

HUMOROUS ASPECTS OF TRUCK CONTAINER SIGNS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: As Homo Ludens, human beings inherently possess a penchant for play. They exhibit the remarkable ability to craft various forms of playful devices, one of which revolves around the skillful use of language as their primary vehicle for verbal communication. This paper explores the humorous dimensions inherent in language usage, as artfully harnessed in the signage adorning truck containers. By meticulously scrutinizing these container signs displayed on trucks navigating the highways of Indonesia, this study unveils that the creators of these signs employ three fundamental mechanisms, as articulated by Bergson's (1983) theory, to elicit smiles and laughter from their audience. These mechanisms encompass repetition, inversion, and, most notably, the concept of reciprocal interference within series. Such effects are achieved through various techniques, including phonological alterations, ambiguities, juxtapositions, and the deliberate incorporation of taboos and insults.

Keywords: humor, laughter, repetition, inversion, reciprocal interference

INTRODUCTION

Humor is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon encompassing various expressions that evoke laughter, amusement, or enjoyment (Warren et al., 2021; Mahcece & Beghoul, 2022). It is a form of social and cognitive communication that plays a significant role in human interaction. While humor can take various forms, its core purpose is often to entertain, create a sense of joy, and, in many cases, convey meaning or commentary. At its core, humor aims to elicit laughter and amusement. It triggers positive emotional responses, contributing to joy, happiness, and sometimes surprise.

Humor is culturally dependent because it often relies on shared experiences, values, and linguistic nuances specific to a particular culture (Ladilova et al., U., 2022; Afriani, 2020; Bryant & Bainnridge, 2022). The cultural context greatly influences what people find funny; a community's unique social, historical, and linguistic elements shape humor. Humor often involves commentary on social norms, values, and taboos. What one culture finds

amusing or acceptable may not resonate with another due to differences in cultural perspectives. Many jokes and comedic references are based on shared cultural knowledge, including historical events, famous figures, and local traditions. With this shared context, humor may be recovered in individuals from a different cultural background. Cultural norms dictate what topics are considered sensitive or taboo (Etri, 2022). Humor that crosses these boundaries may be offensive or inappropriate in one culture but acceptable in another.

Humor is closely tied to language, and studying humor can provide insights into how language evolves (Vásquez, 2019; Attardo, 2020; Ginzburg, J., Mazzocconi, C., & Tian, Y., 2020). Human beings, often referred to as Homo Ludens, possess an innate inclination for play and amusement. They creatively engage in various forms of playful activities using the tools and devices available in their surroundings. Language, their primary mode of verbal communication, is no exception to this playful disposition. Consequently, humans are

often referred to as "talking creatures" or *Homo Loquens*.

Linguists can track changes in vocabulary, syntax, and discourse patterns through humor. Analyzing linguistic elements of humor can help researchers understand cultural nuances, norms, and values (Chavez & Del Prado, 2023). Jokes and comedic expressions can mirror societal beliefs and trends (Paton et al., 2019). Humor plays a significant role in social interactions, and linguistic analysis can shed light on how humor establishes and negotiates social identity (Dávila, 2019). Examining language in jokes and comedic discourse can reveal power dynamics, group affiliations, and the negotiation of social roles. Humor provides a rich and dynamic field for linguistic analysis, offering insights into language evolution, cultural dynamics, social identity, and language change. The ever-changing nature of humor in contemporary society makes it a compelling subject for linguistic exploration.

Humor in Indonesia is rich and diverse, reflecting the country's cultural, linguistic, and social complexities. The Indonesian sense of humor is deeply influenced by its history, traditions, and the diverse ethnic groups that comprise the nation. Indonesia has many ethnic groups, each with its own languages, customs, and traditions. Humor often draws on this cultural diversity, incorporating elements from various regions to create jokes and comedic expressions that resonate with a broad audience. Indonesian humor often involves linguistic play, including wordplay, puns, and creative language use. The diversity of languages and dialects spoken across the archipelago provides ample opportunities for linguistic humor. It serves as a cultural connector, bridging gaps between diverse communities, and manifests in various traditional and contemporary forms, reflecting the nation's heritage and its response to modern influences.

