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 ³⁷ to be fightly correlated (Chappe et al. 2002, see also Blasko and Comme ³⁸ 1993). In addition, similarity between topic and vehicle concepts has been ³⁹ shown to play a crucial role in metaphor appreciation (Gentner and ⁴⁰ Humor 18–1 (2005), 23–39 ⁴⁰ 0933–1719/05/0018–0023 	36	to be highly correlated (Chiappe et al. 2002; see also Pleske and Copping
²³ shown to play a crucial role in metaphor appreciation (Gentner and <i>Humor</i> 18–1 (2005), 23–39 0933–1719/05/0018–0023	38	1993) In addition, similarity between topic and vehicle concents has been
Humor 18–1 (2005), 23–39 0933–1719/05/0018–0023	39	shown to play a crucial role in metaphor appreciation (Gentner and
Humor 18–1 (2005), 23–39 0933–1719/05/0018–0023	.,	shown to play a crucial role in metaphor appreciation (Oenther and
		Humor 18–1 (2005), 23–39 0933–1719/05/0018–0023

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Wolff 1997), provided their domains are distant (Tourangeau and Stern-1 berg 1981, 1982¹). Thus, the more relational properties (than attributes) 2 involved in the interpretation the more apt the figurative statement (Ai-3 senman 1999; Gentner and Clement 1988). Similarly, the more a com-4 parison captures important features of the topic the more apt the figure 5 in question (Blasko and Connine 1993; Chiappe and Kennedy 1999; 6 Chiappe and Kennedy 2001; Chiappe et al. 2003; Chiappe et al. 2002). 7 In this study, we look into irony aptness. Unlike metaphors and sim-8 iles, which rely on shared properties, irony highlights a difference or a contrast. Irony aptness should, therefore, be sensitive to the amount of 10 the disparity involved in its interpretation. Given that disparity tends to 11 be more difficult to process than similarity (Clark and Clark 1977) and 12 that perceiving the humor and deriving the stance is a complex process 13 (Giora 2003; Giora and Fein 1999; Giora et al. 1998; Schwoebel et al. 14 2000), irony aptness might also be sensitive to some complexity or sophis-15 tication. In this study, then, we test the hypotheses that both degree of 16 ironiness and sophistication might independently play a role in irony apt-17 ness. In the experiments we ran, the items were all in Hebrew and the 18 participants were all native speakers of Hebrew. 19 20 21 2. Irony aptness and degree of ironiness 22 23 On various accounts, irony may be viewed as a graded notion. For in-24 stance, the indirect negation view (Giora 1995), which assumes that irony 25 depends on some considerable difference between what is said and what 26 is referred to, the degree of this difference should determine degree of 27 ironiness. On the relevance theoretic account (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 28 1995), which assumes that irony involves echoing a norm, an opinion, or 29 an attributable thought, the degree of explicitness of that thought or opin-30 ion might be one of the factors determine degree of ironiness (Yus 2001). 31 32 33 2.1. Degree of ironiness: The indirect negation view 34 35 In previous studies, we showed that irony hinges on some significant dis-36 parity between what is said and what is referred to, while adhering to the 37 relevance requirement (Giora 1995; Giora and Fein 1999; Giora et al. 38 1998). Indeed, there is ample evidence that the greater the disparity the 39

