

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Current literature studies show us that attitude of both students and teachers in a classroom is one of the essential elements that can determine the output of a language learning activity. Even though it is important, people cannot easily judge someone's attitude since attitude is a mental state. For instance, students or teachers might express their attitudes through facial expressions, body language or gestures, and voice tones. Sometimes people also tend to hide their attitudes instead of showing them to others. Thus, attitudes play a big role in language learning activity since they can affect the students' outcome of the learning activity. A study by Eagly and Chaiken revealed that attitude is a psychological inclination that is showed by evaluating a particular object with a degree of favor or disfavor (as cited in Albarracin, Johnson, & Zanna, 2005).

There are several ways for teachers to lead the students' attitudes to be more positive. One of them is by using humor. Humor can make teaching and learning activity more enjoyable and create a comfortable atmosphere. Humor itself is a social phenomenon where people use it as an expression in communicating with others. Humor becomes a crucial part of communication. To avoid unpleasant situations, people often include humor in their conversation. By telling jokes, people can change the conversations into livelier ones. Humor also becomes a tool that takes a big role in society. According to Ross (1998), humor is influential—from using satire jokes to criticize the government to joking as a method to establish friendships and excluding

others. Therefore, from time to time, jokes have transformed into a double-edged sword, i.e., something that can make either a positive or negative effect on society.

At present, jokes serve as an important part of the process of communicating with others. As a form of humor, a joke is mostly created to make people laugh by adding humorous effects. It can be added to various instruments of communication such as daily talks, speeches, teaching-learning activities, literature works, movies, and advertisements.

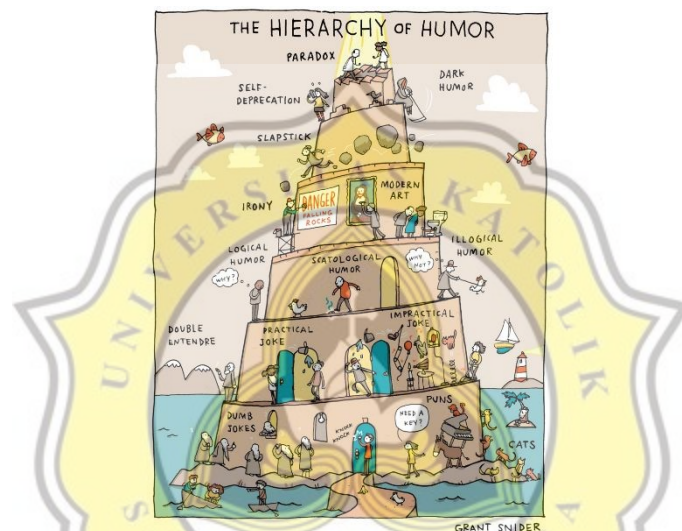


Figure 1.1: The Hierarchy of Humor

As an example, Grant Snider, an American cartoonist, comic strip artist, and a writer, humors are divided into several categories that have its own hierarchy in the society. At the lowest level of the hierarchy, there are dumb jokes, jokes that is so simple that people able to understand the punchline without thinking it too much, puns, jokes that utilize the manipulation of words at the sound level, which is called phonological jokes. Some others rely on homophones, homonyms, or polysemes where sounds remain the same and the ambiguity lies in the lexical unit or lexeme (Attardo et al., 1994), which is called lexical jokes.

On the level above, Grant put practical and impractical jokes, which usually called as prank. What makes them different is impractical joke takes more effort to execute compared to

practical jokes, for example as seen in the picture, the practical joke is only utilizing door to execute the water bucket joke. In the other hand, impractical joke utilizes a lot of equipment in order to execute the same joke that producing the same result. On the same level, Grant puts double entendre or double meaning joke, a joke that rely on “a duality...of semantic interpretations motivated by the structural patterns of the language system” (Lew, 1996), and hence is usually called as syntactic ambiguity joke.

On the third level of the hierarchy list, Grant places logical humor, illogical humor, and scatological humor. Logical humor is a humor that actually simple and straightforward but makes the audience thinks the opposite, the example can be found in the “why do chicken cross the road” joke. While the answer is as simple as “to get the other side”, audience are trying to guess something that they think as the most hilarious answer to that question. In the other hand, illogical jokes utilize the absurd answer to make the joke funny because the answer is far from a logical analysis of the situation. The humor gets its charm from the ridiculousness and unlikeliness of the situation. the scatological joke is known as toilet jokes to most people, this joke is usually considered as taboo because most of the time this joke is dealing with defecation, urination, and other bodily functions including something that is recognized as sexual such as dick jokes.

On the fourth level, Grant proposes to put irony jokes and modern art into the list. Irony joke is a clash between expectation and reality. Commonly, the outcome is the opposite of what someone wanted or wished for. While modern art is considered as a humor in the recent days because of people’s bizarre way to determine something as an art. As an example, in 2019, Maurizio Cattelan, an Italian artist, taped a banana to the gallery in Art Basel in Miami Beach and called it as a work of art titled “Comedian”.

The slapstick joke is style of humor involving excessive physical activity that exceeds boundaries of the regular physical comedy. Slapstick usually involves both intentional and unintentional violence from the incompetency use of props. This style of joke is performed by few people in the past, few of the famous people that utilize slapstick jokes into their performances are Charlie Chaplin, Jerry “The King of Comedy” Lewis, and the Three Stooges.

The second highest hierarchy of humor according to Grant are self-deprecation jokes and the dark jokes. Self-deprecation joke is the joke that uses the oneself aspect of life and turn them into a funny story that can cause laughter. Dark jokes is a form of humor including twists that make the joke seen as harsh, horrid, or offensive. Yet, the joke is still funny. people need to have great tolerance for dark humor in order to notice its funniness. Lastly, Grant Snider put Paradox jokes as the highest jokes in the Hierarchy of humor, this joke is a group of statements that leads to a contradiction between one and another.

