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Explaining Ironic Literary Dialogue

*A Comparative Study of Echoic and Pretence Accounts of Verbal Irony Focusing on Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises**

Werner Rinde Thorstensen

ENG4191 - Master's Thesis in English Language

60 ECTS Credits

Department of Literature, Area Studies and European
Languages

Faculty of Humanities

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Spring 2021

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Abstract

This thesis tests and compares two post-Gricean accounts of how to explain verbal irony by using them to analyse data from literary texts, primarily Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises*. The first of these accounts explains verbal irony as a type of echoic language use where the speaker tacitly attributes a thought and tacitly expresses a dissociative attitude towards that thought. The second account explains irony as being a type of pretence, where the speaker pretends to be someone with a defective perspective or point of view in order to represent a similar point of view as unreasonable. The echoic theory and the multiple variants of the pretence theory have by some been seen to be empirically or theoretically indistinguishable. Hybrid accounts that make use of elements from both accounts have also been made, and the theories have thus become even less distinct. The pretence variant relevant to this thesis is arguably such a hybrid. This thesis tests and compares the two chosen theories to find what the similarities and differences between the two are by analysing and explaining data from *The Sun Also Rises* and a few other literary texts. By analysing data from literature, the theories can be tested in an interesting way while also offering explanations of intuitive interpretations and claims by literary critics.

I suggest that the only meaningful distinction between the two theories appears to be their fundamental disagreement over whether irony is echoic language use or a type of pretence. In several aspects where the two theories are similar, I argue that the echoic theory is superior. I also claim that the pretence theory would be improved by adapting similar or identical explanations to those of the echoic theory. Treating irony as a kind of pretence also seems to complicate the pretence theory's explanations, while not appearing to offer any meaningful benefit for the added complications. I also make observations about ironic questions, including questions that appear to be both sincere and ironic, as well as ironic answers to sincere questions. Furthermore, I claim that the ways in which irony can have victims are not unique to irony. Lastly, I comment on Hemingway's use of verbal irony and the way in which it often leads to the attitudes communicated in irony being open to interpretation.

Appendix 1 contains the examples in the data that are analysed in the thesis, as well as a few additional examples mentioned in the discussion. Appendix 2 contains tables and figures, including a figure that is an example in the data.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 General Introduction

This thesis will test and compare two pragmatic theories that explain verbal irony. It has been suggested that the theories in question are “empirically or theoretically indistinguishable” (Wilson 2006, 1724), and the thesis therefore intends to test whether this is the case. If not, then the aim is to find out which theory is superior. The chosen theories are among the leading theories today. One theory is the *echoic theory of irony*, created and later refined further by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson (1981, 1995; Wilson and Sperber 1992, 2012). This is one of the most influential accounts of verbal irony, if not the most influential, since that by Paul Grice (1967). The other theory is Gregory Currie’s (2006) variant of Herbert Clark and Richard Gerrig’s *pretence theory of irony* (Clark and Gerrig 1984). These theories will be applied to data found in the dialogue of literary texts, primarily Ernest Hemingway’s 1926 novel *The Sun Also Rises*¹, to analyse and explain various examples of verbal irony. This application of pragmatic theory to literary texts places this thesis in the emerging field Siobhan Chapman and Billy Clark have named *pragmatic literary stylistics* (Chapman and Clark 2014, 1). The aim of the thesis is to provide insight into how intuitive interpretations of ironic utterances are reached while also serving as an intriguing and hopefully insightful way of testing the pragmatic theories. The method will be to compare detailed analyses by both theories of examples primarily drawn from *The Sun Also Rises*.

1.2 Pragmatic Literary Stylistics

Pragmatics “is concerned with how language users interact, communicate and interpret linguistic behaviour” (Chapman and Clark 2014, 1). It can be described as “the study of how contextual factors interact with linguistic meaning in the interpretation of utterances” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 1). Verbal irony falls within the field of pragmatics as it is through contextual factors that an utterance like “well done!” can be ironic. It would be an ironic utterance if said after someone fails a task but in a different context, where the task is successfully accomplished, the same utterance would not be ironic. Literary stylistics on the

¹ The novel was first published in the United States titled *The Sun Also Rises*, then later in England titled *Fiesta* (Chapman 2019, 22). The edition from which the examples in the data are cited is called *Fiesta: The Sun Also Rises*, but the novel will henceforth be referred to only as *The Sun Also Rises*.

other hand, “is the study of how close attention to language use can contribute to accounts of how texts are understood and evaluated” (Chapman and Clark 2014, 1). *Pragmatic literary stylistics* was introduced by Chapman and Clark (2014, 1) since despite the two fields overlapping to a certain degree, there has not been much work done that combines them. This new field has the potential to lead to new insight, as “just as pragmatics can offer insights into the interpretation of literary texts, or explain the more intuitive insights of literary critics, so encounters with literary texts may suggest ways in which pragmatic theories can be developed, refined and adapted” (Chapman and Clark 2014, 10). They also suggest that “work in pragmatic literary stylistics can constitute not only an application of specific pragmatic theories but also a way of shedding light on their nature and, to some extent, of testing them” (Chapman and Clark 2014, 7).

Using data from literary texts to test pragmatic theories of verbal irony appears to have great potential. This approach could not only lead to insight into the theories, which is the primary aim of this thesis, but could also say something about how the data is intuitively interpreted, as well as supporting or undermining existing claims made by literary critics. Since this is such a new field, relatively little work like this thesis has been done in the past. Massimiliano Morini (2010) made use of the echoic account of irony to develop a thesis about uses of irony in Jane Austen’s novels, but not much other work has been done where pragmatic theories of verbal irony are applied to irony found in literature. While not about irony, Chapman’s chapter in *Pragmatics and Literature* (Chapman 2019) is also similar in that it discusses marked forms and indeterminate implicatures in *The Sun Also Rises*.

1.3 Aim and Scope

A major aim of this thesis is to identify differences and similarities between the echoic account of irony and a variant of the pretence account. To do this, examples found in dialogue in literary works will be analysed using both theories. The analyses will then be briefly compared, while the most relevant findings will be discussed in detail in the later discussion section. The data will primarily come from Hemingway’s novel *The Sun Also Rises*. This limits the scope of the thesis and makes it possible to compare findings with what some literary critics have said about the novel and Hemingway’s style of writing, as well as his use of irony.

More cases of verbal irony were found than the thesis has space to analyse, and so the thesis will instead make use of as large and representative a sample as possible. This, along with the possibility that some cases of verbal irony in the novel may have been missed,

means that the thesis will be able to generalize about verbal irony in the novel but not say anything definitive about every use of irony.

Data from other literary works will be included to offer a better test of the pragmatic theories in cases where they are distinct in some way from those found in *The Sun Also Rises* and may therefore offer different challenges to the two theories. Including data from other sources not only leads to superior tests for the pragmatic theories, but by comparing and contrasting other uses of verbal irony to that by Hemingway it will also be possible to say something about the ways in which he tends to use verbal irony.

Only verbal irony from dialogue has been included in the data, primarily to limit the scope of the thesis. Examples from the narration in *The Sun Also Rises* could also have been included, but the thesis will focus only on verbal irony in dialogue for the sake of cohesiveness and space restraints. Using examples from literature means that the data in this thesis will by necessity be longer than most examples used elsewhere in linguistics, due to the importance of context to the interpretation of verbal irony. In examples where additional context is necessary beyond just preceding lines of dialogue, paraphrased context will be provided in brackets. Due to space restraints, the examples in the data will be found in Appendix 1. The single exception is example (B.1) which appears as figure 3 in Appendix 2. The examples in the data will be labelled by the first letter in the last name of the author of the work the example is from. The examples will then be numbered and sorted in Appendix 1 by order of appearance in the original text, to make it easier to find them in editions where the page numbers do not correspond with those in the edition cited. (H.5) will therefore be the fifth example found in the text by Hemingway. Worth pointing out is also that examples (H.7), (H.9), (ST.1), and (B.1) will be referred to in the discussion, but not analysed in Chapter 3 due to space constraints.

The thesis will attempt to answer the following research questions:

Ai. What are the differences and similarities between the two theories of verbal irony, at least in terms of how they apply to irony in literary dialogue?

Aii. How do differences between the theories impact their ability to explain the data considered?

Aiii. Does either theory offer superior explanations and analyses?

B. What insight can the two theories offer to intuitive interpretations of the use of verbal irony in the data, as well as certain claims made by literary critics about Hemingway's use of irony?

1.4 Outline of thesis

Chapter 2 will give an overview of the central literature on verbal irony in general. Different aspects of verbal irony will be presented, as well as the highly influential work by Grice. The two theories of irony under consideration in this thesis will be explained. As it provides additional context to the echoic theory, relevance theory will also be briefly explained.

Chapter 3 will consist of analyses of the data, with the analysis of each example divided into separate subchapters. Each subchapter will contain a short summary of both theories' analyses of that example.

Chapter 4 presents extended discussion of the most important findings from the data analysis. The similarities, differences, strengths, and weaknesses of the theories will also be discussed.

Chapter 5 will draw conclusions based on the findings and revisit the research questions. Some suggestions for further research will also be made.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Irony

Irony is a broad term that is typically categorized into subtypes such as dramatic irony, situational irony, and verbal irony. The relation between these types is unclear: it may only be historic, or they may all be parts of a broader category. Defining irony and its subtypes is not easily done either, so the types are best illustrated by ostensive definitions. Dramatic irony is the kind of irony famously found in *Romeo and Juliet* where Romeo takes his own life by drinking poison because he thinks Juliet is dead, while the audience is aware that Juliet is still alive. Situational irony includes examples like a burning fire station and a musician with amusia. Verbal irony, the topic of this thesis, is the type of irony seen in examples (1) and (2).

- (1) Spoken on a cold, windy and rainy day: “The weather is lovely today!”
- (2) Spoken after someone fails a task: “Well done!”

Unless otherwise stated, the word *irony* in this thesis, including in most citations, will be referring to verbal irony specifically, rather than the broader term. The distinction between *irony* and *sarcasm* can also be vague. *Sarcasm* is typically used synonymously with verbal irony in North American English, while it in British English is considered a subtype of irony that is particularly mocking or scornful (Allott 2010, 107). *Sarcasm* has also been defined as “a statement that clearly contradicts the knowable state of affairs and is harshly critical toward the addressee”² (Leggitt and Gibbs 2000, 5). This thesis will not make use of the word *sarcasm*, as for the purposes of this thesis, distinguishing between irony and sarcasm does not seem beneficial enough to warrant the potential confusion it could cause.

Irony occurs in both spontaneous discourse and literary texts, and analysing it is therefore of interest to both linguists and literary critics, as well as to students of humour (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 53). It is therefore also curious how little attention linguists, philosophers and literary theorists have paid to the nature of verbal irony (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 53). It is not that verbal irony as a phenomenon has been ignored, but that “the nature of verbal irony is generally taken for granted” (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 53). Much has therefore been written on the effects that irony has, whether in general or in specific

² For further discussion on irony, sarcasm, and other similar phenomena, see “Irony, Hyperbole, Jokes and Banter” (Wilson 2017).

examples, but comparatively little has been done to explain how verbal irony is interpreted and understood. Experimental studies have been done though, and Ira Noveck (2018, 182) claims that such studies have made clear the distinction between the comprehension of metaphors and of irony. “The ability to understand simple forms of irony is thought to be present from around the age of six or seven, and to be impaired in a variety of conditions” and “one of the goals of pragmatics is to describe this ability and thus explain how irony is understood” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 123). However, while most people are capable of both understanding and producing ironic utterances, the nature of irony is surprisingly elusive.

Dictionary definitions of irony as a type of speech tend to be inadequate. Too often these definitions describe verbal irony as a reversal of meaning, where the intention of the speaker is to convey a meaning that is opposite of the literal meaning of the words being used. For example, while it does not have a separate entry for verbal irony, the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines irony in the sense of verbal irony as “the use of words that say the opposite of what you really mean, often as a joke and with a tone of voice that shows this” (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 8th ed., s.v. “irony”). The Oxford English Dictionary offers a better definition, instead defining irony as “the expression of one’s meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect” (Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “irony, n,” accessed April 30, 2021, <https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.uio.no/view/Entry/99565>). Example (3), from F. Scott Fitzgerald’s 1925 novel *The Great Gatsby*, can be used to illustrate that definitions like the one from the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary are insufficient.

- (3) “I said I’d been making a small investigation of his past.”
“And you found he was an Oxford man,” said Jordan helpfully.
“An Oxford man!” He was incredulous. “Like hell he is! He wears a pink suit.”
“Nevertheless he’s an Oxford man.”
“Oxford, New Mexico,” snorted Tom contemptuously, “or something like that.”
(Fitzgerald [1925] 1993, 77–78)

The discussion is about Jay Gatsby and Tom does not believe that he went to Oxford University. Tom instead ironically suggests that Gatsby studied in the non-existent town of Oxford, New Mexico. If verbal irony is to be understood as the opposite of the literal

meaning, then this example would have to be explained as Tom meaning something that can be paraphrased as “it is not something like Oxford, New Mexico that Gatsby studied at” which, while true, is not what Tom is trying to communicate. Instead, it intuitively appears as if Tom is communicating a critical attitude about the idea that Gatsby studied at Oxford University. Irony can therefore not just be explained as a reversal of the literal meaning. So, while the average adult will be able to understand the irony in Tom’s utterance and identify it as such, explaining what irony is appears to be something even dictionaries struggle to do adequately.

Many dictionary definitions of irony are often quite similar to how verbal irony was seen in classical rhetoric, where it “was traditionally classified as one of the *tropes*” (Abrahams and Harpham 2009, 165). These tropes are utterances “with a figurative meaning that departs from its literal meaning in one of several standard ways” and in the case of verbal irony this departure “is the contrary or contradictory of the literal meaning” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 123). The literary scholars M.H. Abrahams and Geoffrey Harpham (2009, 165) have a better description of verbal irony and characterize it as

a statement in which the meaning that a speaker implies differs sharply from the meaning that is ostensibly expressed. The ironic statement usually involves the explicit expression of one attitude or evaluation, but with indications in the overall speech-situation that the speaker intends a very different, and often opposite, attitude or evaluation.

Wilson and Sperber (2012, 123), whose theory of irony is central to this thesis and will be explained below in section 2.4, claim that “the point of irony is to indicate that a proposition the speaker might otherwise be taken to endorse . . . is ludicrously inadequate” and that “a hearer who fails to recognize this will have misunderstood the speaker’s ironical intention.” Wilson (2006, 1722–1723) also says that the point of ironic utterances

is not to claim what they would be taken to claim if uttered literally . . . but to draw attention to some discrepancy between a description of the world that the speaker is apparently putting forward and the way (she wants to suggest) things actually were. A speaker who does not recognise this will have misunderstood and a speaker who doubts the hearer’s ability to recognise it on the basis of background knowledge may provide additional clues.

Wilson and Sperber (1992, 67) claim that “all communication takes place at a risk,” as recognising a speaker’s intentions involves fallible inferential processes. In the case of verbal

irony, it is not uncommon for even the most sophisticated readers to fail to recognize the speaker's ironic intent (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 67). Noveck (2018, 172) shares an anecdote of how even Wilson, despite being "one of the world's leading authorities on irony," found herself missing the ironic intent of a speaker in a bakery. Wilson and Sperber (1992, 67) say that "the subtler the irony, the greater the risks." The subtlety of the verbal irony can therefore be reduced by providing additional clues, though in some cases the speaker may intend for the irony to be subtle and hard to discern. The kinds of clues used to indicate verbal irony are of particular interest when looking at verbal irony used in dialogue in literary texts, as it is written language meant to resemble spoken language. The ironical tone of voice is for example a characteristic feature of verbal irony in spoken language, but it is not easily replicated in written language. This tone of voice "is characterised by a flat or deadpan intonation, slower tempo, lower pitch level and greater intensity than are found in the corresponding literal utterances . . . and is generally seen as a cue to the speaker's mocking, sneering or contemptuous attitude"³ (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 128). It is possible to replicate this in written language to a certain degree by reporting clauses like "he said ironically" or "she said flatly." However, while this might serve the same function of being a cue or clue to a speaker's ironic intent, it will not have the exact same effects as the ironical tone of voice. Authors will therefore need to rely on different clues if they want the reader to more easily be able to recognize the irony. Worth noting is also that the recognition of irony among the characters exists on another layer from the recognition by the reader. As a result, a character can miss another character's ironic intent, while the reader does not. This could also lead to dramatic irony, such as when the reader is explicitly told that a character misses someone else's ironic intent.

This thesis does not aim to settle on an exact definition of verbal irony, nor is it necessary for it to do so, though it should be clear at this point that any definition of irony as simply being the opposite meaning of the words being used is inadequate. Giving an accurate and concise definition of verbal irony appears to be challenging, and may not even be possible, but dictionary definitions should still describe irony in a more comprehensive way than some appear to do. It is, however, not necessary to settle on a specific definition of verbal irony in order to study its nature and how it is processed. Wilson (2006, 1723) points out that in order to turn definitions into "an explanatory theory, we would need, first, a definition of figurative meaning, second, a method of deriving figurative meanings from their

³ For more literature on the ironical tone of voice, see Wilson and Sperber (2012, 128).

literal counterparts, and third, some rationale for the practice of substituting a figurative for a literal meaning.” Furthermore, Wilson (2006, 1723) also points out that the interpretation of tropes is “highly context-dependent.” Therefore, “if figurative meanings . . . are pragmatically inferred, we need an account of how the inference is triggered, what form it takes, and what types of outputs it yields” (Wilson 2006, 1723).

2.2 Grice

Philosopher Paul Grice’s William James lectures at Harvard University in 1967, later published in *Studies in the Way of Words* (Grice 1989), were hugely influential and “led to the real development of the field [of pragmatics]” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 1). While not Grice’s main focus, his analysis of tropes, including irony, “was the first serious attempt to analyse them using pragmatic machinery independently needed for the analysis of ordinary literal utterances” (Wilson 2006, 1723). Central to his theory of verbal irony and tropes in general is the distinction between what can be called *sentence meaning* and *utterance meaning*. The former is “the semantic content of the sentence” and the latter is “the totality of what the speaker intends to convey by making an utterance” (Kroeger 2019, 139). As a result, sentence meaning is independent of context while “utterance meaning includes the semantic content plus any pragmatic meaning created by the use of the sentence in a specific context” (Kroeger 2019, 139). For example, a speaker may answer the question “what’s your favourite animal?” by stating “I like cats.” The semantic content of the sentence alone does not suggest that cats are the speaker’s favourite animal; only that they like them. However, the context of the question means that the utterance meaning communicates something like “cats are my favourite animals.” Compare this to the same sentence being uttered in a different context, in response to “do you like dogs?” The semantic content of the answer remains the same, yet in the second context the sentence communicates something like “I don’t like dogs, but I like cats.” Therefore, in these examples, “the difference in utterance meanings must be due to pragmatic inferences induced by the different contexts” (Kroeger 2019, 140).

Grice referred to these inferences as *conversational implicatures* (Kroeger 2019, 140). Sperber and Wilson (1995, 2) call the model of communication which has emerged from Grice’s work an *inferential model*, which is different from the *code model* that they say all previous theories of communication were based on. According to the code model, “communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages” (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 2) and “utterances are signals encoding the messages that speakers intend to convey,

and comprehension is achieved by decoding the signals to obtain the associated messages” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 2). However, with the inferential model “communication is achieved by producing and interpreting evidence” (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 2). Here, “utterances are not signals but pieces of evidence about the speaker’s meaning, and comprehension is achieved by inferring this meaning from evidence provided not only by the utterance but also by the context” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 2). Since an utterance is “a linguistically coded piece of evidence, . . . comprehension involves an element of decoding” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 2). Therefore, the two models “are not incompatible; they can be combined in various ways” (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 3). “However, it is usually assumed that one of the two models must provide the right overall framework for the study of communication in general” (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 3). For most approaches to pragmatics today, this inferential model is considered as one of two foundational ideas that were defended by Grice (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 2). The second foundational idea is that when the listener infers the speaker’s meaning, they are “guided by the expectation that utterances should meet some specific standards” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 3). “Most current pragmatic theories share Grice’s view that inferential comprehension is governed by expectations about the behaviour of speakers, but differ as to what these expectations are” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 4).

Grice (1989, 26) claimed that conversational implicatures were “essentially connected with certain general features of discourse” and formulated “a rough general principle which participants will be expected (*ceteris paribus*) to observe.” This principle was labelled the *Cooperative Principle* and Grice (1989, 26) formulated it as “make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.” Grice (1989, 26) also observed that “our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did.” For talk exchanges (the term used by Grice) to be rational, each participant must cooperate to some degree. The exact purpose or direction of the talk exchange can be set from the beginning or evolve as the talk exchange progresses, but there will always be some conversational moves at each stage of the talk exchange that will not be conversationally suitable (Grice 1989, 26). It is worth pointing out that the Cooperative Principle is not “a code of conduct, which speakers have a moral obligation to obey,” but rather “a statement of default expectations for rational conversation” (Kroeger 2019, 142). By failing, or appearing to fail, to meet these expectations, it is possible “to communicate extra elements of meaning” (Kroeger 2019, 142). One way to do this is to fail to follow the sub-

categories of the Cooperative Principle that Grice (1989, 26–27) called *maxims* and categorized as:

Quantity:

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange).
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality:

Supermaxim: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Relation:

1. Be relevant.

Manner:

Supermaxim: Be perspicuous.

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

A speaker may appear to break with one of these maxims but that would not lead to a pragmatic inference if the hearer does not expect the speaker to be cooperative (Kroeger 2019, 143). Only if there is such an expectation of cooperation will the hearer assume that the violations were made by the speaker with a purpose (Kroeger 2019, 143). This can be illustrated with one of Grice's own examples:

(4) A: *Where does C live?*

B: *Somewhere in the South of France.*

(Grice 1989, 32)

B is here violating the first maxim of Quantity as their answer is not informative enough to adequately answer A's question. This violation can be explained by B not having the necessary information to answer the question without violating the second maxim of Quality, and A would infer this. As a result, B's violation of the first maxim of Quantity generates the implicature that B does not know which town C lives in. This is a case where

one maxim is violated because it clashes with another maxim. This is one of multiple ways that a participant in a talk exchange can fail to fulfil a maxim (Grice 1989, 30). However, had A not expected B to be cooperative, then the implicature that B is giving A all the information they have would not have been inferred.

According to Grice (1989, 30), verbal irony is a type of conversational implicature that is generated by *flouting* a maxim, meaning to “blatantly fail to fulfil it.” Tropes like irony, metaphor, meiosis and hyperbole are all mentioned as examples where the first maxim of Quality is flouted (Grice 1989, 34). According to Grice, in verbal irony, the speaker says something they do not believe, thereby violating the first maxim of Quality, while also making it blatantly obvious to the audience that the speaker is violating a maxim by saying something they do not believe to be true. So, in example (1), the speaker flouts the first maxim of Quality by saying something they clearly do not believe to be true, as they obviously do not think the weather is lovely that day, and the hearer will recognize this. The hearer will assume that the Cooperative Principle is still in effect and that the speaker is trying to be cooperative. There will therefore need to be some sort of implicature present. According to Grice (1989, 34), the speaker must be trying to put forth “some obviously related proposition” and “the most obviously related proposition is the contradictory of the one he purports to be putting forward.” The utterance meaning is therefore the contradictory proposition from the one in the sentence meaning. The proposition the speaker puts forward, or as Grice (1989, 34) says “purports to be putting forward,” is the proposition “the weather is lovely today.” However, it is the contradictory “the weather is not lovely today” that they are trying to communicate.

While Grice’s work has been highly influential, his discussion of tropes has been shown to be inadequate in numerous ways. Grice himself acknowledged one of the ways his theory was insufficient with example (5).

- (5) A and B are walking down the street, and they both see a car with a shattered window. B says, *Look, that car has all its windows intact*. A is baffled. B says, *You didn't catch on; I was in an ironical way drawing your attention to the broken window*. (Grice 1989, 53).

This exchange fulfils Grice’s criteria for verbal irony: B flouts the first maxim of Quality by saying something they believe to be false and intends for A to recognize that this is the case. The contradictory proposition “look, that car does not have all its windows intact” would, based on Grice’s account, be what B was trying to communicate, but instead of this

being inferred the exchange comes across as absurd. Grice's (1989, 53) explanation was "the fact that irony is intimately connected with the expression of a feeling, attitude, or evaluation. I cannot say something ironically unless what I say is intended to reflect a hostile or derogatory judgment or a feeling such as indignation or contempt." As Wilson (2006, 1727) points out, it is hard to see this utterance as ironic because "it is hard to see what could have justified this critical judgement or attitude in the circumstance described." While Grice recognized that something related to attitude was missing from his account of irony, he did not attempt to incorporate this.

As has been shown above in section 2.1, explanations of irony as a contradictory proposition are in many cases inadequate and as a result Grice's theory of irony cannot account for examples like (3). Another problem with this explanation is that "the definition of irony in which the speaker communicates the opposite of the literal meaning does not do justice to the very rich and varied effects of irony" (Wilson 2006, 1726). Ironic questions are another issue for Grice's account. If the speaker in (1) had instead ironically asked "isn't the weather lovely today?" then the utterance could not be said to violate the first maxim of Quality, yet the question is intuitively understood as ironic.

Another criticism of Grice's account of verbal irony is whether saying something means *expressing* a proposition or *asserting* it. Asserting a proposition means that the speaker is also communicating that they believe that proposition to be true (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 180). In some parts of Grice's framework, it can be said that he "treats saying as not merely expressing a proposition but asserting it" (Wilson 2006, 1726). However, if a speaker says, and thereby also asserts, a proposition in the case of verbal irony, then the first maxim of Quality is not violated as the speaker does not say something that they believe to be false. In his discussion of tropes, Grice (1989, 34) instead talks of the speaker "making as if to say" and "purporting to be putting forward" propositions. However, if the speaker is not actually saying anything "then the first maxim of Quality is not violated, and Grice's account of tropes does not go through" (Wilson 2006, 1726).

Grice's account of irony also "offers no clear explanation of why metaphor and irony should exist at all" (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 124–125). Grice's theory involves first interpreting and rejecting the literal sentence meaning due to a violation of the first maxim of Quality, and then concluding that the sentence meaning is "the most obviously related proposition" (Grice 1989, 34). As a result of this, "metaphor and irony should cost more to process than their literal counterparts, but yield no extra benefit, which makes their use irrational and a waste of effort" (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 125). In other words, there is no

explanation for why the speaker in (1) would ironically say “the weather is lovely today!” instead of a possible literal counterpart like “the weather is terrible today!” While Grice’s account was highly influential, much of the recent work on irony, including the two theories that will be presented below, are “based on the view that what irony essentially communicates is neither the proposition literally expressed nor the opposite of that proposition, but an attitude to this proposition and to those who might hold or have held it” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 125).

2.3 Relevance Theory

Grice’s account of implicatures and inference was not intended as a psychological account of how a hearer mentally processes implicatures, but rather an attempt to offer as an explanation of how implicatures could rationally be inferred (Wilson 2016, 79). Since then, “relevance theorists have been trying to develop Grice’s insights in a different direction, by incorporating them into a psychologically plausible, empirically testable theory of overt (‘ostensive’) communication” (Wilson 2016, 79). Clark (2014, 155) suggests that “relevance theory is arguably the most influential approach to pragmatics to have developed from the work of Grice.” Since it provides important context to the echoic theory of irony, relevance theory will be briefly introduced in this section.

Relevance theory is based on the two foundational ideas defended by Grice, which were discussed in section 2.2, but is distinct in two significant ways (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 5). First, Wilson and Sperber (2012, 5) summarize one of their earlier papers (Wilson and Sperber 1981) and suggest that “while Grice was mainly concerned with the role of pragmatic inference in implicit communication, relevance theorists have consistently argued that the explicit side of communication is just as inferential and worthy of pragmatic attention as the implicit side.” Second, relevance theory is one of the current theories that differs noticeably from Grice’s view of which expectations govern inferential comprehension. According to relevance theorists “the very act of communicating raises precise and predictable expectations of relevance, which are enough on their own to guide the hearer towards the speaker’s meaning” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 6). They claim that while it is possible for a speaker to produce an utterance that fails to be relevant, in genuine communication it is impossible to “produce utterances that do not convey a presumption of their own relevance” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 6). One area where relevance theory departs from Grice’s framework and which is highly relevant to the comprehension of verbal irony is

regarding the role of maxims (Wilson 2016, 80). According to Grice, implicatures can arise from violating maxims, but since relevance theory does not postulate conversational maxims, “blatant violation of pragmatic principles or maxims has no comparable role in relevance theory” (Wilson 2016, 80).

Relevance theory “treats utterance comprehension as an inferential process” (Wilson 2016, 81). This process creates a hearer’s inferred interpretation of what a speaker means through the hearer taking into consideration both the speaker’s utterance and information about the context in which the utterance is made (Wilson 2016, 81). An utterance will be “*relevant* to an individual when it connects with available contextual assumptions to yield *positive cognitive effects*” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 6). These effects can lead to strengthening, weakening or abandoning existing assumptions the hearer already has, or they can be “true contextual implications” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 6). The more positive cognitive effects an utterance has, the more relevant it will be (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 119). On the other hand, a hearer will need to invest effort to process an utterance, and so “the greater the processing effort, the lower the relevance” (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 124). As a result, “everything else being equal, the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved, and the smaller the mental effort required . . . the greater the relevance of the input to the individual at that time” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 6). Wilson and Sperber (1992, 67) therefore claim that when communicating, humans will try to achieve the greatest possible positive cognitive effects that requires the smallest amount of processing effort. For verbal irony, this means that ironic utterances must produce some positive cognitive effects in order to be worth the extra effort it takes for the hearer to process the utterance compared to a similar literal paraphrase. Two principles, one related to cognition and one to communication, are central to relevance theory:

- (a) Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximisation of relevance.
- (b) Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance.

(Sperber and Wilson 1995, 260)

Since attention on the part of the hearer is necessary for successful communication, and the hearer is likely to pay attention to something that is relevant, they must find the utterance relevant enough to be worth processing for communication to be successful (Wilson 2016, 85). A rational speaker must also intend for the utterance to be relevant enough to the

addressee for them to pay attention to and comprehend it (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 271). As a result, the second principle claims that every utterance carries with it the presumption that it is relevant to the addressee, or else it would not have been made. This is because by trying to communicate something, the speaker “indicates that she wants the audience to see her utterance as relevant” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 6). Unlike Grice’s maxims, this second principle is not something that a speaker has to be aware of in order to communicate in an effective manner, nor is it a principle that a speaker can choose to disobey (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 68). Instead, relevance theorists claim that “it is an exceptionless generalisation about human communicative behaviour” (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 68). The two principles also tie into the notion of *optimal relevance*:

An utterance is optimally relevant to the hearer if:

- a) It is relevant enough to be worth the hearer’s processing effort.
- b) It is the most relevant one compatible with the speaker’s abilities and preferences.

(Wilson and Sperber 2012, 65)

The wording of Grice’s third maxim of manner “be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)” (Grice 1989, 27) can be used as an illustration here. The clause in parentheses here may not seem to be worth the hearer’s processing effort, as it essentially means the same as the aforesaid “be brief” only through the use of far more letters and the quite uncommon word *prolixity*. The maxim is therefore somewhat contradictory. However, the second part of the manner is in fact relevant to the speaker’s, in this case Grice’s, preferences because he intended for the maxim to be humorous while also proving its own point by appearing to contradict itself. So even though the wording of the manner requires more processing effort than a shortened “be brief,” it also achieves greater positive cognitive effects. For this and other utterances, the effort required is worthwhile and consistent with the principle of relevance when there is no other utterance that could have achieved the same effects while requiring less effort (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 70).