more ironic the utterance (Giora et al. forthcoming; see also Colston and O'Brien 2000; Dukas 1998; Gerrig and Goldvarg 2000; Ivanko and Pex-2 man 2003). Assuming that irony is indeed an end-product of computing 3 some gap between what is said and what is referred to suggests that con-4 trolling the size of the gap should result in different degrees of ironiness, 5 with a wide gap affecting high ironiness. 6 In an earlier study of Hebrew ironies (Giora et al. forthcoming), we controlled for degree of contrast by keeping the context constant while 8 manipulating the strength of the ironic targets. We thus controlled for the difference between what is said and what is referred to by using 10 expressions that ranged between opposite ends of a scale (exception-11 ally bright-stupid). Our results, indeed, showed that a top of the scale 12 expression—an affirmative overstatement—(1a), which involves a wide 13 gap between what is said and what is criticized, was rated as most ironic. 14 A negated version of that overstatement, which, in fact, is a mitigated 15 version of it (1b), was also considered ironic, albeit to a lesser extent. As 16 anticipated, rather than eliminating the gap, the negation marker only 17 narrowed it, resulting in some observable ironicity (on negation as mitiga-18 tion see Giora et al. 2004). Less ironic than both was a statement that in-19 volves a negative non-overstated version of the affirmative overstatement 20 (1c). In contrast, some opposite of the affirmative (1d), which hardly in-21 volves any gap between what is said and what is referred to, was eval-22 uated as non-ironic. These results were replicated for other hedges as 23 well: 24 25 Although Max was working very hard preparing for his exams, he (1)26 failed them all. 27 a. Max is exceptionally bright. (Affirmative overstatement) 28 b. Max is not exceptionally bright. (Negated overstatement) 29 c. Max is not bright. (Negated non-overstatement) 30 Max is stupid. (Opposite of the affirmative) d. 31 These results have also been replicated for other languages such as 32 Russian and French (Chicheportiche and Rabits 2003). Thus, both 33 speakers of Hebrew, Russian, and French have exhibited sensitivity to de-34 gree of ironiness as a result of various degrees of differences between what 35 is said and what is referred to. 36 To test the hypothesis that irony aptness is sensitive to degree of iron-37 iness, which resides in some gap between what is said and what is referred 38 to, we designed Experiments 1A and 1B. In these experiments we aim to 39

show that items rated as highly ironic would also be rated as highly apt. 1 In contrast, low ironiness items would score low on the aptness scale. The 2 gradedness in ironiness assumed here has been established earlier as a 3 function of mitigation by means of either a negation marker (Experiment 4 1A) or a hedge such as looks like (Experiment 1B) (Giora et al. forthcom-5 ing; on negation as mitigation see Giora et al. 2004). 6 8 9 Experiment 1A: Aptness and degree of ironiness as a function of negation 10 11 Method 12 13 Participants. Forty-eight undergraduates of Tel Aviv University (22 14 women, 26 men), aged 21–26 (M = 23.95, SD = 1.32), served as volun-15 teer participants. 16 17 18 Materials. Materials were 18 contexts such as (1) followed by 3 target 19 sentences. Eighteen contexts made up the experimental items (1), each fol-20 lowed by one of 3 target sentences (1a-c); in all, 54 target sentences. In 21 addition, 16 contexts provided for filler items. Three booklets were pre-22 pared so that each student saw all the contexts but only one target of the 23 triplet, presented in a random order. 24 25 Procedure. Subjects read the passages and were asked to rate each tar-26 get on a 7 point aptness scale (in which 1 is not at all apt and 7 is highly 27 apt). 28 29 30 Results 31 32 As illustrated by the top row in Table 1, results obtained from subject 33 (F_s) and item (F_i) analyses support the hypothesis that aptness is sensitive 34 to degree of ironiness. A one-way ANOVA performed on aptness ratings 35 was found to be significant, $F_s(2, 94) = 63.39$, p < .0001, $F_i(2, 34) =$ 36 56.66, p < .0001, and a linear planned contrast [1, 0, -1] showed that 37 aptness ratings were graded according to the degree of ironiness, 38 $F_s(1,47) = 75.11, p < .0001, F_i(1,17) = 78.74, p < .0001.$ 39

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Experiment 1B: Aptness and degree of ironiness as a function of hedging
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    The aim of Experiment 1B was to show that irony aptness is sensitive to
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    degree of ironiness that is a function of narrowing the gap between what
5
    is said and what is referred to by means of a hedge such as looks like (on
6
    the mitigation function of looks like, see Caffi 2001: 450). The gradedness
    in ironiness tested here for aptness has also been established earlier (Giora
8
    et al. forthcoming).
10
11
    Method
12
13
    Participants. Forty-eight undergraduates of Tel Aviv University (21
14
    women, 27 men), aged 21–26 (M = 24.31, SD = 1.50), served as volun-
15
    teer participants.
16
17
    Materials. As in Experiment 1A, only this time the mitigator is not a
18
    negation marker but another hedge:
19
20
    (2) Although Max was working very hard preparing for his exams, he
21
         failed them all.
22
         a. Max is exceptionally bright. (Affirmative overstatement)
23
         b. Looks like Max is exceptionally bright. (Hedged overstatement)
24
         c. Looks like Max is bright. (Hedged non-overstatement)
25
26
    Procedure. As in Experiment 1A.
27
28
29
    Results
30
31
    As illustrated by the bottom row in Table 1, results obtained from subject
32
    (F<sub>s</sub>) and item (F<sub>i</sub>) analyses were very similar to the results of Experiment
33
    1A, thus lending further support to the claim that aptness is sensitive to
34
    degree of ironiness. A one-way ANOVA performed on aptness ratings
35
    was found to be significant, F_s(2, 94) = 22.56, p < .0001, F_i(2, 34) =
36
    30.20, p < .0001, and a linear planned contrast [1, 0, -1] showed that apt-
37
    ness ratings were graded according to the degree of ironiness, F_s(1, 47) =
38
    29.11, p < .0001, F_i(1, 17) = 70.90, p < .0001.
39
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Table 1.	Mean aptness	ratings as a	function of	f narrowing	the gap	between w	hat is	said	and
what is rej	ferred to SD in	parentheses							

