

An analysis of humor in “Mario Teguh Golden Ways” talk show (Wahyu)

## AN ANALYSIS OF HUMOR IN “MARIO TEGUH GOLDEN WAYS” TALK SHOW

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### *Abstract*

The use of humor is considered as one of the most important things in social communication. In this case, the writer analyzed the humor expressions appeared in a famous talk show in Indonesia, Mario Teguh Golden Ways. The research is focused on the types of humor expressed by Mario and the audiences during the show. The method of this study was descriptive qualitative since the researcher intended to obtain the conversations among the keynote speaker and participants. . The data were taken from the video of the talk show. The research subjects of this study are the keynote speaker and participants of the talk show Mario teguh golden ways “how to begin to be a richman” episode. The data collections were done as follows: first, the researcher downloaded the videos and transcribed of The Mario teguh talk show. Second, the researcher observed the videos; compared the videos and the transcriptions. Later, the researcher transcribed the parts of the transcription that contain humor to be analyzed further. The findings show that there are many humorous expressions appeared during the show. There are seven extracts which is divided into three classifications of humor; they are irony, teasing and joking. None of the humor expression can be categorized as banter or language play. All of the humor expressions are conceptual humor.

**Keywords** – Conversation, Humor expression, talk show

### INTRODUCTION

Humor is an important tool to achieve certain purposes. Humor is at first a type of language behavior. Attardo defines humor by two criteria. The first one is whether the event elicits laughter or smiling. The second one is whether it was produced with the intention of eliciting laughter or smiling<sup>1</sup>.

The concept of talk shows on television, especially in Indonesia, has been considered as an event concept that will never defeat rating soap operas or other entertainment programs. Talk show is often considered boring, too hard to digest, not attractive packaging, and various other reasons that make the talk show increasingly marginalized in the affairs of the acquisition of rating. Studying the effects of humor on Talk Show program in general has led to mixed results. One of the main difficulties surrounding the issue of humor in TV programs is the multidimensionality of humor. humor is at once cognitive, emotive, and psychological. Differences among people’s personalities, experiences, and ideas lead to different concepts of what is funny. Disagreements

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<sup>1</sup> Salvatore Attardo et al., “Multimodal Markers of Irony and Sarcasm,” *Humor* 16, no. 2 (2003): 243–60.

concerning the definition of humor and the theories surrounding humor make humor research difficult and prone to debate.

There are some researchers who have studied about the use of humor. Tahir in his research entitled "Humor in *Bukan Empat Mata* Talk show". He conducted his research by using discourse analysis. He found that language choice and language form as dialects which contrast with standard, non-standard and connection with local culture in the socio-cultural context of Indonesian slang and mixing English are used to create humor<sup>2</sup>. Meanwhile, Muqun & Lu in their article entitled "The Functions of Humor in Classroom Instruction". They concluded that English humor is a practical and reliable means for raising awareness in EFL students that language is inseparable from culture. Furthermore, the understanding and appreciation of humor can enhance the students' own sense of humor which is an important part of a person's character<sup>3</sup>. English humor has the power to give students a more positive attitude toward their target language and to provoke interest and involvement in the use and application of their expanding language skills.

### ***Humor***

A standard definition for humor is hard to find. Martin and Lefcourt proposed that humor is the frequency with which the individual smiles, laughs, and otherwise displays amusement in a variety of situations<sup>4</sup>. Meanwhile, Anthropologist, Robert R. Provine, has spent years studying laughter and believes that laughter is not always connected to humor; rather, laughter is more often used as a mechanism for moving conversation<sup>5</sup>. Humor is very much a social phenomenon and serves various types of social or interpersonal purposes. The social aspects of humor are reflected in the nature of laughter. Laughter typically occurs in groups of two or more people and rarely, or at least less frequently, when people are alone.

Research into laughter and humor has shown that people who laugh at something in the company of others often do not laugh at the same thing when they are alone. Likewise, if an individual is in the company of other people who do not laugh at something, then this individual will typically stop finding it humorous. Conversely, being the only person who laughs at something in a group of people often results in embarrassment and awkwardness. Finally, an individual who does not normally find something humorous may laugh at it, ending up seeing it as humorous after all, if in the company of other people who are laughing at it.

