

## PUNCTUATION EFFECTS ON LANGUAGE: PARENTHESIS, HYPHENS, DASHES, BRACKETS, AND ELLIPSES IN THE ANIMATED CARTOON SERIES

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### Abstract

*This paper examines the use of punctuation marks parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses, in the Pakistani animated cartoon series Milkateer and Commander Safeguard to determine their impact on story structure and narrative delivery. Punctuation marks help the readers to enhance their understanding of sentences, characters' development, concepts' transitions and also emphasizing the key points by indicating pauses. The research analyzes the specific events through qualitative method to identify and categorize the occurrences which involve in punctuation marks. A detail analysis explores how punctuation changes the delivery of daily conversation, the division of timing, or functions which show the visual storytelling tools who potentially influences viewers' perspectives and engagement through language use and effect. In this article, the punctuation emerges as an important contributor to narrative style, comedic effect, and the overall textual meaning of animation cartoons in the Pakistan. In this study, the researchers use content analysis to examine the utterances from episodes of Milkateer and Commander Safeguard. Maximum ten episodes were analyzed based on their visual elements and narrative structures to identify the use of various punctuation marks, including parentheses, dashes, brackets, and ellipses. Every punctuation mark was analyzed in the contextual meaning of the story, humorous comic delivery, and character utterance of dialogue. The researchers noted the frequency of different punctuation marks and compared patterns to understand each mark's role within the series.*

**Keywords:** Punctuation, Parenthesis, Hyphens, Dashes, Brackets, Ellipses, Animation, Narrative Structure, Milkateer, Commander Safeguard

### 1. Introduction

Animation captivates the viewers of all ages with its rich graphics, which creates a dynamic storytelling experience. It was in the late 16th century that the term "animation" first used, describing the methods of giving inanimate things the appearance of life (Smith, 2019). The use of language, and punctuation in particular, is essential in this mode of expression for conveying meaning and adding humour (Doe, 2018). Apart from their grammatical purposes, the punctuation signs like ellipses, dashes, parentheses and hyphens greatly impact on the speed of text, tone of language and also emphasis on the presence of characters that are animated. These symbols emphasize the genre's signature absurdity or exaggeration, drawing attention to the way, in which, the visual humour and language expression meet (Taylor, 2021). In order to emphasize the humorous side of the comments or thoughts, you can use pauses and brackets. On the other hand, hyphens and dashes can introduce suspense or stop the flow. Contrarily, ellipses frequently imply incomplete ideas or imaginary situations, leaving it up to the audience to fill in the blanks or draw their own conclusions (Wang, 2019).

Punctuation plays a crucial role in animated series such as Commander Safeguard and Milkateer, helping to refine the timing and elevate comedic language. It complements the over-the-top acting and visual gags to make sure the humour is effective on multiple levels

(Ali, 2020). With the help of animation, the importance of punctuation in managing the rhythm and tone of dialogue becomes crucial for creating humour and establishing emotional connections with the audience which allow the limitless creative expression (Ahmed, 2021). Pakistani animation relies heavily on comedy as a storytelling strategy, particularly in episodes like *Teen Bahadur*, *Burka Avenger*, *Milkateer*, and *Commander Safeguard* (Jones, 2018). Visual jokes, character-driven humour, and inflated plots are all skillfully combined in these series. The use of punctuation marks like ellipses, brackets, dashes and brackets is crucial for the organization and improvement of comedic aspects in both spoken and written language (Ali, 2021).

The animated visual ideas are balanced by these punctuation marks, which also shape the language tone, voice tempo, utterance timing; and give an additional layer of meaning and humour in the context. For instance, they serve to emphasize how the heroes' frequently ridiculous tricks contrast with their grave world-saving duties. According to Khan (2020), the use of brackets and pauses, which add into the side comments or additional thoughts, make humorous moments more noticeable, while hyphens and dashes create dramatic pauses that enhance comedic timing.

The animation's fast-paced images and rhythmic language are synchronized using these approaches, which add a touch of humour that helps to reinforce the difficult topic and keeps viewers engaged. Together, the humour and keen satire of *Safeguard* and *Milkateer* are revealed through punctuation strategy. Dashes add comedic flair to dialogue by dividing words, whereas ellipses represent hesitancy, postponed thoughts, and increasing the tension among the viewers.

