu percepciju svijeta. Analiza humora u TV serijama poput *That '70 Show* ističe praktičnu primjenu ovih teorija, pokazujući kako lingvistička neusklađenost stvara humor. Kako se istraživanje humora nastavlja, ono će produbiti naše razumijevanje odnosa između jezika, kognicije i socijalne interakcije.

Ključne riječi: *humor, semantička neusklađenost, razrješenje, kognicija, socijalna interakcija*

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the complex relationship between humor and linguistics, particularly examining how humor is realized through semantic incongruity in the television sitcom "That '70s Show." Humor, a universal aspect of human culture, has fascinated scholars since the days of Plato and Aristotle. Linguistics is vital in humor studies as language is often the main vehicle for expressing humor. This research analyzes specific scenes from "That '70s Show" to explore how semantic incongruity generates humor. It utilizes the Incongruity-Resolution Theory, which suggests that humor arises when there is a discrepancy between expected and actual outcomes, requiring cognitive resolution. By analyzing scenes, the study identifies instances where incongruous elements produce humor, providing insights into the cognitive processes involved in understanding humor. This thesis contributes to humor studies by examining how linguistic elements create comedic effects in a popular television series. The analysis of scenes from "That '70s Show" provides practical examples of linguistic incongruity in action. The dialogues and interactions in these scenes reveal how humor arises from unexpected elements and their resolution. For instance, in Season 1, Episode 18, the interaction between Hyde and his mother Edna showcases multiple layers of incongruity, from Edna's mixed signals to Hyde's surprising acceptance of her bad mothering. Similarly, in Season 5, Episode 3, Fez's sudden change in attitude about a place he initially hated demonstrates how incongruity in character responses can create humor. Furthermore, in Season 1, Episode 2, the dynamic between Kitty, Red, and Eric illustrates how mixed signals and unexpected parental responses generate humor. Red's contrasting treatment of Eric and Laurie, combined with his sarcastic remarks, underscores the incongruity between expected parental behavior and his actual responses. Understanding humor through various theoretical frameworks, especially the Incongruity Theory, provides valuable insights into human experiences and the complex ways in which language shapes our perception of the world. Analyzing humor in TV series like "That '70s Show" highlights the practical application of these theories, demonstrating how linguistic incongruity creates humor and enhances the viewer's engagement. As research into humor continues, it will deepen our comprehension of the relationship between language, cognition, and social interaction.

Keywords: *humor, semantic incongruity, resolution, cognition, social interaction*

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	6
1.1. Corpus description.....	7
1.2. Methodology.....	7
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
2.1. Defining humor.....	8
2.2. Understanding Incongruity Theory.....	10
2.3. Forced Reinterpretation Theory.....	15
2.4. The Semantic Script Theory of Humor (SSTH).....	16
2.5. General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH).....	20
3. CORPUS ANALYSIS.....	22
3.1. SEASON 7, EPISODE 2: LET’S SPEND THE NIGHT TOGETHER.....	22
3.2. SEASON 4, EPISODE 23: HYDE’S BIRTHDAY	25
3.3. SEASON 5, EPISODE 12: MISTY MOUNTAIN HOP.....	26
3.4. SEASON 3, EPISODE 23: CANADIAN ROAD TRIP.....	27
3.5. SEASON 1, EPISODE 18: THE CAREER DAY.....	28
3.6. SEASON 5, EPISODE 3: WHAT IS AND WHAT SHOULD NEVER BE.....	31
3.7. SEASON 1, EPISODE 2: ERIC’S BIRTHDAY.....	31
3.8. SEASON 5, EPISODE 6: OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY.....	32
3.9. SEASON 4, EPISODE 23: HYDE’S BIRTHDAY.....	34
3.10. SEASON 2, EPISODE 18: KITY AND ERIC’S NIGHT OUT.....	36
4. CONCLUSION.....	38
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	40

1. INTRODUCTION

Humor is used all over the world and people react to it in different ways. It is a fundamental part of our life and culture and therefore many scholars focus on its better understanding. In his article *Humor in Language* (2017), Attardo states that scholarly research on humor goes back to Plato and Aristotle and extends to practically all fields of inquiry, including mathematics and medicine. There exist several scholarly societies for the study of humor and numerous journals and book series are dedicated entirely to humor research. Linguistics has had a privileged role in humorology (or gelotology), both because of its contributions and because language is the medium of much humor. Even humor that is produced entirely outside of language (for example, visually or musically) needs to be discussed and explained in language by scholars wanting to analyze it. (Attardo, 2017) Humor and linguistics are closely connected because the way we use language plays an important role in understanding and creating humor. Linguistics gives us information about the function, meaning, and structure of language and also it can help us understand how different linguistic elements produce humor. However, defining humor can be difficult because there isn't a unique approach to it. Scholar Isabel Ermida (2008) emphasized humor's complexity, saying that "humor has many facets and many academic constructions, as well as many terminological shades, which a tradition of interdisciplinary distance has tended to overlook and confuse. This may explain why researchers tend to disagree when struggling to answer a seemingly simple answer: what is humor?" It is difficult to define humor because it can be highly subjective, meaning that what you find funny may not be funny to somebody else.

There are different approaches to studying humor including the linguistic approach and this paper will focus on one part of the relationship between humor and linguistics. The goal of the paper is to analyze the way in which humor is realized through semantic incongruity.

1.1. CORPUS DESCRIPTION

The corpus used in the analysis will be several selected scenes from the TV Series *That '70s Show*. This American television sitcom aired from 1998 to 2006 and became very popular. I will watch scenes selected from YouTube and transcribe them. Then, I will investigate the way in which humor is realized through semantic incongruity. The sources for the corpus of this final diploma paper will be listed in a separate section of the bibliography under the title “Sources for the Corpus”.

That '70s Show revolves the lives of several 17-year-olds living in Point Place, Wisconsin, 1976. The head of the group is Eric Forman who lives under the authority of parents Red and Kitty. Living next door is girlfriend Donna Pinciotti and her parents Bob and Midge. The rest of the gang includes Fez, a foreign-exchange student who's soaking up American culture like a sponge, Jackie Burkhardt, her on-again, off-again boyfriend Michael Kelso, and Steven Hyde, a conspiracy theorist who believes Xerox will take over the world. The gang usually spends their time in Eric's basement, thinking of their lives, parents, and futures, but they manage to get into funny adventures and mishaps along the way through their teenage lives. (Plot summary of *That '70s Show*, IMDb, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0165598/plotsummary/?ref_=tt_stry_pl)

1.2. METHODOLOGY

My main goal in this final diploma paper is to investigate how incongruity can be used to create humor in a television sitcom. After I write about linguistic theories of humor I will analyze the way in which humor is realized in *That '70 Show*. The focus will be on the relationship between one of the most important theories of humor in linguistics: the Incongruity-Resolution theory and the above-mentioned TV Series. I will do that through a detailed descriptive analysis of incongruity in *That '70s Show*. I will gather information from the scenes, analyzing and watching them on YouTube.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Defining Humor

This section explores the concept of humor and its definition. Defining humor is a complex task as there is no universally accepted definition. Victor Raskin and Salvatore Attardo are mentioned as linguists who have extensively discussed the notion of humor. Raskin (1985) states that humor is both natural and acquired, with individuals having different ideas about what is funny. It is noted that people react differently to funny stimuli, with some having a sense of humor and deriving pleasure from laughter, while others may not react or reject the existence of humor altogether. Salvatore Attardo suggests that humor should be defined pragmatically as a text that elicits laughter (Attardo, 1994, p.13). This means that humor is intended to be funny, even if it may not always be perceived as such. In *Linguistic Theories of Humor* (1994) Attardo states that it is important to differentiate between humor and laughter. While laughter often accompanies humor, it is not a necessary condition for humor. Laughter can be a response to various emotions like fear, discomfort, or shame, and humor can be appreciated without causing laughter. People have different senses of humor, so something may be funny to one person but not to another. Humor is considered a mental phenomenon, while laughter is a neuropsychological manifestation that may result from humor, but the two are not necessarily interconnected. People can laugh even when they are sad or angry, highlighting the distinction between humor as a mental phenomenon and laughter as a response.

Attardo (2017) highlights the function of humor in creating solidarity among participants, where humorous exchanges reinforce and strengthen social bonds. He also mentions how Haugh and Bousfield (2012) found that the use of *jocular mockery* (humorous teasing) functions as a way to build an in-group of friends: "...one could not mock a stranger without risking serious offense." (Haugh and Bousfield, 2012 as cited by Attardo, 2017). By Attardo (2017), humor is also seen as a tool to challenge authority through *decommitment*, where risky jokes can be tested by adding a "just kidding" phrase. Palmer (1994) argues that anything that is or could be funny falls under the category of humor, and the specific quality shared by these phenomena defines humor.

Various theories of humor exist. Morreal (1983) describes three main classes of humor theories:

- 1) **The Superiority Theory** suggests that humor is used to express feelings of superiority over others.
- 2) **The Relief Theory** focuses on the psychological effects of humor and sees laughter as a release of nervous energy.
- 3) **The Incongruity Theory** states that humor arises from the presence of opposing elements or something unexpected, illogical, or inappropriate.

