

## Setting:

This is a video from “The Late Late Show”, which is a tv programme hosted by James Corden (who is the man that appears on the video). Lots of celebrities go to “The Late Late Show” every week. They play games with James and they also chat with him a little about their lives. In this opportunity the celebrities invited are Mila Kunis and Christina Applegate. During the interview James asks Mila about her “love story” with her husband ( Ashton Kutcher). As it’s well known they were both on a TV programme called “ That 70’s show” when they were really young, but back then they were just friends.

## Activity: After watching the video, answer the following questions

1. Why does James talk about a “friend zone”?
2. How does he describe “the zone” Mila and Ashton are now? Which word does he use?
3. How did Mila and Ashton use to stay in touch before becoming a couple?
4. Where did Mila meet Ashton some years later?
5. What happened to her when she saw him there?
6. Why does Mila say it was all “meant to be”?

## Transcription:

JC: P əʊ jeə/P sʌmwʌnz əbaʊt tə get pʌŋkt

MK: R kaɪnd əv/ P jes/ R səʊ bɪfɔːr ðə pʌŋkɪŋ hæpnd/ R aɪ faʊnd aʊt leɪtər/P ɪn laɪf/R ðæt maɪ hʌzbənd/ P wəz traɪnɪŋ tə set mi ʌp /P ɒn ə blaɪnd deɪt /P wɪð wʌn əv hɪz best frendz ðæt naɪt/ P səʊ hiː wəz laɪk kʌm əʊvər/ R+ ən hi hæd ə frend ðæt hi wɑːntɪd tə set mi ʌp wɪð/P ən ðæt dɪdnt hæpn/

JC: P ən huː wəz ðə frend

MK: P ɔːl aɪ dɪd nəʊ / P wəz ðə frend əd biːn deɪtɪŋ sʌmwʌn/ P maɪ hʌsbənd went ɒn ə deɪt wɪð leɪtər/ P ɪts ɔːl veri tuː ment tə bi/ P ɪts ɔːl gʊd

JC: P ɪt ɪz ment tə bi/ P aɪ ʌv ðɪs/ P aɪ ʌv ɪt/ P ɪts bjuːtɪfəl

## ACCOUNTING FOR OUR CHOICES:

/R kɑnd əv/:

Tone: We believe that Mila is creating togetherness by choosing an R tone. She is positioning herself within the area of convergence. She is sharing her story with them and in a way letting them be “part of it”. She doesn’t take James’ joke in a bad way. She could have gotten offended by the comment and she could have created some distance by choosing a P tone, but she didn’t.

Prominence: This is a case of existential synonymy. We believe there’s no sense selection. She could have said “sort of”, “maybe” “something like that” and it wouldn’t have changed the meaning of the message. All the expressions are equally available. We believe it is just a matter of what the speaker prefers to say or maybe even register.

/R ðæt maɪ hʌzbənd/:

Tone: We believe he chooses an R tone because her husband and their story is what is already in play in the conversation. She is not mentioning a new participant or someone who hadn’t been mentioned before. All of the interlocutors in this conversation know that she is married and who her husband is. Mila is positioning herself on behalf of the speaker “I”.

Prominence: We believe “my” is not made prominent because it’s already in play. She is telling her story so we know she is talking about her. In the case of “husband” we think this may be a case of existential synonymy because she could have said; “Ashton”, “My love”, etc and she would have been referring to the same person. It would have been just a matter of preference rather than a matter of sense selection. We believe she chooses “husband” just to emphasize the idea that the one who is now her husband and father of her children, wanted to set her up on a date with someone else.

/P ɒn ə blaɪnd deɪt /:

Tone: We think Mila is positioning herself on behalf of the speaker “I”. She is telling them a part of the story that they don’t know yet (haven’t heard before). She is the one holding the information.

Prominence: We think this is a case of syntagmatic organization. The concept of “blind dates” is shared by almost everyone. There’s no need to

highlight both of them. There's no paradigm for "blind" since there's no such a thing as a "deaf date" or a "mute date".

/ R+ ən hi hæd ə frɛnd ðət hi wɑ:ntɪd tə set mi ʌp wɪð/:

Tone: we think this is a case of "Discourse Control 1". She has something else to say and she doesn't want to be interrupted. We also believe that the quality of R tones is present. The date-with-a-friend situation is already implied, it's what they have been talking about before. So all parties in the conversation are aware of it (it's shared)

Prominence: We believe that by making "friend" prominent Mila is exploiting the system because it has already been made prominent. Again, the whole thing about her dating a friend of Ashton is already in play and she is presenting it as something "new". It's like she is paraphrasing what she had said before. In the case of "up", we think this is a case of syntagmatic organization. "Set (someone) up" is a phrasal verb so there's no other option to choose from the paradigm for "up". There's no need to make both words prominent.

P its ɔ:l gʊd:

Tone: She is giving her point of view, which hasn't been implied in the conversation yet. She is telling them how she feels about their "love story" ( something that James and the other guest don't necessarily know)

Prominence: We believe that making "all" prominent is a case of exploitation of the system. "All" has been made prominent before. We believe that she is just emphasizing her idea. In the case of "good", we think there's sense selection. Mila is choosing from the existential paradigm. She could have choose to say " perfect, "great", amazing", "wonderful" and it would have change the meaning of the message. They do not integrate a group of equally available words, each of them expresses a different degree of "good".

P it ɪz ment tə bi/ :

Tone: James is expressing his opinion which is something he hasn't done yet. Mila and the other guest don't know how he feels about the whole story.

Prominence: By making "is" prominent, we believe James is emphasizing Mila's idea that it was all meant to be. He is in a way "agreeing" with her . He could have said "it isn't"( choosing from the general paradigm) to express a different opinion.

P ai lav it/ :

Tone: Again James is expressing himself, telling them his opinion. But he had already done that and he had said exactly the same “phrase” so we think is a case of exploitation of the system. His opinion is already in play and it’s something shared by all of them.

Prominence: We believe that by making “love” prominent again James is exploiting the system to show Mila how happy he is for them and how lovely the whole story is to him. The choice of not making “it” prominent has to do with the fact that the reference for “it” is pretty clear (it refers to the whole “love story”)