

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**A SEMANTIC STUDY OF SARCASM AND HUMOUR
AMONG THE GA PEOPLE**



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**A SEMANTIC STUDY OF SARCASM AND HUMOUR
AMONG THE GA PEOPLE**

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**A Thesis in the Department of Ga-Dangme Education,
Faculty of Ghanaian Languages Education, submitted to
the School of Graduate Studies,**

**in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of degree of
Master of Philosophy
(GA)
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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

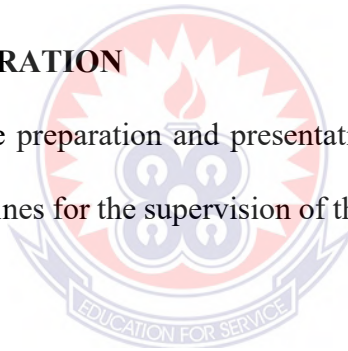
I, **FELICIA MARTEKIE LARYEA**, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works and written texts which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

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SUPERVISORS DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for the supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.



SUPERVISORS' NAME: DR. YVONNE OLLENNU

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SUPERVISORS' NAME: DR. CECILIA KOTEY

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DATE:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents.



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My first and greatest appreciation goes to the Almighty God for granting me grace, mercy, hope, strength and protection in writing this research.

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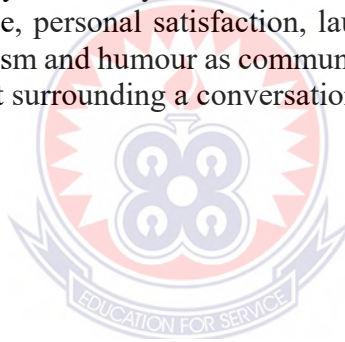


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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to investigate the use of sarcasm and humour among the Ga from a semantic perspective. To achieve the purpose of the study, three research questions were raised as follows: (i) in which various are sarcasm and humour used? (ii) What are the triggers and the effects of these communicative tools? (iii) What are the similarities and differences in terms of usage? Using the qualitative approach, thirty native Ga speakers from three Ga towns in the Greater Accra Region (Accra Central, Chorkor, and Kaneshie) were purposively sampled, observed and or interviewed. The study employed Austin's 1961, Speech act theory in its data analysis. The analysis of the data on sarcasm and humour showed that the Ga people make use of these communicative expressions in their day to day conversations or utterances under various circumstances, in several domains. Also, the study found out that sarcastic and humourous statements are not only used for ridicule, mocking, praise, entertain etc but they help individuals play with the language which also displays competence in the usage of the Ga language. It was further revealed that the use of sarcasm fosters retention and helps in memorization. Additionally, the study revealed that the situations that triggers the use of sarcasm and humour were times of having fun, when responding to foolish statements, when criticizing, when complementing and also when giving advice. Finally, the study revealed that the use of sarcastic statements can provoke anger and violence, personal satisfaction, laughter, shyness and humiliation. In conclusion, the use of sarcasm and humour as communicative techniques are dependent on the circumstance or context surrounding a conversation.



CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

In Ghana, the use of sarcasm and humour are essential characteristics of communication among most of the languages. Sarcasm and humour serve as powerful communicative tools used among the Ga with hidden meanings and negative connotations. However, they provide some sought of entertainment, as some of these utterances turn out to be funny or humourous. It is evident that the use of sarcasm and humour feature significantly in several practices or domains among the Ga people.

This study is an attempt to investigate the use of sarcasm and humour among the Ga people from a semantic perspective. This chapter is organized into ten (10) sub-sections. Section 1.0 looks at the introduction to the study, 1.1 gives the background to the study, 1.2 talks about who the Ga people are, followed by 1.2.1 which also talks about the linguistic background of the Ga people. Section 1.3 looks at the statement of the problem, while 1.4 delves into the purpose of the study, 1.5 presents the objectives of the study, 1.6 looks at the research questions the study seeks to find answers to, followed by 1.7, which is the significance of the study, 1.8 and 1.9 covers the limitations and delimitation of the study, and finally 1.10 talks about the organization of the thesis outline.

1.1 Background to the Study

There has been considerable number of studies on sarcasm and humour from the various linguistic domains and semantics is part of the domains but my search in the literature revealed little work on sarcasm and humour in Ga. This study is thus motivated by the fact that the Ga people employ diverse discourse techniques in communication. These include sarcasm and humour. Sarcasm and humour form a vital part of a culture as it forms part of the communicative tools of a particular language or group of people. Sarcasm, according to Pickering et al. (2018), is also known as “sarcastic irony”, a statement or utterance or attitude conveyed that turns to ridicule and is directed towards an individual. Irony and sarcasm are forms of nonliteral language that are often used to communicate the opposite of what is really said. Sarcasm is a specific form of irony, which is used when the target of the comment is a person (Kreuz & Glucksberg, 1989). Sarcastic comments are most commonly used to criticize someone (e.g., uttering “You’re early”! To a colleague who arrived late to a meeting), but they can also be used to praise (e.g., saying, You’re such a terrible tennis player! To a friend who claims not to be able to play tennis, yet wins an important competition). Since sarcasm can be more difficult to process and understand than the same message intended literally (Filik, Leuthold, Wallington, & Page, 2014), there must be some benefits from using sarcasm in order to communicate, which may justify the increase risk of misunderstanding.

It is also realized that some of these statements are funny or humourous. Therefore, humour is the funny or ironic way of telling the truth without the receiver feeling it instantly or immediately. In order for a receiver to be able to understand and process humour, he must be able to recognize the intentions of the speaker and to understand the humourous attempt

(Wilson and Sperber, 1992). Humorous communication can be considered as just another way of implicitly expressing the speaker's attitudes towards some aspects of the world. Speakers use humour to "lead hearers to entertain mental representations that are attributable to someone other than the speaker while simultaneously expressing towards such representations an attitude of self-distancing" (Curcó 1996:10). Whereas humour has a semantic and a pragmatic facet, irony is said to be a purely pragmatic phenomenon without a semantic counterpart (Attardo 2001a, 2001b). However, contradiction is central to both phenomena. Thus, whereas irony represents a form of indirect negation, from the semantic point of view, humour is seen as an antonymic opposition between two scripts which are both at least partly compatible with the text (Wilson and Carston, 2007)

Sarcasm and humour are both ironic ways of expression that punch at a person without precisely insulting him or her. It is realized from the above that sarcasm and humour are related as they both ridicule or make fun of people or situations and forms part of our emotional and cultural processes. Pardede (2016) defines semantics as the study of meaning. He goes on to say that, it is the relationship between words and symbols and objects or concepts they refer to. With this, I intend to explore, how the Ga people make use of sarcasm and humour in their inter-personal communications.

1.2 The Ga people

Ga is a language spoken by a group of people called the Ga. The language belongs to the Kwa language group of the Niger-Congo family of languages. Ga together with Dangme forms the only members of the Ga-Dangme group (Adomako, 2018). The Ga language is spoken mainly in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. According to Amartey (1990) cited

in Tamakloe (2016), there are six Ga towns. They are Ga Mashi (Central Accra), Osu, La, Kaneshie, Nungua and Tema. Each of these towns is divided into 'Akutsei' (communities or quarters) and each 'akutso' is sub-divided into 'Wei' or patrilineal houses. Ga Mashi has seven 'akutsei' (quarters or communities) and each of the seven akutsei of Ga Mashie together with the chiefs of the other Ga towns (Osu, La, Kaneshie, Nungua and Tema) have no paramount chief thus every town is autonomous. The Ga uses their towns to distinguish themselves. The people of Nungua are known as 'Nunguamei' as distinct from 'Lamei' or 'Temabii' (La people and Tema people). They are traditionally fishermen and farmers. The Ga people usually make use of sarcasm and humour in their day-to-day medium of communication. This sometimes is done to ridicule, have fun or as a way of insulting.

1.2.1 The Linguistic background of the Ga people

According to Amartey (1989), the Ga language has twenty-six (26) letters of the alphabet which consist of forty-four(44) basic sounds. Nineteen (19) are one- letter consonants, eleven(11) two-letter consonants, two(2) three- letter consonants and twelve (12) are vowel sounds (5 nasal vowels and 7 oral vowels). Language normally vary internally in a number of ways and the Ga language is no exception to this rule, but the variation found is relatively minor in phonology (Dakubu, 1987). She explains that the orthography of the Ga language does not exactly reflect how Ga words are pronounced. The spelling of the words also gives much better indication of the pronunciation than they do in most European languages. Kotei (1969) and Mante (1971) also said that the Ga language has no dialect, but vocal differences as one moves from one area to the other. They concluded that the pronunciation differences do not lead to clear dialect divisions.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Researchers and scholars over the years have investigated the semantics of sarcasm and humour across various social settings. (Clark, 1996; Lakoff and Johnson, 2008; González-Ibáñez et. al, 2011; Caucci, 2008; Dews et al, 1995; Helmy (n.d), Gloria et al. 2007 and Tylor 2015). From these listed scholars, Tylor (2015) worked on beyond sarcasm; the metalanguage and structures of politeness by describing the ways that mock politeness is talked about and performed and also argued against equating mock politeness with sarcasm.

In addition, Agyekum (2009) also worked on the ethnography of Akan speech play and provided some significant insight into humour in Akan, specifically in speech plays. This paper on jokes and humour in Akan speech play posits that joking in the game functions as a face mitigating strategy.

Upon a careful study, it is evident to state that, some earlier studies explored how people interpret statements and found that, sarcasm makes a statement more critical. Other works on sarcasm also pointed to the fact that sarcasm can be easily misinterpreted, particularly when communicated electronically. Meanwhile, to the best of my knowledge little or no reports have been made on the creativity aspect of sarcasm and humour as well as the surprising benefits of sarcasm. Ga sarcasm and humour is seen to enhance creativity and has surprising benefits amongst the Ga, unlike that of other Ghanaian cultures such as Akan. Amongst the Ga people get attention by using sarcasm and humour to the extent that it become an accepted norm. Also most Ga people who often have difficulty dealing with emotions in situations and relationships, may deal with their emotions indirectly by

participating in sarcasm. Most Ga use sarcasm as a way to tell the truth without consequences.

However, to the best of my knowledge, little has been done on the semantics of sarcasm and humour in Ga. It therefore remains that sarcasm and humour used in the Ga language is under-reported in the existing literature and has thus failed to emphasize on how the use of sarcasm and humour reflect and promote communication among the Ga people. This study therefore seeks to investigate and add to literature on the use of sarcasm and humour, by investigating their usage among the Ga people from a semantic perspective.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to discuss sarcasm and humour among the Ga people from a semantics perspective. Also to examine the various domains where sarcasm and humour are being used, the triggers and effects of these communicative tools and their similarities and differences in terms of usage.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study include the following. The study seeks to:

- i. explore the domains where sarcasm and humour are used among the Ga people;
- ii. examine the triggers and effects of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people;
- iii. investigate the similarities and differences in terms of the use of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people.

1.6 Research Questions

The following research questions are what this study seeks to address:

- i. In which domains are sarcasm and humour used among the Ga people?
- ii. What are the triggers and effects of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people?
- iii. investigate the similarities and differences in terms of the use of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The present study is significant because it investigates a pressing social and communication issue on the usage of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people from a semantic perspective. This study will contribute to the existing literature by examining the domains in which sarcasm and humour are used amongst the Ga people, triggers and effects of the use of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people as well as the similarities and differences in the usage of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Apathy on the part of the research participants made them to almost not cooperate. However, the researcher devoted time to educate them on the educative nature of the research and assured them that the information gathered will be highly protected and be used for academic purposes only.

1.9 Delimitation of the Study

The study focuses on the semantics of sarcasm and humour among the Ga people. It would have been informative to conduct a thorough research among all the Ga communities, but due to time and the reluctance of some native speakers to help in the discussion, the study is limited to only three Ga communities/areas in the Greater Accra region. They are Accra Central, Chorkor and Kaneshie in the Odododiodio, Ablekuma South, and Okaikwei North Districts respectively. These communities have been chosen because most of the dwellers are native speakers of Ga and also they are noted for the frequent usage of humorous and sarcastic statements. Even though the study is limited to only these areas, the findings of the thesis will benefit all speakers of Ga.

1.10 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction of the study which comprises of the background to the study, the information about the Ga people and their linguistic background, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study, the research questions, significance of the study, limitation and delimitation then finally, the organization of the thesis.

Chapter two reviews related literature on the topic. It caters for the definition of semantics and the concept of meaning, communication in general, the concept of sarcasm and humour, the context of sarcasm and humour, some literary devices and lastly the theoretical frameworks employed in the study.

Chapter three focuses on the methodology of the study, discusses the research design, the population sample and the sampling technique. It again discusses the sources of data and the data analysis procedure.

Chapter four analyzes sarcasm and humour by exploring the various domains where sarcasm and humour are used among the Ga people and what are the triggers and the effects of these communicative tools. The similarities and differences in terms of usage were also discussed under this chapter.

Chapter five presents the summary, findings and the conclusion of the study. It also makes recommendations for further research into the Ga language.

1.11 Summary

The chapter gave the general overview of the thesis and how it is organized according to its chapters. Thus it has provided information that will enable a reader to understand what this present work is about. To make the information comprehensible, they have been captured under sections such as introduction, background to the study, the Ga people, the Linguistic background of the Ga people, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitation, delimitation of the study, organization of the thesis and ended with the chapter summary.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature on the study of sarcasm and humour as well as the theoretical frameworks. It focuses on some assumptions or ideologies that have been used in the study of the phenomena of sarcasm and humour across the globe. These include what semantics is, sarcasm, humour and the relationship between sarcasm and humour. The theory underpinning the study is also discussed.

2.1 What is Semantics?

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that deals with meaning. Over the years, research scholars have given several definition on what semantics is and the following are few of such definitions. According to Yule (2005), semantics is the study of meaning. He also add that, semantics is concerned with the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. In the same way, Pardede (2016) agrees with Yule's (2005) definition of semantics as he defines semantics as the study of meaning. He goes on to say that, it is the relationship between words and symbols and objects or concepts they refer to. Leech (1983) says that semantics as the study of meaning is central to the study of communication thus, it is the study of the human mind where (thought processes, cognition, conceptualization) are all intricately bound up in the way we convey messages or experiences of the world using language. Kracht (n.d) also says semantics studies meaning. He further adds that, it deals mainly with the question of what is meant by saying something.

In addition, Issah and Adomako (2013:96) define semantics as “a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of words, the relationship between words and their meanings and the individual meanings of words. They add that “it is the study of meaning of words, the relationship between words (that is the physical forms) and their meanings (that is the sense) and the individual meaning of words, in relation to the overall meaning of an utterance.” The various definitions given by the scholars above establish the fact that semantics is the branch of linguistics or language study that deals with meaning and the meaning is usually looked at from the interpretation of words, phrases and sentences. Every meaning embedded in each word is linked or related with other words and as these words are put together to form phrases and sentences, a wholesome meaning is derived, of which communication finally becomes possible.

2.1.1 The Concept of Meaning

Since semantics deals with meaning, Yule (2010) postulates that, meaning is concerned with the relation of linguistic concepts and mental representations in order to explain how sentences are understood by the speakers of a language. According to Nouraldeen (2015) “meaning is the cornerstone of language”. He adds that, since people, communicate principally to convey meaning, meaning is also found in a context and thus meaning cannot be communicated without context and vice versa. In the same way William (2004) says that, meaning is solely contextual. This denotes that, meaning and context are interdependent, in other words meaning can be derived from a context.

Based on context, meaning can vary in a word or statement. Therefore, it will be expedient to say that semantics as a branch of linguistics deals with meaning but not meaning in isolation but meaning in relation to context.