Attardo (1994) states that superiority theories of humor highlight its aggressive nature, suggesting that people laugh at the misfortunes, mistakes, or stupidity of others. This theory posits that laughter arises from a sense of superiority felt when mocking someone else. Aggressive humor includes sarcasm, verbal irony, and jokes targeting both less powerful groups (stereotypes) and powerful groups (political satire). It can serve as a social corrective to address deviant behavior. Vandaele (1999) defines two types of superiority: "negative superiority," where a clear target of the joke is identified, and "positive superiority," which describes non-aggressive forms of superiority. Positive superiority arises when individuals experience a sense of accomplishment or heightened self-esteem from resolving incongruity in a joke. Additionally, recognizing an "in-group" reference in a joke can generate happiness by fostering a sense of belonging.

Release theories propose that humor liberates individuals from inhibitions, conventions, and societal norms. (Attardo, 1994) Laughter occurs when thoughts and emotions are freed. This theory suggests that laughter is triggered by a sense of release from a perceived threat, such as reducing fears related to death and sex. (Ross, 1998) Taboo subjects, such as jokes about sex, death, or religion, fall under this category. However, different cultures have varying ideas about what is considered taboo. (Baker, 1992) Therefore, translators may need to adapt or omit certain jokes to align with the target audience's expectations.

Incongruity theories propose that humor arises from the combination of incongruous elements, such as unexpected wordplay that surprises and amuses people. The element of surprise, often delivered through a punchline, is essential in creating humor. For instance, when a word has two meanings in wordplay, the incongruity between these meanings can generate laughter once both

interpretations are processed. Incongruity, for it to be humorous, requires resolution. The punchline of a joke creates incongruity by presenting information that contradicts the listeners' expectations based on the joke setup. According to the incongruity-resolution model proposed by Jerry Suls, when listeners hear a joke setup, they form assumptions about its outcome. When the punchline deviates from these expectations, it surprises the listeners, prompting them to search for a cognitive rule that makes the punchline congruent with the setup. Laughter arises when the incongruity is resolved by finding the appropriate cognitive rule. If no rule is found, the incongruity remains unresolved, leading to confusion rather than laughter. (Rod A. Martin and Thomas Ford, 2007).

2.2. Understanding Incongruity Theory

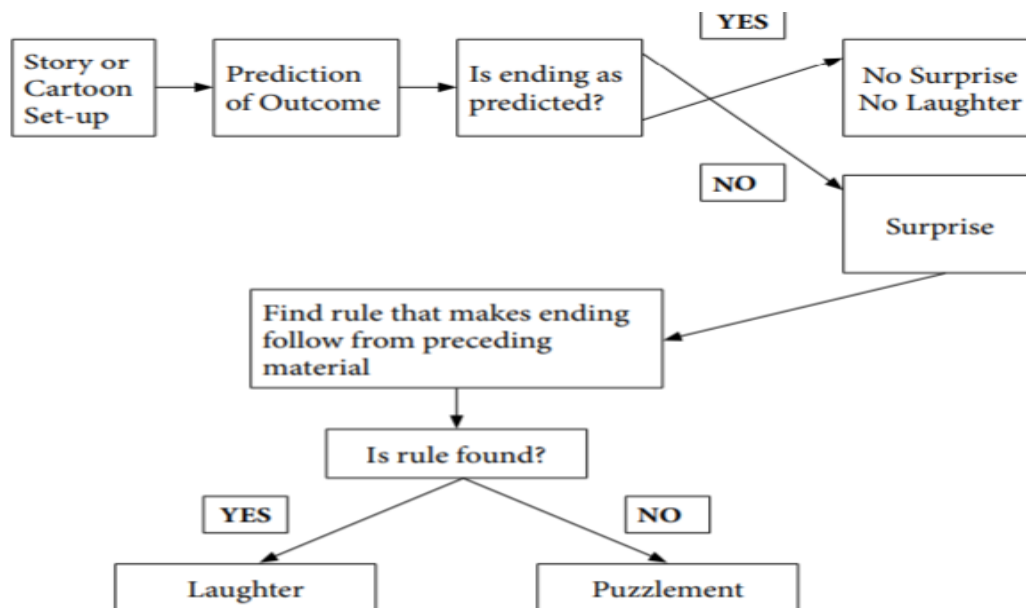
In this paper, I will focus on the Incongruity Theory of humor which focuses on cognitive aspects of humor and revolves around the perception of incongruity or mismatch. Various scholars throughout history have explored the concept of incongruity and its role in achieving humor. The essence of humor lies in the discrepancy between the listener's anticipated outcome and the actual outcome. This theory can be traced back to Ancient Greece and Aristotle.

In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle suggests that laughter can be elicited by creating certain expectations and then delivering something contrary, which forms the basis of the incongruity theory. However, this idea was not further developed by Aristotle or his followers and critics. It reappeared at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century in the works of Arthur Schopenhauer and Immanuel Kant. Kant, in his book *Critique of Judgment* published in 1790, considers absurdity as an essential component for laughter, stating that it arises when "strained expectations are suddenly reduced to nothing" (Kant, 2007).

Schopenhauer presents a similar explanation, explicitly mentioning incongruity but with a slight difference. He argues that the outcome of a joke is not nothing, but rather something unexpected. According to Schopenhauer, laughter is the expression of the incongruity between a concept and the real objects that are thought through that concept. The greater the contrast between these expectations, the greater the ridiculous effect.

“The cause of laughter in every case is simply the sudden perception of the incongruity between a concept and the real objects which have been thought through it in some relation, and laughter itself is just the expression of this incongruity.” (Schopenhauer, in Moreall, 1983, p. 17)

The incongruity-resolution model, proposed by psychologist Jerry M. Suls in 1972, is mentioned as a framework to understand how incongruity is resolved in humor. Is incongruity alone sufficient to achieve a humorous effect? It has been established as a necessary condition, according to Suls. However, it seems that something else is required, namely resolution. Various models within the Incongruity-Resolution Theory share common characteristics. These models differentiate between the setup and punchline of a joke, propose that the punchline does not immediately make sense to the cognitive agent who is a participant involved in occurrences of humor, and assume that the cognitive agent eventually finds a resolution that makes the punchline congruous.



(Martin, 2007, p.65)

To illustrate what happens when listeners find a cognitive rule, we will mention Suls' example:

“O’Riley was on trial for armed robbery. The jury came out and announced, ‘Not guilty’. ‘Wonderful’, said O’Riley, ‘does that mean I can keep the money?’” (Suls, 1972, p. 90)

Suls' incongruity-resolution model explains how humor arises from the resolution of incongruity or a violation of expectations. In the given example, O'Riley's response to the jury's verdict creates an incongruity. The expected response after being declared "not guilty" in a trial for armed robbery would typically involve relief or gratitude. However, O'Riley's humorous response, asking if he can keep the money, creates a contradiction between the expected and the actual outcome. According to Suls' incongruity-resolution model, this contradiction generates a cognitive conflict, as it deviates from the expected script of a legal trial. The incongruity triggers a mental process of resolving the inconsistency and creating a humorous response. In this case, the humor arises from the resolution of the incongruity by interpreting O'Riley's question as a comically misguided interpretation of the jury's verdict. The model suggests that humor occurs when there is a violation of expectations, leading to cognitive conflict, and then resolving that conflict in an unexpected or clever way. In the given example, the incongruity arises from the unexpected response of O'Riley, who humorously interprets the verdict in a way that goes against the typical expectations of a legal trial. According to Suls, the magnitude of incongruity and the violation of expectations contribute to humor. Incongruity alone is not sufficient for humor; there needs to be a resolution that resolves the incongruity. Humor is perceived as a cognitive solution to the incongruity.

To explain additionally, I will analyze one famous riddle joke "*Why did the chicken cross the road? To get to the other side*" (https://amazingjokes.com/jokes/2013-04-08_kids-riddles.html) The question "*Why did the chicken cross the road?*" sets up an expectation for a clever or unexpected answer. However, the punchline *To get to the other side* simply provides a straightforward and literal response. There is no cognitive conflict or resolution involved. Jerry M. Suls proposed an incongruity-resolution model that outlines a two-stage process for a joke to be understood and perceived as funny. In the first stage, the perceiver's expectations are shattered by the punchline, which is incongruous with the setup. In the second stage, the recipient engages in problem-solving to find a cognitive rule that explains the incongruity. Suls argues that these two stages are essential for a joke to be found funny and that the humorous effect is proportional to the surprise and incongruity caused by the punchline. The greater the incongruity, the stronger the

recipient's need to resolve it, leading to a greater appreciation of the joke. In the above-mentioned riddle, the unexpected answer still makes us laugh.

I will provide another analysis using the riddle joke *"Why was the math book sad? Because it had so many problems!"* (<https://funnykidjokes.com/why-was-the-math-book-sad/>) In this riddle, there is an incongruity created between the setup question and the punchline. The question *"Why did the math book look sad?"* sets up an expectation for a serious or emotional reason. However, the unexpected twist comes in the form of the punchline, which introduces a literal interpretation of the word "problems." This incongruity creates a cognitive conflict as the listener tries to make a connection between the "emotional state" of an object with a mathematical context (many tasks/problems must be solved). The resolution of the incongruity occurs through the clever play on words. By stating that the math book had too many problems, the punchline resolves the incongruity by providing a humorous twist on the double meanings of "problems". According to Suls' incongruity-resolution model, the humor in this joke arises from the cognitive conflict and the subsequent resolution.