One interesting linguistic phenomenon in Indonesian related to humor is the quote in the truck containers. In Indonesia, people do not merely design their trucks with fabulous color paint or thematic images but also by writing several quotations in the truck containers. Truck containers' quotes are intended to be remembered by the reader. Therefore, the truck container quotes are

amusing and can prompt hearty laughter in their readers. While humor is highly subjective and influenced by many factors, this declaration might need more accurate.

Studies of humor in an Indonesian context began with research by Pradopo et al. (1985), who employed a semiotic approach to differentiate humor in literary works into three categories: humor as a language code, humor as a literary code, and humor as a cultural code. They argue that humor serves as a thematic tie and a literary fact. Noerhadi (1989) used a phenomenological approach to analyze the humor in editorial cartoons, uncovering contradictions of ideas between aggression and apprehension targets, emphasizing that this contradiction is tightly related to the essence of humor. Wijana (1995) analyzed cartoons using linguistic and pragmatic approaches, highlighting how humor often involves violations of the pragmatic use of language through various language plays. In addition to these studies, humor activities have broadened to encompass various aspects of human life, giving rise to diverse humor genres. Scholars such as Stokhof (1981), Wijana (2019), and Wijana (2014) have explored humor in riddles, politics, and ethnic stereotypes, respectively.

More recently, Mulyadi et al. (2021) analyzed the nuance of Indonesian humor by analyzing one of the Indonesian stand-up comedians, Dodit Mulyanto. Implementing the General Verbal Theory of Humor (GVTH) reveals that comedians use logical mechanisms such as false analogy, fallacious reasoning, absurd interpretation, and word repetition. However, instead of pointing to other people as the object of humor, the comedian dominantly puts himself as the object of humor to avoid impoliteness.

Harpriyanti et al. (2023) also analyzed the humor in South Kalimantan's oral literature using descriptive qualitative methods. The data were the recording of Mamanda's performance, played to commemorate the anniversary of Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. Through a case study, they found four types of humor. They are language, behavioral, gossiping, and pornographic humor. Those four function as advice, criticism, satire, and a form of tolerance.

This paper explores the humorous aspects embedded in the signs that adorn truck

containers, predominantly found on tailgates and the vehicles' left and right sides. While humor can manifest in various forms and does not exclusively rely on linguistic elements, language remains one of the richest sources of comedy, as Nelson (1990) noted. This playful manipulation of language is not confined to comedy alone; it is prevalent in other forms of ludicrous discourses, such as cartoons, riddles, vehicle registration numbers, and stand-up comedy.

Nelson (1990) highlights the distinctions between language used in humor and language found in other registers. He notes that jokes often involve a tightening or heightening language, which may be unnecessary and even disruptive to language's normal pragmatic and informational functions (Nelson, 1990). Many jokes, perhaps even the majority, arise from phenomena that can introduce confusion in pragmatic terms, making confusion a potential source of humor.

According to Bergson (1983), comedians typically employ three fundamental mechanisms in creating humorous discourses: repetition, inversion, and reciprocal interference. As the name suggests, the first mechanism involves the use of verbal or nonverbal repetition, with accidental repetition having the potential to create humor. Conversely, inversion is achieved by rearranging discourse elements to create confusion and convey different information. Finally, reciprocal interference is comedians' most extensive technique in generating jokes. This technique can take on various forms, including mode of speech contrasts, such as heroic versus unheroic, serious versus comic, learned versus unlearned, native versus acquired, upper class versus lower class, and more. These contrasting elements are cleverly juxtaposed, as described by Bergson (1983). In verbal performances, these phenomena manifest as manipulating words or sentences that share similar forms but possess divergent meanings. Alternatively, semantically distant words or phrases are ingeniously intermingled through graphical or phonetical punning.

This paper explores how the three techniques proposed by Bergson (1983), namely repetition, inversion, and reciprocal interference, are utilized and linguistically manifested by truck container sign creators in their quest to craft humorous discourses for

their creations. While some scholars have examined truck graffiti in the past, including Dewi (2004), Nasirudin (2014), and Ilmi (2015), they have yet to delve into the specific verbal techniques extensively employed by the creators of these signs to achieve their humorous objectives. To date; there has yet to be a comprehensive study dedicated to truck container signs. This study tries to fill this gap.

METHOD

This research focused on analyzing the discourses found on truck containers, primarily those displayed on the tailgates and occasionally on the sides and other parts of the vehicles. Data for this study were gathered from two primary sources: Google Search and the researcher's personal collection of truck container signs.