2.1.1.1 What is context in Relation to Meaning?

Speakers of a language understand words used in the language and also understand these words when put together in an utterance, speech or sentence. Understanding is ascribed to the context of the utterance, speech or sentence. Context plays an important role in meaning as far as communication is concerned. According to Christiansen and Dahl (2005) cited in Nouraldeen (2015), context refers to a section of the real world in which some events or the discourse takes place and it is often intertwined and confused with another meaning which is the knowledge about the same thing. Nouraldeen (ibid) goes on to say that, context is a phrase or word as the text that surrounds it. Anderson (2006) also posits that, any pieces of meaning is context dependent. That is, the meaning of a sentence is affected by context or requires a context. This implies that context plays a significant role in determining meaning in communication.

2.1.2 Meaning of Communication

The extent to which humans communicate is a great part of what makes them human. Human beings have an innate ability to articulate their needs, desires and interests. They also experience a host of feelings and emotions, all of which are communicated through a range of gestures, speech or in written form. Communication is therefore central to human existence and serves as the channel through which humans interact with one another.

Through communication, individuals establish relationships and find companionship. For this reason, Daramola's (2012) definition of human communication as the social interaction that occurs between persons through the exchange of messages remains apt.

At the heart of human communication is the fulfilment of the basic need of association and interaction. Human communication strengthens the feelings of togetherness among people through mutual understanding (Devito, 2009). The concept of human communication also includes all the collective activities involved in the sharing of ideas, facts and data from one person to the next. Human communication through the decades involves development of signals and gestures (Smith, 1993, as cited in Onyeator & Okpara, 2019), before humans developed the spoken word.

According to Guagie (2009), the world would have been a boring place if we all move about every day without interacting with one another in our communities, homes, schools, markets places etc. He further explains that it is so because language is used to express inner thoughts and emotions. Language touches on every part of our lives. It gives words to our thoughts, voice to our ideas and expressions to our feelings (Stewart, 1997). However, as said earlier on, languages may have many functions such as interactional, transnational, etc, but the immediate function of language according to research done by many linguists is for communication.

Baidoo (2003) posits that communication is the process of transmitting and receiving information. According to Baidoo, communication involves four main elements which are the message, sender or source, the channel, and finally the destination or receiver. He says again that the channel of information is vital therefore the way we package and transmit

information has effect on our communication. Communication aims at achieving the desired goals for which it is carried out (Guagie, 2009).

From the various definitions, communication can be defined as the sharing of information from one person to the other. It is passing on information from a speaker to a listener through a medium. Fatimayin (2018) hypothesizes that, communication is the interaction within a social context which involves a sender (source) and a receiver. She adds that, it involves interlocutors exchanging signals and these signals could be verbal or gesture or visual (things seen with the eyes, body movement or sound made with the voice). Giffin and Pattern (1976) also state that, communication is the process of making meaning as well as using it. Awoniyi (1982) argues that without communication it will be impossible for humans to live with each other. He further says that there are at least five important elements of the communication process. This is encoder/ sender-----message-----medium of transmission-----medium of receipt-----receiver/decoder.

From Awoniyi's five elements, the **encoder** or sender is the carrier of the information while the **message** is the information itself. The **medium of transition** is the means by which the information will be sent out. The **medium of receipt** is the means by which the receiver of the information would get it and finally the **receiver** or decoder is the one getting the information.

Daniel (2016) disagree with Awoniyi (1982) and asserts that, it is when the receiver gives a feedback or gives a response to the sender which initiates another circle of meaning exchange that you can say that the communication process has attained its full cycle that is , it has become complete.

Message-----encode-----send-----decode-----interpret----- feedback.

From his assertion, he makes it clear that, before the message(information) is sent across, it is first understood by the carrier of the information before the release of the information . The receiver on the other hand of the information then tries to derive its meaning after which he/she will interpret it before finally giving a response to the received message.

From the above, one can say that communication is not only to pass on information but also to get feedback. Fig 1.0 gives an illustration of this.

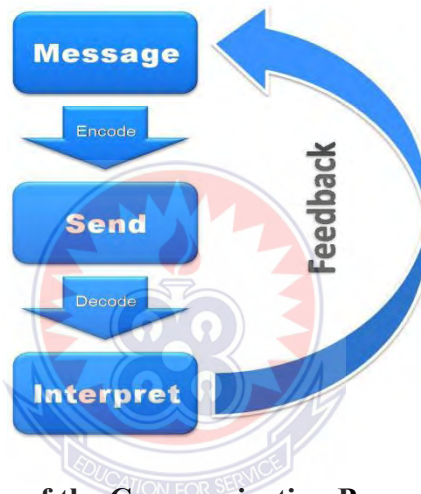


Figure 1.0 a representation of the Communication Process.

Source:aspecmaps.free.fr/NVQ3/SHC31.pdf

The exchange of information or passing on of information, ideas or thoughts from one person to the other or from one end to the other is communication. According to McFarland (1994) communication explicates that communication is a process of meaningful interaction among human beings. More specifically, it is the process by which meanings are perceived and understandings are reached among human beings.” Newman and Summer (1977) define communication as “an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons.”

Thus, communication is the process of passing on information from one person to another. The purpose of communication is to understand an information. Whatever one wants to say to someone should be clearly understood by that person else the very purpose of the communication would be defeated.

2.1.3 Concept of Sarcasm

According Lee and Katz (1998), sarcasm can be seen as a figurative style or term in communication where meaning cannot be interpreted according to the words used but rather meaning is derived outside the utterance being made. Sarcasm has been variously defined as a way of using words opposite to what they meant in order to make fun of people (Dyner, 2016). It is an expression which involves the use of sharp language for mocking, scolding, for jokes or to make fun of something. Agyekum (2013) indicates that sarcasm is a form of verbal irony in which the speaker who seems to be praising rather hides behind the screen and sends a bitter expression of strong and personal disapproval to the addressee. He further explains that sarcasm uses hurtful remarks that are ironic to hurt the feelings of others to denote strong disapproval. Attardo (1999) posits that, sarcasm is an aggressive type of irony.

In addition, McDonald (1999) also states that, sarcasm is a form of ironic speech usually used to convey implicit criticism with particular victim as its target. Pickering et al. (2018) also opine that sarcasm which is also known as “sarcastic irony” is a statement or utterance or attitude conveyed that turns to ridicule and is directed towards an individual.

Furthermore, Filik et al. (2016) adds that most theorists agree that sarcasm serves some communicative function that would not be achieved by speaking directly, such as eliciting a particular emotional response in the recipient. They further state that; one debate concerns whether this kind of language serves to enhance or mute the positive or negative nature of a message. The role of textual devices commonly used to accompany written sarcastic remarks is also unclear. The research used a rating task to investigate the influence of textual devices (emoticons and punctuation marks) on the comprehension of, and emotional responses to, sarcastic versus literal criticism and praise, for both unambiguous (Experiment 1) and ambiguous (Experiment 2) materials. Results showed that sarcastic criticism was rated as less negative than literal criticism, and sarcastic praise was rated as less positive than literal praise, suggesting that sarcasm serves to mute the positive or negative nature of the message. Longman Dictionary of

Online Contemporary English (2007) defines sarcasm as being the way of speaking which involves saying the opposite of what is meant to be a bad joke or showing that there is irritation. From the definitions and ideas on what sarcasm is, it can be concluded that sarcasm is a way of communicating using words opposite to what is being said or its literal meaning to ridicule, praise, scorn, advice, etc. Sarcasm is undoubtedly associated with irony or characterized by irony in the sense that just as irony is a statement which is opposite to the thought a person expresses, so is sarcasm.

2.1.3.1 Difference between Sarcasm and Irony

Irony and sarcasm are forms of non-literal language that are often used to communicate the Opposite of what is literally said (Filik, et al. (2016). Sarcasm is a specific form of irony,

which is used when the target of the comment is a person (Kreuz & Glucksberg, (1989). According to Lee and Katz (1998), sarcasm differs from irony in that it mocks a specific victim, whereas irony does not. This was based on their research into the role of mockery in sarcasm and irony. Lee and Katz (1998) found out that sarcasm made it easy for participants to detect inaccurate predictions of others than their own, drawing on Kreuz and Glucksberg's (1989) research. This is because, due to the speaker's identity, exposing someone else's mistake is usually considered as a more important way of mocking than identifying one's own mistake. However, the identification of a victim does not affect the degree of irony conveyed by a speaker's allusion to an incorrect prediction.

Sarcastic comments are frequently used to criticize someone (e.g., saying, Wow, You're beautiful! to an ugly friend), but they can also be used to praise someone (e.g., saying, You're such a terrible singer! to a friend who claims not to know how to sing and thus has a bad voice, but sings beautifully and has a wonderful voice). Due to the tone of voice and facial expression, it is difficult to understand sarcasm in a discussion and as a result, whether sarcasm is used in a discussion or an utterance, the recipient may take the message literally. As a result, sarcasm is more rude than irony. Despite the fact that both irony and sarcasm are two well-studied language phenomenon, no definite definition appears to exist (Filatova, 2012). Situational and verbal irony (sarcasm) are the two main types of irony. Sarcasm, which is taken into account in this thesis, is typically defined as speaking the exact opposite of what you mean.

2.1.4 The concept of Humour

Humour, according to Ofori et al. (2021), is a crucial part of human behavior and communication. In view of this, Dynel (2008) says that the principal role of humour is the statement of hostility towards the hearer or the expression of interlocutors' solidarity. She goes on to add that it has the potential to criticize, mock, or isolate the interlocutor while also accounting for playfulness and connecting.

Wu (2013) agrees with Dynel (ibid.) as he states that humour is defined in aesthetics as the ability of one human to make another person laugh, as well as being utilized to express serious emotions like wrath, fear, hatred, melancholy, bitterness, and so on. Long and Graesser (2016) define humour in a broader sense as "anything said or done, intentionally or inadvertently, that is regarded to be hilarious or amusing." According to El Refaie (2011), the subjectivity of humour is one of the most widely held beliefs, because something can be humorous to one person and completely unfunny or even insulting to another, or even the same person, depending on the circumstances or context.

According to Holmes (2000), as cited by Ofori (2019), humour is defined as instances of utterances in which the participant(s) convey enjoyment to one another through the analyst's evaluation of paralinguistics, prosodic, and discoursal clues. Depending on how the addressee reacts, these instances of utterances can be successful or unsuccessful. Again, Afflerbach (2015) explains that humour and laughter are linked, making it difficult to isolate the precise or actual cause and effect relationship in every circumstance. He further says that, with humour, laughter has a mental stimulation that elicits and justifies a reaction. Humour is a combination of language, social expectation, intersubjective

relationship, and aesthetic experience. From the above definitions, certain things about humour are clear, that is, humour is based on statements that cause people to laugh; humour is usually judged on the basis of context, in the sense that a remark that is humorous to one person may not be humorous to another. As a result, humour revolves around the setting.

2.1.4.1 Difference between Humour and Jokes

In finding the difference between humour and jokes, Long and Graesser (1988) explain that, “humour is anything done or said, purposely or inadvertently, that is found to be comical or amusing”. They further assert that, in contrast, jokes are defined as anything done or said to deliberately provoke amusement. Jokes are also context-free and self-contained in the sense that they can be told in many conversational contexts. They also explain that, a joke contains within it all the necessary information for understanding a message or point. In other words, jokes carry all the content necessary for the comprehension and is easily transferred from one situation to the other.

According to Romero and Cruthirds (2006) humorous communication promotes pleasant emotions and cognitions in an individual, group, or organization. It is necessary for social interactions and relationships. It can be perceived as light-hearted banter in some situations, but in others, it can harm somebody's social position or savour relationships and contact between people inside and across social groupings. Humour elicits laughter and laughter is an antidote to seriousness (Lockyer and Pickering, 2008).

Afflerbach (2015) states that humour and laughter are deeply intertwined in all circumstances. This demonstrates that humour guides us in our social interactions, and that its appreciation is context-dependent, as what is humorous in one setting may not be in another. It could incorporate a variety of facets of our lives and results to in laughter, satisfaction, and acknowledgment. The consequences of understanding, agreement, and acknowledgement when shared with others can be highly pleasant, at least for those who are included.

2.1.4.2 Context of Sarcasm and Humour

Any study, including the study of sarcasm and humour, needs context to be successful. According to Ross (1998), while the primary goal of every hilarious act is to elicit laughter, the context in which the humorous occurrence occurred is equally critical to its reception, and this holds true for sarcasm. Both sarcasm and humour have a pragmatic form and are thus context-dependent.

The circumstances that structure the setting for an event, remark, or thought are known as context (Ofori, 2019). In addition to this, Cook (1992:1) posits that, the context of any communication act includes "who is communicating with whom and why; in what kind of society and situation, through what medium; how different types of communication evolved, and their relationship to each other" This demonstrates how important context is in every act of sarcasm or humour. This is because context is what determines whether a sentence is caustic or humorous. To appreciate sarcasm and humour, as well as how they are communicated through language, there must be a working social relationship between

the sender and the receiver, as well as a certain contexts (Sekyi-Baidoo, personal communication with Ofori November 30, 2018 cited in Ofori, 2018).

Murata (2014:2) describes workplace humour as "context-bound and frequently difficult to understand by non-group members." This demonstrates that one's familiarity with the context of a witty act has a significant impact on one's capacity to comprehend and cope with the act. Bell (2011) also claims that, given the right circumstances, practically any topic may be used for amusement. This indicates that, like sarcasm, humour isn't limited to a single issue, but the context can make it humourous or caustic. Sex or gender, age, language, politics, religion, and ethnicity are the six areas/contextes most typically employed for humour appreciation around the world.

Humour and laughter, according to Fine (1983), frequently include a social link, or a connection between one's self and the other. He goes on to say that the cultural and social influences that influence humour creation and enjoyment should not be disregarded. Agyekum (2010) defines context as a set of ethnographic conditions such as location, participants, historical context, socio-cultural context, and genres. "The setting of a conversation affect people's perceptions about a language," (Obeng, 2000:293).

Attardo (1994:294), the term context has two meanings: (i) "the non-linguistic environment of an utterance" and (ii) "the other utterances that precede and/or follow a specific speech." He goes on to say that an utterance's context can be any relevant entity in the universe, including non-existent, fictitious, or abstract entities that encompass nature, position, and socio-cultural interactions. From the foregoing, one can deduce that context can refer to both the linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of a given utterance, and that, while the

linguistic component is important in understanding a humorous event, the non-verbal components such as gestures, mood, and facial expression are also significant. This assertion supports Wu (2013), who states that while the humour object, that is, the humour language and humour receiver, is important, other factors such as setting, humour recipients, and so on are also important for a successful comedy event.

2.1.5 Figure of speech/ Literary Devices

Figures of speech according to Agyekum (2013) are usually divided into five categories namely:

1. Figures of resemblance or relationships, e.g. simile, metaphor, personification, euphemism etc.
2. Figures of emphasis or understatement e.g. hyperbole, litotes, rhetorical question, oxymoron etc.
3. Figures of sound e.g. alliteration, repetition, onomatopoeia, and anaphora
4. Verbal games and gymnastics e.g. pun etc. and
5. Errors e.g. malapropism, spoonerism etc.

2.1.6 Review of related Studies on Sarcasm

In a paper titled “The use of indirect strategies among university students in Ghana; a case study of University of Cape Coast”, by Bosiwah (2015), his aim was to find why and how students of the University of Cape Coast use sarcasm. After conducting his research, it was revealed that students employ the use of sarcastic comments to correct as well as tease individuals. He further discovered that gender also influences the use of such comments.

He concludes by saying that, people barely pass sarcastic comments on people they consider elderly as demanded by cultures in Ghana.

