Intertextuality As A Postmodern Trait : The Simpsons Sitcom

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Abstract. In analyzing The Simpsons Sitcom, the paper aims to clarify the ideology of Postmodernism and how this Sitcom theatre expresses and interacts with it. In this article, the text is analyzed from the point of view of the Postmodern technique, Intertextuality. Intertextuality is an introduction to the history of earlier literary works. An attempt to comment on the state of literature and society at the end of the 20th century by borrowing old literature. The Simpsons sitcom relies heavily on Intertextuality concerning social, cultural, popular, and historical culture. The Simpson uses Intertextuality in references to itself and other works, and the program demonstrates a high level of confidence through frequent references to its creations. After all, anyone who has watched The Simpsons, at least once, knows that it offers predictions that have received appropriate support. The Simpsons sitcom is used to predict real-life events subconsciously**.**

Keywords: Postmodernism, Intertextuality, The Simpsons, Hamlet, Sitcom.

ملخص. بتحليل مسرحية عائلة سيمبسون ، تهدف الورقة إلى توضيح أيديولوجية ما بعد الحداثة وكيف يعبر عنها ويتفاعل معها مسرح السيتكوم. في هذه الدراسة ، يتم تحليل النص من وجهة نظر تقنية ما بعد الحداثة وهي التناص. التناص هو مقدمة لأرخنه الأعمال الأدبية السابقة ومحاولة للتعليق على حالة الأدب والمجتمع في نهاية القرن العشرين عن طريق استعارة الأدب القديم. تعتمد المسرحية الهزلية عائلة سمبسون بشكل كبير على التناص فيما يتعلق بالثقافة الاجتماعية والثقافية والشعبية والتاريخية. يستخدم المسرحية التناص في الإشارات إلى نفسها والأعمال الأخرى ايضا، ويظهر العمل مستوى عالٍ من الثقة من خلال الإشارات المتكررة إلى إبداعاته. بعد كل شيء ، يعرف أي شخص شاهد المسرحية، مرة واحدة على الأقل ، أنها تقدم تنبؤات تلقت الدعم المناسب. كما يتم استخدام المسرحية الهزلية عائلة سمبسون للتنبؤ بأحداث الحياة الواقعية دون اي وعي ملحوظ.

الكلمات الرئيسية: ما بعد الحداثة ، التناص ، عائلة سمبسون ، هاملت ، سيت كوم.

Introduction

Postmodernism Theory

Postmodernism is an intellectual movement that embraces many philosophical approaches to the world. It revolves around man's inability to understand everything around him, his mind's inability to understand the world, and easy access to absolute truth. In other words, Beyond Modernism describes the movement as if it always follows modernity. However, this is only partially true, as there is ample evidence that postmodernist ideologies coexist with modernity. It is an approach where the mind cannot understand the world because it is complex. (Almaaroof & Hassan 8030–8047). Thus, each person has his understanding of the world because he lives in his environment and has his environment, which has shaped his mind and understanding. So, there is no absolute truth. Rather, there is a person's perception of this truth. (Shaker & Almaaroof, 2022, 49-56)

1. Postmodern Literary Techniques

1. Irony, playfulness, and black humor have become hallmarks of most postmodern writers. Postmodern writers often choose serious topics,

such as wars or conspiracy theories, and tell their stories with irony and humor.

2. A pastiche combines elements from other genres and literary styles to create a new narrative voice. Popular elements include crime fiction, science fiction, war fiction, songs, pop culture references, and notable obscure fictional stories.

3. Intertextuality is an introduction to the story of earlier literary works. An attempt to borrow from earlier literature and comment on the position of literature and society in the second half of the twentieth century.

4. Metafiction was written to inform the reader about his novel and the author's whereabouts. Writers use this technique to allow abrupt narrative twists and impossible time jumps or to maintain emotional distance as storytellers.

5. Time warp, a non-linear time scale, is used. Here the artist jumps into the past or the future. Although this technique is often used in literature, it is becoming more common in cinema.

6. Paranoia thought processes are strongly influenced by fear and anxiety. Paranoid thinking includes persecutory beliefs because you believe you are in danger or threatened by something or someone.

7. Maximalism is in the tradition of long writings, and writers who use this technique sometimes defend their writings out of necessity.

8. Historical metafiction, including fiction, creates real historical events and characters (Almaaroof & Hassan, 2022, 8030).

