A COGNITIVE-PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS
OF TRUMP'S POLITICAL TWEETS

Basim Jubair Kadhim[1],
Zaid Najah Merzah[2i]
[1]PhD, Lecturer,
Department of English,
Faculty of Arts,
Imam Ja'afar Al-Sadiq University,
Najaf, Iraq
[2]Assistant Lecturer,
Department of English,
Faculty of Arts,
Imam Ja'afar Al-Sadiq University,
Najaf, Iraq

Abstract

This study is concerned with the analysis of irony in Trump's political tweets. Irony as a cognitive-pragmatic concept represents the discrepancy between more than one level of meaning which is conceptualized through the mapping between the source and the target levels. A model which mixes cognitive and pragmatic treatment to irony has been developed in this study and has been used to analyze Trump's political tweets. The analysis of representative tweets for Trump has revealed certain conclusions which are relevant to politics. The most significant finding is that irony is an important strategy used in politics as it is significantly related to different levels of language such as congruity and discrepancy whose implications are only accessed through the mapping between the source and target domains of meaning.

Keywords: cognitive-pragmatic analysis, political tweets

1. Introduction

According to cognitive linguistics (Fouconnier and Turner, 1994: 44), context is an integral part of analyzing different facts of meaning under any given linguistic realization. To deal with linguistic phenomena, in terms of negotiating to mean between speakers and listeners, different contextual cues (Gumperz, 1992: 40) are taken into account. Dealing with certain literary devices or as the traditional treatment of figures of speech as meaning negotiation, i.e., having multiple interpretations in different

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[i] Correspondence: email basimjbear@sadiq.edu.iq, zaid.najah@sadiq.edu.iq

situations, can be clustered under a unifying model within cognitive linguistics; precisely, cognitive pragmatics.

Irony, as one figure of speech in literature and one of the pragmatic tropes in linguistics, is to be addressed under the conceptual theory that intermarries cognition and pragmatics altogether. The present study tries to answer the question of whether there is a unifying conceptual model to analyze ironic utterances pragmatically.

The study aims to explore cognitive linguistics in general and to extend the approach to logical domains to bring together pragmatic and cognition. Another aim is to develop a conceptual model of analysis of irony as it is used by the American president Trump, as an influential figure in politics worldwide.

It is hypothesized that Trump's utterances have pragmatic implications and intentions that can only be demystified through contexts. It is also hypothesized that those contexts that can come to the conceptualization are cognitive-pragmatically oriented.

Following specific procedures to review the relevant literature on conceptual theory to meaning and pragmatics treatment of irony, the model of Jubair and Al-Hindawi of pragmatic analysis of irony and the conceptual model of irony are put into an amalgam to yield a unified model of analysis. Then, certain utterances are selected from Trump's speeches are analyzed according to a workable model.

2. Traditional Approach to Irony

The traditional view of verbal irony, originating in classical rhetoric and emerging employing philosophy of language, holds that the ironic utterance means the opposite of its literal form, which is a semantic approach. This becomes the job of the language philosophers later on (Wilson and Sperber, 2004: 31).

Wilson and Sperber (ibid) stress the role of the context when there are no such paralinguistic clues:

> *"When there is no distinctive intonation, it is clear that the choice between literal and ironic interpretation must be based on the information external to the utterance, i.e. contextual knowledge and other background assumption… rather than the form or the content of the utterance itself."*

Linguistically speaking, most studies about irony are concerned with verbal and situational irony, for they have some peculiar characteristics that distinguish them from other types, like intentionality, indirect negation, and context (Reyes et al., 2006: 2-3). As far as verbal irony is concerned, it is characterized by two dimensions: the pragmatic strategies used in the issuance of irony and the type of the H or receiver, whether the victim – who receives the ironic utterance – or the target - whom the implied meaning of irony is addressed to (ibid: 3).

Horn and Ward (2006: 621-23) classify the sources of verbal irony into two types: Text-dependent and audience-dependent. The text-dependent irony is the simpler and

less risky of the two forms. An author wants to ensure that an audience, or an indefinite number of audiences, will detect his intended irony. So, he frames the ironic story within an authoritative statement, for the audience alone, of facts unknown to characters in the story. By contrast, Audience-dependent irony means the tacit connection between the speaker and the audience through inappropriate utterances.

Audience-dependent irony can be subtler and more effective than text-driven irony, though it is riskier because it operates without the safety net of authoritative guides. The S must be sure not only that the audience will know certain crucial items but, in potentially dangerous contexts, that the audience will not read the wrong sort of irony into the S's implicated meaning (Bartsch, 2007: 67 – 8).