Fitriyanti (2020), also conducted a research on the “Creative thinking portrayed from sarcasm of netizens’ comments in Donald Trump's Instagram account” from a pragmatic point of view using creative thinking, In this study the researcher clarified "the types of sarcasm that are employed by the netizens. The remarks were then grouped into Guilford's (1956) four categories of creative thinking: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. According to the findings, lexical sarcasm appears more natural and is more explicit about the speech acts. She also argues that a netizen can make a nice message that has a detrimental impact. Netizens are internet users who are actively involved in the things that happen on the internet and they frequently use lexical sarcasm to display extreme denying sophistication, demonstrating the use of sarcasm to toy with language.

Netizens can still control their emotions and avoid offending others because of the startling difference between explicit and implicit meanings while creating humour. Fluency also refers to people's capacity to turn simple language into sarcasm in order to express a wide range of concepts.

Capelli et al. (2016) also claim that adults rely on one of the two cues: the context in which the remark is uttered or the speaker's intonation. They evaluated the development of children's capacity to use these cues in two experiments comparing third graders (8-9 years old), sixth graders (11-12 years old), and adults. For starters, children could detect sarcasm when speakers used sarcastic intonation, but they could not do so without it, even when the context clearly suggested a non-literal interpretation. In the second experiment, participants

presented conversation with the tone they thought was appropriate, justifying their selections based on whether or not the situation suggested sarcasm. Young children appeared to be largely oblivious to irony that was conveyed in the context. These findings imply that children recognize sarcasm based on tone rather than context.

The afore-mentioned researchers looked at the use of sarcasm from different perspectives in different domains but this current study is more interested in understanding sarcasm and the listener's reaction to sarcastic words, the goal of comprehending sarcasm itself and the listener's response to sarcastic statements as well as the consequences it has on individuals.

2.17 Review of Related Studies on Humour

Ofori (2019) looks at the essence of humour and how it emerges in the Akan language in her study. She explains why people find some occurrences hilarious in the game of draughts and some selected radio episodes in Akan, a Kwa language, using the Incongruity theory. In her research, she discovered that insult, ridicule, mockery, and other forms of humour are common in Akan, particularly in the game of draughts, where members have a 'permission' to use invectives on one another due to the lifting of the societal restriction on insults in that context. Her research also reveals that context is crucial in understanding comedy because what one finds amusing in one setting may not be amusing in another. The study discovered that, unlike comedy, which has a casual environment, radio programming have a formal context in which humour is employed as a persuasion technique, a softening mechanism, a weapon of ridiculing, a politeness strategy, a tool of indirection, and so on to address sensitive societal topics. The findings of this thesis revealed that in the game of draught, participants can taunt each other with a hilarious

reference term that is familiar to everyone. The survey also revealed that the use of some amusing terms in draught games and radio shows are solely for entertainment purposes.

Whiles Ofori's thesis is more concerned with how humour emerges in the Akan language and its usage among the people of the Akan speaking communities using the incongruity theory, this thesis is more concerned with understanding humour itself and the listener's response to humorous statements among the Ga communities using the Speech Act Theory.

According to O'Connor (2013) in a study titled "Teachers' perceptions on their use of humour in the primary classroom" Teachers use comedy to engage pupils in their learning. She also noticed that using comedy in the classroom helps teachers build relationships with their students as well as provide caveats. In terms of humour and language, evidence shows that many verbal jokes contain some type of linguistic ambiguity that can be resolved successfully (Horibe and Shultz, 1974). Children can begin to grasp and build a smart play on words and the numerous meanings linked with the ambiguity in words and the incongruity that is generated, she claims, by learning more complicated language and knowledge of the multiple meanings of words. Children realize the hilarity once the incongruity is understood and rectified.

People get accustomed with the ambiguity inherent in language at several levels, including morphology, semantics, syntax, and phonology, when it comes to linguistic ability (Robillard and Shulz, 1980 cited in Martin, 2007). As a result, they can enjoy the wordplay and multiple meanings that are common in many jokes and riddles. Consider the pun, "What is brown and sticky?" A stick'. Answers: These may seem simple, but many

youngsters under the age of six enjoy puns like these (McGhee, 2002). McGhee (2002) calls the discovery of puns in childhood "riddle sickness."

When young children, rather than adults, are the ones who supply the response, they get preoccupied with this form of humour. The majority of study on children's understanding and enjoyment of jokes, cartoons, and riddles focuses on cognitive components of humour development. However, they only account for a small fraction of the humour employed by children in everyday interactions (Bergen, 1998, cited in Martin, 2007; Kuiper and Markin, 1999), and they ignore other forms of humour such as irony, sarcasm, and satire (e.g. Glenwright et al, 2006; Alexander et al, 2010). She continues by stating that comedy should be included in the human strength repertoire. Teachers, she adds, define and create their own sense of humour.

From a different perspective is Steel (1998) who in a study titled "Positive and negative impacts of the use of humour in the classroom setting," investigated the usefulness of humour in reducing students' stress and anxiety in the classroom, as well as promoting a pleasant environment, thereby boosting learning. She looks at whether comedy reduces student stress, whether it helps to foster a more pleasant environment, and what kind of humour should not be used in the classroom. Her study went on to investigate if a sense of humour in the classroom may increase attention and assist learning and retention, as well as whether humour can improve attention and facilitate learning and retention.

Her findings were examined in terms of the number of students who chose each option and the proportion of students who chose each response. According to the findings, majority of students believe that using humour in the classroom helps to reduce stress and anxiety and

creates a more positive learning environment. Humour was rated as useful in lowering student stress and tension. This demonstrates that these pupils were more comfortable participating in class and were looking forward to it. Over half of the pupils said that humour contributed to a positive classroom atmosphere. Most of the students said that, a teacher who uses humour in the classroom is approachable and improved teacher-student connection. The teacher-student relationship is improved when pupils regard a teacher as approachable. Two-thirds of the students thought it was inappropriate to use comedy to embarrass or criticize others, while a small number thought it was acceptable. The use of humour to aid learning and recall of more difficult subject matter was evaluated as successful by half of the respondents, with only few disagreeing. Almost three-quarters of students thought comedy was useful in sustaining their attention and maintaining their interests.

She ends by stating that comedy was beneficial in relieving stress and tension, retaining of more difficult subject matter, and learning enhancement by enhancing attention. Humour was also used to help build a pleasant connection between the teacher and the students. According to this survey, pupils thought comedy was a useful element in the classroom.

While Steel's thesis was more concerned with the positive and negative impacts of using humour in the classroom and O'connor's thesis was more concerned with instructors' impressions of their use of comedy in the primary classroom, this thesis is more focused on understanding humour and the listener's reaction to humourous words and what causes the use of this communicative technique as well as the consequences it has on individuals.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Speech Act Theory

This study employs Austin's Speech Act theory of 1961. The theory of speech acts starts with the assumption that the minimal unit of human communication is not a sentence or other expression, but rather the performance of certain kinds of acts, such as making statements, asking questions, giving orders, describing, explaining, apologizing, thanking, congratulating, etc. Characteristically, a speaker performs one or more of these acts by uttering a sentence or sentences; but the act itself is not to be confused with a sentence or other expression uttered in its performance.

Austin (1964) distinguishes between three kinds of acts which may get superimposed in the act of utterance; the locutionary act (equivalent to uttering a sentence with a certain sense and reference), illocutionary act (such as informing, ordering, warning etc) and the perlocutionary act (what is achieved by saying something, eg persuading). Austin distinguishes between the two main speech act as performatives and constatives. Performatives are used to undertake an action which is rather felicitous or infelicitous. Constatives are used to make just a statement which can be either true or false.

The Speech Act Theory is a theory that looks at the usage/functions of a word, not only imperatively, but also using words to explain an action or a verb. Searle (1969,1979) also stresses on the speech act by looking at the pitch of a speech in; the locutionary act, the illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act. Many philosophers and linguists use the speech act theory in order to understand speeches or utterances made in details. As according to Searle (1969), the illocutionary act is the literal meaning of a word in a speech. He further

says that, meaning is derived from human speech, utterance or communication since they have intentions behind them. Searle then explains that, words, utterances or speeches have a locutionary act meaning. for instance; “you are still asleep?”. The meaning of such a statement or utterance is determined by the current state of the person who is being communicated to.

Searle (1979) explains the illocutionary act as a non-specific meaning derived from a communication or a conversation. He continues by saying that, we do not expect meaning from a word or a phrase, but rather, a general meaning that the whole conversation holds.

In agreement to what Searle and Austin said, Sekyi-Baidoo (2002) posits that, the perlocutionary act is a communication whose meaning has effect on the listeners in a conversation. Austin (ibid.) says that, usually, a perlocutionary act has a great effect on the listeners’ feelings, intentions or behaviours. The perlocutionary act can serve as a source of encouragement, command, to console, promise, and many others. In this same regard, Grice (1975) also says that, every speech has an exceptional explanation which displays a good or a bad meaning. He continues that, it is only the speech act theory that can be used in analysis to get a plain understanding. Bosiwah (2015) also adds that, whatever goes into an interaction during communication forms part of a speech act. Grammatical competence, linguistic competence and performance of a speaker forms an integral part of a speech act. “A speech act is an utterance that serves a function in communication” Bosiwah (2015).

Searle (1969) later grouped the speech act theory into five categories. Speech act theory has become prime in other language learning theories. The act groups, which he says are the things a speaker gets from a speech are as follows;

First is "**Assertives**". A word with an assertive property is a word which shows some movements or actions that may be true or lies. This makes the speaker faithful to his speech.

Example: It is raining.

The second one is "**Directives**". A speech with a directive property is that which commands someone to act according to the speech. This is commonly used to command someone to act in a certain way, or many other ways. Example : Go out.

The third one is the "**Commissive**". A speech with this property often commands the speaker to do something in the future. It could be a promise from the speaker. Example : I promise to pick you up tomorrow morning.

The fourth one is "**Expressive**". A speech with an expressive property shows how truthful the speaker will be to his or her speech. Example: Thank you for the gift.

The last one is "**Declaratives**". A speech with this property is that which declares a speech and see to it that it comes through. Example is when someone is declared guilty, or someone calls for war. Example: Out of order

Looking at the various explanations and categorizations given about the speech act theory, it is clear that this theory and its functions are very much in line and thus helpful in the analysis of utterances in communication. It is realized that, the three main aspects of speech; locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary are seen in most conversations, utterances, words or speeches. The locutionary act is for the utterance, or the literal meaning of the utterance or speech. It is the part of the utterance that has to be

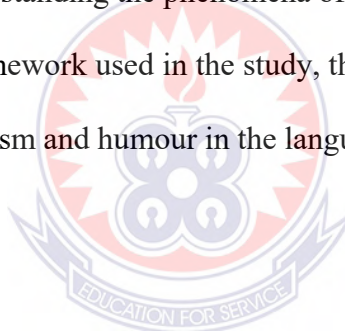
analyzed to derive the meaning while the illocutionary act also shows the utterance's meaning or meaning pertaining to speech or words spoken. With this: some of the utterances or speech speak about the steps people take in this world, some also talk to people to act according to the speech, some also instruct someone to do something in the future, etc and the perlocutionary act also is for the listeners. They use the words to convey experiences, and also talk to people and this affects them. It was seen in the research or data collection that, utterances, words, or speech made by people in the areas specified in this study where data was fetched have effect on listeners, which sometimes encourage, command, console, or ridicule them.

Rosaldo (1982) conducted a study, in which she compared Ilongot notions about acts of speech to Searle's (1976) five categories of assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations as the foundations for a cross-cultural typology of linguistic action. She goes on to suggest that while Searle's categories are a useful heuristic for introducing speech act verbs, the explanation he laid forth fails to work as a gloss on Ilongot materials. She states that some of Searle's flaws stem from his methodology. Rosaldo (*ibid*) suggests that a similar research of cultural ordering among English acts of speech, would pose similar difficulties. Most importantly, the evidence gathered throughout the study demonstrates that theories of verbal activity cannot legitimately proceed without taking into account the relationships between social order, folk notions about the world, and speaking styles.

In brief, assertive verbs appear in conflicts with "same" or "equal" guys. As a result, they contribute to the shaping of debate. Their potency resembles that which Searle attributes to our "declaratives" rather than assertive behaviors like "arguing" and "telling facts."

2.3 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter covers the following topics: what semantics is, concept of meaning, context in relation to meaning, what communication is, concept of sarcasm, difference between sarcasm and irony, what humour is, context of sarcasm and humour, difference between humour and jokes, figurative expressions, and review of related studies. The debates on the topics above aided in understanding the phenomena of the use of sarcasm and humour as a whole. The theoretical framework used in the study, that is the speech act theory was also explained. The use of sarcasm and humour in the language and its meaning is examined in the following chapters.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods used in gathering data for the research. Areas covered under the topic include research design, population, sampling technique, data sources, data collection methods, and data analysis procedure for the study as well as ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Approach

This study employs the qualitative method which seeks to understand a research problem from the point of view of the population involved. This method of data collection is effective for gathering culture specific information about opinions, values, behaviours and social context of a particular population (Tuckman, 1999). Qualitative research approaches are helpful in determining the significance that people assign to experiences (Bogdan & Biklen 2003; Denzin & Lincoln 2000). The goal of this research is to learn more about the sarcasm and humour Ga people use.

Understanding, exploring, discovering, and clarifying situations, feelings, attitudes, perceptions, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people is the goal of qualitative research (Kumar, 2011). In this study, the researcher investigated and uncovered respondents' perspectives on the use of sarcasm and humour and their meaning among the Ga people.

Borrowing the words of Kankam & Weiler (2010:65), trying to simplify things, the method strives to unearth complex things and grasp meanings. This means that these designs aid in the comprehension of difficult topics and allow researchers to be understood by their audience. This was chosen by the researcher because it is mostly descriptive. It clarifies the usage of the language of sarcasm and humour, their link with one another, and what their relationship reveals in terms of their usage and interpretation among the Ga people.

Qualitative approaches emphasize the researcher's active participation in the investigation (Creswell, 2005). In this study, the researcher was both the primary data collector and the interpreter of the findings. This study might benefit from a qualitative approach because it allows the researcher to have a better understanding of the participants' real-life experiences. The current researcher met with native Ga language speakers and competent Ga language speakers from diverse domains to learn about the meanings they assign to activities involving the use of sarcastic and humorous language, and to interpret their responses in ways that are relevant to this study.

3.2 Population

The study involved Ga residents in the Greater Accra Region. Three Ga towns were visited by the researcher. The population sample for this study was Accra Central, Chorkor, and Kaneshie, all of which are located in the Greater Accra Region. Although the entire population did not participate in the research study, the results from the study are generalized to the entire Ga population.

3.3. Participants

Thirty (30) native speakers with age ranging from fifteen (15) to sixty (60) years were interviewed for the study. Teachers, drivers, traders, fishermen, students, and people from other sectors were among the vocations of the respondents in this study. Ten (10) males and twenty (20) females make up the thirty (30) respondents. The respondents were made up of five (5) school children; two (2) from Kaneshie market, two (2) from Chorkor and one (1) from Accra Central. Three (3) public transport drivers and two (2) conductors from the Kaneshie lorry station, six (6) market women; three (3) from Accra Central market and three (3) from the Kaneshie market, two (2) teachers from Accra Wesley Girl's Senior High School, three (3) fishermen and three (3) fish mongers from Chorkor, and six (6) people in recreational centers in either of these locations were part of the participants. This is because different societies utilize sarcastic and humorous languages in different ways.