While observing this, we can indeed realize that the Incongruity-Resolution Model explores the process of humor creation through two stages. In the first stage, an initial incongruity is created, where the listener's expectation is not confirmed by the punchline. In the second stage, the listener attempts to find a resolution that resolves the incongruity and results in a humorous response. Suls' diagram illustrates that humor arises when the punchline of a joke defies expectations and surprises the listener. The unexpected element triggers a cognitive process where the listener tries to find a rule or scheme that resolves the incongruity. If the resolution is successfully identified, laughter occurs; otherwise, confusion may result. However, sometimes a laugh doesn't occur because a listener can't figure out the joke. To understand better, I will analyze another riddle: *"Why did the tomato turn green? Because it forgot its lines!"* (https://www.reddit.com/r/3amjokes/comments/13z1vhz/why_did_the_tomato_turn_green/)

In this joke, there is an incongruity created between the setup question and the punchline. The question *"Why did the tomato turn green?"* sets up an expectation for a clever or unexpected reason. The humor in this joke relies on the listener's ability to make the connection between the unexpected interpretation of "lines" and the color change of the tomato, leading to a moment of surprise and amusement. The punchline plays on the double meaning of the word "lines." In a

literal sense, "lines" can refer to the sentences that actors memorize and recite. However, in this joke, the word "lines" is interpreted as the characteristic lines that appear on ripe tomatoes. By suggesting that the tomato turned green because it forgot its "lines," the joke humorously suggests that the tomato missed its cue to ripen and instead remained green. The incongruity in this joke may lead to confusion rather than laughter because the resolution is not clear or easily identifiable. In this case, the lack of a clear connection between the setup and punchline can lead to confusion as the listener attempts to make sense of the joke but struggles to find a logical or humorous explanation. While confusion can be an unintended outcome in humor, it highlights the importance of the incongruity-resolution process. If the resolution is not successfully identified or the connection remains unclear, the joke may not create laughter and can instead result in confusion.

However, Willibald Ruch states that not all jokes or instances of humor follow a strict pattern of incongruity and resolution. While incongruity-resolution is a common and effective mechanism in generating humor, Ruch says that "(...) the punchline may (1) provide no resolution at all (2) provide a partial resolution (leaving an essential part of the incongruity unresolved) or (3) actually create new absurdities or incongruities." (Ruch, 1992) For example: *What is the difference between a cat and a dog? A deer has antlers.* According to Ruch's perspective, the difference between a cat and a dog in the given joke relies on creating an incongruity between the expected attributes of a cat and a dog and the unexpected mention of a deer and its antlers. This incongruity triggers a cognitive conflict in the listener's mind, as they try to reconcile the unexpected connection between cats, dogs, and deer.

The punchline "*A deer has antlers*" ruins the listener's expectation by introducing a statement that does not logically follow the question. While the question implies a comparison between cats and dogs, the punchline disrupts this comparison by introducing a random fact about deer. In this example, the resolution is not offered at the end of the joke. All the expectations that listeners build are "betrayed" in the punchline of the joke, where no answer is offered to the question. Laughter in this case can arise from the situation of absurdity that occurs in the response.

Suls developed his model in 1972, long before Victor Raskin proposed his famous Semantic Script Theory of Humor, and Salvatore Attardo and Victor Raskin developed the General Theory

of Verbal Humor, the most recent model. The foundation for these theories is the Forced Reinterpretation Theory.

2.3. Forced Reinterpretation Theory

Thomas R. Shultz developed the theory of forced reinterpretation in 1976 (<http://libback.uqu.edu.sa/hipres/Indu/indu10473.pdf> – June 23rd, 2023.), and it has received attention from various authors. Notably, Dascal (1985), Dolitsky (1992), and Norrick (2001) have discussed this theory, but it is worth highlighting the contributions of Graeme Ritchie. The theory of forced reinterpretation implies the existence of two interpretations, with the listener being unaware of this fact. They only perceive the interpretation that they develop from the joke's structure or organization. Graeme Ritchie described this:

“The set-up has two different interpretations, but one is much more obvious to the audience, who does not become aware of the other meaning. The meaning of the punchline conflicts with this obvious interpretation, but is compatible with, and even evokes, the other, hitherto hidden, meaning. The meaning of the punchline can be integrated with the hidden meaning to form a consistent interpretation which differs from the first obvious interpretation.” (Ritchie, 2004, p. 59)

The set-up of a joke can be understood in two different ways, but the audience usually only recognizes the more obvious meaning and remains unaware of the other possibility. The punchline conflicts with the obvious interpretation but makes sense and even brings out the hidden meaning. By combining the punchline with the hidden meaning, a new interpretation is formed that differs from the initial obvious understanding.

The following example will serve as an illustration:

"Why do bunny ears stick out when a rabbit hides?
- I don't know.
- Because it didn't hide well."

In this joke example, the listener's expectations are activated upon hearing the question about why bunny ears stick out when a rabbit hides. The situation being described is familiar - rabbits are wild, timid animals with long ears. However, the punchline goes against the expectations (one

of them, for example, could be that the rabbit's ears are excessively long). However, the punchline presents a contrasting and unexpected outcome - the rabbit didn't hide well. This contrast between the expected and actual outcome prompts a reinterpretation of the joke, resulting in a new understanding.

Often, however, incongruity is found in linguistic relationships:

“Q: Do you believe in clubs for young people?

A: Only when kindness fails.” (Attardo, 1994, p. 97)

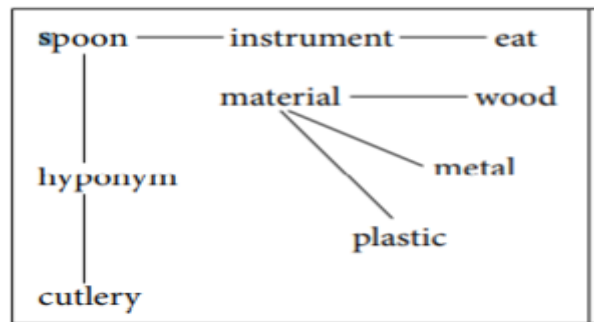
In this scenario, the listeners of the joke initially form expectations based on the question asked, assuming a straightforward answer of "yes" or "no." However, a contradiction arises when they realize that the given answer does not match the question, prompting them to reevaluate and reinterpret the joke. During this reinterpretation, they become aware of the deliberate use of homonyms in the joke's punchline. Specifically, the word "club" in English has dual meanings, referring to both a gathering place and a physical object used for inflicting pain. This realization leads the listeners to adopt an alternative interpretation that aligns with the answer and uncovers the underlying humor. Essentially, the joke reveals the speaker's belief that resorting to physical punishment is justified when polite communication fails in dealing with young people.

2.4. The Semantic Script Theory of Humor (SSTH)

The Semantic Script Theory of Humor (SSTH), introduced by Victor Raskin in his book "Semantic Mechanisms of Humor" (1985), expands upon the concept of incongruity in linguistics. Salvatore Attardo said that "...the SSTH is the most powerful epistemologically and promising theory available in the field of linguistic-based humor research." (Attardo, 1994, p. 207) According to Raskin (1985), a text can be considered a single-joke-carrying-text if the text is compatible, fully or in part, with two different scripts and if the two scripts with which the text is compatible are opposite (...). The two scripts with which some text is compatible are said to overlap fully or in part on this text” Therefore, for a text to be humorous, it should be compatible with multiple

scripts that have contrasting elements. Attardo (1994) states that the SSTH implies that a semantic frame is an organized part of the information in the broadest sense. It is an organized cognitive structure that provides speakers with information about various activities and ways in which tasks are performed. The term itself originates from psychology and has been adopted by linguists such as Fillmore, Chafe, Raskin, and others.

Raskin (1985) considers that every semantic frame is a graphical representation with lexical nodes and with semantic connections among the nodes. Furthermore, all semantic frames of a language form a continuous graphical representation in which the lexical concept of a word is a domain within that graph, with that specific word being the central node. Raskin also introduced the concept of a continuous graph domain, where lexical concepts are connected by arrows:



(Attardo, 1994, p. 202)

This is a semantic network that contains all the information the speaker has about their culture (Attardo, 1994, p. 202). According to Raskin, every semantic theory must consist of all the available semantic frames for the speaker and a set of rules by which the speaker combines these frames. If the combination leads to at least one coherent interpretation, it is considered that meaning has been achieved (Attardo, 1994). In this sense, Raskin's theory of humor functions in such a way that the combination of semantic networks sometimes encounters parts of the text that are compatible with "more than one reading," meaning they could fit into more than one semantic frame (Attardo, 1994: 201). However, when it comes to the opposition of semantic frames, it is important to emphasize that it is always a binary opposition. Raskin (1985, pp. 113-127) categorizes these oppositions into three classes: actual versus non-actual, normal versus abnormal,

and possible versus impossible. Within these three classes, he mentions five common oppositions: good/bad, life/death, obscene/non-obscene, money/no money, and high/low stature:

“‘Is the doctor at home?’ the patient asked in his bronchial whisper. ‘No,’ the doctor’s young and pretty wife whispered in reply. ‘Come right in.’” (Raskin, 1985, p. 117)

Attardo (1994, pp. 206-207) explains that the analysis can be done in several steps: first, the activation of all the semantic frames in the text. The second step involves activating all the combinatorial rules that will select the semantic frames based on the words they contain (e.g., PATIENT, ILLNESS, WIFE, BEAUTIFUL...). Here is an example of Raskin's analysis of the semantic frame LOVER:

LOVER

Subject: [+ Human][+ Adult][+ Sex: x]

Activity: Making love

Object: [+ Human][+ Adult][+ Sex: x]

Location: Secluded

Time: > Once

= Regularly

Condition: If the subject or object is married, the spouse(s) should not know (> indicates ‘past,’ and ‘=’ indicates ‘present’) (Raskin, 1985, p. 85)

When discussing opposition, the listener is faced with the question of why the doctor's wife invites the patient in even though her husband, the doctor, is not nearby (which is a condition that must be fulfilled in the treatment process). This leads to a contradiction, and the listener then activates what is called a competing script (Raskin, 1985, p. 125), or an alternative meaning, which requires the recipient to reassess the text. At that point, the semantic frame LOVER is activated, and the opposition is based within the class of normal versus abnormal, specifically in the subclass of sex versus non-sex.