This means that not laughing at somebody's attempt at humor not only disproves of their sense of humor but also signals social distance and non-

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<sup>2</sup> Saidna Zulfiqar Bin Tahir and D U I Buru, "Humor in 'Bukan Empat Mata' Talk Show," *Jurnal JUPITER* 5, no. 4 (2012): 68–74.

<sup>3</sup> Wang Muqun and Wang Lu, "The Functions of Humor in Classroom Instruction," 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Herbert M Lefcourt, Rod A Martin, and Wendy E Saleh, "Locus of Control and Social Support: Interactive Moderators of Stress.," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 47, no. 2 (1984): 378.

<sup>5</sup> Robert R Provine, *Laughter: A Scientific Investigation* (Penguin, 2001).

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sympathy (it can of course also signal the failure to understand the joke). Another consequence is that not laughing when other people laugh signal non-membership and non-allegiance with them.

### *Classification of Humor*

Throughout the study of humor, categories of different types of humor have been explained. However, the categorising of humor types has been criticised, because of the difficulty of distinguishing between different forms of humor. According to Norrick, forms of humor tend to “fade into each other in conversation”, which makes it impossible to get a clear distinction between various humor types<sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless, in the present study categories of humor are presented in order to distinguish what types of humor are most typical in a specific social situation of an EFL classroom.

### *Irony*

Irony refers to the use of ambiguous or implicit utterances which typically involve double meanings<sup>7</sup>, since when someone is being ironic, they say the opposite of what is meant. In other words, there is a meta-message hidden in the speaker’s remark. What makes the phenomenon so puzzling is that it is possible for one to be ironic or sarcastic without giving any signs of insincerity<sup>8</sup>. Thus, unsuccessful use of irony is quite common and one often needs to point out their use of it afterwards to get their true message understood. Finally, it should be mentioned that the humorous intention of irony or sarcasm works best with a target who shares the same “knowledge of the world” or who is familiar with the speaker’s character and opinions.

Furthermore, a subtype of irony referred to as sarcasm is often differentiated from the term irony; however, the differentiation of the two terms is not unproblematic. Multiple studies use the two terms as synonyms, while others attempt to point out their differences. According to Haiman, sarcasm is “overt irony intentionally used by the speaker as a form of verbal aggression.” In other words, sarcasm is more aggressive and more likely to hurt its target than other simple forms of irony<sup>9</sup>. To avoid confusion, the present thesis will use the term irony to refer to all humor extracts which involve turns with ironic and/or sarcastic intent.

### *Teasing*

Keltner stated that teasing is intentional provocation accompanied by playful off-record markers that together comment on something relevant to the

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<sup>6</sup> Neal R Norrick, *Conversational Joking: Humor in Everyday Talk*. (Indiana University Press, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> Arja Piirainen-Marsh, “Bilingual Practices and the Social Organisation of Video Gaming Activities,” *Journal of Pragmatics* 42, no. 11 (2010): 3012–30.

<sup>8</sup> John Haiman, *Talk Is Cheap: Sarcasm, Alienation, and the Evolution of Language* (Oxford University Press on Demand, 1998).

<sup>9</sup> Haiman.

target<sup>10</sup>. Teasing can easily act both as a positive and a negative type of humor. The difference between what is considered to be good natured teasing and when teasing starts to resemble bullying is difficult to differentiate. One reason for this might be that teasing has a clear target, which means that it is directed at a certain individual and thus, is highly personal. Even when teasing is intended as positive, the recipient can choose to interpret the tease in a negative manner and be offended<sup>11</sup>.

#### *Banter*

Banter can be said as more specific teasing where the teasing happens back and forth. Mostly in teasing the recipient does not play along<sup>12</sup>, but in banter the target is expected to participate in the bantering, which usually starts by focusing on some habit or characteristic of the recipient. The banter stops when one of the participants runs out of ideas to outdo the other. The intention of banter is to create and reinforce relationship through social acceptance-friendship strategies. However, if the intention of banter fails and the recipient does not respond, then banter can easily have negative effects<sup>13</sup>. One might say that when unsuccessful, banter turns into negative teasing.

