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The portrait of humorous social interaction in "Kontrakan Rempong" sitcom

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Abstract

The research aims to investigate the humorous social interactions semantically in Kontrakan Rempong sitcom by applying the three significant groups of humor concepts (superiority, relief, and incongruity), denoted as parameters of SSTH theory. The qualitative method was applied to represent and construct the variation in a situation, phenomenon, problem, or event. From the 20 episodes of Kontrakan Rempong sitcom, it was found that the actors normally uttered impoliteness superiority remarks to raise conflict, establish a target limit, and announce and support status. People can achieve self-reflexive pleasure in observing others' inferiority. From the relief-based humor analysis in Kontrakan Rempong sitcom, the taboo-breaking moments were even more influential in regenerating something stressful into something cheerful. It is a strategy for coming to terms with misfortunate aspects of life. From the incongruity-based humor analysis, it can be concluded that the events were perceived as incongruous since the arrangement of the constituent elements of the events was incompatible with the normal or expected ones. In Kontrakan Rempong, the context is important to bring laughter since it appears as a result of the reader's understanding of the context.

Keywords: Kontrakan Rempong, incongruity, relief, social interaction, SSTH, superiority



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Public Interest Statement

The study examines humorous social interactions in *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom using SSTH theory parameters. It found that actors often use impolite superiority remarks to raise conflict, establish a target limit, and announce status. People can experience self-reflexive pleasure by observing others' inferiority, highlighting the importance of understanding humor in social situations.

Introduction

Nowadays, social media facilitate people to find information and entertainment. Individuals and organizations can post information on various topics through social media platforms. News updates, educational content, research results, and expert opinions can be distributed to a broad audience. People can follow accounts and pages that match their interests, and they can stay abreast of the latest developments. One of the most popular social media is YouTube. There are many entertaining videos on YouTube, including music videos, comedy skits, short films, vlogs, video games, etc. Due to the variety of channels that appeal to different interests and genres, there is always something for everyone to enjoy. Comedy content is usually content that is quite sought. Content creators can freely express and be creative on this platform without binding rules, influencing on the social and culture of cyberspace.

'*Warintil*', as a channel on YouTube, has quite well-known content on social networking platforms entitled "*Kontrakan Rempong*." It is considered one of Indonesia's most representative and influential works. It offers relatable and funny situations that resonate with many people. The characters in the content come from all walks of life and ethnicities, reflecting the diversity of the Indonesian population. Due to its popularity on YouTube and social media, it has gained a large following. This content is a situational comedy series created by six creators from Medan, one of the most populated cities in Indonesia, which now have more than 1 million subscribers. They have achieved great popularity among audiences of all ages not only because of incorporating the daily life culture of the women in the suburbs of Medan and trending social topics into the storyline, but more importantly because it has a massive appeal to YouTube audiences by adding funny scenes in various demographics group of age. More specifically, the language used in this content reflects the general characteristics of the language used by the people of the suburbs of Medan in their daily interactions. In addition, the language used also emphasizes rude humor and incorporates these characteristics into the wider context of the social and cultural background of the low-education community of Medan. Therefore, "*Kontrakan Rempong*" sitcom can be considered an ideal source for researching the humorous interactions of the economic and low-education community conversations in Medan, which has not been studied so far.

Most English academic humor literature is beyond the scope of this study. Specific areas related to humor in people's daily interactions, including conversations between friends (Coates, 2007; Lampert & Ervin-Tripp, 2006); family conversations (Tannen, 2007); and interactions in the workplace (Holmes, 2006; Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Schnurr, 2008) are the examples. This study explores the mechanism of humor, the semantic and pragmatic analysis of humor, and the function of humor in social conversation. In addition, the literature also provides a solid theoretical and analytical basis for exploring humor in sitcom discourse.

Compared to the natural development of research on conversational humor in recent years, research on humor in sitcom discourse is seen as inadequate (Dynel, 2015). Researchers of sitcom discourse argue that conversations in this fictional world are imitations and reflections of people's daily interactions in the real world. They also argue that sitcom discourse reflects the ongoing social, cultural, and economic changes (Dynel, 2011b; Gray, 2005). In other words, research in sitcom discourse language implies and reflects authentic social norms, values, behaviors, and actions. Herman (2005) stated that how people

organize their social, cultural, and interpersonal problems in the real world creates the basis of our understanding of the speech and actions of fictional characters in sitcom discourse.