Table 1 : Number of Research Participants

Names of towns	Number of participants	Percentage (%)
Accra Central	5	16.67%
Chorkor	8	26.67%
Kaneshie	17	56.67%
Total	30	100%

Table 2. Showing the domains and the number of participants

Names of Towns	Domains	Number of Participants	Percentages(%)
Accra Central			
	Market women	3	10%
	Recreational centre	4	6.67%
	School children	1	3.33%
Chorkor			
	Fishermen	3	10%
	Fishmongers	3	10%
	School children	2	6.67%
Kaneshie			
	Market women	3	10%
	Drivers	3	10%
	Conductors	2	6.67%
	Teachers	2	6.67%
	Recreational centre	2	6.67%
	School children	2	6.67%
Total		30	100%



3.4 Sampling Technique

Tuckman (1999) defines sampling as the selection of a small subset of the population for observation and interview. Sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample size or a representative portion of a population in order to determine parameters or characteristics of the entire population. Tuckman (ibid). The semi-structured type of interview was used, and this gave room for flexibility and originality.

By observing the features of the sample size, the researcher could make assumptions about the characteristics of the wider population.

Purposive sampling was the technique the researcher employed. The researcher went to Chorkor on the 20th of December, 2021 to collect data. When the researcher arrived with her research assistant, who is also a native, made arrangement with the people and asked questions about the topic under investigation. Some of the participants were conversing among themselves, and the researcher watched and listened to how the whole thing unfolded. Following the utterances and comments passed, questions were asked concerning comments that the researcher did not comprehend. Everything was also recorded, and the researcher then transcribed them.

Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to choose Accra Wesley Girls' High School in Kaneshie, Accra market women in Accra Central, public transport drivers and their mates in Kaneshie and children as my sample and research area for this study. These places were chosen because they had the necessary participants or respondents for the study that is, the people were able to supply the necessary information (data) for the research.

Due to time constraints, these three towns were also purposefully chosen. The native speakers for the interviews were likewise chosen via purposeful sampling. The technique of selection was based on their ability to communicate fluently in the Ga language. The researcher spoke with few of the people she recorded in this work for the interview. The researcher purposefully selected and interviewed these speakers because of their ability to communicate fluently in the language and their knowledge about the said topic.

Teachers, traders, drivers, fisherman, and many others, were very important in order to obtain in-depth data for the study's research because these are the people who usually engage in conversations since they are always surrounded by people because of their dealings with them, they make use of sarcastic and humorous statements in their day to day communication.



3.5 Sources of Data

Data for this study was collected from primary source. The primary data was sourced from public transports, markets and some social gatherings in various domains among the Ga people. The primary data was gathered through one-on-one interviews with respondents and recordings of narrations. The researcher used her intuition knowledge of the language to construct some of the data for the analysis because she is a native Ga speaker. The accuracy of the data was confirmed by other native speakers.

3.5.1 Data Collection Technique

Semi-structured interviews and native speaker knowledge were employed as data gathering strategies. Patton (2002) states that, a semi-structured interview is one in which the

researcher defines the issues and subjects to be covered in an outline form and the interviewer selects the order and terminology throughout the interview. This study requires the triangulation of this stream of data because it ensures the research's legitimacy. According to Owu-Ewie (2012), triangulation in qualitative research is the requirement to employ different study design methodologies or multiple data collecting strategies to ensure the validity and credibility of the work and to bring out all details about the data collection.

3.5.2 Focus group Interviews

A focus group is a qualitative research approach in which members of a group and the researcher discuss their views and beliefs about a topic, product, or service in a free and open setting. A focus group is a learning environment in which a researcher poses questions that spark conversation among group members. Issues and various perspectives on them, as well as any noteworthy point expressed during these talks, provide information from which conclusions might be drawn. It is similar to interviewing a bunch of people at the same time (Kumar, 2011).

Teachers, students, and other native speakers were interviewed in the focus groups. Since it was a face-to-face interaction with informants, the researcher encouraged them to share their thoughts and experiences about the numerous activities in which sarcasm and humour are used. Each focus group had five members. The researcher chose five to give a variety of perspectives. The Ga language was used in all encounters, talks, and communications.

"The drive for interviewing is to find out what is in or on someone else's mind," Patton (1990). To collect some of the information, the researcher also utilized open-ended questions. The researcher established positive interpersonal relationships with the participants. As a result, participants felt comfortable to express themselves and share their opinions. The open-ended questions also allowed the researcher to get a detailed explanation of their perspectives, which greatly aided in understanding of the participants.

3.5.3 Audio Recording

Interview and recordings were the main methods for data collection. Individuals' sarcastic and humorous comments were recorded by the researcher. Duranti (1997) postulates that no matter how brilliant a writer is, writing is a terrible tool for communicating the richness of an experience if the purpose is to have an encounter. Interactions with respondents were recorded by the researcher and later transcribed and translated into English.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data analysis was done in the form of a written report. The sarcastic and humorous comments were recorded and then transcribed in Ga before being translated into English. The behaviors that prompted the use of such comments were discussed using excerpts from the numerous comments.

3.7 Ethical Issues

Ethics, according to Resnik (2015), are rules and regulations that control the method, approach, or perspective for collecting and analyzing data to answer a research topic.

During the research, some ethical issues like confidentiality and interview ramifications were recognized and addressed. This suggests that the informants' privacy was protected. The participants were informed by the researcher that their personal information would not be used in the final product. participants were told that their interviews and recordings would be kept private and deleted at the conclusion of the study. With this assurance, the informants were able to open up and provide detailed information for the study. Informants were also notified of their right to withdraw from the study at any moment if they so desired.

3.8 Summary

This chapter presented the methodology for this study. The researcher adopted the qualitative research methodology which presented the number of research participants and their roles. The instruments used in the data were also discussed. After that the researcher looked at the data interpretation and analysis procedures and finally dealt with some ethical issues of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the data collected and analyzed them based on the significant roles sarcasm and humour play in communication among the Ga interlocutors in any communication process. The researcher explored the various domains where sarcasm and humour are used. The chapter also looked at what triggers their use and finally investigate the similarities and differences in terms of their usage.

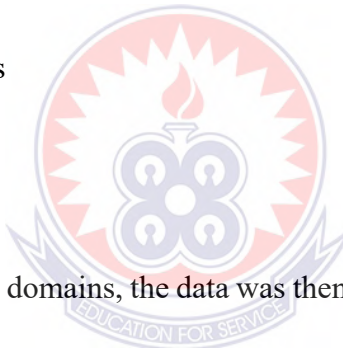
Morpheme by morpheme glossing is not done as it does not have any direct bearing in the analysis.

4.1 Domains of Sarcastic and Humorous Expression usage

There have been several researches on sarcasm and humour over the years. However, it is sometimes difficult to understand such expressions because their appreciation is not clear due to their nature. Sarcasm is usually equated to irony while humour is usually aligned to a joke or a comic expression, but this is not always so. Most of these researchers such as Agyekum (2013); Attardo (1999); Dynel; (2008), Ofori et al, (2021) and Wu (2013) etc over the years have based their opinions on factors like definitions of both sarcasm and humour, their history, how they are developed and so on, but they have not considered their usage from the semantic perspective, the domains in which they are used, their similarities and differences and the effects these communicative expressions have on the individuals during the communicative process. I therefore considered domains where large number of

people often gather and inter-personal communications are evident. This was to enable me be abreast with the frequent usage of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people. It was also to enable me report adequately on the use of sarcasm and humour amongst the Ga people. As a result, some domains identified in this research where sarcastic and humorous expressions are usually used during communication among the Ga people include;

1. Schools
2. Markets
3. In public transport
4. Homes
5. Recreational centers
6. Beaches
7. Churches



After identification of these domains, the data was then analyzed and classified under these domains.

4.1.1 The school Domain

The school is a formal setting and a well-constructed building or space for the purpose of educating individuals. There is a conscious transfer of knowledge from a one person (instructor) to another student, consciously to cause change in the individual (Roser, Max; Ortiz-Ospina, Esteban, 2019). A school is an educational institution designed to provide learning spaces and learning environments for the teaching of students under the direction of teachers. Schools are organized spaces purposed for teaching and learning. The

classrooms, where teachers teach and students learn, are of central importance in every community and country (Burke and Grosvenor, 2008).

Boyer (1995) posits that a community is, without question, the glue that holds an effective school together. The use of community by Boyer (1995) means more than a sentimental slogan or a message to be sent home to parents at the beginning of the year. What he is really talking about is the culture of the school, the way people relate to one another, their attitudes and values and during school visits, it is concluded that to achieve community, a school must have six essential qualities. These essential qualities are that, the school must be a purposeful place, with a clear and vital mission; the school must be a communicative place, where people speak and listen carefully to each other; the school must be a just place, where everyone is treated fairly; the school must be a disciplined place, with clearly defined rules of conduct; the school must be a caring place, where students feel secure; and the school must be a celebrative place, with lots of ceremonies and celebrations. To create this spirit of community it is concluded that The Basic School also should be small enough to assure that every student will be known by his/her name.

According to Burke and Grosvenor (2008), like other buildings, schools are products of social behavior. They should not be viewed merely as capsules in which education is located and teachers and pupils perform but also as designed spaces that in their materiality project a system of values. The school exists in a sea of pupils and parents and although it remains the same its position in the landscape may alter substantially and this may be caused by local population, community regeneration or the arrival of a new community. Schools also display regional and local characteristics in material, form and style. From

the above definitions, we can say that, education which is of importance in the setup of a school can be defined as the conscious effort to transfer knowledge from one person to another to create a permanent change in the individual.

Under this domain, it was identified that, both teachers and students make use of sarcastic and humourous expressions in their day-to-day conversations and utterances: be it in the classroom, outside the classroom or anywhere around the school premises such as the dormitories and/or hostels.

In the school, the teacher is the facilitator or instructor or the educator who usually plays the role of a supervisor and a mentor and in some cases a counsellor to the students while the student is the receiver of the instruction or the learner to whom knowledge is imparted. During the classroom communication process, the teacher usually is the sender of the information while the student is the receiver of the information but in certain situation, the process may be between teachers: where information is passed on from a teacher to another of the same level or a superior and a subordinate and this can also be found with communication among students.

Now that we have identified what makes up a school and difference between a student and a teacher and how they communicate under the communication process, lets now analyze some examples of sarcastic and humourous expressions used in the school after which some of the reactions exhibited from individuals after these expressions were made will be looked at.

The researcher classified these examples under three categories. These are:

1. Teacher to student expressions
2. Teacher to teacher expressions
3. Student to student expressions

4.1.1.1 Teacher to Student Expression

Example 1

Kasɛɔ: Tsɔɔɔ ofainɛ mi okɛwiesɔ lɛ lo?

Student: Madam please are you talking to me?

Tsɔɔɔ: Daabi, mikɛ sɛi lɛ ni wiesɔ.

Teacher: No, I am talking to the chair.

Contextual Situational Narrative

With the example 1 above, the locutionary statement made is “no I’m talking to the chair” showing the sarcasm in the interaction. This utterance happened in class session during a lesson delivery in a classroom. A particular student kept talking and did not listen to what was being taught. The teacher told the student to keep quite but the student acted disrespectfully. She got up and asked the teacher “madam please are you talking to me?” The teacher also responded by saying “no, I am talking to the chair”. Immediately the student sat down in shame and the whole class started laughing at her. The illocutionary effect of the statement “no, I’m talking to the chair”, is a command which means that, the student, should sit down, shut up and not be disrespectful towards the teacher. This made the girl quiet throughout the lesson delivery. The perlocutionary effect made the student

feel ashamed. Aligning the above speech act to that of Searle's speech act categories as illustrated in 2.2.1, the utterance made by the teacher is an example of a directive. Being directive, the teacher indirectly and jokingly commands the student to keep quiet.

Example 2

Kaselo: Tsɔɔlɔ ofaine meni wolo mli wɔbaaŋma nitsumɔ le kɛwo?

Student: Sir please in which book did you say we should write the work?

Tsɔɔlɔ: Nyɛŋmaa yɛ nyɛdeŋ.

Teacher: Write it in your palms.

Contextual Situational Narrative

From example 2 above, the locutionary statement used is “nyɛŋmaa yɛ nyɛdeŋ” which is “write it in your palms” demonstrates the sarcasm in the dialogue. This speech occurred after a lesson when the teacher gave an assignment in class. He expected the students to know the appropriate exercise book for the assignment, but annoyingly a student asked “Sir please in which book are we supposed to write the work?” The teacher answered, “write it in your palm”. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “nyɛŋmaa yɛ nyɛdeŋ” is to give an advise which meant that, the student should apply common sense and do the work in the appropriate exercise book. The student upon hearing the answer, covered her face and hid her face while some of her colleagues hid and laughed at her. The perlocutionary effect is that the student felt embarrassed. Referring to 2.2.1 under Searle's speech act categories, the statement made by the teacher is an example of a directive. In this case too, the characteristic of the statement made from the teacher is a directive, which owes to the

fact that, the teacher indirectly commands the student to write the work in the appropriate book.

Example 3

Tsoᵑᵑᵑ: Abonua GHC 2.00 pɛ ni etako yɛ jara lɛ nɔ eeeee! Mɛɛba nyɛtaoɔ ni nyɛgbe wɔ yɛ tsu nɛɛ mli?

Teacher: Lime is only GHC 2.00 and there is still some in the market eeeeeee! Why, do you want to kill us in this room?

Kaselo: Kaselɔi lɛ fɛɛ boi ŋmɔᵑᵑ.

Student: All the students burst into laughter.

Contextual Situational Narrative

Looking at example 3 above, the locutionary statement made is “Abonua GHC 2.00 pɛ ni etako yɛ jara lɛ nɔ eeeee! Mɛɛba ni nyɛtaoɔ ni nyɛgbe wɔ yɛ tsu nɛɛ mli?” This statement was used when a teacher walks into a class a week later after a discussion on personal hygiene with students. The teacher came to give an information to the students, but upon her entry into the classroom, she perceived a bad odour and this put the teacher off. Before giving out the information, the teacher burst out by saying “lime is only GHC2.00 and there are still some in the market eeeeeee!” why do you want to kill us in this room”. Immediately, the students burst into laughter while looking at each other’s face.

The illocutionary effect of the utterance “Abonua GHC 2.00 pɛ ni etako yɛ jara lɛ nɔ eeeee! Mɛɛba ni nyɛtaoɔ ni nyɛgbe wɔ yɛ tsu nɛɛ mli?” is an advice to some of the students in the classroom who have body odour (amɛhe ejeeɛ ŋma) due to sweat. In such situations,

lime is traditionally used by Ghanaians to clear body odour emanating from the armpit. It is basically used for the elimination of body odour. The teacher who did not want to embarrass directly any of them employed sarcastic statement. Here, the students did not respond but only reacted with laughter because it is a sarcastic expression educating them on personal hygiene. The perlocutionary effect made the students feel embarrassed for not being neat. According to Searle's speech act categorization, the teacher's statement, is an example of expressiveness. The teacher's statement being expressive is due to the facts that she is stating the obvious that bad odour emanates from the students' armpit. Expressive statements have the truth element.

4.1.1.2 Teacher-to-teacher Expression

Example 4

Tsɔɔɔ 1: Nɛɛgbɛ sukuu nɔtɛ lɛ yɔɔ?

Teacher 1: Where is the school proprietor?

Tsɔɔɔ 2: Mitsu lɛ.

Teacher 2: I have sent her.

(They both burst into laughter looking at each other's face)

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 4 above, the locutionary statement made is "Mitsu lɛ", which shows the sarcasm in the interaction. This event occurred during school hours when two teachers were having a conversation about a teacher who usually snitches on other teachers with the aim of winning favour before the headteacher of the school. Teacher 1 asked "where is the school

proprietor?” and then teacher 2 answered saying, “I have sent her” both teachers then laughed aloud. The actual meaning of this narrative of the statements made by the two teachers is that they were making fun of or laughing at the other teacher who usually reports other teachers to gain favours from higher authority (headteacher) in the school, without referring to her by her name but rather referring to her as the school proprietor. There is no information in the school concerning any teacher that passes by her and also because of her relationship with the headteacher. She was given the title “school proprietor”. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “Mitsu le” is to make fun or tease the teacher who reports all issues to the headteacher. Sending her means teacher 2 has done something and “school proprietor” is going to report.