In this case, both the semantic frames LOVER and DOCTOR are fully compatible with the text and in opposition to each other, which is why this text is considered humorous.

Furthermore, according to Raskin (1985, p. 81), there are three types of semantic frames: the scripts of common sense, which represent common procedures in specific situations; restricted scripts (shared by certain groups of people); and individual scripts (semantic frames based on personal experience). Raskin discusses both individuals who have and those who do not have a developed sense of humor, depending on whether they are capable of understanding (i.e., being aware of) opposition. He states that “people “with a sense of humor” switch easily and readily from the bona-fide mode of communication to the joke-telling mode, have more scripts available for oppositeness interaction and have more oppositeness relations between scripts relations available, while people “without a sense of humor” refuse to switch between the bona-fide mode of communication to the joke-telling mode, have fewer scripts available for oppositeness interaction and have fewer oppositeness relations between scripts available.

There are script-switch (Raskin, 1985, pp. 114-117) that fall into two categories: ambiguous triggers and contradiction triggers. Ambiguous triggers are words that have multiple meanings. For example, a joke that mentions the word "story" contains an ambiguous trigger of a semantic frame.

"What is the largest building in the world?

A. The library because it has the most stories."

(<http://boards.straightdope.com/sdmb/archive/index.php/t-180864.html> - July 8, 2023.)

In this case, the listener activates two possible semantic frames, and the trigger is the word "story," which is phonetically associated with two separate and unrelated meanings: a narrative and a floor level. The expected punchline is an answer that emphasizes the height of the building/number of floors. However, the listener is presented with a different semantic frame that is part of the content of the English word "story."

Within the context of ambiguous triggers, we should also mention the quasi-ambiguity, which concerns phonetic relationships between words, as can be seen in the following example, where two ambiguous semantic frames are activated:

“A rogue who was being led out to execution on a Monday remarked: ‘Well, this week’s beginning nicely.’” (Raskin, 1985, p. 25)

In this case, the trigger BEGINNING is compatible with the semantic frames MONDAY, BEGINNING, and WEEK, but the contradiction lies in the fact that this man is being led to execution.

Raskin's Theory of Humor based on semantic logical meanings forms the foundation for newer linguistic theories of humor, which Raskin developed with his colleague, linguist Salvatore Attardo. Their General Theory of Verbal Humor – GTVH is considered an improved version of SSTH (Script-Based Semantic Theory of Humor).

2.5. General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH)

Attardo’s five-level joke representation model and Raskin's opposition of semantic frames form the core of this recent linguistic theory of humor, which was introduced by Raskin and Attardo in 1991 in their article "Script theory revis(it)ed: joke similarity and joke representation model." This can be seen as a revision of both Attardo's model and Raskin's theory, leading to the development of the General Theory of Verbal Humor. According to Attardo, the revision of Raskin's theory involved expanding it by incorporating other fields of linguistics. Besides the predominant focus on semantics in SSTH, the revised theory primarily included textual linguistics, narrative theory, and pragmatics (Attardo, 1994, p. 222). In this context, the concept of "Knowledge Resources" (KR) was introduced, consisting of six elements: (1) SO - Script Opposition (adopted from Raskin's theory: the opposition between real/unreal, possible/impossible, etc.); (2) LA – Language (containing all the necessary information for verbalization of the text); (3) NS - Narrative Strategy (narrative format of the joke: riddle, dialogue, etc.); (4) TA – Target (the “butt” of the joke); (5) SI – Situation (objects, activities, etc., necessary for a joke to be told); and (6) LM - Logical Mechanism (the mechanism connecting different scripts of a joke).

As was already mentioned, in my analysis I will focus on the Incongruity theory since incongruity is a key element that often underlies jokes and humorous situations. Humor often

involves wordplay, puns, ambiguity, and incongruity at the lexical level and it (humor) often arises when this incongruity is resolved in a clever or unexpected way. However, understanding humor requires a combination of both semantics and pragmatics. While semantics helps decode the linguistic elements that create incongruity and wordplay, pragmatics helps in interpreting the speaker's intention and understanding the contextual factors that contribute to the humorous effect. Attardo (1994) states that jokes can only exist in context.

After someone tells a joke, the expected response is usually laughter. However, not everyone reacts the same way to jokes because people have different senses of humor. Some may find a joke funny and laugh, while others may not appreciate it and respond with a groan or show disapproval. The success and impact of a pun depend on the participants in the humorous situation, as jokes are connected to our beliefs and understanding of the world. If a joke goes against our worldview, our facial expressions will likely reveal our discomfort.

3. CORPUS ANALYSIS

3.1. SEASON 7, EPISODE 2: LET'S SPEND THE NIGHT TOGETHER

Linguistic incongruity in the scene below is evident through the characters' interactions. The use of specific, unexpected words creates humor and tension in the room. Here, William Barnett is presented as Hyde's biological father and that is a shock for everyone (except Hyde) since William is African-American and Hyde didn't inherit his father's skin tone at all.

(In the Forman living room: Jackie sitting on the piano chair, Hyde standing in front of her, Eric standing next to him, William Barnett standing by the right side of the couch, Kitty standing next to William Barnett on the left side of the couch, Red standing by his chair and drinks on the table by the left and snacks on the table as well.)

Eric: Well, uh, Mr. Barnett please sit anywhere you'd like on this big Day. (William Barnett sits on the couch by the right side where he was standing)

Eric: After all, how often does a kid get to meet his very own father? (Red sits in his normal chair and Kitty sits next to William Barnett)

Hyde: So far I'm up for twice.

Eric: (laughs uncomfortably) (to William Barnett) Hey, would you like a drink? (Jackie taps Hyde to sit next to her on the piano while Eric runs to the drinks on the table)

Eric: Perhaps a cool drink for our cool visitor. (laughs uncomfortably)

Mr. Barnett: No, thanks, but... I think all of you could use a scotch.

Eric: That's crazy. We're totally relaxed... Hey, you know what show I love... "The

Jefferson's" ... Dy-no-might, right? (laughs nervously)

Jackie: (serious/to Eric) "Dy-no-might" is from "Good Time's".

Eric: (to William Barnett) Oh... well, I watch them all, I mean, I don't discriminate.

Red: So... Father and son.

Mr. Barnett: Yep.

Red: Well, I...I guess Steven must have gotten his mother's –

Kitty: (uncomfortably interrupts) -- eye's, eye's. Steven got his mother's pretty eyes.

Mr. Barnett: Right.

Eric: Or as I like to say (points) Right on (Hyde gives Eric a weird look)

Kitty: Okay, Well, nobody's talking about the elephant in the room so I'll do it... (looks at William Barnett) you're black!

ANALYSIS: First, Eric's nervousness in this scene is incongruous because Hyde is one of his best friends and this should be a casual family gathering. His excessive politeness and unexpected formal tone create awkwardness and tension. Introducing an unexpected question *After all, how*

often does a kid get to meet his very own father? Eric makes the situation even more uncomfortable because neither Hyde nor his father are too excited to meet each other. Everybody except Hyde and his father are so shocked and nervous and they cannot hide that. Eric continues with his excessive politeness and offers Mr. Barnett a “cool drink”. The incongruity arises from Mr. Barnett’s language. His response that the group could use a "scotch" is incongruous because he is advising them to take a strong alcoholic drink instead of a casual one since everybody is nervous due to his skin color, but they are trying to hide that. Eric is naive and still thinks that Mr. Barnett feels uncomfortable due to his skin color so in order to make him “more relaxed” he mentions that he likes *The Jefferson’s*, a sitcom about an African-American family. Eric's reference to *The Jeffersons* and the catchphrase "Dy-no-might" is incongruous because it's incorrect, as pointed out by Jackie. This incongruity arises from Eric's attempt to connect with Mr. Barnett. Eric's statement, "I don't discriminate" is linguistically incongruous in this context because discrimination is a serious and sensitive topic and in the 1970s African Americans still experienced discrimination on a daily basis in the US. Red starts the conversation by stating, "So... Father and son." This statement suggests a serious and potentially emotional conversation but Mr. Barnett responds with a simple "Yep," confirming the relationship between him and Steven as father and son. The lack of seriousness in Hyde’s father’s response is unexpected and creates laughter among viewers. The incongruity arises from the fact that Kitty starts by mentioning "the elephant in the room," which is typically an idiom used to describe an obvious and sensitive issue that everyone is avoiding discussing. However, instead of addressing the metaphorical "elephant," she inappropriately makes a direct comment about William Barnett's race, saying "You’re black!" The incongruity lies in the contrast between the expected conversation about a sensitive or uncomfortable topic and Kitty's racially explicit statement. This creates a moment of surprise and may even be considered offensive knowing the position of African Americans in the United States in the 1970s, who are, unfortunately, discriminated even nowadays.

Eric: (upset) Mom! (to William Barnett)
 Okay, please, Mr. Barnett we’re very open-minded.
 Kitty: Oh, oh, no, he's right. I myself, love that singer Art Garfunkel.
 Hyde: Art Garfunkel is white.