Despite the importance of the relationship between the world of real interaction and the world of sitcoms, it needs to be emphasized that the language of sitcom discourse is much more complex than the language used in natural conversation. It is because, in sitcom discourse, the nature of the conversation is very artificial or constructed and aggressive. So, the language of sitcoms, including conversational humor, shows its own characteristics. This scientific matter has not yet been researched. Several previous studies have found about the form of humor in sitcom discourse (Brock, 2016; Babel & Spitz, 2006; Dynel, 2011a, 2011b), the purpose of humor in sitcom discourse (Messerli, 2016), and the methodology of humor in sitcom discourse (Dynel, 2011b). However, many unsolved problems still entail being investigated.

In short, the most prominent study of humor that has never been studied is to investigate humorous social interactions semantically. It can be argued that research on humor in sitcom discourse will face far more difficulties than research in natural conversation. In comparison, some recent research on humor in sitcom discourse has addressed several issues, such as the identification of humor (Brock, 2016) and the purpose of humor in sitcom discourse (Dynel, 2015; Messerli, 2016).

Recognizing the potential risks and limitations of defining humor from a personal perspective, researchers tend to define it by looking at the speaker's intentions and the listener's interpretation. For example, Holmes (2000) defines humor as "an utterance intended by the speaker to entertain and which at least some participants find amusing." However, Mullany (2004) points out that Holmes's definition is not comprehensive enough because it does not include examples of accidental and failed humor. Therefore, he broadens Holmes's definition of humor by viewing humor as one of the most comprehensive (includes almost all examples) examples of humor in natural conversation and not only the prototype form of the expected humor but also humor that occurs by accident and failed humor which is an unexplored but important phenomenon in humor interactions. However, while Mullany's definition is clear and comprehensive, it only covers the case of humor in natural conversation and cannot fully describe the picture of humor in sitcom discourse. Therefore, humor in natural conversation cannot be directly used in discussing humor in sitcom discourse, so a definition of humor in sitcom is needed. This study intends to fill this gap.

The current study investigates each instance of conversational humor identified by applying the humor theory "Script-Based Semantic Theory of Humor" (SSTH). Three significant groups of humor concepts (superiority, relief, and incongruity of humor) are applied based on the different aspects of humor denoted as parameters of SSTH theory. The proposed theory aims to investigate the humorous social interactions in *Kontrakan Rempong* rather than the psychological or other reasons for its production.

Literature review

So far, many studies have been conducted to explore humor from various perspectives (sociolinguistics, interactional pragmatics, psychology, anthropology, cultural studies, and history). However, researchers still view humor in linguistic research as a very complex and unexplored area of research, especially regarding humor in languages other than English and genres other than natural conversation. This study intends to review the study of humor that concentrates on humor in linguistic research. The main focus of this research is the ideas and theories about humor that are most relevant in dealing with the problems in this research.

Although most influential studies on humor are carried out by Western researchers who mainly

focus on spoken and written data in English discourse, many definitions, functions, and theories of humor have universal value in humor research across different linguistic backgrounds (Morreall, 2009).

2.1. Defenition of Humor

Humor, as a broad and complex term, has been defined by researchers from different perspectives, and no universal definition of humor has been reached. In a broad sense, humor can be roughly categorized into non-verbal and verbal humor. Non-verbal humor arises from scenes or body language (Dyner, 2009), and verbal humor is produced mainly through language or text (Attardo, 1994; Norrick, 2003; Raskin, 1984). Thereby, the three significant groups of humor concepts (superiority, relief, and incongruity of humor) on the basis of SSTH and the researchers' definitions will be portrayed.

2.1.1 Superiority-based Humor

Attardo (1994) quoted that the concept of superiority (superiority theory) was first put forward by Hobbes in 1951. Here it is said that the humorous aspect of laughter arises from "sudden glory" because of self-esteem. Superiors are enhanced when belittling subordinates. The superiority concept argues that aggression is an essential feature of humor. Therefore, the theory of superiority is also called the theory of humiliation, degradation, and aggression. This theory is fully supported by Gruner (2000), who explains that much humor can be described as aggressive and hostile and shows the speaker's superiority over the target humor. However, for the most part, this involves playful aggression, designed as a form of play and not intended to cause real harm (Gruner, 2000).