However, some para-linguistic clues often accompany the utterance to be indicators of the S's intended irony; they are peculiar to the spoken irony like intonation (Gibbs, 2008: 136).

In order for the ironist to use the verbal irony successfully, Muecke (1982: 52) suggests four principles that can be regarded as the criteria used in delimiting the ionic situations:

> *"1) The principle of **economy**, which implies the use of few signals. It is used in parody, advice, encouragement, rhetorical questions, and other ironic tactics.*
> *2) The principle of **high contrast**, which takes place when "there is a disparity between what might be expected and what happened" (ibid: 53), or when there is antithesis, semotactic anomalies, or internal contradiction.*
> *3) The position of **the audience (background knowledge)**, particularly in the theatre where the quality of the irony depends very much on whether the audience already knows the outcome or true state of affairs or learns of these only when the victim of irony learns."* (ibid: 54).
> *4) The **topic**: This last factor or principle relates to the importance of emotions in generating and enhancing both the observer's feelings toward the victim or the topic of the irony and the H's awareness and appreciation of the irony on an equal footing, among the areas in which most emotional capital is invested: religion, love, morality, politics, and history.* (ibid: 55)

3. Pragmatic Approach to Irony

Irony has been differently tackled in pragmatics, i.e. it is treated as belonging to pragmatic domains such as politeness, indirectness, ostensible speech acts, and the like according to Leech (1983: 165), irony is viewed as a pragmatic principle that implicates different pragmatic purposes. It is triggered by different tropes and pragmatic concepts such as sarcasm, off-record strategies (Bbrown and Levinson, 1983), rhetorical devices such as rhetorical questions, humour, and bantering… etc.

Sperber and Wilson (1980:199) introduce a different treatment to irony, under the realm of pragmatics. They (ibid) argue that irony is the discrepancy between the propositional meaning of an utterance and the speaker's intention which can be

cognitively relevant to the real situation. In such a case, situational factors are prerequisites to the production of irony.

Kreuz and Glucksberg (1989: 377) argue that irony, as a pragmatic process, is produced in certain stages, following Attardo's 2000 model of irony markers. The issuance of irony starts with flouting the maxims of the cooperative principles and ends with interpreting the intended echoic meaning as irony.

Colston and Gibbs (2007: 22-24) tackle irony under the rhetorical pragmatic devices that could be interchangeably used as markers and strategies to irony. This reasoning goes hand in hand with the focus by Sperber and Willson (2004) regarding the context of a situation in that using different tropes to indicate the ironic echoic intentions. Adopting their famous example, "*you are a fine friend*" can have many different intentions based on the different levels of various contexts. The contextual factors such as those introduced by Hymes (1972) and modified by Lewis (1972) regarding the possible world have an essential role in deciding the ironic utterances and pragmatic intentions.

Commenting on the previous example, it can be intended that to criticize the friend in a context where the friend does things that should not be done by a fine friend. In this case, irony works as an evaluating the status of the friend. It is also used for the humorous purpose in a context where two friends are criticizing each other to make fun. The same example can be used as an aggressive utterance to the negative face of the addressee when the context is formal between the speaker and the hearer.

4. Conceptual Approach to Irony

The traditional approach to irony as a figure of speech which is highly employed in literature and rhetorical works has been superseded by the new turn of cognition (Lackoff and Johnson 1980: 55) figures of speech by definition are the deviation from the literal meaning which is full of implicatures (McQurrie & Mick, 1996). The implicatures can be handled by revealing the pragmatic manifestations in the ironic utterances and with the help of contextual factors. However, the choice of the implicatures representing the most appropriate ones is the issues that have been long difficult to be addressed. The conceptual metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnson 1980 is one of the most influential treatments to figures of speech in general, including irony.

This theory asserts that figures of speech consist of two basic components: the surface propositions and the conceptualization of "*understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain*" (Grady et al, 1999: 422). They (ibid) provide certain definitions to the domain as any content organization of experience. There are two types of domains which are sources domain and target domain. Between these two domains are the mappings or correspondences that ground any given trope. Their famous example of the metaphor "*life is a journey*" is analyzed accordingly.

In such a metaphoric example, to ground the similarities is to portrait the experience of a journey that has a beginning and an end. Conceptually speaking, the source domain here is a journey and the target is life. Having the mappings and

correspondences between the two is regarded as the grounding of the metaphor (Lackoff, 1990: 44).