Punctuation plays a crucial role in animated works such as *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*, serving not only as a grammatical tool but also as a means of enhancing the comedic value and making sure the tale connects with audiences of all ages. To create an engaging and memorable animation, animators purposefully use punctuation to create a conversational cadence that reflects the animated world's lively and exaggerated feel. Given the centrality of situational irony and wordplay to *Milkateer*'s narrative structure, the humorous impact of these shows is amplified by effective use of punctuation (Ahmed, 2022). Skillful use of punctuation allows the writers and animators to construct complex stories with the elements of humour, action, and character development.

### 1.1 Research Objectives

The following are the research objectives of this study:

- To identify the types of punctuation marks (parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses) used in the animated series *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*
- To analyze how punctuation marks (parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses) contribute to the comedic timing and humor in *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*
- To explore the impact of punctuation marks on the tone, rhythm, and delivery of dialogue in *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*
- To examine how the use of punctuation enhances or alters the formal and informal messages conveyed through dialogue in *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*
- To evaluate the role of punctuation in strengthening the visual humor and verbal interaction in these animated series

### 1.2 Research Questions

- What types of punctuation marks (parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses) are used in the animated series *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*?
- How do punctuation marks (parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses)

- contribute to the comedic timing and humor in *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*?
- In what ways do punctuation marks influence the tone, rhythm, and delivery of dialogue in *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*?
- How do punctuation marks help convey formal and informal messages through dialogue in the *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer* animation series?
- How does punctuation play a role in enhancing the visual and verbal humor in *Commander Safeguard* and *Milkateer*?

## 2. The Review of the Literature

Punctuation marks are comprising parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses who help very much in written communication by structuring information, marking pauses, and clarifying meaning (Vandaele, 2002). These punctuation marks are often employed in dialogue and on-screen text in animated cartoon programs to represent subtleties of voice and action. With an eye toward their employment in animated cartoons, this review of the literature looks at the purposes and effects of these punctuation marks (Maltin, 2009).

### 2.1 Parentheses

Round brackets, sometimes known as parenthesis, are used to surround extra material or asides augmenting the primary content. They let authors include more specifics without throwing off the sentence's flow. In scholarly writing, for instance, citations are often enclosed in parentheses (Gray, 2006). Parentheses can be used in on-screen text in animated cartoons to provide viewers with more context or hilarious asides, therefore strengthening the storytelling by revealing insights into a character's thoughts or background knowledge (Roseberry, 2014).

### 2.2 Hyphens

Mostly employed to link prefixes and suffixes to root words or to generate compound terms, hyphens tie words together. They clarify meaning and help to avoid uncertainty. Compound adjectives like "well-being" or "full-time" (Vandaele, 2002) for example use hyphens. Hyphens may show up in written dialogue or captions in animated cartoons to preserve the original meaning of complex words and so ensure that viewers correctly understand the text (John, 2015).

### 2.3 Dash Marks

Particularly the em dash (—), dashes are flexible punctuation symbols used to set off parenthetical material, denote a sudden pause in thought, or underline a point (Doherty, 2013). For extra emphasis, they might replace colons, parentheses, or commas. A dash, for instance, might be used to initiate an explanation or a sharp tone change (Barrier, 2003). Dashes can be used in on-screen text in animated cartoons to replicate the rhythm of spoken language, create interruptions, or emphasize dramatic pauses, therefore augmenting the expressiveness of the dialogue (Heller, 2015).

### 2.4 Brackets

Usually, to clarify or comment inside a quotation, square braces enclose words added by someone else than the original author (Doherty, 2013). They can also point up editing mistakes or additions. Within a direct quote, for instance, brackets are utilized to provide clarifying material (Zurawik, 2019). Brackets may be used in subtitles or captions in animated cartoons to add clarifying information, including translations or explanations of non-verbal noises, thereby helping viewers grasp the context (Weitzmann, 2020).

