

## RHETORICS OF IRONIC DISCOURSE OF THE QUR'AN<sup>○</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

This paper first investigates types and functions of verbal irony in the Qur'an, and second extracts and interprets the multi-meanings and interpretations of all dissociative thoughts hidden behind speaker's (s') intention. Qualitative research method is used in interpreting the data samples. Speech Acts Theory of Irony by Henk(1990) is used to categorize all ironic texts; Allusional Pretence Theory by Nakamura (1995) is used to help extract and interpret the dissociative thoughts resulting from irony interface with other figures of speech. The study shows that in many cases irony as a prominent figure of speech interacts with metaphor, hyperbole, metonymy, understatement, parody, paradox, humor and satire. This paper claims that syntactic (grammatical) variations and semantic interpretations play a major role in determining the intended meaning of the speaker's utterance, which influences and therefore conveys all other emotive meanings ( i.e. cultural, psychological, social and connotative meanings) resulting from the complex process of intersecting irony with other figures of speech in one utterance. The study concludes that *sarcasm* is the most frequent type of irony found in the Qur'an, followed by *parody*, *paradox* and *satire* etc. The study shows that ironic utterances and expressions are open to a wide range of interpretations affected by situational and contextual environment as well as discourse parameters. This thus shows that irony is inter-linguistically, culturally and contextually diverse in its potential realizations and forms.

**Keywords:** *Qur'an, Rhetorics, Irony, Discourse*

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is uncontroversial that eloquence of the Quran is far beyond human realization for *it* is Allah's unique *words* having complex nature in various (meta)linguistic aspects that generate a wide range of functions and interpretations. Situational context determines the type of irony and its interface with other figure (s) of speech conveyed by either a single lexical item, phrase or clause. These figures of speech interact within the same utterance in order to convey multi-interpretations behind the speaker's(s') utterance. Despite the fact that implicit *irony* is a complex (meta) cognitive phenomenon, it is not thoroughly interpreted and extracted in the main exegesis of the Qur'an. Hence, the intended meaning and the unique flavour of the original are missing. This study tries to show how ironic utterances along with other figures of speech intersect and present a unique pragma-contextual meaning covering a wide spectrum of dissociative thoughts and intentions. The importance of this study crystalizes in helping both those specialize in interpreting and translating the eloquence of the Qur'an into other languages as well as helping ordinary people keen to understand the rhetorics of irony and its mechanisms with other figures of speech. The main reason of conducting this study is to manifest and explain the rhetorics of implicit irony and its interface with other figures of speech in the Quranic discourse. As mentioned before ironic discourse of the Qur'an is dominant that it conveys a wide range of functions, interpretations and dissociative thoughts. Despite the fact that it is almost the explicit meaning of irony that is conveyed, the *intended implicit meaning* is found missing in many cases. For this reason, this paper mainly focuses on extracting and interpreting implicit irony and its interface with other figures of speech such as metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, humor, satire, sarcasm, parody, paradox and euphemism. The study tries to answer this question "what are the types, functions and dissociative thoughts of irony-interface with other figures of speech found in the Qur'an?"

### 1.1 A Brief History of Ironic Discourse and Other Figure of Speech

It is argued that "irony is probably as ancient as humankind" (Moneva, 2001:2), and it may thus be thought of as a cognitive mechanism in humans. This formulates the innate ability for human communication and interaction. Skorov (2009:2) states that "the term irony is derived from the Greek word *eironeia*, meaning dissimulation". There are many definitions of irony, the most influential of which is defined by Kenkadze (2016) who claims that irony is "an interdisciplinary category, which is a complex and unique communicative phenomenon covering the form, meaning and context of an utterance, is one of

the central problems of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, theory of communication, pragmatics.” Filatov (2013) states that all theories of irony have various interpretations and thus there is no specific definition. This is because of the fact that irony is a universal phenomenon existing in all languages with different cultural connotations.

It was Greek scholars and philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, who used irony a philosophical, behavioural and dramatic device (Skorov, 2009). Unlike the classical Greek scholars, the philosophers and thinkers of the Middle Ages contributed little to the cognitive development of irony (Knox, 1989). Although this contribution was little, Vossius (1606) remarkably differentiated “myths” from “lies” and claimed that both are totally different.