Speakers produce such utterances and expect that listeners are aware of the whole package of the context in which this type of utterance is used. This I related to the pragmatic choice to make effective communicative acts (following Kovecses, 2005: 268) listeners, on the other hand, use their schematic structure regarding each of the elements of the conceptualization process: mapping and correspondence.

SOURCE : JOURNEY	MAPPINGS	TARGET: LOVE
TRAVELLERS	→	LOVERS
VEHICLE	→	LOVE RELATIONSHIP
JOURNEY	→	EVENTS IN A RELATIONSHIP
DISTANCE COVERED	→	PROGRESS MADE
OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED	→	DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED
DECISIONS ABOUT DIRECTION	→	CHOICES ABOUT WHAT TO DO
DESTINATION OF THE JOURNEY	→	GOALS OF THE RELATIONSHIP

Table 1: Cross-domain mappings of the LOVE IS A JOURNEY metaphor

The same process applies to irony, taking into account the discrepancy relation between the source and target domains in the conceptual treatment of irony (Palinkas, 2014: 614).

As pragmatically treated, irony and metaphor have been identified to have many commonalities (Colston and Gibbs, 2002: 26), arguing that irony needs different tools to be taken under the disparity of two different propositions. Yet, they assert that it is treated in the same way that metaphor and other tropes are tackled.

Eviatar and Just (2006) argue that metaphor comprehension is different from that of irony to a certain degree. However, they both agree that metaphor and irony can be used to convey meanings that are not the same as literal. Pragmatically, Caucci (2009: 327) puts metaphor and irony on the same scale of intentionality and contextuality, though it is argued that each of them has different contextual factors.

Concerning the treatment of irony from a conceptual point of view, it is treated when considered under the blending theory as a development for the conceptual theory of metaphor (Fauconnier and Turner 1994, 1998, 2002).

The blending theory states that the speaker's intention is a matter of constructing meaning in two mental spaces which are to be integrated afterward. This conceptual integration is done through the networks of mental spaces; at least two mental spaces. These two mental spaces are the generic spaces and the second one is the blended space (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002: 40). The generic space has the abstract or common meaning, whereas the blended space is when a selection of the new meaning fits the situation.
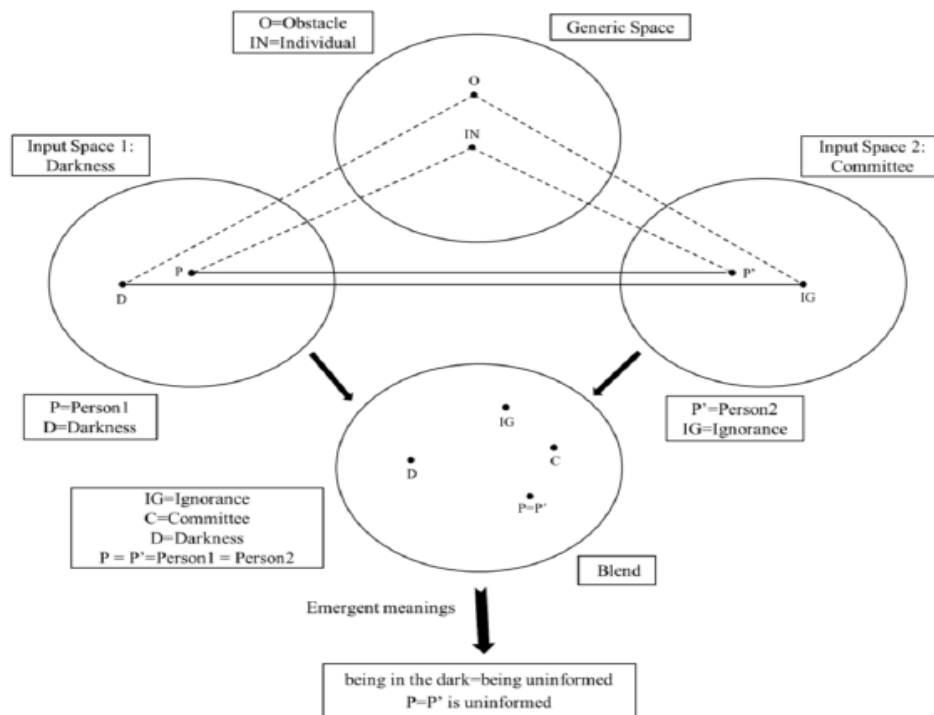
Figure 1: Conceptual integration network: "The committee has kept me in the dark about this matter"

Colston (2005: 136) discussed the conceptualization of irony under blending theory, mentioning that three types of spaces: expected reaction, counterfactual trigger, and blended spaces. If irony conveys a certain negative evaluation, the expected reaction is to make one upset; the counterfactual trigger refers to how the world should be, and finally blending the first two gives the intended, blended meaning.