#### *Language Play*

Language play refers to the conscious repetition or modification of linguistic forms, such as lexemes or syntactic patterns<sup>14</sup>. Language play is also paying particular attention to a certain feature of language and then targeting the feature humorously.

#### *Joking*

Joking is the most abstract of the types of humor presented here. It can be divided in to two categories: conversational jokes and canned jokes. The term conversational joking could be used as an umbrella term for all the different types of humor presented here (irony, teasing, banter, language play), since it includes all different forms and strategies that result in laughter from the target<sup>15</sup>. By contrast, a canned joke can be defined as used before the time of the utterance in a form similar to that used by the speaker<sup>16</sup>. In other words, a canned joke uses a familiar joke frame to create amusement. One clear example of canned joking is a knock-knock joke, where the target knows the intention of the speaker, since it is produced in a familiar frame. Canned jokes are used less freely than

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<sup>10</sup> Jennifer S Lerner and Dacher Keltner, "Fear, Anger, and Risk.," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 81, no. 1 (2001): 146.

<sup>11</sup> Niina Lilja and Arja Piirainen-Marsh, "Connecting the Language Classroom and the Wild: Re-Enactments of Language Use Experiences," *Applied Linguistics* 40, no. 4 (2019): 594–623.

<sup>12</sup> Frederick Attenborough, "Jokes, Pranks, Blondes and Banter: Recontextualising Sexism in the British Print Press," *Journal of Gender Studies* 23, no. 2 (2014): 137–54.

<sup>13</sup> Barbara A Plester and Janet Sayers, "'Taking the Piss': Functions of Banter in the IT Industry" (Walter de Gruyter, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Julie A Belz, "Second Language Play as a Representation of the Multicompetent Self in Foreign Language Study," *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 1, no. 1 (2002): 13–39.

<sup>15</sup> Norrick, *Conversational Joking: Humor in Everyday Talk*.

<sup>16</sup> Attardo et al., "Multimodal Markers of Irony and Sarcasm."

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conversational jokes, since they are often considered to be inappropriate in formal contexts.

### RESEARCH METHODELOGY

This research investigates the humorous expressions appear in Mario Teguh golden ways talk show. Therefore, The method of this study was descriptive qualitative since the researcher intended to obtain the conversations among the keynote speaker and participants. The researcher provided the data as they naturally occur without manipulating them. The data were taken from the video of the talk show.

The research subjects of this study are the keynote speaker and participants of the talk show Mario teguh golden ways “how to begin to be a richman” episode. The data taken from this research are humorous expressions produced by the speaker, in this case Mario Teguh, and the audiences during the talk show went out.

The data collections were done as follows: first, the researcher downloaded the videos and transcribed of The Mario teguh talk show. Second, the researcher observed the videos; compared the videos and the transcriptions. Later, the researcher transcribed the parts of the transcription that contain humor to be analyzed further.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the findings of the research and discussion of the research findings. The findings of the research cover the description of *Analysis of Humor Expressions in Mario Teguh Golden Ways*. The following part presents the types of humor appear in the talk show Mario Teguh Golden Ways, the example can be seen in the following findings.

#### *Irony*

There are some expressions in the talk show that can be categorized as irony. The following two extracts are the example of irony can be found in the talk show.

#### **Extract 1: Mario Teguh and P2**

- P2* : *saya memilih B tidak mementingkan harta karna bagi saya yang penting cukup!*  
*“I choose B not to consider wealthy is the most important thing because I think as long as it is enough.”*
- MT* : *yang penting cukup, apakah itu untuk beli pulau cukup? (hahaha)*  
*“as long as it is enough, is it enough to buy an island? (laughing)”*
- P2* : *yah, tidak mungkin pak beli pulau (tersipu malu sambil menutup mulutnya)*  
*“yah, it is impossible to buy an island (embarrassed and covering her mouth)”*

*MT : ahh, tidak mungkin beli pulau berarti konsepnya dibatalkan sendiri (hahaha) ayo, kalo cukup harusnya tidak ada batas yah memang cukup.  
“ah, it is impossible to buy an island so you cancel your own concept (laughing). Come on, there shouldn't be any limitation for enough”.*

The extract 1 above is taken from the conversation between Mario Teguh and the second questioner. The questioner (P2) said that she does not consider the wealthy as the most important thing but as long as it is enough. And then Mario responded by saying as long as it is enough to buy an island? The comment made the audiences laughed. P2 answered it by saying “it is impossible to buy an island.”. Finally, Mario respond again by saying “it is impossible to buy an island, so you cancel your own concept. If it is enough there should not be a limit.” The current extract shows an example of irony.