The teachers are not happy by her actions and behavior towards other teachers. This is because her actions have put some of the teachers into trouble and for this most of the teachers were not happy with her. However, in order not to offend her, they were being sarcastic and at the same time humorous in their conversation. The perlocutionary effect made the teacher aware of how they are unhappy with her behavior. The above statement “Mitsu le” made by the teacher is an example of an assertive under the speech act categories by Searle. The statement falls under the assertive because in assertive, a statement given can be true or false. The fact that the teacher reports other teachers to the headteacher does not mean she is the proprietor of the school. Yes, she is indirectly the proprietor of the school based on her behaviour but she does not own the school. So the statement could be true or false, thus its assertiveness.

Example 5

Tsɔɔɔ 1: Baahe O “letter” ni oya shia.

Teacher 1: Come for your letter and go home.

Tsɔɔɔ 2: Kaawie pii. Midieɲtse maha bo “letter”.

Teacher 2: No need for long talk, I myself will give you the letter.

(Both teachers laughed and shook hands and then peeps into the head’s office)

Contextual Situational Narrative

With reference to example 5 above, the locutionary statement is “Kaawie pii. Midieɲtse maha bo “letter” which shows the humour in the conversation. This is a joke shared by two teachers who have not seen each other for a while and on that day, they both arrived late for work and met in front of their headteacher’s office to sign in for duty. Their head is fond of issuing query letters without any notice. She usually gives it out to people she has not seen for a while and assumes they do not come to work as well as people who came to work late. In this situation, these two teachers were standing in front of her office without caring whether she was around or not. Teacher 1 then tells teacher 2 to come for her letter then teacher 2 responded by saying she doesn’t have to talk for long because she will also give her a letter.

The illocutionary effect of “Kaawie pii. Midieɲtse maha bo “letter” was to make fun of the headteacher. The two teachers were making fun of the headteacher for her frequent or rapid issuing of query letters unjustly to teachers even for trivial issues without first warning them or finding out from them the actual problem. In this situation, these two teachers were standing in front of the head’s office without caring whether she was around

or not. They both laughed while having this conversation, shaking hands and peeping into the office to see if the headteacher was around. The perlocutionary effect made the headteacher know how unhappy they were about the way she treats them (her staff). The statement “Kaawie pii. Mideɛntse maha bo “letter” made in example 5 above is an example of an assertive. This is according to Searle’s speech act categorization as illustrated in 2.2.1. This is because they are stating the true or obvious character of the headteacher indirectly. And as it has been learnt from assertive statements, any statement that is made on truth or non-truth has the characteristic of assertiveness.

4.1.1.3 Student-to-student Expression

Example 6

Kaselo 1: Ookane nii lo?

Student 1: Are you reading?

Kaselo 2: Daabi, miihoo nii.

Student 2: No, I am cooking.



Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 6 above, the locutionary utterance used is “Daabi, miihoo nii” showing the sarcasm in the discourse. The speech happened during school hours when students were out on break. Some students stayed back in the classroom while others were busy with various activities. One of the students who stayed back in the classroom was reading a book. Everyone could see what she was doing yet one of her friends stood up and asked her “are you reading” and her response was, “no, I am cooking”. Others who sat in the

class could not help but laugh at the situation. The student sat down in shame and put her head on the table. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Daabi, miihoo nii” is to ridicule the student 1 for refusing to use her eyes. What this actually mean is that, student 2 is telling student 1 that, she should make use of her eyes and not ask “silly” questions. The perlocutionary effect made the student 1 feel stupid and ashamed for asking the student 2 such a question knowing well what student 2 was doing. In example 6 above, the utterance made by student 2 is according to Searle’s speech act categories, it is an example of an assertive. This speech act category, can be found in 2.2.1. Being an assertive statement, the student is actually stating the obvious to the other student that she is cooking, as in assertive, a statement given carries truth.

Example 7

Kaselo 1: Meni okɛ “brush” lɛ yaafee?

Student 1: What are you going to do with the brush?

Kaselo 2: Mikeyaasha tsɔɔlo Becky tiafi lɛ mli.

Student 2: I’m going to use it to scrub madam Becky’s toilet.

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 7 above, the locutionary statement made is “Mikeyaasha tsɔɔlo Becky tiafi lɛ mli.” That shows the sarcasm in the interaction. This speech occurred at the school hostel of Accra Wesley Girls Senior High School. Students were up on a Saturday morning and going about their chores. After they were done, some of them sat down on their beds to converse. While conversing, one of the students got up and took her toothbrush to go and brush her teeth. Before she got to the door of their room, another student asked what she

was going to do with the brush knowing very well what a brush is used for. The lady responded saying “I’m going to use it to scrub teacher Becky’s toilet”. For some seconds, the place was quiet and then “boom” the students all started laughing.

The student who asked the question countenance changed after the response. Her eyes had turned red and she sat quietly on her bed. The above means that, student 2 is expecting student 1 to know what a toothbrush is used for since everyone in the hostel uses one to brush their teeth including student 1 herself. Thus, she shouldn’t have asked her what she was going to use her toothbrush for. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Mikeyaasha tsɔɔlo Becky tiafi le mli” made by student 2 is an abuse directed at student 1 for asking her such a question. The perlocutionary effect made the student feel sad. The reason for the change in her countenance. Referencing to Searle’s speech act categorization, the statement above is an example of assertive as seen in 2.2.1. The response from student 2 is indeed telling student 1 that she is indeed going to use the brush to brush her teeth. This is done indirectly and she is stating the obvious, the statement has the property of assertiveness.

Figure 2 and figure 3 below shows a picture of a typical setting of a school domain.



Fig. 2: A picture of the researcher with students of the Accra Wesley girls' high school

Source : .(09/12/2022) The picture was taken with the permission of the participants



Fig.3: Picture of students of Accra Wesley girls's high school spending time with the police.

Source: (18/08/2022) The picture was taken with the permission of the participants

After exploring the domain of the school and identifying some examples and the circumstances that bring out the use of these communicative expressions, the researcher goes on to look at the next domain which is the market.

4.1.2 The market Domain

A market is a place where goods are sold and services rendered. According to Stigler and Sherwin (1985), the role of the market is to facilitate the creation of exchanged between sellers and buyers. They further add that whether a good is exchange for a good or for money, there is an exchange rate between the quantity of something in exchange for the quantity of another thing therefore making the market, a place where prices for goods are established or determined.

Coase (1974) says that, markets which involve the exchange of goods is usually regulated by the government and customers lack the ability to make the appropriate choices while producers often exercise monopoly and assumed that if the government does not intervene it may not promote the interest of the public. Since the market is a place where goods and services are exchanged and services given. We cannot overlook the fact that they use language that is understood by both parties during this process and this fosters a better understanding for both parties and for the purpose of this work, sarcasm and humour are part of the expressions used amongst the participants involved in the exchange of the goods and services rendered. Examples of sarcastic and humourous expressions used at the Kaneshie and Accra Central markets with situations that brought about the use of the language

Example 8

Nihelo: Mami, nii nɛɛ jara wa tso. Mɛɛba ni osumɔɔɔ ni otseɔ nɔ nɛɛ loo osumɔɔɔ ni ohɔɔ oha mi?

Customer: Madam, the price of this item is too expensive. Why don't you want to reduce it or you don't intend to sell it to me?

Nihoolo: Efeɔ mi ake owu ke bo je gbefaa mli keba etseko ona? Aloo jeeɛ maɲ nɛɛ mli oyɔɔ? Onuko ake akɛɛ Russia ke Ukraine miihuu ta ni eha aɲme nɔ fɛɛ nɔ nɔ nɛɛ onuko lo?

Market woman: Did your husband just bring you from abroad? Or it seems you don't live in this country. Don't you know that the war between Russia and Ukraine has affected the prices of items?

Contextual Situational Narrative

The locutionary statement made from the example above is “Efeɔ mi ake owu ke bo je gbefaa mli keba etseko ona? Aloo jeeɛ maɲ nɛɛ mli oyɔɔ? Onuko ake akɛɛ Russia ke Ukraine miihuu ta ni eha aɲme nɔ fɛɛ nɔ nɔ nɛɛ onuko lo?” which shows the sarcasm in the interaction. This statement was used when the researcher went to the Kaneshie market few days after the announcement of the war between Russia and Ukraine and realized that prices of items had escalated. The prices have either twice shot-up the old price or the price had tripled. This did not make sense so in an attempt to question one of the sellers who refused to reduce the price of her item, the researcher tried to bargain with the seller. Meanwhile, the seller got angry when the researcher asked “madam, this item is too expensive. Why don't you want to reduce the price or you don't intend to sell it to me?”. She became moody immediately and to the researcher's surprise, asked “did your husband

just bring you from abroad?” The researcher laughed because it was her first time meeting the market woman. She did not know her and was wondering why she asked such a question. At that moment, the woman hisses and continues by saying, “it seems you don’t live in this country. If not, you will not have asked me such a question”.

The researcher proceeded to ask “why” and this time she was really fuming with anger, but the researcher ignored and still wanted an answer for the question and then she said, do you not know that the war between Russia and Ukraine has affected everything thus the increase of goods?. For few seconds, the researcher stood there amazed and then smiled and left without buying the item. The above means that, the market woman and the customer are both complaining about the increase in price of goods. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “Efeɔ mi akɛ owu kɛ bo jɛ gbɛfaa mli kɛba etsɛko ona? Aloo jeeɛ maŋ nɛɛ mli oyɔɔ? Onuko akɛ akɛɛ Russia kɛ Ukraine miihuu ta ni eha aŋmɛ nɔ fɛɛ nɔ nɛɛ onuko lo?” is to mock the researcher for pretending not to know the reason why the prices of items had increased. The market woman was blaming the increase of items on the war between Ukraine and Russia since most of the things are imported. The importation had affected taxes on imported goods thus making them very expensive. The perlocutionary effect made the customer feel embarrassed. The statement in example 8 above goes for the expressive speech act category according to Searle. With the import of the statement by the market woman being expressive, it means that the woman is staying true to her word and she is not going to reduce the price of the items, no matter what the customer says. And it is in expressive that the speaker stays true to his or her word.

Example 9

Nihelɔ: Meni ni onibii jara wa neke?

Customer: Why are your goods so expensive?

Nihɔɔɔɔ: Yaa ni oyabi Akyim nuu kpitioo le.

Market woman: Go and ask the “Akyem short man”.

Contextual Situational Narrative

From example 9 above, the statement “Yaa ni oyabi Akyim nuu kpitioo le” is the locutionary statement which shows the sarcasm in the interaction. This speech happened when the researcher after her first experience decided to escort a friend to the Accra Central market to buy some items for school but to their surprise, prices had increased tremendously as compared to her first experience at the Kaneshie market. They could not buy most of the items they went to the market to buy due to financial constraint. In an attempt to find out the reason, her friend asked the seller “why are your things so expensive?” and then the seller looked at her strangely and responded by saying “go and ask the short Akyem man”. They could not help but laugh together with some few people around including some of the sellers. In this narrative, both the market woman and the customer are both complaining or bringing out their sentiments about the rise in goods and commodities in the country which they were both not happy about.

The illocutionary effect of the statement “Yaa ni oyabi Akyim nuu kpitioo le” is to scorn her customer for asking her about the obvious. The market woman was blaming the President for his inability to sustain the economy. The perlocutionary effect made the customer feel the market woman was unhappy with her question thus making her feel

embarrassed for the answer given. The above statement by the seller can be aligned to the speech act categories by Searle as an example of an assertive. The two women are indirectly stating the truth that the economy is in a mess, thus the property of their statements being assertive.

Example 10

Nihelo: Fɔ nɛɛ hiɛ edi waa ɲmɛnɛ. Mɛni, nyɛbeebe fɔ ni lo?

Customer: This oil looks blackish. Why, is this yesterday's oil?

Niyenii hɔɔɔ: Daabi, nyɔɔɲ kome fɔ ni.

Food vendor: No, it is a one month old oil.

Contextual Situational Narrative

From example 10 above, the locutionary statement made is “Daabi, nyɔɔɲ kome fɔ ni” which indicates the sarcasm in the utterance. This speech occurred at a food joint where beans is sold. A customer goes to buy some of the beans but this customer usually likes the coconut or sun flower oil and not the red oil. On that day, he felt the color of the oil was not pleasing to the eyes and instead of just complaining, the customer asked the food vendor “is this yesterday's oil?” and in return, he receives the response “it is one month old oil” from the vendor. People around just started laughing though the food vender looked serious. The customer look a bit embarrassed about the situation but tried to smile till he left the food joint. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Daabi, nyɔɔɲ kome fɔ ni” is to ridicule the customer for his statement.

The above means that, the customer was just saying “I don’t like the color of this oil. Is there no other one because it looks old to me but the vendor wasn’t quite happy with that and also told the customer, “don’t come and annoy me, if you don’t want to buy the food again, just leave and don’t come and waste my time”. The perlocutionary effect on the customer is embarrassment. Here, since the customer is true to his word that the oil of the food looks bad and the seller also would expect the buyer to either buy or leave, the expressive aspect of Searle’s speech act categorization is used.

Drinking bar in the market.

Example 11

Daatɔɔ: Adonko nee efee tamɔ nu ŋmɛnɛ . Daa kroko be jɛmɛ ni naa wa fe ɛnɛ?

Drunkard: This bottle of “Adonko” tastes like water today. Is there no alcoholic drink better than this?

Bar tender: Hɛɛ. Glasiŋ.

Bar tender: Yes, Kerosene.

(Other drunkards laugh and raised their glasses.)

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 11 above, the locutionary statement made is “Hɛɛ. Glasiŋ”, which shows the sarcasm in the conversation. This speech occurred at a drinking bar in the market where some of the drivers and the “junkies” who worked in the market go to drink and relax when they are exhausted. On one occasion, the researcher was tired from walking in the sun and decided to enter the bar for a soda but to her surprise there were many people there drinking.

The researcher sat on one of the chairs there while the bar tender attended to her. Then one of the men who was drunk called out to the bar tender and said that the bottle of Adonko felt like water that day and asked whether there was no better one.

The bar tender chuckled and answered him saying, “Yes, Kerosene”. Everyone in the bar including the researcher burst into laughter while other drunkards raise their glasses and bottles and continued laughing to the extent of making fun of the one who made the remarks. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Hɛɛ. Glasiŋ” is to tease the drunkard.

In this situation, “Adonko” is an alcoholic drink. It is one of the strong drinks sold in drinking bars in Ghana. The drunkard was already drunk, he was not aware of the effect of the drink and the response from the bar tender was to shut him up and to put him off and also to create humour for other customers. This was achieved because there is no way kerosene can be stronger than “Adonko” which was an alcoholic drink. The perlocutionary effect made the drunkard feel ashamed. The import of the statement, especially from the bar attendant is one of expressive, since the attendant is indirectly stating the truth that the ‘Adonko’ is okay, which cannot be compared with kerosene.

Figures 4, 5 and 6 below show pictures of the market domain setting at the Kanneshie and Accra Central markets.



Fig.4: Picture of the Kaneshie market.

Source: (02/10/2022). The picture was taken with the permission of the participants.



Fig.5: picture the researcher interacting with some market women at the market.

Source: (13/12/2022). The picture was taken with the permission of the participants.



Fig.6: picture of the Accra Central market.

Source: (09/10/2022). The picture was taken with the permission of the participants.

4.1.3 The public Transport Domain

Transportation is the act of conveying a person or goods from one destination to the other with the aid of a vehicle.

The examples under this domain are categorized under:

1. Expression from driver to passenger.
2. Expression from bus conductor to passenger.
3. Expression from driver to bus conductor.

