



REVISTA

CÁTEDRA

Estudio lingüístico sobre las dimensiones contextuales de la caricatura política

Linguistic study on the contextual dimensions of political caricature

Mariela Pérez

Universidad Pedagógica Experimental Libertador, Barquisimeto, Venezuela

marielasofi@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5583-1931>

Yonarlli Vielma-Orellana

Universidad Técnica de Manabí, Portoviejo, Ecuador

yonarlli.vielma@utm.edu.ec

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3462-6859>

(Recibido: 27/08/2020; Aceptado: 29/08/2020; Versión final recibida: 08/09/2020)

Cita del artículo: Pérez, M. y Vielma-Orellana, Y. (2020). Linguistic study on the contextual dimensions of political caricature. *Revista Cátedra*, 3(3), 34-49.

Resumen

La caricatura constituye uno de los géneros periodísticos de opinión de gran auge en las últimas décadas, en ella se conjugan multimodalmente la ironía, el humor y la sátira para analizar los hechos relevantes de un país. El análisis del discurso permite establecer una relación conjunta entre la realidad social y la cognitiva en este tipo de texto. Esta investigación se propone analizar, desde el enfoque pragmático, el discurso de la caricatura política de Eduardo Sanabria sobre la contienda electoral de 2017 en Venezuela bajo un enfoque cualitativo y diseño descriptivo-exploratorio. El análisis del discurso es la técnica empleada. El corpus estuvo conformado por cinco caricaturas publicadas en el diario El Nacional días previos a los comicios y cuyo tópico central se circunscribe a la convocatoria electoral. El análisis identificó los contextos: icónico - lingüístico, situacional y sociocultural. Los actos de habla y las figuras retóricas se identificaron como estrategias discursivas dirigidas a evidenciar la intencionalidad de una comunicación ostensiva como es la caricatura. Se tomaron los aportes de la Teoría de la Relevancia (Sperber y Wilson, 2004) y de la Teoría de los actos de habla (Austin, 2016; Searle, 2017). Se evidencia un macroacto de habla ilocutivo como es la convocatoria a votar. Se concluye que el discurso



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

de las caricaturas de Sanabria expresa la crítica sobre el evento electoral a partir del juego de lo implícito, construido discursivamente entre lo icónico – lingüístico, el componente retórico y el contexto, estableciéndose una relación de complicidad con el lector.

Palabras clave

Caricatura política, contexto, pragmática, retórica, teoría de la relevancia.

Abstract

Cartoons are one of the most popular journalistic genres in recent decades, combining irony, humor and satire to analyze the relevant facts of a country. Discourse analysis allows establishing a joint relationship between social and cognitive reality in this type of text. This research aims to analyze, from a pragmatic approach, the discourse of Eduardo Sanabria's political cartoon about the 2017 electoral contest in Venezuela under a qualitative approach and descriptive-exploratory design. The analysis of the discourse is the technique used. The corpus was made up of five cartoons published in the newspaper El Nacional days before the elections and whose central topic is limited to the call for elections. The analysis identified the contexts: iconic-linguistic, situational and socio-cultural. Speech acts and rhetorical figures were identified as discursive strategies aimed at evidencing the intentionality of an ostensive communication such as caricature. The contributions of the Theory of Relevance (Sperber & Wilson, 2004) and the Theory of Speech Acts (Austin, 2016; Searle, 2017) were taken into account. A macro-act of illocutionary speech such as the call to vote is evidenced. It is concluded that the discourse of the Sanabria cartoons expresses the criticism of the electoral event from the game of the implicit, discursively constructed between the iconic-linguistic, the rhetorical component and the context, establishing a relationship of complicity with the reader.

Keywords

Context, political caricature, pragmatics, relevance theory, rhetoric.

1. Introduction

The notion of discourse has been conceived as a social and historical practice within the framework of important socialization processes, among which the media stands out. The study of discourse in the media field addresses both the specifications of texts and speech and its persuasive force in the formation of opinions, so that its access and control is linked to notions of power. In studies on discourse, power and society, Van Dijk states that "power and the abuse of power, domination and manipulation, as well as all forms of illegitimate discourse, interaction and communication are based on social structures and relations between social groups" (2016, p. 175). In the triad discourse, society, cognition, a mediation is established in which the singularity of each discourse is explained, given that it will be the personal and social cognitive models, understood as shared knowledge and ideology, which particularize the discourses in each social situation.