Kitty: (surprised) Really!... Well, his name's got the "Funk" in it so I... Oh, wait, wait, wait Red? Who's that black person I like? (Erik puts his head down ashamed holding nasal part of nose with his fingers)
 Red: (guessing) Martin Luther King?

Kitty: (excitedly slaps knee) Yes! (Shaking head yes/smiling)

Mr. Barnett: (smiling) You know, I--I'm beginning to feel like you haven't had a lot of black people in this house.

Eric: Well, I mean, certainly not because we didn't want to.

Kitty: Right, right. No, It's just there haven't been any available. (laughs)

Jackie: You know, It's Wisconsin.

Mr. Barnett: Well I know all about Wisconsin. The only place around here where

you'll see white and black together is on a cow. (William Barnett laughs while Kitty and Eric laugh uncomfortably loud)

ANALYSIS: Here, we can again notice the inconsistency between what is said or implied linguistically and the actual intended meaning or social context. When Eric's mother, Kitty, says that she loves to listen to Art Garfunkel (a white singer), she says that believing Art Garfunkel is a Black artist because his name contains "funk" in it. **Funk** is a rhythm-driven musical genre popular in the 1970s and early 1980s that linked soul to later African-American musical styles. (<https://www.britannica.com/art/funk>, January 6, 2024.) Kitty associates Art Garfunkel's name with a musical style common to Black artists in the 1970s and 1980s thinking that he is not white because his name has "funk" in it. Such linguistic incongruity is based on the linguistic elements existing in Art Garfunkel's name and a stereotype that connected this particular music style with Black artists. Kitty's judgment is made mostly due to the misunderstanding and this linguistic incongruity reveals a stereotype-based assumption. Then, in the next scene, Kitty tries to remember a Black person she admires, trying to show Mr. Barnett that she has a friendly attitude toward African Americans. But, she can't remember anyone's name even though she tries hard and she asks for Red's help. Red jokingly suggests Martin Luther King, hinting that he is the only prominent African Americans. The stereotype that he is the only well-known black figure is funny because it shows their limited knowledge of prominent people of different skin colors. Mr. Barnett's comment that "the only place in Wisconsin where you'll see white and black together is on a cow" presents linguistic incongruity which occurs through the use of humor to comment on racial diversity. Mr. Barnett's use of language creates humor but also reveals that racial integration is lacking in Wisconsin. The incongruity appears when Mr. Barnett makes a funny and exaggerated comment about racial diversity. Cows have black and white spots naturally and Mr. Barnett humorously applies this to the social context, assuming that there is no

racial integration in Wisconsin. Therefore, the linguistic incongruity here lies in the humorous and exaggerated presentation of a serious social problem (racial discrimination and lack of diversity) through its comparison with cows – highlighting the fact that the only place in Wisconsin one might see black and white together is on a cow.

3.2. SEASON 4, EPISODE 23: HYDE’S BIRTHDAY

(Kelso's in the garage rummaging through Red's tools) (Red enters. Clears his throat. Kelso whips around.) Kelso: Red! Hey! (covering, playful) You're wondering why I'm going through your stuff. Am I right? Or am I right? Or am I right? (off Red's glare) O-kay. (As Kelso talks, he moves to the driveway and situates himself so he's facing the garage. Red's back is to it.)
Kelso: See, I need your saw because... I have to chop down a tree. (off Red's glare) Because... there's something stuck in it. (off

glare) An animal. (off glare) A rabbit. There's a rabbit stuck in a tree. And I want to return that rabbit to the wild so it can lay its eggs.
Red: Kelso, rabbits don't... How the hell did a rabbit get in a tree?
Kelso: Um... (Eric sneaks into the garage through the back door to snag Red's tools. Donna follows.)
Kelso: Eric threw it up there!
Red: Eric threw a rabbit up a tree?
Kelso: Yeah, he's a sadistic bastard. You know he hit a cow.

ANALYSIS: In this scene, linguistic incongruity is presented through Kelso’s absurd explanations after Red catches him in his garage. Kelso tries to provide reasons for needing Red’s saw. He claims he needs the saw to save a rabbit stuck in a tree. He continues explaining by stating that he wants to return it to the wild so that it can “lay its eggs”. This explanation is humorous because it combines incompatible elements. As we know, rabbits don’t lay eggs and the idea that a rabbit is stuck on a tree is ridiculous. The linguistic incongruity is further emphasized by Red’s question “How the hell did a rabbit get in a tree?”. Rabbits, as commonly understood, don’t climb trees. Therefore, the linguistic incongruity arises from the clash between the established norms in nature and Kelso’s illogical answers, while Red’s question makes this incongruity even stronger. The incongruity continues when Kelso tries to shift blame to Eric for the rabbit being stuck in the tree. The claim that Eric threw the rabbit up in the tree is illogical and absurd. The idea that someone would intentionally throw a rabbit into a tree is ridiculous, especially if that person is Eric since he is not known as an aggressive or malicious person. Red’s question “Eric threw a rabbit up a tree?” again emphasizes the incongruity of Kelso’s illogical explanation to justify his actions. The incongruity develops once again when Kelso attributes sadistic behavior to Eric by calling him a

“sadistic bastard” who “hit a cow” once. This is absurd because these accusations don’t fit Eric’s character at all. Everybody knows Eric’s calm personality and good behavior. He would never commit such cruel acts. Red’s reaction of disbelief once again serves as a reinforcement of the incongruity. He is Eric’s father and he knows well his son’s character. Therefore, his questions just add more absurdity to Kelso’s already unexpected and absurd narrative.

3.3. SEASON 5, EPISODE 12: MISTY MOUNTAIN HOP

Red: Do you idiots realize how much trouble you're in?

Hyde: How could that bathroom not have a window? Isn't that like a building code or something?

Jackie: What's going on?

Kelso: Well, apparently Hyde had a stash none of us knew anything about! Especially me! I think Fez knew about it too!

Fez: That's the way you want it, fine! You have to sleep sometime.

Red: Shut up. (TO KELSO) I'm calling your folks. (TO FEZ) I'm calling immigration. (TO HYDE) And you! I warned you once about this crap. And now I have no choice. You're out of the house.

Jackie: No, wait! That stash isn't his, it's mine.

Hyde: Jackie!

Jackie: Let me talk.

Kelso: Yeah, Hyde, let her talk.

Jackie: (TO THE FORMANS) I've been having such a hard time lately since my Dad's been in jail, and I was looking for anything that might make me feel better. It's just like you, Mrs. Forman, what with your menopause and all that wine you're always drinking. Kitty: You shut your dirty little mouth!

Red: Steven, tell me right now, is this yours or not? Hyde: Mister Forman, I can honestly say that it's not. Red: (BEAT, THEN) Okay, fine. I don't care whose it is, I'm throwing it in the lake.

Kelso: No, I paid twenty bucks for that. You have my parents'number.

ANALYSIS: The linguistic incongruity in this dialogue arises from the unexpected and contradictory statements of the characters, especially if we also take into consideration their established personalities. The most interesting example of linguistic incongruity in this dialogue is Kelso’s worry about the money he spent on the stash which contrasts with the seriousness of the situation. His response presents a semantic incongruity because there is an incongruity between the seriousness of the situation and the context of his speech. Instead of being worried about being caught by the police, Kelso revealed everything because he had paid for the stash and was sad to lose the money. Kelso’s response also shows us the pragmatic incongruity because he can’t make an appropriate response to a serious situation. He should be concerned and aware of the potential

consequences, but his focus on the money involving the statement “You have my parents’ number” is pragmatically inappropriate in this situation. Such incongruity contributes to the humor and describes Kelso as someone who doesn’t understand the seriousness of the moment and he proves that with his word choices. Another interesting example of linguistic incongruity in this dialogue is when Jackie tries to justify her actions by mentioning Kitty’s behaviour (menopause and drinking wine). Jackie’s attempt to make an excuse for her actions is weird and discordant because of the inappropriateness of her comparison. She mentions Kitty’s menopause in front of everybody even though it was still a taboo in the 1970s. Kitty’s response “You shut your dirty little mouth” further contributes to linguistic incongruity since the response is aggressive and confrontational. As an adult and a mother, Kitty should serve as a role model and maintain a serious and calm tone but her unexpected choice of words doesn’t align with the expected norm or context of a conversation. Also, what makes the situation funnier are Red’s threats. He mentions immigration and Kelso’s parents instead of threatening with the police, which is incongruous. Involving immigration or parents for an offense like possession of marijuana is disproportionate. Typically, this kind of situation would be addressed by police or handled within the group. Red knows that Fez is afraid of immigration so that’s why he mentions that.

3.4. SEASON 3, EPISODE 23: CANADIAN ROAD TRIP

Red: Guess who got a bonus today?

Kitty: Oh, my golly. They gave you a boxful of money. Red: Better.

Kitty: Ohh. "A videocassette recorder." What's videocassette, and why do we need to record it?

Red: It records TV. You know how we don't get to see Johnny Carson?

Kitty: Well, he's on so gosh-Darn late. Who can stay up past 10:30?

Red: No one, but now we can record Johnny while we sleep and then watch it the next Day.

Kitty: Oh.

Red: And you know how you wanted to watch the rerun of Roots?

Kitty: Mm-hmm.

Red: Well, we can tape it, and then you can watch it over and over.

Kitty: Well, I think just watching it tonight should do the trick.