3		Highly ironic	Mildly ironic	Less ironic
4 5	Negation marker Experiment 1A	Affirmative overstatement	Negated overstatement	Negated non-overstatement
6 7		4.60 1.41	2.78 0.95	2.40 0.93
8 9 10 11	Hedge — "looks like" Experiment 1B	Affirmative overstatement 5.65 1.26	Hedged overstatement 4.91 1.14	Hedged non-overstatement 4.38 1.44

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¹³ Discussion

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¹⁵ In Experiments 1A and 1B, we tested the hypothesis that aptness is ¹⁶ sensitive to degree of ironiness. In Experiment 1A, ironiness gradedness ¹⁷ was affected by the use of negation. In Experiments 1B, toning down ¹⁸ was achieved via the use of a hedge (*looks like*). Findings from both ex-¹⁹ periments show that irony aptness is sensitive to degree of ironiness: the ²⁰ more ironic a statement the more apt it is.

22 23

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3. Aptness, degree of ironiness, and sophistication

25 To further establish aptness sensitivity to ironiness, it is necessary to ex-26 amine other factors that might affect degree of ironiness. For instance, 27 within relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995), manipulating the explicitness of the source of the echo has been assumed to influence 28 29 degree of ironiness (Yus 2001). In what follows, we test the explicitness 30 hypothesis against the alternative that it is the accessibility of the source 31 of the echo that accounts for degree of ironiness (section 3.1). We further 32 propose to also consider the effect of sophistication on irony aptness (sec-33 tion 3.2).

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36 3.1. Degree of ironiness: The echoic mention view

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According to relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995), irony is a variety of an "echoic interpretive use in which the communicator

dissociates herself from the opinion echoed with accompanying ridicule or scorn" (Wilson and Sperber 1992: 75). Such a view predicts that an 2 ironic statement that echoes a thought or an opinion made explicit in pre-3 vious contexts would make up a better instance of irony than an alterna-4 tive that involves an implicit echo (Gibbs 1986). Thus, the ironic state-5 ment "This sure is an exciting life" should be comprehended more 6 speedily in the echoic story (3) than in the non-echoic version (4). In the 7 echoic version, it involves an allusion to a statement that is explicitly 8 mentioned in the previous discourse ("the Navy was not just a job, but an adventure"), which makes the echo explicit. In the non-echoic version 10 (4), the same ironic statement involves only an implicit echo, because it 11 does not refer to any explicitly mentioned remark (Gibbs 1986): 12 13 (3) Echoic story 14 Gus just graduated from high school and he didn't know what to do. 15 One day he saw an ad about the Navy. It said that the Navy was not 16 just a job, but an adventure. So Gus joined up. Soon he was aboard 17 a ship doing all sorts of boring things. One day as he was peeling po-18 tatoes he said to his buddy, 19 "This sure is an exciting life." 20 Non-echoic story (4)21 Gus just graduated from high school and he didn't know what to do. 22 So, Gus went out and joined the navy. Soon he was aboard a ship 23 doing all sorts of boring things. One day as he was peeling potatoes 24 he said to his buddy, 25 "This sure is an exciting life." 26 Indeed, findings in Gibbs (1986) showed that ironies with an explicit 27 echo were read faster than ironies with an implicit echo (see also Jorgen-28 sen et al. 1984). 29 In this study, we wish to examine degree of ironiness within the rele-30 vance theoretic framework. However, instead of positing a relation be-31 tween explicitness and ironiness, we propose to view statements as more 32 ironic to the extent that the source of their echo (the speaker is dissociat-33 ing herself from) is foremost on the comprehender's mind, regardless of 34 its explicitness (the accessibility hypothesis). The accessibility hypothesis 35 thus predicts that both explicit and implicit echoes of discourse elements 36 highly accessible to the comprehender would be rated as more ironic than 37 ironies involving an explicit echo of a low accessibility discourse element. 38 Specifically, because (5a) and (5b) refer to discourse elements that might 39