An important distinction in relevance theory is between *interpretive* and *descriptive* uses of language. Sperber and Wilson (1995, 227) claim that “in appropriate conditions, any natural or artificial phenomenon in the world can be used as a representation of some other phenomenon which it resembles in some respects.” For example, someone may use pieces of fruit to create a model of the solar system. A watermelon does not resemble the Sun, nor does a clementine resemble Jupiter. However, this could still serve as a representation of the solar

system because the size and shape of the objects and the distance between them would loosely resemble that of celestial objects in the solar system. Since utterances are also phenomena, they too can be used as representations of something that they resemble (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 227).

There are two ways for these representations of propositional form to represent something. The first is *descriptively*, when there “is a relation between thoughts or utterances and possible or actual states of affairs which make (or would make) them true” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 218). The second way is *interpretively*, when there “is a relation between thoughts or utterances and other thoughts or utterances that they resemble in content” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 218). Wilson and Sperber (2012, 218) claim that interpretive representations are fundamental for explaining non-literal utterances, such as verbal irony. The degree to which an utterance resembles the content of some other thought or utterance can vary. Reported speech is one kind of interpretive language use and with indirect quotes the speaker can choose to which degree the utterance resembles the original utterance (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 230). An indirect quotation like “she loves tea” would for example more closely resemble the utterance “tea is my favourite beverage!” than “she likes tea” would.

Sperber and Wilson (1995, 230) go so far as to say that in a sense all language use is interpretive, since “on a fundamental level, *every* utterance is used to represent a thought of the speaker’s.” They “see verbal communication as involving a speaker producing an utterance as a public interpretation of one of her thoughts, and the hearer constructing a mental interpretation of this utterance, and hence of the original thought” (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 230). Every propositional form of an utterance is therefore an interpretation of a mental representation of the speaker (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 232). However, that interpretation does not have to be a literal reproduction, and as a result Sperber and Wilson (1995, 231) do not “postulate a convention, presumption, maxim or rule of literalness.” Instead, “how close the interpretation is, and in particular when it is literal, can be determined on the basis of the principle of relevance” (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 231). Figure 1 in Appendix 2 is a recreation of a figure by Sperber and Wilson (1995, 231) and illustrates the relationship between the propositional form of an utterance and a speaker’s thought, and the possible ways for that thought to represent something.

2.4 The Echoic Theory of Irony

Sperber and Wilson (1981) first laid out their account of irony in “Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction” and the account has since been refined and is now referred to as the *echoic account*. According to Wilson (2013, 41), most new theories of irony since the publication of that first paper “can be seen as variants of, or reactions to, the echoic account.” The account started out as being “based on a distinction between *use* and *mention*” (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 57), where both words and propositions can be either used or mentioned. They illustrate this distinction with an example where Peter asks “what did Susan say?” to which Mary responds “she couldn’t speak to me then” (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 58). Mary’s utterance in this example has two interpretations, depending on whether the proposition is being used or mentioned. If it is being used, then Mary means that Susan could not speak to her, and that Susan therefore did not say anything to Mary. However, Mary could also be reporting what Susan said. In that case she is indirectly quoting what Susan said, which would have been something like “I can’t speak to you right now”, and the proposition is therefore being mentioned, rather than used. Sperber and Wilson then “went on to argue that verbal irony is a variety of indirect quotation, and thus crucially involves the mention of a proposition” (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 59). Indirect quotations can be used either to *report* or to *echo* something. With the first, the speaker only conveys the content of an original thought or utterance (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 59). This would be what Mary does if she is indirectly quoting what Susan said. Echoic use on the other hand, is a subtype of attributive language use. This is in turn a kind of interpretive language use, as was discussed in 2.3 above, and “specifically, it is interpretive use in which there is attribution of a thought or utterance to another” (Allott 2010, 23).

With echoic utterances, a speaker’s “primary intention is not to provide information about the content of an attributed thought, but to convey her own attitude or reaction to that thought” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 128–129). “The attitudes which can be conveyed in an echoic utterance range from acceptance and endorsement of the attributed thought, . . . through various shades of doubt or scepticism, . . . to outright rejection” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 130). Example (6) illustrates this.

(6) John (excitedly): “It’s going to snow tomorrow.”

Christine (excitedly): “It’s going to snow tomorrow.”

Christine (acceptingly): “It’s going to snow tomorrow.”

Christine (dismissively): “It’s going to snow tomorrow.”

Each of Christine’s utterances here are echoic, as she is expressing her attitude or reaction to the thought she attributes to John. As the example shows, she can echo the same thought and express attitudes such as sharing in John’s excitement, accepting the thought as a fact, dismissing the thought as totally unlikely, etc. Worth noting here is that “the proposition expressed by the ironical utterance need not be identical in content to the thought being echoed” (Wilson 2013, 46). The proposition may for example just be one of the implications of the echoed thought (Wilson 2013, 46). In the case of (6) though, they would be identical.

According to the echoic account, verbal irony is a variety of echoic use, but what sets irony apart from other echoic uses is that the speaker conveys an attitude from “the *dissociative range*: the speaker rejects a tacitly attributed thought as ludicrously false (or blatantly inadequate in other ways)” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 130). When being ironic, “the speaker echoes a thought she attributes to someone else, while dissociating herself from it with anything from mild ridicule to savage scorn” (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 60). So, when Christine in (6) echoes the thought and conveys an attitude of dismissing the thought, doing both of which tacitly, the utterance “it’s going to snow tomorrow” is verbal irony. The attributed thought that echoic utterances convey a speaker’s attitude towards can be a previous utterance, which may or may not have been uttered recently, or an unexpressed thought. In either case, it is the thought of someone other than the speaker, or a thought the speaker had in the past (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 238). This thought “may not be attributable to any specific person, but merely to a type of person, or people in general; it may be merely a cultural aspiration or norm” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 60).

“Since echoic utterances are not normally treated as departures from a norm, there is no reason to treat ironical utterances any differently,” (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 62) as the echoic account of irony considers it to simply be a variety of echoic utterances. In other words, what makes one of Christine’s utterance in (6) ironic is her expressing a dissociative attitude and so Wilson and Sperber do not see any reason to treat this instance differently from any of the other possible attitudes she could express. This, along with the fact that echoic utterances are easily understood, would suggest that no distinct competence is needed for producing ironical utterances. Wilson and Sperber (2012, 219) also “reject the maxim of truthfulness and the assumption that non-literalness involves a departure from the norms of communication.” Instead of there being an expectation of literal truthfulness central in communication, they suggest that there instead is an expectation of optimal relevance

(Wilson and Sperber 2012, 219), as was discussed above, which in the case of irony is fulfilled by the utterance of a sentence that to some degree resembles an attributed thought or utterance and expresses an attitude towards it.

In order to interpret verbal irony, the hearer needs to be able to recognize a source (or sources, as will be seen in chapter 3) that is being echoed in the utterance (Wilson 2006, 1728). This echo being tacit explains why irony comes with risk, as the speaker may not be able to recognize the source of the echo. This explains why an utterance like Grice's example (5) fails to be ironic; there is no obvious source for the echoic utterance when B says that the car has all its windows intact. In other words, it is not clear what thought the speaker is supposed to be conveying an attitude towards. As Wilson suggests, B's utterance could have been interpreted as ironic if there had been a suitable previous utterance that the speaker was echoing (2006, 1728). An example of such an utterance could be that B has voiced concerns about leaving their car parked on this street out of fear that it might get vandalized, to which A responded that it is a perfectly safe street to park a car. B then saying "look, that car has all its windows intact" would be an echo of A's previous assurance that B rejects by tacitly expressing a dissociative attitude towards, and the utterance would therefore be ironic.

The pioneering experimental study by Julia Jorgensen, George Miller, and Dan Sperber (1984) found that the subjects in the study were more likely to consider an utterance ironic when an anecdote included some antecedent that was identifiable as a source for an echoic utterance. As mentioned though, a speaker can echo more than just utterances that have been made in the past. In (1) for example, the context could be expanded by another speaker saying, "lets go to the park tomorrow, the weather will be lovely!" the previous day. In that case, the second speaker would be tacitly echoing that utterance and tacitly expressing a dissociative attitude towards it. But in the context given in (1), there is no previous utterance available to be echoed and yet the utterance is intuitively understood to be ironic. In this case, the speaker can instead be said to echo the hope that the weather would be lovely. Jorgensen, Miller, and Sperber (1984, 115) suggest that "under ordinary circumstances, people can be assumed to have such a hope; it can therefore be mentioned and ridiculed when it turns out to be disappointed, without creating any difficulty in interpretation for the hearer." The hope that the weather will be nice is therefore a kind of thought that is always available to be echoed in ironical utterances when the wish is not fulfilled. Cases like Grice's example of the car with broken windows "do not echo widely shared hope or expectations, and require a certain amount of scene-setting in order to be understood as echoic or ironical" (Wilson 2006, 1732). On the other hand, "universal human hopes or aspirations" (Wilson 2006, 1731)

are always available to be echoed, and the echoic theory of irony does not make any distinction between cases of verbal irony that echo these, such as example (1), and those that echo context-specific thoughts or utterances, such as the altered version of Grice's example (5) or the possible ironic utterance in (6).

In "Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction" (1981), Sperber and Wilson highlighted five important aspects of irony. One of these was the asymmetry in the use of irony; "one is much more likely to say *How clever* to imply 'How stupid' . . . than the other way around" (Sperber and Wilson 1981, 312). This *normative bias* can be seen with example (1), as saying that the weather is lovely when it is terrible can be intuitively understood as ironic whereas saying that it is terrible when it is lovely cannot. "Although the normative bias in irony was described and discussed at length in classical rhetoric, it was never properly explained" (Wilson 2017, 210). Grice's account of irony cannot explain this bias either, since if irony just entails substituting one meaning for its opposite, then irony "should be able to work just as well in one direction as in the other" (Sperber and Wilson 1981, 312). The echoic theory of irony can explain this as a result of what has been discussed above, with certain "universal human hopes or aspirations" always being available to be echoed (Wilson 2006, 1731). Since lovely weather is something humans universally hope for, it is possible to echo this hope and express a dissociative attitude towards it when that wish is not fulfilled. In order for "the weather is terrible today" to be understood as verbal irony it has to instead echo some previous thought or utterance of doubt or fear about the weather in the future, as there is no universal hope for the weather to be bad that is available to be echoed when the weather is good. Sperber and Wilson (1981, 312) claim that "in the face of an imperfect reality, it is always possible to make ironical mention of the norm. In the face of a perfect reality, there must be past doubts or fears to echo if the mention of a critical judgement is to count as ironical." Therefore, "norms, in the sense of socially shared ideas about how things should be, are always available to be ironically echoed when they are not satisfied" (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 142). As a result, according to the echoic theory of irony, "the normative bias follows from the fact that irony is echoic" (Wilson 2017, 214).

The echoic account also offers a good explanation for the relationship and "very close links" between irony and parody (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 62). The traditional accounts treat the two in distinct ways; irony as a substitution of meaning and parody as a form of imitation. Therefore, similarities between the two can only be the result of similar attitudes the speaker has when using irony and parody (Sperber and Wilson 1981, 311). The echoic account offers an account for the similarities and differences between the two, as Wilson and

Sperber (1992, 62) claim that “parody is to direct quotation what irony is to indirect quotation.” This means that while both are cases of echoes and dissociative attitudes, irony echoes content and parody echoes linguistic form (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 62–63). The two can also interact, as “parody can be used to express an ironical attitude to the thought expressed by the utterance being imitated” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 143).

Grice’s explanation for why his “look, that car has all it’s windows intact” example fails to be ironic was “the fact that irony is intimately connected with the expression of a feeling, attitude, or evaluation. I cannot say something ironically unless what I say is intended to reflect a hostile or derogatory judgement or a feeling such as indignation or contempt” (Grice 1989, 53–54). While this was not the first time someone had pointed out that irony is connected with some characteristic attitude, Grice still did not attempt to alter his account to explain the presence of such an attitude (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 127). Such a characteristic attitude is not present in for example metaphors, which is noteworthy as the classical and Gricean accounts of irony and metaphor sees them both as “departures from a convention, norm or maxim of literal truthfulness” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 127). This then raises the question of why only one of these departures would involve a characteristic attitude, and neither the classical nor Gricean account has an explanation for this. Most recent theories of irony break with these older ones, and “what the speaker . . . is now taken to communicate is not the proposition literally expressed by the ironical utterance, nor the opposite of that proposition, but an *attitude* to the proposition and to those who have accepted or might accept it” (Wilson 2017, 202–203). With the echoic theory of irony, the presence of the characteristic attitude in irony is an essential feature, as opposed to a puzzling one (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 141). As mentioned, the theory sees verbal irony as echoic use where the speaker conveys a dissociative attitude towards the attributed thought, meaning that the theory can explain why such an attitude is present with verbal irony.

While the range of dissociative attitudes a speaker can convey is wide, Wilson and Sperber (2012, 130) claim that the prototypical attitudes found in verbal irony are relatively mild. However, they also suggest that “there is no cut-off point between dissociative attitudes that are prototypically ironical and those that are not” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 130), and as a result there is a continuum of cases with a variety of attitudes. The presence of a dissociative attitude means that echoic account of irony, unlike the Gricean and traditional accounts, can explain more than just the cases where the speaker dissociates themselves from a particular thought because they believe it to be false; a speaker “may dissociate herself from

an opinion echoed not because it is false, but because to hold it or express it in the circumstances would be patently absurd” (Wilson and Sperber 1992, 61).

Another of the five important aspects of irony that Sperber and Wilson (1981, 311) highlight “has to do with the fact that ironical utterances often seem to be aimed at a particular target or victim.” The idea of irony being aimed at a target or victim is shared by many other than Sperber and Wilson (Hirsch 2017, 191–192). Among those who believe that irony can have victims are also Clark and Gerrig (1984, 122). Irony having a target or victim can be seen intuitively in (7). Marcus’ ironic statement is aimed at Mike and seems to come at his expense for having made the suggestion in the first place.

- (7) Mike: The weather is lovely today, let’s take a walk in the park!
[It starts raining when they reach the park.]
Marcus: What lovely weather for a walk in the park!

According to the echoic theory of irony, “irony is directly targeted at attributed thoughts, and may be indirectly targeted, particularly in sarcasm, at the people, or type of people, who entertain such thoughts or take them seriously” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 141). The direct targeting of thoughts therefore appears as a defining feature of irony, while the indirect targeting of the people who hold such thoughts is common but optional. In (7), the echoic theory would say that the targeted thought of the irony is that the weather is suitable for a walk in the park, which Marcus echoes. The irony also indirectly targets Mike since the thought is one that he very clearly entertained (and in this case also expressed).

Both the echoic account and the variant of the pretence account used in this thesis see irony as having a target: an attributed thought in the former and a limited perspective in the latter. *Victim* and *target* are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature to describe how irony can indirectly target a person or people, but the word *victim* for that notion will be used going forwards in this thesis for the sake of clarity.

Central to Sperber and Wilson’s explanation for victims of irony is the claim that “an ironic remark will have as a natural target the originators, real or imagined, of the utterances or opinions being echoed” (Sperber and Wilson 1981, 134). Sperber (1984, 134) also says that “the thought echoed may have been recognizably entertained or expressed by different people in different ways.” As a result, the echoic theory “easily allows for any number of victims differentiated in any kind of way” (Sperber 1984, 134). In (7), the originator of the echoed utterance is Mike, which both Mike and Marcus are fully aware of, and so he becomes the victim of the irony. However, if the context is expanded to say that Marcus had

initially responded to Mike's suggestion by enthusiastically saying "I agree, let's do it!", then he would have recognizably entertained the same thought he later echoes. As a result, Marcus could make both himself and Mike victims of the irony, but to different degrees. Mike would be the primary victim since he made the original utterance and Marcus would be the secondary victim since he expressed enthusiastic agreement. Had Marcus expressed less enthusiastic agreement instead, then he would still be a victim of his own irony, but to a smaller degree.

Other instances of verbal irony may have no particular discernible victim at all, such as in (1). If there is no previous thought or utterance made about expectations for the weather at a later stage then there is no particular victim as the echo is instead of a universal expectation about the weather, attributed to no one in particular or to people in general. This view of victims of irony has been questioned though, including in Hirsch (2017) which discusses "specific cases in which the originators of the ironic utterances or opinions echoed could not be conceived as victims of the irony" (Hirsch 2017, 189). Important to highlight is also that it appears as if irony may have both intended and unintended victims. In (7) for example, Marcus may be intending to make Mike a victim by echoing something he said. However, the context could be expanded to include a third person Dave who also went to the park thinking that the weather was going to be lovely and who just happened to overhear what Marcus said as he walked past. Dave could very well be considered a victim in this scenario, and the echoic theory could explain this as due to him also entertaining the echoed thought, yet Marcus could not possibly have intended for him to be a victim.

2.5 The Pretence Theory of Irony

Much of the work on irony since the 1980's, under the direct or indirect influence of "Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction" (Sperber and Wilson 1981) and "Test of the Mention Theory of Irony" (Jorgensen, Miller, and Sperber, 1984), now rejects the idea that irony is primarily meaning reversal, a fundamental part of the classical approach, and instead sees irony as expressing an attitude towards a proposition or the people who do or could hold it (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 125). This includes the *pretence theory of irony*, which is "by far the most influential variation of [Sperber and Wilson's] account, and also the most critical one" (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 126). While not the first to suggest that irony is a kind of pretence, a proper account based on this idea was first put forth by Clark and Gerrig (1984) in "On The Pretense Theory of Irony" and has since seen other variations that expand and

improve the original theory. The pretence and echoic theories “are sometimes seen as empirically or theoretically indistinguishable: several hybrid versions incorporating elements of both have been produced, and the boundaries between them have become increasingly blurred” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 126). “Sometimes it is suggested that these two views are the same, or that they do not differ in essential ways” (Currie 2006, 122). However, proponents of both theories continue to argue that the theories are distinct and that their preferred theory is superior.

The pretence theory of irony as proposed by Clark and Gerrig expands on Grice’s theory, which they claim “isn’t what it is made out to be” (Clark and Gerrig 1984, 121). As mentioned above, one of the criticisms against Grice’s theory is that it sees irony as involving using one proposition to get across another and thereby requires a hearer to “*replace* the literal meaning by its implicature” (Jorgensen, Miller, and Sperber 1984, 114). Clark and Gerrig (1984, 121) claim that this is not what Grice’s theory assumes, but that it instead assumes “that the ironist is *pretending* to use that proposition.” It is perhaps not quite clear why pretending to use a proposition should entail that there can be no replacing of meaning though, as the two do not seem to be mutually exclusive. Grice (1989, 54) does seem to have seen irony as being connected to pretence, as he suggested “to be ironical is, among other things, to pretend (as the etymology suggests), and while one wants pretense to be recognized as such, to announce it as a pretense would spoil the effect.” He suggested that this is why it would be appropriate to say “to speak metaphorically” before using a metaphor but not “to speak ironically” before verbal irony (Grice 1989, 54). Those who adhere to the echoic theory would explain this being a result of verbal irony being tacit in nature, while Clark and Gerrig support Grice’s view that it is because it would ruin the pretence. Some cases of pretence are certainly not spoiled by announcing it as such though, since it is possible to start pretence by saying something like “let’s pretend.” Two or more people may also pretend to be cops and robbers, and announcing it as such as an answer to the question “what are you doing?” does not prevent the person asking the question from joining the pretence with the others. However, it might be that verbal irony requires a specific kind of pretence, one that should be recognized as pretence but not announced as such, similar to how the echoic theory suggests that irony is both tacitly attributive and tacitly dissociative.

According to Clark and Gerrig (1984, 122), when a speaker such as in (1) is ironic, they are “pretending to be an unseeing person . . . exclaiming to an unknowing audience how beautiful the weather is.” The speaker intends for the hearer to recognize the pretence as such, “and to see that she is thereby ridiculing the sort of person who would make such an

exclamation, . . . the sort of person who would accept it, and the exclamation itself” (Clark and Gerrig 1984, 122). Clark and Gerrig (1984, 122) express their theory as there being a speaker S who addresses A, the primary audience. When speaking ironically, S pretends to be another speaker S’ who addresses an audience A’ by saying something that “in one way or another, is patently uninformed or injudicious” (Clark and Gerrig 1984, 122) What S’ is saying, i.e. what S pretends to say, is therefore worthy of “a hostile or derogatory judgment or a feeling such as indignation or contempt” which Grice suggested was a necessary part of irony (Grice 1989, 122) . Out of ignorance, A’ does not recognize the pretence, while A sees everything, including “S’s attitude toward S’, A’, and what S’ said” (Clark and Gerrig 1984, 122). The fictional audience A’ “may be present or absent, real or imaginary” and both “S’ and A’ may be recognizable individuals . . . or people of recognizable types” (Clark and Gerrig 1984, 122).

Clark and Gerrig also highlight how the pretence theory explains three of the features of irony that Sperber and Wilson (1981) mentioned in “Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction.” To explain the normative bias, they refer to Jorgensen, Miller and Sperber (1984) who point out that “people tend to see the world according to norms of success and excellence” (Clark and Gerrig 1984, 122). Clark and Gerrig (1984, 122) then suggest that “people in ignorance should cling especially tightly to these norms” and that “in pretence theory, this is just the sort of person ironists pretends to be.” As a result, verbal irony should have a normative bias because S’ is more likely to be someone with overly optimistic hopes and expectations. In his defence of the echoic theory, Sperber (1984, 134) claims that this would appear to be a cultural difference, yet it is not reflected in the way irony is used in different cultures. He suggests that ignorant Americans may be happy optimists, but that “ignorant French people are notorious complainers; they see failure and deception everywhere” (Sperber 1984, 134). Based on Clark and Gerrig’s explanation for the normative bias, one could therefore assume that the bias would be opposite for American and French ironists. However, as Sperber (1984, 134) points out, that is not the case and the normative bias is the same.

As for the targets or victims of irony, the pretence theory suggests that both S’ and A’ are potential victims (Clark and Gerrig 1984, 122). S’ is a potential target due to their poor judgement, and A’ due to “their uncritical acceptance of S” (Clark and Gerrig 1984, 122). Sperber (1984, 134) criticizes the pretence theory for only being able to identify these two types of victims while irony can have no, one or multiple different types of victims, as was illustrated above in 2.4. The echoic theory claims to be able to explain this, but Sperber

(1984, 134) points out that “there exists a whole range of standard cases of verbal irony with an obvious victim that do not fit within pretence theory.” His illustration of this is (8).

(8) (X) I am a very patient person.

(Y) Bill is such a patient person!

(Sperber 1984, 134)

In this example, Sperber (1984, 134) suggests that Bill believes (X) about himself, and often says so, while there is no one else who would ever describe Bill, a notoriously impatient person, as patient. Judy could then ironically say (Y) and make Bill the victim of the ironical utterance. As Sperber points out though, she could not be pretending to be Bill because Bill talks about himself in the first person, and she could also not be pretending to be someone else because Bill is the only person who believes (X) (Sperber 1984, 134). So, Bill is the victim of the irony, but he cannot be said to be either S' or A'. The echoic theory can explain this as Judy simply echoing Bill's thoughts about himself, thereby making him the victim (Sperber 1984, 134).

2.6 Currie's Pretence Theory of Irony

One of the better recent variations of the pretence theory of irony is that presented by Currie (2006) in “Why Irony is Pretence.” Wilson (2006, 1735) has described this as a similar account to the one suggested in Kumon-Nakamura, Glucksberg, and Brown (1995) but more fleshed out and detailed. It also “addresses many of the objections made by Sperber (1984) to earlier versions of the pretence account” (Wilson 2006, 1736). Unless otherwise specified, the term *pretence theory* will henceforth be used to refer to Currie's variant of the theory, as opposed to Clark and Gerrig's original proposal. The central idea in Currie's account is still that irony is a kind of pretence: “the ironist pretends to assert, or to question, or to endorse, and in doing so expresses an attitude towards those who do or would say or question or endorse in this way, or towards people and actions and attitudes which the pretence otherwise brings to mind” (Currie, 2006, 113). Currie (2006, 113) also points out that this attitude can be expressed non-verbally. He rejects the idea “that irony is an essentially communicative activity” because the speaker may not intend for the audience to recognize the irony and there are cases where an ironical utterance has no audience at all or the ironical utterance is only a thought in the mind of the speaker (Currie 2006, 115). Instead, Currie (2006, 115) suggests

that “irony is a form of expression” because “what is essential is the expression, not the communication.” Furthermore, Currie’s theory does not necessitate that any fictional S’ and A’ does or could exist; instead the determining factor is “whether we can *pretend* that there is such a speaker and such an audience” (Currie 2006, 123).

Sperber (1984, 131) points out that with verbal irony, (according to the echoic theory) what is being echoed must be recognisable as such in order to be successful verbal irony. Currie (2006, 116) instead suggests “the idea that the pretence draws attention to something we might call a *target* . . . it is not irony merely to pretend to say something that would be ridiculous if seriously asserted, but it is irony to pretend to say something, intending thereby to draw attention to something ridiculous.” It should be noted though that while the word *targets* is often used alongside *victims* of verbal irony, as discussed above in 2.4, Currie instead uses the word *target* in a similar fashion to Wilson’s use of *source* when she says that “the interpretation of irony is facilitated by the presence of an obvious source for the echoic utterance” (Wilson 2006, 1728). In Wilson’s altered version of Grice’s story about the cars with broken windows, A’s reassurance that it is safe to leave their car on this street is the source of the echoic utterance according to the echoic theory, and a target that can be drawn attention to according to Currie. While there are clear similarities here, Currie (2006, 116) claims that both Sperber and Wilson and Clark and Gerrig believe that “irony is essentially disapproving”, which he suggests “is too strong.” Worth noting here though is that while the echoic theory suggests that the attitude in irony is *dissociative*, that does not entail that it must be disapproving. The latter is only one of numerous possible dissociative attitudes. To illustrate his point though, Currie (2006, 116) uses an example of ironically saying of his daughter that “she is very excited. Father Christmas is coming tonight.” He says that “I am not expressing hostility to, indignation at, contempt, mockery, or disapproval of my daughter for believing this” (Currie 2006, 116). Instead, he suggests that what makes the utterance ironic “is the invitation in my pretended assertion to attend to her epistemically limited perspective” (Currie 2006, 116).

As already mentioned, a central point of pretence theories of irony is that “one pretends to be doing something which one is not doing” (Currie 2006, 116). However, Currie (2006, 116) suggests that

the pretence that is fundamental to irony is not a pretence of doing; it’s a pretence of being. In pretending to assert or whatever, one pretends to be a certain kind of person—a person with a restricted or otherwise defective view of the world or some part of it.

So the fundamental point of the irony in his example is not what he pretends to *do*, which is asserting that Father Christmas is coming, but rather that he pretends to *be* someone who has a restricted view of the world because they believe in Father Christmas, i.e. his daughter or someone who shares her views.

One aspect of Sperber and Wilson's theory of irony that Currie incorporates into his theory is the idea of resemblance (Currie 2006, 117–118). With the echoic theory, as mentioned above, what is being echoed needs to resemble the content of a thought or utterance. According to Currie (2006, 118), an ironic utterance “puts us in mind of some perspective, point of view, or stance, G.” This must resemble the “limited or otherwise defective perspective, point of view, or stance, F” that the speaker is pretending to have (Currie 2006, 118). Currie uses *perspective*, *point of view* and *stance* to describe both F and G, though he seems to eventually settle on just *perspective*. For simplicity and clarity, *perspective* will therefore be used in this thesis going forward. It should be kept in mind though that Currie does not exclusively use this word to describe F and G. G is the target of the verbal irony and may, but does not have to, resemble F to such a degree that the two are identical, as in the example with Father Christmas (Currie 2006, 118). However, “in other cases, the relationship between the perspective adopted and the target is more complicated” (Currie 2006, 117). For there to be verbal irony though, it is not enough to highlight some limited perspective by just pretending to have a similar or identical perspective. He suggests that only certain perspectives are possible targets for verbal irony, more specifically “those to which we can apply a standard of reasonableness” (Currie 2006, 118).

What Currie (2006, 119) goes on to claim is that “irony represents—and hence may misrepresent—its target as unreasonable in some ways, or at least as falling short of some salient standard of reasonableness.” This is then an explanation for why irony is associated with a characteristic attitude. It is through adopting the idea of resemblance that Currie explains the irony in (8). As Sperber points out, Judy cannot be pretending to be Bill, however Currie instead suggests that she is merely pretending to have a perspective that resembles the one Bill has (Currie 2006, 119). It does not matter if Bill has never said (X) before, as long as people suspect that he thinks that way about himself (Currie 2006, 119). What is important is that “it is the perspective that is the target of Judy's ironic comment, not any particular utterance or formulation” (Currie 2006, 119). This also ties into Currie's explanation for why verbal irony has many forms, like “ironic assertions, questions, orders, and insults, as well as ironic gestures and facial expressions. Anything that serves to indicate

that one is pretending to a point of view will do” (2006, 119). Wilson and Sperber (2012, 138) suggest that the limited perspective found in Currie’s theory can be said to be “tacitly attributed to some person or type of person (or people in general)” and that as a result “Currie’s version of the pretence account can be seen as incorporating the claim that irony is tacitly attributive.” In a footnote, Currie himself does not appear to object to this (Currie 2006, 118). If Currie’s version is to be seen as incorporating a tacitly attributed element, then his version could certainly be described as a hybrid attributive-pretence account.

Worth noting though, is that although Currie rightly points out that the target in (8) is Bill either thinking or saying (X) about himself, his explanation leaves out the fact that Bill can be intuitively understood as a victim of the verbal irony. In fact, Currie does not talk about victims of irony in his paper. As a result, it is not quite clear how his account of irony would explain irony having victims. The theory could adapt the possibility of either S’ and/or A’ being the victims from Clark and Gerrig’s original theory, but as was discussed in 2.5, that is still subject to Sperber’s criticism that a theory should not limit itself to only two particular types of victims (Sperber 1984, 134). Another possibility is for the theory to suggest that anyone that could believably hold a certain perspective G, or who did so in the past, would be a possible victim of ironic utterances. If adopting this view though, Currie would have to say that he makes his daughter a victim of the verbal irony when he ironically says that his daughter is excited because Father Christmas is coming. This seems like something he would be unwilling to accept, as it seems odd to refer to his daughter as a victim of the irony when what makes his utterance ironic is only “the invitation in [his] pretend assertion to attend to her epistemically limited perspective” (Currie 2006, 116). Exactly how Currie’s pretence theory would explain victims is therefore somewhat unclear. This thesis will make use of an explanation like the latter of the possibilities mentioned.

Currie’s theory also offers an explanation for the normative bias in verbal irony. As for why it is necessary for irony to always adopt a perspective that is defective, Currie (2006, 121) suggests that it is because people can easily identify ways of viewing the world that are inferior to their own, but they are not good at identifying ways that are superior. “In fact, there seems to be something close to a pragmatic paradox involved in the idea of pretending to see things more clearly, more rationally, more dispassionately, than you actually do see them” (Currie 2006, 121). The explanation offered by Currie (2006, 122) for why positive irony is rarer than negative irony is that “the ironist has to go one step further than is required for irony itself.” With negative irony, all a speaker needs to do is pretend to have a limited perspective F in order to draw attention to the defects of the resembling perspective G.

However, with positive irony the speaker “has also to find a way to use the pretence so as to highlight some positive trait or action” (Currie 2006, 122). This means that “positive irony . . . is irony plus something else, and the something else is not easy to bring off” (Currie 2006, 122).

