**A Postcolonial Reading of Humor in Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man***

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**Abstract**

As an author who writes only a single novel in his life span, Ralph Ellison (1913-1994) shot to fame for his literary masterpiece, *Invisible Man*(1952). It was the first time a black writer’s novel won the prestigious award of National Book Award. However, *Invisible Man*’s study of Afro-American themes of injustice, racism and identity does not present its great aesthetic values without considering Ellison’s comic style of writing and his humorous language. The present paper interweaves postcolonial theory and humor theory, thus deals with the interface between these two. Applying Homi K. Bhabha’s postcolonial concepts and Attardo’s linguistic theory of humor called GTVH (General Theory of Verbal Humor) the study provides a more comprehensive analysis. Applying GTVH theory, examination of all types of comedy and deformity represented in the language of the novel with six factors known as Knowledge Resources is needed. Among the six knowledge resources, target, script opposition, and language are examined. Targets of humor play an important role in identifying the humorous aspects of the novel. The general distribution of humor targets and its different types has been demonstrated in graphical representation. The findings of the study reveal patterns of humorous target repetition that result in racial humor. It is concluded that Ellison’s verbal humor techniques is a strategy to resist against whites’ oppressions; the strategy which is interwoven with Bhabha’s comic aspects of mimicry.

**Keywords**:*GTVH, Invisible Man, language, postcolonial, Ralph Ellison, script opposition, target, verbal humor.*