To create a comprehensive dataset, the researcher conducted an extensive online search using Google, which resulted in a diverse range of truck container signs. This online search provided access to a wide variety of signs, ensuring the inclusion of a significant and representative sample for the analysis. The researcher also augmented this online data with signs from their personal collection, which likely contained unique examples not easily found through online searches. This approach provided a more holistic view of the phenomenon.

The dataset included the textual content of the truck container signs, accompanied by images or pictures and relevant contextual information. This comprehensive dataset allowed for a thorough analysis, considering both the verbal and visual elements of the signs. To facilitate the analysis, the collected data were categorized based on the techniques employed by the sign creators to construct their designs. These techniques encompassed various linguistic and rhetorical devices, including repetition, inversion, and reciprocal interference. Categorizing the data in this manner enabled the identification of patterns and trends in the humor embedded within these signs. Notably, the data were presented in their original form, with grammatical and spelling corrections, preserving the authenticity of the signs for an accurate exploration of the intended and perceived humor within their unique cultural context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

By Bergson's (1983) theoretical framework, the research findings are categorized into three distinct sections: repetition, inversion, and reciprocal interference, each of which will be discussed in detail in the following sections. Upon thoroughly examining the collected data, it becomes evident that only a few instances demonstrate the exploitation of repetition and inversion techniques. However, akin to various other forms of humorous discourse, truck container signs predominantly rely on reciprocal interference techniques, and intriguingly, these techniques are frequently intertwined with one another.

Repetition

Examining the truck container signs revealed two instances showcasing the use of repetition. In the first example, repetition is employed in conjunction with idiomatic expressions. The sign cleverly combines "hati" (heart) with the idiomatic expression "hati-hati" (take care, be careful), as demonstrated in (1):

(1) *Ketika hatimu dan hatiku bertemu, di sana terdapat dua hati, yaitu hati-hati di jalan.*

Translation: "When your heart and mine met, there would be two hearts, i.e., be careful on the road."

The first example artfully combines repetition with idiomatic expressions to convey a multi-layered message. In this case, the word "hati," meaning "heart," is repeated and blended with the idiomatic expression "hati-hati," which translates to "take care" or "be careful" in Indonesian. The sign (1) reads, "Ketika hatimu dan hatiku bertemu, di sana terdapat dua hati, yaitu hati-hati di jalan," which can be interpreted as "When your heart and mine meet, there are two hearts, namely, 'be careful on the road.'" This sign masterfully intertwines expressions of love with crucial advice for safe driving. Love, a universally relatable emotion, coexists with the practical guidance to prioritize road safety. The juxtaposition of these themes generates humor and prompts contemplation, making it a compelling and engaging sign for the audience.

(2) *Aku janji gak akan nakal lagi, kalau aku nakal lagi, nanti aku janji lagi.*

Translation: "I promise I will not be naughty again. If I do something naughty again, I will promise again."

In contrast, the second example (2) uses repetition to underscore the unreliability of promises. The sign humorously reads, "Aku janji gak akan nakal lagi, kalau aku nakal lagi, nanti aku janji lagi," which translates to "I promise I will not be naughty again. If I do something naughty again, I will promise again." This sign appears to playfully critique the tendency of adult males to fall victim to unfulfilled promises made by women repeatedly. The repetition of the promise and the expectation of unkept vows adds a whimsical twist to the sign's message, shedding light on the humorous dimensions of human relationships and expectations.

These instances exemplify how repetition, when artfully integrated into truck container signs, can convey multiple layers of meaning and provoke laughter and contemplation. Despite its limited use within this medium, repetition showcases the creative and versatile language play employed by sign creators to engage their audience in unexpected and intriguing ways. These signs serve as cultural artifacts and humor sources, enriching the vibrant tapestry of Indonesia's expressive truck signage.

Inversion

Inversion is a syntactic technique that alters the standard word order in sentences, conveying information more intriguingly or thought-provokingly, as in sentences in (3).

(3) *Udah lama nggak gitu. Ah pas gitu nggak lama.*

Translation: "It has been a long time since not doing that, but when doing that, it did not last long."

The sentence (3) manipulates the permutation of the clause element "*lama nggak gitu*" (meaning 'long time not doing that') into "*gitu nggak lama*" (signifying 'when doing that, it did not last long'). The term "*gitu*" is a euphemistic expression used to allude to 'sexual intercourse.' It is one of the richest sources for constructing playful or humorous situations. However, it is important to exercise caution due to the propriety taboo associated with discussing such topics.