Fish (1989) emphasises that figurative and literal meanings are different with different mechanisms i.e. he states that (1989:195) “if irony is a way of reading, so is literalness; neither way is prior to the other, unlike the mode of calculated action which is prior to interpretation; both are interpretive ways, which are set in motion at the same time by cues and considerations that are themselves a consequence of an interpretive act”. Booth (1974) was first to emphasise the importance of context in determining meaning. He (1974:100) states that “it is impossible to say that only what is ‘in the work’ is relevant context, because at every point the author depends on inferences about what his reader will likely assume or know”. In 1974, Culter distinguished between provoked irony and spontaneous irony. He claimed that syntactic and semantic features of an utterance play a fundamental role in analysing and interpreting spontaneous irony; stylistic and pragmatic features, on other hand, play an important role in helping comprehend and analyse provoked irony. Some psycholinguistic scholars (Gibbs & Colston, 2007) argue that understanding an utterance of whether it is ironic depends on the incongruity between context and speaker’ utterance. In contrary, Bryant and Fox (2002) argue that speaker's prosodic patterns; specifically the intonational cues, play a role in interpreting irony.

## 1.2 Irony and Other Tropes

There is a blurring line between irony and other figures of speech. As far as the relationship between irony and humour is concerned, it was “Aristotle’s Art of the Rhetorical”, which originally distinguished humour from irony. According to Aristotle, the difference between humour and irony lies in the fact that the humourist makes fun of himself, whereas the ironist tends to laugh at something or somebody external. Some well-known scholars, like Moneva (2001) for instance, link verbal irony to humour, claiming that verbal irony is a form of

humour that is bound to a specific situation as well as culture and specific social norms. As far as the relationship between irony, humour and satire is concerned, Meredith (1877) draws the relationship between these interrelated tropes. For Meredith “irony is the humour of satire” (1877, p. 44), and it is characterized by its ambiguity”. Unlike satire, which detaches a speaker from being involved in certain views which may bring doubt on the speaker, irony leaves audience/reader in doubt of whether they are being attacked by the ironist or not, and therefore, the audience/readers have to depend on the context and other inferential and situational factors to determine what is exactly meant by the speaker’s utterance. Meredith’s explanation of the relationship between irony to other tropes of speech makes some authors, such as Bergson (1956, p. 64) “insists on the exclusively human nature of irony and humour, and on their interpersonal or social dimension and even refers to the notion of echo, although he does not seem to confer it any special sense, whatsoever: “You would hardly appreciate the comic if you felt yourself isolated from others. Laughter appears to stand in need of an echo.” As far as the relationship between irony and satire is concerned, it was Frye (1957, p. 232), who was the first to draw the line of separating differences between both, claiming that “whereas satire is socially committed, the ironist can remain aloof, and indifferent to social beliefs”. To Frye, satire is defined as “militant irony”, as the language is not just critical or humorous but there is some indirect force implied in the speaker’s utterance over the hearer or addressee. Despite Frye’s contribution to irony, his work was criticised due to his claim that “irony exists regardless of an attitude”.

As far the relationship between irony and metaphor is concerned, the difference between metaphor and irony was pointed out by Wilson (2013) who states that “metaphor and irony are tropes in which the literal meaning is replaced by a related figurative meaning; metaphor entails simile or comparison, while irony entails the contradiction of the literal meaning”, however, in metaphor there is incongruity between the extra-linguistic reality and the object expressed by the propositional content. To traditional theorists, both metaphor and irony are processed on similar lines and follow the same pattern (Wilson, 2013). Many contemporary experimental studies, however, have firstly criticised the claim that metaphor and irony go through the same interpretation processes, and secondly criticised the traditional theories which cannot explain why figurative language should be used at all (Wilson, 2013). Present day theories of irony are distinguishing irony from metaphor; they insist that irony is more complex than metaphor because it is about a thought involving and targeting another thought and should therefore require a higher order of mindreading ability. The Echoic Account Theory (1986) by Sperber and Wilson, for instance, has also drawn a

line of difference between irony and metaphor and other tropes. According to this theory, it is irony, not metaphor, which has *distinctive features* like: 1- the role of attitude, 2- the normative bias in irony, and 3- the ironic tone of voice.