make up the next discourse topic and hence are of high accessibility 1 (Giora 1985, 1988; Ariel 1988), they will score higher on the ironicity 2 scale than ironies referring to less-accessible elements (such as 5c) that 3 do not make up a natural discourse progression, despite their explicit 4 mention in the previous discourse: 5 6 (5)John and Saul are home Friday night watching the Miss Universe 7 competition on TV. During the late stages of the competition, the 8 girls line up unimaginatively on the stage, and are asked for their 9 opinion on current events in international politics. Miss Venezuela, 10 Miss Cuba, and Miss USA give laconic, shallow, and plainly stupid 11 answers, which prompt John's remark: 12 "These girls are brilliant". (Explicit echo of a potential a. 13 discourse-topic) 14 b. "These girls are missing from the NASA Space Program". 15 (Implicit echo of a potential discourse-topic) 16 "Their line-up is the most imaginative thing on that stage". c. 17 (Explicit echo of a non-potential discourse-topic) 18 19 20 3.2. Sophistication 21 22 In addition to testing sensitivity of aptness to ironiness, we wish to ex-23 amine its sensitivity to sophistication. Given that irony is rather hard to 24 understand compared to literal and metaphoric counterparts (Colston 25 and Gibbs 2002; Giora and Fein 1999; Giora et al. 1998; Schwoebel et al. 26 2000; Pexman et al. 2000), we suspected that low comprehensibility might 27 play a role in the appreciation of irony. According to Raskin and Trie-28 zenberg (2003), elaborate comprehension processes involving a number 29 of inferential steps contribute to the appreciation of utterances as sophis-30 ticated. Low comprehensible ironic items might thus be considered apt on 31 account of their sophistication. 32 Which ironic items would be harder to understand? Ironies echoing 33 implicit or low accessibility information should involve more inferential 34 steps compared to explicit or high accessibility information, and would 35 therefore contribute to the sophistication of that utterance, and thus to 36 its aptness. Given the sophistication assumption, we expect both explicit-37 ness and accessibility to have a negative effect on sophistication, since 38 both decrease inferential steps. 39

Irony aptness 31 In Experiment 2, we set out to explore the effects of both ironicity and sophistication on irony appreciation. 2 3 4 Experiment 2: Aptness, degree of ironiness, and sophistication 5 6 To test aptness sensitive to ironiness that is a result of the accessibility of 7 the echo involved, we first had to establish degree of accessibility of the 8 echoes to be used in the experiment. On the assumption that accessible 9 discourse constituents would make up best next discourse topics or text 10 continuations (Ariel 1988, 1990; Giora 1985, 1988), we ran a pretest in 11 which we asked participants to rate the extent to which a given continua-12 tion (either 5a, 5b, or 5c) is coherent with its prior context. 13 14 PRETEST 15 16 Method 17 18 Participants. Twenty four students of Tel Aviv University (16 women, 8 19 men), aged 23-31 (M = 27.71, SD = 3.25), served as volunteer subjects. 20 21 Materials. Materials were made up of 16 contexts such as (5), ending in 22 either 5a, 5b, or 5c. 23 24 Procedure. Participants had to indicate their best, second best, and least 25 preferred choice (on a 1-3 fitting scale, where 1 indicates their best choice 26 and 3 indicates their least preferred choice). They thus had to decide 27 which of the three targets was the most coherent and contextually fitting 28 ending, which was the second best, and which was the least fitting ending. 29 30 31 Results and discussion 32 33 Results obtained from subject (but not from item) analysis confirmed 34 the assumed accessibility differences. They distinguish accessible from 35 less accessible candidates for next discourse-topics. A one-way ANOVA, 36 F(2,46) = 3.68, p < .05, and a significant planned contrast [-1, -1, 2], 37 F(1,23) = 7.88, p < .01 show that while the two targets, which either 38 implicitly (5a: M = 1.93, SD = 0.24) or explicitly (5b: M = 1.94, SD =39