Another example of inversion (4) takes a heroic action "to save a widow"

(*menyelamatkan janda*). It humorously confuses it with an unheroic and paradoxical act, "to make one's own wife a widow" (*menjandakan istri sendiri*).

(4) *Jangan karena ingin menyelamatkan seorang janda jadi menjandakan istri sendiri.*

Translation: "Do not just because you want to save a widow, make your own wife a widow."

Sign (4) humorously warns against allowing the noble intention to save a widow to result in the unexpected consequence of turning one's own wife into a widow. This clever manipulation of linguistic elements elicits humor by challenging the audience's expectations and exposing the situation's absurdity.

Moreover, sign (5) provides valuable advice in a witty and thought-provoking manner.

(5) *Kalau hidupmu tak jadikan sholat sebagai penghapus dosa, maka dosa akan menghapus sholat dalam hidupmu.*

Translation: "If your life does not consider prayer as a cleanser of sins, then sins will erase prayer from your life."

It encourages individuals to maintain a regular practice of praying as a means to erase their sins. This sign underlines the belief that sins can be forgiven through prayer, but if one forgets to pray, the sins might accumulate and, in turn, erase the act of praying from one's life. This inversion technique highlights the interplay between religious guidance and human forgetfulness, resulting in a humorous and contemplative message.

In summary, inversion is a powerful linguistic tool used within these truck container signs to create humor through the clever permutation of sentence elements. These examples illustrate the versatility of this technique in generating laughter, pushing boundaries, and imparting wisdom, all within the confined space of these culturally significant signs.

Reciprocal Interference

According to Nielsen (1990), reciprocal interference is one of the most prevalent methods employed in creating humor, and it plays a central role in the construction of humorous truck container signs. In this section,

this technique is linguistically manifested within these signs. Following a detailed examination of the collected data, the analysis is presented progressively from the most basic to the more complex levels.

Reciprocal Interference: Phonological Alteration

The lowest level technique in play on words, phonological alteration, involves substituting or permuting one or more sounds within a word. The juxtaposition or association of these altered sounds can create strangeness and fun. The following examples demonstrate this technique in the context of truck container signs:

(6) *Kutunggu Jasadmu.*

Translation: "I am waiting for your corpse."

This sign humorously plays with the phrase "*Kutunggu jandamu*" (I am waiting for you to be a widow), typically used to express waiting for someone to become a widow. However, in this case, the word "*jandamu*" ('until you become a widow') is phonologically altered to "*jasadmu*" ('your corpse'). The humor lies in the unexpected substitution, requiring knowledge of the story of Sumanto, the 'corpse-eating man,' whose image is often depicted on truck signs.

(7) *Musti Bisha.*

Translation: "You must be able."

In this sign, the term "*Musti Bisha*" humorously stems from the phonological permutation and substitution of "Mitsubishi," a Japanese car brand. The sign cleverly transforms the familiar brand into a playful phrase, as in (7), that means 'You must be able.'

(8) *Papa pergi mama resah, Papa pulang mama basah.*

Translation: "Papa's going, my mom's restless. Papa's coming, my mom is wet."

This sign relies on the phonological alteration of words with dual meanings. "*Resah*" ('restless') and "*basah*" ('wet') are juxtaposed with their associative, and at times, risqué meanings, typically related to sexual intercourse.

(9) *Ojo ngomong sayang nek kowe durung sembahyang.*

Translation: "Do not say love if you have not yet prayed."

This sign delivers advice, urging individuals to prioritize prayer before

professing love. The humor here arises from the combination of "*sayang*" ('love') and "*sembahyang*" ('prayed') in a way that underscores the importance of prayer in maintaining a relationship.

(10) *Pergi karena tugas, pulang karena beras.*

Translation: "Going because of duty, and coming home because of rice."

In this sign, a semantic contradiction occurs through the juxtaposition of "*tugas*" ('duty') and "*beras*" ('rice'). "*Tugas*," or duty, has a positive connotation, and "*beras*," or rice, has a negative one since it is commonly related to poverty and hunger.