2. Intertextuality

Intertextuality indicates that all texts, whether written or spoken, formal or informal, artistic or colloquial, are related in one way or another. It is important to understand the meaning of media and online content as it is becoming increasingly common to associate certain content with other media, such as sports blogs, crime thrillers, or advertisements. Because the term comes from the literature study, all media content, including its audiovisual aspects, is referred to as "text." The term "intermediary" is often used to emphasize that relationships between texts arise within a particular medium (for example, television advertising with elements of a TV show) and between different media types (Cinema or vice versa) (Almaaroof and Mahmood, 2022, 2790).

2.1. Types of Intertextuality

a. Allegory: The first and most common example of Intertextuality is an allegory. The allusion is a "very common humor" for presenting famous characters and events from other texts in a new, sometimes specific way, with minor corrections or additional information to help the reader make connections.

b. Parody: is a form of Intertextuality that "aims to teach and correct" and therefore can serve as a powerful tool for social change.

c. Satire can be called "corrective comedy" because it aims not only to make fun of something but also to show viewers the problems of society or the human condition and cause them some reaction, causing them trouble.

3. Sitcom

The simplest definition of the sitcom genre becomes clear. Sitcom: Circumstance is a place, location, or fact, the latter being seen as a metaphorical continuation of the first situational (ongoing) story told only with humorous intent in the recurring pattern of sitcoms. Thus, comedy can take on different forms or styles depending on its genre.

4. The Simpsons Overview

The Simpsons have become true pop culture icons, reflecting and shaping 1990s American culture through clever scripting and hilarious animations. The series is one of the most popular television series in the world and features many outstanding voice actors. It ran for 14 seasons with over 300 episodes and was still airing at the time of writing. The series is also popular and broadcast in more than 60 countries. Moreover, it is almost a billion-dollar franchise when you factor in clothing marketing and licensing. The Simpsons began as a collection of short films from The Tracey Ullman Show in 1987 and evolved into its series in 1989 with producer James Brooks and producer Matt Groening. Groening created the fictional city of Springfield, USA, as the setting for his animated film. Once an underground comedian, Groening used the comic medium to transform Springfield into a fantasy world that reflects nature through a distorting entertainment mirror. Groening said he used the series to "silence some of the counter messages."Brooks' influence as an established producer and the show's "widespread popularity" is considered a defense against network intrusion or censorship. New York Times film critic A.O. Scott believed he was dealing with an important issue facing the United States (Ho, 2003, 277).

5. Intertextuality in The Simpsons

The Simpsons is a very rich example of intertextual references in popular culture. The Simpsons have several characters in literary adaptations. The Intertextuality of The Simpsons includes two main types of literary sources: texts belonging to the canon of classical world literature and texts or genres belonging to popular literature. Both types have a certain effect on how much the viewer understands the respective reference material. While popular works tend to be known to a wide audience by title and content through recent readings and public discussions, the same goes for classical works. Work with rough ideas about titles and content or individual standouts with fixed universal interpretations based on decades of academic/scientific debate and intertextual adaptation (Raab and Gurr, 2011, 17).

Literary references to The Simpsons' Hamlet can be described as satirical parodies. Hamlet's father came from the underworld to avenge the death of his son. In this part of Shakespeare's play, the ghost tells Hamlet the vivid story of how he was killed by his brother Claudius. However, this moment in The Simpsons loses its seriousness. The ghost was originally played by Simpson's father, Homer, who was a glutton. The series alludes to the greedy ghost from the Ghostbusters movie Slug, seen when Homer climbs over a wall, leaving behind a thick layer of green goo. According to Montironi, "this fact is used to parody Shakespeare's line about the ghost of his father" (The Simpsons 11), replaced by a dialogue between Bart and Homer (Moreno, 2020, 28):

"HOMER. Yes, I have returned from the dead. "

"BART. Looks like you've returned from the buffet."

Figure 1.

Intertextual links are achieved through "remixing and combining" and "reusing old material and providing cultural contextualization". Typically, cross-text links range from contemporary celebrities to classic literature references, with high and low content links spanning decades. This approach was placed next to reality TV jokes that included references to Edgar Allen Poe.

Figure 2.