Clark and Gerrig offer an explanation of the ironical tone of voice, but Sperber (1984, 135) rejects their explanation because he claims what they describe is a parodical tone of voice rather than an ironical one. Sperber (1984, 135) even goes so far as to say that there can be no pretence when the ironical tone of voice is used because “there is no audience, real or imaginary, that would fail to perceive the derogatory attitude and hence the ironic intent it conveys.” Currie’s response to this is the idea of “the scope of pretending” (Currie 2006, 123). Stage plays are used as an example where the audience cannot fail to recognize that what they are witnessing is all pretence, and Currie (2006, 123) suggests that “we easily bracket out elements of what we are given in a pretence.” What he proposes is that ironically saying *P* with an ironic tone of voice does not have to be understood as pretending to [seriously assert *P* in an ironic tone of voice] but rather as to pretend, with an ironic tone of voice, to [seriously assert *P*] (Currie 2006, 123). The ironic tone of voice can therefore be understood as part of the performance of pretending, rather than a part of what is being pretended.

Sperber and Wilson suggest that the differences between different subtypes of echoic utterances are much less noticeable than the differences between utterances that are echoic or not, and Currie agrees except by suggesting that the distinction is between utterances that are pretence or non-pretence (Currie 2006, 130). He suggests that “all any of us are doing is seeking a centre of gravity for irony: a place from which a range of irony-related cases spread out, with no clear point at which the label ceases to be applicable” (Currie 2006, 130–131). Fringe cases should therefore be handled by explaining the similarities and differences they have to cases belonging to the center of irony’s gravity (Currie 2006, 131). A theory of irony therefore has to “show that it has the resources to characterize, in intuitively acceptable ways, the place where irony’s centre of gravity is, and to measure, again in intuitively acceptable ways, the distances from there to other places on the map” (Currie 2006, 131).

2.7 Literary Dialogue

Fictional dialogue is a potentially interesting source of data for studies on pragmatics. Elise Nykänen and Aino Koivisto (2016, 1) claim that “while fictional dialogue is considered to be

an independent narrative mode, it also makes use of the characteristics of everyday language.” The methodology used in their study “draws from multiple approaches within literary studies and linguistics” (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 1), and is therefore relevant to the analyses in this thesis. They also suggest that “understanding dialogue depends partly on the reader’s experiences of real-life conversations and can thus be examined in relation to it” (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 1). Interpreting dialogue is not identical to interpreting natural conversation, in part because dialogue should also be interpreted in relation to both the literary work as a whole and conventions of literary studies (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 1).

Dialogue can be said to be “an artificial version of talk, partly shaped by a variety of aesthetic and thematic intentions and conventions” (Toolan 1985, 193). The dialogue in literary works, even if it is direct speech, needs to be reported by someone, meaning that there must always be a narrator (Rimmon-Kenan 1983, 96). This means that natural conversations and the dialogue in drama, where a narrator is not necessary, are not as “distinctly multilayered” as the dialogue in prose fiction (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 1). As a result, “dialogue in fiction is not only used to depict character-character relationships, but also serves other levels of communication in narrative” (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 2). This is an important aspect of dialogue and if it is neglected, then it is possible “that the dialogue is approached as naturalistic and the complexities of the interface between the dialogue and the framing work of the narrator are overlooked” (Thomas 2002, 661). While some of these aspects of fictional dialogue are of more interest to literary critics than to linguists, it is still an indication that linguistic approaches to dialogue can be worthwhile. Fictional dialogue can also serve to test pragmatic theory and it “offers an interesting point of comparison” to everyday conversations (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 6). Also worthy of note is that “crucial structural and functional principles and patterns are at work in fictional dialogue as they are in natural conversation” (Toolan 1985, 193). The question then becomes whether these potential differences could also lead to differences in how verbal irony in fictional dialogue is interpreted and understood compared to real-life cases, as well as if theories of irony can still offer suitable explanations.

Fictional dialogue and natural conversations are different in multiple ways. One obvious difference is that it is written, rather than spoken, and as a result “no paralinguistic resources, such as intonation, rhythm or emphasis can be employed” (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 7). Instead, “fictional dialogue may resort to typographical resources and commentary provided by the narrator” (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 7). This has an impact on inference and means that not all the same clues are available to indicate verbal irony, such as body

language and in particular the ironical tone of voice. Instead, any clues of the speaker's ironic intent therefore need to be presented in other ways in fictional dialogue. Reporting clauses and speech tags can for example "provide the reader with information about the style or tone of the characters' voices, the rhythm of the speech, the actions performed while talking, and possible non-fluencies or silences" (Nykänen and Koivisto 2016, 2).

2.8 Hemingway and *The Sun Also Rises*

Much has been written on Hemingway's use of irony, to the point where William Dow (2005, 178) comments that "there appears to be, for most Hemingway scholars, no subject more banal than 'irony in Hemingway'." Jackson Benson (1969, 25) claims that Hemingway generates emotion on "the level of experience produced above and beyond the words themselves through the powers of imagery, irony, metaphor, and associated modes of expression." Of these, he highlights irony as "perhaps the most pervasive and important" (Benson 1969, 25). He even goes so far as to say that "the importance of irony in Hemingway's work can hardly be overstated" (Benson 1969, 25), while Halliday (1956, 14) claims that irony as a literary device is so suited to Hemingway's writing "as to distinguish him as a writer." Hemingway's writing therefore appears to be a prime candidate for providing data for pragmatic analyses of verbal irony. However, what most literary critics have referred to when they use the broad term *irony* is in fact situational and dramatic irony, rather than verbal irony. This is not necessarily a problem for this thesis though, as it seems to indicate that Hemingway's use of verbal irony could have been overlooked in the past, or that it at the very least has not been treated as a distinct form of irony. While the relation between different kinds of irony is not entirely clear, the importance given to irony in general in Hemingway's writing by literary critics is still an indication that a closer look at his use of verbal irony is warranted.

Another interesting reason to look at Hemingway's use of verbal irony is that he as a writer has been said to have a "devotion to the implicit rather than the explicit mode" (Halliday 1956, 21). Halliday (1956, 3) also says that Hemingway's manner is that of implication and that it "has always eschewed explication." He claims that Hemingway's own self-criticism, especially in *Death in the Afternoon*, indicates this as well (Halliday 1956, 4). In that book, Hemingway (1935, 183) wrote that

if a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an ice-berg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water.

This iceberg theory of writing is central to Hemingway's writing, in that he often omits descriptions, explanations, etc. to the point where, like an iceberg, what can be seen on the surface is only a fraction of the total experience. This has some similarities to verbal irony, as it is a kind of figurative language use where a speaker intends to implicitly convey something different than what is explicitly expressed. So, when ironically exclaiming that the weather is lovely on a rainy day, the speaker's true feelings about the weather are different and can be said to be the main body of the iceberg hidden beneath the surface of the water. Verbal irony in Hemingway's dialogue therefore appears to be worth studying in closer detail than has been previously attempted.

As for a specific source of data, *The Sun Also Rises* seems a good choice as Dow (2005, 178) claims that "critics of Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* have neglected the linguistic and epistemological qualities of irony in the novel." He suggests that most of the critique of irony in this novel has been portraying irony as being used by characters to disconnect and separate themselves from others, or to reject idealism (Dow 2005, 178). Taking issue with this, he instead turns attention to properties of irony that he suggests "do not alienate, exclude, create distances between characters or between the narrator and reader, or necessarily reject idealism" (Dow 2005, 179).

Benson (1969, 114) suggests that Hemingway would not use irony for comedy as often in his later novels as in *The Sun Also Rises*. In his paper specifically on humour in the novel, Scott Donaldson (1987, 25) claims that "Hemingway had an excellent ear for talk, and much that is funny in *The Sun Also Rises* depends on that gift." This then suggests that the verbal irony should be humorous, at least to a certain degree. Donaldson (1987, 24–25) has also said that "*The Sun Also Rises* runs heavily to dialogue, and the characters reveal themselves largely through what they do and say, with only occasional interpretative suggestions from the narrator." *The Sun Also Rises* therefore appears to be a prime candidate for pragmatic study of verbal irony in the novel's dialogue. Much has already been said about dialogue and irony in relation to Hemingway, though not verbal irony specifically. Studying examples of verbal irony from *The Sun Also Rises* will therefore be a good way to test the pragmatic theories, while also shedding new light on claims made by literary critics like Dow, Halliday, Benson, and Donaldson.

The plot of *The Sun Also Rises* is centred around a group of expats, primarily Americans, who live lavishly in Europe in the 1920's. They are all members of the Lost Generation and some, including the novel's narrator Jake Barnes, are veterans of the First World War. Jake was left impotent by a wound he sustained in the war, which prevents him from having a relationship with Lady Brett Ashley, despite the two seemingly being in love. The first part of the novel takes place in Paris where the group frequent cafés and restaurants, usually drinking heavily. The group eventually travels to Pamplona to experience the fiesta and watch the bullfights. While there, the tensions in the group rise and the quarrelling increases. The novel ends shortly after the fiesta is over and most of the characters have gone their separate ways.

Chapter 3

Analysis

As mentioned in section 1.3, all examples analysed in this chapter can be found in Appendix 1. Each section of this chapter will cover analyses of a single example, which in some cases contain more than one ironic utterance. The examples are labelled by the first letter in the last name of the author of the work the example is from. They are numbered and sorted in Appendix 1 by order of appearance in the original text, to make it easier to find them in editions where the page numbers do not correspond with those in the edition cited.

3.1 “You have nice friends”

The verbal irony in example (H.1) is Georgette saying “you have nice friends.” The description that Frances “would have liked to have kept it up” had it not been for coffee being served is a clear indication that she is not trying to have a sincere conversation with Georgette. Instead, she appears to try to intentionally bother Georgette, and Frances’ rather aggressive escalation in asking questions about Georgette’s opinions about Paris indicates that Frances wanted to bother Georgette from the start. However, this desire seems to be amplified when Georgette voices her displeasure to Jake about having to talk to Frances. The way the two women’s utterances play off each other is interesting: Frances immediately retorts with a contradictory view of Paris not only being clean but “extraordinarily” so when Georgette calls it dirty, and Georgette’s ironic remark about Jake having “nice friends” is her response to Frances saying that Paris has “nice people.”

Wilson and Sperber’s echoic theory of irony necessitates there being both a thought that is echoed and the speaker having a dissociative attitude to that thought, as well as both the echo and the attitude being expressed tacitly. Georgette’s utterance can here be said to echo the thought that Frances is a nice person. The thought could also be said to be about Jake’s friends in general being nice people, in which case the echoed thought would be that his friends are nice people, but the irony here does seem to highlight Frances in particular. The idea of a person being nice is arguably one that is always available to be echoed, as there is a general belief that being nice is something positive and admirable, and Frances behaviour fails to live up to that norm. As such, the thought may not be specifically attributed to anyone. However, another possible suggestion that may better explain this example is that the

thought echoed is that Frances is behaving like a nice person, which is a thought that would be attributed to Frances. Narrowing down exactly what kind of attitude Georgette conveys towards the echoed thought is difficult; while it is clearly critical, it could be one of scorn, contempt, disdain, etc. Still, while there may not be enough clues in the text to indicate an exact attitude, what is needed for the utterance to be ironic according to Wilson and Sperber's theory is that the attitude can be said to be in the dissociative range. Georgette's obvious dislike of talking to Frances is a clear indication that she does not agree with the thought she echoes. The fact that this must be inferred from the context surrounding the utterance rather than being made clear from the utterance itself is a result of the attitude being conveyed tacitly.

One noteworthy aspect of this case of verbal irony is that even though Georgette turns towards Jake and appears to be addressing him when she speaks, the ironic remark could be interpreted as being aimed less towards Jake and more towards Frances. In fact, Georgette addressing Jake instead of Frances may even make this effect more pronounced. By using an ironic remark like this, Georgette indirectly criticizes Frances, knowing that she will hear the comment being said to Jake and intending for her to do so. If the echoed thought is that of a norm, then it could be said to be attributed to no one in particular. However, if it is attributed to Frances then she and Jake can end up as victims of the irony. This can be explained by what Sperber (1984, 134) says about how "the thought echoed may have been recognizably entertained or expressed by different people in different ways." Both Jake and Frances can be recognized as having entertained the echoed thought. Frances likely holds the thought about herself as people tend to avoid acting in ways that make them seem like bad people. Jake on the other hand does not appear to object to Frances' behaviour, which he could be expected to do if he did not entertain the echoed thought. Either way, Georgette could make Frances the victim of her irony and convey that she sees her as acting like a bad person, even though she is speaking to Jake. He in turn ends up as a victim as well, for choosing to associate with Frances. The reason why Frances ends up as the primary victim in this case is perhaps because she is more easily seen as entertaining the echoed thought, due to norms of how people behave. Compare this to if Jake had previously said to Georgette "you should meet my friends! They are nice people!" Georgette's irony would then be making Jake a victim to a larger degree, as he entertained the thought echoed to a more recognizable degree than in (H.1).

According to Currie's version of the pretence theory, Georgette would in this example pretend to have perspective F, which is a "limited or otherwise defective perspective, point of

view, or stance” (Currie 2006, 118). In this example, Georgette pretends to have the limited perspective F that Jake’s friends are nice people. This is recognisable as pretence due to the context indicating that Georgette does not actually have this perspective herself. The ironical utterance of Georgette pretending to have the perspective F then “puts us in mind of some perspective, point of view, or stance, G” (Currie 2006, 118). Similar to how the echoic theory can account for Georgette’s utterance being either a critical comment about all of Jake’s friends or just of Frances specifically, the pretence theory can do the same based on what one determines G to be and how closely F resembles it. The clearest resemblance here would be if F and G are identical, meaning that G is also the perspective that Jake’s friends are nice people. The other possible resemblance is that G is more restrictive than F, being that Frances in particular is a nice person. In this case, G would then be identical to the thought echoed according the echoic theory. In either case, G is the target of Georgette’s ironic utterance. Of course, pretending to have a limited perspective in order to draw attention to a resembling perspective is not enough for an utterance to be ironic; it is also necessary for the target perspective to be represented as “unreasonable in some way, or at least falling short of some salient standard of reasonableness” (Currie 2006, 119). In both possibilities of G, the perspective is, according to the way Georgette represents it at least, clearly not reasonable. Frances’ treatment of Georgette is not what a nice person would have done to someone they were just introduced to and even if someone were to think that Frances is a nice person, it could still be recognized that Frances does not think so.

If G is the narrower perspective about Frances being a nice person then Frances is the primary victim, although it is unclear how the pretence theory would best explain this. One possibility is that G is a perspective Frances holds, though whether it is recognizable that Frances thinks she is a good person is perhaps arguable. Jake likely also holds perspective G to some degree, as one typically prefers to associate with people one thinks are nice, and so he is also a victim. In the alternate scenario where Jake had previously claimed that his friends were nice, then it would be obvious that he holds perspective G, making him a victim to a larger degree. Another possible explanation for the pretence theory is that G is the perspective that Frances is acting like a nice person. Georgette would then be representing this as unreasonable and, for similar reasons as with the echoic theory, both Jake and Frances could believably be seen to have this perspective.

In this example then, different interpretations are possible as it is not entirely clear whether Georgette intends for this utterance to criticize just Frances, or Jake’s friends in general. It is also difficult to narrow down exactly what her attitude is. She is clearly not

happy with the situation Jake has put her in, as can for example be seen in the fact that she refuses to go along with his pretence that she is his fiancée, and this utterance specifically highlights his poor choice of friends. Both the echoic and pretence theories of irony offer good explanations for how the irony works, although it is perhaps somewhat unclear if the target of Georgette's irony is Frances' character or her behaviour. Either of these options are possibilities, as it all depends on how one chooses to interpret the ironic utterance, and both theories can explain these interpretations. The theories can also offer explanations for why Frances and Jake are victims of the verbal irony, though this is most believable in the interpretation of Georgette criticizing Frances' behaviour. As for why Frances appears to be more of a primary victim than Jake, the explanations are quite similar. Both theories can also explain why Jake would be a victim to a larger degree if he had previously said that his friends are nice people. The theories seem to offer less believable explanations for why Frances and Jake are victims if the target of the irony is the idea that Frances is a nice person, but it could be claimed that there are no victims of the ironic utterance in this case. The analysis of example (J.1) in section 3.9 will discuss something similar, and this will be returned to in section 4.1.3 of the analyses as well.

3.2 “You’re awfully funny”

Cohn's use of verbal irony in (H.4) is very critical. While the same was the case in (H.1), the irony seems even more bitter and hostile in this case. Cohn does not like being mocked and he is therefore ironic when he says that Harvey is “awfully funny”. Worth noting here is also the fact that the verbal irony is immediately followed by what can easily be interpreted as a threat, coming from a former boxer. While not a part of the ironic utterance, this shift from an ironic compliment to a threat helps underline the hostile attitude of the ironic remark. How serious Cohn is being with this threat is unclear though. He may not even be sure, instead making that utterance out of frustration.

According to the echoic account, Cohn can be seen to be attributing to Harvey the idea that he thinks he is being funny. This clearly seems to be a thought that Harvey believes, as he is laughing and enjoying himself at Cohn's expense. It could very well be that Harvey does not think that anyone else finds his jokes funny, because at least he likely does not think that Cohn finds him funny. However, the fact that he is making jokes means that him being funny is easily recognizable as a thought he has about himself, regardless of whether he thinks anyone else finds him funny. This thought is being attributed tacitly, as Cohn does not

explicitly state that Harvey believes this thought. Cohn also tacitly communicates his attitude towards the attributed thought, which is somewhere in the dissociative range. The more hostile nature of this example compared to (H.1) can by the echoic theory be explained as the attitude Cohn tacitly expresses towards the attributed thought being more hostile. In this case the dissociative attitude Cohn has towards the thought of Harvey being funny is something like hostile contempt or harsh scorn. At the very least it is an attitude of outright rejection, which is more than dissociative enough for what is required for it to be explained as ironic.

Harvey is clearly the victim of Cohn's verbal irony, and the echoic theory would explain this as being because the echoed thought is one that Harvey is easily recognized as entertaining. Since Cohn is expressing a seemingly hostile attitude towards the echoed thought, he is indirectly being hostile towards Harvey as well. Worth mentioning here though, is that it is somewhat unclear whether Jake finds Harvey's insults funny or not. If he is interpreted as doing so, then he would also be seen as entertaining the thought that Harvey is being funny, and as a result he would also be a victim of the verbal irony, to a degree that depends on how funny Jake thinks Harvey is being. In this case, Cohn would primarily be indirectly criticizing Harvey for making the jokes, while also indirectly criticizing Jake for thinking that the jokes are funny, rather than insulting.

The pretence account would say that the limited perspective F that Cohn is pretending to have in this example is that Harvey is being funny. The perspective G this puts us in mind of is identical to F, and to the thought echoed according to the echoic theory. In other words, it is the perspective of finding Harvey to be funny that is the target of Cohn's ironic utterance. Cohn represents this perspective as unreasonable, which is evident from the context and in that he can be intuitively understood to have a serious attitude and no humorous reactions. There is very little description of how Cohn acts in this scene, but it is entirely reasonable to interpret him as serious and upset at being insulted. This is therefore a good example of Currie's idea of "the scope of pretending" (Currie 2006, 123). Cohn is not pretending to [seriously assert that Harvey is funny while obviously not finding him funny], as that would be a contradiction. Instead, Cohn is pretending, while obviously not finding Harvey funny, to [seriously assert that Harvey is funny]. In fact, the way he pretends helps make clear his judgement of the perspective as unreasonable. Had Cohn instead pretended to [seriously assert that Harvey is funny while seemingly finding him funny] by feigning amusement then it might have been harder to recognize the pretence as such. As a result, the reader and the other characters present might not as easily detect that he represents G as unreasonable. The

insult following the ironic utterance would still make Cohn's attitude and that he was speaking ironically completely obvious though.

To explain Harvey being the victim of the verbal irony, the pretence theory would again adapt a similar explanation as the echoic theory. Harvey would then be said to be the victim because he is the one who very believably holds the perspective G. Also similar to the echoic theory, the pretence theory would say that Jake is also a victim, but to a smaller degree, if he is interpreted as finding Harvey's jokes funny and holding that perspective. The more believable it is that Jake holds the perspective, the stronger he is a victim.

The use of the adverb *awfully* in this example is noteworthy though, as "you're awfully funny" is a sentence that it could be challenging to imagine someone accepting as a sincere compliment. That is not to say that *awfully* cannot be used in a sincere way. A couple waiting a long time to be seated at a restaurant may for example be told "I'm awfully sorry about the long wait" by a completely sincere waiter. Still, "you're awfully funny" would be easier to see as sincere when used as a compliment had it used a different intensifier like *very*, *so*, or *really*. Part of the reason for this could perhaps be that *awfully* appears to have been used less frequently in recent decades than around the time when the novel was released in 1926. Table 1 in Appendix 2 shows how use of the adverb *awfully* peaked in the years between 1910-1939 in the Corpus of Historical American English. Occurrences of "awfully funny", although rare, sees a similar peak in the same corpus in figure 2 in Appendix 2.

In any case, given the context in example (H.4) – i.e. that Cohn is being insulted – it seems unlikely that readers in 1926 would have failed to recognize Cohn's ironic intent. However, their increased exposure to the word *awfully* could mean that they would see the utterance "you're awfully funny" as less inherently ironic than modern readers might. In some other situations, modern readers could interpret as ironic, where they were intended to be sincere, uses of *awfully* such as in "you're awfully funny" from an early 20th century text. This would then be done based on sentence meaning and the present markedness of *awfully* rather than context. So while *awfully* in (H.4) is unlikely to have an impact on whether the utterance is interpreted as ironic or not, it is still going to influence the inferential process and could more easily lead to changes in the perceived attitudes being conveyed by the irony. While this is highly speculative, (H.4) is still useful as an example of how the detection and interpretation of irony depends not just on textual factors but also on contextual factors that can change over time, sometimes in quite subtle ways, meaning that readers of contemporary literature may interpret verbal irony differently from readers of the same works at a later

time. It also illustrates how the context upon which the recognition of irony extends beyond just the context of the utterance or literary work itself.

Returning to the explanation of the verbal irony, this seems to be a more straightforward example than (H.1), and both theories can offer explanations of Cohn's use of verbal irony. The explanations the theories offer for Harvey being the victim are also very similar, as well as how Jake may be a potential victim as well. Perhaps worthy of mention is that Harvey most likely recognizes Cohn's hostile ironic intent, yet his reaction is to laugh. This is further insulting to Cohn, as it shows how Harvey does not take him seriously at all, and it is one of numerous examples of Cohn being mocked and ridiculed by the other characters.

3.3 “No, he came to enjoy the view of the woods”

Whereas the shift mentioned in example (H.4) is implicit, a similar one in (N.1) is explicit due to the character called the Dragon first giving an ironic answer and then saying “of course”, followed by the real reason why the prince came. The second sentence therefore means that there can be no doubt that the preceding sentence was uttered ironically rather than sincerely. This is an ironic trope that does not appear to have been discussed academically⁴, but it is intuitively recognizable as a common way to use verbal irony in response to sincere questions or statements. It serves to highlight that the speaker finds the preceding question as having an obvious answer or being inappropriate in some other way. In this case the use of the trope would perhaps not be deemed entirely appropriate as Agnieszka's confusion towards the situation is not entirely unreasonable. The prince's reason for visiting the wizard may be obvious, as no one ever visits him other than to ask for his magic, but her confusion is still warranted due to the prince insulting the person whose help he has come to seek. The use of this ironic trope here is therefore critical and mocking and helps to characterize the Dragon as an impatient person who dislikes when people ask him something he expects them to already know, and is in general less than pleased that not everyone else is as knowledgeable and quick to draw conclusions as he is. In other words, he uses this ironic trope because he finds the answer to be obvious and the question redundant.

The echoic theory can explain this example and the use of the trope in general. The Dragon here attributes to Agnieszka the thought that the prince came for some reason other than for magic. The way her question is phrased indicates that she in fact assumes that magic

⁴ At least, I have been unable to find any mention of it in pragmatic literature.

is the reason for his visit, but the fact that she asks the question at all is indicative of her doubt and uncertainty. This doubt means that the thought that the prince might have come for a different reason can be attributed to Agnieszka and echoed by the Dragon. The same is the case for all other uses of this trope as a response to a question with an answer that is deemed to be obvious by the ironist. It does not matter if the person asking the question indicates that they already know the answer, as Agnieszka does, because if the question has been asked then the uncertainty is available to be echoed. The inappropriateness of this use of the trope could then be said to come as a result of Agnieszka sincerely asking this question to clear her doubt, yet the Dragon answers ironically. The Dragon tacitly expresses an attitude towards the thought that the prince might have come for another reason, and this attitude is clearly in the dissociative range. More specifically it appears to be something akin to mockery or ridicule. Since the thought that the Dragon echoes is one that Agnieszka appears to entertain, when she asks the question, she becomes the victim of the verbal irony. As a result, the Dragon mocks both the idea that the prince might have come for another reason, as well as Agnieszka for thinking that this might have been the case.

According to the pretence theory, the Dragon would in this case be pretending to have the limited perspective F that the prince came to enjoy the view of the Wood. This puts us in mind of perspective G, which is similar but, in this case, not identical to F. G would instead be a perspective that the prince came to visit the Dragon for some reason other than for magic, of which F is only one of several possibilities. The perspective G is therefore here identical to the thought being attributed according to the echoic theory. F is the perspective that the Dragon is pretending to have, but it cannot be the same as G since the irony clearly targets a broader assumption about why he might have come. It is therefore easy to see that F and G resemble each other, but that G is a wider perspective.

The well-known fact that people only ever visit the Dragon when they need magic means that it is unreasonable to assume that someone would visit him for some other reason. That the prince would have wanted to visit the tower to get a look at the Wood is especially unreasonable, as most people stay away from it due to it being a dangerous and hostile place. As mentioned though, Agnieszka's confusion is not entirely unreasonable, which entails that perspective G is not entirely unreasonable either, despite the Dragon representing it as being so. However, Currie (2006, 119) says that "irony represents—and hence may misrepresent—its target as unreasonable in some ways, or at least as falling short of some salient standard of reasonableness." In this case it can therefore be said that the Dragon represents the target perspective as being completely unreasonable, but that doing so is misrepresenting it as such.

The pretence theory can also explain the trope in general as any time a speaker deems the answer to a question to be obvious, they can answer by pretending to have a perspective other than the obvious one, to draw attention to the wider perspective of there being any other possibility than the obvious one. The speaker will then by default consider this perspective to be unreasonable as anything other than the obvious answer is unreasonable. It does not matter whether the perspective that is the target of the irony is unreasonable or not, as long as the speaker is recognized as representing it as unreasonable to some degree. Since Agnieszka appears to hold the perspective G, as is indicated when she asks the question, she becomes the victim of the verbal irony.

Both theories can therefore explain not only the irony in this example, but also how this ironic trope works in general. This example is interesting in that it illustrates how the trope can be used even in cases where the answer to the question may only be obvious without doubt to the person making the ironic utterance. This is something both theories are able to account for, as all that is needed is for the speaker to find the answer to be obvious. Presumably though, the less the speaker asking the question suspects the correct answer, the greater the chance that they may end up missing the irony by taking the first answer as sincere, before the reversal. In some cases, this may even be the intent of the ironist.

The reversal in this example is therefore different from the one in (H.4), primarily because Cohn's utterances are not made in response to a question. Another important distinction is that the two sentences in (H.4) lack an explicit connection to each other. As a result, Cohn's second utterance only contradicts and reverses the first one when the irony is recognized. In that case he first communicates something along the lines of "you are not funny (and therefore bothering people)" and the second sentence therefore ties into the first as a potential result that might happen if Harvey keeps up his behaviour. If the irony is missed, then the two sentences seem like unrelated statements with no obvious connection. This would not have been possible in (N.1), since the second sentence both makes it clear what the Dragon thinks and that the first sentence was not uttered sincerely. Part of what makes (H.4) an interesting example is also that it allows more room for interpretation than the trope in an example like (N.1). It is quite straightforward that the Dragon intends in (N.1) to scold his servant for asking (what he deems to be) silly questions. Cohn's motives in (H.4) are not as clear. While the second sentence appears to be a threat, it is still open to interpretation how sincere Cohn intends that threat to be. (H.4) and (N.1) are therefore useful cases of verbal irony to see in comparison as they both utilize some form of reversal, with Hemingway opting for a variant that is less explicit and more open to interpretation.

3.4 “You’re getting damned romantic”

In example (H.2), Brett is being playfully ironic when she says that Jake is “getting damned romantic.” Not only is it difficult to see bringing a random prostitute to meet his friends as romantic in any way, but the fact that he does not seem to know why he brought her somehow makes the whole thing even less romantic. An interesting thing to note about this example is Jake’s response to the ironic utterance. He seems to treat the utterance as if it was genuine and denies that he is getting romantic, instead pointing out that he is getting bored. Why Jake does this is open to interpretation. He may for example choose to ignore the irony because he feels that he is being made fun of. Another possibility is that he tries to steer the conversation in a different direction by talking about his recent state of mind. A third possibility is that he fails to recognize Brett’s ironic intent and therefore treats the utterance as sincere.

According to the echoic theory, with her ironic utterance, Brett could be said to tacitly echo the thought that bringing Georgette was a good idea. This thought is then attributed to Jake. Whether or not Jake actually thought that bringing Georgette was a good idea is perhaps unclear, as he himself does not seem to know why he brought her. However, the fact that he did end up bringing her means that Brett can attribute this thought to him, since people generally tend to prefer doing things that they think are good ideas, and want to avoid doing what they are unsure of or think are bad ideas. There may or may not be other recent behaviour of Jake that was romantic or obviously not so, but here Brett is specifically mocking Jake’s decision to bring Georgette. Brett’s attitude towards the thought she echoes is tacitly dissociative, as she clearly did not think bringing Georgette was romantic. More specifically, the attitude she conveys towards the thought can be said to be one of playful mockery. She may also have a more critical attitude though, as the use of *possessed* in “what possessed you to bring her?” seems far more accusatory than something like “what made you decide to bring her?” The interpretation of Brett’s dissociative attitude will then likely also influence the interpretation of why Jake responds the way he does. The echoed thought is one that Jake can be seen to have entertained, even if it is quite unclear if he did indeed hold that thought. As mentioned though, he would likely not have brought her if he thought doing so was a bad idea, and so he can be recognizably seen as having held the thought that it was a good idea. This makes Jake the victim of the irony, and the attitudes Brett expresses mean that she is playfully mocking Jake for his decision to bring Georgette, while also being somewhat mocking and potentially critical of him for doing so.

The pretence account would say that the limited perspective F that Brett pretends to have in this case is that Jake's recent behaviour has been romantic. Again, it might be that Brett is referring to other aspects of Jake's behaviour as well, which would be included in this limited perspective. The reader is not privy to this information though, and so for them Jake's recent behaviour seems to only refer to him bringing Georgette. Perspective F then puts us in mind of perspective G, which is the specific perspective that bringing Georgette was a good idea. F and G are therefore not identical, although they resemble each other as the target of the ironic utterance is a specific event while F concerns Jake's behaviour on a larger scale. Brett presents G as unreasonable, as bringing Georgette to meet his friends was a poorly thought out decision and not a very good idea. The pretence theory can here adapt a similar explanation to that of the echoic theory to explain Jake being a victim. Perspective G is one that he can believably be seen as having held with the explanation that people make decisions that they think are good ideas.

For this example, the echoic theory seems to offer the better explanation. While both theories suggest the same direct target of the ironic utterance, the echoic theory's ability to explain attitudes seems superior to what the pretence theory can offer. While it is not clear what attitudes Brett is conveying, the echoic theory can easily account for the different possibilities. These attitudes then also make it clearer in what way Brett makes Jake the victim.