Red: Well, we will watch it tonight, after we tape it. Kitty: But we don't stay up to watch Carson. Why would we stay up to watch this?

Red: Because it's conven... Oh, you just don't understand technology! (he leaves with the box)

Kitty: No. But I sure know how to tell time.

ANALYSIS: In this dialogue linguistic incongruity emerges from Red and Kitty’s contrasting language use and attitudes toward the videocassette recorder, creating humor while showing the

characters' different perspectives on technology in the 1970s – a period marked by significant technological achievements. Red is excited to tape and rewatch shows and accepts the videocassette recorder as a solution to their inability to watch television late at night. However, Kitty is surprised and confused and she uses expressions like “Oh, my golly” because she questions the nature of a videocassette recorder. Her linguistic choices show a lack of familiarity and skepticism regarding the need to record television. She wonders why they would stay up late to watch something recorded when they can watch it immediately. Kitty raises a question by saying: "But we don't stay up to watch Carson. Why would we stay up to watch this?" Here, Kitty is comparing two situations: staying up late to watch a show like Carson that airs late at night and the suggestion of staying up late to watch a recorded show. Her words imply that there's a kind of confusion or contradiction in Red's plan. She's pointing out a logical inconsistency in the idea of using the videocassette recorder to record a show and then staying up late to watch it, especially when they don't do the same for other late-night shows like Carson. This part of the conversation shows Kitty questioning the practicality of Red's proposal and adds humor to their discussion about the new technology. When Red responds with, "Because it's conven... Oh, you just don't understand technology!" it shows that he's feeling frustrated and a bit impatient with Kitty for not embracing the new technology. Red thinks Kitty's resistance is because she doesn't quite get how the technology works, and he sees it as a bigger issue of not being on the same page about modern gadgets. "No. But I sure know how to tell time," is Kitty's clever way of saying that her hesitation isn't because she doesn't understand technology. Instead, she's pointing out that she's practical and aware of bedtime. Her humorous and unexpected response presents linguistic incongruity in the conversation and suggests that while she might not be fully educated on technology, she's handling well more basic things. By observing Red and Kitty's conversation and behavior we can also say that they represent two groups of people in the 1970s. Red represents a group that is willing to embrace new gadgets while Kitty represents a group that is reluctant to accept technological change. Their clash of ideas and different attitudes towards technology create humor in this scene.

3.5. SEASON 1, EPISODE 18: THE CAREER DAY

Hyde: "Hi."

Edna: "Steven, you came back. You don't know what that means to me."

Hyde: "Oh yeah?"

Edna: "Yeah. Honey, could you clean up those pizza trays, I'm gonna skip out early."

Uh, Steven, I'm sorry. I'm not being a very good mom, am I?"

Hyde: "No."

Edna: "Alright, I got a better idea. Let's do something together. Come on, I'll buy you a beer."

Hyde: "A beer?" (Hyde sounds hurt. But He changes opinion.)

Hyde: "Well yeah, that actually sounds great!"

Edna: "Come on. You got your fake I.D.?"

Hyde: "You know it."

Edna: "That's my boy!"

[FORMAN BASEMENT] (The gang is finishing up their reports.)

Kelso: "Autumn is harvest time for the farmer. At dawn, my dad and I were out in the field picking carrots fresh off the trees."

Hyde: "Kelso carrots don't...That's good, you should put that down."

ANALYSIS: In this chosen scene there are several examples of linguistic incongruity. Edna, Hyde's mother, seems to be happy that Hyde has returned, and we believe she wants him to know just how much his presence means to her. She expresses her feelings by saying, "You don't know what that means to me." These words show that his return is very important to her and probably she feels a deep emotional connection to him. The incongruity arises with Hyde's response "Oh, yeah?" which is rather indifferent and lacks emotion. But, the incongruity appears again when Edna responds "Yeah. Honey, could you clean up those pizza trays, I'm gonna skip out early". It suggests that she is happy to see Hyde only because he can help her finish earlier with her job. By immediately asking him to clean up the pizza trays and mentioning her plan to leave early, it implies that her joy might stem from the fact that Hyde's presence allows her to pass some tasks or responsibilities to him. This contrast between her emotional tone and the practical nature of her request creates a funny moment. Edna notices that and as the dialogue continues she admits in a sad tone that she is not a good mother, asking Hyde for clarification. Hyde's short answer "No" makes the conversation serious. His brief answer suggests that he agrees with Edna's thought that she might not be doing well as a mother. This gives the conversation a serious tone and we expect that they will continue this conversation in a serious tone and try to make things better. But, another linguistic incongruity occurs when Edna suddenly suggests a fun idea - like going to get a beer together. When she brings up this suggestion, Hyde initially seems surprised and a bit confused. He didn't expect that. But surprisingly, he changes his mind and becomes excited about the thought of getting a beer. The linguistic incongruity happens because the discussion goes from being serious about parenting to a more easygoing suggestion of having a beer, especially because Hyde must not drink, because he hasn't reached the legal age yet. Edna's question about a fake ID and her proud remark, "That's my boy!" make the shift even more unexpected and funny. After that

scene, Hyde goes back to Eric's place. Kelso is also there and he makes a statement that creates a funny moment due to linguistic incongruity. Kelso says something quite absurd about picking carrots off trees during autumn, which doesn't make sense because carrots grow underground, not on trees. Hyde tries to correct him humorously by saying, "Kelso carrots don't...That's good, you should put that down." The humor here comes from the mismatch between what Kelso says and the actual facts about how we harvest carrots. We find it funny because we know that vegetables like carrots don't grow on trees. Hyde's attempt to set things straight makes the situation even more humorous, as he's addressing Kelso's lack of understanding about basic agriculture. Such linguistic incongruity relies on the audience's knowledge of simple facts to create humor and our awareness of it enhances the comedic impact, emphasizing Kelso's lack of understanding about the fundamental things around us.

Dr. Ashley: "Alright, let's start Mr. Harris on a full course of penicillin."

Kitty: "Um, Doctor you might wanna consider erythromycin."

Dr. Ashley: "And why would I want to do that, Nurse?"

Kitty: "Well, it's just that uh, Mr. Harris is allergic to penicillin and I thought that erythromycin might make him a touch less dead."

Eric: "I know that when I go to the hospital, I like to not die!"

ANALYSIS: In another scene from the same episode linguistic incongruity again arises due to Dr. Ashley's wrong decision to give a full course of penicillin to a patient and Kitty's revelation that the patient is allergic to penicillin. Dr. Ashley's lack of awareness regarding the patient's allergy introduces a layer of absurdity because, as a doctor, he should save people's lives instead of putting them in danger. This unawareness creates humor since the audience expects doctors not to make such absurd mistakes in hospitals. The incongruity becomes a source of comedy as it highlights the irony in the situation – the doctor who is responsible for prescribing the treatment lacks crucial information about the patient's condition. In Eric's statement, he shares the idea that when he goes to the hospital, he prefers not to die. When we think about hospitals, we generally associate them with places where people ask for medical help regarding health concerns, injuries, or illnesses. So, the primary purpose of going to a hospital is to receive medical help and, if possible, recover. The incongruity arises because the statement, "I like to not die," seems obvious in the context of a hospital visit but Eric says that to the doctor. People naturally go to hospitals to avoid health issues or death, hopefully. So, the humor or incongruity lies in the fact that Eric's statement in front of

the doctor points out the obvious expectation of staying alive when visiting a hospital, making it sound funny.

3.6. SEASON 5, EPISODE 3: WHAT IS AND WHAT SHOULD NEVER BE

Fez: (Comes back with a sheet of paper.)
Guys...I love this place. I want to work here.
Hyde: You just said you hated it.
Fez: Yeah, but I went up to the counter, and the guy treated me like crap, but he was treating everybody like crap. Poor, rich,

black, white-we're all crap. And look at him. Think he was popular in high school? No way. But now he's the belle of the ball. Well, my friends, it's my turn to get a taste of those balls.

This dialogue presents linguistic incongruity because there's an inconsistency in Fez's responses, and it creates humor. The incongruity begins with Fez's sudden change in attitude. Fez says he loves the place and expresses a desire to work there, but Hyde points out that Fez had just claimed he hated the place. "Poor, rich, black, white - we're all crap." Here, Fez is using humor and exaggeration to describe how the counter guy treats everyone poorly, regardless of their economic status or race. What adds to the humor is the unexpectedness of Fez's response and the irony that he thinks the mistreatment of everybody is a good solution for inequality. He believes it's a plus for him if everybody is mistreated since he is often treated badly in Wisconsin because of his skin color. It seems like Fez is taking a shortcut to deal with discrimination thinking that if everyone faces mistreatment, it somehow makes things easier for him. The absurdity of Fez's suggestion that the mistreatment of everybody is a solution to inequality creates incongruity and then humor.

3.7. SEASON 1, EPISODE 2: ERIC'S BIRTHDAY

Kitty: "Well, I just don't like my little boy banding those words about. You're still my baby!" (She wipes his mouth with a napkin.)
Eric: "Thanks mom! Laurie!"
Red: "Quit staring at your sister and eat your carrots."
Laurie: "Oh yeah, Eric wanted me to tell you that he thinks he's too old for a party. Keys."
Kitty: "There's no party! Laurie, loose lips!"
Eric: "Oh Laurie, I just remembered, I can't loan you the VistaCruiser on account of I hate

you." Red: "Laurie, you're not driving the VistaCruiser. It's old and undependable. It could break down and you'd be at the mercy of any maniac who came along. That's okay for Eric. But you're taking the Toyota. Oh and here's a twenty."
Laurie: "Will that cover gas?"
Kitty: "Oh well, it should. Honey, honey, give her another ten just in case."
Eric: "I could probably use some gas money."
Red: "Yeah. And if a frog had wings, he wouldn't bump his ass when he hops."