This patchwork approach to Intertextuality, especially the mixture of high and low art, is consistent with the postmodern approach to art. Moreover, get as many viewers as possible. The Simpsons rely heavily on Intertextuality concerning social, cultural, popular, and historical culture. It means that listeners are active participants, not passive users. Intertextuality allows discerning audiences to feel intelligent in their observations, allowing them to communicate in an era of burgeoning internet fandom (Lizzie, 2019, 3).

Simpson uses Intertextuality not only in references to other works but also in references to herself, and the program demonstrates high self-esteem through frequent references to her creations. Simpsons' characters rethink their actions based on the plot of the episode. They paused to point out that the episode was postponed due to their actions. In "Bart Gets Famous, " Bart walks down the street singing the Simpsons theme. The characters often make confident statements about their existence in TV shows. At the beginning of

the episode "The Tell-Tale Head, " Bart informs the viewers that the story will end in 23 minutes and 5 seconds, which is for sure. An episode without commercials.

Figure 3.

The show has made more nods to its commercially addicted creations as host Troy McClure talks about the family's future. Also, after one dramatic moment in two different episodes, Homer turns to the "camera" and calmly announces to the home audience, "I will be right back." The Simpsons' self-reflection can be seen not only in its status as an adult animated program but also in its many references to its association with other animated films (www.Openculture.com)

Lisa tells Homer, "If cartoons were for adults, we'd show them in prime time, " Referring to the fact that The Simpsons was the first animated series in American television history to air in prime time. Throughout the series, various members of The Simpsons have dismissed cartoons as cheap entertainment, with various self-parodying comments.

"Cartoons are just ridiculous pictures to make you laugh on the cheap."
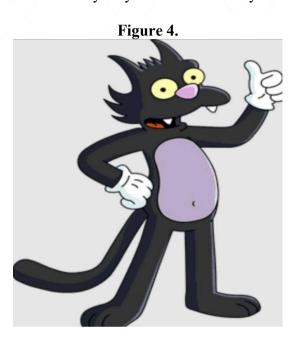
("Mr. Lisa goes to Washington")

 "We are cartoon characters."

The Simpsons call themselves animated series and Parody some of the animated series, such as Family Guy and Tom and Jerry.

Figure 4.

He is a parody of Tom and Jerry's character, Tom. To exaggerate Tom's role as a victim, Scratchy is an unfortunate victim who does not even want to harm Quest but suffers a very painful death at the hands of Quest, in contrast to Tom and Jerry's mutual rivalry (www.fandom.com).

The Third type of Intertextuality is Satire. The Simpsons is a pop culture icon influenced by the American reactionary movement of the 1960s. Poking fun at the law and corporations, the series exposed many problems in the American legal system. The commentary on the series is undoubtedly funny, but it is more than a comedy that "exposes" the shortcomings of our social order. The series falls into the realm of reform society satire. While this reflects an imperfect legal system, it is also an attempt to change it. The Simpsons use old-style Satire to provide timely and relevant information about the failings of American society, especially the legal system.

Ultimately, The Simpsons are promoting a realistic legal agenda. Springfield's rule of law is nonsensical, trivial, and easily circumvented. In the tradition of legal realism, the creators and writers of the series envisioned a fictional world where there are no absolutes based on religion or natural law

and where justice can only be achieved through abuse or circumvention of the legal system. For the people of Springfield, this is the only way to find truth and justice. The Simpsons are effective because they reflect the widely held beliefs of the legal system. He told the jurists that the cause of the criticism should be removed and investigated (Ho, 2003, 288).

The Simpsons are in a unique position to be recognized as one of the most influential Sitcom in television history, while at the same time owing its popularity and critical acclaim to its innumerable repetitions of popular culture in the form of Intertextuality and pastiche.

Finally, The Simpsons use Intertextuality primarily for its parodic value. The Simpsons is a great example of using Intertextuality and technology to create connections. The Simpsons use Intertextuality to add depth and layering to a TV show. The creators of The Simpsons use many types of Intertextuality to enrich and entertain their audiences.

Conclusion

Intertextuality is critical to understanding the meaning of online media and contents as more and more media contents are linked to other media, such as sports blogs, crime fiction, or promotional contents. Referring to the fact that The Simpsons was the first animated series in American television history to air in prime time, The Simpsons have become true pop culture icons. The Simpsons use Intertextuality primarily for its parody value. It is a great example of using Intertextuality and technology to make connections. The Simpsons uses Intertextuality to add depth and layering to the Sitcom. The creators of The Simpsons use many forms of Intertextuality to enrich and entertain their audiences.

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