3.5 “What did you think I was doing”

In example (H.3), Jake communicates something along the lines of “of course I was sleeping” with his ironic question “what did you think I was doing?” It is interesting that this question is asked in response to a question by Brett. The ironic trope seen in example (N.1) would have been an option for Jake here, as he could have answered something like “no, I was still awake. Of course I was sleeping!” Note that even if not opting for the trope, Jake could ironically answer that he was doing nearly any activity that involves him not sleeping, such as “I was practicing the accordion,” and it would end up as successful verbal irony. Both Jake's response in (H.3) and the other suggested possibilities are verbal irony that seem to implicate that the speaker finds the question to be redundant or unreasonable. However, the option he chooses appears to be less hostile and mocking than the alternatives, while still being somewhat critical of Brett and the question she asks.

Something else of interest in this example is how Brett seems to brush aside the irony by answering the question as if it was asked sincerely. As with Jake's sincere response to Brett's ironic remark in (H.2), there are several possible interpretations for why she might choose to do so rather than to respond to the implicature that Jake was sleeping. The most obvious possibility is that Brett is drunk and therefore fails to recognize Jake's ironic intent. Her intoxication also seems to have led to her not realizing how late it is, which could mean that she, unlike Jake, does not find her question to be redundant. Another possibility is that she asked the question expecting him to be courteous and deny that she woke him up, regardless of whether that was true. When he instead indicates that he is not pleased with her behaviour (causing a row and waking him in the middle of the night) she answers his question as if it was sincere to steer the conversation in such a way that she can remove blame from herself. However, it is also worth noting that Jake's question does not appear to be entirely rhetorical. Jake may actually be curious to hear what Brett thought he was doing up so late, meaning that something like "I thought you might have trouble falling asleep" would be just as fitting a response as "sorry I woke you." Jake's ironic intent is clear though, especially as Brett tells Jake not to be cross shortly after the excerpt ends, which indicates that she thinks Jake is or might get cross.

The echoic theory would say that with his ironic question, Jake attributes to Brett the thought that he might not have been sleeping. This is a thought that is available to be echoed due to Brett asking the preceding question, thereby indicating uncertainty and doubt in her thoughts about what Jake may have been doing. (H.3) therefore resembles (N.1) in this way. Her uncertainty, and therefore also her question, does appear to be reasonable, as it is far from unusual that the characters are awake at this hour. Jake appears to tacitly express an attitude towards the echoed thought that belongs in the dissociative range, as he does not seem pleased to be awoken. However, the interpretation by the reader of how upset Jake is influences what kind of dissociative attitude he is taken to convey. If he is interpreted as being genuinely upset, then the attitude will be taken to be a more hostile one than if he is seen as just mildly inconvenienced. A likely possibility here is that he is upset about having been awakened, while still being able to understand why Brett had thought that he may not have been asleep. His attitude is then dissociative and somewhat lamenting, with perhaps a hint of being critical. Since the thought is one that appears to have originated with Brett and is one that she seems to have entertained, she becomes the victim of the verbal irony. The interpretation then determines in what way she is a victim. If Jake is seen as critical of the thought that he may not have been sleeping, then he is likely also critical of Brett for having

thought so. However, if he distances himself from that thought while also lamenting that it is not true, then he is not nearly as critical of Brett, instead lamenting that she held the thought instead of realizing that he probably slept.

According to the pretence account, the perspective F that Jake pretends to have is that he is wondering what Brett thought he was doing when she arrived. Perspective F puts us in mind of the resembling G, which is that Jake might not have been sleeping when Brett arrived. This is a perspective Brett appears to have since she asks whether he was asleep, meaning that even though she suspects that he may have been asleep, she still considers it possible that he may have been awake. Jake therefore ironically asks what other possibilities Brett may have had in mind, making her perspective the target of the verbal irony. He believes that the assumption that he might still be awake falls short of a standard of reasonableness and cannot be considered reasonable. Like with the trope in (N.1), Jake here seems to think that the answer to Brett's question is obvious. This means that Brett's perspective is limited by default because she asks a question to which she should reasonably, according to Jake at least, be assumed to know the answer to. Exactly how unreasonable Jake finds this perspective depends on the interpretation. He may find it entirely unreasonable, thereby being more critical, or just somewhat unreasonable, thereby being more understanding. Since it is Brett's perspective Jake pretends to have, she is easily seen as having held the perspective and Jake makes her the victim of the ironic utterance.

The ironic aspect of Jake's question can be explained well by both theories. The attitudes Jake communicates towards the target of the irony and the victim Brett, is arguably best explained by the echoic theory, which can explain the differences based on possible interpretations in more detail. Neither theory appears to offer any explanation for how Jake's question may be both ironic and genuine at the same time, thereby essentially communicating that he was obviously sleeping while also genuinely asking what Brett thought he might have been doing. However, this does not appear to be something the theories have to answer but should instead be answered by pragmatics in general, as it seems entirely reasonable that one can communicate more than one thing at once. For example, someone may genuinely ask a stupid question while also communicating that they think the question is stupid. If that is possible, there is no reason why ironic questions cannot both communicate an attitude towards a thought, while also genuinely asking a question. While theories of irony should not rule this out, they need not specifically explain it. A potential issue arises for the pretence theory though, since it would mean saying that he is pretending to be someone who wonders what Brett thought he was doing, while also being a person with that perspective. The

question of whether it is possible to pretend to be something one already is will be left for now, and it will instead be returned to in section 4.1.4 in the discussion.

3.6 “What does the word Cohn mean” and “that gives you a lot of dope”

Example (H.8) contains two cases of verbal irony, both ironic questions. The first is Bill’s “what does the word Cohn mean?” which is a joke in the form of verbal irony. Since Bill does not understand Spanish, *Cohn* would be the only word in the short telegram that he recognizes and understands. Exactly what Bill tries to communicate with his use of verbal irony is hard to pin down and open to interpretation. Perhaps the most obvious explanation is that he is cracking a joke simply for the sake of being funny. A second possibility is that Bill intends the utterance to be a funny way of criticizing Cohn, even though he is not present, for sending his friends a telegram in Spanish rather than English. A third option is that Bill is making an ironic remark in response to Jake’s lack of translation of the telegram, even though Jake knows that Bill will not be able to understand the telegram without it.

It is worth pointing out here though that it is unclear if “Vengo Jueves Cohn” is a case of direct speech, where Jake reads the telegram out loud to Bill, or a direct quotation of the telegram made by Jake the narrator for the sake of the reader. In the latter case, which is perhaps most likely, Bill would be reading the telegram himself instead of hearing it repeated. The difference is not impactful on the understanding of the passage but could influence how Bill’s use of verbal irony is interpreted. It would be more suitable for him to make an ironic remark poking fun of Jake for not translating for him if Jake verbally repeated the telegram in Spanish instead of in English, since that would be a somewhat strange thing for him to do when he knows Bill won’t be able to understand what he says. Even with this latter interpretation of Bill making fun of Jake, it is still clear that Bill intends the irony to primarily be humorous, rather than critical of Jake.

The second ironic question is Jake’s “that gives you a lot of dope, doesn’t it?” This case of verbal irony is more critical than the first one, as Jake is frustrated that Cohn does not send a longer telegram than the absolute bare minimum of what is needed to communicate his intentions. An interesting difference to note here is that the first ironic question cannot be answered sincerely by Jake without the answer being absurd in context, as Bill obviously knows that the word *Cohn* is Robert Cohn signing the telegram. On the other hand, the second question could be answered sincerely, and Bill in fact responds to it with an

explanation for why Cohn wrote the telegram the way he did. Jake's question therefore seems like another case of asking a question both sincerely and ironically, as in (H.3).

Bill's ironic question is one that resembles another question that could be asked genuinely in the same context. Since the telegram is in a language Bill does not understand, he could ask what any of the other two words in the telegram mean, though such a question would obviously be genuine. The echoic theory can therefore say that Bill asks a similar question about the one word he does understand, which means that the question ends up being ironic rather than genuine. The ironic question can here be analysed as him echoing the thought that it is appropriate that the telegram is in Spanish. His question about what the word Cohn means, but not the Spanish words he does not understand, resembles this echoed thought as it is an implication of the thought that the telegram being in Spanish is appropriate. He could then be said to attribute this thought to people who speak Spanish or to Cohn as he is the one who wrote the telegram in the first place. Bill tacitly expresses an attitude towards the echoed thought, fulfilling the criteria for an ironic utterance. However, what kind of attitude he is seen as expressing depends on the interpretation of the utterance. In the case where he is simply making an ironic joke, his attitude towards the thought attributed would be on the periphery of the dissociative range, more specifically one of very playful and light-hearted mockery. This ironic question would then be a case of absurdist humour.

The echoed thought is one that Cohn can be seen as having entertained, as it is a thought he must have had when he wrote the telegram and decided to write it in Spanish rather than English. He therefore ends up becoming the victim of the verbal irony. However, as the attitudes Bill conveys are so light-heartedly dissociative, Bill is not criticizing Cohn for having had the thought, but instead finding it humorous that he did so. In the interpretation where Bill is cracking a joke in order to also criticize and make fun of Cohn, which is something many of the characters do on a regular basis, then Bill's attitude towards the attributed thought is more clearly dissociative and something closer to mockery. Cohn is still the victim for the same reasons as mentioned above, and since Bill would here communicate stronger dissociative attitudes, he would be much more critical of Cohn than with the previous interpretation. With the interpretations of the irony being directed more towards Jake, the thought would be attributed to him instead of Cohn, or to both as they are both part of the group of people who speak Spanish. Either way, Jake's lack of translation means that the thought can be attributed to him, since he does indeed appear to think that it is appropriate that the telegram is in Spanish by not translating it to English for Bill. Jake is then also more strongly seen as having entertained the echoed thought. Depending on whether Jake reads the

telegram out loud or not though, the attitude Bill tacitly expresses towards the thought can differ. In either case the attitude will be dissociative and something like playful ridicule. In the interpretation of Jake reading the telegram out loud, the attitude might be less playful and more critical. In that case, since both Jake and Cohn must be seen as having entertained the thought, they both become victims of the verbal irony. Since the attitude is playfully critical, Bill can communicate his dislike towards Cohn sending the letter in Spanish and towards Jake for having read it in Spanish. If Jake does not translate the telegram but only hands it to Bill, the irony could still be directed towards Jake with the interpretation of him entertaining the echoed thought. He would again be a victim, but in this scenario Bill's attitude would be more playful, again meaning that Bill is not criticizing Cohn and Jake, but rather poking fun at them.

The echoic theory can say that Jake's ironic question tacitly attributes to Cohn the thought that the telegram he has written contains all the information necessary. This appears to be something Cohn thought, as he could have included seven more words in the telegram, at no additional cost, but opted not to do so. In the preceding sentences Jake explicitly says that he does not like the telegram, which makes it easy to recognize that he in this ironic question tacitly expresses a dissociative attitude towards the idea that the telegram contains enough information. His attitude appears to be something like displeasure or frustration, maybe even disdain if interpreted to that extreme, as he is upset that Cohn would bother writing a telegram but not say anything more than the absolute bare minimum. Since this echoed thought is one that Cohn very clearly appears to have entertained, he becomes an obvious victim of the verbal irony. The attitudes Jake communicates indicate that he is displeased both with the telegram being so short, and Cohn for not having made it any longer.

According to the pretence account, when asking his ironic question, Bill pretends to have a peculiarly limited perspective F. This perspective is that he understands the Spanish portion of the telegram, but not what "Cohn" means and therefore asks to find out. Worth noting here is that he goes so far as to pretend to not even recognize Cohn as a name since he asks what the word means, rather than who it is. Another interesting thing to note here is that part of his pretence appears to be that he understands Spanish since he gives no sign of having trouble with the Spanish words, yet he still asks his question in English. This is a limitation of pretence in general; one can pretend to speak a language that one does not speak but one cannot communicate using that language if one's understanding is just pretence. In other words, one can pretend to read or understand a language by feigning knowledge, like Bill does here, or by pretending to speak it. The latter can be done either by saying a few

words and phrases one might already know, by imitating how one thinks the language sounds, or by repeating words one knows are in a particular language, without knowing their meaning. However, in neither case is it possible to pretend to use the language and communicate with someone who speaks it. As a result, Bill must by necessity speak English to communicate with Jake because his knowledge of Spanish does not extend beyond the pretence. The pretence theory of irony can account for this limitation by simply saying that Bill is pretending to have the limited perspective F of someone who speaks English, since the question is asked in English, as well as Spanish, but who still does not know who or what Cohn is.

F resembles and puts us in mind of G, which in the case of the irony being directed at Cohn is the perspective that it is appropriate that the letter is written in Spanish. This perspective is identical to the thought attributed according to the echoic theory. Bill represents this perspective as unreasonable, which is interesting considering how it might not be as unreasonable as he represents it. The telegram is after all addressed specifically to Jake, who Cohn knows can understand Spanish, meaning that it is not completely unreasonable for the telegram to be written in this language. Still, there is something odd about an American sending his American friend a telegram written in Spanish, so it does make sense that Bill finds G unreasonable. It does not matter what one thinks of G though, as all that is necessary is for Bill to represent it as unreasonable, which he does do. The different interpretations will influence in what way he finds G unreasonable, though. If he simply finds the situation humorous, then he represents G as humorously unreasonable, as opposed to mockingly unreasonable if he is more critical of Cohn. Since G is a perspective that Cohn appears to have held, he becomes a victim of the verbal irony. If Bill targets Jake, then F resembles the perspective G that it was not necessary to translate the telegram. Bill would then represent this perspective as unreasonable as well, though likely to a different degree depending on whether Jake repeats the telegram out loud or simply hands it over. Bill would likely find the perspective more unreasonable in the former, and thereby being more critical of Jake as well. Since it is a perspective that Jake appears to have held, he becomes the victim of the verbal irony, though in different ways depending on how unreasonable Bill represents G as being.

Jake's ironic question can by the pretence account be explained as him pretending to have the limited perspective F, which is wondering whether Bill agrees that the telegram gives a lot of information. F is therefore similar to G, the target of the irony, which is the perspective that the telegram contains all the information it needs to. G is then identical to the thought attributed according to the echoic theory. This is a perspective that Cohn appears to

have had when he decided to send the telegram, despite having been able to include more information at no additional cost. The preceding sentences help make it very clear that Jake is representing G as unreasonable and that what he really believes is that Cohn should have included more information. Cohn is a victim of Jake's irony, as he appears to have held the perspective G when he wrote the telegram.

Jake's ironic question and the multiple different interpretations possible of Bill's can therefore be explained by both theories. The echoic account does perhaps seem better suited at explaining the attitudes Bill communicates with his verbal irony, as the theory can better explain his humorous attitude towards the attributed thought. Jake's ironic question can be answered, unlike Bill's, and this could be because Jake asks the question both sincerely and ironically to both communicate his opinions on the matter, while also hoping to get affirmation of these opinions by asking what Bill thinks. Bill, on the other hand, already knows the answer to his own question and is therefore not asking it sincerely. As mentioned in section 3.5, Jake being able to be both sincere and ironic at the same time is not something either theory needs to explain. However, the same issue as with that example again arises for the pretence theory, as he has to be said to both be pretending to be someone who wants to hear Bill's thought on the matter, while also being that kind of person.

Another noteworthy aspect of Bill's question that the echoic theory seems to offer a better explanation for is that of victims. It appears as if the pretence theory must rely on different perspectives to explain how the irony can indirectly target either Jake or Cohn. This also makes it more difficult to explain how both Jake and Cohn can be victims at the same time. The echoic theory avoids these issues by simply saying that Bill can attribute the same thought to Jake, Cohn, or both. Depending on who the thought is interpreted as attributed to, they would then be more recognizably seen as having entertained that perspective, and therefore end up as victims. Jake's ironic question seems more straightforward than Bill's, and neither theory seems to offer a substantially different or superior explanation of the verbal irony there, although the echoic theory seems better suited at explaining the attitudes present.

When Bill's ironic question is interpreted as him simply making a joke without meaning to criticize anyone, his joke partially fits the latter part of Donaldson's claims that "*The Sun Also Rises* is the great book that it is partly because of Bill Gorton's humor that directs its jibes at ideas and institutions, not human beings" (Donaldson 1987, 37). Especially in the interpretation of Bill simply making a joke about the situation this would be true, as he is making a joke that directly targets the fact that the letter is in Spanish, rather than directly

making fun of Cohn for writing it in that language. The irony still indirectly targets Jake, Cohn, or both, but the playful attitude still means that he is not particularly critical of either.

3.7 “You’ve such lovely manners”

In example (H.10), “Mike ventilates his outrage in a vicious assault on Cohn” (Donaldson 1987, 33). Both sentences uttered by Brett in (H.10) are ironic and meant to reprimand Mike. She is being critical in both cases, though in the first sentence she is being critical of Mike’s current behaviour and in the second she is critical of Mike’s character and his manners. As a result, she first communicates something like wanting Mike to stop talking while also scolding him for having bad manners, while the second utterance primarily does the latter. An interesting point here though is that while she very clearly dislikes Mike’s behaviour, she does not appear to disagree with what he is saying about Cohn. Following the excerpt, Brett is described as looking disgusted and even calls Mike “a bloody ass”, however, she also tells Jake that she does not disagree with what he said. Her verbal irony is therefore critical of the way Mike is behaving, accusing him of hypocrisy, rather than being critical of the content of what he is saying. Worth noting is also that this appears to be a variant of an ironic idiom that is perhaps more commonly seen as “you’re a fine one to talk” or just “you’re one to talk.” This idiom is used when one does not think that the person talking in a particular situation should be doing so. However, this variant is perhaps also slightly hyperbolic, with the adjective *splendid* being stronger than *fine* or no adjective at all. The second utterance can perhaps be interpreted as Brett criticizing Mike for exhibiting poor manners when he talks to Cohn that way, but a second interpretation could also be that she is criticizing Mike for having poor manners in general. Donaldson (1987, 32–33) has commented on how this passage shows Mike’s humorous repetitive banter turning gradually harsher. He also points out that “once started, Mike's invective is hard to stop” (Donaldson 1987, 33). It is interesting how Brett is the one to stop this hostile rant by twice making use of irony.

According to the echoic theory, with her first utterance, Brett can be said to tacitly attribute to Mike the thought that he is a suitable person to criticize the manners of others. As he is in the process of criticizing Cohn for his manners, this is clearly a thought that Mike appears to have, even if he does not express it directly. This makes it easy for Brett to tacitly attribute it to him and echo it by expressing her own attitude towards it. The attitude she tacitly conveys is very clearly in the dissociative range and appears to be something like contempt. Since the thought being echoed is one that very clearly originates from Mike, he is

a victim of the verbal irony. Brett's second utterance echoes the thought that Mike has good manners. This thought is tacitly attributed to Mike and this is also a thought that his current behaviour indicates that he appears to hold. The fact that he is okay with lecturing Cohn about manners suggests that he at the very least thinks he has better manners than Cohn. Brett tacitly expresses a similar attitude towards this thought as in her previous utterance. It is very clearly dissociative, as she does not at all think that Mike is exhibiting good manners. For the interpretation of Brett suggesting that Mike has bad manners in this instance, but not necessarily in general, the attributed thought would instead be that Mike is exhibiting good manners at that time. Again, she echoes a thought that Mike appears to hold and again she tacitly expresses a strongly dissociative attitude, but in this case, she does not communicate anything about what his manners are usually like. For both of these interpretations, the echoed thought is one that Mike recognizably appears to entertain. The harshly dissociative attitudes in both utterances mean that Brett is also very critical of Mike when she makes him the victim in both cases.

On the pretence account, with her first utterance, Brett can be said to pretend to have the limited perspective F, which is that Mike is a "splendid" candidate to talk about manners. F resembles, but is not identical to, the target perspective G, which is that Mike is a suitable person to talk about Cohn's manners. F and G resemble each other closely but are not identical, and G is in this case identical to the echoed thought according to the echoic theory. G is a limited perspective that Mike appears to hold, making him the victim of the verbal irony. Brett finds G to be completely unreasonable and represents it as such. In the second utterance, the limited perspective F that Brett pretends to have is that Mike has good manners. This then resembles perspective G, which will differ depending on the interpretation. One possibility is for the perspectives to be identical, while the other is that they resemble each other but that G is narrower in that Mike is exhibiting good manners at that time. Again, G is identical to the echoed thought for this interpretation. In either interpretation she finds the target perspective to be completely unreasonable. If F and G are identical, then Brett would find it unreasonable that Mike has good manners in general, while she would find his manners unreasonable in this specific scenario if F and G resemble each other but G is more specific. In either case these are perspectives Mike appears to hold, meaning that he is the victim of the verbal irony.

The verbal irony in both of Brett's utterances is therefore quite straightforward, at least compared to some of the previous examples. Both theories offer reasonable explanations

and are able to account for both interpretations of the second utterance, and neither theory appears to offer an explanation that is substantially different or superior to the other.

3.8 “You’ll go a long way” and “I suppose if I’d given you five francs”

Unhappy that their bribe did not work, Bill makes two ironic remarks to the conductor in example (H.6). This could be considered another case of Bill using “humor that directs its jibes at ideas and institutions, not human beings” (Donaldson 1987, 37). Intuitively this utterance can be understood as Bill directing his humorous dislike of the situation that he is in at the idea of how the world works, where unhelpful and corrupt people are able to succeed. Note that he is not criticizing corruption in general (he himself has just taken part in it after all) but he is upset that here the corrupt system only benefits the other party. However, it does perhaps also appear as if his humour is directed at the conductor for exploiting the system, so Donaldson’s claim may be too broad here. Bill’s use of verbal irony is joking and playful but while he speaks directly to the conductor, he intentionally does so in English so that the conductor will be unable to understand him. Part of what makes this verbal irony funny to Bill, Jake, and the reader is precisely that the conductor is left out. If Bill had spoken French instead, the tone of the verbal irony would likely have been more critical and less playful, at the conductor’s expense. Also worth noting is that Bill’s second ironic remark is a case of hyperbolic verbal irony. Since the conductor is of no help and only tells them to get sandwiches when bribed with ten francs, Bill suggests that the conductor would have been dramatically less helpful if he had only been offered five francs instead.

While the narration makes it clear that “you’ll go a long way, brother” is uttered in English, it can be questioned whether the rest of what Bill says to the conductor is in English or French. Chapman (2019, 30) claims that in *The Sun Also Rises*, “the reader is often not able to establish what language is being spoken.” About this scene she says that “explicit statements about language use do not guarantee clarity . . . It is not possible for the reader to disentangle with certainty the exact pattern of language use being represented in the conversation on the train” (Chapman 2019, 33). In other words, Bill’s second ironic utterance may be interpreted as being made in French, and the same can be said for him telling the conductor to “go to hell.” For the purposes of this analysis, it will be assumed that Bill is speaking French when making both ironic utterances. Him speaking French would not change how the irony works, though it would likely impact the explanation of what kind of attitudes he is communicating.

On the echoic account, with his first ironic utterance, Bill tacitly echoes the thought that the conductor will go a long way, i.e. that he will succeed in life. Who this thought is attributed to is arguably hard to pin down. It could be that he is attributing it specifically to the conductor, although it may also be that he attributes it to people in general who would believe that the conductor's actions are going to lead to his success in life. In either case the thought ends up attributed to the conductor, though it is done more directly in the former and indirectly in the latter, as the conductor can be said to belong to that group. Bill tacitly expresses a dissociative attitude towards this thought, but what is interesting here is that he may easily be interpreted as not believing that the echoed thought is false. In other words, he may be endorsing the thought that the conductor will make it far, while also expressing a dissociative attitude towards it. This fits with the parenthetical part Wilson and Sperber's description of the dissociative range as being used in irony meaning that "the speaker rejects a tacitly attributed thought as ludicrously false (or blatantly inadequate in other ways)" (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 130). In this case, Bill then does not believe that the thought is false, just "blatantly inadequate." The reason for this is presumably that although the conductor might get far by continuing his behaviour, essentially getting paid for doing nothing, the way in which he is behaving is still inadequate because he is burning bridges with every bribe he takes. That he does so is perhaps not likely to be an impediment to his success, due to the constant turnover of railroad passengers, but Bill still finds it "blatantly inadequate," perhaps because he takes issue with it from a moral standpoint. Exactly what kind of dissociative attitude Bill expresses here might not be entirely clear. It may be that he finds the thought inadequate in a humorous way, though he could also be more critical if he is interpreted as actually being upset. The conductor ends up as a victim of the verbal irony since it is a thought he can be seen to hold, and in what way he is a victim depends on the dissociative attitude Bill expresses.

For the second utterance, Bill can be said to tacitly attribute to the conductor the thought that what he did to help was sufficient for being bribed ten francs. This is a thought that is easily attributed to the conductor as his behaviour makes it is entirely reasonable to assume that he thinks like that. However, Hemingway's style of writing makes it a bit unclear if he accepts the bribe knowing full well that he cannot do what Jake and Bill are asking him to do, or if he is unaware that he is being bribed since he cannot help them anyway, and instead takes the money thinking it is a tip. The latter is perhaps not as likely as the former, but it is worth considering as he would hold the thought that Bill attributes to him in one interpretation but not in the other. Regardless though, Bill can tacitly attribute the thought to

him. Bill ironically echoes the thought by also tacitly expressing an attitude towards it, and the attitude appears to be in the dissociative range. This attitude can be said to be something like playful ridicule. The attributed thought originates with the conductor whether he actually holds the thought or not, as in the latter case, where the conductor just sees the money as a tip rather than a bribe, he would still be the imagined originator of the thought being echoed. Since Bill's intention primarily is to make fun of the situation that he and Jake find themselves in, by expressing a playfully dissociative attitude, the conductor is the victim only in a playful way.

In the first ironic utterance, the pretence account can say that Bill pretends to have the limited perspective F, that the conductor will go a long way. This perspective is identical to the target G, and G is also the same as the echoed thought according to the echoic theory. Exactly how Bill can think that the perspective G is both true and unreasonable is not something the pretence theory appears to have an explanation for. One possibility is that as in (H.3), Bill is here communicating two things at once, both that he believes what he says to be true and that he represents the target perspective as unreasonable. If accepting this, the pretence theory would not have to explain things any further. Bill would then be said to represent G as falling short of a standard of reasonableness. The perspective would then not be entirely unreasonable, just unreasonable in that it burns bridges while still being likely to bring the conductor success. Since it is a perspective that the conductor can be seen to have, he becomes a victim of the verbal irony.

With his second utterance, Bill can be said to pretend to have the limited perspective F, which is that he supposes the conductor would have told them to jump off the train if he had been given five francs instead of ten. This perspective resembles and puts us in mind of the target of the irony, the limited perspective G, which is that what the conductor did was sufficient for being bribed ten francs. G is therefore substantially different from F, but still resembles it, while being identical to the thought attributed according to the echoic theory. Bill represents this perspective as unreasonable, as he seemed to believe that ten francs was a sufficient bribe for what he wanted the conductor to do. The pretence theory can explain how the conductor ends up as a victim of the irony in the case where he knowingly takes the bribe, as he is therefore easily seen as holding perspective G. However, it does not appear to be able to do the same when the conductor takes the money without realizing it was meant as a bribe, since he cannot really be seen to hold perspective G in that case. In order to explain him being the victim in that interpretation, the pretence theory needs to alter its explanation of victims of irony to be even more like that of the echoic theory. It could then say something

similar about how the conductor may be the imagined originator of the perspective, even if it is not recognizable that he holds it. This would explain the conductor being the victim, but it would bring the theory even closer to the echoic theory.

It therefore appears that both theories can explain the verbal irony in these examples. However, the echoic theory seems to have a better explanation for the different attitudes Bill may be conveying, as well as easily being able to account for him potentially expressing a dissociative attitude towards a thought he also believes is true. The pretence theory saying that he believes G is true while also falling short of a standard of reasonableness works to explain what is going on, but the idea of unreasonableness and standards of reasonableness appear more vague than Wilson and Sperber's concept of a dissociative attitude. The pretence theory also struggles to account for the conductor being a victim of the verbal irony in all interpretations, at least without moving even closer to the echoic theory.

An interpretation of these uses of verbal irony that fits with Donaldson's claim about Bill's humour is reasonable, as Bill does seem to want to make fun of the situation that he and Jake find themselves in. However, it should not be ignored that this humour, while perhaps not directed at the conductor, still comes at the expense of a human being. While the conductor does not understand what Bill is saying to him, he realizes that Bill is speaking to him and that he intentionally does so in English. While that may be a way for Bill to appear less critical of him than speaking to him in French, it still excludes him and essentially ends up as a way of, figuratively, talking about him behind his back. So while it does indeed appear like Bill's humour is being directed at the strange situation he and Jake find themselves in, or perhaps even the institution of bribery in France, it has to be taken into account that this use of verbal irony also comes at the expense of the conductor, if not to the degree that it could have done. So again, Donaldson's claim appears to be too strong when applied to Bill's ironic humour.

3.9 "Lovable old thing"

As has already been seen in previous examples like (H.1), verbal irony can have more than one victim. Theodora's ironic endorsement in example (J.1) also has more than one victim, but it seems like a different explanation from the ones in previous examples is needed to explain this. Primarily, the utterance seems to be made to criticize Mrs. Dudley, whom Theodora does not like. However, Theodora also seems to be using the utterance to criticize

the front door, and the utterance is in fact directed at the door, as the reporting clause indicates. These are not separate interpretations; she does not intend to be critical of either one or the other. Instead she seems to direct the ironic endorsements at both, thereby communicating that she has a dislike of both. In (H.1), both Frances and Jake can be said to be victims because by Georgette insulting Frances' character, she also insults Jake to a lesser degree as he presumably finds her character likeable enough to spend time with her. Here though, the only recognizable connection between Mrs. Dudley and the door is that Theodora dislikes them both. The reporting clause in this example sets it apart from most of those found in *The Sun Also Rises*, as Hemingway does not seem to make much use of them for his verbal irony. Here it is likely needed to emphasize the focus on the door, or else the utterance may have seemed solely directed at Mrs. Dudley. It would still be understood as verbal irony, but the duality of this example seems to be highlighted by the reporting clause.

The echoic theory can say that Theodora here echoes two distinct, albeit similar, thoughts. It does not necessarily seem like an issue for the echoic theory to suggest that two thoughts are echoed at once, as Sperber and Wilson (1995, 197) claim that “an act of communication merely makes manifest which assumptions the communicator intends to manifest.” So, Theodora may in this case intend to make manifest two thoughts about norms at the same time. These thoughts are both norms that are always available to be echoed, being hopes or expectations about behaviour. One of these norms is that people should be nice, or at the very least that they should not bother others. This is a norm that Mrs. Dudley fails to live up to, at least according to Theodora. She also made a similar harsh ironic remark about Mrs. Dudley by calling her a “delightful old body” shortly before this scene. Worth mentioning here is the similarities between these two utterances and the one from (H.4), where it seems to be somewhat challenging to see the same utterances being made sincerely. “Lovable old thing” seems like it could be uttered affectionately, similarly to a phrase like “poor old thing.” On the other hand, the similar “delightful old body” seems like it would be interpreted as insulting whether it was intended to be ironic or sincere. The same norm is echoed in both utterances and they are both good examples of the normative bias in verbal irony. Theodora can use irony to criticize Mrs. Dudley because she fails to live up to the aforementioned norm of expected behaviour. However, it would not be possible for her to use irony to praise Mrs. Dudley by saying something like “unlovable old thing” or “horrible old body” if she lived up to the norm and behaved nicely, except under more specific circumstances. Since there is no norm that people should behave badly, there would instead have to be some recognizable thought that the utterance echoes for the irony to succeed.

The second norm that Theodora echoes is the ideas or expectations people have regarding the behaviour of doors or objects. This norm seems to be that artefacts should benefit humans, which they usually do by fulfilling their intended purpose. For doors specifically, this means that they should not have agency to move on their own, unless it is beneficial and saves someone the trouble of opening or closing a door. The latter is an important distinction, as “loveable old thing” would be sincere rather than ironic if uttered when the circumstances were different, and the two women forgot to close the door behind them on a cold winter day. In this case, the door moving on its own does not break with a norm since the door closing benefits Theodora and Elanor, and everyone else in the house, by preventing the house from getting cold. In the circumstances of (J.1) though, the door does break the norm because it shuts when Theodora does not want it to and has taken action to prevent it from doing so. As a result, she can echo the norm and make the utterance ironic.