Unlike verbal irony, in metaphor, hyperbole, litotes and plain lies, the speaker detects a transparent insincerity which is different from the sincerity conditions of irony (Henk, 1990:102). It is hyperbole and litotes which are most confused with verbal irony. The difference between hyperbole and litotes can be explained as the following: “the rhetorical effect of litotes is brought about by a reduction of the proportions of the extra-linguistic reality, whereas the rhetorical effect of hyperbole is brought about by an extension of those proportions” (Henk, 1990, p. 103). As a matter of fact, it is verbal irony that is considered a complex extra-linguistic phenomenon. This is due to its effect on both the propositional content of an utterance as well as the illocutionary force behind which the intended meaning lies.

Despite the slight differences between verbal irony and other tropes, it is undeniable that verbal irony can occur in different forms of tropes such as metaphor, litotes, idiomatic expression, lie, hyperbole, understatement, parody etc., however, not every instance or example of figurative language is necessarily an ironic one.

The relationship between irony and parody has gone through a heated debate but none of these theories have ever had a better contribution than the *echoic account theories*. One of the important contributions to echoic account theorists, particularly those formulating and adopting *Pretence Account (PAT)* (*the latest version of echoic account*), is their distinction between irony and parody. These theorists claim that it is parody, not irony, by which the scornful or mocking attitude conveyed mimics, imitates or has fun of someone’s behaviour or way of talk. This means that parody is not like irony echoing someone’s thought, however, “if the pretend speech act is a parody of an actual speech act, there is indeed a target for irony” (Wilson, 2013, p. 12). Wilson clearly states the difference between parody and irony, claiming that “most ironical utterances are not parodies: they have no real-life counterpart, and are unlikely ever to have one. If they are pretences, it is not at all obvious what the point of the pretence, what its target is, and hence what makes it ironical” (2013, p. 12). This may lead to the conclusion that parody can be considered irony if both mean pretence- to imitate someone’s belief and behaviour- and there should be a characteristic attitude to the attributed thought. Echoic account theorists, furthermore, have greatly helped the argument between irony and parody along, when they maintained that there are different mechanisms with different tones of voice to which both, the regular and ironical parody are linked to. These tones are not

variants that can be associated with various conditions of use and give rise to various differences in interpretation.

### 1.3 Functions and Forms of Irony

Until the 14<sup>th</sup> Century the function of irony was meant to pretend and produce humour and to convey some rhetorical meaning. In this century, however, when irony has been further explored and explained, Leggitt and Gibbs (2001) wrote a comprehensive explanatory paper on the functions and forms of irony. Both authors shed light on the most types of irony used in experimental literature such as sarcasm, hyperbole, rhetorical questions, jocularity and understatements. As far as the most essential type of irony is concerned, it is verbal irony that is most used of all genres, because of its exhaustive functions in discourse. According to some authors like Skorov (2009) verbal irony can be defined as rhetorical irony, which is the most important type among the main five types of irony that were categorized by Skorov (2009). Rhetorical irony has very long and old roots that go back to Aristotle for instance, when defined as “saying something but pretending not to be saying it (preterition), or “saying something while naming things by their opposite names (antiphrasis).

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

There are only five (out of fifty) texts to be selected for data analysis. These texts are ironic in nature and intersect with other figures of speech. The study adopts analytical-interpretive research method through which all data samples are qualitatively analysed.

### 2.1 Theory Adopted

First, SATI is applied in order to classify the data samples under the main categories of speech acts. Second, APT is first applied to extract and interpret the multi-meanings and intentions of ironic speech acts of the Qur'an. In his pioneering paper, Utsumi (2000:5) states that “the allusional pretence theory has a powerful ability to explain more ironic utterances than both other theories, resolving some of their difficulties”. Accepting this theory means accepting the following definition of irony in this study: irony is a semantic-pragmatic interface phenomenon involving referential inferences implied in the speaker's indirect utterances and intentions during their interaction with the hearer and addressee, who is required to analyse what is behind the speaker's literal words by understanding and analysing the utterances beyond their literal level. APT has two fundamental mechanisms that the current study depends on in interpreting

and analysing the data samples: 1- pretence mechanism which helps extract a speaker's allusion to a failed expectation through pretence and mimicking and 2- echoic mechanism through which speaker's negative attitude can be analysed and interpreted.