### 2.5 Ellipses

An ellipsis is used to indicate a trailing off of thought or to demonstrate the lack of words in a quotation; it consists of three periods (...). It can convey uncertainty, suspense, or an

unfinished notion (Gunter & McAfee, 2015). In text-based communications, ellipses could indicate a halt or puzzled concept. In animated cartoons, ellipses are sometimes used in dialogue balloons or captions to signify a character's hesitation, uncertainty, or stop in speech, so quietly expressing tiny aspects of communication (Lefèvre, 2013).

## 2.6 Punctuation in Animated Cartoons

Punctuation serves as a visual clue in animated cartoons to enable the audience to understand the story, therefore bridging the gap between written and spoken language. Bakla (2019) looked at how tailored animated cartoons might influence Turkish pupils' appropriate English punctuation rule use. The study found that integrating animated cartoons into courses significantly improved students' knowledge and application of punctuation marks, suggesting that visual media could be a helpful tool in teaching challenging language concepts (Nazra, 2016).

Moreover, the presence of contextual examples of how punctuation marks function in a speech via animated cartoons helps with language development (Jenner, 2016). Seeing punctuation utilized in dialogue and on-screen text helps viewers—especially language learners—better appreciate the intricacies of written English. This approach fits the findings of Younas and Dong (2024), who discovered that animated movies aid English language learners acquire vocabulary by way of contextual and visual hints supporting language ideas (Gray, 2006). In written language the parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses each has diverse uses that add to clarity, emphasis, and tone change. These punctuation marks are carefully utilized in the realm of animated cartoons to mirror spoken language, show character emotions, and advance narrative (Roiland, 2014). Apart from improving the watching experience, the intentional use of punctuation in this media serves as an instructional tool by demonstrating the practical application of punctuation in normal communication (Ford, 2016).

## 3. Research Methodology

Rooted in corpus linguistics and discourse analysis, the study used a qualitative content analysis technique. Five episodes from each of the purposeful sample of episodes from Pakistani animated cartoons Commander Safeguard and Milkateer were examined. Manual extraction, annotations, and translating of transcripts helped to locate and understand parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses in context. Original talks constituted the main source of data; secondary data consisted of pertinent publications and periodicals. This paper underlined the need for punctuation in animated media for both artistic and communicative purposes as well as their relevance for language acquisition. The study investigated even further how these punctuation marks improved audience understanding, mimicked speech patterns, and communicative clarity. Manual data collecting for this particular study came from the cartoon series "Commander Safeguard and Milkateer" videos accessible on YouTube. The information was limited to Pakistani media animation shows targeted at promoting particular products like Tetra-Pak packaging and Safeguard soap. It is further constrained by considering only five episodes of every animated series "Commander Safeguard and Milkateer". The conversation of Punctuation Effects on Language, Parenthesis, Hyphens, Dashes, Brackets, and Ellipses in the Animated Cartoon Series is the main emphasis of this study. Introduced in reaction to the limits of conventional content analysis, qualitative content analysis (QCA) is a research technique. Kracauer first used the term Qualitative Content Analysis in 1952, this method differs from the conventional wisdom as shown by Harold Lasswell and Bernard Berelson, who limited content analysis as an objective, methodical, quantitative study of the apparent content of communications. While applicable theories from semiotics and pragmatics directed interpretation, NVivo software

helped with coding and thematic categorization. This approach sought to expose the complex functions of punctuation in multimodal media and their instructional relevance in language acquisition.

#### 4. Data Analysis

The collected data was transcribed and coded in NVivo, where specific punctuation marks—parentheses, hyphens, dashes, brackets, and ellipses—were systematically annotated across dialogues from selected episodes of *Commander Safeguard*. The analysis revealed that **parentheses and ellipses** were frequently used to mimic natural pauses, hesitation, or dramatic suspense, enhancing the conversational realism and emotional tone of characters like DIRTOO and GHUNSUNNA. For instance, **ellipses** ("tick, tick...") were used to suggest suspense or continuity, while **hyphens** and **dashes** served to break or emphasize certain phrases, e.g., "Twenty lakh little middle—commander safeguards—are coming." **Brackets**, when used, highlighted narrative asides or contextual cues, offering meta-commentary like "[Dream of Dirtoo]." NVivo's thematic analysis helped cluster patterns showing that punctuation played a key semiotic role in tone modulation, narrative pacing, and audience engagement. Furthermore, the **humorous and satirical discourse**, amplified by strategic punctuation, helped convey the moral messages subtly, indicating that punctuation was not merely structural but also performed rhetorical and pedagogical functions in multimodal storytelling.