4.1.3.1 Driver to Passenger Expression

Example 12

Tsɔnefolɔ: Mɛni wɔbaawɔ biɛ ?

Passenger: Are we going to sleep here?

Tsɔnekudɔɔ: Bɛ oŋmɛ saa yɛ biɛ nɛɛ?

Driver: Have you laid a mat here?

Contextual Situational Narrative

From example 12 above, the locutionary statement used is “Bɛ oŋmɛ saa yɛ biɛ nɛɛ?” which indicates the sarcasm in the discourse. This utterance occurred one early morning, when the researcher boarded a vehicle from the Kaneshie station to Accra Central. A few minutes after the car took off, most of the passengers alighted at various point, so the vehicle was half full. The driver decided to stop at one of the point to load so as to get the vehicle full before continuing the journey. One woman two seats away from the driver got angry at the behavior of the driver so she shouted, “are we going to sleep here?” The driver instead of sympathizing with the passengers rather annoyingly responded by saying “have you laid a mat here?” Almost everyone in the vehicle got “mad” and started talking and angrily warned the driver not to repeat that action. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “Bɛ oŋmɛ saa yɛ biɛ nɛɛ? is to warn the woman against complaining about the waste of time.

The actual meaning of the statement made by the passenger simply means “we are in a hurry, why do you choose to waste our time by stopping at one point for a long time? We are going to be late to where ever we are going to” The answer from the driver means,

“stop complaining. we would be moving shortly but I also need to make my car full so we can move”. The perlocutionary effect on the woman is anger. Referring to 2.2.1 on Searle’s speech act categorization, the statements from the driver and passenger have the property of directive. This is because the passenger is indirectly commanding the driver to move fast, as the driver is also indirectly commanding the passenger to stop complaining.

Example 13

Tsɔnefolɔ 1: Tsɔnekudɔɔ, meni ootao ni wɔye be le fɛɛ ye biɛ?

Passenger 1: Driver; why, do you want us to spend all the time here?

Tsɔnekudɔɔ: Jee nu ni mikewoɔ tsone le mli onu.

Driver: It is not water I use to run this vehicle ok.

Tsɔnefolɔ 2: Nɔ ni nɔŋŋ ni nysle ji shika shi jee nɔ ko dɔŋŋ.

Passenger 2: All you people are interested in is your money and nothing else.

Tsɔnekudɔɔ: Miyɛ osaso ye shia.

Driver: I have your kind in my house.

Tsɔnefolɔ 2: Bele eetɔ mɔ le pɛ.

Passenger 2: Then that person is really suffering.

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 13, the locutionary statements made is “Jee nu ni mikɛ woɔ tsone le mli onu” and “Bele eetɔ mɔ le pɛ” shows the sarcasms in the interaction. These speeches occurred in a moving vehicle from Kaneshie to Accra Central market. The driver decided to make several stops on the way and this made passengers angry. One elderly woman who was

among the passengers asked the driver, whether they will have to spend the all the time at one spot. The driver instead of being apologetic responded rudely that he, runs the vehicle with fuel. This answer made the passengers very angry because of the words he used. A young lady in the vehicle added by saying that “All you people are interested in is your money and nothing else”

This got the driver angry and he told the lady “I have your kind at home” The lady then laughed and replied, “Then that person is really suffering”. All the passengers burst into laughter. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Jee nu ni mikɛ woɔ tsone lɛ mli onu” is an abuse directed at the woman for complaining and the illocutionary effect of the utterance “Bele eetɔ mɔ lɛ pɛ” is to make fun of the driver for his rudeness.

The above in example 13 simply means that the passenger was just saying “you are wasting our time with the several stops” which was answered by the driver with “I have used a lot of money to buy petrol to fill my tank to run this vehicle so let me work to make my profit”. Due to the driver’s impoliteness, he got a response from another passenger that drivers have no regard and are very insensitive to the needs of their passengers. The driver was not happy with the second lady’s response and made her aware that he had a wife like the lady which implied that the lady should accord him some respect. This made the lady laugh out loud and said, “Your wife might not be happy with this your behavior but she has chosen to keep quiet about it”. This answer got applause from the passengers because it serves the driver right. The perlocutionary effect made both the driver and the passengers angry. The passengers were unhappy with the driver’s utterances and the driver on the other hand was not happy about their various responses.

In this interaction, the directive category of Searle's speech act categorization is employed, as the statements by the three participants are indirectly commanding each other. The two passengers with their statements indirectly command the driver to concentrate on driving them to their destinations rather than making stops on the way. And the response from the driver also indirectly tells the passengers to keep quiet for him to do what will give him money, as he uses money to buy fuel.

4.1.3.2 Bus conductor to Passenger Expression

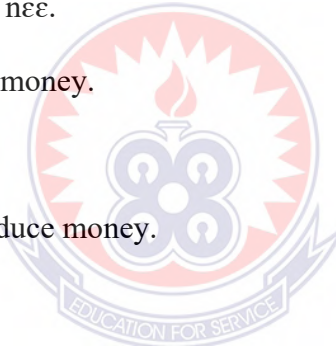
Example 14

Tsɔnefolɔ: Misumɔɔ shika nɛɛ.

Passenger: I don't like this money.

Meetifinyo: Mifoo shika

Bus conductor: I don't produce money.



Contextual Situational Narrative

Looking at example 14 above, the locutionary statement made is “Mifoo shika” showing the sarcasm in the conversation. This speech occurred in a vehicle that moved from the Kaneshie lorry station to Chorkor. A passenger refused to collect her change because she wanted the bus conductor to change the note which was too dirty given to her with the explanation, “I don't like this money”. The conductor also responded by saying; “I don't produce money notes”. The woman's countenance changed immediately and she threw the money back at the bus conductor and kept quiet. (Everyone in the bus started murmuring).

The illocutionary effect of the statement “Mifoo shika” is to ridicule the lady for rejecting the money.

From the above in 14, the passenger is only saying “this note is torn and in a very bad shape. Give me a better one” but the bus conductor refused her request by telling her that it was also given to him by another passenger so he wouldn’t change it for her because it was a valid note”. The perlocutionary effect made the passenger angry. This was because the bus conductor refused to change the currency note for her. In alignment to Searle’s categorization of the speech act, the statements in this conversation also has the property of directive. Being directive, the passenger is indirectly asking the bus conductor to change the money for her, as the bus conductor is also looking forward to the woman taking the money in good fate because that is what he has got to give her.

Example 15

Meeti: Niyenii ni mɔ fɛɛ mɔ miiye lɛ fiofio lɛ, kwemɔ bɔ ni oye lɛ hwanhwan ni oyi keta shi.

Bus conductor: That food that everyone is eating in bits, see the way you have eaten everything and you have become full.

Tsɔnefolɔ: Hɔmɔ miiye mi no hewɔ ni.

Passenger: I was hungry that is why.

(Everyone started laughing uncontrollably in the vehicle)

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 15 above, the locutionary statement used is “Hɔmɔ miye mi no hewɔ ni” that shows the humour in the interaction. This interaction took place in a vehicle from Chorkor to Kaneshie between a pregnant woman and the bus conductor. While the bus conductor was collecting the fare from passengers, when he got to the pregnant woman’s turn he asked her: “food everyone is eating in bits, look at how you have eaten everything and looking very full”. The pregnant woman answered him by saying that she was very hungry that is why she ate everything.

The illocutionary effect of the statement “Hɔmɔ miye mi no hewɔ ni” is to make fun of the pregnant woman. This means that, the bus conductor was deliberately teasing the pregnant woman because she was looking very tired and stressed. He was trying to make her laugh to help her feel a little relaxed. What he said is “most people have sex but not everyone gets pregnant but she is lucky to be pregnant so she should try and endure it”. The pregnant woman also answered by saying “she doesn’t know it was not easy at all to be pregnant”. The perlocutionary effect made the pregnant woman laugh. In this conversation, the fact that the conductor is trying to make the pregnant woman act in a certain way by feeling relaxed makes the statement to carry the property of assertive under the speech act categorization. And also, the pregnant woman concluding that pregnancy is not a child’s play may be true or false since some may feel how she feels while others may feel otherwise.

4.1.3.3 Interaction between driver and bus Conductor

Example 16

Tsɔnekudɔlɔ: Aa! Wenuu! Kwɛmɔ oblayoo ni hoɔ lɛ, bɔ ni etele nibii yɛ ehie kɛhoɔ. Ataa Naa Nyɔŋmɔ.....

Driver: Charlie! Look at that lady and the things she is carrying in front of her. ohh God.....

Meeti: Ehe hiaa waa. Be ni ebɔ nɛɛ, ebaanyɛ etsa helai fɛɛ. ona bɔ ni etɔ bo nɛɛ, milakaaa bo, kwɛ enɛɛ lɛɛ naa “pain killer”

Bus conductor: It’s very necessary, it size tells you that this medicine can cure any form of ailments and considering the way you are tired this is pain killer for you.

Contextual/ Situational Narrative

From example 16 above, the locutionary statement made is “Ehe hiaa waa. Be ni ebɔ nɛɛ, ebaanyɛ etsa helai fɛɛ. ona bɔ ni etɔ bo nɛɛ, milakaaa bo, kwɛ enɛɛ lɛɛ naa “pain killer” which shows the humour in the discourse. This speech occurred at the Kaneshie lorry station when a driver and a bus conductor were chatting after a day’s work. Suddenly a beautiful lady who was busty passed by their vehicle wearing a skimpy dress which caught the attention of the bus conductor. The conductor prompted his driver to have a look at the lady because he was attracted by her big breasts.

The above means that, the bus conductor drew the attention of his driver by telling him to “Look at a lady passing by with her big breast” The driver responded and agreed with the conductor that the lady really has big breasts. The bus conductor then says to the driver, that if he has this lady by his side in your bed, she will make him very relaxed throughout the night. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Ehe hiaa waa. Be ni ebɔ nɛɛ, ebaanyɛ

etsa helai fɛɛ. Ona bɔ ni etɔ bo nɛɛ, milakaaa bo, kwe enɛɛ lɛ naa” made by the bus conductor was to tease the driver for his desire for ladies with big breasts. The driver was overwhelmed by the lady’s big breast and could not stop looking as the lady as she passed by. The perlocutionary effect made the driver feel excited about the observation of the lady’s big breast while she passed by. Lining up the above example to the speech act categorization by Searle, the property of the import of the statements by the driver and bus conductor is that of assertive. Being assertive, the statement by the driver that the lady’s breast can be a relaxer to him may be true or false. So in a way, the statement may be true that it can be a relaxer to him, but it can also be false.

Example 17

Tsɔnekudɔɔ: Mɛni ofeɔ nɛɛ?

Driver: What are you doing?

Meeti: Miisɔle.

Bus conductor: I am praying.



Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 17 above, the locutionary statement made is “Miisɔle” which shows the sarcasm in the interaction. This speech occurred at the lorry station in Kaneshie while several buses were been loaded. There was a vehicle in the queue waiting to be loaded. Due to the delay, the bus conductor decided to have his lunch. He bought some food with a bottle of mineral in addition. While sitting in the bus the driver confronted him and asked what he was doing. The conductor responded sarcastically that he was praying. They both

took it as a joke and the driver then asked the conductor where he bought the food from so he can buy some. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Miisole” is to make fun.

What this means is that, the driver is humourously telling his conductor: “you are really enjoying this afternoon; look at the food you are eating”, The conductor responded by saying: “allow me to enjoy myself”. The perlocutionary effect on the driver is laughter. According to the speech act categorization by Searle in 2.2.1, the property of the import of the statements in this conversation is that of directive. In the conversation, the conductor succeeds in making the driver act in a certain way, and that is making him know that indeed he is eating and also making him laugh.

Example 18

Tsonekudɔɔ: Sidi kome pe ni miyɔɔ.

Driver: I have only Ghc1.

Polisifonyo: Nibii ajara etee ηwei ei.

Police officer: The price of goods have gone up.



Contextual Situational Narrative

From example 18 above, the locutionary statement made is “Nibii ajara etee ηwei ei” which shows the sarcasm in the conversation. This interaction occurred when a vehicle from Accra to Kaneshie got to a police check point. It was late at night so the officers demanded money from the driver. The driver explained that he just started work since he had been at the workshop throughout the day. He told the officers he had only Ghc1.00 and that was what he could give them. The officers then said “the price of goods have gone up”.

Everyone in the vehicle started laughing about the shameless act on the part of the police officers. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Nibii ajara etee ɲwɛi ei” is to scorn the driver for refusing to give them enough money.

The meaning of the statement is that on the part of the driver, he doesn't want to pay enough money that is why he offered to give them Ghc1.00 but the police refused to collect the money because they wanted the driver to give them more since the money offered by the driver was inadequate. The perlocutionary effect on the driver is feel they were not happy about the small amount of money offered them. In this conversation too, the property of the statements used is that of directive. The driver is indirectly asking the police to act in a certain way by accepting what he is giving him or leave him to go, as the police is also indirectly asking the driver to act in a certain way by adding additional money.

Figure 7 below shows a typical public transport domain.

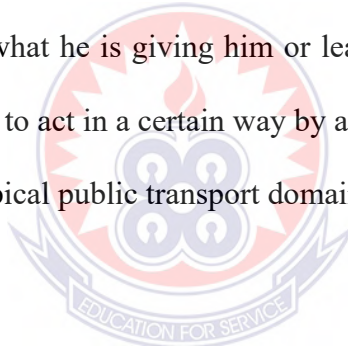


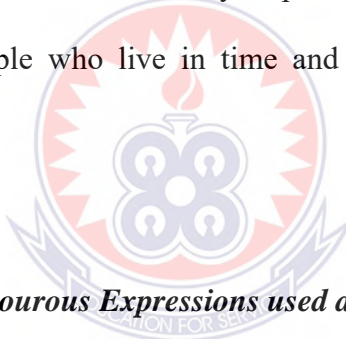


Fig.7: picture of a trotro station in Accra

Source: (09/10/2022). The picture was taken with the permission of the participants.

4.1.4 The home Domain

The home is a dwelling place for people or families in a community or a particular geographical location. Després (1991) says that, people refer to their home as a symbol of how they see themselves and want to be seen by others. People are able to express their tastes, interests and character and these are expressed through furniture, decoration, as well as objects and meaningful possessions they have in the home. He further says that, the home is a familiar environment or place that provides its occupant with a sense of belonging and have a root. It is a place where memories are created (childbirth, childhood, raising a child, the demise of a spouse etc.) indicating connection with experiences. Douglas (1991) says that, a home is not only a space, it also has some structure in time; and because it is for people who live in time and space, it has aesthetic and moral dimensions.



4.1.4.1 Sarcastic and Humorous Expressions used at Home

Example 19

Nyemi 1: Ani oyaaju ohe?

Sibling 1: Are you going to have a bath?

Nyemi 2: Daabi, miyatsi jwei mashwie.

Sibling 2: No, I'm going to throw the rubbish away.

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 19 above, the locutionary statement uttered is “Daabi, miyatsi jwei mashwie” which shows the sarcasm in the interaction. Compound houses where several family

members with their spouses and children lived is typical of most Ga communities. This speech occurred in one of the houses in Chorkor when siblings in the house were playing in the middle of the house. A mother called her child to come and take the bath so they could have their dinner because it was getting late. The child left the others to go and take the bath. The bathroom was in the compound of the house. This child went to fetch his water because the tap was also on the compound with a towel wrapped around his waist and then proceeded to the bathroom. On his way to the bathroom, one of his siblings asked him whether he was going to bath and he also responded by saying, “no, I’m going to throw the rubbish away”. The other siblings laughed at him and started teasing him with one rubbing his hand on his head. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “Daabi, miyatsi jwei mashwie” is to ridicule the sibling for asking such question knowing very well what he was going to use the bucket of water for.