Theodora also tacitly expresses dissociative attitudes towards both echoed thoughts. Note that the attitude is expressed towards the norm in the given context, and not the norm in general. In other words, Theodora expresses a dissociative attitude towards the norm that people should not behave poorly because that wish turned out not to be true, but not because she does not agree with the norm. To the contrary, her attitude is towards Mrs. Dudley failing to fulfill the norm, which she does in this and preceding contexts. Similarly, she conveys a dissociative attitude towards the norm that artefacts should benefit humans as the door fails to do so. These attitudes she conveys, while both dissociative, are not the same though, as her attitude towards the norm violated by Mrs. Dudley is much more hostile than the one violated by the door. Theodora has previously voiced strong opinions about Mrs. Dudley, so her attitude is therefore something like hostile contempt or disdain. There are fewer signs that she dislikes the door anywhere near as much as she dislikes Mrs. Dudley, and it appears to be more of an inconvenience to her. Her attitude here is therefore something closer to frustration, rather than hostility.

The echoic theory struggles to explain Mrs. Dudley and the door being victims of the verbal irony. Since the thought echoes a norm, like with the weather in example (1), the theory would say that there is no victim, even though intuitively there appear to be two. One possible way around this is by saying that Mrs. Dudley entertains the norm about herself, even though her actions seem to break it, and that this makes her a victim. Such an explanation could work to make her a victim, but a similar explanation would not work to make the door a victim as it obviously does not entertain the norm about itself, being an inanimate object with no thoughts. Suggesting that the door is the imagined originator of the

echoed thought does not work either. Even if one goes so far as to agree that it is possible to imagine the door having a thought, the echoed thought is a norm and it would not make sense to suggest that this norm originated with a door, even if just imagining it. It therefore appears as if the echoic theory by necessity has to say that this is a case of victimless verbal irony, even if it may go against intuition.

The pretence theory in this case would likely have to explain the verbal irony as Theodora pretending to have two limited perspective Fs at once. These perspectives would be that Mrs. Dudley is a lovable old thing, which is F1 and that the door is a lovable old thing, which is F2. Another possible way to analyse this is by saying that what she is pretending is a single perspective F, incorporating her view of both Mrs. Dudley and the door. Pretending to have more than one perspective is not something Currie discusses in his article, and so it is unclear how the theory should handle complicated cases such as this. To what degree analysing it as one or two perspectives makes a difference is perhaps also not quite clear, but since the theory seems to have to rely on there being two perspective Gs, it seems like the most reasonable explanation will be to say that there are two Fs as well. These two Fs puts us in mind of the target of the irony G, which could here be said to be two distinct perspectives that are both identical to their corresponding Fs. G1 would be that Mrs. Dudley is a lovable old thing and G2 that the door is a lovable old thing. Theodora then represents both targets as unreasonable, though not to the same degree. Her dislike of Mrs. Dudley indicates that she finds G1 to be completely unreasonable, meaning that there is little to nothing about Mrs. Dudley that she finds to uphold a standard of reasonableness. On the other hand, she seems to represent G2 as falling short of a standard of reasonableness. G2 is therefore not represented as being completely unreasonable, meaning that Theodora does not discount (or acknowledge) that the door may have other redeeming qualities that may have made it lovable. However, the door fails to be lovable because it is unreasonable for a door to be lovable when it behaves like this one does.

The pretence theory also faces issues when trying to explain the presence of victims with this use of verbal irony. Mrs. Dudley could perhaps be seen as believably holding perspective G1, although this perspective seems too strong for this to truly be believable. Compare this to the norm that the echoic theory says she may believe about herself, which is slightly more believable as people can be seen to generally think that they are nice, or at least that they do not bother others. There is nothing about the context that makes it seem like Mrs. Dudley should believe that she is a “lovable old thing,” and so one would have to suggest that people in general think this about themselves. This seems like taking the same assumption as

the one the echoic theory makes one step further and one step too far. The theory also faces similar issues to the echoic theory when explaining how the door is a victim, as it cannot in any way be seen to hold perspective G2 about itself. Consequently, the pretence theory also seems to have to say that there are no victims to Theodora's ironic utterance.

Both theories can offer explanations for the irony in (J.1), but the echoic theory seems to better explain the attitudes that Theodora communicates. The concept of echoing norms also strengthens the echoic theory, while the pretence theory must stretch the idea of "standards of reasonableness" in a way that arguably makes it more closely resemble that of the echoic theory's norms. In order to offer an explanation of similar quality, the pretence theory therefore ends up becoming more similar to the echoic theory, giving another indication that the latter offers the superior explanation here. As for potential victims of the verbal irony, both theories seem to suggest that this use of irony is victimless, even though this goes against the intuitive interpretation that the door and Mrs. Dudley are both victims. This will be discussed further in section 4.1.3 in the discussion chapter.

3.10 "It doesn't sound so bad, does it"

Many of the examples from *The Sun Also Rises* so far have been open to interpretation in one way or another, but part of the reason for this is that the dialogue for the most part is left on its own, with no additional information in the narration. (H.3) may be the best example of this, as it is not clear whether Jake asks the question sincerely, ironically, or a mix of both. His question is not linguistically ambiguous, though it could instead be described as pragmatically ambiguous, a term first introduced by Keith Donnellan (1966). It is in some cases possible for the narration to eliminate this kind of ambiguity by explicitly stating that something is ironic, such as with reporting clauses like "he said ironically." However, example (SA.1) illustrates how narration also can be used to intentionally make it unclear if an utterance made by a character is made ironically or not, thereby creating pragmatic ambiguity. The plan Kelsier has just laid out in detail to his crew is to overthrow an immortal and godlike emperor. This is a plan that he, but nobody else, thinks it is possible to accomplish. The third-person narrator gives the reader insight into what the protagonist Vin thinks about the utterance Kelsier then makes. Her apparent uncertainty as to whether Kelsier is being serious or making a joke (in the form of an ironic question) makes the reader adopt a similar uncertainty. The fact that he seems to have thought out all the details of this plan means he very well could be asking the question entirely sincerely. However, he may also be

using verbal irony to humorously acknowledge the fears and scepticism of his colleagues. He may also be doing the latter, while at the same time wanting to hear the objections of the rest of the crew.

If the utterance is ironic, then on the echoic theory the thought that Kelsier can be said to echo here is the idea that his plan is perfectly safe and simple. This is a thought that he then tacitly attributes to himself. Attributing thoughts to oneself might seem somewhat odd, but it is how the echoic theory would explain self-irony, for example when a speaker echoes an utterance they made in the past. This will be seen again in section 3.14 below. What is necessary for the echoic theory is that the thought is one the speaker can express a dissociative attitude towards at the time of speaking. In most cases that would presumably not be a thought the speaker holds true at the time of speaking. In this case, the echoed thought resembles one that Kelsier has, though it is much stronger.

Kelsier then tacitly expresses an attitude towards this thought, which is somewhere in the dissociative range. Exactly where it is depends on what one interprets Kelsier as thinking about his own plan. One possibility is that the attitude is playfully and mildly dissociative, meaning that he thinks the plan is going to be dangerous and difficult. However, he is then likely not so dissociative towards the thought that he thinks the plan is imperfect and difficult to a point where it cannot be accomplished. The more strongly Kelsier believes in his plan, the less dissociative he will be towards the idea that it is safe and simple. If he is being completely sincere in asking his question, as the narration suggests he might be, then he is not being ironic and his attitude towards the thought is not dissociative. By attributing this thought to himself and expressing a dissociative attitude towards it Kelsier is able to jokingly admit that he knows the plan is dangerous, while also letting his crew know that he recognizes that they are sceptical and uncertain about his daring plan. Worth noting here is that the thought he echoes is one that nobody appears to entertain. Even though it resembles Kelsier's own thought, it is too strong to be one he entertains himself. However, he could be said to be the victim of his own verbal irony by saying that he is the imagined originator of the echoed thought. By making himself the victim in this way, he would then acknowledge that he is being ambitious in his belief that the plan can be accomplished.

The pretence account would say that Kelsier is pretending to have the limited perspective F, which is wondering if the rest of the crew think that the plan sounds so bad. This resembles and puts us in mind of a similar perspective G, though this perspective is stronger than F. G is here that the plan is completely safe and without risk. G is here the same as the echoed thought according to the echoic theory, with only minor differences in phrasing

separating the two. G is then the target of the verbal irony and Kelsier represents this perspective as unreasonable. As the echoic theory would say that he expresses an attitude that is dissociative but not strongly so, the pretence theory would say that Kelsier represents the perspective as falling short of a standard of reasonableness. In other words, he represents G as being unreasonable in that the perspective fails to recognize that the plan comes with substantial risk. However, he does not represent G as being so unreasonable that the plan cannot be accomplished. As a result, he can convey that he recognizes the concerns that the crew might have as valid, while still also expressing his confidence in the plan. Perspective G is not one that anyone would believably be said to hold, so the pretence theory would have to say that this use of verbal irony is victimless. As with (H.6), the only way for the pretence theory to explain Kelsier being a victim of his own verbal irony is by adopting an explanation even more similar to the echoic theory and saying that G is a perspective that it can be imagined originated with Kelsier.

The narration here deliberately makes the utterance seem pragmatically ambiguous by pointing out that Vin is unsure if Kelsier is being ironic or not. Still, the reader can of course interpret the ambiguity in Kelsier's utterance however they like. It could be interpreted as him being so overly confident that he fails to see the glaring danger of his plan, or as him believing that the plan can be accomplished but still recognizing the danger. Both accounts can explain this use of verbal irony very well, though again the pretence theory's explanation seems problematic when explaining how Kelsier asks a question both sincerely and ironically. He then has to be seen as pretending to be someone who wonders what the rest of the crew thinks, while also being that kind of person. Only the echoic theory seems to be able to explain Kelsier being a victim of his own verbal irony though. As mentioned, this intuitively makes sense, but the pretence theory cannot explain it unless altering its explanation to be more like that of the echoic theory.

3.11 “Damned touching scene”

Bill saying that the violent events were a “damned touching scene” in example (H.13) is critical and bitter verbal irony, as the scene was anything but touching. Benson (1969, 20) describes Cohn as “probably Hemingway's most foolish character.” He also claims that Cohn “sees himself as a modern-day Sir Lancelot and finds that it is his duty to rescue his lady-in-distress, Lady Brett (who, of course, is hardly a helpless maiden), from her ‘betrayers’” (Benson 1969, 20). Bill's use of verbal irony here is therefore so cutting because Cohn likely

believed, or at least hoped, that his intent and actions would end up creating a touching scene where he rescues Brett. It can even be considered a case of situational irony that Cohn tries to rescue Brett but instead creates a scenario where his violent behaviour leads to Brett likely feeling that she is in danger. As with examples like (H.4), this is another case where an ironic utterance would be somewhat difficult to see as genuine if uttered under different circumstances. *Damned* is an interesting choice of modifier and although it can be used to endorse, it would perhaps seem odd to genuinely describe a touching scene as “damned touching.”

According to the echoic theory, Bill can here be said to tacitly attribute to Cohn and echo the thought that what happened was a (damned) touching scene. This is a thought that Cohn might have had when he decided to beat up Romero and take Brett away. At the very least he likely thought that the results of those actions would be a touching scene of him coming to her rescue, though he may very well have realized during the chaos that the scene in no way lived up to his expectations. Bill can tacitly attribute the thought to Cohn, regardless of whether he actually held it, as the thought is one that appears to be in line with Cohn’s outdated worldview. Bill also tacitly expresses an attitude towards this thought that is very clearly in the dissociative range. This attitude is perhaps something like condemnation, as he does not appear to find the thought to hold any merit at all. Another possibility is that the attitude is something like mocking disbelief, as Bill may be imagined rolling his eyes and shaking his head at the result of Cohn’s thoughts and actions. With this interpretation, Bill may also be intending to make fun of Cohn and his worldview. Since the thought is one that is recognizable as having been entertained by Cohn, he ends up being the victim of the verbal irony. When the attitude is one of condemnation, Bill ends up indirectly condemning Cohn since he, and in this case nobody else, entertained the echoed thought.

With the pretence account, Bill can be said to pretend to have the limited perspective F that the scene was damned touching. This resembles and puts us in mind of perspective G, which is identical to F, as well as the thought attributed according to the echoic theory. Bill represents this perspective as completely unreasonable as his judgement appears to be that Cohn should have been able to realize well in advance that the scene of brutally assaulting Brett’s love interest would not be touching at all. G is a perspective that Cohn might have had, but as mentioned it is also possible that his perspective about the scene changed as events happened. However, since it is a perspective that he can be believably seen as having held, he ends up as the victim of Bill’s verbal irony.

Bill's use of verbal irony here is explained well by both theories. While Bill does not use verbal irony with the primary intent of being funny, unlike in examples (H.8) and (H.6), this use of irony still ends up being humorous to some degree because of its absurdity. Whether Bill is intending to be funny or not is open to interpretation though, and it may be that the humour only exists at the level of the reader, rather than that of the characters or even the narrator. Either way, this is an interesting utterance seen in relation to Donaldson's claims about Bill's humour not being directed at people. In this case, the ironic utterance clearly has Cohn as a victim, and consequently the humour comes at his expense. However, what is interesting is how indirectly Cohn is targeted. Not only does Bill avoid explicitly criticizing Cohn, instead opting to do so using verbal irony, but he also avoids an explicit focus on Cohn himself. In other words, Bill could have implicitly focused on Cohn and his character by ironically saying something like "he was a knight in shining armour." Instead, he focuses on the scene that is the result of Cohn's actions, making the irony even more indirectly targeted at Cohn than it could be. So, while Donaldson's claim still seems too strong, it is interesting that Bill potentially uses irony to be humorous here, and that the way he does so means that his humour is not directly targeting a person, even if he is being critical.

3.12 "Bill's a yell of laughter"

Donaldson (1987, 38) says that the scene in example (H.12) "represents Bill's humor for once gone off the rails under the tensions of Pamplona." Bill's humour is often based around humorous repetition, but here "the repetition becomes more awkward than amusing" (Donaldson 1987, 38). Jake's description at the end of the example suggests that both Bill and Mike are heavily intoxicated at this point. Since Jake is relatively sober in comparison, he finds the whole thing uncomfortable rather than funny. Mike is therefore presumably drunk as well, but it is interesting that Jake does not seem to offer any indication of how Mike feels about the situation. It does appear that he no longer finds the joke funny, and Donaldson (1987, 38) claims that "Mike sardonically observes, 'Bill's a yell of laughter'." That utterance does appear to be verbal irony, though exactly how Mike feels is arguably still a little vague, and *sardonically* can seem like too strong a word in this case. A likely interpretation is that Mike once found the joke funny but now thinks Bill has gone too far, though not to the extent where Mike would be described as sardonic.

The echoic theory can say that with his ironic utterance, Mike tacitly attributes to Bill the thought that the joke is still funny. Worth noting here is that the attributed thought is more

specific than something like “Bill is funny.” Mike has thought, and likely will continue to think, that Bill is funny, even though he does not appear to think so at this point in time. “Bill is funny right now” is perhaps also a possible way to phrase the attributed thought, but it seems inferior since Mike appears to use verbal irony to say something about the joke itself, not just Bill and his humour in general. The echoed thought is one that Bill appears to have, as can be seen specifically in his decision to direct the newly arrived bootblack towards Mike and his gleaming shoes; if Bill realized that the joke was getting old then he would have not pushed it further. Still though, the narration suggests that Bill perhaps no longer plays as active a role in this joke as he once did. The bootblacks appear to be spreading the news of a potential employer among themselves, meaning that Bill is not actively seeking them out like he would have done to get the joke started. Bill still seems to find the joke funny enough to keep directing the bootblacks to Mike though, instead of turning them away.

There would presumably be other obvious signs of Bill still finding the scene amusing as well, such as laughter and smiling, but Hemingway’s style tends to leave out those kinds of descriptions, which is the case here as well. It is instead through actions and dialogue that the reader can recognize that Bill still enjoys himself. Mike, however, does not appear to find the joke funny at this point, and he therefore tacitly expresses a dissociative attitude towards the attributed thought. Donaldson’s observation would entail that the attitude Mike expresses is a sardonic one, although other interpretations are certainly possible here. Mike does previously say that “Bill is an ass,” though whether that is meant as an insult or as banter is not entirely clear. There is little indication that his attitude towards the echoed thought is anything but dissociative though. However, instead of sardonic the attitude may be something like exhaustion. The wording also suggests that Mike may be getting increasingly exhausted and frustrated, as calling someone “a yell of laughter” instead of *funny* or *hilarious* could be seen as a sign of Mike’s increasing frustration. In that case, Mike may have found the joke funny at some point and therefore shared the same thought as the one he attributes to Bill. In this case, Mike’s attitude towards the echoed thought would have gotten gradually more dissociative over time, and at this point he dissociates himself from the thought as he no longer finds the joke funny. Since the thought echoed is one that is recognizably entertained by Bill, he ends up as a victim of the verbal irony. It does not appear that anyone else still entertains this thought (Jake very clearly does not) and so Bill ends up as the only victim. Therefore, with this use of verbal irony, Mike expresses his feelings about the joke, though he also criticizes Bill for still going along with it.

Mike can be said to pretend to have the limited perspective F with the pretence account, which is that Bill is a yell of laughter. As mentioned in the echoic explanation, this is a similar perspective to what Mike and the other the characters often believe, and F is therefore a perspective that they generally hold without it being limited. However, the context of the joke gone too far means that the perspective is limited, and that Mike does not have that perspective at this point but is instead pretending to have it. F resembles but is not identical to G, which is the limited perspective that the joke is still funny. Again, G is identical to the thought attributed according to the echoic account. Mike represents this perspective as being unreasonable. Mike may at one point also have believed G, and his potential change in opinion about this perspective can also be explained with the pretence theory. His judgement of G would then have changed based on a scale of reasonableness, where G started out as reasonable but got gradually less so as the joke went on. Based on Donaldson's assessment though, Mike would be representing G as utterly unreasonable. Although Mike may reach such a judgement if the joke continues even further, it does not quite seem like the joke has reached that point yet. For the same reasons that the thought is easily attributed to Bill, the limited perspective G is also one that Bill appears to have. Since G is easily recognizable as Bill's perspective, and seemingly no one else's, Bill here becomes a victim of the verbal irony.

The two theories are here able to offer good explanations for the verbal irony. The two explanations are noticeably similar to each other, with the only meaningful difference seemingly being how the theories adjust to the different interpretations. The echoic theory's description of attitudes seems slightly favourable here. Donaldson's claim that the utterance is a sardonic observation is very easily explained by the echoic theory by saying that the dissociative attitude is sardonic. The pretence theory can offer a reasonable explanation as well, although not one that can as directly incorporate Donaldson's claim. Lastly, both theories can explain an interpretation where the verbal irony is seen in relation to the overly repetitive nature of the joke.

3.13 “Oh not at all” and “you were only dead”

Brett and Bill make quite similar ironic remarks in example (H.11), with a noticeable exception being that Bill's utterance is ironic hyperbole. Bill's utterance is interesting though, as it somehow appears to show signs of being both hyperbole and meiosis at the same time. The utterance would be more clearly hyperbolic if Bill had said “you were dead.” Instead,

only is something one might have expected to find in an understatement like “you were only dozing off a little.” Ironic hyperbole seems like the best way to describe Bill’s utterance, but without *only*, “you were dead” would instead be more easily interpreted as only hyperbole rather than ironic hyperbole. It is therefore noteworthy that this appears to be a complex case. Both Brett and Bill’s verbal irony is obviously aimed at Cohn here, though in what way is not entirely clear. Throughout the novel Cohn is mocked and ridiculed to an extensive degree, often because he is Jewish. As Donaldson (1987, 30) says, most of the humour based on ethnicity found in *The Sun Also Rises* comes at Robert Cohn’s expense. This anti-Semitism dates the novel as many modern readers are likely to take issue with how he is treated yet “in 1926 none of the reviewers remarked on Hemingway’s treatment of Robert Cohn” (Reynolds 1987, 54). As a result, it becomes more challenging to interpret what Brett and Bill’s intentions are with these utterances. They may be using verbal irony with ill intentions to mock and ridicule Cohn, to make a harmless joke at his expense, or they may even be so drunk that they themselves do not quite know what their intentions are. Some mix of the first and second option is perhaps the most reasonable interpretation.

Brett and Bill are not the only ones harassing Cohn either. Following the excerpt here, Mike also tells Cohn to eat garlic when he says that he is hungry and then tries unsuccessfully to trick Cohn into thinking that he has been sleeping for two days when Cohn asks what time it is. Worth noting is that Cohn ignores Brett and Bill’s ironic comments and instead asks if they should eat. This does not necessarily mean that their irony is not meant to harass him though, as Cohn does at times tend to let others treat him poorly without fighting back. This will be seen again in the analysis of example (H.5) in section 3.15 below. It is therefore clear that the verbal irony comes at Cohn’s expense, though what Brett and Bill’s attitudes are is perhaps not immediately clear and instead open to interpretation. Worth noting here is that Brett could perhaps have made use of the trope seen in (N.1), if she had followed her utterance by saying “of course you were sleeping!” It would perhaps seem odd if she were to do so, which could be the result of the trope being too critical to fit her intentions in this case or the fact that it would not be made in response to a question.

Despite the differences between the two utterances, the echoic theory explains the irony in similar ways. Both Brett and Bill can be said to tacitly attribute to Cohn the thought that he was not sleeping. This is not a thought that Cohn has expressed, and to the contrary he expresses the very opposite. However, his preceding utterance makes it possible to echo this thought. Compare this to a scenario where Cohn comes walking into the room without saying anything. Brett could then have said “you were not sleeping at all” which, despite having the

same propositional content, would fail to be understood as irony due to a lack of a recognizable source being echoed in such an utterance. What makes this echo interesting is that it is an echo of a thought, but not one that Cohn gives any explicit indications of having. As in example (N.1), the echoed thought seems to be possible to tacitly attribute because of tacit indications of doubt. There does appear to be some doubt present here as well, since when Cohn says that he *must* have been sleeping it means that he finds it to be the most plausible answer to an unasked question. That question could be said to be something like “what happened?” or “why is it so late?” However, he could just as well have said “I slept” without giving any indication that other explanations were possible, and the verbal irony that follows would still work. This could be because such a declaration being made in a vacuum would be odd and could therefore also be seen as a response to a similar imagined question. Either way, it seems as if it is Cohn stating the obvious that indicates his doubt, in the sense that he presents himself sleeping as somehow being open to question as opposed to being taken for granted by everyone. Brett and Bill can therefore echo the thought that something other than the obvious fact that he was sleeping could be possible, and attribute that thought to Cohn. Note here that the attributed thought is more specific than the one in (N.1). While the prince in that example could have visited for any other reason than magic, there are far fewer possible options available to be echoed here as Cohn can primarily be said to have been either asleep or awake. Only a small handful of other possibilities lie in between those two states, such as being in the process of falling asleep or being half-asleep.

In both utterances in (H.11), the speaker tacitly expresses a dissociative attitude towards the attributed thought. The possible interpretations here influence what kind of attitude Brett and Bill are seen as expressing. It does appear to be attitudes like mockery or ridicule, but the intensity is not quite clear. If this is one of many examples of Cohn being tormented, then the attitude is intensely mocking or ridiculing. However, if they are primarily just making a joke then the attitude is instead more playful. It is not necessary for the theory to pinpoint how intense the attitude is though, as all that is needed is to say that it exists somewhere on this scale and that the interpretation determines where on the scale it is determined to be. Worth noting also is that the two attitudes do not appear to be identical, as Bill’s verbal irony seems slightly harsher and less playful than Brett’s. Regarding victims, Cohn does appear to entertain the thought that something like the echoed thought could be true, which is what allows for the irony in the first place. However, that is quite far from entertaining the thought itself. In fact, what Cohn expresses is the very opposite of the echoed thought, and so while it is possible to attribute the thought to him due to the presence of

doubt, it seems unreasonable to suggest that the doubt means he actually entertains it. However, the echoed thought is one that originates with Cohn, or can be imagined to do so, as it is a thought that seems to appear when he makes his first utterance. As a result, Cohn can be said to be the victim of both Brett and Bill's utterances. The way in which he is a victim depends on the attitudes they are interpreted as expressing towards the echoed thought.

The pretence account would say that Brett and Bill pretend to have different perspectives F. Brett is pretending to have the perspective that Cohn was not sleeping, while Bill pretends to think that Cohn was only dead. The latter seems to be the F that the pretence theory has to say that Bill is pretending to have, although it seems odd to say that this is what he is pretending. If it is to be said that Bill is pretending to have a perspective here, it would intuitively be one similar to Brett's, though perhaps stronger like "Cohn was definitely not sleeping." This issue for the pretence theory may be the result of hyperbolic nature of the utterance, but it is unclear how the theory would adjust to the hyperbole and explain why Bill would pretend to have the latter F as opposed to the former. Brett's perspective F resembles and puts us in mind of the target perspective G, which is identical. However, how Bill's perspective F resembles and puts us in mind of any perspective G that would serve as the target of the irony is unclear. If the theory could somehow account for Bill having a perspective F similar to Brett's though, then it would resemble an identical G. In that case, both represent this perspective as unreasonable, though Bill perhaps to a slightly more intense degree than Brett. The pretence theory can also account for the different interpretations of Brett and Bill's intentions with the verbal irony. In all cases they represent the target perspective as unreasonable, though it can be said that they represent it as different degrees of unreasonableness depending on the interpretation. In the interpretation of them mocking Cohn they may represent G as ridiculously unreasonable, as opposed to just humorously unreasonable in the case of them making jokes.

If Cohn had not said something first, then Brett could still have pretended to have the same perspective F by saying "you weren't sleeping at all." From the view of the pretence theory, it is perhaps not as clear why this utterance would fail to be ironic, though a possibility might be that it is less likely to imagine someone having this perspective if Cohn does not make his utterance first. Although Cohn seems to hold the perspective that G may not be entirely unreasonable, he cannot be said to believably hold the perspective itself, nor does anyone else. As a result, the theory appears to have to say that there are no victims of these uses of irony, even though Cohn can intuitively be considered one. This could be explained by altering the explanation to suggest that Cohn is the victim because perspective

G originates with him, though this would be another instance of changing the already vague explanation to be even more like that of the echoic theory.

The echoic theory stands out as the superior theory for this example, in multiple ways. First, the pretence theory seems to struggle with Bill's utterance. It is possible to find a reasonable explanation that would fit the pretence theory, but it is not at all clear why this explanation should be the one reached and not one based on the claim that Bill is pretending to think that Cohn was "only dead." Second, the way the echoic theory allows for a range of intensity of dissociative attitudes is superior to that of the pretence theory with degrees of unreasonableness. It here appears that the ideas of dissociative attitudes and unreasonableness share some similarities, but that the former is able to offer wider explanations. This will be returned to in section 4.1.2 in the discussion. Both theories can also explain why the irony works in this example, but not if Cohn had not said something first, however the echoic theory's explanation for this appears more robust. Worth mentioning is also that this is another example that seems to clash with Donaldson's claim about Bill's humour not being directed at people, as this seems like humorous use of verbal irony that comes at Cohn's expense. The echoic theory can explain this due to Cohn being the victim of the verbal irony, yet the pretence theory cannot explain this unless it alters its explanation to be closer to that of the echoic theory.

3.14 "Well isn't this nice"

As the title suggests, Alanis Morissette's 1995 hit song "Ironic" contains numerous cases of supposed irony. Some of these may perhaps be described as situational irony, such as what happens to Mr. Play It Safe when he finally overcomes his fear of flying. Others have seemingly nothing to do with irony whatsoever and range from absurd (10,000 spoons when you need a knife) to bad luck (rain on a wedding day). Many listeners and critics have noted the apparent scarcity of true irony in a song with numerous supposed ironic situations, which in itself could be said to be situational irony. About the song, Morissette has said that "I've had my ass kicked for twenty years about it being a malapropism" (Morissette and Ballard 2015). The song is not entirely devoid of irony though, as there is a single case of what is clearly verbal irony. Example (M.1) is different from previous examples of verbal irony not just in the fact that it is a song lyric, but also in that the irony here is found in a direct thought, as opposed to direct speech. The preceding line makes it explicitly clear that "well isn't this nice..." is a thought that Mr. Play It Safe has, as opposed to something he communicates to

the people around him. Jake being the first-person narrator of *The Sun Also Rises* means that any direct thoughts in that novel would have to be (presented as) his own. Hemingway seems to make little use of this though, instead opting to rely mostly on dialogue in the form of direct speech and the indirect thoughts of his narrator.

With the echoic theory, Mr. Play It Safe can here be said to tacitly attribute to himself the thought that going on a flight was worth the risk. This is a thought he must have had in the past, as he did end up going on the flight. The rest of the verse makes it clear that this was a thought he was very reluctant to accept, as he spent his entire life avoiding flying out of fear. At the time of the verbal irony though, this is obviously no longer a thought that he has. This is important as the speaker of verbal irony must have a dissociative attitude towards the echoed thought. Having a thought in the form of a proposition while also having a dissociative attitude towards that proposition may technically be possible, but that question is perhaps better answered by psychologists. Most often when a speaker echoes their own thought and expresses a dissociative attitude towards it, it will be because they have changed their mind and no longer hold the same thought. The change in circumstances has obviously led to a change in his views on the safety of flying, and he therefore tacitly expresses a dissociative attitude towards his previous beliefs, and by doing so he essentially reverts to his original position. Worth noting here is that the idea of the man *expressing* an attitude when it is just a thought in his mind is arguably problematic. For now, it will be assumed that expressing something without communicating is possible. This will be returned to in 4.1.5.

Exactly what kind of dissociative attitude Mr. Play It Safe is expressing is open to interpretation. It may be one of lament if he is seen as using verbal irony to reflect on his own decisions with sorrow, regret, and despair. It may also be that he finds himself surprised by what is happening and uses verbal irony to cope with his disbelief. His attitude towards the attributed thought is then reluctantly dissociative as he struggles to accept what is happening around him. In this case, he may recognize that the risks were very low and that he got extremely unlucky, but the fact that the plane is crashing means that he still distances himself from the idea that the risks were low enough to go flying. Another possibility is that he feels anger and frustration, thereby criticizing himself by expressing an attitude of disdain towards the thought of his past self. The man ends up as a victim of the verbal irony in all these interpretations as the thought clearly originated with himself, though the attitude expressed affects the manner in which he is a victim. If the attitude is something like lament, then the irony is obviously not critical of himself in the past for having had the thought. The same is the case if the attitude is reluctantly dissociative. Only if the attitude towards the echoed

thought is interpreted as being something like disdain does he criticize himself for having had the thought. So, while the man ends up a victim of his own verbal irony in all interpretations of this thought being echoed, he does so in substantially different ways.

One potential issue with the pretence theory's explanations for verbal irony in direct thought is that in cases like this the man must be said to be pretending to himself only. This does not appear to be a problem for Currie though, as he claims "there is plenty of reason to think that children and adults engage in solitary pretence" (Currie 2006, 126). An example of this can be that a person, all by themselves, may shoot a football into a net and pretend that they scored the winning goal of a huge tournament. Whether this pretence is acted out in a lavish celebration or stays within the confines of the person's own imagination seems immaterial, as they can be said to engage in pretence either way. It is therefore possible for the pretence theory to say that the man in (M.1) is pretending to have the limited perspective that the situation he finds himself in is nice. This F then puts us in mind of the resembling target of the irony G, which is that going on a flight was worth the risk. The resemblance here is perhaps a little vague. However, it can be intuitively understood that the irony serves as a way for him to think that he was right all along. G is the perspective that the man had in the past, and it is the same as the thought echoed according to the echoic theory. The man's views on perspective G have changed over time; he used to find it unreasonable, then found it reasonable enough to fly, and now finds it even less reasonable than he did in the past as he is witnessing his doubts being confirmed.