(11) *.Pada akhirnya yang berjuang akan kalah dengan yang beruang.*

Translation: "Finally, the struggler will lose against the bear"

"*Beruang*," in this case, does not literally refer to a bear but to someone who has much money (*uang*) or, in Indonesia, is commonly called "*ber-uang*." This sign sharply critiques capitalism, suggesting that financial power will always surpass individual effort. The play on words arises from the substitution of "*berjuang*" ('struggle') with "*beruang*" ('bear'), implying that the struggle is futile against capital owners.

In the case of signs (8), (9), (10), and (11), the phonological alterations involving the maintenance of final rhyming offer a unique layer of complexity to these expressions. This phonetic play serves the primary humorous function of eliciting laughter and amusement and adds a poetic dimension to the truck container signs. This dual function is significant as it showcases the creators' ingenuity in using language not just for comedic effects but also to craft aesthetically pleasing and rhythmically resonant expressions.

Preserving final rhyming ensures that the signs possess a certain lyrical quality, enhancing their memorability and artistic appeal. By maintaining a poetic underpinning, these signs become more than just humorous messages; they become small poetic compositions in their own right. This duality allows the signs to engage the audience on multiple levels, eliciting both laughter and an appreciation for the artistry involved in their creation. This interplay between humor and poetry demonstrates the versatility of language as a tool for creative expression on

these truck containers. It also highlights how the sign creators use phonological alterations to provoke smiles and laughter and transform these everyday vehicles into moving canvases for linguistic play and artistic experimentation.

Reciprocal Interference: Ambiguities

Ambiguity plays a central role in creating humor in truck container signs, and it arises from a range of linguistic elements that take on multiple meanings, either through metaphorical usage, figurative expressions, or clever combinations of similar words and acronyms. This multifaceted approach to creating ambiguity adds depth and humor to the signs.

One way ambiguity is introduced is through metaphor or figurative meaning. For example, in sign (12), the word "*dari*" (from) is used to signify both the starting point at "zero" and the origin of "Klaten." This figurative extension of the word's meaning creates an amusing play on words. In sign (13), the term "*numpaki*" or drive is used metaphorically in association with sexual intercourse, introducing ambiguity. This kind of wordplay relies on the associative power of words and often results in comical or thought-provoking expressions.

(12) + *Dari nol ya mas.*

Translate: "It starts from zero, brother"

- *Bukan, saya dari Klaten.*

Translate: "No, I am from Klaten"

(13) *Ora nduweni wis tau numpaki*

Translate: "Do not have but ever drive it."

In some instances, truck container sign creators leverage the associative power of words to infuse humor into their messages. This approach involves manipulating words with multiple meanings or associations skillfully, resulting in witty and entertaining expressions.

Furthermore, another example of such signs is in (14). Sign (14) ingeniously utilizes Javanese words like "*mlebu*" (enter), "*lunyu*" (slippery), and "*metu*" (exit) to craft a comical wordplay.

(14) *Mlebu lunyu, metu lunyu.*

Translate: "Coming in is slippery, and going out is also slippery."

This sign cleverly capitalizes on the dual meaning of "*lunyu*," which can signify both

"slippery" and "slip inside," injecting humor into the concept of entering and exiting.

Additionally, more examples in signs (15), (16), (17), and (18) rely on metaphors to create humorous comparisons. These expressions not only aim to generate linguistic beauty but also offer a unique source of amusement, closely intertwined with the daily experiences of truck drivers. In these instances, the quality of love is humorously juxtaposed with various elements like the purity of fuel gas, which serves as the vehicle's energy source, or even the dimensions of parking lines, the length of a toll road, and the weight of the truck's load. These unconventional comparisons are rarely encountered in other forms of communication.

(15) *Cintamu tak semurni solarku.*

Translate: "Your love is not as pure as my diesel fuel."

(16) *Cinta sopir hanya sebatas parkir.*

Translate: "A driver's love is only as vast as a parking line."

(17) *Kukira cintamu sepanjang Tol Cipali. Ternyata cintamu seperti Tol Palikanci yang singkat menemani.*

Translate: "I thought your love was as long as the Cipali Toll road. However, it turns out, it is more like the short journey of the Palikanci Toll road."

(18) *Cintamu tak seberat muatanku.*

Translate: "Your love is not as heavy as the load I carry."

Ambiguity often finds its amusing form in truck container signs through the creative use of homonymic pairs. These pairs combine two or more linguistic expressions that share identical or nearly identical forms but carry entirely unrelated meanings. When it comes to these signs, this homonymy takes shape through three distinct approaches. The first approach centers on inventing new acronyms, some rooted in established ones or words with established meanings.