What the narrative above means is that sibling 2 is telling sibling 1 that; “can’t you see that I’m going to take my bath”. Why are you asking me again when you have seen me carrying water to the bathroom. The perlocutionary effect on sibling 1 was embarrassment in the midst of the other siblings. Again, the property of the import of the statements is that of directive. Sibling 2 is trying to command or make sibling 1 act in a certain way that he should notice that he is going to bath and stop asking unnecessary questions.

Example 20

Nyemi 1: Kwemɔ ohie!

Sibling 1: Look at your face!

Nyemi 2: Obaana mihie nɛɛ?

Sibling 2: Will you even get my type of face?

Nyemi 1: Keji mina ohie nɛɛ eko kule, masama mimami.

Sibling 1: If I had your kind of face, I would have sued my mother.

Contextual Situational Narrative

From the example 20 above, the locutionary statement made is “Keji mina ohie nɛɛ eko kule, masama mimami” which shows the humour in the interaction. This speech occurred when two siblings were teasing themselves. Sibling 1 was making fun of the looks of sibling 2 and said, “look at your face.” Sibling 2 replied by saying that, “will you not even get my kind of face?”. Sibling 1 comes back to tell sibling 1 that “if I had your kind of face, I would have sued my mother” (they both laughed). The illocutionary effect of the statement “Keji mina ohie nɛɛ eko kule, masama mimami” is to make mockery of his face.

The meaning of this is that sibling 1 is telling sibling 2 that he is not handsome at all. Sibling 2 is also telling sibling 1 how his looks is very unique which makes him very handsome and that sibling 1 would be proud to have such a face. However, sibling 1 disagreed and said if he had gotten such a face, then his mother is to be blamed for it. The perlocutionary effect made sibling 2 feel mocked. Here, the property of the import of the conversation is that of is that of assertive. As to whether sibling 1 would have got the guts to sue his mother if he had got a semblance of the face of sibling 2 could be true or false.

Example 21

Mami: Negbe mina bo keje?

Mother: Where did I get you from?

Bi yoo: Miheɔ miyeɔ akɛ oto mi ye gbɛ nɔ.

Daughter: I'm sure you picked me up from the roadside.

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 21 above, the locutionary statement made is “Miheɔ miyeɔ akɛ oto mi ye gbɛ nɔ” indicates the humour in the conversation. This speech happened in one of the houses in Kaneshie when a daughter was playing games with her mother and at a point her the mother jokingly asked her while laughing “where did I get you from?” The daughter replied by saying that “I’m sure you picked me up from the roadside” They both laughed and the mother hit the girl from behind. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “Miheɔ miyeɔ akɛ oto mi ye gbɛ nɔ” is to tease the mother.

The meaning of the above in the example 21 is that, the mother is telling the child that you are very worrisome. Let me have my peace and the child is telling the mother that, you gave birth to me so you have to accept me just the way I am. The perlocutionary effect is to create excitement and laughter. According to Searle’s Speech Act categorization, the property of the statement is that of directive. Per the response of the daughter which has the sense of humour, she is indirectly asking the mother to act in a certain way by accepting how she seems to her and stop complaining.

Figure 8 below shows a typical home domain of the Ga people.



Fig.8: A picture of a compound house in Accra (Paladium)

Source: (05/11/2022). The picture was taken with the permission of the participants.

4.1.5 Recreational or Community center Domains

Recreational centers are public places where members or people of a community gather usually for group activities, social support, public information and other purpose. Such activities or programs are either for a specialized group within the community or the whole community. These centers are not only for social gatherings but can also be for religious gathering such as Christian and Islamic activities etc. or secular activities such as youth clubs, etc. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2022), “a recreational center is a building that is open to the public where meetings are held, sports are played and there are activities available for the young and old people”.

4.1.5.1 Sarcastic and Humorous Expressions used at the Recreational Center

Example 22

Kuɲnyo 1: Ofainɛ nu lɛ enyɛ ni?

Member 1: How much is the bottle of water?

Nihɔɔɓɓɔ: Sidi 10.00

Seller: It is Ghc 10.

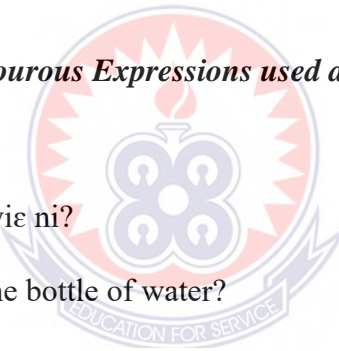
Kuɲnyo 2: Ei, mɛɛba! “water of life” ni lo?

Member 2: Ei! Why, Is it water of life?

Nihɔɔɓɓɔ: Daabi, water of eternity ni.

Seller: No, “It’s water of eternity.’

(They all burst into laughter)



Contextual Situational Narrative

The locutionary statement “Daabi, water of eternity ni” in example 22 above creates some humour. The statement in 22 was uttered during a conversation between two friends in a recreational center in Accra. They were going to watch a play. At the entrance one decided to buy a bottle of water so she asked for the price and the seller said Ghc 10. When they heard the price, the friend exclaimed and asked, “Ei! Why, is it water of life?” The seller also responded that, it was water of eternity. They all burst into laughter. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “Daabi, water of eternity ni” is to make fun of the price of the bottle of water.

The above narrative means that member 2 is just saying the bottle of water is too expensive. The perlocutionary effect on the members was laughter. The above statement according to Searle’s speech act categorization in 2.2.1 gives the property of the speech to be that of assertive, for an assertive statement could be true or false. And in this scenario, the participants agree to the fact that the economic hardship has made price of bottle water expensive.

Example 23

Sinikwɛɔ 1: Kpoo onu

Member 1: Sorry ok.

Sinikwɛɔ 2: Olumɔ nɛɛ nitsumɔ ni aloo onikeenii ji no?

Member 2: Is stupidity your profession or a gift?

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 23 above, the locutionary statement made is “Olumɔ nɛɛ nitsumɔ ni aloo onikeenii ji no?” that shows the sarcasm in the conversation. This speech occurred when an association had a film show as part of their annual end of year activities. During the program, popcorn and *sobolo* drink were shared to members present. While sharing, one of the members mistakenly spilled the “sobolo” drink on another member and she tried to apologize for her mistake but the member 2 asked her “if stupidity was her profession or it was part of her giftings”. Member 1 looked very sad and said nothing. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Olumɔ nɛɛ nitsumɔ ni aloo onikeenii ji no?” is to mock member 1 for her clumsiness.

What this narrative’s actual meaning is that, member 2 is telling member 1 to stop being clumsy all the time and to be more focused to avoid ruining things all the time. The perlocutionary effect on member 1 is embarrassment and sadness. This was because member 1 was unhappy for spilling the drink on member 2. In this case, the directive property of speech is employed, since member 2 is not happy with the incident and wants member 1 to act in a certain way by accepting that what he has done was borne out of stupidity.

Figure 9: below is an example of a recreational centre in Accra.



Fig.9: picture of a recreational center at Accra (Bukom).

Source:(10/11/2022). The picture was taken with the permission of the participants.

4.1.6 The beach Domain

The encyclopedia says that a beach is a narrow, gently sloping strip of land that lies along the edge of an ocean, lake, or river. Materials such as sand, pebbles, rocks, and seashell fragments cover beaches. Most beach materials are the products of weathering and erosion. Over many years, water and wind wear away the land. The continual action of waves beating against a rocky cliff, for example, may cause some rocks to come loose.

4.1.6.1 Sarcastic and Humorous Expressions under the beach Domain

Example 24

Oblanyo 1: Kwε bɔ ni oblayoo lε ekpε sεε.

Youngman 1: Check the backside of the Lady.

(With eyes still on the back section of the lady)

Oblanyo 2: Ao anyemi sεε nεε yε “fine”.

Youngman 2: Ao, my brother, this backside is fine.

(They both laughed while looking at the back view of the lady in her bikini)

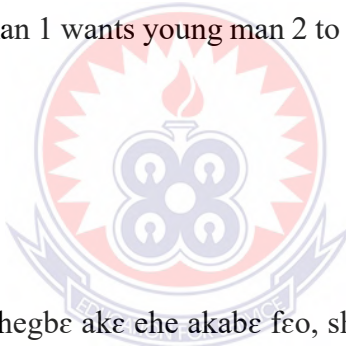
Contextual Situational Narrative

The locutionary statement made in example 24 is “Ao anyemi sεε nεε yε “fine” which shows the humour in the interaction. This situation was recorded at the beach between two young men one hot afternoon. These two gentlemen were sitting down enjoying their beer, when a lady walked by in her bikini and this attracted the attention of the two young men. One asked the other to look at a lady’s buttocks. The second young man also admitted the

lady had a big buttocks but then added they (the buttocks) were fine. They both laughed and kept looking at the lady.

The illocutionary effect of the sentence “Ao anyemi sɛɛ nɛɛ yɛ “fine” is to make fun of the big buttocks of the lady who walked by.

The meaning one derives is that the first young man is telling second young man to take a look at the lady’s big buttocks and the young man 2 admired them. The perlocutionary effect is the joy and happiness they derived from talking about the back view of the lady. The directive property of speech under Searle’s speech act categorization was employed in this conversation. Young man 1 wants young man 2 to act in a certain way by admiring the shape of the lady.



Example 25

Gbekeyoo: Mɔ fɛɛ mɔ yɛ hegbe akɛ ehe akabe feo, shi efeɔ mi akɛ okɛ onɔ le etsu nii fe nine.

Girl: Everyone has the right to be ugly, but I think you have overused your right.

Gbekenuu: Eɲmɔ mugeɛ ni etee

Boy: He smiled and walked away.

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 25 above, the locutionary sentence is “Mɔ fɛɛ mɔ yɛ hegbe akɛ ehe akabe feo, shi efeɔ mi akɛ okɛ onɔ le etsu nii fe nine” which portrays the sarcasm. This utterance was used at the beach one Sunday after church when the researcher together with some friends

were enjoying the breeze. There, four young men who sat next to them saw a girl passing. They had a bet saying that whoever will be able to speak to the girl and get her contact, would get money. One of them said he could do it. He got up and went straight to where the lady sat and sat close to her. He asked the lady of her name and told her that he wanted to be her friend but the lady said to him “everyone has the right to be ugly, I think you have overused your right”. The boy felt very embarrassed after hearing this from the lady.

He smiled and walked away without uttering a word. Meanwhile his friends who had witnessed everything started laughing and hailing him when he was approaching them. The illocutionary effect of the statement is to mock the young man for his ugly look. The girl was simply telling the boy that he was too ugly to be her friend and was not interested in whatever he was saying. The perlocutionary effect made the gentleman feel embarrassed. The Speech Act category by Searle found in this conversation is that of directive. In this instance, the lady wants the guy to act in a certain way by agreeing to the fact that he shouldn't try proposing to her and also accept that he is ugly.

Figure 10 below shows a picture of beach domain.



Fig 10: A picture of a beach in Chorkor

Source: (18/12/2022). The picture was taken with the permission of the participants.

4.1.7 The Church Domain

The church is place or building where members of the Christian faith/ religion meet to fellowship or worship. According to Vilarde (2009) the church is not a building, but a body of believers with a specific nature and purpose. Many people understand the church to be a building but the word “church” is a translation of the Greek word ekklesia, which is defined as “an assembly” or “called-out ones.” The actual meaning of a church is not that of a building, but of people. In summary, the church is not a building or a denomination.

According to the Bible, the church is the body of Christ—all those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Example 26

Yoo 1: Yitsɔi, waonaa kɛ nɔ fɛɛ nɔ feeki, ani oheee oyeee ake oje China?

Woman 1: Fake hair, nails and everything, are you sure you are not from China?

Yoo 2: Daabi, mi je nyemaŋ le mli.

Woman 2: No, I'm from your hometown.

Contextual Situational Narrative

The sarcasm in example 26 above situation is seen in the utterance “Daabi, mi je nyemaŋ le mli”. The utterance was made during a conversation between two young adults at a church meeting. The conversation which began as a joke nearly ended in a quarrel. It was time for the meeting to commence and a young lady entered dressed like a masquerade. One of the ladies who was her friend stood by her and said jokingly, “fake hair, nails and everything. Are you sure you are not from China?” the lady replied and said “No, I'm from your hometown”. They both laughed and sat down. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “Daabi, mi je nyemaŋ le mli.” is to ridicule the lady for being nosy.

The meaning of the statement is that, the lady1 was trying to tell the lady2, she was overly dressed and she lacked naturality or originality. The answer the lady 2 gave to her also meant that don't be silly, I'm still the person that you know. The perlocutionary effect made the lady feel ashamed for the question she asked. In this conversation, the Speech Act category by Searle employed is that of both assertive and directive. Lady 1's statement

of classifying lady 2's dressing of her having hailed from China may be true or false, thus the assertiveness of her statement; and the response by lady 2 which tells lady 1 to act in a certain way by feeling ashamed and accepting that she is still the friend she has always known falls under the directive category of speech act.

Example 27

Kuɲnyo 1: Be mli ni Nyɔŋmɔ miike jwɛŋmɔ ɛ, nɛgbɛ oyɔɔ?

Member 1: Where were you when God was sharing common sense?

Kuɲnyo 2: No mli ɛ, miihala tɛi yɛ etsu ɛ sɛɛ.

Member 2: I was then busy collecting stones at his backyard.

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 27 above, the locutionary statement made is “No mli ɛ, miihala tɛi yɛ etsu ɛ sɛɛ” which shows the sarcasm in the discourse. This speech emerged after a church service when two church members were having a conversation about recent happenings in the church and member 1 made a silly contribution which almost made member 2 angry. She was surprised and asked her, “Where were you when God was sharing common sense?” Member 2 then responded that she was busy collecting stones in his backyard”. The illocutionary effect of the sentence “No mli ɛ, miihala tɛi yɛ etsu ɛ sɛɛ” is to scorn Member 1 for being silly. She did not seem happy about the question put to her. This means that Member 1 was telling member 2 not to speak if she did not have anything better to contribute. Member 2 on the other hand responded by saying that she is already aware of the fact that she has nothing better to contribute. The perlocutionary effect made the

member 2 feel ridiculed. In this conversation also, the directive category of the speech act categorization is employed, as member 1 wants to tell member 2 not to talk if she had nothing sensible to say and member 2 wants member to also accept that if that is what she thinks of her, then so be it.

Example 28

Yoo 1: Ohe efee feo shrao fe aduŋ

Lady 1: You look slightly beautiful than a monkey.

Yoo 2: Oyiwaladɔŋŋ

Lady 2: (laughs) Thank you

Contextual Situational Narrative

In example 28 above, the locutionary statement made is “Ohe efee feo shrao fe aduŋ” which shows the humour in the interaction. This interaction occurred during a wedding ceremony between two ladies who met at the exit of the church. Lady 1 upon seeing lady 2 two was beautifully dressed said, “you look slightly beautiful than the monkey”. Immediately, lady 2 laughed and said thank you. They both laughed and hugged each other and continued with their conversation. The illocutionary effect of the statement “Ohe efee feo shrao fe aduŋ” is to praise Lady 2 for her beautiful appearance. This, though humorous, is often said among the Ga’s to show how beautiful one is dressed. The meaning of this narrative is that, Lady 1 was simply telling Lady 2 that she was looking very beautiful. Lady 2 knowing exactly what her friend was talking about laughed and thanked her. The perlocutionary effect made lady 2 feel loved. The above is an example of an expressive. In

this conversation, the directive category speech act is employed since lady 1 wants lady 2 to act in a certain way by feeling loved based on how beautiful she looks.

The picture below in figure 11 shows the church domain.



Fig.11: picture of the Accra Wesley Cathedral Methodist church

Source: (30/11/2022). The picture was taken with the permission of the participants.