The different possible interpretations seen in the echoic theory can also be explained by the pretence theory as depending on the degree to which the man finds G to be unreasonable. For the first two interpretations, he may not be representing the perspective as entirely unreasonable, but instead as falling short of a standard. He is therefore accepting that the risks were low, but the fact that there were risks at all means that G is still too unreasonable. The latter interpretation sees him representing the perspective as entirely unreasonable, though. The man held this perspective in the past, and as a result he becomes a victim of the verbal irony. The different ways in which he becomes the victim is something the pretence theory does not explain though. However, it could be suggested that, similar to what the echoic theory suggests, the degree of unreasonableness influences the way in which the man is the victim: if G is entirely unreasonable then it was more unreasonable for the man to have held the perspective in the first place.

While both accounts seem to be able to explain the verbal irony of an unexpressed thought, the echoic theory here seems to offer the best explanation. This of course comes

with the prerequisite that one accepts the idea of expressing attitudes within one's thoughts. The many ways the ironic thought can be interpreted can be explained well by the man expressing different attitudes towards the thought he used to have. The pretence theory can attempt to explain this as well, using degrees of unreasonableness, though this explanation seems inferior. While both theories can explain the man being a victim of the verbal irony, the echoic theory seems to offer the better explanation by easily accounting for the many ways the man may be a victim. To also explain this phenomenon, the pretence theory seems to have to adopt a similar, yet inferior, explanation to what the echoic theory has.

Worthy of note here is also that had the man spoken the utterance out loud, the people around him would still recognize the utterance as ironic. However, they would likely misunderstand his intent, as they do not know that the man had a fear of flying. Instead, they would take his ironic utterance to simply communicating "this situation is not nice." The echoic theory can explain this as the people on the plane not recognizing the thought the man was trying to echo, instead assuming that he is ironically echoing a norm about wanting situations, including flying, to be nice. The pretence theory would have to explain this situation as the perspective G put in mind of the people on the plane being that the situation is nice. Since the pretence theory does not make use of the concept of norms though, it does not seem as if it has as good of an explanation for why they would assume that to be G. Worth noting about this example is also that the ironic utterance could be understood as an ironic question. However, the written lyrics in the album's liner notes has the line ending with ellipses as opposed to a question mark. Even if it is to be understood as an ironic question, the analyses would remain the same except for the pretend perspective F having to be slightly altered to explain the perspective being one of wondering and asking a question.

3.15 "Won't it be lovely" and "I'm going to England without a protest"

Donaldson (1987, 30) comments on the scene in example (H.5) and says that "Frances Clyne devastates Cohn at greater length, also in the presence of Jake. Frances satirically unveils Cohn's narcissism, his self-pity, his habit of buying himself out of entanglements, and his stinginess in doing so." The scene in its entirety covers more than 2 pages and can be found along with the abbreviated example in Appendix 1. Jake the narrator comments on how horrible Frances is being, as does Cohn himself, but Jake also points out that Cohn would suffer more and worse abuse later in the story. As has been seen in other examples as well, this is an apt description as Cohn faces a lot of hostility throughout the novel. An interesting

thing to note is that it is Cohn who inadvertently starts Frances' tirade, as he is the one who brings attention to her going to England. Over the course of several pages, Frances then strongly voices her dislike of being sent away. There are numerous cases of verbal irony throughout this tirade, including the ironic questions "won't it be lovely?", "won't it be fun?", and "don't you think it will be fun?", as well as the blatant contradiction "I'm going to England without a protest" as she is in the middle of protesting going to England. The three first cases are similar enough that one of them can be analysed and be representative of the rest, as the differences between them are primarily some slight variations in the way the questions are worded. The rant itself also has some obvious ironic tones, and it is possible to consider it verbal irony in its entirety.

With ironic questions like "won't it be fun?" and its similar variants, the echoic theory can say that Frances tacitly attributes to Cohn the idea that she will have fun in England. What Cohn thinks about sending Frances away is somewhat unclear as he remains mostly passive throughout the scene, something Jake the narrator even points out. Frances' utterances indicate that they have discussed her going to England in private, and the thought that Frances would enjoy herself is something Cohn might have expressed then. Even if Cohn has expressed such a thought, the reader would not be aware of it. However, it can still be recognized by the reader as something Cohn might think about sending her away, as he does seem to expect Frances to be joyful about going to England. Frances can therefore tacitly attribute this thought to him. The attitude that Frances tacitly expresses towards this thought is clearly dissociative; she does not look forward to leaving nor does she think she will have a good time in England. She clearly dislikes the thought, and Cohn for having it, and her attitude towards it is therefore more specifically something like scorn. Her attitude also has a mocking aspect to it though, likely due to Jake being present and Frances enjoying getting the chance to make a scene. Since this is a thought that Cohn could be seen to recognizably entertain, he becomes the victim. The scorn and mockery are therefore also reflected on him.

The ironic statement "I'm going to England without a protest" is a clear contradiction, as Frances is clearly protesting, although implicitly rather than explicitly. With this use of verbal irony, she tacitly attributes to Cohn the idea that she ought to go without a protest. Again, this is a thought that Cohn may have had and expressed in the past, though that would have been in the same conversation between him and Frances that the reader was not privy to. This is a thought he can be understood as having by entailment though, as if he believes, as he seems to, that Frances will enjoy her time in England then there is no reason for her to object to going there. Frances tacitly expresses a dissociative attitude towards this thought as

well, and her attitude appears to be something like mocking scorn, as with the ironic questions. As with those cases, the thought is again recognizable as entertained by Cohn, making him the victim.

When seeing Frances' tirade as ironic in its entirety, the echoic theory would explain it as her echoing a thought on a larger scale than just the sentence level. Clark and Gerrig use Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" as their example when criticizing the echoic theory for having to see that entire essay as echoic, but Sperber (1984, 132) seems to have no problem with such a suggestion. He suggests that "text-length irony stands to phrase- or sentence-length irony the way allegory stands to metaphor" (Sperber 1984, 133). There do not appear to be any clear reasons why echoing something on a larger scale than the sentence level should not be possible, so it will be assumed that this is what Frances is doing in this case. The thought echoed appears to be something like it being acceptable to send her to England, which is a thought that she tacitly attributes to Cohn through her rant. This thought appears to be more general than the ones she attributes in the specific examples, being about the situation in its entirety. She also tacitly expresses an attitude towards this thought, and the attitude seems similarly dissociative as those towards the other thoughts. Not only does she strongly disagree with the thought, she also has a mocking attitude where she deems it worthy of ridicule, not just disagreement. This rant is obviously embarrassing and insulting to Cohn, especially because it is made in front of Jake rather than in private. Cohn is also made the victim through the verbal irony though. The echoed thought is one that obviously originated with him and that he appears to still entertain. Since she is both critical and mocking of the echoed thought, Frances therefore communicates that she is critical and mocking of Cohn for having it.

The pretence theory would say that the ironic "won't it be fun?" can be explained as Frances pretending to have the limited perspective F, which is wondering if the others agree that going to England will be fun. This then resembles G, which is that going to England will be fun, which is the target of Frances' irony. While Cohn may find this perspective reasonable to some degree, Frances represents perspective G as being completely unreasonable. Note that she does not intend her question to be answered. This is in part because she does not let Cohn or Jake get much of a chance to interject, but could also be because she finds the perspective so unreasonable that she does not require confirmation or denial of its unreasonableness. Being a perspective that it is very believable Cohn holds, he becomes the victim of the verbal irony.

For the second utterance, Frances can be said to be pretending to have the limited perspective F that she is going to England without protest. This is perhaps interesting in that it is a contradiction and very clearly false, though that does not mean it cannot still be considered pretence. F here puts us in mind of the resembling G, which is that she has no reason to protest. This is identical to the thought echoed according to the echoic account and it is recognizable as a perspective Cohn is likely to have. Frances again represents the perspective as completely unreasonable, as she instead appears to think she has numerous reasons to protest. G being a perspective that Cohn seems to have, he becomes a victim of this verbal irony as well.

The pretence theory can also offer an explanation for the tirade itself being ironic as well. In that case, she pretends to have the limited perspective F, that she looks forward to going to England. The other ironic utterances are then part of this greater pretence that extends beyond the sentence level. F then resembles and puts us in mind of G, the perspective that sending her to England is acceptable. G is therefore identical to the thought attributed according to the echoic theory. Frances then represents this perspective as completely unreasonable, as she does not appear to find any redeeming feature with it. Since G is a perspective that Cohn clearly holds, he again becomes a victim of the verbal irony.

Although both theories are able to explain the verbal irony in these examples, it is the echoic theory that offers the better explanation, being able to describe in greater detail the attitudes that Frances has towards the thoughts she echoes, and as a result the attitudes she has towards the victim in Cohn as well. Since this is an ironic question that Frances does not ask sincerely, both theories are able to explain it well. The tirade itself being seen as ironic is also something that both theories appear to be able account for without issue.

Dow (2005, 184) says that “through ironic verbal confrontations, Jake, Brett, Frances, and other characters express their basic feeling of impermanence of self and situation. As individuals not generative of their own actions, they seem to vanish, valueless, into the only apparent solidity of their own language.” This does seem fitting for this example, as what Frances has been seen to do in her tirade is protesting and criticizing the idea that she should go to England. However, she does not appear to refuse to go, meaning that she does come across as vehemently making use of her own language in a situation where she appears to have little control over her own actions since Cohn is essentially ending his relationship with her by sending her away.

Chapter 4

Discussion

4.1 Distinguishing Between the Echoic and Pretence Theories

The analyses outlined above seem to support Wilson and Sperber's (2012, 126) observation that it has gotten increasingly difficult to distinguish between the echoic account of irony and hybrid accounts that include aspects of both the echoic and pretence accounts. Not all the analyses offer the exact same explanations and insight with each example, but more often than not the accounts seem to offer explanations with more similarities than differences. It is perhaps not surprising that they do not generally offer widely different explanations for the same instance of irony, as doing so would likely mean that one explanation would distinguish itself in ways that would be unexpected considering the theoretic similarities between the two accounts. Therefore, it also comes as no surprise that there are no examples of verbal irony that either theory fails to offer any explanation for (even if the explanations offered are not always of the same quality). One important point to discuss is therefore to what extent the two theories indeed are distinguishable. The main difference between the two theories is obviously that one sees verbal irony as echoic language use and the other as a kind of pretence, but all other elements of the theories could be said to appear more similar than not.

4.1.1 Thoughts and Perspectives

Both theories rely on the concept of resemblance. With the echoic account, the content of the echoed thought or utterance that the verbal irony conveys an attitude towards must resemble the propositional content of some other thought or utterance. With the pretence account, the limited perspective, point of view or stance F must resemble and therefore put us in mind of the limited perspective, point of view or stance G. For the theories, these are what verbal irony communicates attitudes about. As has been noted in the analyses of many of the examples though, the echoed thought and G can often be said to be identical. When not, they are often separated by mere semantic differences in phrasing. This is just as, if not more, likely to be the result of the nature of resemblance making it challenging to pinpoint specific phrasing of the thought or perspective in question, rather than the two being fundamentally different. This can be illustrated with example (H.10), where the echoed thought or point of view G of Brett's second utterance could be said to be "Mike has good manners." This

resembles the words of her utterance, but so does “Mike does not have bad manners,” “Mike always has good manners,” “Mike is known to have good manners,” and “Mike is exhibiting good manners right now” meaning that any of these could potentially be said to be the echoed thought or G. Some of these readings may be more believable than others but neither option is correct or incorrect. As a result, there will never be a definite answer to what the echoed thought or perspective G in an ironic utterance is, and any difference between the two could have arisen from opting for phrasing with slightly differing resemblances. This is what appears to be the case in analyses where G and the echoed thought are similar, but not quite identical.

Another reason why settling on a specific thought/perspective that the irony is directed at can be challenging could perhaps be explained by an interesting finding in the analyses. Seen with the framework of the echoic theory, almost exclusively the echoed thoughts resemble thoughts, rather than utterances. (H.5) is one potential exception, as Cohn may very well sincerely have asked something like “don’t you think going to England will be fun, Frances?” when discussing this topic with Frances in private. She would then be echoing this utterance when ironically asking “won’t it be fun, Robert? Don’t you think it will be fun, Jake?” However, even if this is the case, Jake and the reader would not be privy to this information and would therefore not recognize her irony as echoing such an utterance. The irony still succeeds though, as they will still interpret it as her echoing a similar thought, just without knowing that it was uttered by Cohn in the past. It will also be understood as being attributed to him, since he appears to think that Frances should be excited about going. While it is certainly not unexpected to find echoes of thoughts, it is perhaps noteworthy that echoes of utterances appear to be so rare in the data. The challenging part when the echo is not of a previous utterance is that determining exactly what thought is being attributed and echoed will to some extent involve interpretation. In (H.10), Brett can attribute a thought about Mike’s manners to Mike since he clearly seems to think that his manners are good enough that he can criticize those of others, yet exactly what thoughts about his manners Brett attributes to him is open to interpretation.

As has been mentioned, Currie (2006, 118) uses the words *perspective*, *point of view* and *stance* when discussing both F and G. However, in this sense, are perspectives, points of view or stances not all made up of ideas and thoughts? Is attributing a thought to someone not the same as attributing to them a certain perspective, or at least part of one? Perspectives may be larger in scale, often encompassing multiple interconnecting ideas, but it seems that for verbal irony drawing attention to the perspective is enough, and so the complexity of the

perspective should not matter. The analyses of (H.12) can be used to illustrate these similarities. With the echoic account the suggestion was that Mike is attributing to Bill the thought that the joke is still funny, while the pretence account says that G is the perspective that the joke is still funny. A noteworthy point here that will be discussed later in 4.1.5 is whether Mike can be said to be attributing the perspective to Bill with Currie's pretence account. Regardless, what the verbal irony in (H.12) communicates is an attitude towards this thought or perspective and based on what has been said the question then becomes what separates the two. If the thought that the joke is still funny is attributed to Bill, then that entails that his perspective of the situation is that the joke is still funny. As suggested in section 3.12, that perspective would likely include other thoughts as well, here including thoughts about *why* the joke was and continues to be funny. However, the attitudes that Mike communicates with his verbal irony in (H.12) can be intuitively understood to be directed towards and criticize the idea *that* Bill still finds the joke funny, not *why* he still finds it funny. In other words, any other wider aspects of this perspective are not what the verbal irony is directed towards.

Saying, as the echoic theory does, that the verbal irony is directed at a thought or utterance therefore seems superior to suggesting that the irony is directed at a larger perspective, point of view or stance that the thought or utterance would be a part of anyway. With the latter, as the pretence theory may be said to suggest, it does not become clear why the verbal irony is directed at a specific part of the larger perspective. The theory can of course simply say that the target perspective is narrower than what is being claimed here, and that aspects like *why* Bill still finds the joke funny are not part of the target perspective G in the first place. In that case though, as has been laid out above, it seems more fitting to describe what the attitudes in the verbal irony are directed at as *thoughts*, as the echoic theory already does, rather than *perspectives*, *points of view* or *stances*, as there does not appear to be any meaningful distinction between them. Doing so would make the pretence account more similar to the echoic account in terms of terminology.

It is of course also possible to claim that Mike in (H.12) indeed does communicate an attitude towards other aspects of the larger perspective. One possible interpretation of the verbal irony in (H.12) could be that Mike also expresses solidarity with the bootblacks by criticizing Bill for finding it okay to demean them, as Bill's humour in this situation can be said to fail because he ends up "demeaning the low but honest trade of the bootblacks" (Donaldson 1987, 38). However, suggesting that Bill has some sort of thoughts about the joke not being demeaning to the bootblacks as a part of his perspective that the joke is still funny

would be problematic. Currie's theory would then say that he represents a larger perspective, with its numerous parts, as unreasonable, but this cannot account for the fact that the attitudes he would communicate towards these two different aspects of the perspective would presumably be distinct attitudes. Instead, it seems superior to do what the echoic theory suggests and consider narrower thoughts and the distinct attitudes towards each of them. If the pretence theory is to see the targets as separate perspectives rather than a single wide one, then again the question arises of whether there is any meaningful differences between thoughts and perspectives. Some cases of irony also appear more complex than others, as (J.1) illustrated with the irony having multiple targets at once, and the concept of echoing thoughts and of making thoughts manifest seems well equipped to deal with these complexities.

4.1.2 Attitudes

There also appear to be some interesting differences and similarities in the way the two theories explain how verbal irony communicates attitudes towards something. This is explained as being done in different ways: tacitly expressing a dissociative attitude towards an attributed thought or representing the target as unreasonable. The former seems to be able to offer more robust and extensive analyses, especially in examples like (H.8), (J.1), (H.11), (M.1) and (H.5). The echoic theory is here able to account for the possibility of numerous different attitudes being conveyed, while the pretence theory struggles to do the same, at least without adapting its framework to be more like that of the echoic theory. Being able to accurately describe attitudes is strictly speaking not a necessary part of explaining irony; all the theories require is the ability to either say that there is a dissociative attitude or that the target is being represented as unreasonable. However, being able to explain these dynamics in greater detail and more accurately describe what the verbal irony communicates would strengthen either theory. This is of particular importance when analysing examples from literature, where many possible interpretations are often possible (which is sometimes seen as being characteristic of "good" literature), and any theory of verbal irony should ideally be able to account for them. While a speaker may clearly be expressing a dissociative attitude, those attitudes may be "anywhere on a spectrum from amused tolerance through various shades of resignation or disappointment to contempt, disgust, outrage or scorn" (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 130). Example (H.11) illustrates this well, as the attitudes Brett and Bill express are difficult to pinpoint. As mentioned in the analysis in 3.13, their intention behind

their use of verbal irony may be from a wide range; anything from harsh mockery or ridicule to playful jokes, as well as the possibility that they are too drunk to have any specific intentions in mind, other than being dissociative. The echoic theory can account for all of this due to being able to narrow down a more specific attitude than the pretence theory can by saying that something is “represented as unreasonable.”

Whatever attitude one ends up saying the irony communicates is not a definitive answer, but merely a suggestion. Still, this is of value as it makes it possible to explain these possible interpretations. Based on the analyses of the data, I am suggesting that Currie’s pretence theory does not by default offer explanations of the same quality as those offered by the echoic theory. There is some room for narrower explanations, as the target has to be represented “as unreasonable in some ways, or at least as falling short of some salient standard of reasonableness” (Currie 2006, 119). However, different degrees of unreasonableness still do not allow for the same narrow details quite as easily as those of dissociative attitudes. I suggest that part of the reason for this may be that representing something as unreasonable seems to already be a narrower kind of expression of a dissociative attitude. Finding something unreasonable and representing it as such, thereby also communicating that one finds it to be unreasonable, seems quite similar to expressing, thereby also communicating that one has, a dissociative attitude towards something. In other words, finding something unreasonable entails having a dissociative attitude towards it. The opposite is not always the case though, as it is possible to express a dissociative attitude towards a thought that one does not find unreasonable. Someone may for example express a dissociative attitude towards what is deemed a morally reprehensible action, while not finding it unreasonable if such an action is necessary under the circumstances.

With the echoic theory the only question that needs to be asked is what kind of dissociative attitude is being expressed. However, with the pretence theory questions have to be asked regarding what ways the target is being represented as unreasonable or what “salient standard of reasonableness” it is represented as failing to live up to. The answers to these latter questions are neither as simple as to the one posed by the echoic theory, nor do they offer as much insight. So, while the two theories therefore appear to be relying on similar mechanisms, the one in Currie’s theory seems more complex while also offering inferior explanations. In the analysis of example (N.1) it was pointed out that G may be said to be misrepresented as unreasonable, and the possibility of such misrepresentation in irony is perhaps an interesting aspect of Currie’s pretence theory. However, as has been discussed above, representation (and hence misrepresentation) of a target as unreasonable is not

substantially different from expressing a dissociative attitude of finding something to be unreasonable. Whether one says that someone misrepresents something as unreasonable or expresses their attitude that they find something to be unreasonable, when it arguably is not, does not seem to make any meaningful difference. It therefore appears as if the echoic account allows for more detailed explanations and emerges as the superior account for explaining the possible attitudes communicated in verbal irony. Attempts to improve this aspect of Currie's pretence theory could certainly succeed but would seemingly also serve to make it even more like the echoic theory as a consequence.

4.1.3 Victims

As has been seen, verbal irony can have victims in numerous different ways. However, there are also cases analysed here where it seems more suitable to refer to someone with the term *indirect target* rather than *victim*. In some cases, the ironic utterance is clearly made at someone's expense and the speaker is being so critical or mocking that *victim* is a suitable term, such as in examples like (H.4), (N.1), (H.10), and (H.5). In other examples though, like (H.2), (H.3), (SA.1), and potentially (M.1), it seems too strong to use that term, at least in some of the suggested interpretations. This can be illustrated with the possible interpretations of (H.3). The direct target of the irony in either interpretation here is the thought or perspective that Jake might not have been sleeping. When interpreting Jake as being upset at Brett for causing a scene and waking him, what he then communicates to Brett with his ironic question is something like "it was a ridiculous thought and you were ridiculous for believing it," essentially chastising her for having had that thought/perspective. Jake communicates something substantially different with the interpretation that he is not upset at Brett though, it instead being something like "it was an unfortunate but understandable thought and it was unfortunate but understandable that you believed it." While Brett is certainly an indirect target in both interpretations, to call her a victim in the latter seems too harsh.

Victim is a traditional term in discussions of verbal irony, and it is not unclear what the term means to those familiar with the field, but I still suggest that *indirect target* is more suitable. Another reason for this is also that highlighting the indirect nature of people being targeted by verbal irony makes sense, considering that whatever attitude is being directed at the target of the irony will then also be reflected onto the indirect target. It seems like neither the echoic nor the pretence theory can suggest that different attitudes are communicated towards the target thought/perspective and the indirect victim. Doing so would mean

directing a specific attitude towards the victim, which should be contradictory to Wilson and Sperber's claim that the victims are only indirectly targeted (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 141). Currie does not make a similar claim as his article does not discuss the concept of victims, however, there is also nothing to indicate that he suggests people can be represented as unreasonable in a different way from the target perspective.

A distinction between intended and unintended victims of irony is something that may also be worth highlighting. This can be illustrated with example (H.4). It is clear that Harvey is a victim of Cohn's irony and that Cohn intends for that to be the case. However, as was mentioned in the analysis, Jake may also end up as a victim of the verbal irony if he finds Harvey funny, though the degree to which he does so influences how strongly he also is a victim. However, whether that is something Cohn intends is not clear. He may very well be intending to criticize the thought/perspective that Harvey has and indirectly criticize everyone else who also shares it. However, his focus may just as well be on Harvey alone, not caring what other people think, thereby potentially making Jake an unintended victim. Deciding whether one believes a victim or victims to be intended or unintended victims is a matter of interpretation though, and with many of the examples it would be entirely reasonable to suggest that the victims are so unintendedly. This includes some possible interpretations of (H.8), where Bill is simply making an ironic joke without intending for Cohn or Jake to end up as victims. While this concept of intention related to victims of irony makes intuitive sense and can be seen in many of the examples in the data, neither theory seems to indicate that intent may be a determining factor in the way irony can have victims.

Another important topic to return to is example (J.1), which can be intuitively understood as having two victims—Mrs. Dudley and the door—yet neither theory appears to be able to account for both. The echoic theory could explain Mrs. Dudley being a victim if she is said to recognizably entertain the echoed norm about herself. This does not come without issues though, as the norm that is echoed is about how people in general are expected to behave and people do not tend to have those general hopes in particular cases. In other words, while there exists a general hope or expectation for human behaviour, there is no such hope or expectation for Mrs. Dudley in particular. As a result, it seems odd to suggest that Mrs. Dudley has entertained this thought and is therefore a victim. The pretence theory could also attempt a similar explanation, although it was suggested that doing so is even less believable. In either case, the reliance on recognising thoughts or perspectives as having been entertained or held by someone means that it becomes odd to suggest that the door is a victim, since it has no capacity to think.

One possible solution to the problem of the victims in example (J.1) is that Theodora may intend for both to be victims, even if neither are victims of the verbal irony itself. This idea is certainly not unreasonable as this use of verbal irony clearly insults both Mrs. Dudley and the door, even if they are not victims of the irony and neither is able to hear what she says. Intuitively this makes sense, as what Theodora can be understood as intending to convey is something more like “Mrs. Dudley is not a lovable person and the door is not a loveable door,” than “Mrs. Dudley is not a loveable person and it is ridiculous of her to think so about herself, and the door is not a loveable door and it is ridiculous of it to think so about itself.” The first part of that second paraphrase might be believable, meaning that Mrs. Dudley could be a victim, though it is likely not Theodora’s intent to criticize Mrs. Dudley for thinking that about herself which would technically make her an unintended victim. This seems to be paradoxical if Theodora intended for her to be a victim, as was just suggested, but an explanation could simply be that what Theodora intends is for Mrs. Dudley to be a victim of the insult she communicates in her ironic utterance, rather than a victim of the ironic utterance itself. The defining feature of the latter is that it involves saying something about a person holding a certain thought or perspective, while the former does not. In other words, Mrs. Dudley and the door are victims in (J.1) in much the same way as if Theodora had explicitly stated “Mrs. Dudley is a horrible person and the door is a horrible door.”

The same concept of victims of the utterance and victims of the irony can be applied to other examples, such as if Georgette is seen as echoing a norm in (H.1). In that case, Frances would not end up as a particular victim of the irony itself, but since the utterance communicates an insult of her character she would end up as a victim of the utterance. Another example is (H.4). Two possible interpretations there are that Cohn intends to communicate that he does not think Harvey is funny and criticizing Harvey for thinking so about himself, making him a victim in both senses. However, he may not intend to criticize Harvey for what he thinks about himself, instead intending to only communicate that he does not think Harvey is funny. That would then make Harvey an intended victim of the insult and an unintended victim of the irony. These distinctions therefore seem to be of particular importance when explaining ironic utterances in literature, as it makes it possible to say more about the character’s communicative intentions and the way they relate to each other.

If victims of irony are victims because the ironic utterance communicates some sort of dissociative attitude towards them for entertaining a particular thought or utterance, then that does not appear to be a mechanism unique to verbal irony as all sorts of utterances can have these kinds of indirect victims. If someone is proudly showing off their newly painted house

to their friends, someone may then ironically say “what a lovely colour!”, making the owner an indirect victim of the irony because they entertain the thought that the colour is lovely. However, the owner would be the victim in a very similar, if not identical, way if the friend had said “what an ugly colour!” instead. The homeowner would then be an indirect victim because their thought/perspective is being criticized. These kinds of indirect victims may also be unintentional: e.g. if the friend had not seen the house before and made the second utterance thinking it was a neighbour’s house. There are therefore multiple ways that people can be victims of utterances and although all of them can be found with verbal irony, none of them appear to be unique to irony. The reason why irony often has indirect victims is because it necessarily involves, according to both the echoic and pretence theory, expressing an attitude towards a thought/perspective. Since that attitude is either dissociative or one of finding a perspective unreasonable, the people who entertain the thought are going to end up as indirect victims.

As has been discussed above in 4.1.2, one of the strengths of the echoic theory appears to be the concept of dissociative attitudes as part of what is communicated in irony. Not only does the possibility of looking at the dissociative attitudes in detail reveal something about the speaker’s attitudes towards the target of the irony, but it also does so for the speaker’s attitudes towards the victim. Numerous different kinds of dissociative attitudes have been identified in the analyses, including ones that are playful, critical, lamenting, mocking, and hostile. As a result, the echoic theory is well suited to explain the different ways in which irony has victims. These victims are sometimes mocked, criticized, made fun of, etc. and the echoic theory can explain how this works in every example in the data. The pretence theory cannot do this as easily, unless its concept of unreasonableness is stretched and changed in ways that make it more like that of the echoic theory’s dissociative attitudes. While doing so may be possible, it would also make the theory even less distinguishable from the echoic theory.

The second advantage the echoic theory appears to have is that it is also much better suited to explain the many different types of victims that verbal irony can have. In none of the examples analysed was the echoic theory unable to explain who the victims were, provided that one accepts the suggestion that the irony in (J.1) and one interpretation of (H.1) do not have any indirect victims. This is due to its seemingly quite robust framework of explaining victims as being those who are either the real or imagined originators of the echoed thought, or those who have recognizably entertained or expressed it. Currie never discusses the concept of victims in his article, and so it is not clear how his theory can best explain victims.

Despite it possibly not seeming like an explanation that Currie would agree with, the idea that victims of the irony are those that can be believably understood as holding perspective G was suggested. This explanation already has similarities to the echoic theory suggesting that the victims may be someone who has recognizably entertained the echoed thought. This suggested explanation proved to be insufficient, as it could not explain who the victims are in all examples, including in (H.8), (H.6), (SA.1), and (H.11). It would certainly be possible to suggest that the pretence theory could make use of the same criteria as the echoic theory, thereby being able to explain the victims in all examples where the echoic theory can do so but the pretence theory cannot. However, doing so would once again make the theories still more similar. Victims of irony is therefore something the echoic theory is much better suited to explain. At best the pretence theory can attempt to alter its explanations to match those of the echoic theory, but the theory seems to offer no advantages in this area that could potentially make it superior.

4.1.4 Ironic Questions

Multiple ironic questions were found in the data and are worth looking at in detail. These examples are (H.3), (SA.1), (H.8), and (H.5), with the latter two examples containing more than one ironic question. Ironic questions have been mentioned and used as examples in literature on verbal irony, and there might not be much new to say about fully ironic questions. For the echoic account of irony, ironic questions are just another way of tacitly echoing a thought while tacitly expressing a dissociative attitude towards it. As for the pretence accounts, Currie (2006, 119) with his variant suggests that questions are just one of several ways that a speaker can pretend to have a certain perspective or point of view. With the fully ironic questions such as Bill's question in (H.8) and Frances' questions in (H.5), the verbal irony is explained by both theories. However, the pretence theory's explanations seemed to become somewhat problematic in the questions that could be interpreted as both genuine and ironic, like (H.3), (SA.1), and Jake's question in (H.8). As was mentioned in the analyses, it appears entirely reasonable to suggest that a speaker can ask a question sincerely while also asking it ironically. The speaker would then communicate that they want an answer to the question, while also communicating an attitude towards a thought. This appears to be possible when sincerely asking a stupid question while also communicating that one thinks the question is stupid, and so there is no reason to think that the same should not be possible with verbal irony.

Ironic questions seem to be quite versatile, whether fully ironic or not, as can be seen in the analyses of the different ways they are used in the aforementioned examples. Example (ST.1) in Appendix 1 can also be used to illustrate this. Colonel O'Neill, a character known for his frequent use of irony and cynical attitude, here asks the ironic question "since when, sir?" instead of making an ironic statement like for example "yeah, right." The latter would be entirely inappropriate when speaking with a commanding officer, yet his ironic question can convey a very similar attitude while not being an utterance he can as easily be reprimanded for. It seems as if O'Neill's intention with this utterance primarily is to convey an attitude through verbal irony, although he is arguably also somewhat curious about what the answer will be, and therefore asks the question genuinely as well.

(ST.1) is an example from a television series, which makes it closer to drama than prose fiction. However, while there is no narrator, there is arguably still some multilayering present in this example, in part because of the editing process. There is a cut before the ironic question of Captain Carter's puzzled and sceptical face turning to look at the colonel, then a cut of him looking at her before facing the general with a similar, albeit more critical and judging, facial expression. While facial expressions themselves do not separate this scene from one in natural conversation or a stage play, neither of those variants of conversation can draw attention to facial expressions in the same way television and film can. This is of course only done for the layer of the viewer while the characters themselves are engaged in what is supposed to be natural conversation. Highlighting the demeanour and body language of the characters like in this example gives clues about the speaker's ironic intent in a way that is essentially the exact opposite of what Hemingway mostly does in *The Sun Also Rises*.

