
The Impact of Relationship Proximity on the Use of Irony and Sarcasm

Erika Cannone*^{†1} and Greta Mazzaggio^{‡2}

¹Università degli Studi Roma Tre – Italy

²Department of Humanities, University of Florence – Italy

Abstract

This study examines whether the choice of using irony vs. sarcasm depends on the social relationship between the speakers. The study found that participants were more likely to use both forms of irony with close people, and that irony is more accepted than sarcasm, regardless of the interlocutor. Empathy plays a crucial role in determining the use of irony or sarcasm, with more emphatic individuals being more likely to use irony compared to sarcasm. Overall, the study highlights the complexity of using verbal irony and sarcasm in social communication.

Keywords: irony, sarcasm, empathy

*Speaker

[†]Corresponding author: eri.cannone@stud.uniroma3.it

[‡]Corresponding author: greta.mazzaggio@unifi.it