

## A Study of Irony in Political Discourse

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### Abstract

This study examines the ideological and evaluative nature of irony in discourse. It aims to reveal the linguistic constructions involved in ironic utterances and to uncover ideologies underpinning such structures. It draws upon the echo and pretense theories to account for utterance representation along with Wodak's (2007) framework of self and other presentation strategies. The study examines the incongruous construction of an attitude, and the objectives attempted to achieve by taking a cynical stance. The main research questions center on the role played by ironic utterances and how they contribute to preserving the image of the speaker and to the negative representation of the other. The study reveals the way politicians mark their verbal irony, i.e., to classify and categorize the co-textual markers including hyperboles, and repetitive follow-up commentaries. The findings in this study support Bertuccelli (2018) view that irony is not merely saying the opposite of what one means but instead communicating an attitude. It adds to the existing literature that irony involves not a reversal of evaluation, but a reversal of attitudes about social actors to draw a positive self-image. Furthermore, the study shows that echoing the opponent's utterance involves a representation of acts and speech acts along with free direct and indirect speech.

*Keywords:* discourse, echo, irony, negative other representation, pretense, positive self-presentation

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