That a question can be asked both sincerely and ironically does not cause any issues for the echoic theory, as in (H.3) where it says that Jake communicates a dissociative attitude towards the thought that he might not have been sleeping, which he attributes to Brett. There is no reason why he should not be able to do so while also wanting to hear what Brett thought he was doing instead of sleeping. An issue arises for the pretence theory though, as he must be said to both pretend to be someone who wants to know what Brett thought he was doing, while also being that type of person. Whether this is possible is perhaps not quite clear. It does seem possible to pretend to be X while also being X in cases where one does not know that one is X, as in Anscombe's example that "a man can pretend to be poisoned when, unknown to him, he is poisoned" (Austin and Anscombe 1958, 283). However, the question becomes whether it is possible to pretend to be poisoned when one knows that one is poisoned. Or similarly, can one pretend to be happy when one is happy? Even if the answer

would be yes, it would still be problematic because the audience of irony would presumably react to the pretence, regardless of whether the speaker is *X* or not. This may not be a problem for the pretence theory of irony though, as the pretence in irony is of a kind that is intended to be recognized as such. This means that the pretence theory could say that in ironic and genuine questions, the speaker is both sincerely asking the question while also pretending to be someone who asks it in order to target a different but resembling perspective and represent it as unreasonable. Such an explanation could work if the pretence is intended to be recognized as such, but the theory would still require that the hearer recognizes that the speaker is asking the question sincerely while also pretending to ask it in order to make use of verbal irony. This is not the case for the echoic theory, which can instead simply say that the question is asked sincerely while simultaneously echoing a thought that the speaker is expressing a dissociative attitude towards.

So, while the notion of pretence may still work for the pretence theory with these kinds of ironic questions, it does appear to cause some potentially serious problems. On the other hand, the echoic theory seems to be entirely compatible with the idea of questions being both sincere and ironic, and therefore seems to be the theory better suited at explaining ironic questions in general. Worth noting though, is that the reason why questions may appear to be asked both sincerely and ironically may instead be said to be a result of the attitudes that can be conveyed in verbal irony. In that case, Jake would in (H.3) be conveying an attitude towards the thought or perspective that he may not have been sleeping when Brett arrived, and his attitude would then be both critical and curious. This could perhaps better explain why ironic questions seem to exist on a continuum, with an ironic question like the one in (ST.1) seeming being less sincere than the one in (SA.1). If this curious attitude is how these kinds of ironic questions should be explained, then the pretence theory might not struggle as much to explain what is going on. However, as has been argued in 4.1.2, the echoic account is much better suited at explaining the attitudes communicated in verbal irony and would therefore still be able to offer the better explanations for these attitudes of curiosity. A potential issue with this explanation of sincere and ironic questions is that it would mean that the attitude conveyed in these cases of irony is less clearly dissociative. As a result, it would make such uses of irony fringe cases. There may be ironic questions where this is the case, but I suggest that in examples like (H.3) the question can be interpreted as both clearly ironic and clearly sincere at the same time, without the ironic question being on a borderline between sincere and ironic. The attitude expressed towards the target of the ironic utterance would therefore not be one of dissociative curiosity.

4.1.5 Pretence

The notion of pretence faced issues in (H.11) as well, where it was not clear what the perspective F should be seen as being in the case of Bill's hyperbolic irony. Wilson and Sperber (2012, 144) say that "it seems to us that the pretence element in attributive-pretence accounts of irony adds to the complexity of the theory without yielding any corresponding benefit." They consider Currie's theory to be one of these hybrid attributive-pretence accounts, since it can be assumed that the perspective G is tacitly attributed (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 138). Currie (2006, 118) seems to suggest that something like that is possible, though does not go into further details about it. It does indeed seem possible to suggest that G can be attributed based on many of the analyses of the data, as G more often than not already corresponds with what the echoed thought is according to the echoic account. However, while Currie's pretence account seems to be able to incorporate a tacitly attributive element, thereby becoming even less distinguishable from the echoic theory, it seems as if it would also have to incorporate the idea of norms in order to explain an example like (J.1) as attributive.

Another potential issue appeared in (H.3) regarding whether it should be claimed that Cohn is pretending to find Harvey funny if he is speaking in a serious manner, unlike the manner of someone who would genuinely find him funny. This was explained as being an example of what Currie (2006, 122) calls "the scope of pretending." While not mentioned in those analyses, the same potential issue could be said to be present in numerous other examples, though it would depend heavily on the interpretation as Hemingway gives few descriptions of the manner in which the characters speak. (H.10) is another possible example, as Brett saying "you've such lovely manners" appears so critical that it is hard to picture her speaking as if it was a sincere compliment. While it is possible to explain this as her pretending, in a critical and hostile manner, to [seriously assert that Mike has lovely manners], this does appear, as Wilson and Sperber (2012, 144) claim, to lead to a "diluted pretence account." While the idea of the scope of pretending is interesting, it also seems to indicate that the pretence found in irony must be a very specific kind of pretence. As was mentioned in the literature review, "to speak ironically" ruins the effect of the following irony. Presumably this is because the pretence in irony cannot be spoiled like this, but at the same time the pretence in irony is one that the hearer is supposed to recognize as such. After all, if the pretence in irony is too convincing then the speaker will seem sincere rather than ironic. So, if irony is to be seen as a kind of pretence then it must be making use of a highly

specific type of pretence. This dilution and added complexity of the pretence element means that the pretence element ought to offer benefits compared to simply explaining irony as attributing and echoing thoughts, and I see no such benefits.

(M.1) was an example where the pretence notion was able to overcome a potential issue regarding whether it makes sense to explain verbal irony in direct thought as a kind of pretence. As was mentioned, it does indeed seem that solitary pretence is possible. However, it could still be questioned whether the best way to explain the man in (M.1) ironically thinking “well isn’t this nice...” to himself is by saying that he is pretending to be someone who has a restricted view of the world and believes that the plane crashing is a nice situation to be in. Suggesting that he is instead echoing a thought he held in the past seems like a much easier explanation, and it is not clear what benefits the pretence element offers here. However, a potential issue for the echoic theory with this example has to do with how the attitude in verbal irony is conveyed in thoughts. The echoic theory claims that irony “necessarily involves the expression of a certain type of attitude towards the attributed thought” (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 129). A question can therefore be raised as to whether someone can express something solely in their own thoughts, without speaking. It seems as if the echoic theory must suggest that the answer is yes, and could do so without issue, though this could potentially cause complications with respect to other aspects of relevance theory. The pretence theory does not appear to have any issue here, as it is arguably less problematic to suggest that it is possible to *represent* something as unreasonable solely in thought.

It is primarily the incorporation of an element of resemblance that makes Currie’s pretence theory a hybrid theory of the pretence and echoic theories. It is the explanation of F and G as similar but potentially distinct limited perspectives that is arguably the biggest strength of Currie’s pretence theory compared to Clark and Gerrig’s original account. The primary benefit of this is being able to explain cases where the perspective the speaker pretends to have differs from the perspective that the speaker wishes to use as a target for the irony. While the theory could also be seen to include an attributive element with its perspective G, as Wilson and Sperber suggests, it is not necessary to claim so for it to be considered a hybrid theory. However, it is interesting that making use of resemblance means that an attributive element could be seen to follow as a result, and that the concept of norms should in turn also be incorporated. This means that not only is the strongest element of Currie’s theory one that he has adapted from the echoic theory, but by doing so it seems as if it might also become even more like the echoic theory than Currie may have intended. The

main distinction is still that Currie's theory is one that considers irony to be a kind of pretence, though based on the analyses of the data I see no noticeable benefit to doing so.

4.1.6 Ironic Answers

One interesting use of verbal irony is as an answer to a genuine question, which was seen in examples (N.1) and (H.3). There appears to be something about questions that allows for ironic utterances that would otherwise not be possible. In (H.3) for example, it seems that what makes it possible for Jake's utterance to be ironic is the question Brett asked. He could ask the question "what did you think I was doing now?" as soon as Brett enters, but such a question would likely fail to be ironic. It was also suggested in the analysis of (H.3) that Jake could ironically answer that he was engaging in any activity that involves being awake, but this would likely also fail to be interpreted as irony if not made in response to a question. Somehow the questions appear to allow the Dragon in (N.1) and Jake in (H.3) to ironically answer in a wide variety of different ways, but this does not appear to be the case for every question asked. This can be illustrated better with example (B.1) seen in figure 3 in Appendix 2. This cartoon was made during the First World War and the answer The Fed-up One gives is verbal irony. The hole would have been made as a result of the fighting, presumably by artillery fire, and was obviously not made by mice. However, the Fed-up One does not seem to have the same wide selection of possible answers here as in (N.1) and (H.3). Had he answered something like "ducks" or "hedgehogs" the utterance would not be successful irony, despite these also being animals that did not make the hole in question. So there appears to be something about mice that makes it a possible answer here, which the echoic theory could try to explain as being that his answer echoes a norm "in the sense of socially shared ideas about how things should be" (Wilson and Sperber 2012, 142). Such norms are always available to be echoed though, and the man saying "mice made that hole" unprompted would not be successful irony. That mice make holes is not a norm, as people seeing a hole do not have an idea that it being made by mice is how things should be. Instead, it appears to be a socially shared idea that mice do indeed make holes, which is what makes it a possible ironic answer but not an unprompted ironic utterance. Since no such shared idea exists with ducks or hedgehogs, they are not possible answers. Worth noting is also that this shared idea of mice making holes may have been stronger in 1916 than it is today, presuming that mice holes in walls were more common in the early 20th century than in the present. Similar to what was discussed in 3.2 and 3.13, contextual factors outside of the context of the utterance

can therefore influence the inference of irony. It may even have been that “mice made that hole” would have been successful irony in 1916, provided that mice holes were common enough.

So, while the question in (B.1) allows for ironic responses that would not otherwise be possible, there are still some answers that are not possible. This is likely because the question asked is a wh- question as opposed to the yes-no questions in (N.1) and (H.3). For the latter, almost anything that contradicts the correct answer could be used as an ironic answer. With a wh- question though, it seems as if the ironist is limited to a set of answers that would either be plausible under different circumstances or otherwise connected to the correct answer. Although it is not plausible that they made this hole, “mice” is a possible answer since they are known to make holes and the hole must obviously have been made by someone or something that can make holes. The Fed-up One can also ironically answer something like “someone with high precision field artillery, likely 75 mm calibre and loaded with high explosive shells judging by the size of the ‘ole” as it is related to the correct answer and may even be entirely true. However, it is too specific to plausibly have been a genuine answer, as an appropriate answer would be something like “the French,” “the Germans,” etc. Other questions may be more limited in terms of possible ironic answers though, whether they are wh- or yes-no questions. Ironic answers to the wh- question “what day is it today?” would for example usually be limited to days of the week and expressions of uncertainty (since those are plausible answers to the question) as well as ironic questions like “what day do you think it is?”, similar to what Jake does in (H.3). However, some of the same limitations would normally be the case for a yes-no question like “is it Friday today?”, as any answer ironically giving a suggestion that it is some day other than Friday is still primarily limited by the days of the week.

It appears as if what ironic answers to genuine questions often communicate is that the speaker finds the actual answer to the question to be obvious. This would then be easier to communicate with yes-no questions, since the person asking the question primarily expects an affirmative or negative answer, while also already appearing to have some idea as to what the answer may be. At the very least, they have it narrowed down to two possibilities. So, while wh- questions therefore allow for only some kinds of ironic answers, negative answers to yes-no questions can in some cases give the ironist nearly limitless options in comparison, though still remain restrained to some degree by the question. It could therefore be that the ironist can use verbal irony to convey a critical attitude towards the thought that any negative answer is possible by offering what would be a plausible answer to the same yes-no question

in a different but believable context, thereby communicating an affirmative answer. (N.1) and (H.3) are examples of this, as has been discussed above. While communicating negative answers to yes-no questions is also possible, the ironist is obviously more limited in what they can say than with affirmative answers. Jake could for example ironically answer “yes, I was sleeping like a baby!” in (H.3) if he had been awake. It therefore appears that irony communicating negative answers can elaborate on the ironic affirmative answer but not offer any new ones.

4.1.7 Norms

The claim that irony can echo norms or general hopes, expectations, or aspirations is an interesting one. This was used to explain the verbal irony in (J.1), where Theodora echoes two distinct but similar expectations that people generally have. However, norms and expectations could also be said to cover nearly everything, and yet they will not always end up being successfully echoed when attempting irony. Grice’s example of “that car has all its windows intact” said about a car with a broken window, and previously discussed in 2.2, can be used to illustrate this. Cars having their windows intact is arguably an expectation people have about cars, yet clearly this expectation is not available to be echoed in this utterance. Part of the reason for this might be that it is not general or universal enough. Instead, it might be said to be part of a more general norm that everyone hopes and expects that people leave each other’s property alone. This norm does not appear to be echoed in the utterance either, though it would be if someone in the same scenario looked at the car with a broken window and said “this is clearly a street where people respect the property of others!” or “such great respect for other people’s property!” So not only do there appear to be some kind of restrictions as to what makes a norm available to be echoed, but the way in which they are echoed also matters. A possibility for why the latter is the case could be that what is said in Grice’s example does not resemble closely enough a norm that is available to be echoed. That cars should have all their windows intact is certainly part of the more universal hope for property to be left alone, yet it does not appear to be something that is either thought or expressed by people on a regular basis. As a result, the resemblance between the two is not strong enough that saying something about car windows can echo the norm. By saying something about the property of others though, the resemblance is close enough that the norm can be echoed. Relevance theory could explain this by saying that the utterance in Grice’s original example requires more cognitive effort while not yielding any greater positive

cognitive effects compared to something like “such great respect for other people’s property!”

Something similar to (5) can be observed in (J.1) as well. As was mentioned in the analysis, the reporting clause is part of what makes it apparent to the reader that Theodora is communicating something about both Mrs. Dudley and the door. Without the reporting clause, the utterance is perhaps more likely to be interpreted as only being about Mrs. Dudley. Part of the reason for this may be that *lovable* is an adjective more commonly used about people than doors or other objects. This would then result in the resemblance to the norm for people being stronger than that for objects. It would be easier to see it as referring to the door (even without the reporting clause) had Theodora instead said “lovely old thing,” since things being lovely more closely resembles the norms and hopes about them than them being lovable. What is also interesting is that no indication of how Eleanor interprets the utterance is given to the reader. The reporting clause is only available to the reader, meaning that it is entirely possible she would have missed that Theodora was not only speaking about Mrs. Dudley. This is then another example of how verbal irony in literature has the potential to interact with the reader on a different layer from that which it interacts with the characters. The kind of layering with verbal irony that comes as a result of reporting clauses and narration does not appear to be used much by Hemingway in *The Sun Also Rises*, although something similar can be seen in (H.2) if the reader interprets Jake as missing Brett’s ironic intent.

Currie’s pretence theory does not rely on norms and must therefore explain what has been just discussed in slightly different ways. Since the theory relies on resemblance between F and G, it could suggest that what prevents “that car has all its windows intact” from succeeding as irony is that the pretended perspective F does not resemble the desired target perspective G to a close enough degree that it can put us in mind of it. This may very well be the case, but without the idea of norms the pretence theory has no explanation for why a particular perspective should be what the ironist is trying to use as a target. This could be solved by incorporating an idea of norms and suggesting that it is indeed norms that irony targets in these cases. However, then another potential issue arises in that G must have certain limitations or defects that resemble those of F. However, as Wilson (2006, 1736) points out, “it is not clear why entertaining a very general hope or wish that things should go well, the weather should be nice, etc. should be seen as having a restrictive or defective view of the world.” This means that to offer an explanation for why Grice’s example fails, the pretence theory has to rely on resemblance, similar to the echoic theory. Though as to explain what it

is trying to resemble, the notion of norms appears to be needed and incorporating that seems to potentially cause issues. It therefore appears as if the echoic theory is much better suited to explain this aspect of irony.

4.2 Hemingway and Irony

One interesting finding has been the amount of scene setting and context needed for the examples in the data. The examples more commonly used in literature on pragmatic theory, including irony, are much shorter by comparison; often no longer than a sentence or two explaining the context and then the ironic utterance itself. An exception to this is examples used in experimental studies. Reducing the examples in the data to shorter lengths would technically be possible, but it seems like doing so would reduce some of the effects the irony has. This can be illustrated by reducing example (H.12) to the following:

(9) [Bill has been orchestrating an elaborate joke that may have been funny when it started, but that nobody else finds funny at this point.]

“Bill's a yell of laughter,” Mike said.

The verbal irony is obviously still intact with just the one line of dialogue and a single sentence to describe the scene, and both theories would still be able to explain the verbal irony. The explanations would not be fundamentally different either, as the echoed thought, and perspectives F and G would all be explained as being the same, while the attitude would still be a dissociative one and G represented as unreasonable. However, this scenario obviously does not convey as much as the far broader context in (H.12). Important details about the scene are missing in (9), such as Mike's previously proclaiming “I say, Bill is an ass.” Another is Bill's response to the bootblack's question humorously being in English except for “señor”, which is presumably most of what little Spanish Bill knows. Also, the bootblack kneeling down beside another already at work, as well as the description of Mike's shoe already shining in the electric light, help highlight the repetitive nature of a joke gone too far. These all influence the way the reader will interpret the verbal irony, and something is lost when they are paraphrased, summarized, or omitted. A general summary of the context is all that appears necessary for the verbal irony to be recognized, so the specific details may instead primarily be influencing the interpretation of the attitudes communicated in irony, as well as weak implicatures the reader may or may not entertain. As has been discussed in 4.1.2, these attitudes cannot necessarily be determined with any certainty, nor is it necessary

to do so to explain that the utterance is ironic. However, doing so is of value when interpreting literature, as it can make it possible to say something more specific about the state of mind of the characters, as well as how they communicate and relate with each other. It is for example not possible to say as much about Mike's attitudes, opinions, and what he intends to communicate in (9) as in (H.12). The primary reason for this seems to be that the context is reduced, though the fact that this reduction necessarily involves subjective paraphrasing may also have an impact. Also worthy of note is that this reliance on greater context to recognize and explain specific communicated attitudes is not unique to literature; it is also necessary for doing the same with real life situations and use of verbal irony. Other contextual clues are likely to have an even greater impact on the interpretation of verbal irony in spoken language, as even more clues will be available. These include clues related to things like the sounds of speech and facial expressions, none of which are available in the same form in literature. While again not necessary for explaining how verbal irony works, focus on a wider context still seems to be able to offer insight into the nuances in what verbal irony communicates.

One noteworthy finding in the data from *The Sun Also Rises* is how Hemingway opts not to point out the characters' use of verbal irony. As with most of the other dialogue in the novel, even reporting clauses like "Cohn said" in (H.4) are rarely used with verbal irony. The verbal irony therefore does not distinguish itself from the rest of the dialogue, and the narration rarely draws any specific attention to it. Reporting clauses like "he said ironically," "he was being sarcastic," etc. that makes irony explicit are not found at all in this novel. Hemingway therefore seems to be making limited use of some of the many interesting ways verbal irony can be exploited in literature.

Example (SA.1) was highlighted as an example that made use of narration to bolster uncertainty about whether a character was being sincere or ironic. While not given a full analysis, example (H.9) in Appendix 1 can be said to show a similar kind of pragmatic ambiguity. While Mike does appear to be using verbal irony to express sympathy with Harris for having fought in the war by ironically claiming to miss the war, he may also be reminiscing fondly about that time. The former is perhaps intuitively the most appropriate interpretation, and Brett responding to the utterance with her signature phrase "don't be an ass" seems to indicate that she finds it ironic. Still, other interpretations are also possible, including that Mike may be unsure if he is being sincere or ironic. However, unlike in (SA.1), Hemingway does not draw any attention to this potentially ambiguous exclamation. This way of handling verbal irony appears to be in line with what he said in *Death in the Afternoon*

about the writer omitting things that they know, and the reader still being able to feel them. While Hemingway could have had Jake the narrator add something like “it was hard to tell if he was being serious or not” to explicitly state that it is unclear what Mike really means, he instead opts to omit descriptions like that. The reader can still get a feeling that it is unclear what Mike means though, even without such descriptions, as Hemingway can be seen to suggest. However, his claim that the reader “will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them” (Hemingway 1935, 183) does appear to be too strong when applied to context surrounding verbal irony. While the reader may very well still be able to recognize verbal irony even if clues in the narration are kept to a minimum, as Hemingway opts to do, it is still not going to create quite the same feeling in the reader. For example, the reader is almost certainly going to recognize Cohn’s irony in (H.4), and admittedly an explicit confirmation like “Cohn said ironically” would likely not make much of a difference. However, Hemingway also leaves out other contextual clues, such as the tone of Cohn’s voice, his facial expressions, etc., and they are likely to influence how the irony is interpreted. If Cohn is described as rolling his eyes, then he is likely to be interpreted as less hostile than if he is described as looking angry and fuming. So, while the way Hemingway uses verbal irony does not seem to make it harder to recognize as such, it means that the nuances in the irony are less clear to the reader and therefore more open to interpretation. The echoic theory would explain this as the reader being able to identify that a dissociative attitude is being expressed, but not exactly what kind of dissociative that attitude is.

What Halliday wrote about irony being suited for Hemingway’s writing does appear to extend to verbal irony as well. It allows the writer to communicate a lot more through the words of the characters than just the words themselves. The many analyses above show that a lot can be said about comparatively few words in the verbal irony of Hemingway’s writing. Worth noting is also that the way Hemingway uses verbal irony is one that is uniquely available to him due to being written language. Irony in spoken language necessarily comes with additional clues, while Hemingway limits the number of clues available to the greatest possible extent by rarely offering descriptions and reporting clauses in relation to verbal irony. He therefore appears to be making full use of the opportunities that the format of the novel offers in this regard.

As this thesis is based on analyses of data from only one of Hemingway’s novels, it cannot be used to support Benson’s claim about irony in *The Sun Also Rises* being used for comedy more frequently than the author’s later novels. However, it does appear as if Hemingway makes use of irony for comedy on numerous occasions. Bill in particular uses

irony to be funny, which will be discussed below in relation to Donaldson's claims. Other examples can be humorous to the reader, even if the irony is not meant to be funny by the character making the utterance. Two good examples of this are Mike's ironic "Bill's a yell of laughter" in (H.12) and Frances' rant in (H.5). If one finds the constant harassment and abuse of Robert Cohn to be funny, as it appears contemporary readers may have, then examples like (H.4), (H.13), and (H.11) could also be considered to be irony being used by the writer for comedy.

The analyses offered by the two pragmatic theories also shed light on the novel and its characters. Verbal irony is used by numerous different characters and for a wide variety of purposes. A few examples of this are: Brett being highly critical of Mike in (H.10), Georgette voicing her complaints in (H.1), Bill making an ironic joke in (H.6) and Cohn being hostile and potentially threatening towards Harvey in (H.4). The theories make it possible to explain in detail how these uses of verbal irony work, beyond just non-theoretical and intuitive descriptions. They have also been able to offer explanations for multiple interpretations of the same case of irony, as well as what changes from one interpretation to the other. Being able to account for different interpretations is crucial for pragmatic theory to be of value in literary studies. If the theories would have to rely either on specific interpretations or on certain prerequisites, then they would not be able to account for the wide array of interpretations and nuances that are possible with literature. The theories seem to be able to account for numerous interpretations, with the echoic theory in particular easily being able to accommodate more possible nuances, as was seen in (H.1), (SA.1), (H.12), (H.11), and (M.1) in particular.

A few comments can also be made about Donaldson's claims about humour in the novel, more specifically regarding Bill Gorton. While neither the echoic nor the pretence theory aim to explain the humour that is sometimes the result of verbal irony, they can still attempt to explain the irony itself. Donaldson (1987, 34) claims that "the most consistently funny character in *The Sun Also Rises* is Bill Gorton." While this thesis does not cover humour in general (nor does it extend widely enough to generalize about all humorous uses of verbal irony) it is still noteworthy how some of the most clearly humorous cases of verbal irony in the data, (H.7) in Appendix 1, (H.6), and (H.8), are utterances made by Bill Gorton. The other most playful and potentially humorous utterance is that in (H.2), made by Brett. Worth noting is also that the ironic utterance Mike makes in (H.12) is made because of Bill's – arguably failed – attempt at humour.

Furthermore, Donaldson (1987, 37) also claims that “*The Sun Also Rises* is the great book that it is partly because of Bill Gorton's humor that directs its jibes at ideas and institutions, not human beings.” However, as has been noted in the analyses, the findings do not necessarily support this claim, at least not unconditionally. Part of the reason for this may be the normative bias of verbal irony. Since irony is more likely to be used to criticize than to praise, it makes sense that Bill, like the other characters, would use irony in a more negative way. Humour appears to be entirely separate from the criticize/praise dynamic, in that both kinds of verbal irony can be funny. As was pointed out in the analysis of (H.6), Bill’s humour does to a degree direct itself at human beings as well. However, in that example he opts to speak in a language that the conductor does not understand. This means that even though the irony is still directed at the conductor, the irony becomes more humorous than critical in its effects as the person whom the criticism would be directed at is not made aware of it. It is worth mentioning that the conductor is aware that Bill deliberately speaks in another language though, and so Bill’s humour still comes at the conductor’s expense, just in a different way. (H.13) was also highlighted as an example of how the way Bill uses irony can be seen as him intentionally being as indirect towards Cohn as possible, by criticizing the situation and what Cohn may have thought about the situation, rather than what he may have thought about himself. One last thing to point out is that Bill’s ironic humour technically directs itself at ideas, rather than people, according to both the echoic and pretence theory. That is due to how the theories view verbal irony, and, as mentioned, criticism of people who hold certain ideas is done indirectly while only criticism of the idea itself is done directly. However, Bill’s ironic humour would not differ from anyone else’s ironic humour in this respect. So, it does appear that Donaldson’s claim primarily holds true for most of Bill’s ironic humour, but it is still worth pointing out that ironic humour often comes at someone’s expense.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Summary

I have applied two pragmatic theories of verbal irony, Wilson and Sperber's echoic theory and Currie's variant of the pretence theory, to examples of verbal irony found in *The Sun Also Rises* as well as various other sources. I have looked in some detail at how the two theories can explain interpretations of these examples in order to test the theories and look for differences between the two. The results of these analyses were then discussed in greater detail. I found the echoic theory to be the superior theory of irony in multiple ways. Several observations about verbal irony in *The Sun Also Rises* were also made.

5.1.1 Irony in *The Sun Also Rises*

Hemingway makes frequent use of verbal irony in *The Sun Also Rises*. I have suggested that verbal irony fits well with his style, as he often opts to omit clues to a character's ironic intent. This does not prevent the reader from recognising the ironic intent of the characters, but it was discussed that the lack of clues in the narration can make it harder to determine exactly what attitudes the characters are communicating, thereby leaving this aspect open to interpretation to a larger degree. This is an effect of irony that is possible to achieve in dialogue in literature, but not real-life conversations, and I believe the analyses show that Hemingway utilizes this effect to its full potential. Verbal irony also fits with Hemingway's iceberg theory of writing, as it can communicate a lot with relatively few words due to being tacit in nature.

I also found that irony was used by a wide variety of characters and for a wide variety of different purposes. The use of irony by Bill Gorton was particularly interesting. His use of irony fits with descriptions of him as a funny character, as some of his uses of verbal irony are humorous, whether intentionally or not. Donaldson's claim that Bill does not direct his humour at human beings was disputed, although it was ultimately argued that the way irony targets people is inherently indirect. This means that ironic humour clashes with the claim to a certain extent, as it often is intentionally or unintentionally indirectly targeted at human beings and made at their expense, though this need not be in direct conflict with the claim. Specifying that his humour does not appear to directly target human beings therefore seems

worthwhile. The pragmatic theories of irony considered here appear to have something to offer studies of Hemingway's use of verbal irony, as they are able to explain and support arguments for a variety of interpretations.

5.1.2 The Echoic and Pretence Theories

I believe this thesis indicates that dialogue from literary texts can provide an excellent testing ground for pragmatic theory. Given the wide range of potential uses of verbal irony, I did not find that Hemingway's use of verbal irony in *The Sun Also Rises* on its own provided sufficient variety to test enough aspects of the two theories of irony. This was remedied by incorporating examples from various other sources, where irony was used in different ways.

The wide context that often surrounds verbal irony in literary texts has an influence on how the irony is interpreted, and this leads to the theories having to describe what is being communicated in greater detail than with the shorter examples typically used within the field of pragmatics. This was part of what made it possible to highlight the advantage the echoic theory has over the pretence theory in its ability to explain attitudes in much greater detail. Although not necessary for explaining the *presence* of verbal irony, I found this to be a major advantage when attempting to analyse irony in literary dialogue. The ability to explain victims was highlighted as another advantage of the echoic theory, as was the way it draws in concept of norms and socially shared ideas. My analyses therefore revealed relative weaknesses of the pretence theory, while no significant weaknesses of the echoic theory were found. Meanwhile, the echoic theory seems to possess the strengths of Currie's pretence theory, and arguably to a stronger degree. This variant of the pretence theory already has substantial similarities to the echoic theory, and I have suggested in the discussion that it would be improved by becoming even more similar in certain respects.

Of course, the main distinction between the two theories is still that the pretence theory sees irony as a kind of pretence while the echoic theory sees it as a kind of echoic language use. As I have discussed, seeing verbal irony as a kind of pretence seems to complicate and problematize certain explanations, while offering no discernible benefits. The aim of this thesis has not been to answer the question of whether irony is pretence or not, but I suggest that none of the results of the analyses in this thesis support the claim that irony is a kind of pretence rather than echoic language use. I therefore conclude that the echoic theory is the superior theory at explaining verbal irony, particularly in literature. That being said, it

does not mean that the analyses offered by the pretence theory have no value, but they were often not as plausible or detailed as those offered by the echoic theory.

My discussion also raised some questions about verbal irony in general. One particularly interesting issue is the possibilities available to the ironist in answers to sincere questions and the discussion of questions that are both ironic and sincere. For the former, the expression of doubt was suggested as one possible explanation of what makes some ironic utterances possible in certain contexts. I also suggested in the discussion that the victims verbal irony may have are not unique to irony. Instead they appear to be the result of irony communicating criticism of thoughts that people hold or are believed to hold. The echoic theory's concept of echoing norms was also something I elaborated on.

5.2 Answers to Research Questions

The research questions posed in 1.3 can now be answered as follows:

Ai. What are the differences and similarities between the two theories of verbal irony, at least in terms of how they apply to irony in literary dialogue?

The main difference between the two theories is that the echoic theory sees irony as a kind of tacitly attributive and dissociative language use while the pretence theory sees irony as a kind of pretence. It was pointed out that Currie says his account makes use of an element of resemblance, as the echoic theory does, but I suggested that his theory had other similarities to the echoic theory as well. The first of my two main claims in this regard was that the limited perspectives Currie says are the target of ironic utterance are not meaningfully distinct from the thoughts the echoic theory claims are the targets. The other claim was that representing the target as unreasonable, which Currie's variant says verbal irony does, is merely a subtype of expressing a dissociative attitude towards that target.

Aii. How do differences between the theories impact their ability to explain the data considered?

I found that the pretence element in Currie's pretence theory caused issues and complications while seeming to offer little to no benefit in explaining the data. This was discussed in 4.1.5, and the analyses in 3.2 and 3.7 were highlighted as potentially problematic because the pretence element has to be stretched with the "scope of pretending" in order to account for speakers making utterances in ways that seem to contradict what they are

pretending. As mentioned in the answer to Ai, I found that representing a thought/perspective as unreasonable was a subtype of expressing a dissociative attitude. Despite this meaning that they are similar, they are still not identical. I suggested that the differences here were clearly in the echoic theory's favour, as the wider range of possible dissociative attitudes made it possible for that theory to explain the attitudes communicated in the data in greater detail than the narrower explanations offered by the pretence account.