ANALYSIS: In this scene, there are several examples of linguistic incongruity. First, Kitty uses mixed signals. She expresses concern about Eric using mature language, while simultaneously she treats him like a child by wiping his mouth with a napkin. There is a contradiction in her behavior and it creates humor. Then, Red criticizes the VistaCruiser, portraying it as old and unreliable, and he raises concerns about potential issues that might put Laurie in danger. He is her father, so, of course, he cares about her. However, an unexpected statement occurs. It's when Red mentions: "That's okay for Eric." This statement is sad for Eric and most parents would disagree with Red, but it is still humorous because there is this linguistic incongruity, an unaccepted norm on how to deal with your kids. Red's statement implies that the potential issues associated with the VistaCruiser are acceptable for Eric but not for Laurie. Red's concern for Laurie's safety is a typical parental reaction. However, the unexpected statement about it being okay for Eric creates a surprising twist. This incongruity deviates from the expected norm of parental equality, creating a humorous effect. We usually expect from parents to treat all of their kids equally and, therefore, Red's statement serves as a humorous element because, surprisingly, it seems like he does not at all care for Eric, his son. As the conversation goes on Eric directly asks Red for gas money, since he already gave Laurie some money. However, Red's response introduces linguistic incongruity again. Rather than responding directly, with simple "yes" or "no", Red employs humor through an exaggerated statement: "And if a frog had wings, he wouldn't bump his ass when he hops." This humorous statement is similar to the idiom "if pigs could fly" and it suggests the unlikelihood of Red giving gas money to Eric. Essentially, Red's analogy implies that the probability of him giving Eric gas money is as unlikely as the existence of a winged frog.

3.8. SEASON 5, EPISODE 6: OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY

(Forman kitchen. Red is leaning against the counter as Hyde and Eric enter the room via the living room access.)

Red: Hold it, you two. Now before we hit the road, we need to have a talk about that horrible thing that's taken over your mother.

Eric: You mean her "change of life"?

Hyde: Thought we were calling it the "lady parts problem."

Red: It goes by many names. Now we're dealing with a tricky enemy here. I haven't been this frosty since Korea. And just like a Commie, it can jump out and attack you at any moment.

Kitty: (From the basement.) Red, honey!

Hyde: Incoming.

Eric: Retreat. (The two boys flee the room to the driveway.)

Kitty: Red, um...you know, I've been a tad bit moody lately. So, um, if you don't want me to go on this trip, I'll understand.

Red: Well, you know, honey, there's really no need for you to go.

Kitty: I knew you didn't want me to go! Well, I am going whether you like it or not! Why is it so damn hot in here? It's like we're living in hell!

Red: You can say that again.

Kitty: (Coming out of the house.) Red, honey, you know, I'm sorry about our little spat. The last thing I wanna do is ruin our trip.

Red: Oh, sweetheart, that's okay. (He kisses her on the lips. She laughs and gets in the car.

)

Eric: Wow, mom certainly cheered up.

Red: Don't be fooled. She's a ticking time bomb.

Kelso: (Running up to them.) Hey! Wait up!

Red: What do you want?

Kelso: The explanation is pinned to my lapel.

Red: (Unpins the envelope and takes out the sheet of paper in it and reads it.) "Dear Red, Mr. Kelso and I are unable to take Michael to U.W. Here's \$30 so he can go with you." (He looks in the envelope again.) Where's the thirty bucks?

Kelso: Oh, I bought this electronic football game. Red: I swear to God, Kelso, you make Eric look like Einstein.

Eric: (looking pleased.) Thank you, Daddy.

Kelso: "Thank you"? Einstein was ugly.

ANALYSIS: In this scene, we can see how linguistic incongruity is used to create humor through the characters' opinions about menopause. Red approaches the subject with a serious and exaggerated tone. He describes menopause as a "tricky enemy" and compares it to his experiences in Korea. He also uses military-like language to describe it as a significant and potentially dangerous event. The comparison to a "Commie" serves to create a comedic effect, like he is at war with menopause. Menopause, a natural biological thing, is described as a strong unwanted force, and the reference to the Cold War era adds an extra layer of humor. The linguistic incongruity is presented by the fact that Red's characterization of menopause clashes with the simpler and less serious language used by Hyde and Eric. They use terms like "change of life" and "lady parts problem," creating a more modern and less serious attitude towards menopause. This contrast between generations emphasizes the social and cultural changes that occurred between the 1970s. It underlines how language evolves over time, not only in terms of vocabulary but also in the way people approach and discuss certain topics, like menopause. Next, when Kitty opens up about her feelings, she is possibly seeking understanding from Red regarding her emotional state, which is probably linked to menopause. However, Red's response suggests a lack of empathy for Kitty's feelings. Instead of dealing with her concerns and inviting her to go with him, Red hopes

to get rid of her, because he does not want to deal with her menopause. The linguistic incongruity arises when Red agrees with Kitty's complaint about the heat. Instead of showing more empathy, he feels like a real victim, comparing his life with Kitty to a life in hell. In the next scene, a contrast between Kitty's lovely and optimistic language and Red's skeptical and negative interpretation of her feelings creates humor. Kitty uses words like "sorry" and explains that she doesn't want to ruin their trip, indicating a positive attitude. However, Red's choice of words, especially describing Kitty as a "ticking time bomb," introduces a metaphor that implies he sees her as an emotionally unstable person. Instead of teaching Eric to be supportive in such situations, Red gives him the idea that menopause is the worst thing in the world and that he should run away from such a thing, without trying to understand it. Such surprising interpretations create incongruity which then creates humor in the dialogue. We can again observe it when Kelso arrives and Red notices that the promised \$30 within the envelope is missing. This discovery adds a new layer of incongruity. Kelso's explanation makes the scene even funnier because he says that in such a casual way, instead of being worried because he spent his parents' money. We see a clear difference between what the money was supposed to be used for (helping Michael go with the rest of them) and what Kelso actually spent it on (an electronic football game). The money was meant for something important, but Kelso used it for something totally unnecessary. This difference makes the situation ironic and shows that Kelso sometimes makes quick and stupid decisions. Kelso's wrong and surprising priorities make us laugh and often confirm his personality. He is definitely not the smartest guy among them. His response to Red's sarcastic remark again confirms his ignorance. When Red compares Kelso to Eric, suggesting that Kelso makes Eric look like Einstein, Kelso misinterprets the comment. Kelso responds with, "Thank you? Einstein was ugly," indicating a lack of awareness that the comparison was not meant to be a compliment. This misinterpretation highlights Kelso's ignorance regarding the sarcasm incorporated in Red's statement. This ignorance contributes to the comedic elements of the conversation and shows how linguistic incongruity can create an amusement for the audience.

3.9. SEASON 4, EPISODE 23: HYDE'S BIRTHDAY

(HYDE'S IN HIS CHAIR. RED ENTERS FROM THE SIDE DOOR.)

Red: Alright, get your butt up those stairs and over to your party.

Hyde: I'm not going.

Red: Steven you're eighteen now. It's time to start being a man. And the first rule of being a man is you spend your life doing crap you don't want to do. Like I don't want to be here talking to you right now. But I am. And you don't want to go to a party. But you will.

Hyde: Actually, I won't.

Red: What's the matter, you don't like parties? Me neither. I hate people as much as you do.

Hyde: More, actually.

Red: But as long as you're living under my roof, you'll do what I tell you to do.

Hyde: Well lucky for me, I'm not going to be under your roof anymore, anyway.

Red: What the hell are you talking about?

Hyde: I'm eighteen, I should be getting out of here, right? I mean, that's what my dad did, my uncle did, and my cousins did. They were all on their own when they were my age.

Red: And what are they doing now?

Hyde: Uh, pumping gas, prison, prison, dead, prison. Red: And the reason you live here is so you don't end up like them. But if you want to leave, I can't stop you. So what's it going to be Steven? Prison, death or a birthday party?

Hyde: I guess I'll go to the party. (THEY GET UP TO GO) Hyde (CONT'D) And thanks.

Red: You're welcome. Now don't tell Eric we had this conversation, because when he's eighteen he's out.