Although the superiority concept can explain why interlocutors may experience humor from aggressive and hostile comments, it is still receiving criticism for its overly negative portrayal of humor and difficulties in determining the speaker's original intentions, namely cheerful or sincere aggression (Dyner, 2013; Martin, 2018). In addition, some researchers argue that friendly, innocent, and non-hostile senses of humor, such as puns and riddles, where humor arises only from the form of humor (i.e., wording and inappropriate content) (Martin, 2018; Morreall, 2009). Responding to the controversial view that all humor is aggressive, Gruner (2000) asserts that humor does not only come from incongruity, but a lot of humor also involves a game of win and lose, and there is a sense of superiority of the speaker over the target of humor so that the goal becomes inconsistent aligned.

Despite the debate over these ideas, researchers who research humor in television discourse recognize that the theory of superiority is beneficial in explaining why screen viewers can derive additional entertainment from the experiences or weaknesses of sad actors (Dyner, 2013). In televised discourse, audiences are freed to laugh at the stupidity and failure of the cast, thus enabling them to feel superior to the cast in a fictional world that is free from moral burdens (Culpeper, 2005). Therefore, superiority theory is able to offer essential insights into the analysis of humor in sitcom discourse, especially in explaining how aggressive humor among actors is a primary source of entertainment for audiences.

2.1.2 Release/Relief-based Humor

The relief concept is a psychoanalytically oriented theory, which is fully supported by Freud (1960(1905)), confirming that "humor/laughter is the release of repressed energy from inhibitions, conventions and laws" (Attardo, 1994). The relief theory is also known as the liberation theory (Attardo, 1994). Some researchers, such as Mindess (2011 (1971)), argues that humor is a vehicle to overcome the demands that bind as humans, obeying the rules and carrying out people's social role while simultaneously defending themselves in an authentic and real way. Humor allows people to gain a sense of freedom, mastery, and self-worth by temporarily escaping the social constraints of human life.

Freud (1960(1905)) also argues that humor is also recognized as a defense mechanism to release people from painful emotions associated with dire circumstances (Martin, 2018). The relief theory provides theoretical support for humor researchers to explore various functions of humor interpersonally, socially, and especially psychologically oriented functions to release tension/stress and overcome shame, etc.

Superiority and relief concepts pay special attention to humor's interpersonal and social aspects. Researchers who focus on the interpersonal aspects of humor define humor by focusing on the speaker's intention, the listener's interpretation, or both. For example, Hay (2000) defines humor as "anything the speaker wants to find funny" by prioritizing the speaker's intent to entertain. However, some scholars argue that focusing on the speaker's intent in defining humor can complicate matters because, in some cases, the speaker's intent cannot always be determined. Instead, they highlight the importance of listener responses in defining humor (Martin, 2018). A cogent definition of humor in this regard is presented by Duncan & Feisal (1989), viewing humor as a humorous expression that makes the audience laugh. However, this argument has been criticized for ignoring the complex relationship between humor and laughter. Laughter should not be seen as the only response to humor. Listeners can respond in different ways to show their appreciation, such as playing with the humorist or responding to the humorist's humor (Hay, 2001).

Several linguists have attempted to develop a holistic linguistic humor theory to broaden the scope of humor theory. The most influential works in this regard are the SSTH (Semantic Script Theory of Humor) (Raskin, 1984) and GTVH (General Theory of Verbal Humor) (Attardo, 1994). Both of these theories, especially GTVH, have been recognized for their theoretical value in the study of humor linguistics and have been widely applied to humor research in various forms other than humor and in various discourses outside of laboratory-based interactions.

Raskin's SSTH theory is built on the concept of 'scripts'. As discussed earlier, the script refers to "highly complex as well as distinctive information, such as established routines and general ways of doing things and performing activities" (Raskin, 1984). The core idea in Raskin's SSTH theory is that every jokes are fully or partially compatible with (at least) two incompatible and contradictory scripts. It has been recognized that Raskin's SSTH theory has clarity compared to other humor incongruence theories and was the first linguistic humor theory to apply semantic analysis to verbal jokes, yet, the theory is incomplete (Attardo, 2017).

The shortcomings of the SSTH theory lie in the following aspects; firstly, unable to compare or distinguish the similarities and differences between different joke texts. Secondly, the speaker's competence in conveying the joke determines whether the text is funny; the listener does not take the joke personally. Thirdly, SSTH theory only discusses the most uncomplicated form of humorous text (short narrative jokes) and cannot analyze various forms of humor appearing in different contexts (Attardo, 1994). In short, SSTH theory focuses on the semantic mechanism of joke texts with a superficial investigation of how social and interpersonal factors influence humor negotiations.