The dynamics of modern society is marked by the presence of the media, which represent a kind of mediator between social events and individuals. The knowledge we obtain about the events in each country and the world is mostly obtained by the information disseminated by the printed/virtual press or in social networks. Media discourse not only conveys information, but also expresses opinions. This ubiquity of the media makes them a key factor in the construction of people's beliefs.



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Among the range of discourses disseminated by the media and social networks is the humorous discourse in whose essence lies the transgression of power relations. Authors like Calsamiglia and Tusón, agree in characterizing the humorous discourse as a game of language in which its effect is achieved from the non-fulfillment of the conventional, serial, alternate and organized communication process, being rather a complex communicative event in which humor is produced when the expectations arisen from norms and conventionalisms are transgressed (1999, p. 214).

In caricature as a journalistic genre, humor, irony and satire are combined in their approach to the problems that afflict each society. In the Venezuelan context, Chirinos et al:

Caricature has become the journalistic genre that combines irony, humor and satire to expose the problems of a country in a pleasant and different way. In the Venezuelan context, humorists and caricaturists have an abundant and continuous source of inspiration (2010, p.16).

In Venezuela, the cartoons of Eduardo Sanabria reflect the political, economic and social events of the country in one of the newspapers with the longest trajectory, *El Nacional*. The caricatures of Sanabria were the object of interest of this study in relation to the electoral event of 2017, where regional elections were held, occasion in which the Governors of the 23 states of Venezuela were elected for the 2018-2022 fiscal year. This election process was developed in a stage characterized by high polarization and political conflict.

The social sphere was also marked by the execution of protest actions in the main cities with a balance of 142 dead and 800 injured. This was due to the uprising against the political and social model implemented by the President's administration, which was not bringing benefits to the population in the areas of health, food and education. In addition, the economic situation marked a dynamic of rising prices and accentuated shortages of basic necessities, and a general economic decline due to low oil prices, which is the main source of income for the Venezuelan economy (Bracho, 2018, p. 538 - 539).

Thus, the humor and caricatures produced are fundamentally nourished by the political and social context, hence the predominance of political caricatures over any other type of humor. In this specific type of discourse, two areas converge: the political one, which signifies the content, and the journalistic one, which determines the space, the form, and the message. Specifically, in the case of political caricatures, there is a condensation of the visual and the verbal about the daily affairs of a country, which would be the world shared by the author and his interlocutors. In terms of its function, the condensation of codes, themes and voices seeks to disqualify the official in politics. Political humor starts from the shared world and subverts order (Agelvis, 2010, p. 46).

Given the importance of political caricature in the transmission of information and opinion on political and social events, the purpose of this article is to analyze the discourse of the caricatures of Eduardo Sanabria on the convocation of regional elections in Venezuela during 2017. The theme of the call to participate in said electoral event is developed by the author; however, in addition to inviting participation, a device of the implicit is put into play that evidences a particularly critical view on the fact.

From these considerations, the following questions arise: how does Eduardo Sanabria discursively construct the call to participate in the aforementioned election event? What are the dimensions of the context of the discourse of Sanabria's cartoons? Through what discursive strategies is the author's intentionality in the cartoons made evident?



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

The development of the research was oriented through the following specific objectives: a) To identify the model of context deployed by the text in order to guide its interpretation. b) To determine the speech acts and rhetorical figures as discursive strategies aimed at evidencing the intentionality of an ostensive communication such as the cartoons.

By assuming a contextual approach to discourse, various aspects of society and its culture are involved. The study of discourse "means approaching the social dynamics and identities, as well as achieving an understanding of the different socio-cultural groups in a specific historical time" (Calsamiglia and Tusón, 1999, p.16). Language users interact in the construction of meaning as a matter of socially organized subjects. Therefore, discourse is not only a construction or text, it involves meaning, interpretation and understanding.