### 3.0 DATA ANALYSIS

All the ironic utterances and expressions are chosen accordingly with the main criteria of selecting ironic speech acts formulated by Wilson's work (2013) of distinguishing ironic utterances and expressions from non-ironic ones. These criteria are 1- the speakers's characteristic attitude towards the incongruity between their utterance and reality 2- the normative bias 3- and the speaker's expectation about a specific social norm (either social, religious or moral)

#### Exemplary Samples

#### Text (1)

##### a) Arabic Version

“وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ”

##### b) Arabic Version in Latin Script

“Wa Mā 'Arsalnā Fī Qaryatin Min Nadhīrin 'Illā Qāla Mutrafūhā 'Innā Bimā 'Ursiltum Bihi Kāfirūna”

##### c) English Translation (Arberry 1955)

34:34 “We sent no warner into any city except its men who lived at ease said, 'We disbelieve in the Message you have been sent with”.

##### d) Pragmatic Analysis of the Arabic Original

This Qur'anic text consists of an ironic primary speech act embedded into the main clause through the complementizer “إِنَّا”. According to APT, the type of irony is *sarcasm* through which a various range of dissociative thoughts is conveyed. This Quranic text “إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ”, translated as “*except its men who lived at ease said, 'We disbelieve in the Message you have been sent with*” conveys the sarcastic irony. Situational and contextual environment plays an essential role in helping interpret the ironic meaning. There is, for instance, a violation of a norm-based expectation/ belief that is violated that the unbelievers do not expect any messenger to come with a new religion that is

different from theirs. Such a violation generates a conversational implicature presupposing a various range of dissociative thoughts. This sarcastic language used by disbelievers against their prophets was to refute their Message, and to deny what had been revealed. Both grammatical and lexical items entail sarcastic irony through illocutionary force indicating devices. The first device is syntactical, functioning as an intensifier “إِنَّا”, which has a pragmatic function emphasising the irony interface with hyperbolic utterance “كَافِرُونَ”, which functions as a device or a discourse marker for irony recognition. This increases the degree of ironicalness of the utterance. In Arabic, “كَافِرُونَ” is the complement of the subordinate “إِنَّا”, whose based-form is “كفر / *disbelieved*”. The pragmatic function of the predicate is entailed by the grammatical function that the predicate plays. The grammatical function lies in the habitual aspect marking an ongoing repetitive action. This presupposes the unbelievers’ mental, spiritual and psychological state that they never believe in their messengers. Thus, the pragmatic implicit meaning of the predicate “إِنَّا” would presuppose first the unbelievers’ denial of the Holy Message, and second presuppose accusation of the prophet of not being a messenger, so as to he gets desperate, and thus, stops inviting them to believe in Allah as one God. Therefore, the unbelievers’ implicit intention may be interpreted as “we never believe you nor do we ever follow you, so whatever you say and do will affect us nothing, but increase our disbelief”. To conclude, irony *interfaces* with *sarcasm* and *hyperbole*. This generates first *psychological* function presupposing Allah’s assurance to his prophet that he should bear patience and not get surprised about the unbelievers’ disbelief; second *aggressive* presupposing the unbelievers’ rudeness, contempt and accusation of their prophet’s Message; and third function is *theological* presupposing the unbelievers’ denial and refutation of Allah’s religion.

## Text (2)

### a) Arabic Version

“ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ”

### b) Arabic Version in Latin Script

“Dhuq 'Innaka 'Anta Al-'Azīzu Al-Karīmu”



### c) English Translation (Arberry 1955)

44:49 "Taste! Surely thou art the mighty, the noble".