I also suggested that the pretence variant would be improved if some of the differences between the two theories were reduced and the pretence theory incorporated more aspects of the echoic theory, such as the role of norms in irony.

Aiii. Which, if any, theory offers superior explanations and analyses?

I have argued that the answer to this question is the echoic theory, especially in analyses of data from literature, but it was also pointed out that it is worth noting that this does not invalidate the explanation and analyses offered by the pretence theory. I suggest that despite being inferior to the echoic theory of irony, the sophisticated account set out by Currie is a better theory of irony than the pretence account first suggested by Clark and Gerrig, as well as Grice's classical account. I believe it still offers considerable insight into a range of data, with the explanation of example (M.1) as solitary pretence and representing a perspective as unreasonable in thought being particularly interesting and thought provoking.

B. What insight can the two theories offer to intuitive interpretations of the use of verbal irony in the data, as well as certain claims made by literary critics about Hemingway's use of irony?

Numerous different interpretations have been analysed and explained in detail by both theories. I believe both theories were able to account for different interpretations of the same ironic utterance, with the echoic theory specifically being well suited to explain what changes from one interpretation to another. Mike's attitude towards the target thought in example (H.12) potentially changing over time to gradually become more dissociative was a particularly compelling example of this, in my view. In the case of *The Sun Also Rises*, the analyses offered by the theories also provide insight into claims made by literary critics. I discussed certain analyses in relation to claims by Donaldson, and that the analyses supported Halliday's claim that irony is well suited for Hemingway's style of writing. I also suggested that the theories can explain the novel's characters using verbal irony for different purposes and in different ways.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

The role of pretence in irony was not the primary focus of this thesis, but this seems to be the only potential advantage the pretence accounts have over the echoic account. It therefore appears that any defence of a pretence theory of irony primarily needs to offer evidence for benefits of seeing irony as pretence. Other pretence theories may offer different explanations from Currie's variant, but in my view his account does not distinguish itself from the echoic theory in any meaningful way beyond the claim that irony is pretence. Currie's claim that irony can open the door to further pretence (Currie 2006, 125) proved to be beyond the scope of this thesis but could be relevant in studies focusing more closely on the pretence element. I suggest that Shirley Jackson's 1959 novel *The Haunting of Hill House*, the source of example (J.1) in the data, could provide highly relevant data for such a study as the characters often appear to engage in a kind of communal pretence.

My main suggestion for further research would be on the application of pragmatic theory to literary texts. Pragmatic literary stylistics is an emerging and interesting field, and this thesis helps support its foundational claims that pragmatic theory has something to offer literary studies, and that literary texts can be excellent testbeds for pragmatic theory.

Further research into Hemingway's use of verbal irony seems likely to offer new insight as well, since relatively little appears to have been written on Hemingway's use of verbal irony compared to his use of other kinds of irony, and in particular situational irony. This thesis has showed that much can be said about his use of verbal irony as well. Furthermore, while this thesis has looked at irony found in dialogue, irony in narration could also be analysed in similar ways. I believe the study of characters is one area where closer examinations of verbal irony in dialogue would be of particular interest and benefit. I hope I have shown that the echoic theory of irony in particular is a tool that is well-suited for such studies, as well as for studies on verbal irony in literary works by other authors.

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Appendix 1

Data

(H.1)

Analysed in section 3.1, on page 36.

[Jake, the protagonist and narrator of the novel, has met the prostitute Georgette, whom he brings with him when he goes to meet his friends. He introduces her as Georgette Leblanc (the name of a contemporary opera singer) and tells his friends that they are engaged. However, Georgette does not play along with the joke. The following is then a conversation between Georgette and Frances Clyne, who is in a relationship with Jake's friend Robert Cohn.]

“Have you been in Paris long? Do you like it here? You love Paris, do you not?”

“Who's she?” Georgette turned to me. “Do I have to talk to her?”

She turned to Frances, sitting smiling, her hands folded, her head poised on her long neck, her lips pursed ready to start talking again.

“No, I don't like Paris. It's expensive and dirty.”

“Really? I find it so extraordinarily clean. One of the cleanest cities in all Europe.”

“I find it dirty.”

“How strange! But perhaps you have not been here very long.”

“I've been here long enough.”

“But it does have nice people in it. One must grant that.”

Georgette turned to me. “You have nice friends.”

Frances was a little drunk and would have liked to have kept it up but the coffee came.

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 16)

(H.2)

Analysed in section 3.4, on page 45.

[Brett is talking to Jake. This conversation starts when they happen to see Georgette, the prostitute Jake brought as a joke, who at this point is dancing with someone else.]

“What possessed you to bring her?”

“I don’t know, I just brought her.”

“You’re getting damned romantic.”

“No, bored.”

“Now?”

“No, not now.”

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 19–20)

(H.3)

Analysed in section 3.5, on page 46.

[Jake has left the party and gone to sleep. He is awakened by a row outside, caused by a heavily intoxicated Brett. She is then let in by the concierge.]

Brett came up the stairs. I saw she was quite drunk. “Silly thing to do,” she said. “Make an awful row. I say, you weren’t asleep, were you?”

“What did you think I was doing?”

“Don’t know. What time is it?”

I looked at the clock. It was half-past four. “Had no idea what hour it was,” Brett said.

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 28).

(H.4)

Analysed in section 3.2, on page 39.

[Harvey and Jake see Robert Cohn coming. Harvey then to Cohn as “that moron” to Jake. When Cohn gets up to their table, Harvey says “Hello, Robert. I was just telling Jake here that you’re a moron.” Robert asks what he means and Harvey tells him to say the first thing that comes to his mind when asked “what would you rather do if you could do anything you wanted?”]

“I mean what would you rather do. What comes into your head first. No matter how silly it is.”

“I don’t know,” Cohn said. “I think I’d rather play football again with what I know about handling myself, now.”

“I misjudged you,” Harvey said. “You’re not a moron. You’re only a case of arrested development.”

“You’re awfully funny, Harvey,” Cohn said. “Some day somebody will push your face in.” Harvey Stone laughed.

[Harvey continues to mock Cohn. When Harvey leaves, Cohn makes a comment to Jake about not being able to stand Harvey because he gets on his nerves.]

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 38)

(H.5)

Analysed in section 3.15, on page 76.

Abbreviated example

[Robert Cohn and Frances Clyne are currently a couple. Cohn decides to send Frances to England while he remains in Paris, which she is extremely displeased by. By doing this, Cohn is essentially ending his relationship with Frances. She goes on a tirade that covers more than 2 pages, with Jake present as well.]

“Robert’s sending me. He’s going to give me two hundred pounds and then I’m going to visit friends. Won’t it be lovely? The friends don’t know about it, yet.”

...

“Won’t it be fun, Robert? Don’t you think it will be fun, Jake?”

She turned to me with that terribly bright smile. It was very satisfactory to her to have an audience for this.

...

I’m going to England without a protest.

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 42–45).

Complete Scene

[Jake and Frances have been talking about Frances’ relationship with Cohn. They walk to where Cohn is sitting, and the first line is addressed to him.]

“Well, what are you smiling at?” Frances asked him. “Feel pretty happy?”

“I was smiling at you and Jake with your secrets.”

“Oh, what I’ve told Jake isn’t any secret. Everybody will know it soon enough. I only wanted to give Jake a decent version.”

“What was it? About your going to England?”

“Yes, about my going to England. Oh, Jake! I forgot to tell you. I’m going to England.”

“Isn’t that fine!”

“Yes, that’s the way it’s done in the very best families. Robert’s sending me. He’s going to give me two hundred pounds and then I’m going to visit friends. Won’t it be lovely? The friends don’t know about it, yet.”

She turned to Cohn and smiled at him. He was not smiling now.

“You were only going to give me a hundred pounds, weren’t you, Robert? But I made him give me two hundred. He’s really very generous. Aren’t you, Robert?”

I do not know how people could say such terrible things to Robert Cohn. There are people to whom you could not say insulting things. They give you a feeling that the world would be destroyed, would actually be destroyed before your eyes, if you said certain things. But here was Cohn taking it all. Here it was, all going on right before me, and I did not even feel an impulse to try and stop it. And this was friendly joking to what went on later.

“How can you say such things, Frances?” Cohn interrupted.

“Listen to him. I’m going to England. I’m going to visit friends. Ever visit friends that didn’t want you? Oh, they’ll have to take me, all right. ‘How do you do, my dear? Such a long time since we’ve seen you. And how is your dear mother?’ Yes, how is my dear mother? She put all her money into French war bonds. Yes, she did. Probably the only person in the world that did. ‘And what about Robert?’ or else very careful talking around Robert. ‘You must be most careful not to mention him, my dear. Poor Frances has had a most unfortunate experience.’ Won’t it be fun, Robert? Don’t you think it will be fun, Jake?”

She turned to me with that terribly bright smile. It was very satisfactory to her to have an audience for this.

“And where are you going to be, Robert? It’s my own fault, all right. Perfectly my own fault. When I made you get rid of your little secretary on the magazine I ought to have known you’d get rid of me the same way. Jake doesn’t know about that. Should I tell him?”

“Shut up, Frances, for God’s sake.”

“Yes, I’ll tell him. Robert had a little secretary on the magazine. Just the sweetest little thing in the world, and he thought she was wonderful, and then I came along and he thought I was pretty wonderful, too. So I made him get rid of her, and he had brought her to Provincetown from Carmel when he moved the magazine, and he didn’t even pay her fare back to the coast. All to please me. He thought I was pretty fine, then. Didn’t you, Robert?”

“You mustn’t misunderstand, Jake, it was absolutely platonic with the secretary. Not even platonic. Nothing at all, really. It was just that she was so nice. And he did that just to please me. Well, I suppose that we that live by the sword shall perish by the sword. Isn’t that literary, though? You want to remember that for your next book, Robert.”

“You know Robert is going to get material for a new book. Aren’t you, Robert? That’s why he’s leaving me. He’s decided I don’t film well. You see, he was so busy all the time that we were living together, writing on this book, that he doesn’t remember anything about us. So now he’s going out and get some new material. Well, I hope he gets something frightfully interesting.”

“Listen, Robert, dear. Let me tell you something. You won’t mind, will you? Don’t have scenes with your young ladies. Try not to. Because you can’t have scenes without crying, and then you pity yourself so much you can’t remember what the other person’s said. You’ll never be able to remember any conversations that way. Just try and be calm. I know it’s

awfully hard. But remember, it's for literature. We all ought to make sacrifices for literature. Look at me. I'm going to England without a protest. All for literature. We must all help young writers. Don't you think so, Jake? But you're not a young writer. Are you, Robert? You're thirty-four. Still, I suppose that is young for a great writer. Look at Hardy. Look at Anatole France. He just died a little while ago. Robert doesn't think he's any good, though. Some of his French friends told him. He doesn't read French very well himself. He wasn't a good writer like you are, was he, Robert? Do you think he ever had to go and look for material? What do you suppose he said to his mistresses when he wouldn't marry them? I wonder if he cried, too? Oh, I've just thought of something." She put her gloved hand up to her lips. "I know the real reason why Robert won't marry me, Jake. It's just come to me. They've sent it to me in a vision in the Café Select. Isn't it mystic? Some day they'll put a tablet up. Like at Lourdes. Do you want to hear, Robert? I'll tell you. It's so simple. I wonder why I never thought about it. Why, you see, Robert's always wanted to have a mistress, and if he doesn't marry me, why, then he's had one. She was his mistress for over two years. See how it is? And if he marries me, like he's always promised he would, that would be the end of all the romance. Don't you think that's bright of me to figure that out? It's true, too. Look at him and see if it's not. Where are you going, Jake?"

"I've got to go in and see Harvey Stone a minute."

Cohn looked up as I went in. His face was white. Why did he sit there? Why did he keep on taking it like that?

As I stood against the bar looking out I could see them through the window. Frances was talking on to him, smiling brightly, looking into his face each time she asked: "Isn't it so, Robert?" Or maybe she did not ask that now. Perhaps she said something else. I told the barman I did not want anything to drink and went out through the side door. As I went out the door I looked back through the two thicknesses of glass and saw them sitting there. She was still talking to him. I went down a side street to the Boulevard Raspail. A taxi came along and I got in and gave the driver the address of my flat.

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 42–45)

(H.6)

Analysed in section 3.8, on page 56.

[Bill and Jake are about to take the train to Pamplona. After having breakfast, they ask the conductor for reservations for the first service of lunch. His response is that everything is booked until the fifth service.]

“This is serious,” I said to Bill.

“Give him ten francs.”

“Here,” I said. “We want to eat in the first service.”

The conductor put the ten francs in his pocket.

“Thank you,” he said. “I would advise you gentlemen to get some sandwiches. All the places for the first four services were reserved at the office of the company.”

“You’ll go a long way, brother,” Bill said to him in English. “I suppose if I’d given you five francs you would have advised us to jump off the train.”

“*Comment?*”

“Go to hell!” said Bill. “Get the sandwiches made and a bottle of wine. You tell him, Jake.”

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 74)

(H.7)

Not given a full analysis but mentioned on page 101.

[Bill and Jake are on the train.]

Inside the dining-car the waiters served the fifth successive table d’hôte meal. The waiter who served us was soaked through. His white jacket was purple under the arms.

“He must drink a lot of wine.”

“Or wear purple undershirts.”

“Let’s ask him.”

“No. He’s too tired.”

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 77)

(H.8)

Analysed in section 3.6, on page 49.

[Jake and Bill receive a telegram from Robert Cohn. Jake understands Spanish but Bill does not.]

The telegram was in Spanish: “Vengo Jueves Cohn.”

I handed it to Bill.

“What does the word Cohn mean?” he asked.

“What a lousy telegram!” I said. “He could send ten words for the same price. ‘I come Thursday’. That gives you a lot of dope, doesn’t it?”

“It gives you all the dope that’s of interest to Cohn.”

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 111)

(H.9)

Not given a full analysis but discussed on page 99.

[Bill and Jake are talking to the group about their fishing trip, where they met Harris.]

“There was an Englishman up there.”

“Named Harris,” Bill said. “Ever know him, Mike? He was in the war, too.”

“Fortunate fellow,” Mike said. “What times we had. How I wish those dear days were back.”

“Don’t be an ass.”

“Were you in the war, Mike?” Cohn asked.

“Was I not.”

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 117)

(H.10)

Analysed in section 3.7, on page 54.

[Mike is on a drunken rant and harshly criticizes Robert Cohn for following Brett around and for being in love with her. Cohn had an affair with Brett. She is engaged to Mike while also going through a divorce and has had multiple other affairs, including Jake and later the bullfighter Romero.]

“Why do you follow Brett around? Haven’t you any manners? How do you think it makes me feel?”

“You’re a splendid one to talk about manners,” Brett said. “You’ve such lovely manners.”

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 124)

(H.11)

Analysed in section 3.13, on page 69.

[Robert Cohn falls asleep while the others continue drinking. He then wakes up and joins the rest of the group.]

“I must have been sleeping,” he said.

“Oh, not at all,” Brett said.

“You were only dead,” Bill said.

“Aren’t we going to go and have some supper?” Cohn asked.

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 138)

(H.12)

Analysed in section 3.12, on page 67.

[Bill has been buying numerous shoeshines for Mike as a joke.]

“This is the eleventh time my boots have been polished,” Mike said. “I say, Bill is an ass.”

The bootblacks had evidently spread the report. Another came in.

“Limpiabotas?” he said to Bill.

“No,” said Bill. “For this Señor.”

The bootblack knelt down beside the one at work and started on Mike’s free shoe that shone already in the electric light.

“Bill’s a yell of laughter,” Mike said.

I was drinking red wine, and so far behind them that I felt a little uncomfortable about all this shoe-shining.

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 150)

(H.13)

Analysed in section 3.11, on page 65.

[Robert Cohn, who is a former boxing champion, snaps and punches Jake. Jake then goes back to his room to recover. Brett has now been seeing Romero, a young bullfighter. Cohn still has feelings for Brett. When he finds her and Romero together in Romero’s room, Cohn starts punching the bullfighter as well. Bill then describes those events to Jake the next morning.]

“He nearly killed the poor, bloody bull-fighter. Then Cohn wanted to take Brett away. Wanted to make an honest woman of her, I imagine. Damned touching scene.”

(Hemingway [1926] 2000, 174)

(J.1)

Analysed in section 3.9, on page 59.

[The group of main characters are staying in a supposedly haunted house. Theodora and Eleanor go outside but realize that the big front door is very heavy, and struggle to open it. They decide to prop it open with a big vase from the hall. At this point in the novel it has already been pointed out that the doors in the house are always shut, and the group later

realize that many of the doors tend to close on their own for no apparent reason. Mrs. Dudley is the caretaker of the house and the guests do not like her, in part because they find her presence to be annoying and interruptive.]

Behind them Mrs. Dudley moved the vase again, and the big door slammed shut.

“Lovable old thing,” Theodora said to the closed door.

(Jackson [1959] 1984, 49)

(M.1)

Analysed in section 3.14, on page 73.

Mr. Play It Safe was afraid to fly
He packed his suitcase and kissed his kids good-bye
He waited his whole damn life to take that flight
And as the plane crashed down he thought
“Well isn’t this nice...”
And isn’t it ironic...don’t you think

(Morissette 1995)

(N.1)

Analysed in section 3.3, on page 42.

[A wizard nicknamed the Dragon is a recluse who lives in a tower near a dangerous forest called the Wood. The wizard is visited by a prince who wants magic from him but who also insults him. Agnieszka, the first-person narrator, is a teenage girl from a nearby village who has recently become, against her own wishes, the wizard’s new servant.]

“Why would he want to insult you?” I timidly asked. “Didn’t he come to—to ask you for some magic?”

“No, he came to enjoy the view of the Wood,” the Dragon said. “Of course he came for magic.”

(Novik 2016, 49)

(SA.1)

Analysed in section 3.10, on page 63.

[Kelsier, a flamboyant and overly confident character who tends to believe in the impossible, has just presented a daunting plan of overthrowing an immortal godlike emperor. He broke the plan down into a list of separate elements, but to his audience, this only highlights how daunting each part of the plan really is and makes the plan in its entirety seem even less plausible.]

“When you break it down like that, it doesn’t sound so bad, does it?”

Vin frowned, trying to decide if Kelsier was attempting a joke or not. The list wasn’t just daunting—it was disturbing.

(Sanderson 2006, 112)

(ST.1)

Not given a full analysis but discussed on page 90.

[SG-1 is a team that explores alien planets through a portal device called a Stargate. The team is part of Stargate Command, a military organization run by the United States Airforce. A member of this team has been taken captive on an alien planet for breaking their laws. Team leader Colonel O’Neill and team member Captain Carter are trying to convince the general to let them attempt a rescue.]

GENERAL HAMMOND. Now you want to launch an assault on them?

COLONEL O’NEILL. No, sir. I’m hoping once they see our superior numbers and firepower, they’ll release him without incident.

GENERAL HAMMOND. Colonel, the United States is not in the business of interfering in other people’s affairs.

[Captain Carter and Colonel O’Neill exchange doubtful glances.]

COLONEL O’NEILL. Since when, sir?

GENERAL HAMMOND. Since this administration was elected.

(Stargate SG-1 1998)

Appendix 2

Figures and Tables

Aspects of verbal communication

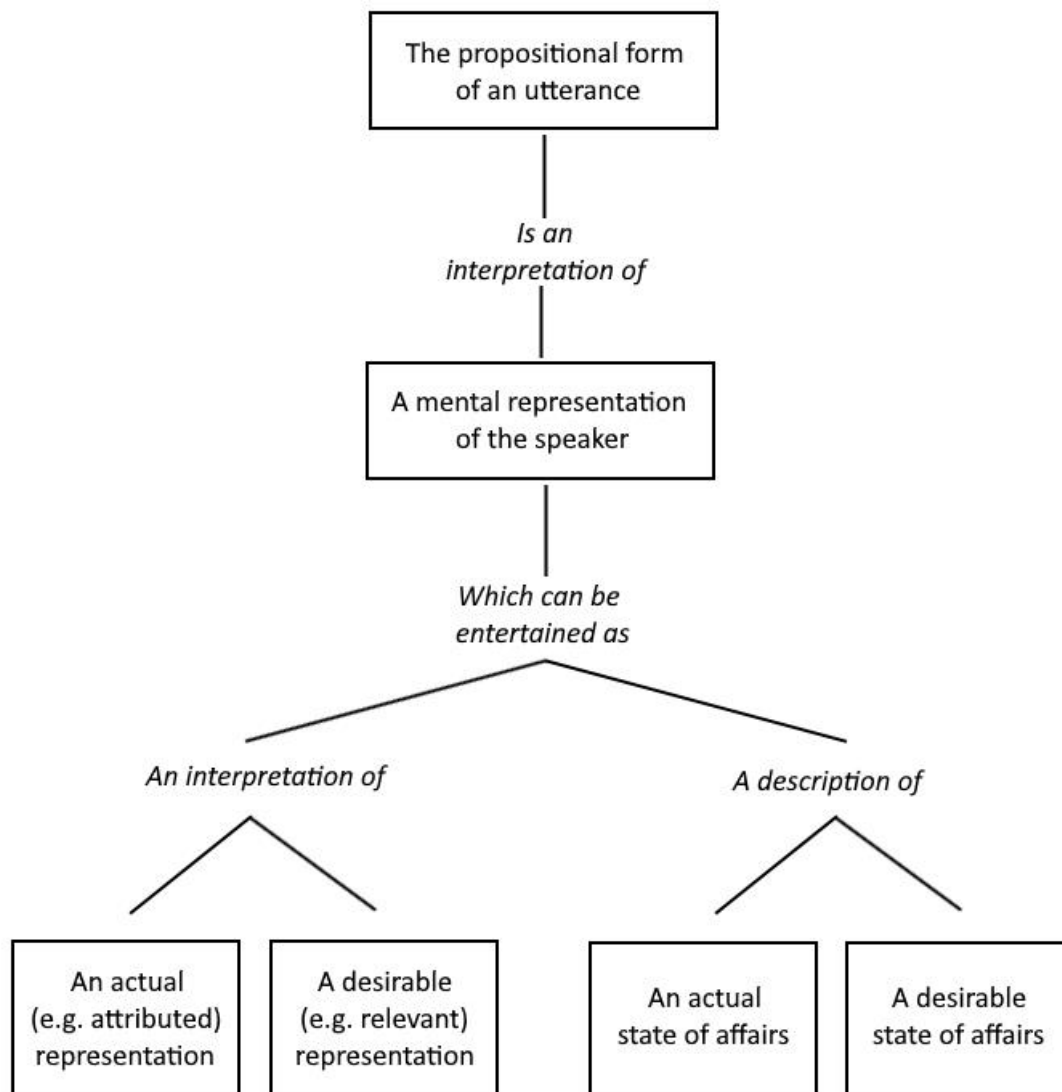


Figure 1. Aspects of Verbal Communication. Adapted from Sperber and Wilson (1995, 231).

Table 1. Occurrences and frequencies of *awfully* across decades in American English

Decade	Occurrences	Frequency per 1 mill. words
1810	1	0.8
1820	32	4.6
1830	42	3.0
1840	49	3.1
1850	46	2.8
1860	73	4.3
1870	219	11.8
1880	215	10.3
1890	376	17.7
1900	371	16.5
1910	511	22.6
1920	496	19.4
1930	558	22.9
1940	289	12.0
1950	335	13.7
1960	251	10.5
1970	240	10.1
1980	171	6.8
1990	178	6.4
2000	152	5.2

Source: Data from Davies (2010-).

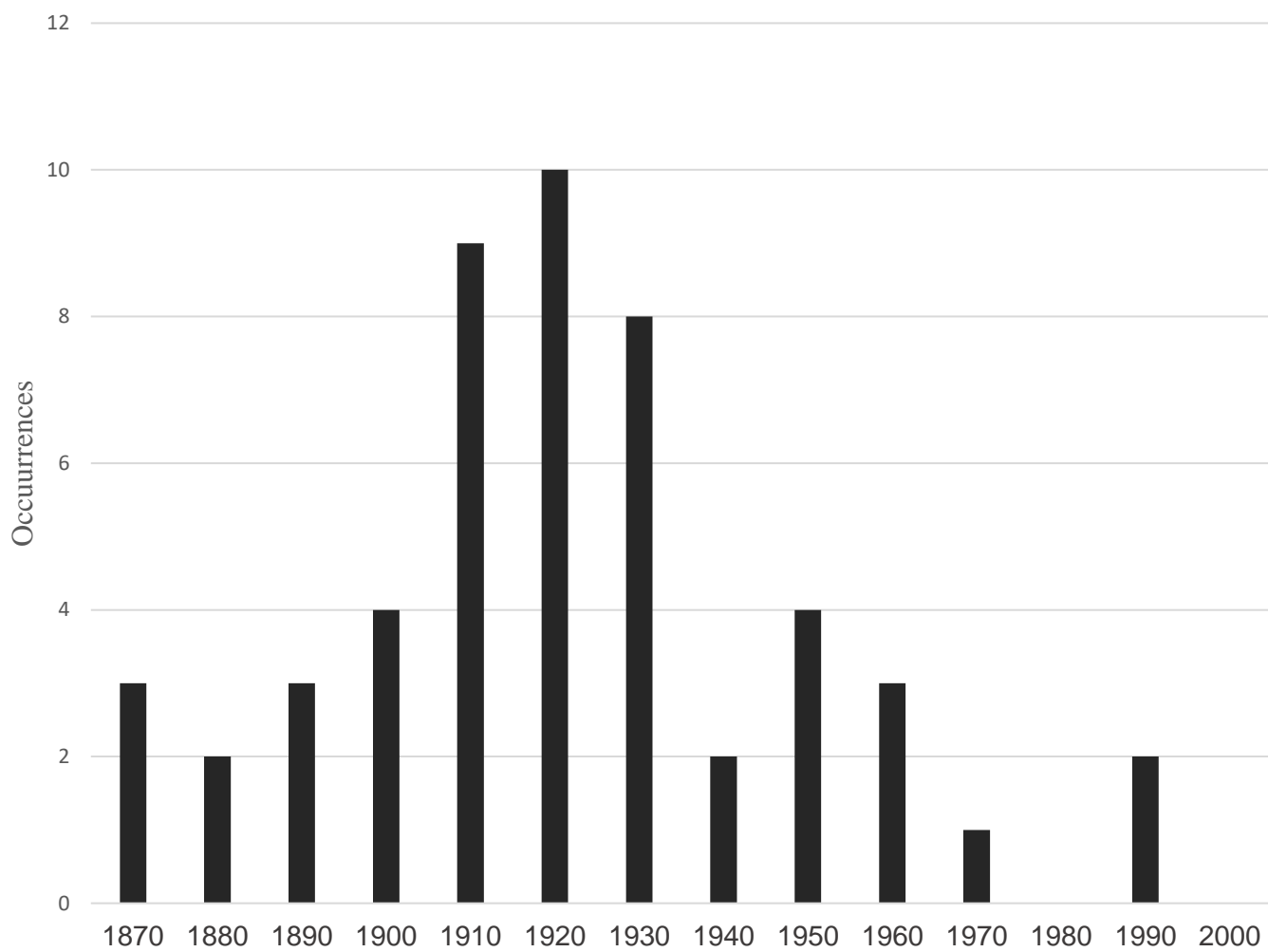
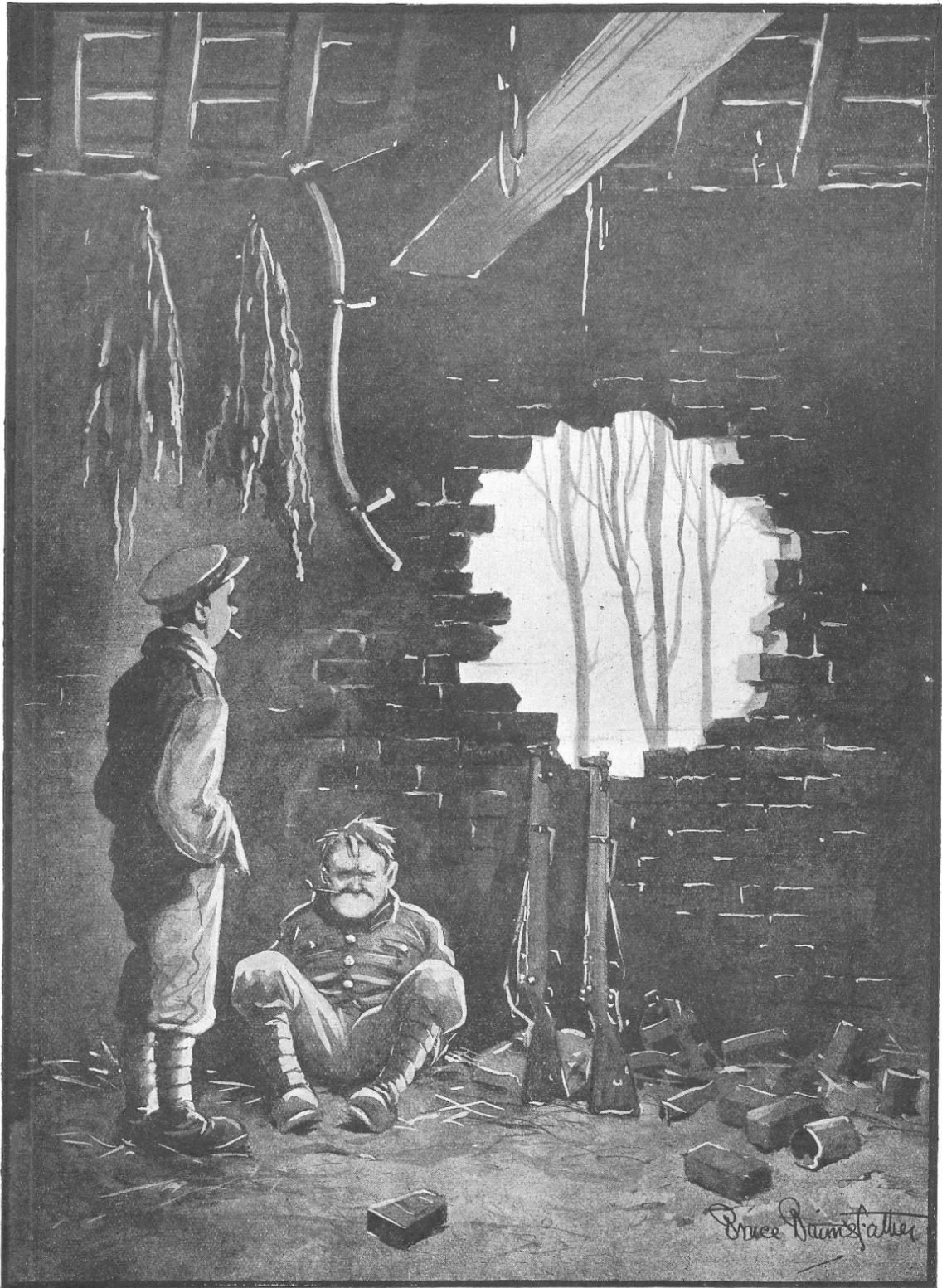


Figure 2. Occurrences of “awfully funny” in each decade in the Corpus of Historical American English. There were 0 occurrences before 1870. Data from Davies (2010-).



So Obvious.

The Young and Talkative One: "Who made that 'ole?"

The Fed-up One: "Mice."

Figure 3. Example (B.1), the cartoon "So Obvious." by Bruce Bairnsfather. Discussed on page 94. Scanned from Bairnsfather (1916, 17).