2.1.3 Incongruity-based Humor

From the 1960s to the 1970s, the superiority theory and relief concept gained tremendous momentum, but the leading role of these theories has been largely replaced by the incongruity concept, which is now seen as the dominant concept in humor linguistic research. Inconsistency theory can initially be traced back to the time of Aristotle but was not continued and developed systematically until the 1960s. The incongruity concept (Raskin, 1984) pays special attention to humor's linguistic and cognitive aspects, which exhibit a very different focus from superiority and relief tconcepts, as these concepts concentrate on humor's social, interpersonal and emotional aspects. It suggests that humor arises from the perception

of a discrepancy between expectations and what has been felt (Attardo, 2008).

It defines humor as a text containing incongruity elements that violate listeners' expectations (Archakis & Tsakona, 2005; Miczo et al., 2009). It is worth mentioning that there was no systematic attempt to produce a clear definition of humorous texts in previous humor research. Instead, the researchers paid special attention to exploring the characteristics of humorous texts. For example, Raskin (1984) argues that humor incongruity is a major element of humorous texts. He argues that humorous texts that can be identified as humorous are usually compatible with (at least) two scripts, which are usually opposite (Raskin, 1984). The script is the basic idea of Raskin's theory, as he emphasizes that a text contains information directly related and evoked by certain lexical terms (Raskin, 1984). For example, a restaurant script might presuppose other scripts, such as driving to a restaurant, being seated, ordering food, etc. Most researchers in humor linguistics argue that scripts exhibit a broad complexity of "typical information, such as established routines and general ways of doing things and performing activities" (Attardo, 1994). Two compatible but incompatible scripts that appear in a speaker's joke violate the listener's expectations and thus have a humorous effect (Raskin, 1984).

METHODS

This study deploys a qualitative method to portray and establish the variation in a situation, phenomenon, problem, or event. In other words, qualitative research is a process of research and understanding based on a methodology that investigates a social phenomenon in which the researcher carefully investigates an event, activity, process, or group of individuals. The qualitative research approach emphasizes the socially constructed nature of reality and the close relationship between the researcher and the subject studied (Creswell: 2014).

In this case, this study tries to analyze 20 justified episodes of "*Kontrakan Rempong*" sitcom. In order to gain a deep understanding of the humorous interactions in the sitcom, observing, transcribing, screen-shooting the sitcom, then reading the data were employed as data collection techniques. Data analysis techniques in this study were systematically deployed by looking at notes, copying statuses that contain humor or invite laughter, and transcribing the data in an analysis worksheet. Data analysis based on superiority, relief, and incongruity concepts is applied based on different aspects of humor denoted as parameters of the SSTH theory. After analyzing the data, then the data is grouped according to the categories.

Results and Discussion

In this section, the analysis is divided into three (superiority-based, release/relief-based, and incongruity-based of humor analysis).

Superiority-based Humor Analysis

Superiority-based humor analysis is concerned with the social aspects of humor. From the 20 episodes of "*Kontrakan Rempong*" sitcom, there are 440 (41,6%) utterances that are under the superiority theory model, where laughter arises from joy because they feel superior to others or that humor is a social correction that corrects deviant behavior (Attardo, 1994).

As stated earlier, the superiority concept of aggression is an essential feature of humor. Therefore, the concept of superiority is also called the concept of humiliation, degradation, and hostility. Gruner (2000) explained that numerous humor could be described as aggressive and hostile, demonstrating the speaker's superiority over the humor's target. For the most part, however, this involves playful aggression, designed as a form of play and not intended to inflict real harm (Gruner, 2000). There are

many instances in *Kontrakan Rempong* in which the actors employ jokes that neatly fit the superiority-based of humor theory. It can be seen in the following example in which Nining involves mocking of Tatik;

- (1) Nining : *Hih, kelen rupanya gak tau, si Tatik emang jorok. Gak kelen tengok kok perhatikan dia masak? Sayurnya gak dicuci, dah gitu kelen tengok bulu ketiaknya itu jatuh-jatuh loh ke sayuran it?*
(Don't you all know that Tatik is a sloppy woman? Why didn't you take a look at her when she was cooking? Everything is not washed, and can you see her underarm hair falling into the meal?)
(episode 51 scene 4)

In this scene, Nining explained how Tatik prepared the meal for the customers. She mocks Tatik and involves a joke about Tatik's underarm hair that falls to the meal. That the largest part of the scorn is reserved for other players who are in that gossiping time shows how comedy can function to align an audience in their beliefs, whose behavior and appearance are understood to be inferior in some way. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of one player's performance involves mockery of herself. It is when Mumu makes a joke about preferring ironing her hair herself than paying an expensive fee to Tatik in rebonding Mumu's hair. It can be seen in the following example;