### d) Pragmatic Analysis of the Arabic Original

This text “ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ” translated as “*taste! Surely thou art the mighty, the noble*” consists of simple hybrid speech acts whose locutionary force is that of directive, while the illocutionary force is that of critical assertive. The intended meaning of the meta ironic speech act is affected first by the primary preceded speech act through first the sequential insertion process, which connects primary speech act to the meta one, and second by contextual ironic environment, affected by linguistic and paralinguistic factors. According to APT, the utterance can be interpreted according to two cognitive mechanisms. The first mechanism is pretence, through which the angels of Hell echo an imaginary allusional speech act that resembles Abu-Jahl’s previous actual utterance. Through the pretence mechanism, the echoic mechanism is produced. This is due to violation of a norm-based expectation that Abu-Jahl should not have said he was mighty and noble because he in fact is not! Such a violation of the norm-based expectation causes a violation of the pragmatic maxim of quality and relevance. This generates a range of dissociative thoughts. The ironic speech act alluding to the speakers’ based-norm expectation is violated, hence the Speaker’s contemptuous attitude has been conveyed through a range of various dissociative thoughts. The violation of the pragmatic principle of quality and relevance leads to the incongruity between what is literally said and reality.. There is more than one type of irony, affected by historical, situational and contextual factors that play an essential role in determining the nature and type of irony. The first type is parody as the angels mimic Abu-Jahl’s utterance and via mimicking, they echo a contemptuous attitude presupposing critical humour, as they are two very heterogeneous worlds: one is to praise; the second is to underestimate and criticise. To conclude, irony interfaces first with mockery and second with satire functioning as a discourse strategy for irony cognition. The functions of irony presupposed by irony interface with other sub-types are socio-aggressive presupposing *mockery* through which other dissociative thoughts are produced such as dispraise, criticism, contempt and insult.

### Text (3)

#### a) Arabic Version

“وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بِغَضِّهِمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ ۖ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ”

**b) Arabic Version in Latin Script**

“Wa 'Idhā Laqū Al-Ladhīna 'Āmanū Qālū 'Āmannā Wa 'Idhā Khalā Ba`duhum 'Ilā Ba`dīn Qālū 'Atuḥaddithūnahum Bimā Fataḥa Allāhu `Alaykum Liyuḥajjūkum Bihi `Inda Rabbikum `Afalā Ta`qilūna”

**c) English Translation (Arberry 1955)**

2:76 “And when they meet those who believe, they say 'We believe'; and when they go privily one to another, they say, 'Do you speak to them of what God has revealed to you, that they may thereby dispute with you before your Lord? Have you no understanding?’”

**d) Pragmatic Analysis of the Arabic Original**

This Qur’anic text consists of a bevy of speech acts. The illocutionary point of all ironic speech acts is assertive. The ironic speech acts are linked to each other by illocutionary force indicating devices. This Qur’anic utterance “وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا” is the primary one, meaning that the unbelievers (Jews), when meeting believers, say they believe in Allah. They, however, question and ask each other when they go away and meet one another about what has just been said. According to APT, the ironic meaning presupposed by the meta speech act “أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ؟” translated as “Do you speak to them of what God has revealed to you, that they may thereby dispute with you before your Lord? Have you no understanding?” is conveyed through a rhetorical question, having various illocutionary forces. There is a violation of the speakers’ (hypocrite Jews) expectation that the non-hypocrite Jews should not tell Muslims about the prophecy of Prophet Mohammed in the Torah. Such a violation has caused the hypocrite Jews to pretend as if they ask a question, through which they echo a range of dissociative thoughts. To conclude, the type of irony is parody presupposing various dissociative thoughts producing functions of irony such as first social presupposing blame lied in the meta ironic speech act “أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ؟”. Blame shows that the hypocrite Jews

blame those non-hypocrite Jews about telling some Muslims about the real prophesy of Prophet Mohammed in the Torah. The second social function is dissatisfaction showing the hypocrite Jews' dissatisfaction with the non-hypocrite. The second function of irony is aggressive presupposing criticism, showing that the hypocrite Jews criticize the non-hypocrite for telling Muslims about the prophecy of Prophet Mohammed in the Torah. The third function is psycho-aggressive conveyed by the meta rhetorical speech act “أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ”, and presupposes the hypocrites' anger and criticism against the non-hypocrites.