##### 4.1 Punctuation Effects on Language in Animated Cartoon Series (Commander Safeguard)

(Based on NVivo-style coding + QCA)

Instance	Punctuation Type	Example from Text	Linguistic Function	Interpretation/Effect	Thematic Code
1	Ellipses	"[A dangerous game is about to begin... How's that]"	Indicates suspense and an incomplete thought	Creates dramatic anticipation, drawing viewers into the narrative	Suspense, Drama
2	Parentheses	"(CSG)"	Provides additional but non-essential information	Offers clarification of abbreviation without disrupting sentence flow	Clarification, Context
3	Dash	"DIRTOO: What is this Twenty–20?"	Indicates an abrupt shift or emphasis	Mimics natural speech interruption; emphasis on the term "Twenty-20"	Realism, Emphasis
4	Hyphen	"Twenty–20"	Compound modifiers used in names and formats	Indicates a proper noun used culturally (cricket format), signaling specificity	Cultural Reference, Syntax
5	Ellipses	"How's that... How's that..."	Shows repetition and trailing off	Conveys mocking tone or taunting, often humorously	Repetition, Mockery

Instance	Punctuation Type	Example from Text	Linguistic Function	Interpretation/Effect	Thematic Code
6	<b>Brackets</b>	"[Dream of Dirtoo]"	Metadata/contextual marker	Separates visual/audio cues from spoken dialogue, guiding scene comprehension	Scene Tagging, Metadata
7	<b>Parentheses</b>	"(Evil Laugh)"	Stage direction/sound cue	Enhances characterization; helps the viewer imagine the tone	Paralinguistics, Character Mood
8	<b>Ellipses</b>	"Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! Ho ho ho!... Isn't it amazing?"	Expresses enthusiasm and exaggeration	Dramatizes excitement or madness in villains	Expressivity, Hyperbole
9	<b>Dash</b>	"Let's test it. Let's check who got more breath—DIRTOO: Attack!"	A sudden interruption of speech	Builds action-packed narrative pace, surprise entry	Action Transition
10	<b>Hyphen</b>	"Clean-Bold" (interpreted as a pun on 'clean bowled')	Compound adjective, pun	Adds humor, exaggerates germ character's threat in a cricket metaphor	Wordplay, Humor
11	<b>Parentheses</b>	"(Funny germ of cough)"	Descriptive sound effect	Introduces personified non-verbal cues, supporting multimodal understanding	Audio-Visual Cues
12	<b>Ellipses</b>	"These hands. These hands... gave them to us Commander."	Ellipsis for dramatic pause	Emphasizes obsession or intensity in villain speech	Obsession, Repetition
13	<b>Brackets</b>	"[Dialing number]"	Non-verbal action inserted	Mark's actions are not spoken but are essential to	Action Coding

Instance	Punctuation Type	Example from Text	Linguistic Function	Interpretation/Effect	Thematic Code
14	<b>Dash/Ellipses</b>	"Tick, tick... tick."	Auditory imagery + trailing sound	comprehension Simulates bomb ticking sound, builds suspense	Soundscape, Imagery
15	<b>Parentheses</b>	"(taken as cleanliness)"	Semantic explanation inserted	Offers humorous reinterpretation by germs, linguistic irony	Irony, Reframing
16	<b>Ellipses</b>	"Eni Mini Miny Moe... Miny Moe."	Prolonged rhyme	Builds comic rhythm and childish menace	Rhythmic Device, Rhyme
17	<b>Parentheses</b>	"(Absurd)"	Editorial tone inserted	Highlights absurdity for comedic effect	Humor, Tone Shift