The description of the situation and the context are fundamental components of pragmatic analysis to determine the communicative intent of the discourse or communicative event (Agelvis, 2010, p. 50). In the pragmatic approach, the spatial-temporal and situational elements are interpreted in the socio-cultural framework of people, who, at the same time, integrate the information in their minds thanks to the cognitive processes. In this sense, the pragmatic-discursive study must consider the analysis of the context, understood as the world of the author and the world of the interpreter (Calsamiglia and Tusón, 1999, p. 102). In particular, in the caricature, the image and the short text that is generally attached, constitute the visual and verbal keys chosen by the author to unfold an interpretation process based on what the reader interprets and, in whose genesis, the contextual factors are found.

But discourse is also a cognitive activity; it is a practice that covers a path in two directions, verbal interaction and communication event. Its "meanings, inferences and intentions, as well as other properties and processes of the mind are intrinsic to the text" (Van Dijk, 1999, p. 246-247).

However, the cognitive approach does not conceive of meaning as a value immanent to it, but rather it is attributed by the users and their mental processes. This is how Calsamiglia and Tusón express it:

However, meaning - or pragmatic-discursive meaning - results from the interdependence of contextual factors and linguistic forms; it requires from the interpreter, his previous and shared knowledge, his intentions, everything that is activated in the communicative exchange, as well as the rest of the dimensions of the empirical context in which it occurs (1999, p. 185).

Discourse and its mental processes are inserted in the social dynamics. From this viewpoint, the process of interpreting a statement leads to identifying what is explicitly said by the speaker, which implies the speaker's intention and the context in which the statement is intended to be processed.

Language is action according to the theory of speech acts developed by (Austin, 2016; Searle, 2017). Speaking is doing, so that when a statement is issued it has an explicit meaning, an intentional dimension, and a dimension that affects the audience. In this regard, there are "consequences or effects that such acts have on the actions, thoughts, or beliefs of the listeners" (Searle, 1994, p. 34).

The notion of language as action conceives that in every communicative act there is an intentional act, produced so that the performer performs some action, believes some of



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

what has been said, acts according to some convention, in short, acts accordingly. In this sense, the enunciateur "may want to say more than he actually does, but it is always possible for him in principle to say exactly what he wants to say" (Searle, 1994, p. 27).

On the other hand, a discursive approach to the issue of meaning must necessarily raise the difference between explicit meaning and implicit meaning. In this aspect of the analysis it is necessary to consider the use of rhetorical figures as discursive strategies or transgressions of language employed in order to make certain information relevant. In the theory of relevance, implicit meaning and ostensive phenomena are studied. The latter occur when the speaker or author of a discourse contributes significantly to the recognition of its communicative intent (Sperber & Wilson, 2004, p. 241). Within the so-called ostensive communication there is a form of analysis of mixed units (text and image) since caricatures function as ostensive texts whose purpose is to provoke public attention.

In this research the caricature is conceived as a discourse integrated by three components, which are the types of contexts that are denoted to establish the analysis as typified by Reyes:

- a) linguistic context or co-text, linguistic material preceding and following the statement.
- b) situational context or spatial-temporal dimension of the statement.
- c) socio-cultural context comprising the ideas, scales of values, and cultural knowledge of all kinds shared by the interlocutors (2007, p. 19).

The pragmatic perspective leads to the notion of caricatured text as a communicative event, in which the study of the use of language in context is pursued and as the construction of a particular gaze on a specific event. Its study seeks to identify the author's intentions, as well as to characterize the probable context in which the interpretation of the cartoon is proposed.

The article presents four sections. The first section outlines the development of the study by describing the context of the analysis. In the second section, we find the materials and methods where the procedures inherent to qualitative research and according to the techniques of Discourse Analysis are indicated. In the third section the part of the results is located, here the products of the processing of the information achieved through the designed and analyzed matrices in an integrated way are expressed. Finally, the fourth section contains the conclusions and reflects on the results of the corpus analysis in light of the vision of the political cartoon discourse in the social field.

2. Materials y methods

The research is part of the qualitative research approach, which proposes "the study of specific cases without the need to generalize into large amounts of data, seeking to analyze and describe social phenomena from their determining features" (Bonilla and Rodriguez, 2005, p.110).

The type of research is descriptive-exploratory, whose descriptive studies show the properties, characteristics, and profiles of people or any other phenomenon submitted to analysis, in order to evaluate its dimensions or components (Hernández et al., 2014).