0.25) revolve around accessible elements, did not differ from each other 1 (regardless of explicitness), they did differ significantly from targets not 2 assumed to be potentially next discourse-topics, despite their explicitness 3 (5c: M = 2.14, SD = 0.23). These findings establish hierarchy of echoes in 4 terms of the accessibility, rather than in terms of the explicitness of their 5 source. 6 Based on these findings, we now attempt to show that ironies involving 7 accessible echoes, whether explicit (5a) or implicit (5b), would be rated as 8 more ironic than ironies that involve less accessible though explicit echoes 9 (5c). 10 11 12 Method 13 14 Participants. Fifty three participants (31 women and 22 men, all but 4) 15 students of Tel Aviv University, aged 22-38 (M = 26.31, SD = 3.22), 16 served as volunteer subjects. 17 18 Materials. Materials were 16 contexts (5) each followed by one of three 19 target sentences (5a-c); in all, 48 targets. 20 21 Procedure. Participants were asked to rate the ironicity, sophistication, 22 and aptness of each target on three 7 point scales (where 1 was either not 23 ironic, not sophisticated, or not apt and 7 was either most ironic, most 24 sophisticated, or most apt). 25 26 27 Results and discussion 28 29 Results of 5 participants whose scores showed hardly any differentiation 30 and were very low (between 1-2) on all the scales were discarded from 31 the analysis. Below, we summarize the results obtained for each of the 32 variables: ironicity, sophistication, and aptness. 33 34 Ironicity 35 36 As shown in the top row of Table 2, results obtained from subject (F_s) 37 and item (F_i) analyses confirmed our hypothesis regarding ironicity. 38 A one-way ANOVA performed on ironicity ratings was found to be 39

	Explicit echoes of a potential discourse-topic 5a	Implicit echoes of a potential discourse-topic 5b	Explicit echoes of a non-potential discourse-topic 5c
Ironicity ratings	4.28	4.26	3.62
	1.25	1.08	1.10
Sophistication ratings	2.98	3.76	3.37
	0.96	1.09	1.15
Aptness ratings	3.52	3.78	3.41
	1.22	1.14	1.06

¹ Table 2. Mean ironicity, sophistication, and aptness ratings as a function of the accessibility the source of the echo SD in parentheses

11 12

significant, $F_s(2, 94) = 12.32$, p < .0001, $F_i(2, 30) = 5.33$, p < .05, and, 13 specifically, a planned contrast [1, 1, -2] show that, as anticipated, ironies 14 involving an accessible echo (5a,b) were significantly more ironic than 15 ironies involving a less accessible echo (5c), regardless of explicitness, 16 $F_s(1, 47) = 19.55$, p < .0001, $F_i(1, 15) = 9.19$, p < .01. These results sug-17 gest that it is the accessibility (in terms of a relation to a discourse-topic, 18 see Giora 1985) rather than the explicitness (Gibbs 1986; Yus 2001) of the 19 source of the echo that affects degree of ironiness. 20

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²² Sophistication

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As shown in the mid row of Table 2, results obtained from subject (F_s) 24 and item (F_i) analyses show that, as anticipated, sophistication is related 25 to implicitness. A one-way ANOVA performed on sophistication ratings 26 was found to be significant, $F_s(2, 94) = 13.59$, p < .0001, $F_i(2, 30) =$ 27 5.13, p < .05. Specifically, a planned linear contrast [1, 0, -1] showed 28 that, as anticipated, the implicit echoes (5b) were rated as more sophis-29 ticated than the explicit echoes of a non-potential discourse-topic (5c), 30 which, in turn, were more sophisticated than explicit echoes of a poten-31 tial discourse-topic (5a), $F_s(1, 47) = 34.52$, p < .0001, $F_i(1, 15) = 9.75$, 32 p < .01. In addition, results further support the accessibility hypothesis, 33 showing that items sharing explicitness but diverging in accessibility in-34 deed differed in terms of sophistication, with the less accessible items (5c) 35 scoring higher on the sophistication scale (3.37) than more accessible 36 items (5a) (2.98). Sophistication, then, is a matter of implicitness and low 37 accessibility, which should complicate comprehension processes, as envis-38 aged by Raskin and Triezenberg (2003). 39

(V7(M) 24/1/05 08:30) WDG/G J-1242 Humor, 18-1 PMU: WSL(W) 20/01/2005 Times_M (0).3.04.05 (148×225mm) pp. 23-40 002_P (p. 33)