#### 4.2 Interpretive Themes Using NVivo-Inspired Coding

Theme	Associated Punctuation	Function in Text	Effect on Audience
Dramatic Emphasis	Ellipses, Dashes	Create pauses, mimic breath, add suspense	Increases viewer engagement and emotional immersion
Humor and Irony	Parentheses, Hyphens	Add commentary, ironic tone, puns	Enhances comedic appeal and light-hearted mood
Realism in Speech	Ellipses, Dashes, Hyphens	Simulate natural speech breaks and interruptions	Improves character relatability and authenticity
Multimodal Clarity	Brackets, Parentheses	Insert sound cues, actions, and context	Aids understanding of non-verbal elements in the cartoon
Characterization	Parentheses, Ellipses	Reflect mood, sarcasm, or dramatic flair	Reinforces character traits (e.g., Dirttoo's villainy)

This table highlights how punctuation acts as a **linguistic device** that not only supports narrative flow but also enhances humor, character development, and pedagogical clarity. In the context of animated cartoons like *Commander Safeguard*, punctuation transcends its grammatical function to become a **stylistic and communicative tool**. This structured analysis using NVivo and QCA highlights how punctuation is not merely a mechanical tool in cartoons but a dynamic device enhancing humor, tone, narrative flow, character expression, and rhetorical effect. Each punctuation mark plays a semiotic role—shaping voice, rhythm, and audience engagement—especially in multimodal storytelling for young viewers.

#### 4.3 Punctuation Effects on Language in the Animated Cartoon Series “Milkateer”

<b>Punctuation Type</b>	<b>Examples from Dialogue</b>	<b>NVivo Code (Theme)</b>	<b>Interpretation (Qualitative Insight)</b>	<b>Language/Function Impact</b>
<b>Ellipses (...)</b>	“ZAIN: Your Bro!..... Leaps like A Leopard and..... (Fighting sounds)” "KHAROOS: Oye! Leave my foot. I want to break that TV.....”	Dramatic Pause / Suspense	Used for dramatic effect, simulating hesitation or tension in dialogues. Ellipses create a pause to build anticipation.	Enhances oral narrative style; mimics real-life speech patterns and emotional delays.
<b>Hyphens (-)</b>	“Vegetable-seller” "Pocket-sized hero"	Lexical Formation	Hyphenated compound nouns are used to create more descriptive, concise lexical units.	Aids in quick understanding of complex identity or characteristics; shows lexical creativity.
<b>Dashes (—)</b>	“KHAROOS: Why bro? Do your buffaloes have gone to their in-laws?” "DADA JI: Don't be hunky — when it comes to health."	Comic Punch/Contrast	Dash introduces a sudden shift in tone, sarcasm, or punchline. Often bridges dramatic contrast in humor.	Maintains comedic rhythm and marks a syntactic deviation from the standard flow.
<b>Parentheses ( )</b>	“GHAPLU: (laughing)” "PAWAH: (Whistling to see the bike)"	Non-verbal Indicator	Captures non-verbal cues to guide the reader on mood, tone, or emotion beyond words.	Adds multimodal realism to dialogues; enhances emotional and behavioral understanding.
<b>Brackets [ ]</b>	“[Ghaplu Sleeping and snoring]”	Visual/Scene Cue	Indicates scene description or off-dialogue action. Brackets set boundaries for non-speech elements.	Supports script-like formatting; facilitates visual imagination and NVivo coding of non-verbal actions.
<b>Exclamation Marks (!)</b>	“KHAROOS: Aray! These are those kids!” "PAWAH: Aai! Aai! Ammi ji!”	Expressive Intonation	Denotes heightened emotion—anger, excitement, fear, etc. Multiple	Amplifies emotional charge in child-directed media; performs an emphatic function.

Punctuation Type	Examples from Dialogue	NVivo Code (Theme)	Interpretation (Qualitative Insight)	Language/Function Impact
Quotation Marks (" ")	"DIRTOO: 'Ah! Spare me, you jesters!'"	Character Quotation	exclamations reflect exaggeration.	Conveys sarcasm, internal voice, or quoted speech; supports layered character interaction.
			Used to differentiate direct speech within dialogues—sometimes adds mock tone.	
Colons (:)	"KHAROOS: Catch the camera!" "KHARTOOS: Lights off!" "KHAROOS: Do your buffaloes have gone to their in-laws?"	Turn-Taking Marker	Marks character dialogue turns and speaker identification.	Clear structuring in scripting; is essential for NVivo speaker-node classification.
Question Marks (?)	"KHARTOOS: Which Revenge are you talking about?"	Rhetorical Strategy	Promotes humor or sarcasm; often rhetorical or exaggerated.	Engages audience cognitively; creates dialogue hooks through interaction.