The procedure to carry out this research was the following:



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

1. **Bibliographic archiving on the subject to be investigated:** An exhaustive investigation was carried out to locate the main theoretical models related to pragmatics, as well as those linked to political caricature.
2. **Intentional search and selection of the corpus:** The corpus was made up of five caricatures by Eduardo Sanabria published in the newspaper El Nacional and whose central topic is limited to the electoral event called in Venezuela on October 15, 2017. The selection was intentional and responds to the interest to study the pragmatic interaction in the caricatures of Eduardo Sanabria referred to the call to participate in the regional elections. These were progressively numbered according to the dates of publication and correspond to the days prior to the elections.
3. **Elaboration of the matrices:** A matrix called context model in the cartoon was designed, oriented to identify the iconic-linguistic, situational and socio-cultural context of the ostensive communication as participating dimensions in the construction of meaning. And another matrix called pragmatic-rhetorical perspective of caricature following the contributions of (Calsamiglia and Tusón, 1999) to identify the acts of speech and rhetorical figures.
4. **Segmentation of the units of analysis in the matrices:** The basic unit of analysis was the statement, defined as any linguistic production with meaning that has a communicative intention. In this sense, "in any case, producing a statement implies performing a type of action: a speech act" (Escandell, 2014, p.166).
5. **Analysis of the caricatures:** In the first instance, we proceeded to identify the model of context displayed by the text in order to guide its interpretation. The identification action covered three levels. In the iconic-linguistic context, both the images of each cartoon and the text in its verbal manifestation were recognized, appealing to the encyclopedic knowledge of the reader. The situational context had to do with the conditions of the publication and the socio-cultural context involved the shared knowledge about the subject and relevant facts associated with it, at present and in the past in Venezuela.
Secondly, speech acts and rhetorical figures were determined as discursive strategies. In this aspect, the fundamental unit of analysis was the enunciation and from these the speech actions and the rhetorical figures were identified. The pragmatic analysis is completed by dynamically integrating both the context model and the pragmatic-rhetorical perspective in order to evidence the interactive play of the context with the text in the construction of a discourse and a specific author's perspective.

In order to carry out the analysis, a series of cartoons were intentionally selected to make up the corpus of Eduardo Sanabria regarding the call to participate in the regional elections of 2017 in Venezuela.



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)



Figure 1 Caricature of the character "El Chuniór", Venezuelan broadcaster, C1 coding in this research. Source: (Sanabria, 2017, 8 de October)

The caricature from the iconic plane represents a popular Venezuelan humorous character nicknamed "El chuniór". On the verbal level, an assertive and an exclamatory sentence is presented.



Figure 2 Caricature of Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi character from the movie "Star Wars", C2 coding in this research. Source: (Sanabria, 2017, 9 October).

The C2 is composed of a single character from the aforementioned film and in the background the Venezuelan national flag. On the verbal level there is a desiderative sentence.



Figure 3 Caricature of the character "El Chuniór", Venezuelan broadcaster, C3 coding in this research. Source: (Sanabria, 2017, 11 the October)

In C3 the unique narrative structure is repeated. Again, the character is called "Chuniór". The verbal plane is characterized by exhortative and desiderative sentences.



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)



Figure 4 Cartoon of a pair of women conversing, C4 coding in this research. Source: (Sanabria, 2017, 12 the October)

On the iconic level, C4 represents two young women chatting. On the verbal level, a dialogue characterized by enunciative and interrogative sentences is briefly developed.



Figure 5 Caricature of two pinkies with electoral dye, coded C5 in this research. Source: (Sanabria, 2017, 13 the October)

The iconic plane reveals a pair of hands with the little finger tinted and a series of hands receptive to the sign of the vote being cast. The linguistic plane is made up of the exhortation.

3. Results

Once the corpus was selected and the word processing matrices were designed, the analysis of the cartoons was developed. Taking into account that the segmented statements in the analysis matrices constituted the fundamental key. First, because it represents the central verbal point for the reader to carry out the task of interpretation, that is, to identify what the cartoon says or implies. And secondly, the context of interpretation in which the cartoonist expects his caricature to be processed.