- (2) Tatik : *Ya kalo aku sih ngasih-ngasih aja, tapi adminnya potong atas 50 ribu ada bunganya lagi 30%. Mau kau, Mu?*
(I just can give it away, but the admin cuts over 50 thousand, there is another 30% interest. Deal?)
Mumu : *Ih gak usah pala yah Tatik. Daripada aku minjam sama ulat bulu kek kau, bagus aku rebonding pake gosokanku sendiri, gratis. Tau kau? Ya kan, Is?*

(Of course I don't want it. Instead of me borrowing money from you as a caterpillar, it's better if I rebond my hair using my own ironing. It's free of charge, you know? Isn't it?) (episode 63 scene 5)

In this case, Mumu is submitting herself to be laughed at and offering the others a superior position. From the example of the conversation above, it can be concluded that people generally laugh because of others' misfortunes, and it emphasizes one's superiority over the shortcomings of others. In this case, Tatik is the one who has the superior position as she wants to give Mumu debt with high interest. As stated in Damanik & Mulyadi (2020), silliness is marked by the appearance of irregularities in a person, and people will laugh at individuals who are inferior or ugly, because they feel happy and feel superior to them. However, as stated by Dynel (2013), the abrasive but creative and witty remarks and their superiority over the target of humor often amuse the viewers, whose appreciation of humor is indicated by canned laughter. The following example is presented here for analysis.

- (3) Tatik : *Dirumah enggak si Nining ini ya, Ning, oh Ning (sambil memanggil)*
(Is Nining at home? Ning..(calling))
Nining : *Eh Tik, ada apa?*
(Hi Tik, What's up?)
Tatik : *Teruslah kau pura pura lupa.*
(Keep on pretending to forget, hmm)
Nining : *Apa Sih Tik?*

(What's wrong?)

Tatik : *Cicilan hutangmu lah kan baru dua kali kau bayar.*

(Your debt. You've just paid the second instalment)

Nining : *Oiya lupa aku, alah Tik Tik tinggal ngomong kek gitu aja pun susah kali kau ngomongnya.*

(Ooops, sorry. Why did you feel reluctant to ask for it?)

Tatik : *Yaudah sini bayarlah.*

(Ok, just pay for it.)

Nining : *Yaudah bentar lah kek gitu aja pun gak sabaran kali kau.*

(Ok. Why can't you wait for it a second. (a bad facial expression))

Tatik : *Ha, begitu minjem manis kali mulut kau itu begitu ditagih keluar tabiat asli kau mau kuhaut-haut muncung kau nanti.*

(When you asked for it, you behaved well, but now, when I'm asking for it to be paid, you give you shit. I'll tear your mouth. (angrily))

Nining : *Alah alah dahlah nah Tik ah, merepet aja pun kau, gak tau kau muka kau crack nanti.*

(Ok, here you are. Don't be too serious, unless your face will be cracked)

Tatik : *Hih, mana mungkin muka aku crack, perawatanku aja mahal.*

(It's impossible to be cracked. I put the expensive facial treatment on.)

Nining : *Takut aku perawatan kau gak mempan Tik.*

(I'm afraid it cannot work on your face)

Tatik : *Maksud kau ning?*

(What do you mean?)

Nining : *Ya, maksudnya kulit kau kan tebal bergerigi Tik kek kulit tyrex, HAH.*

(I mean, your skin is too thick and jaggy as tyrex, Hah.)

(episode 121 scene 1)

In example (3), Tatik is trying to collect the debt from Nining. Firstly, she does not ask for it directly by saying "*Teruslah kau pura pura lupa*", hopes that Nining will notice her coming for it, but still Nining does not gives any responds for it, until Tatik says "*Cicilan hutangmu lah kan baru dua kali kau bayar*" and then, "*Ha, begitu minjem manis kali mulut kau itu begitu ditagih keluar tabiat asli kau mau kuhaut-haut muncung kau nanti*" to show her superiority behaviour towards Nining. The debt collecting situation does not end until Nining asks Tatik to wait for it in a state of anger. In this extract, Tatik seriously asks Nining to pay for the debt. Nining replies with an impoliteness remark, demonstrating her superiority as a talkative lady by saying "*muka kau crack nanti*". It is continued by Nining's statement "*Takut aku perawatan kau gak mempan Tik*" and "*Ya, maksudnya kulit kau kan tebal bergerigi Tik kek kulit tyrex*" regarded as a mockery towards Tatik who has forced her to pay for the debt. Their expressions can be seen in the following screen-shooting.