1 Aptness

2 Results show that both accessibility and sophistication affected irony apt-3 ness (bottom row of Table 2). A one-way ANOVA performed on aptness 4 ratings was found to be significant in the subject analysis, $F_s(2,94) =$ 5 3.73, p < .05; F_i(2, 30) = 1.00, p = .38. Specifically, items that were both 6 ironic and sophisticated (i.e., implicit echoes of a potential discourse-7 topic, 5b) were rated more apt than items that were low in either ironiness 8 (5c) or sophistication (5a). This pattern of results was confirmed by a 9 planned contrast [-1, 2, -1], $F_s(1, 47) = 8.32$, p < .01, $F_i(1, 15) = 1.48$, 10 p = .24. In addition, correlation tests revealed that irony aptness is corre-11 lated with both sophistication and ironicity. 12 Consistent with the findings in Experiments 1A and 1B, the correlation 13 between ironicity and aptness (with regard to items) was high and signifi-14 cant (0.56, p < .001). Similarly, the correlation between sophistication 15 and aptness was also high and significant (0.58, p < .001). Regardless, 16 the correlation between ironiness and sophistication was neither strong 17 nor significant (0.25, p = .09). 18 As in Experiments 1A and 1B, Experiment 2, then, supports that claim 19 that irony aptness is related to ironiness, but this time as a function of the 20 accessibility of the echo rather than as a function of the size of the gap 21 between what is said and what is referred to. In addition, it also shows 22 that, regardless, irony aptness is also related to sophistication. Though, 23 in and of themselves, sophistication and ironiness are differentiated and 24 unrelated factors, they each affect irony aptness ratings independently.² 25

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4. General discussion

In this paper, we investigated the notion of irony aptness. We tested the
 hypothesis that both ironicity and sophistication should induce irony
 appreciation.

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- 34

35 Ironicity

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To examine the relation of ironicity and aptness, we looked into the notion of degree of ironicity in the framework of two theories of irony—the

tion of degree of ironicity in the framework of two theories of irony — the *indirect negation view* (Giora 1995; Giora et al. 1998) and *relevance theory*

(Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995). Though these theories have different
predictions as to which factors should affect irony gradedness, irony aptness should be sensitive to degree of ironicity, regardless of the type of
irony.

In Experiments 1A and 1B, we tested the implications of the indirect negation view according to which irony hinges on some significant gap between what is said and what is referred to. Degree of ironiness was achieved via mitigation markers—a negation and a hedge (see Giora et al. 2004; Giora et al. forthcoming). Indeed, as anticipated, results showed that ironies exhibiting a large gap between what is said and the situation referred to were rated as more ironic than ironies exhibiting a smaller gap.

In Experiment 2, we tested ironiness in terms of relevance theory 12 (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber 1992). According 13 to this view, irony involves echoing a norm, an opinion, or a thought 14 with an accompanying ridicule or scorn. Such a view might predict that 15 ironies whose source of echo is made explicit in the immediate context 16 would make up a better instance of irony than those whose source is im-17 plicit (Gibbs 1986; Yus 2001). Alternatively, it might be more plausible to 18 come up with a more general assumption according to which, regardless 19 of explicitness, ironies whose source of echo is accessible would make up 20 a better instance of irony than those whose source is of low accessibility, 21 and hence more difficult to retrieve. The notion of accessibility we pro-22 pose is that of a relation to a discourse-topic (Giora 1985; see also Ariel 23 1990). Giora (1988) showed that discourse items enjoying high accessibil-24 ity as a result of primacy and recency effects due to their serial discourse 25 position (whether initial or final) make up a better candidate for the next 26 discourse-topic. We therefore predicted that ironies scoring high on the 27 accessibility scale in terms of their superiority as the next discourse seg-28 ment will also score high on the ironicity scale. And if aptness is indeed 29 sensitive to degree of ironiness, items high on ironicity due to the accessi-30 bility of the source of the echo will score high on the aptness scale. 31

Our findings indeed show that where the source of the echo is acces-32 sible, items score higher on the ironicity scale than when that source is 33 less accessible, regardless of the explicitness of the source. These findings 34 contest earlier findings suggesting that it is the explicitness of the source 35 of the echo that makes its retrieval easier (Gibbs 1986; Jorgensen et al. 36 1984).³ Instead, our findings suggest that while ironiness is indifferent to 37 the explicit/implicit distinction, it is sensitive to the degree of accessibility 38 of the source of the echo. 39

Having established degree of ironiness as a function of the accessibility
of the source, we further show that ironiness and aptness ratings are
highly correlated. Aptness, then, is sensitive to ironiness, regardless of
the type of irony.