That part shows a humor indicated by laughing. The comment of Mario made the audience laughed. The function of humor above is to clarify the concept of enough of P2. Another example of irony can be seen in the extract below.

**Extract 2: it should be three times**

*MT : bukan kekayaan mas ghivari, kan kekayaan adalah nikmat yang dihadiahkan oleh tuhan. Sekarang saya tanya dulu, apakah kesehatan itu kekayaan? (iya) karena nikmat ya, nama baik?  
“it is not the wealthy, Ghivari. That has been a present from the god. Now I want to ask you first, good name?”*

*Penonton : iya  
“yes”*

*MT : istri yang setia?  
“a loyal wife?”*

*Penonton : iya  
“yes”*

*MT : suami yang setia? suami yang setia? suami yang setia? Harus tiga kali karna jarang yang setia (hahaha)  
“a loyal husband? a loyal husband? a loyal husband? It must be three times because almost no husband is loyal. (hahahaha)”*

On the extract above, Mario Teguh asked the audiences about a good name and a good wife. Everyone answered yes. But then, Mario asked the audiences a loyal husband in three times and says “It must be three times because almost no husband is loyal”. That made all audiences laughed.

**Teasing**

There are also some teasing humors that can be found in Mario Teguh Golden Ways talk show. Teasing is intentional provocation accompanied by playful off-record markers that together comment on something relevant to the target. The following extracts shows the example of teasing.

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### Extract 3: Specific or global praying

- MT** : *Waktu anda berdoa, anda itu ang...angkanya spesifik atau global (sambil menulis di e-board) waktu minta uang, minta kaya, itu doanya sudah terserah tuhan berapa aja deh, gitu? Ato jelas sekali tuhan aku minta empat belas juta tujuh ratus lima puluh empat ribu, (hahaha) loh...ha..ha nah sekarang bapak doanya spesifik atau global?*  
“when you are praying, do you ask for specific or global number? (while writing on the e-board). When you ask for money, wealthy, is it up to the god? Or do you asked for it clearly, “god, I want fourteen million seven hundred and fifty-four thousand rupiahs? (hahahahaha). And now do you pray specifically or globally?”
- P3** : *saya nggak dua-duanya pak (hahaha)*  
“I am not at both of them, sir (hahahahaha)”
- MT** : *(heran sambil senyum) tahu kenapa! Frustrasi! (hahahahaha) (tepuak tangan)*  
“(amazed while smiling) do you know why? Frustrated? (hahahahaha) (clapping hands)”

From the extract above, it can be seen an example of teasing humor. Mario asked the audience whether his praying is specific or global. Then, the audience answered that his praying was neither specific nor global. That made everyone laugh, include Mario. A rather similar example of teasing humor can be seen from the following extract.

### Extract 4: Happiness depends on the date

- MT** : *(memotong pembicaraan) oh klo begitu begini, ini tahun 2015 toh! Bapak minta tambah rejeki berapa?...Tambah uang berapa?*  
“(cutting the conversation) oh, if it is like that, this is 2015, isn’t it? “How much wealthy do you ask for? How much money?”
- P3** : *tergantung bulannya pak! Dan harinya (hahaha)*  
“it depends on the month, sir! And the day too. (hahahahaha)”
- MT** : *ini orang yang kebahagiaanya ditentukan oleh tanggal (sambil menunjuk ke P3) (hahaha)*  
“this man’s happiness depends on the date (while pointing on P3) (hahahahaha)”

Extract 4 above shows that Mario asked one of the audience “How much wealthy do you ask for? How much money?”. Then, the audience answer made everyone include Mario laugh. He said that it depends on the day and month. His happiness depended on the date.