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Iconic-linguistic context				
C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
08/10/17	09/10/17	11/10/17	12/10/17	13/10/17
Situational context				
Series of caricatures whose author is Eduardo Sanabria published in the newspaper El Nacional, a Venezuelan newspaper, founded in the city of Caracas on August 3, 1943 with national circulation and long tradition in the country. The cartoons were published between October 8 and 13, 2017, in the days prior to the elections.				
Socio-cultural context				
On October 15, 2017, regional elections were held in Venezuela, where the governors of the 23 states of the country were elected for the 2018-2022 fiscal year. This event was characterized by high polarization and conflict and strong protests during the four months prior to the elections. For this reason, the opposition and the government made repeated calls to vote in order to avoid the abstention characteristic of regional elections. On the one hand, the government invited people to participate in the "electoral party" in order to guarantee peace; on the other hand, the opposition denounced the relocation of more than 250 voting centers, many of them in traditionally oppositional areas, less than 72 hours before the election; the transmission by state media of pro-government electoral propaganda previously prohibited by law; and the presence of "collectives" of pro-government supporters in opposition electoral centers.				

Table 1. Context model in the cartoon

Context model: The corpus of selected cartoons alludes to the electoral event referred to above. The criterion of intentional selection corresponded to the interest in investigating the call to participate in the election as represented by the author, Eduardo Sanabria. The iconic-linguistic context corresponds to both the images and the series of statements of each cartoon. Each one is made up of a frame within which the image of the characters and little text appears. The drawings refer to real characters presented with prominent features; the texts refer to speeches or points of view of those caricatured characters or real beings.

The context of the corpus coincides with the definition of Agelvis (2010) who establishes that, in both iconic and verbal language, satire or criticism full of humor or irony is present with the purpose of persuasion. The images represent exaggerated characters whose meaning becomes relevant in light of the context. Among the characters represented is "El Chunior" (C1, C3) who is one of the most famous characterizations of the humorous actor Emilio Lovera, being "El Chunior" a cheerful speaker who always shows a false wisdom and general culture. It also shows the Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi (C2) character from the movie Star Wars. A pair of women talking (C4) and little fingers with electoral dye (C5). In relation to the texts, they are very brief, in which there was no possibility of establishing anaphoric grammatical relations.

The situational context is characterized by the conditions of a media publication. The author, Eduardo Sanabria, is a caricaturist whose work includes children's humorous drawings, advertising and portraits of personalities, however, it is the political caricature that leads him to fame. The newspaper El Nacional represents a media of long trajectory in the country.



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

The socio-cultural context corresponding to the time period in which the cartoons were published is directly related to the invitation to participate in the regional elections. The call for participation was made by both poles of the election. The official side, whose visible face was the government of the day, made the call under the premise that participation in the electoral "fiesta" would make peace possible, alluding to the four months of protests that preceded the development of the regional elections.

In the framework prior to the event, there were specific events linked to the conditions of participation, the National Electoral Council abruptly changed the electoral districts, which caused a large part of the population to be reassigned to different voting centers, sometimes far from their homes. This fact was denounced by the opposition as well as the violations to the electoral norm by the government sector by disseminating electoral propaganda in the State media, as well as the organized presence of political groups affiliated with the government in the voting centers and in the acts of the opposition. These collectives practiced violent confrontation, which generated fear in the population (Bracho, 2018).

Caricatura	Acto locutivo	Tipo de acto ilocutivo	Figuras retóricas
C1	Revise su "circuncisión"	Directivo	Permutación
	Y vaya a votar	Directivo	
C2	Que el voto esté contigo	Expresivo	Figura polisémica
C3	Salgan todos a votar	Directivo	Metáfora
	No queremos "abstemios"	Expresivo	
	Claro que sí	Expresivo	
C4	Mi novio no va a votar	Asertivo	Aliteración
	¿y entonces?	Directivo	
	Lo voy a votar	Compromisorio	
C5	Vota	Directivo	Metáfora
	Multiplica la señal	Directivo	

Table 2. Pragmatic-Rhetorical Perspective of the Cartoon

The idea that by issuing a statement an action is performed by means of words is the foundation of the theory of speech acts. Illocutive acts express a force by virtue of which the enunciation refers to particular types of actions. Hence, Searle (1994) stipulated five types of illocutionary acts: assertive, directive, committing, expresivos y declarativos.

The predominance of illocutionary speech acts of a directive and expressive type is consistent with a type of ostensive communication such as caricature. If the directive acts



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

pursue an action, the expressive acts serve to manifest the psychological state of what the speaker feels or thinks, according to the propositional content.