For an illustration of Coulson's model, consider the situation in which a driver says *"I lov people who signal"* after being cut off in traffic. See Table 4 below:

Expected Reaction	Blended Space	Counterfactual Trigger
Cuts-off(A,B)	*Cuts-off(A',B')*	Switches-lanes(A",B")
C:~Signal(A,B)	C':~Signal(A',B')	C":Signals(A",B")
Chastises(B,A,C)	**Compliments(B',A',C)**	**Compliments(B",A",C")**

5. Cognitive Pragmatic Model of Irony

To develop a model for the analysis of data, a cognitive-pragmatic model of irony is introduced. This model is based on the Blending Conceptual Theory of Irony (following Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) and the pragmatic model of irony as it is introduced by Jubair and Al-Hindawi (2016). These two models have certain concepts in common, though they treat irony from two different perspectives.

The blending theory of irony is introduced by Fauconnier & Turner, 2002 to analyze the conceptualization of irony as having double meanings: one is the literal meaning and the other is the communicated, intended meaning. Each of these two meanings is found in a space "generic space", the conceptualized meaning is in the

different spaces that are blended to have the intended meaning. These types of blended spaces which mix two or more interpretations yield one intended interpretation.

This model – and the most outstanding cognitive models in this concern- mentions the role of context in a restricted way; without mentioning the roles that different types of contexts play a significant role in reaching the intended meaning, such as situational, social, cultural …etc. following Hymes 1972.

The pragmatic model, on the other hand, has little to say about the cognitive representations of the layers of irony under certain treatment by Giora 1995. It focuses on the strategies used in the stages of issuing and interpreting the ironies. The present model integrates the conceptual representations and the pragmatic implications of irony. Accordingly, the conceptual elements of the model are taken from the blending theory while the pragmatic manifestations are taken from the pragmatic model of irony [see Figure: 4].

The most important contextual factors of a speech event as introduced by Hymes (1974: 55-9) are considered for providing contextual descriptions of the data under analysis. These contextual factors include the following:

1) Setting is represented by time, place, and occasion.
2) Participants are represented by speaker, hearer, addresser, addressee, and audience.
3) End or purpose is represented by the intentional communicative value.
4) Act sequence is the form and order of the event.
5) Key is the paralinguistic behavior, i.e. tone, manner, or spirit of the speech act.
6) Channel is the medium used for communication.
7) Instrumentalities are represented by the style of speech.
8) Norms are the social rules governing the event and the participants' actions and reactions.
9) Genre is represented by the speech event.