5 6

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7 Sophistication

In addition to testing aptness sensitivity to irony gradedness, we have also 9 tested its sensitivity to sophistication. Given Raskin and Triezenberg's 10 (2003) view of sophistication as related to low comprehensibility, we 11 show that factors related to low comprehensibility such as low acces-12 sibility and implicitness (on how implicitness slows down processing, see 13 Gibbs 1986) play a significant role in sophistication ratings. Indeed, items 14 involving an implicit echo were rated as highly sophisticated and highly 15 apt. Irony aptness, then, is sensitive to sophistication. 16

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Notes

19 *Irony aptness*

In all, findings in this study support our hypothesis that irony aptness is 21 sensitive to both ironiness and sophistication. Degree of ironiness affects 22 aptness, regardless of the type of irony. In addition, sophistication, which, 23 among other things, is related to low comprehensibility (Raskin and Trie-24 zenberg 2003), also influences aptness ratings. Though these factors play 25 a role in shaping irony appreciation, they are not correlated, contributing 26 to irony aptness independently. (For replication of our results with partic-27 ipants assumed to be highly sophisticated, such as copy-writers and grad 28 students of literature, see Rubanenko 2004). 29

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 Specifically, "within-domain distance relates negatively to aptness and ... betweendomain distance relates positively to aptness. The first half of the prediction receives fairly consistent support ... the second half of our basic predictions receives less consistent support" (Tourangeau and Sternberg 1981: 50).

One could argue, though, that our results might be influenced by register. To preclude 2. this possibility, we collected register ratings from 14 Linguistics students of Tel Aviv 2 University (9 women, 6 men), aged 19-30 (M = 25.07, SD = 2.81), who are familiar 3 with the notion of 'register'. Results showed that the correlation between register and all the other findings (of aptness, sophistication, ironiness) was neither significant nor 4 strong, reducing the possibility that register might have affected our results. 5 3. The difference between our findings and Gibbs' might be a result of two different no-6 tions of implicitness. While for Gibbs, it is the source of the echo that is implicit, for 7 us, it is the reference to it that is implicit. In addition, Gibbs showed processing differences. Here we only talk of ironiness grading. 8 9 10 11 References 12 13 Aisenman, R. 14 1999 Structure-mapping and the simile metaphor preference. Metaphor and 15 Symbol 14, 45-51. Ariel, M. 16 1988 Referring and accessibility. Journal of Linguistics 24, 65-87. 17 1990 Accessing Noun Phrase Antecedents. London: Routledge. 18 Blasko, G. D., and C. Connine 1993 Effects of familiarity and aptness on metaphor processing. Journal of Exper-19 imental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition 19, 295-308. 20 Caffi, C. 21 2001 La mitigazione. Un approccio pragmatico alla comunicazione nei contesti 22 terapeutici. Münster: Lit. Chicheportiche, S., and R. Rabits 23 Negation as mitigation: The case of Russian and French. Unpublished Ms., 2003 24 Tel Aviv University. 25 Chiappe, D. L., and J. M. Kennedy 1999 Aptness predicts preference for metaphors or similes, as well as recall bias. 26 Psychonomic Bulletin and Review 6, 668-676. 27 2001 Literal bases for metaphor and simile. Metaphor and Symbol 16, 249-276. 28 Chiappe, D. L., J. M. Kennedy, and P. Chiappe 2003 Aptness is more important than comprehensibility in predicting recognition 29 bias and preference for metaphors and similes. Poetics 31, 51-68. 30 Chiappe, D., J. M. Kennedy, and T. Smykowski 31 2002 Reversibility, aptness, and the conventionality of metaphors and similes. 32 Metaphor and Symbol 18, 85-105. Clark, H. H., and E. V. Clark 33 1977 Psychology of Language: An Introduction to Psycholinguistics. New York: 34 Harcourt Brace. 35 Colston, H. L., and R. W. Jr. Gibbs 2002 Are irony and metaphor understood differently? Metaphor and Symbol 17, 36 57-80. 37 Colston, H. L., and J. O'Brien 38 2000 Contrast and pragmatics in figurative language: Anything understatement can do, irony can do better. Journal of Pragmatics 32, 1557-1583. 39

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