On the other hand, the rhetorical figures identified as Eduardo Sanabria's discursive strategies belong to two groups, according to the linguistic features linked to this research are

1) Figures of words, those achieved through procedures applied at a phonic level. Graphical, morphological or lexical figures of words. Calsamiglia and Tusón (1999): Permutation: "Check your circumcison" (C1) where the permutation or change of an expected word for another one with similar sounds and different meaning occurs. Alliteration: Voting - Bouncing where the same sound is repeated in words with different meanings (C4)

2) Figures of meaning, those figures produced through processes of signification by analogy or other types of relationships: Metaphor: "We don't want to be abstemious" (C3) and "Multiply the signal" (C5) and Polysemic statement whose meaning is contextual in "May the vote be with you" (C2).

4. Discussion

The theory of Relevance coincides with other linguistic currents in the idea that there is no unique correspondence between sentences and their semantic content and their interpretation according to (Sperber & Wilson, 2004). Particularly, in the type of ostensive communication, in which the sender actively draws the attention of the recipient, the meanings expressed on the linguistic level go beyond the literal. The contextualization of the caricatures of the corpus are premises obtained from the deductive mechanisms inherent to encyclopedic memory and icon-linguistic decoding.

The caricature displays visual and textual clues that activate inferential processes in order to identify what is explicitly and implicitly communicated by the author. In such a way that the interpretation of the iconic-linguistic statements makes sense in the macro vision that includes the situational and socio-cultural context.

Although the general explicit purpose of the cartoons is inserted in the public call to participate in the regional elections of 2017. In light of the contextual analysis, an interpretative use of the mental representations deployed in the series of illocutionary acts identified in the cartoons can be inferred.

The predominance of directive speech acts describes a state of affairs demanded from the point of view of the speaker or author. Participating, voting, choosing, going to vote indicates actions that the speaker considers desirable from his or her point of view. Similarly, illocutionary acts of an expressive type represent a state of things that exist in the speaker's thought and emotions. So, in the situational and socio-cultural framework, the corpus attends to a manifest intentionality of support for the call. In other words, they are added to the call of the media to participate in an electoral event in the country.

Nevertheless, the rhetorical figures allow the construction of an implicit meaning in which the interpretative use is reinforced. To the intentionality of the acts of speech is added the attitude of the author towards what is communicated. In this way, rhetorical strategies allow to call the interlocutor's attention to other aspects or facts that are not explicit in the statement, but with which the interlocutor can establish a relationship because they are part of the shared socio-cultural context.



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

In C1, the illocutionary directive act requests the action of voting, however, the figure of words or permutation used in the statement: "Review your circumcison" surprises the reader by not using the expected word such as "circumscription", which does not prevent its understanding since in this message the social context provides the reader with the phantom information such as the action taken by the Venezuelan NEC to change the circumscriptions three days before the elections. The word game and the cartoon character known as "El chunior" manage, from the humor, to warn the reader about this possible obstacle in the exercise of the vote. The figures of words are also found in C4 with the figure of alliteration or phonic game between "voting" and "bouncing", a caricature in which the non-participation is interpreted as a negative action.

In the figurative use of language, special mention should be made of the cognitive construction represented in metaphors or figures of meaning. In C3 the statement "We do not want teetotalers" expressed by the character "El chunior" establishes an analogical relationship between the electoral event and a celebration. This analogy of the metaphor has its contextual antecedent in everyday Venezuelan speech in which the image through which the government of the nation has long called the elections the "electoral party" is widely recognized and is already part of the imaginary shared by the majority of Venezuelans.

These statements have been considered as "echo" statements since they refer to something previously stated by another speaker (Sperber and Wilson, 2004). Thus, within the scope of the celebration, the expression "we do not want to be abstainers" alludes to the opposition perspective that calls for massive participation since abstention would favor officialism.

The metaphors project relations of analogy between normally different spheres. In the projection between these domains, a subjective point of view is constructed since they incorporate the point of view of the emitter (Escandell, 2014). The statement of C5 "multiplies the signal", in this case illustrated with several hands with the little finger tinted as a sign of having exercised the vote, refers metaphorically to a communicative event linked to the realization of the elections. The indiscriminate use of the media by the government is an example of this, as well as the unexpected change of electoral districts, which weakened the right of a sector of the voters to be informed, so they had to spread the information.