Figure 1. Tatik's madness in collecting debt from Nining.
source: episode 121 from YouTube @Warintil Official



Figure 2. Nining's bad facial expression.
Source: episode 121 from YouTube @Warintil Official

Tatik and Nining expose female aggression in a polite but deceptive self-presentation. They deliberately expose their intelligence and intellectual superiority, but they cannot deliberately create humor or assume that what they say can convey the effect of humor in any listener. However, recipients will derive humorous satisfaction from their imaginatively structured actions that unmask each other, despite their inherent discomfort. Since the utterances, the meaning of utterances, and pragmatic effect are their tools. Then, the audience can accept the humor that comes naturally from the actors without questioning whether they intend to create humor.

In most of the scenes in “*Kontrakan Remping*”, the actors usually utter rude words or act of superiority to stir up conflict, set boundaries with targets and announce and support one's status or position. Thus, it can be agreeable that one can achieve self-pleasure when observing someone who is in a lower state than oneself. This can also be seen in playfully aggressive humor in the following example.

(4) Bordir comes approaching Mumu who is busy with her plants.

Bordir : *Ngapain ko tanam bunga-bunga ini nggak menghasilkan. Bagus kau tanam bunga bank, biar banyak duitmu, biar bisa ko rebondingkan rambut kribomu itu.*

(It is useless for you to plant that flower. Why don't you plant bank interest in order you can rebond your curly hair?)

Mumu : *Lantam mulut ko tu ya, dari mana pula rambutku ini kribo, ikal ini. Nggak bias kau lihat ini? Buta mata kau?*

(Shut up your garrulous mouth. My hair is nut curly, but wavy, can't you see it? You're blind,

aren't you?)

Bordir : *Mana pula rambut kau ni kayak gini kau bilang itu ikal. Ikal itu kayak biola bergelombang..hmm.. kayak badan aku.*

(No, it's not wavy. Something wavy is like a violin, as my body is. (showing her body))

Mumu : *Alalalalalalalalala..banyak kali cakap kau itu. Badan kau aja pun kayak badak. Pande kali mulut kau.*

(Alahhh, too much talking. Don't you know that your body is like a rhino?)

Bordir : *Halah..badak ngomongin badak. Kau itu kayak sendok semen.*

(How can rhino talks about rhino? You're a cement slince.)

Mumu : *Hahhaaaa.. berkerak la ya kalo sendok semen?* (laughing)

(then it's crusty as cement slince, right?)

(episode 38, scene 1)

The use of playfully attacking humor indexes Bordir's and Mumu's superiority and their position with each other. Bordir and Mumu attack each other (bold phrases), preserving their status and placing them in a superior position. Their repair strategies are a sign of their playful intention, associated with the seriousness and willingness to prevent themselves from being judged negatively by each other, thus reinforcing their in-group bonding that can be seen from Mumu's laughter in the end of the attack. The scene shows how Bordir and Mumu's potential for impoliteness can produce humor to from the audience. Gruner (2000) said that a lot of humor could be described as something aggressive, creating hostility and showing the speaker's superiority over the target of humor. For the most part, however, this involves pleasurable aggression, designed as a form of play and not intended to cause any real harm (Gruner, 2000).

Although superiority-based humor can explain why the interlocutor or audience can experience humor from aggressive and hostile comments, it still receives criticism due to its overly negative portrayal of humor and the difficulty in determining the speaker's original intention, i.e., playful or genuine aggression (Dynel, 2013; Martin, 2018). Regardless of the opinions of these researchers, it can be recognized that superiority-based humor is beneficial in explaining why the audience in front of the screen can get additional entertainment from the sad experiences or weaknesses of the actors. The audience is free to laugh at the stupidity and failures of the cast, reflecting the superiority-based humor theory could offer essential insights into the analysis of humor in the discourse of the sitcom in *Kontakan Rempong*, especially in explaining how the aggressive humor between actors (the primary source of entertainment for the audience).

4.2 Release/Relief-based Humor Analysis

From the 20 episodes of "*Kontrakan Rempong*" sitcom, there are 135 (12,8%) utterances under the release/relief-based analysis of humor uttered by the actors in which all parts of the human body could be used as humorous ideas by them. As it is known that release/relief-based humor analysis is based on physical phenomena that societies commonly refuse to discuss in public, with Freud (1960(1905)) as the most influential proponent. This type of liberation theory is also called release, relief, or relaxation theory. This release or liberation theory can signal relief from tension and pressure. The following data are examples of utterances in "*Kontrakan Rempong*" that contain humor release theory.