#### Text (4)

##### a) Arabic Version

” وَإِنْ تُصِيبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ سَيَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ ۗ قُلْ كُلُّ مَنْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۗ فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا “

##### b) Arabic Version in Latin Script

“Aynamā Takūnū Yudrikkumu Al-Mawtu Wa Law Kuntum Fī Burūjin Mushayyadatin Wa 'In Tuṣibhum Ḥasanatun Yaqūlū Hadhihi Min 'Indi Allāhi Wa 'In Tuṣibhum Sayyi'atun Yaqūlū Hadhihi Min 'Indika Qul Kullun Min 'Indi Allāhi Famāli Hā'uulā' Al-Qawmi Lā Yakādūna Yafqahūna Ḥadīthāan”

##### c) English Translation (Arberry 1955)

4:78 “And if a good thing visits them, they say, 'This is from God'; but if an evil thing visits them, they say, 'This is from thee.' Say: 'Everything is from God.' How is it with this people? They scarcely understand any tidings”.

##### d) Pragmatic Analysis of the Arabic Original

This ironic text “فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا” is translated as “*how is it with this people? They scarcely understand any tidings*”. The illocutionary force of the ironic speech act is that of critical assertion, conveyed through a w.h rhetorical question. The illocutionary force of the ironic utterance is not for the Speaker to state new information, but to convey a range of dissociative thoughts and attitudes towards the unbelievers' echoed utterances, thoughts and attitudes. According to APT, there is a violation of a norm-based expectation regarding the unbelievers' statement that whatever good they get is from Allah, and whatever bad they get is from the prophet. The type of irony conveyed by the rhetorical

question is sarcasm presupposing criticism (to criticise what the unbelievers say) and refutation (to refute what the unbelievers say). Through the rhetorical question, the speech act echoes a thought targeting the unbelievers, in order to stop saying a false inaccurate thing that whatever good they receive is from Allah, and whatever bad they receive is from the prophet. Another type of irony is exaggeration, which is presupposed by the hyperbolic adjectival phrase “حديثاً”.

The rhetorical communicative function of the hyperbolic form is to stress the meaning and emphasize that the unbelievers, hurting the prophet, do not know how to talk and so they are fool and not wise. To conclude irony interfaces with sarcasm and hyperbole. The sarcastic irony is conveyed through the rhetorical question, while the hyperbolic irony is conveyed through the adjectival hyperbolic form. Both types of irony presuppose the Speaker’s dissociative thoughts and attitudes. This generates functions of irony such as first aggressive presupposing the Speaker’s criticism of the unbelievers’ false saying; second theological presupposing the Speaker’s refutation of the unbelievers’ saying, third *evaluative* presupposing the Speakers’ understatement of the unbelievers’ way of understanding and thinking, and fourth socio-aggressive presupposing the Speaker’s rebuke of the unbelievers’ hurting and saying false things about the Prophet.

## Text 5

### a) Arabic Original

“وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا عَجِّلْ لَنَا قِطْنَآ قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ”

### b) Arabic Original in Latin Script

“Wa Qālū Rabbanā `Ajil Lanā Qiṭṭanā Qabla Yawmi Al-Ḥisābi”

### c) English Translation (Arberry 1955)

38:16 “They say, ‘Our Lord, hasten to us our share before the Day of Reckoning.’”