4.2 Situations that trigger the use of Sarcasm and Humour

It is believed that certain questions asked or utterances made by individuals deserve the use of sarcastic and humorous expressions. To prove this hypothetical believe, the researcher interacted with some respondents on this. From the outcome of the interactions, the following were identified as few situations that trigger the use of such expression. When having fun: individuals make use of sarcastic and humorous expression just for fun or to make fun of a situations.

Example 29: When we were in school, our teacher told us that practice makes perfect but my mother also says that no one is perfect so me I have stopped practicing. Such a statement is just to make fun of a failed situation that should be taken seriously but the person decided to deal with it in a humorous way. Secondly, these can be used when responding to “foolish” statement: individuals sometimes use such expressions as a way to responding to foolish comment, utterances or statement from individuals as seen in example 30.

Example 30: A person upon seeing another person eating and decides to ask the question, “are you eating?” The other person who finds the question as foolish also decides to answer “No I’m playing”.

Again when one wants to criticize: since sarcastic and humorous statements are ironic or do not mean exactly the way they are said literally, individuals use such expressions during criticism. This is done not to necessarily offend or hurt the person’s feeling. For Example: hide yourself, the garbage truck is approaching. This means the person is dirty or has not had a bath.

Another situation is during praise or compliments: Sarcastic and humourous expressions are sometimes used by individuals to shower praises on someone or when complementing someone for some good deed or an accomplishment.

Example 31: if I ever need a brain transplant, I will definitely choose yours.

Response: thank you with smiles.

Lastly, sarcastic or humourous statements are made when advising an individual. In Africa and specifically Ghana, people usually use irony, proverbs, idioms, sarcasm or humour to advice others. Such pieces of advice could either be positive or negative as shown in example 32.

Example 32: if everything is coming to your direction, then you are in the wrong place. This means that one shouldn't be greedy.

4.2.1 Some effects of Sarcastic and Humourous Expressions on an Individual

After the researcher interacted and witnessed several circumstances and events from the domains. It was realized that, individuals who received sarcastic and humourous expression are usually affected by the utterances or statements used. The following are some effects of sarcasm and humour use on individuals among the Ga.

Anger and violence: When people receive or are given sarcastic or humourous answers during a communication process, it irritates or provokes them and sometimes this may result in a fight or quarrel.

Example 33

Yoo 1: Oke shika ni he niyenii nɛɛ?

Woman 1: did you buy this food with money?

Yoo 2: Daabi mika tɛi ni he.

Woman 2; No, I bought it with stone.

Sadness: Sarcastic and humorous utterances tend to make individuals who easily get emotional very sad.

Example 34

Tsɔɔlɔ: ba ni obaloo jwei le.

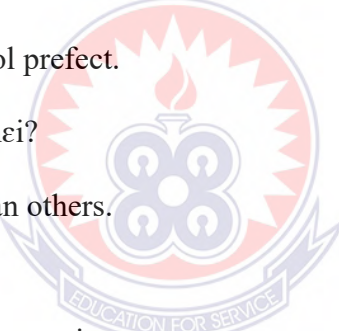
Teacher: Come and collect the rubbish.

Nikaselo: Tsɔɔlɔ, miji sukuubii le anɔkwelo.

Student: Sir, I am the school prefect.

Tsɔɔlɔ: Ani ofe mei krokomei?

Teacher: Are you better than others.



Laughter and fun: Some sarcastic statements or utterances made bring out humour thus creating fun despite its ironic meaning.

Example 35

Nuu 1: Meni mli akɛ gbonyo woɔ?

Man 1: In what do we put dead bodies?

Nuu 2: Akɛwoɔ goga mli.

Man 2: They are put into buckets.

Shyness and humiliation: The use of sarcasm and humour during a conversation sometimes lowers a person's pride especially in a crowded place or amongst friends which make individuals feel shy and humiliated.

Example 36

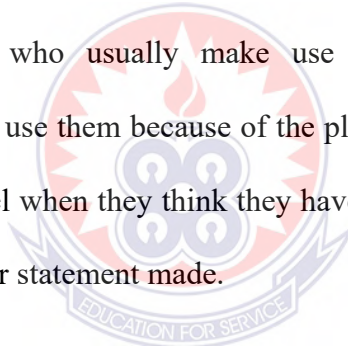
Maṅnyo 1: Oke mi ni wieo le?

Member 1: Are you actually talking to me?

Maṅnyo 2 : Daabi, miijie Nyɔŋmɔ yi.

Member 2: No, I'm praising God.

Satisfaction: Individuals who usually make use of sarcasm and humour during communication sometimes use them because of the pleasure they derive from them. This is sometimes what they feel when they think they have given the receiver what they duly deserve due to a question or statement made.



Example 37

Gbeke 1: Oku oseεε?

Child 1: Have you returned?

Gbeke 2: Daabi, kpaako miiya.

Child 2: No, I'm now going.

Adherence and obedience: Sarcastic and humorous statement can be used to advice or warn individuals though such statements are opposite of what is said, listeners obey and act accordingly.

Example 38

Biyoo: Miiya Adenta maba.

Daughter: I'm going to Adenta.

Mami: Obaanyɛ oya, shi obaabanina mi yɛ biɛ.

Mother: You can go but you will come and meet me here.

4.2.2 Some benefits of using Sarcasm and Humour

The researcher after the data analysis identified some benefits of sarcasm and humour among the Ga people. Some of these benefits are;

Sarcasm and humour show proficiency or command in the use of the language. The use of sarcasm and humour reduces nagging and complains. The use of these communicative techniques promotes creativity as it enables creation of new words. Sarcasm and humour promote remembrance of both the sender and receiver.

Sarcasm and humour used in classrooms make class lively and increases interest in students. Sarcasm and humour reduce stress. Individuals who use sarcasm and humour are considered intelligent, matured and smart. Sarcasm and humour are verbally used by individuals to bring down an enemy not with a weapon but the tongue or mouth.

Sarcasm and humour help in understanding individuals during a conversation. Sarcasm and humour are used to give or show dislike or displeasure or contempt. In using sarcastic and humourous utterances, context is very essential as well as the tone and facial expression of

the speaker during communication. One will ask that what is the tone of the speaker during conversation. From data collected through observation, discussion and audio recorded.

Tone in this context can be described as the harshness or mildness (high or low) of the voice when making such utterances. The tone can also be deceptive in a way as it may contradict the utterance made by the sender. The tone of the voice is what provokes or stirs up the reaction in individuals when sarcasm and humour are used during the communication process. These reactions can come from known or unknown individuals. It is also ascertained that sarcasm and humour utterances made during conversations with known individuals can be less provoking than with strangers.

4.2.3 Some Disadvantages of using Sarcasm and Humour

The researcher after identifying some benefits of using sarcasm and humour, the researcher discovered some disadvantages of using these communicative techniques. Some of these disadvantages are;

The use of sarcasm and humour can be misinterpreted and this can harm relationship and cause a break in the communication process. Using sarcasm and humour sometimes make individuals feel and look “stupid”. The use of sarcasm and humour can lead to unnecessary confrontations and increase the risk of misunderstanding.

4.2.4 Some Considerations to make when using Sarcasm and Humour

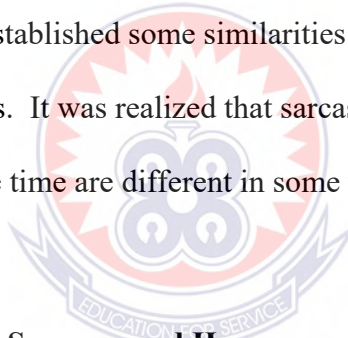
After analysis of the data, the researcher discovered that certain factors need to be considered by individuals before/when using sarcasm and humour. Some of the things to consider when using sarcasm and humour are;

One must consider the individuals or recipients being communicated to. One should consider the sense of humour of the receiver so that the intended effect is established. The sender needs to establish if he or she is just being playful or just teasing the receiver or an ironic joke.

It is prudent for the sender of the information to consider the relationship between him/her and the receiver. One must consider the context or situation before making such utterances.

4.3 Relationship between Sarcasm and Humour

After the analysis of the data collected, the researcher looked at the relationship between sarcasm and humour and established some similarities and differences between these two communicative expressions. It was realized that sarcasm and humour share certain things in common and at the same time are different in some ways.



4.3.1 Similarities between Sarcasm and Humour

Sarcasm and humour though used interchangeably are two separate concepts. They have similarities and differences. The present study has identified the following similarities;

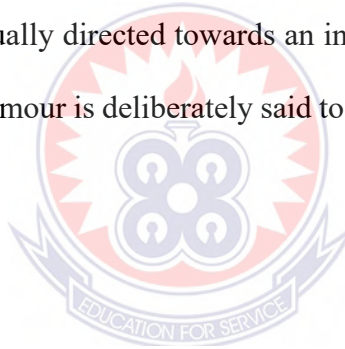
Both sarcasm and humour are ironic ways of expression. That is, they may mean the opposite of what is expressed or uttered. These two communicative techniques are dependent on circumstance or context. This means that, sarcastic and humourous speeches are used based on context or the circumstance surrounding a discourse. Sarcasm and humour are used to express emotions directed at a person without necessarily insulting him or her.

4.3.2 Differences between Sarcasm and Humour

Despite the similarities sarcasm and humour have some differences as revealed in the present study. The analysis shows that these differences are identified in terms of usage, effect and reactions. Below are a some of the differences established in the study;

In terms of usage, sarcasm is more aggressive than humour. Sarcastic comments are commonly used to criticize someone while humour is uttered to make a person laugh. Sarcasm is hurtful to the person receiving as well as the one delivering the utterance while humour may not necessarily bring laughter to the one delivering the speech but brings laughter to the receiver of the speech during communication.

Sarcastic utterances are usually directed towards an individual but humour is not directed to any one in particular. Humour is deliberately said to elicit laughter while sarcasm is said to ridicule a person.



4.4 Conclusion

The chapter focused on the analysis of data collected on the use of sarcasm and humour among the Ga people. The analysis and discussion were grouped under 7 domains identified in this chapter. The chapter again discussed some situations that trigger the use of sarcasm and humour and effects among the Ga people. It was revealed that, the use of sarcasm and humour during conversations, touches on emotions thereby bringing out the effect on individuals. The chapter again discussed some benefits and disadvantages of using sarcasm and humour in communication. It was seen in this chapter that sarcasm and humour have some similarities as well as some differences which make both expressions unique. The analysis of the data on sarcasm and humour also looked at the factors users

consider before/when making sarcastic or humorous expressions in order for the intended meaning to be established.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This study focused on the use of sarcasm and humour among the Ga people, as manifested in the selected domains. The chapter presents the summary and conclusions drawn. Contribution to knowledge and some recommendations for further studies are also discussed in this chapter.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore the semantics of sarcasm and humour among the Ga people. It set out to inquire about the meaning of the sarcastic and humorous expressions used among the Ga people. The thesis further sought to find out the effects of the usage of these expressions among the Ga people under various domains.

The focus of the study was to analyze the meaning of sarcasm and humour used among the Ga people in the context of the speech act theory. This Speech Act Theory is based on the assumption that, words have a deeper meaning than the way they are used literally. That is, the utterance made, the actual meaning of the utterance and the reactions displayed by interlocutors during the communication process. In other words, both the utterance of words and reactions play significant roles in the conversation.

The thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one served as an introductory part of the thesis. It discussed the background of the study as well as who the Ga people are and their linguistic background. The statement of the problem was established. The chapter also examined the purpose of the study. The last section of chapter one presented the organization of the thesis.

Chapter two reviewed literatures relevant to the study on sarcasm and humour. The discussed literature included the concept of semantics, concept of meaning, context in relation to meaning, meaning of communication. The chapter further reviewed literature on the concept of sarcasm, difference between sarcasm and irony, concept of humour, difference between humour and jokes, context of sarcasm and humour, difference between sarcasm and humour. The review of some related studies on both sarcasm and humour were also discussed. It also discussed Austin's (1961) Speech Act Theory as the theoretical framework of the study.

Chapter three was on the methodology used for the research. It discussed the research design employed in the study. It then looked at the population size of the study and the participants involved in the research. The sampling technique used in the data collection was looked at as well as sources of data collection. The data collection technique was discussed alongside the focus group for the study. The data for this study were collected through audio recordings from participants. The researcher's native speaker's intuition was also used to generate some of the data. The instruments used in the data collection exercise; semi-structured interviews were also discussed. The chapter then focused on the data

interpretation and analysis procedures and finally there were discussions on some ethical issues concerning the research.

Chapter four discussed the analysis of the semantics of sarcasm and humour usage among the Ga people. It established some of the sarcastic and humourous expressions used in their day to day conversations and outlined some effects on individuals (recipient). The last section of the chapter discussed the difference between sarcasm and humour.

Chapter five discussed the findings of the study. It came out clear that, the use of sarcasm and humour happens almost everywhere when individuals meet; be it in a social gathering or dialogue conversations. There are no specific time for its usage thus they are not planned expressions.

5.2 Findings of the Study

As noted earlier in 1.4, the literature on sarcasm and humour in Ga is inadequate; this research has consequently contributed by providing evidence on how the use of sarcasm and humour manifests in the day to day communication processes among the Ga people under various circumstances in different domains.

Sarcasm and humour are not only used for ridicule, mock, praise, entertain and other purposes but they help individuals to play with the language which is also a display of competence in the usage of the Ga language. They foster retention and help in memorization. Also, the study brought out some of the situations that trigger the use of sarcasm and humour and the effects they have on individuals. The study showed that, both

men, women and children make use of sarcasm and humour in their daily communication and every utterance made are backed by context. Sarcasm and humour are not bounded by any geographical location or time. Sex or age do not play any significant part in the use of sarcasm and humour.

In addition to the above, the study showed that the use of sarcasm and humour in Ga, is cognitive hence the use of some expressions by a participant on the hearer is intended to stir the emotions of the hearer, which could eventually lead to various consequential reactions. Just like the findings in other studies on sarcasm and humour, the present research showed that sarcasm and humour in Ga can also appear as the speech act elements and not just for the fun of it. In terms of similarities and differences, it was found that humour is deliberately said to elicit laughter while sarcasm is said to ridicule a person.

It was also observed in the chapter that the reactions towards the use of sarcasm and humour on individual differs from one person to the other. This confirms to the earlier findings of El Refaie (2011) and Holmes (2000).

5.3 Conclusion

The influence of sarcasm and humour as a communicative means show that language plays a major role on the effectiveness and growth of people of a particular community. This proves that, the language of sarcasm and humour is a very powerful communication tool to individuals and the communities at large. Again, sarcasm and humour as inseparable entities stand out as distinguishing and influential components of culture.

5.4 Recommendation

Although this study has been able to provide a description on the phenomenon on the use of sarcasm and humour under various domains among the Ga people, not all domains and aspects of sarcasm and humour research were catered for in the language in this study. For instance, the research could not touch on sarcasm and humour used in the media, social media forms, sarcasm and humour on ethnic relations, etc. therefore, further studies on the use of sarcasm and humour in the language could examine them in this regard. I also recommend that further studies can look at sarcasm and humour in Ga Traditional games, proverbs, riddles, folksongs etc and also other branches of linguistics, that is, morphology, syntax, pragmatics etc.



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APPENDIX 1

A SAMPLE OF THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTION

- (1). Why did you use such an expression?
- (2). Don't you think the expression will affect the receiver?
- (3). How do you feel after using such expression?
- (4). How do you feel after receiving such expression?
- (5). Did the expression have any effect on you?
- (6). I observed that, the expression made some recipients laugh while others did not, why was that?
- (7). You were laughing throughout the discourse, why?
- (8). Has there been any instance of a fight (both verbal and physical aggression) here before due to the use of such expressions?
- (9). If yes, how did you deal with it?