Nevertheless, only those features which shed some light on understanding the situations under study are referred to.
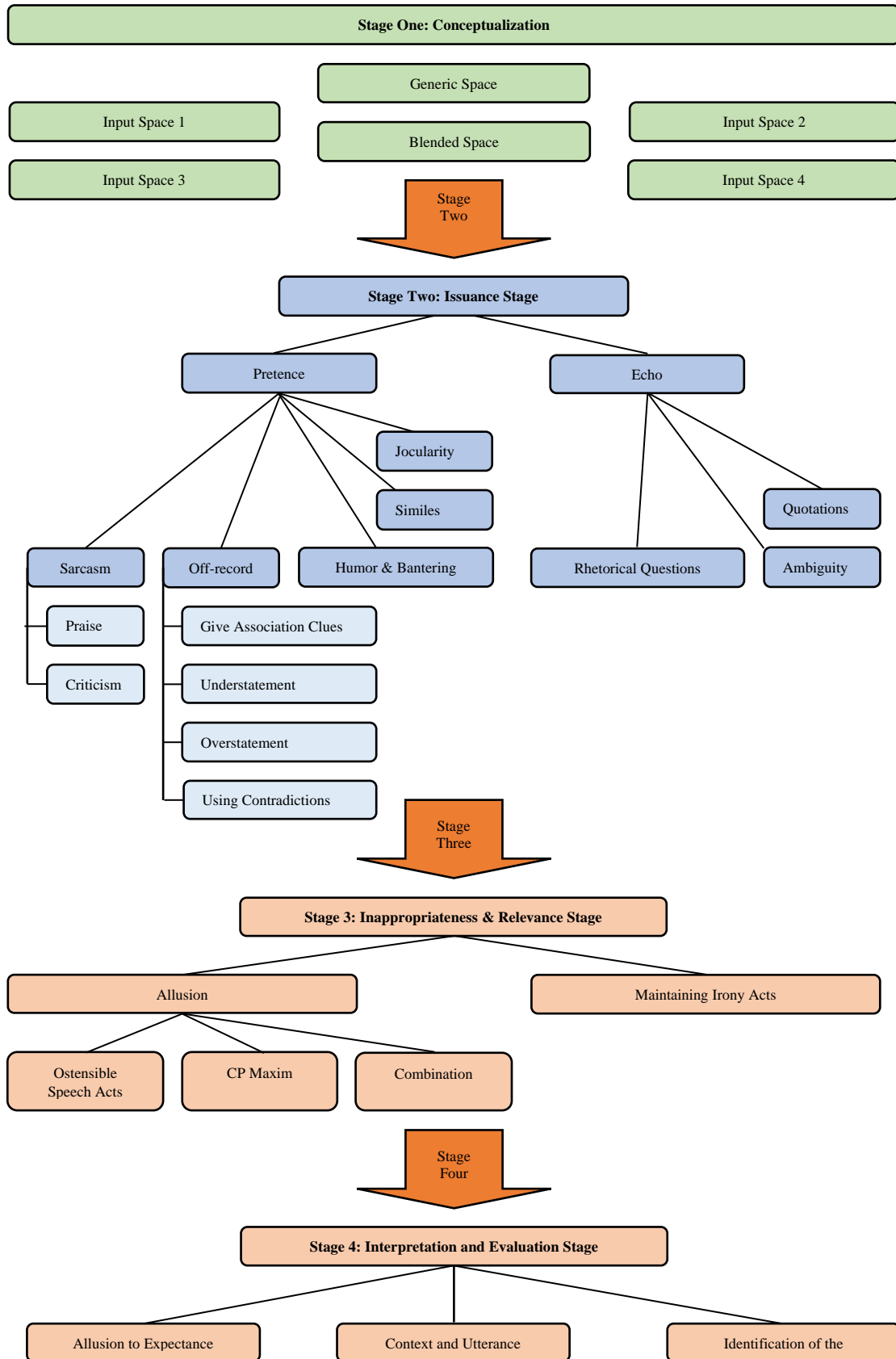
Figure 2: A Model of Cognitive Pragmatic Analysis

6. Data

6.1. Data Description

The United States President Donald Trump takes this opportunity to spread what he believes is important in an average of five tweets per day (Twittercounter, 2017). He is not, however, the first American president to use Twitter. Barack Obama used it during his presidency and still has more followers than Trump (ibid). The remarkable difference between the tweets from the previous and current president is the objectivity of Obama's tweets and the lack of it in Trump's. Donald Trump's tweets are often emotional and approach current news in a controversial and un-statesmanlike manner, and yet they seem to be 'official' rather than private. Since he can be seen as the most influential and powerful person in the world at the moment, it is not surprising that many are critical of his use of Twitter and its presidential appropriateness.

On top of this, Columbia University professor of linguistics John McWhorter, calls Trump's way of talking unadorned and claims that Donald Trump does not speak, but talks (2017). Because of the discrepancy between his position and his talking twitter practice, it is of special interest to see what type of comments he receives on his tweets, as this discrepancy seems to be a new phenomenon. The informal nature of his tweets invites anyone who is not on the President's staff to interact with him and judging by his generally controversial behavior and his low 39% approval rating (Gallup News, 2017), many can be assumed to disagree with his tweets. A popular way of showing disagreement and also ridiculing contemporary news and events is mocking them through memes and ironic comments. The mechanism of irony is suitable on discussion platforms such as Twitter, especially for those who wish to challenge ideas. Trump's frequent controversial tweets should invite ironic responses, which could serve as an interesting sample for a study of how irony is used in Twitter communication on a political issue.

6.2. Data Analysis

In this section, ten of the tweets uttered by the American president Donald Trump are characterized as ironic under the criteria of irony; chief among them is the discrepancy and doubling in interpretation. For reasons of space and avoiding repetition, only five representative tweets are analyzed under the model developed for this purpose and the remaining tweets are analyzed briefly in the table (1) below.

> **Tweet 1:** *"We can't let this happen. We should march on Washington and stop this travesty. Our nation is divided!"*

This tweet is produced at the election rallies. Part of this tweet "*march on Washington and stop this travesty. Our nation is divided!*" is said by Obama, the former American president. Trump quoted this from Obama to provide an alternative to what Obama states.