(5) Bordir: *Pisang Naik? Wihh..jadi pengenlah aku naikin pisang. Ehh,udahlah buru-buru aku ah. Kaupun buang-buang waktu ku.*

(Banana's price grows up? Oops, makes me want to ride a banana. Oh, c'mon, you've wasted my

time.)

(episode 51, scene 1)

In that scene, Bordir uses the word banana (*Pisang Naik*) with an unnatural expression, thus directing the audience to imply Bordir's statement about riding a banana (*naikin pisang*) on a man's penis.

(6) Mumu: *Ngeri ko ya. Rame kali masmu, udah kayak rawa-rawa si Rita ramenya.*
(How crazy you are. You're wearing lot of jewellerys like Rita's swamp.)
(episode 69 scene 8)

Bordir's statement about climbing a banana (*pengenlah aku naikin pisang*) and Mumu's statement about Rita's swamp (*rawa-rawa si Rita*) play a conspiratorial moment between themselves and the women in that situation. By doing this, the moments remain a collective (if divided by gender) event in which the audience can, as a group, engage in the common pleasure of acknowledging physical phenomena that society usually requires the repression. These taboo-breaking moments are even more powerful, precisely in a comedy. It can be seen from Bordir's utterance in example (5) about riding a banana, which implies a male penis, and in example (6) about Rita's swamp, which indicates genitalia.

These scenes show moments where they already understand each other with the expressions intended in each situation. They still see the situation that they only say these expressions with great pleasure when they are in their groups (included groups). Taboo and impolite expressions that use physical terms or parts of the human body are certainly not appropriate to be expressed in public, but they can be shared pleasure, both from the cast and the audience. These taboo-breaking moments are even more influential in a comedy.

For the actors in *Kontrakan Rempong*, maybe they released this taboo and impolite humor just for jokes without intending to offend any party. However, some people may feel offended by the joke because they took it seriously. Besides, everyone has different psychological conditions and interests. For some people who like comedy, a comedy with elements of taboo, impoliteness, or something else is an alternative way to get rid of depression amid their obstacles in life.

For the relief theory, this kind of reaction demonstrates the valuable role comedy can play, allowing audiences to escape from the repressions of civilization and engage communally in acknowledgment that all bodies age, collapse, and wither. The fundamental idea of these theories that can be observed in this study is that humor hesitantly occurs when inner tension is released. The pleasure of humor (in this restricted meaning of the word) appears from the release of energy that would have been associated with this painful emotion but has now become redundant (Martin, 2018). Otherwise, humor stems from regenerating something stressful into something cheerful. It is a strategy for coming to terms with misfortunate aspects of life.

4.3 Incongruity-based Humor Analysis

The incongruity analysis unpacked 483 (45,7%) utterances are marked by the emergence of humor when there is an oddity between the concept prepared in a specific situation and the real incident related to the concept. This theory states that humor appears when there is an oddity between the concepts prepared in certain situations and the real events that are thought to be related to the concept. As previously discussed, this *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom can be said to be full of incongruities, starting with the appearance of the actors who act as someone uniquely, such as Nining with her hijab style, Castle and Bobo with their childish behavior, Mumu with curly hair and her negligee, Rita with

her madness, etc. It is not only their appearances, but also the conversation in *Kontrakan Rempong* portrayed incongruity, as can be seen in the following example;

(7) *Mumu: Oalah mau masak apalah aku ini, semua-semuanya mahal. Cabe mahal, bawang mahal, semuanya mahal. Naik semua harganya udah kayak badanku ini naik, padahal udah dietnya aku tapi gak turun-turun. Udah ku kurang-kurangi makanku pun. Udah gak makan lontong lagi aku tiap pagi sama sore. Udah pagi aja.*

(8)

(What am I going to cook, everything is expensive. Chili is expensive, onions are expensive, everything is expensive. **All the prices have gone up, it's like my body has gone up**, even though I've been on a diet but it hasn't gone down. I've eaten less and less. **I don't eat rice cake anymore every morning and evening. It's morning already.**) (episode 51, scene 1)

From the example above, it is shown that the context is vital in bringing laughter. Laughter appears as a result of the reader's understanding when Mumu talks to herself about the increasing food price. She then relates the condition to her weight. Unconsciously, she states that she wonders even though she has already stopped eating *lontong* (rice cake) in the morning and evening, but then, she realizes that she did it in the morning with the stressing of the word “*aja*” (just), causing these utterances to be funny and following the type of incongruity theory. Another incongruity can be seen in the following screen-shooting examples.