The shared socio-cultural context also includes phrases, expressions, sayings that have been incorporated into the cultural heritage, and is knowledge based on experiences whose metaphorical expression is incorporated into daily life. Such is the case in C2 and the phrase "que el voto esté contigo" (may the vote be with you) which plays with the cartoon character, Jedi Master Obi Wan who in the film Stars Wars pronounces the famous phrase "que la fuerza esté contigo" (may the force be with you). The variation of the phrase starts from the known and amplifies the message. The statement can be interpreted in various ways. Initially, it can be interpreted as wishing to participate; however, also the interlocutor can recognize the famous phrase and also know that it is pronounced as wish of good fortune before a fight. Therefore, it can be inferred that one wishes him/her the best of luck in the face of a circumstance possibly adverse to electoral participation in the face of facts such as those already mentioned and the possibility of violence in the development of the event.

The humorous discourse puts in evidence the contextual game generated from the discursive strategies that conform it, in which the literal is only a part of what is communicated. Seen as a social practice, the humorous discourse starts from an explicit intentionality and is inscribed in the framework of conventions and purposes shared by the



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

society in which it circulates. In this sense, in the political cartoons analyzed there is evidence of an illocutionary macro-act of speech such as the call to vote, so that the author's intentionality participates in the situational context, such as that of social communication.

Nevertheless, the game of the construction of meaning acquires an illocutionary force when analyzing speech acts in the socio-cultural context and in their rhetorical interaction. In the same way that a statement can present a range of interpretations according to its morphology, syntax or semantics, so too can a caricature, analyzed contextually, present various options for interpretation. This is due to the different possibilities of combination between linguistic statements and iconographic representation.

The call to participate with the vote implicitly entails a vision, which, being humorous, insinuates social criticism. The ironic game of humor present through the rhetorical figures structures the implicit. In these messages, each reader will process according to the access he or she has to the socio-cultural context. It is clear that the contexts vary for each reader and will display specific contexts of interpretation for their relevance.

5. Conclusions

In the study of humor and its discursive configurations it is indisputable that there is no sense in the message if there is no socio-culturally shared knowledge. Researches coincide in highlighting the discursive perspective as an "integrating, coherent and preferably multidisciplinary option" (Morales and Samper, 2017, p. 83). With this, the vitality of the language is vindicated and the emerging need always to approach it without reductionist approaches.

In the case of political caricature, the reader's handling of the context is a key factor in the interpretative task. The discursive construction of humor in the corpus analyzed obeys a contextual adaptation between the text, the author and the reader that allows a kind of communicative complicity.

Through the humorous discourse, the political caricature of Eduardo Sanabria reveals the adverse circumstances to the electoral celebration carried out in Venezuela in 2017. Thus seen, there is in the message an interpretation map whose route is executed by a strategic game of voting to counteract the abstention in favor of the government, and voting as a heroic action in a war between light and darkness or the action of the vote as a democratic signal that multiplies in each citizen.

All these possible interpretations are framed in an attitude of the author, which is characterized by a democratic and oppositional position in the face of the pro-government option. The body of shared beliefs and the interpretative game make up the pragmatic universe of Eduardo Sanabria's discourse.

Recent studies in the area show how the discursive potential of political humor in cartoons has turned it into an attractive corpus for qualitative research aimed at deepening social representations and semiotic and discursive constructions of ideology in societies, which are increasingly marked by information and the opinion matrixes disseminated by the media (Prada et al., 2018).

Bibliography

Agelvis, V. (2010). Zapata y la caricatura. *Anuario Grhial*, 4 (4), 43-62. De <http://www.saber.ula.ve/handle/123456789/32815>



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Austin, J (2016) *Cómo hacer cosas con palabras*. España: Paidós Ibérica.

Bracho, Ángel (2018). Tratamiento sobre política y economía en la prensa nacional tras el 15 octubre de 2017. Análisis de contenido. *Telos*, 20 (3), <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=99357002010>

Bonilla-Castro, E. y Rodríguez Sehk, P. (2005). Más allá de los dilemas de los métodos. La investigación en Ciencias Sociales. Grupo editorial Norma: Bogotá-Colombia.