In terms of the conceptualization of the irony in this tweet, the quotation of Obama's speech represents the input space that is taken from the generic space of all types and strategies of irony. This input is sent to the blended space. The criticizing function is the input space two which is sent to the blended space as well. The two inputs are blended to yield ironic utterances. In the second stage, the speaker employs the strategy of quotation to echo Obama's speech. This echoing is presented as inappropriate in the third stage, leading to flouting the maxim of quality to keep the ironic tone. The fourth stage is the interpretation stage where the relevance principle takes place through relating the quotation of Trump to Obama's speech and consequently the conceptualization of the ironic tweet.

Tweet 2: *"While our wonderful president was out playing golf all day, the TSA is falling apart, just like our government! Airports are a total disaster!"*

This tweet on Obama again in which Trump tries to criticize Obama as being away from the state of the union. This is manifested through analyzing the tweet under the stages of irony. In the first stage, the speaker (Trump) puts the praise in an input space to be taken from the generic space and sent to the blended space in order to bring the new interpretation which is different from the literal meaning. The second stage is the issuance of the ironic utterance through pretending to be praising the addressee (Obama) using sarcasm. The third stage is the allusion of the ironic tweet through the ostensible speech act of praising whose purpose is the speech act of criticism. Such kind of speech act is to criticize through praise, an off-record strategy. The fourth stage reveals the relevance and gets back to the conceptualization of the tweet as ironic.

Tweet 3: *"Terrible! Just found out that Obama had my "wires tapped" in Trump Tower just before the victory. Nothing found. This is McCarthyism! 2017"*

Using bantering, Trump tweets this as a matter of being accused of things that have no clues at all. As a response to such allegations, he uses bantering and simile as input spaces that are found in the generic space. These two spaces and another space which is the intended message are sent to the blended space. Out of the blended space, the newly conceptualized meaning is brought to the issuance stage. The second stage, issuance, adopts the strategies of bantering and simile. In the third stage, the tweet uses the combination of flouting the maxim and ostensible speech acts to maintain the ironic tone. After maintaining irony, the tweet is related to the true contextual factors to be conceptualized under the same process of conceptualization in the beginning.

Tweet 4: *"The Chinese Envoy, who just returned from North Korea, seems to have had no impact on Little Rocket Man. Hard to believe his people, and the military, put up with living in such horrible conditions. Russia and China condemned the launch."*

This tweet is concerned with the North Korea ballistic missile test. Trump calls the North Korean president 'Little Rocket Man. The speaker uses overstatements as an input space and off-record contradictions as another input space that are extracted from the generic space. The blended space processes the two spaces to yield the intended space which is to be conceptualized by the addressee. Trump tries to agitate the public against the North Korean president. Hence, in the second stage, the pretense of being overstated and using contradictions to be inappropriately manifested through flouting the manner and quality maxims in the third stage. The fourth stage opens by evaluating the blended spaces to take the most relevant one as intended and conceptualized as ironic.

Tweet 5: "*I have heard so many people believe that. I tend to believe it,*" he said. "*I believe it fits in his attack mode that he has and how he uses his billions and billions in resources.*"

This tweet is about the protesters who confronted Hatch is meant to stoke conservative anger and to dismiss his opponents as opportunists who don't oppose Kavanaugh's nomination. The first stage of conceptualization is through taking two meanings in the two spaces to be blended and yield the ironic meaning. The second stage is issuing the ironic utterance through using ambiguous speech acts to echo the intended meaning and to inappropriately allude with the combination of flouting the manner maxim and issuing ostensible declarative speech acts. This is in the third stage. The fourth stage, nevertheless, starts with relating the utterance especially "the use of billions" to the whole context to be conceptualized as an ironic utterance.

7. Discussions

Based on the analysis above, certain issues are discussed regarding the conceptualization of irony as a general strategy used as a humorous, sarcastic, and mockery device used by Trump. Regarding the model developed in this study, it shows that it can comprehensively deal with all types of tweets that are analyzed.

The conceptualization of irony under the blended space theory of conceptualization represents the way how the levels of language are represented in the cognitive abilities of Trump. This is based on the analysis of the tweets that have been used in the current study. Additionally, the availability of the pragmatic strategies used in the model such as the stages of issuance, allusion, and evaluation, and the availability of the conceptual representations of irony are both complementary to each other, giving an accurate actualization to the discrepancy of ironic utterances.

Aiming to use the ironic utterance rather than any other strategy, Trump employs irony as a general pragmatic strategy (following Jubair and Al-Hindawi, 2016) to address his followers in terms of the way they conceptualize irony as he expects. On the other hand, Trump employs irony as an off-record strategy of criticism against all his rivals through echoing and quotations.