### Joking

Joking is the most common humor used in Mario Teguh Golden Ways talk show. There are some parts of the talk show show joking. The following extracts are some examples of joke in the talk show.

**Extract 5: the angels note it.**

*MT : Langsung angkat tangan yang ingin jadi orang kaya  
“directly rise your hand of you want to be rich”  
(semua orang mengangkat tangan)  
“(all audiences rise their hands)”  
super sekali. **Karna anda sudah tahu bahwa diruangan ini ada malaikat yang mencatat orang yang tidak angkat tangan very super. Because I know that there are angels in this room who note whom did not rise his hands”**  
(hahahahaha, Mario Teguh tersenyum)  
“(hahahahaha, Mario Teguh smiles)”*

The previous extract shows an example of joking by Mario Teguh. He asked the audiences to raise their hands if they want to be rich and tell them that there should be angel in the room who note people who do not raise their hand. That statement made everyone laugh. A bit different joke in the talk show can be seen as follows:

**Extract 6: Dynamite**

*MT : Kalau mau kaya kuasai hati orang lain, bukan pikirannya. Maka menjelaskan macam-macam tidak dibutuhkan. Itu sebabnya kalau jual makanan kita bilang (sangat menekankan) ini enak.. yang wajahnya kelihatan enak (improvisasi wajah). **Makanan kami sangat steril. Dipanaskan 115 derajat selama 14 menit dengan kandungan lemak 13%, protein 70% dan dinamit 14%**  
“if you want to be rich take control of people’s heart, not their minds. So that explaining many things is not necessary. That is why if we sell food we say “this is very delicious” (so stressed), with the face that shows delicious feeling (face improvisation). **Our food is very hygiene. It is cooked on 115 degrees for 14 minutes with 13% fat, 70% protein and 14% dynamite.”**  
(semua orang tertawa)  
“(everyone is laughing)”*

The extract 6 shows another joke by Mario Teguh. He explained how to be rich is not by controlling people’s mind, but their hearts. After that he continues by explaining the ingredients of healthy food but finally he mentions 14% of the ingredients is dynamite. Surely all audiences laugh because of the joke. One more example of joke can be seen at the following extract:

**Extract 7: Vengeance Desire**

*MT : doa itu harus diminta dengan sekuat-kuatnya keinginan pak. Kan banyak orang yang doanya gini, “Tuhan kan sudah tahu doaku kemarin, bulan lalu juga sama.  
“the pray must be asked with a vengeance desire. There are many people who pray like this,” God has known my praying yesterday, just like last month”*

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(*penonton tertawa*)  
“(the audiences are laughing)”  
MT : *tahun lalu sama. Jadi doaku untuk hari ini ya seperti kemarin, seperti kemarin, amin.*  
“*last year is also just the same. So, my praying for today is like yesterday, just like yesterday. Ameen.*”  
(*penonton tertawa*)  
“(the audiences are laughing)”

The joke by Mario Teguh above is conveyed through a story. He told about a man who always asked similar praying every day. Then he said that god surely had known my praying. It was just always the same. Finally, his praying for that was just the same with the day before. Then, all audiences laughed.

The findings above show that there are a lot of humor expressed in Mario Teguh Golden Ways talk show divided into three types. Most of the humor are joke types. Only some of the humor is irony and only one teasing can be found. There are no banter and language play expressed neither by Mario Teguh nor by the audiences.

All humor expressions expressed in the talk show either by Mario Teguh or the audiences are conceptual humor. None of them is verbal humor. Verbal humor is when an aspect of language, such as structural ambiguity, is exploited in order to achieve a humorous effect, while conceptual humor involves concepts or ideas that are thought of as humorous without using aspects of language for other purposes conveying the humorous message.

### CONCLUSION

In this research, the writer has analyzed humor expressions that appeared in one of the episodes of Mario Teguh Golden Ways talk shows entitled “how to begin to be a richman”. Humor are indicated by the laugh of the audiences and or the speaker.

The researcher found some expressions in the talk show indicating humor which are classified into three types based on the five classifications of humor. Among the three types of humor, joke is the most common joke expressed, the others, irony and teasing expressed twice. The humor expressions in the talk show are conceptual humor. None of them are verbal humor.

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