ANALYSIS: In this scene, Red gives advice to Hyde about the responsibilities of being a man, underlining the necessity of doing things one doesn't want to do in order to become mature. This advice is presented as a general life principle, meant to encourage Hyde to attend his own birthday party despite his reluctance. It looks like a conversation between father and son. However, the incongruity arises because Red's attempt at delivering wise advice takes an unexpected and comical turn when he describes his current action (talking to Hyde) as an example of doing something he doesn't want to do. This creates a humorous twist as we witness Red's attempt to guide Hyde through life lessons while simultaneously expressing his aversion to the very conversation he is having. The irony appears because Red is trying to teach Hyde some life wisdom, but the example he gives is about not wanting to talk to Hyde. The incongruity is present again when Red admits his aversion to parties and people. This revelation is surprising because it goes against the traditional image of a parent figure who is typically seen as more mature and sociable, and who supports family members and friends meeting together to spend time, celebrate, or enjoy each other's company. Hyde's response further contributes to the incongruity. Instead of acknowledging that both of them dislike people and parties, Hyde comments that Red hates people even more than he does. This exaggeration intensifies the humor. After that, Red offers practical reasons why Hyde should continue living with him, explaining that the purpose is to prevent him from making the same mistakes as his relatives. Red shows a sense of responsibility and protection,

he acts like a father figure. The incongruity appears when Hyde lists his relatives' "achievements" - "pumping gas, prison, prison, dead, prison." This sudden shift from a serious tone to dark humor creates laughter among the audience, even though some of his relatives already died. We should feel sorry for Hyde, but such an unexpected answer makes us laugh. Eventually, it seems that everything is settled down. Hyde agrees to go to the party. And then, once more, the incongruity creates humor in this scene. Before they leave Red asks Hyde not to tell Eric about the conversation because Red wants Eric (his son) to leave the house as soon as he is 18. It is a huge twist since most parents have more empathy, support, and understanding for their kids. Red is so hard on Eric because Red's father probably treated him in the same way and he believes that, by doing the exact thing to Eric, he will grow into a strong and tough man. Red shows more compassion for Hyde instead for his son. And that is something that happens to most of us. We often show more compassion and patience to colleagues and friends and less to our family members, who have deep emotional ties with us and who are, in most cases, our biggest source of support. We know that Red should treat Eric better.

3.10. SEASON 2, EPISODE 18: KITTY AND ERIC'S NIGHT OUT

Kelso: Hey you guys, The Eagles are on Don Caruso's (?) rock concert tonight.

Eric: Man, I'm gonna miss The Eagles tonight because I got a... I'm busy.

Donna: Do we have a date tonight?

Eric: No I wish. I'm going to a movie. With my mom.

Hyde: He's got a special night out with mommy.

Kelso (reading a TV magazine): Hey, maybe you'll get lucky. (They all look at him in disgust, Kelso keeps on reading until he notices them looking)

Kelso: And your mom will pay for the movie!! God, you people are sick!

ANALYSIS: In this scene semantic incongruity is again employed to create a humorous and memorable scene. It begins when Kelso informs his friends that "The Eagles" are scheduled to appear on Don Caruso's rock concert that evening. Eric expresses his regret about missing the show. When Donna, his girlfriend, asks if they have a date planned, Eric says that he is actually going to a movie with his mom. This revelation motivates Hyde to tease Eric about his "special night out with mommy". The semantic incongruity occurs when Kelso, engaged in reading a TV magazine, responds to Hyde's teasing by saying, "Hey, maybe you'll get lucky." This phrase,

commonly associated with having a romantic or sexual encounter, creates an awkward and inappropriate implication because Eric is going out with his mother. Kelso continues reading until he notices the group's disturbed expressions. Realizing his mistake, he quickly clarifies, "And your mom will pay for the movie!!" His intended meaning was that Eric might be fortunate enough to have his mom cover the cost of the tickets. Semantic incongruity in this context demonstrates how humor can arise from the unexpected clash between different interpretations of a phrase. Kelso's initial statement, which carries a sexual hint, contrasts sharply with his intended message of financial luck. This creates a moment of discomfort and surprise, which is then humorously resolved as Kelso clarifies his innocent intention. The scene effectively presents how semantic incongruity can be used to generate comedy through misunderstandings and the eventual clarification of meaning.

4. CONCLUSION

As more and more researchers dig into the topic of humor, they're trying to figure out why and how we find things funny and how humor affects us. The concept of humor is complex, with different theories trying to explain its nature and effects. Victor Raskin and Salvatore Attardo have contributed a lot to the understanding of humor, putting an accent on its diverse nature. While Raskin emphasizes the individual differences in what people find funny, Attardo pragmatically defines humor as any text intended to create laughter, without regard to individual reactions. Attardo also emphasizes the distinction between humor and laughter, noting that while laughter often accompanies humor it is not essential. Also, humor has important social functions, like creating solidarity among participants. Different theories, such as the Superiority Theory, the Relief Theory, and the Incongruity Theory highlight aspects like the expression of superiority, the release of tension, and the resolution of incongruity as key elements in creating laughter. Incongruity theory, in particular, emphasizes the importance of unexpected elements and resolution in creating humor. The incongruity-resolution model proposed by Jerry Suls describes how the surprise factor in punchlines creates cognitive processing, leading to laughter when the incongruity is resolved. Understanding the humor theories is essential not only for enjoying comedic texts but also for recognizing the cultural and social connections of humor. The study of humor offers valuable insights into human cognition, social dynamics, and communication processes. This thesis focused on the Incongruity Theory of humor, which emphasizes cognitive processes and the perception of incongruity. Scholars throughout history explored this concept and its role in humor. At its core, humor arises from the difference between expected and actual outcomes. While Aristotle laid the groundwork for this theory, it was further developed by philosophers like Immanuel Kant and Arthur Schopenhauer in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Kant emphasized the importance of absurdity in creating laughter, while Schopenhauer highlighted the contrast between imagined expectations and real-world outcomes. Psychologist Jerry M. Suls proposed the incongruity-resolution model, which explains how humor stems from the resolution of incongruity or unexpectedness. This model emphasizes the significance of both incongruity and resolution in humor creation. However, it also raises the question: Is incongruity alone sufficient for humor, or does it require resolution? Suls suggests that resolution is indeed necessary for humor to occur, as it provides a cognitive solution to the incongruity. Incongruity sets up expectations that are disrupted by the punchline, leading to cognitive action and the search

for resolution. Successful resolution results in laughter, while unresolved incongruity may lead to confusion or a lack of humor appreciation. Willibald Ruch's perspective describes that not all jokes follow this strict structure; some may offer no resolution or introduce new absurdities. These perspectives emphasize the complexity of humor and its different manifestations. In my thesis, I also wrote about the relationship between Suls' incongruity-resolution model and more recent theories like the Semantic Script Theory of Humor and the General Theory of Verbal Humor. While these theories build upon Suls' foundation, they offer additional information. The Incongruity Theory emphasizes the significance of incongruity in humor creation, stressing the cognitive process of joining together unexpected elements. Similarly, the Forced Reinterpretation Theory proposes that humor emerges from the reinterpretation of contradictory linguistic cues, leading to new meanings. Both theories highlight the close relationship between expectation, incongruity, and resolution in humor formation. The Semantic Script Theory of Humor and the General Theory of Verbal stress the role of linguistic structures, narrative strategies, and contextual factors in shaping humorous interpretations. They offer a holistic understanding of humor, that it is crucial not only for enjoying funny content but also for comprehending human cognition, communication, and social dynamics.

By exploring humor through theories, we gain deeper insight into human experiences and the complex ways in which language shapes our perception of the world. In my thesis, I mainly explored the linguistic incongruity throughout the analyzed scenes from TV series *That '70s Show*. Through various interactions and dialogues, I could understand how unexpected language choices, contradictions, and misunderstandings contribute to both tension and amusement. In the analyzed scenes, linguistic incongruity serves as a tool to present the absurdities of human behavior. Also, the exploration of linguistic incongruity offers insight into broader social issues such as racial discrimination, gender roles, and generational differences. Through unexpected language choices, contradictions, and misunderstandings, the dialogue not only creates laughter but also makes us think about deeper social issues, enriching our viewing experience.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Attardo, S., 1994, *Linguistic Theories of Humor*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Baker, M., 1992, *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*, London and New York: Routledge.

Ermida, I., 2008, *The Language of Comic Narratives*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Kant, I., 2007, *Critique of Judgment*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Morreall, J., 1983, *Taking Laughter Seriously*, Albany NY: State University of New York Press.

Raskin, V., 1985, *Semantic Mechanisms of Humor*, Dordrecht: Reidel.

Ritchie, G., 2004, *The Linguistic Analysis of Jokes*. London/New York: Routledge.

Rod A. Martin and Thomas Ford., 2007, *The Psychology of Humor: An Integrative Approach*. Amsterdam: Elsevier Academic Press.

Suls, J., 1972, *A Two-Stage Model for the Appreciation of Jokes and Cartoons: An Information Processing Analysis*, New York: NY Academic Press.

INTERNET SOURCES:

Attardo, S., 2017, *Humor in Language*, Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics, <linguistics.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.001.0001/acrefore9780199384655-e-342>

Vandaele, J., 1999, *Each Time We Laugh. Translated Humor in Screen Comedy*. In Translation and the (Re) Location of Meaning: Selected Papers of the CETRA Research Seminars in Translation Studies, 1994-1996, edited by Jeroen Vandaele, 237-272. Leuven: KUL Publications. <http://www.translationconcepts.org/pdf/MuTra_2005_Proceedings.pdf>

Plot summary of *That '70s Show*, IMDb:

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0165598/plotsummary/?ref=tt_str_y_pl

AmazingJokes.com/Why did the chicken cross the road?:

https://amazingjokes.com/jokes/2013-04-08_kids-riddles.html

Funny Kid Jokes/Why was the math book sad?:

<https://funnykidjokes.com/why-was-the-math-book-sad/>

Reddit/Why did the tomato turn green?:

https://www.reddit.com/r/3amjokes/comments/13z1vhz/why_did_the_tomato_turn_green/

Forced Reinterpretation Theory:

<http://libback.uqu.edu.sa/hipres/Indu/indu10473.pdf>

The Straight Dope Message Board/What is the largest building in the world?:

<http://boards.straightdope.com/sdmb/archive/index.php/t-180864.html>

Transcripts/*That '70s Show*:

<https://tvshowtranscripts.ourboard.org/viewforum.php?f=936>