Table 1: Analysis of the Remaining Tweets

	Tweet	Irony Criteria	Cognitive-Pragmatic Strategy			
			Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three	Stage Four
1	North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un just stated that the "Nuclear Button is on his desk at all times." Will someone from his depleted and food starved regime please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his and my Button works! 466K 3:49 AM - Jan 3, 2018	Topical	The use of "button" for humorous effects	Give association clues	Ostensible speech acts	Context and utterance inference
2	Now that Russian collusion, after one year of intense study, has proven to be a total hoax on the American public, the Democrats and their lapdogs, the Fake News Mainstream Media, are taking out the old Ronald Reagan playbook and screaming mental stability and intelligence..... 136K 3:19 PM - Jan 6, 2018	Background knowledge	Blending mental stability with state stability	Ambiguity	Ostensible speech acts	Context and utterance inference
3	Actually, throughout my life, my two greatest assets have been mental stability and being, like, really smart. Crooked Hillary Clinton also played these cards very hard and, as everyone knows, went down in flames. I went from a VERY successful businessman, to a top T.V. Star..... 124K 3:27 PM - Jan 6, 2018	Topical	Using playing to refer to political actions	Sarcasm (Praise)	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
4	to President of the United States (on my first try). I think that would qualify as not smart, but genius....and a very stable genius at that! 131K 3:30 PM - Jan 6, 2018	Topical	Blending "genius " with "idiot"	Jocularity	CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
5	Beautiful weather all over our great country, a perfect day for all Women to March. Get out there now to celebrate the historic milestones and unprecedented economic success and wealth creation that has taken place over the last 12 months. Lowest female unemployment in 18 years! 192K 9:51 PM - Jan 20, 2018	High contrast	Exploiting victory for achievement	Using contradictions	CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
6	WITCH HUNT! 86.3K 3:49 PM - Feb 27, 2018	Economy	The metaphor of expression	Quotation	CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
7	The United States has an $800 Billion Dollar Yearly Trade Deficit because of our "very stupid" trade deals and policies. Our jobs and wealth are being given to other countries that have taken advantage of us for years. They laugh at what fools our leaders have been. No more! 121K	Background knowledge	The categorization of political actions	Quotation	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference

	8:43 PM - Mar 3, 2018					
8	The new Fake News narrative is that there is CHAOS in the White House. Wrong! People will always come & go, and I want strong dialogue before making a final decision. I still have some people that I want to change (always seeking perfection). There is no Chaos, only great Energy! 90.8K 3:55 PM - Mar 6, 2018	Background knowledge	New representation of chaos with energy	Quotation	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
9	Crazy Joe Biden is trying to act like a tough guy. Actually, he is weak, both mentally and physically, and yet he threatens me, for the second time, with physical assault. He doesn't know me, but he would go down fast and hard, crying all the way. Don't threaten people Joe! 240K 1:19 PM - Mar 22, 2018	Topical	Blending political power with physical power	Humor and bantering	Ostensible speech acts	Context and utterance inference
10	While Security spending was somewhat more than his predecessor, Scott Pruitt has received death threats because of his bold actions at EPA. Record clean Air & Water while saving USA Billions of Dollars. Rent was about market rate, travel expenses OK. Scott is doing a great job! 70.1K 3:03 AM - Apr 8, 2018	High contrast	Categorizing bad actions as good ones	Ambiguity	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
11	Apr 21, 2018 So funny, the Democrats have sued the Republicans for Winning. Now he R's counter and force them to turn over a treasure trove of material, including Servers and Emails!	High contrast	Blending emails with illegal affairs	Quotation	CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
12	The Washington Post said I refer to Jeff Sessions as "Mr. Magoo" and Rod Rosenstein as "Mr. Peepers." This is "according to people with whom the president has spoken." There are no such people and don't know these characters...just more Fake & Disgusting News to create ill will! 63.9K 11:13 PM - Apr 21, 2018	Topical	Representing people as fake	Jocularity	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
13	Who's going to give back the young and beautiful lives (and others) that have been devastated and destroyed by the phony Russia Collusion Witch Hunt? They journeyed down to Washington, D.C., with stars in their eyes and wanting to help our nation...They went back home in tatters! 83.8K 3:41 PM - May 27, 2018	High contrast	Representing help as a disappointment	Sarcasm (praise)	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
14	Sorry, I've got to start focusing my energy on North Korea Nuclear, bad Trade Deals, VA Choice, the Economy, rebuilding the Military, and so much more, and not on the Rigged Russia Witch Hunt that should be investigating Clinton/Russia/FBI/Justice/Obama/Comey/Lynch etc. 113K 2:27 PM - May 29, 2018	Background knowledge	Blending a state with a witch	Quotation	CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference

15	Bob Iger of ABC called Valerie Jarrett to let her know that "ABC does not tolerate comments like those" made by Roseanne Barr. Gee, he never called President Donald J. Trump to apologize for the HORRIBLE statements made and said about me on ABC. Maybe I just didn't get the call? 153K 6:31 PM - May 30, 2018	Economy	New categorization for an apology	Rhetorical questions	Maintaining irony acts	Context and utterance inference
16	Congresswoman Maxine Waters, an extraordinarily low IQ person, has become, together with Nancy Pelosi, the Face of the Democrat Party. She has just called for harm to supporters, of which there are many, of the Make America Great Again movement. Be careful what you wish for Max! 137K 8:11 PM - Jun 25, 2018	High contrast	Categorizing bad actions as good ones	Using contradictions	CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
17	HOUSE REPUBLICANS SHOULD PASS THE STRONG BUT FAIR IMMIGRATION BILL, KNOWN AS GOODLATTE II, IN THEIR AFTERNOON VOTE TODAY, EVEN THOUGH THE DEMS WON'T LET IT PASS IN THE SENATE. PASSAGE WILL SHOW THAT WE WANT STRONG BORDERS & SECURITY WHILE THE DEMS WANT OPEN BORDERS = CRIME. WIN! 95K 3:39 PM - Jun 27, 2018	Topical	Categorizing bad actions as good ones	Criticism	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
18	After having written many best selling books, and somewhat priding myself on my ability to write, it should be noted that the Fake News constantly likes to pore over my tweets looking for a mistake. I capitalize certain words only for emphasis, not b/c they should be capitalized! 83.5K 2:13 AM - Jul 4, 2018	High contrast	Categorizing bad actions as good ones	Criticism	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
19	Lebron James was just interviewed by the dumbest man on television, Don Lemon. He made Lebron look smart, which isn't easy to do. I like Mike! 6:37 AM - Aug 4, 2018	Economy	Categorizing smartness as dumbness	Praise	Combination of Ostensible speech acts and CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference
20	As long as I campaign and/or support Senate and House candidates (within reason), they will win! I LOVE the people, & they certainly seem to like the job I'm doing. If I find the time, in between China, Iran, the Economy and much more, which I must, we will have a giant Red Wave! 89.9K 6:25 PM - Aug 8, 2018	Economy	Blending love with a good economy	Quotation	CP maxim flouting	Context and utterance inference

Employing irony without contextual factors at the pragmatic and/or cognitive level cannot be represented well among other available interpretations. In this sense, irony is conceptualized as having two levels: the literal meaning and the intended meaning. Only the intended meaning is what the speaker wants to conceptualize and expects the listener to act accordingly.

Based on the use of the cognitive-pragmatic strategies that are related to sarcasm and criticism, Trump uses his powerful status to reflect his attitudes toward other in an unpredictable way. This indicates that irony is used facilitated here through the uses of dominance and power to convey the sarcastic tone that is used without paying any attention to the sequences that could happen due to ironizing others whatever their status is. Trump does not consider such issues. Accordingly, irony is regarded as a critical strategy used to convey pragmatic discrepancies.

8. Conclusions

Based on the analysis and the discussions above, the present study has come up with the following conclusions:

1) Irony is an important strategy used by Trump to mock, mimic, make humorous effects, and show satiric effects of particular people, mostly his political rivals.
2) The model which has been developed in this study is a workable one as it covers the way how irony is conceptualized and represented in mind to be issued, how it is pragmatically manifested and how it is pragma-cognitively interpreted.
3) Trump employs such strategies as quotation, speech acts of praise, hyperbole, contradictions, and jocularity to pretend and echo, criticize, and convey other purposes pragmatically.
4) Irony is an important strategy used in politics as it is significantly related to different levels of language such as congruity and discrepancy whose implications are only accessed through the mapping between the source and target domains of meaning.
5) Throughout the use of irony by such powerful speakers as Trump, irony is critically used in the sense that Trump abuses the power to convey his sarcastic ideology toward others.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

About the Authors
Basim Jubair Kadhim holds a PhD & M.A. in English Language & Linguistics (Applied Pragmatics) from Babylon University, and currently, a Teaching Staff member in Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq University, College of Arts, Department of English.
Zaid Najah Merzah holds an M.A. in English Language & Linguistics (Pragmatics) from Islamic University in Lebanon, and currently, a Teaching Staff member in Imam Ja'far Al-

Sadiq University, College of Arts, Department of English, and Faculty of Languages - Kufa University, English Department.

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