

## “Seeing-through Utterance” as Wordplay

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Second person assertives with thinking verbs as predicates such as, “You think that my paper will be accepted in an international journal,” are rarely uttered to a conversation participant in everyday communication, unlike second person interrogatives like, “Do you think that my paper will be accepted in an international journal?” because it is apparently odd that the speaker states categorically what the interlocutor thinks to his/her face. However, sentences such as the following can be observed occasionally in fictional conversations in Franz Kafka’s works.

“You think you have strength enough to come over here and that you’re only hanging back of your own accord.” (Franz Kafka: *The Judgment*, p. 86)

In the utterance, a speaker expresses verbally what he sees through the mind of his interlocutor and tries to get an advantage in the interpersonal relationship. Such an utterance can be called a “seeing-through utterance” because the speaker expresses verbally what he or she sees through the mind of the interlocutor (Nishijima, 2015). Seeing-through utterances seem to be used for interpersonal games between characters attending a fictional conversation in Kafka’s works. Then, it can be hypothesized that seeing-through utterances are used as wordplay for interpersonal games in order for the speakers to display their certain attitudes to their interlocutors. The aim of this paper is twofold: (a) to analyze some seeing-through utterances from several of Franz Kafka’s works, (b) to demonstrate that they are used as wordplay, that is, a psychological trick to display the speaker’s power toward the interlocutor. The analysis of seeing-through utterances can be expected to shed light on an unknown aspect of wordplay in the fictional conversations in Franz Kafka’s work.

### References

- Kafka, Franz (1988). *The Judgment*. In Glatzer, Nahum N. (ed.). *The Collected Short Stories of Franz Kafka*. Harmondsworth, Penguin.
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