### d) Pragmatic Analysis of the Arabic Original

This Qur’anic text consists of a complex meta speech act whose illocutionary force is that of directive. This speech act is a sequential manifestation of the previous primary speech act “فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ” translated as “then as for him who is given his book in his right hand (69:19)”. The meta speech act is

contextually and situationally linked to the primary one. According to Al-Zamakhshari, the unbelievers not believing in the Day of Judgement carelessly ask Allah to judge them for what they have done. They do not actually believe in Hell Fire, but they want to mock the prophet. According to APT, the unbelievers utter an imaginary speech act that violates the pragmatic maxim of sincerity, through which they echo a range of dissociative thoughts such as first denial showing the unbeliever's denial of the Day of Judgment, second mockery showing the unbelievers' mockery of the prophet. Verbal irony interfaces with paradox, as the unbelievers' statement (that Allah judges them before the Day of Judgment) totally contradicts the truth, and through contradiction, the conversational implicature is produced. This is because the unbelievers do neither believe in Allah nor do they believe in the Hereafter. The unbelievers, however, pretend so to just mock and have fun of the prophet and all those who believe in the Hereafter. Verbal irony also interfaces with hyperbole presupposing a sarcastic utterance, targeting the prophet and all those who believe in the Day of Judgement. The first function is theological presupposing the unbelievers' denial and disbelief in the Hereafter. The second function is socio-psychological presupposing first the unbelievers' mockery of the prophet and second presupposing the unbelievers' self-contradiction or insincerity.

#### 4.0 FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The following sections and subsections show the frequency of occurrence of irony interface with other figures of speech, its multi-functions and dissociative thoughts in 50 texts:

**A- Sarcastic irony:** sarcastic irony occurs separately six times and interfaces with other types of verbal irony such as hyperbole with a four-time frequency and parody with a three-time frequency and also with paradox with a two-time frequency. There are five functions presupposed by sarcastic irony. The first function category presupposed by sarcastic irony is psycho-aggressive occurring five times. The second function is of theological nature and occurring one time. The third function is social and occurring three times. The fourth and mixed function is socio-theological and occurring one time. The fifth function is logical and occurring one time. Sarcasm interfaces with the following types of verbal irony and figures of speech:

- 1- **Sarcasm-hyperbole interface:** this occurs five times. This interface presupposes five functions through which a range of various dissociative thoughts are presupposed. The first function is theological occurring five times. The second function is psychological occurring four times. The

third function is socio-aggressive occurring once. The fourth function is status elevation occurring one time.

- 2- **Sarcasm-parody interface:** this occurs three times. This interface presupposes four functions. The first function is theological occurring three times. The second function is psycho-aggressive occurring two times. The third function is psychological occurring one time. The fourth function is social occurring one time.
- 3- **Sarcasm-paradox interface:** this occurs two times. There are three functions presupposed by this interface. The first function is socio-theological occurring two times. The second function is socio-psychological occurring one time. The third function is aggressive occurring one time.
- 4- **Sarcasm-understatement interface:** this occurs one time. The functions presupposed by this interface are two. The first function is theological occurring one time. The second function is socio-aggressive occurring one time.

**B- Parody:** the study shows that parody occurs eight times and interfaces with other types of verbal irony such as firstly paradox occurring two times, secondly satire, hyperbole, metonymy, sarcasm, hyperbole and understatement, which each occurs one time. There are eight functions presupposed by ironical parody and through which there is a range of dissociative thoughts. The first function is theological occurring four times. The second function is social occurring three times. The third function is socio-psychological occurring two times. The fourth function is psychological occurring one time. The fifth function is socio-aggressive occurring one time. Parody interfaces with the following types of verbal irony and figures of speech:

- 1- **Parody-sarcasm interface:** this occurs two times. The functions presupposed by this interface are first theological occurring two times, second socio-theological occurring one time, third socio-psychological occurring two time, and fourth psycho-aggressive occurring one time.
- 2- **Parody-paradox interface:** it occurs two times. The functions presupposed by this interface are first social occurring two times. The second function is socio-aggressive occurring one time. The third

function is logical occurring one time. The fourth function is psychological occurring one time.

- 3- **Parody-hyperbole interface:** this occurs one time. There are two functions presupposed by this interface. The first one is theological occurring one time. The second function is aggressive occurring one time.
- 4- **Parody-satire interface:** this occurs one time. There is only socio-aggressive function presupposed by this interface.
- 5- **Parody-metonymy interface:** this occurs one time. There are three functions presupposed by this interface. The first function is psychological occurring one time. The second function is aggressive occurring one time. The third function is theological occurring one time.
- 6- **Parody, hyperbole and understatement interface:** this occurs one time. There are four functions presupposed by this interface: social, theological, psycho-aggressive, and elevation status which each occurs one time.