Calsamiglia H. y Tusón A. (1999). *Las cosas del Decir*. Barcelona: Editorial Ariel Lingüística.

Chirinos, A, Franco, A y León, F (2010). Análisis semio-lingüístico de las caricaturas de Pedro León Zapata. *Revista de Artes y Humanidades Única*, 1 (1), 15-43.

Escandell, M.V. (2014). *La comunicación. Lengua, cognición y sociedad*. Madrid: Akal.

Hernández, R., Fernández, C., y Baptista, P. (2014). *Metodología de la investigación*. México: Mc. Graw Hill.

Morales, E. & Samper, J. (2017). Abordaje discursivo de una caricatura política. *Amauta*, 15(39), 71-83. <http://doi.org/10.15648/am.30.2017.6>

Prada, J; Ramirez, J y Pinzón, D (2018). Articulación de la caricatura política como fuente para la investigación social en Colombia: estado del arte y perspectivas a comienzos del siglo XXI. *Reflexión Política*, vol. 20, núm. 40. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=6837419>

Reyes, G. (2007). *El abecé de la Pragmática*. Arco Libros

Rodríguez, A y Santamaría, F (2017). Searle: significado y referencia en los discursos de la ciencia. *VERITAS*, N° 36 (abril 2017) pp. 73-95

Sanabria, E. (13 de octubre de 2017). Vota. Multiplica la señal. *El Nacional*. Recuperado de <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaMM0RqAbL4/>

Sanabria, E. (12 de octubre de 2017). Mi novio no va a votar ¿y entonces? Lo voy a votar. *El Nacional*. Recuperado de <https://www.instagram.com/p/BajoVryAxxGW/>

Sanabria, E. (11 de octubre de 2017). Salgan todos a votar. No queremos “Abstemios” claro que si... *El Nacional*. Recuperado de <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaHGjjQAbKe/>

Sanabria, E. (9 de octubre de 2017). Que el voto esté contigo. *El Nacional*. Recuperado de <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaCMU4XAw-h/>

Sanabria, E. (8 de octubre de 2017). Revise su “circuncisión” y vaya a votar. Si señor... *El Nacional*. Recuperado de <https://www.instagram.com/p/BaCMU4XAw-h/>

Searle, J. (2017). *Actos de habla*: Madrid: Cátedra.



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

- Searle, J. (1994). Actos del habla: Ensayo de filosofía del lenguaje. Planeta-Agostini: Barcelona.
- Sperber D. y Wilson D. (2004). Teoría de la Relevancia. *Revista de Investigación Lingüística*, 7, 233-283. De <http://revistas.um.es/ril/article/view/6691>
- Van Dijk, T. (1999). Ideología, una aproximación multidisciplinaria. Gedisa: Barcelona.
- Van Dijk, T. (2012). Discurso y Contexto. Gedisa: Barcelona.
- Van Dijk, T. (2016). Estudios críticos del Discurso: un enfoque sociocognitivo. En *Discurso y sociedad*. Vol.10 (1) pp. 137 - 162



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Authoras

MARIELA PÉREZ. Master in Linguistics, 2002. Universidad Pedagógica Experimental Libertador (UPEL-IPB), Venezuela. Bachelor of Arts. Mention in Classical Languages and Literature, 1996. University of Los Andes, Venezuela.

Currently Doctorate in Latin American Culture. Thesis in progress. Coordinator of the Master's Degree in Linguistics. UPEL-IPB.

Professor of Introduction to the Study of Language, Spanish Language and Understanding and Production of Texts in undergraduate courses. Professor of Linguistic Theory. Speech Analysis and Reading and Writing Seminar (Master's Degree in Linguistics UPEL-IPB). (Master's Degree in Latin American Literature, UPEL-IPB)

YONARLLI VIELMA-ORELLANA. Degree in Education with French mention, 2015. University of Carabobo, Venezuela. Member of the Venezuelan Association of Teachers of French and the Venezuelan Association for the Teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language.

Currently Master in Linguistics at the Universidad Pedagógica Experimental Libertador (UPEL-IPB), Venezuela, for supporting graduate work. Teacher of French, Technical University of Manabí, Portoviejo, Ecuador.



[Licencia Creative Commons Atribución 4.0 Internacional \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)