Figure 3. Rita's conversation with the fan.

Source: episode 73 from YouTube @Warintil Official



Figure 4. Rita's ridiculous act in climbing the window.

Source: episode 73 from YouTube @Warintil Official



Figure 5. Rita and Ishaya fall together

Source: episode 73 from YouTube @Warintil Official

Figures 3, 4, and 5 show Rita’s attitude, which always frustrates her neighbors conversing with her. From Figure 3, it can be seen that Rita is having a conversation with the fan, which can be categorized as an incongruous deed. It is in line with what can be seen in Figure 4, where Rita is climbing the window and being watched by Ishaya. Ishaya is trying to help her down, but they fall together, arousing laughter (Figure 5). From those figures, the events are perceived as incongruous since the arrangement of the constituent elements of the events is incompatible with the normal or expected ones. Awareness of the incongruity between concepts and real objects is related to the cognitive aspects of each individual, triggering the appearance of various responses from the interlocutor or the audience. Some individuals understand the discrepancy as something funny, while others do not. This discrepancy caused ambiguity in conflicting situations. Based on what has been found in this study, the concept of ambiguity in humor can be described as follows:

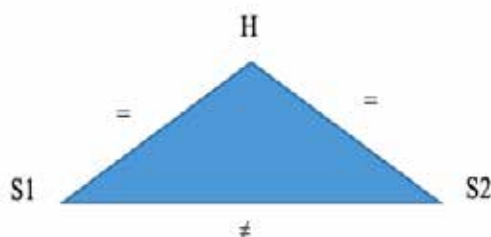


Figure 6. Humor Ambiguity Concept

Humor is denoted by H, while S1 and S2 are arising situations. The humorous discourse is formed from the relationship between S1 and S2, contrasting or opposite. S1 and S2 in humor function as alternatives that are different or contradictory to each other, denoted by a not-equal sign (\neq). In other words, the scheme shows that humor is two perceptions with different references combined to form a funny concept.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study aims to investigate humorous social interactions semantically. In this case, 20 justified episodes of *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom were chosen as the object of the study. It is also established that Script-based Semantic Theory of Humor can be applied not only in long-form narrative text or in the form of a long conversation but also in parts of scenes of *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom, which can be shown in the form of screen-shooting. Superiority-based, release/relief-based, and incongruity-based humor analysis are applied based on the different aspects of humor they denote (Attardo, 1994; Larkin-Galiñanes, 2017) as the parameters.

As previously explained, most linguistic researchers tend to side with the incongruity theory because it is instrumental in demonstrating the linguistic mechanisms to make funny humor. Thus, the researchers explored humor in social interactions in the *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom. Furthermore, this study unveiled that humorous utterances based on incongruity dominated their use in the *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom (43.8% utterances), and conversely, humorous utterances based on relief were the least used (12.2% utterances). From the incongruity-based humor analysis in *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom, it can be concluded that the events are perceived as incongruous, since the arrangement of the constituent elements of the events is incompatible with the normal or expected ones.

In most cases in *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom, the actors normally utter impoliteness superiority remarks to raise conflict, establish a limit with the target, and announce and support status. After

performing those remarks, it can be argued that people can achieve self-reflexive pleasure in observing someone in an inferior state. Damanik & Mulyadi (2020) argued that people generally laugh because of others' misfortunes, and it emphasizes one's superiority over the shortcomings of others. The study also unpacked that foolishness is marked by the appearance of inconsistencies in a person, and people will laugh at individuals who are inferior or awful because they feel delighted and superior to them.

Related to the theory of relief, in *Kontrakan Rempong* sitcom, it was found that taboo expressions were the mutual pleasure of both the actors and the audience. Taboo experiences are influential in comedy. This kind of reaction demonstrates the valuable role comedy can play, allowing audiences to escape from the repressions of civilization and engage communally in acknowledgment that all bodies age, collapse, and wither. The fundamental idea of these theories that can be observed in this study is that humor hesitantly occurs when inner tension is released. According to Martin (2018), the pleasure of humor (in this restricted meaning of the word) appears from the release of energy that would have been associated with this painful emotion but has now become redundant. Otherwise, what can be concluded from the analysis is that humor in "*Kontrakan Rempong*" sitcom stems from regenerating something stressful into something cheerful. It is a strategy for coming to terms with misfortunate aspects of life.

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