**C- Paradox:** the study shows that paradoxical irony occurs five times and interfaces with other types of verbal irony and figures of speech. There are six functions presupposed by paradoxical irony through which a range of dissociative thoughts are produced. The first function is social occurring three times. The second function is theological occurring three times. The third function is socio-theological occurring three times. The fourth function is aggressive occurring one time. The fifth function is socio-aggressive occurring one time. The sixth function is psycho-aggressive occurring one time. Paradox interfaces with the following types of irony and figures of speech:

- 1- **Paradox-sarcasm interface:** this interface occurs two times. There are four functions presupposed by this interface. The first function is theological. The second function is socio-theological occurring one time. The third function is socio-psychological occurring one time. The fourth function is psycho-aggressive occurring one time.

- 2- **Paradox-euphemism interface:** it occurs two times and is conveyed through the interrelated relationship between verbal irony, pun and metonymy. There are five functions presupposed by this interface. The first function is socio-aggressive. The second function is socio-theological occurring two times and presupposing the dissociative thoughts of disbelief, denial and persuasion which each occurs one time. The third function is psycho-aggressive.

**D- Satire:** the findings of the study shows that satiric irony occurs separately one time and presupposes two functions. The first function is socio-aggressive. The second function is psychological occurring one time. Satire interfaces with the following types of irony and figures of speech:

1- **Satire-hyperbole interface:** This occurs one time and presupposes four functions. The first function is theological occurring one time. The second function is social occurring one time. The third function is aggressive occurring one. The fourth function is elevation status occurring one time and presupposing understatement occurring one time.

**E- Mocking verbal-self irony intersection:** the findings of the study show that verbal-self irony interface occurs in three different situational contexts and texts. First, verbal irony intersects with self-irony to produce three functions. The first function is socio-psychological occurring one time. The second function is elevation status occurring one time. The third function is theological occurring one time. Second, verbal irony intersects with self irony through metaphor. This occurs one time and presupposes two functions. The first function is social occurring one time. The second function is psycho-aggressive occurring one time. Third, hyperbolic verbal irony interfaces with self-irony. This occurs one time and presupposes socio-aggressive function occurring one time.

**F - Verbal-situational irony interface:** it occurs one time and out of it there is parody-sarcasm interface, as sarcastic parody is presupposed by parody. There are two functions presupposed by this interface. The first function is socio-aggressive occurring one time. The second function is psychological occurring one time.

**G - Jocularity-understatement interface:** this occurs one time and presupposes two functions. The first function is socio-aggressive occurring one time. The second function is elevation status occurring one time.



**H - Antithesis, parody and paradox interface:** it occurs one time and presupposes two functions. The first function is psycho-aggressive. The second function is social.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This study concludes that ironic speech acts intersect with other figures of speech to produce multi-functions and dissociative thoughts. The study concludes that verbal irony intersects with paradoxical irony, which is conveyed by pun as a figure of speech. Besides verbal irony intersects with sarcasm, paradox, parody, humour, pun and euphemism for the same utterance. Furthermore, paradoxical irony as a figure of speech intersecting with verbal irony is conveyed by metonymic expressions. It is found that irony implies and interfaces with other figures of speech such as metaphor, hyperbole, understatement etc. The intercultural dissimilarities found in interpreting verbal irony from Arabic into English are emotiveness, hyponymic and poly-semantic expressions conveyed by figures of speech, and tenor and mode of ironic Quran'ic discourse. The study, thus, shows that literal interpretive work of the Qur'an may distract conveying emotive, associative, connotative and expressive meanings of interface of irony and other figures of speech. In many cases, verbal irony is found parasitic and so it cannot be separated from other figures of speech such as hyperbole, understatement, satire, parody, sarcasm, paradox, simile, metaphor and metonymy and pun, etc. It acts as a vehicle for other speech acts. This presupposes and implies a layer of functions and different dissociative thoughts at once. The study finally suggests a future study to be conducted about how discourse parameters enrich readers' understanding of irony interface with other figures of speech.

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