

On the Visual and Verbal Communication in Political Cartoons

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(Summary)

The article studies the visual and verbal communication and their interaction in political cartoons. It analyzes the indispensable means of expression the cartoonist uses to convey his/her message such as visual metaphors and metonymies. Visual metaphors and metonymies are analyzed from the point of view of Conceptual Metaphor and Metonymy Theory. Studied are the implications arising from the interaction between image, title and text (for the cases when there is title and/or text), as well as the metaphors and implications beyond image, title and text. The main theoretical construct used is the notion of incongruity from the Incongruity Theory of Humour that is extended to verbal and visual metaphor. The notion Logical Mechanism from the General Theory of Verbal Humour is applied in the analysis to (partially) resolve the incongruity/ies. Political cartoons are compared to a joke, a fundamental unit of humour in psychology, cultural anthropology, linguistics, philosophy and sociology. Pictorial representations and text function as contextualization cues to get to the probable cartoonist's message. The interpretation of political cartoons is open-ended and indeterminate and is dependent on the viewer's/reader's general knowledge and his/her familiarity with the genre.

Keywords: humour; political cartoons; incongruity; visual incongruity; visual metaphor; visual metonymy

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