The Idea of using jokes in a classroom might lead to a positive effect. A study by Baid & Lambert (2010) argued that a teacher or lecturer has to avoid long hours of sitting on a chair and speaking. They mentioned that it is a necessity to use games and group activities to stimulate peer learning and team building where students can learn from each other. They claimed that with this approach, teachers can figure out whether students in their classroom have learned the material or not and also allowed their students to strengthen their newly acquired knowledge to a more profound level. Analogous with Baid and Lambert's statement, research by Huss (2016) revealed the positive impact of humor in the classroom. They stated that teachers considered humor to be an integral part of their teaching plan. Humor makes students relaxed, contributed to a more enjoyable classroom climate, and helped students make content connections. But, as stated before that jokes might be a double-edged sword for its user. There are several

shortcomings or negative effects of the joke if it is used improperly. Some people use jokes at inappropriate times, as the result, the joke only gave a negative impact on the class's atmosphere and put the class into an awkward situation, or even worse, some people intentionally use offensive jokes to ridicule, embarrass or humiliate an individual in the classroom. Language-barrier can also be the possible cause of inefficiency of jokes.

Another study that supported this research is a study by Naser Rashidia et al in public schools and language learning institutes in Shiraz, Iran. The purpose of this research is to compare the different uses of humor among EFL learners in Shiraz, Iran. The results of the study indicated that teachers from language learning institutes utilize humor more than the ones employed in public schools. Hence, students use humor to communicate in their class by using the target language too. Both groups of participants indicated that they believed humor could be a productive tool in learning EFL and reducing effective barriers. This research informs the writer's own research in the steps to do this kind of research. This study is similar to the writer's research in terms of the subject of the research. The difference between this study and the writer's research is that this study compares the different uses of humour among EFL learners in public schools with ones enrolled in language learning institutes, whereas the writer's study only focused on the students of the Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University.

Next, a research conducted by John Huss and Shannon Eastep in the College of Education, Northern Kentucky University. The goal of this research is to find out the faculty members' attitudes toward the use of humor as a pedagogical tool. The result based on quantitative data and coding of open response questions revealed that instructors overall considered humor to be an integral part of their teaching plan and that humor relaxes students, contributes to a more enjoyable classroom climate, and helps students make content connections,

in both traditional and web-based classes. This study is different in terms of the process of learning, this study analyzes both traditional and web-based classes. Meanwhile, the writer's research only analyzes the classical face-to-face learning in the classroom.

Last but not least, research by M Chabeli in the Department of Nursing, University of Johannesburg, South Africa. This research aims to explore the perceptions of nurse teacher-learners regarding the use of humor as a pedagogical tool to promote learning. The findings of the study assist the nurse educators to create a positive, effective, psychological, and social learning environment through the use of humor in a positive manner. Nurse educators will appreciate the fact that the integration of humor into the learning content will promote the learners' critical thinking and emotional intelligence. Negative humor has a negative impact on learning. Learner nurses who become critical thinkers will be able to be analytical and solve problems amicably in practice. This study is similar to the writer's objective of the study. It is to find out whether humor as a pedagogical tool has an impact on the learning process. The difference can be seen in the object of the study. This study focused on the nurse teacher-learners, while the writer's research would take Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University students as the object of his research.

Therefore, in this study, the researcher is going to analyze the attitudes of the students of English Department of Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University towards the use of English jokes in lectures.

1.2 Field of the Study

This research is related to the field of Applied Linguistics.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on the attitudes of 2017 & 2018 students of Faculty of Language and Arts towards the use of English Jokes in lectures.

1.4 Problem Formulation

The researcher formulates the following research questions:

1. What is the Faculty of Language and Arts students' attitudes towards the use of English jokes in lectures?
2. What effects do Faculty of Language and Arts students think that the jokes have on the lectures?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Regarding the problems mentioned above, this research is conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To analyze the attitudes of the Faculty of Language and Arts students towards the use of English jokes in lectures.
2. To reveal the Faculty of Language and Arts students' opinions on the effects of jokes on lectures.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The importance of conducting this research is to find out the 2017 and 2018 Faculty of Language and Arts Students' attitudes towards the use of English jokes in lectures and their opinions on the effect of the jokes in the lectures. Therefore, the writer expects that this research

will be useful as a reference for not only lecturers but also students in the Faculty of Language and Arts, Soegijapranata Catholic University.

It is expected that the results of this research will give more knowledge and understanding of English jokes in lectures and their effects. The writer also expects this research can contribute to the field of Linguistic in explaining humor as a phenomenon in society and also hopes that this research will provide a valuable starting point for further research especially on humor in lectures.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1. Joke

A joke is defined by Hetzron (1991) as a short humorous piece of oral literature in which the funniness is located in the final part of the sentence, called the punchline.

2. English Joke

English Joke is a joke that is delivered using the language of English. Not only using English as the language medium, the joke in this research is also the one that is based on English culture as well. Therefore, what is meant as an English joke in this research is the joke that is told using English and based on English culture.

3. Pedagogical joke

A pedagogical joke is a joke used in an educational environment. According to Chabeli (2008), the pedagogical joke is a part of humor which is used to help the teacher to maintain a lively and engaged relationship with the students.

4. Attitude

Crisp & Turner (2014) explained that an attitude is a set of beliefs that someone holds with an attitude object. The attitude object can be anything, it can be a person, thing, event or issue. Attitudes can be positive or negative.