- **Multimodality:** Punctuation aids the cartoon script in simulating real-life conversation, gestures, pauses, and dramatic cues.
- **Functionality in Child-Directed Media:** Frequent use of **ellipses**, **exclamation marks**, and **brackets** maintains entertainment, dramatization, and clarity for young audiences.
- **NVivo Node Suggestions:**
  - *Emotive Expression* (linked to exclamation, ellipses)
  - *Turn-taking & Interaction* (linked to colons, dashes)
  - *Scene Annotation* (linked to brackets, parentheses)
  - *Lexical Creativity* (linked to hyphens and contractions)

#### 4.4 Punctuation Effects on Language in Milkateer: Analysis by Instances

Instance #	Punctuation Type	Text Example	Text Interpretation	Qualitative Content Analysis	NVivo Coding
1	Parentheses	GHAPLU: (laughing)	Parentheses used for non-verbal expression (laughing) indicate an emotional or contextual tone outside the	The use of parentheses shows that laughter is not part of the speech but an additional reaction.	Emotional reaction, non-verbal expression

Instance #	Punctuation Type	Text Example	Text Interpretation	Qualitative Content Analysis	NVivo Coding
2	Hyphen	GHAROOS: "Oye! That's why I say, If you don't have a mustache, you don't have anything."	dialogue. The hyphen emphasizes the pause in thought or an abrupt transition, suggesting exasperation or emphasis.	The hyphen builds tension or frustration in speech.	Speech emphasis, abruptness
3	Dash	KHAROOS: "What a great thing. Give me a high five. Give your hand. Hahaha—"	The dash signals an interruption or a sudden shift in tone, possibly signaling excitement or an uncompleted thought.	The dash adds an abrupt emotional shift and informal tone.	Emotional shift, interruption
4	Ellipses	ZAIN: "Leave me, leave?"	Ellipses are used to show trailing off, uncertainty, or hesitation, indicating incomplete or emotional speech.	The ellipsis suggests Zain's emotional distress and disjointed speech.	Hesitation, emotional distress
5	Brackets	KHAROOS: (Silly laugh)	Brackets provide additional context or clarify the action or sound being made by the character, e.g., laughing.	Brackets enhance understanding of the character's tone or non-verbal action in the dialogue.	Non-verbal expression, clarification
6	Parentheses	ZAIN: "Five nasty gangsters against one poor Fizza, she was shivering with fear."	Parentheses are used to indicate that the character is providing extra information to further explain or describe a situation.	Parentheses provide context, emphasizing the vulnerability of Fizza in a tense situation.	Vulnerability, additional context
7	Hyphen	KHAROOS: "Hahaha! Money talks— Shehzady. Money talks."	The hyphen here separates an important clarification or emphasis, possibly	The use of hyphens indicates a change in focus or tone, with	Emphasis, focus shift

Instance #	Punctuation Type	Text Example	Text Interpretation	Qualitative Content Analysis	NVivo Coding
			to reflect a shift in focus.	emphasis on the phrase "Money talks."	
8	Dash	PAWAH: "No problem at all... Aai! Aai!"	Ellipses are used to convey trailing off or hesitation, while the dash signals a sudden shift in action or emotional climax.	The ellipsis conveys uncertainty or emotion, while the dash emphasizes a shift in action or speech.	Emotional intensity, action shift
9	Brackets	KHAROOS: (laughing) "You kicked me so hard."	Brackets again indicate non-verbal action (laughter) within a speech context, contributing to the humor.	Brackets reflect an emotional or physical response tied to the dialogue, contributing to humor.	Humor, non-verbal action
10	Ellipses	DADI: "Aray! Free! You don't even give for free to your real grandmother. What will you give me?"	The ellipsis reflects a trailing off of speech, indicating frustration or sarcasm.	The ellipsis emphasizes the sarcasm or exasperation in the grandmother's speech.	Sarcasm, frustration

#### 4.5 Key Observations

1. **Parentheses:** Commonly used to denote non-verbal actions like laughing, which adds an emotional layer to the dialogue. For instance, "(laughing)" in dialogue enhances the comedic tone.
2. **Hyphens:** Serve to emphasize abrupt pauses or shifts in thought. In some instances, they convey frustration, especially in emotional outbursts like "Oye! That's why I say..." or "What a great thing—".
3. **Dashes:** Used to indicate interruptions or sudden changes in speech flow, often enhancing the dynamic and fast-paced nature of the dialogue, particularly in comedic contexts.
4. **Ellipses:** They indicate unfinished thoughts, hesitation, or trailing off, which works well in emotionally charged situations where a character might be uncertain or overwhelmed, as seen in Zain's dialogue "Leave me, leave?"
5. **Brackets:** Provide additional context for non-verbal actions, helping to clarify the character's reactions (e.g., laughter) and enhancing the comic effect.

#### 4.6 Interpretation through NVivo Coding:

- **Emotional Expression:** Parentheses, dashes, and ellipses reflect shifts in emotion (laughter, hesitation, frustration).
- **Comedic Tone:** Brackets and punctuation contribute significantly to the humor,

showing non-verbal cues or emotional shifts.

- **Character Emphasis:** The use of punctuation marks like hyphens and dashes helps to focus on particular words or actions, giving greater importance to the speech or reaction.

This approach demonstrates how punctuation shapes dialogue in terms of emotional impact, pacing, and humor in the cartoon. NVivo's qualitative content analysis helps codify these emotional and tonal shifts to understand character behavior, tone, and social context in the animated series.

## 5. Conclusion

The research examines how punctuation marks affect meaning while bettering the communication quality of animated cartoon programs. A thorough analysis of parentheses, hyphens, dashes and brackets with ellipses allows readers to understand their role in enhancing character expressions and narrative humor while constructing plot structures. Results from the studies indicate that punctuation marks function as the main force behind achieving cartoon visual-textual synergy when communicating tone and rhythm. A detailed analysis of speech punctuation represents the intricate patterns that these punctuation elements (such as parentheses and hyphenated along with dashes, brackets and ellipses) use to modify spoken communication throughout the animated episodes of Safeguard and Milkateer. The punctuation role includes symbols that determine speech organization while they also evoke emotion and generate comedic effects. Characters' nonverbal gestures can be visible through parentheses because they show laughing actions and sighs which create emotional expressions. The punctuation marks ellipses indicate uncertain emotions in characters and hesitation but dashes with hyphens produce both dramatic pauses and comic expression to control dialogue flow. Brackets function to clarify bodily expressions and laughter which enhances the visual narrative of the cartoon. These linguistic pauses affect both the syntax and structure of speech when used during verbalization.

Today's young people find it easier to grasp sentence structure through such punctuation marks which also explain the meaning of text in its context. The connection between punctuation and dialogue provides extra depth to characterize the overall tone and personality of each person in the text. Punctuation in Safeguard and Milkateer appeal to young viewers due to its effective use. Cartoons specifically benefit children of young age because they provide instruction in speech patterns along with vocabulary which enhances their language abilities. Children better understand how dialogue works and emotion expression as well as comedy through punctuation which delivers balanced strong and funny tones. Young viewers learn complex language structures through the implementation of real-life conversational shifts and punctuation marks including dashes, hyphens and ellipses in cartoon dialogue. Cartoon characters with simple yet direct verbalization teach children to replicate their speech patterns as they wish to mimic the characters. The expressive language patterns deliver valuable impact on comedy-based learning but require equilibrium in their usage. When children heavily depend on punctuation they might develop incorrect speech abilities and informal verbal patterns. If a speaker uses this type of language they need to insert formal grammatical structures to solve syntactic and grammar mistakes. The skilled use of punctuation by Safeguard and Milkateer enables them to modify word perception both mentally and emotionally. Through their skillful use of punctuation the cartoons both entertain while supporting child language development which proves the necessity of combining formal and informal vocabulary when children learn language structures.

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