Consider the following examples to illustrate this ingenious linguistic play:

(19) "Kiss" (the English word) transforms into the acronym "*Kisah indah seorang sopir*," humorously conveying the "Beautiful story of a driver."

(20) "*Mawar Biru*," originally referring to a 'blue rose' in Javanese, humorously

interprets to "*Mangan Wareg Bisa Turu*," signifying "eating full and sleeping well."

(21) "Bojonegoro," the name of a city in East Java, takes on a playful twist by becoming an acronym for "*Bocah joko nekad golek rondo*," playfully suggesting "A bachelor determined to get a widow."

This creative linguistic manipulation also extends to established acronyms, as seen in the following examples:

(22) "BPJS," typically standing for "*Badan Penyelenggaraan Jaminan Sosial*" (Social Assurance Organizer), humorously adopts the interpretation "*Butuh Pelukan Janda Semok*," indicating "longing for a plump widow's hug."

(23) "Pajero," widely recognized as a car brand, is humorously reinterpreted as "*Panas Jobo Jero*," suggesting "hot in and outside."

(24) "*Hobiku wiridan*," translating to "My hobby is wiridan" (reciting passages from the Quran), ingeniously combines "*wira-wiri turut dalan*," which humorously means "Going here and there along the road." The sign even humorously advises, "Do not accompany me if you lack strength, as you might end up being considered mad."

These examples epitomize the inventive and playful fusion of homonyms and acronyms within truck container signs, reflecting that this form of communication and the whimsical nature of t

he second way is carried out by combining two or more identical or similar expressions of different languages, mainly between Javanese, Indonesian, and English. The broken English expressions are translated word for word, such as found in (25) and (26).

The second method involves blending two or more identical or similar expressions from different languages, predominantly Javanese, Indonesian, and English. This results in humorous broken English expressions that are translated literally, as demonstrated in (25) and (26) below:

(25) "Don't Rich People Difficult" humorously translates to "*Jangan kaya orang susah*," meaning "Do not be like a poor person." This playful transformation juxtaposes English and Indonesian, creating a comical twist in the message.

(26) "I am not father" amusingly becomes "*Saya nggak papa*," which humorously translates to "I am alright." This

creative linguistic blend showcases the inventive use of multiple languages to convey amusing messages.

It is important to note that these translations may need to be more careful, disregarding the contextual use of English words. For instance, the English adjective "rich" is paired with the informal Indonesian preposition "*kaya*," meaning "to be like," which results in an unconventional expression. Similarly, the English noun "father" is mixed with "*papa*," which can mean "matter" but also colloquially refers to "father." Sometimes, the signs may not actually contain English expressions but are written in a manner that mimics English spelling, creating an illusion of English-language content. It demonstrates the clever and sometimes whimsical use of language in truck container signs.

Truck container signs often employ homonymic combinations, where identical or similar linguistic expressions with unrelated meanings are cleverly merged. These combinations are used to create humor and amusement, and they come in various forms:

(27) "Is one My do" humorously translates to "*Isona maedo*," meaning "What you can do is just skeptical." This phrase plays with the different meanings of the words, adding a humorous twist.

(28) "*The me a nack is three*" transforms into "Demi anak Istri," humorously conveying "For the sake of children and wife." The transformation blends expressions from different languages to create a comical message.

(29) "*Pra one are you the end tought so peer*" humorously turns into "Prawan ayu dienthot sopir," which playfully translates to "A beautiful girl is having a sexual intercourse with a driver." This example showcases the playful use of language in these signs.

(30) "She book carry do it" becomes "*Sibuk cari duit*," meaning "Busy looking for money." The signs creatively combine elements from different languages to deliver a humorous message.

Some signs involve more extensive discourse with multiple clauses, as seen in:

(31), where the message "Wish A Does do wrong. Next do wrong. A Does the seek been she gear. Awake is so she heat or a die ro boonk smoot and law leer bend or a key cut" humorously translates to "*Wis adus durung*.

Nek durung, adus disik ben seger. Awake iso sehat ora di rubung semut and laler ben ora kecut." The signs use wordplay and linguistic creativity to deliver a humorous message about taking a bath for freshness.

In some rare cases, the homonymic combination involves clashes between Indonesian words, as exemplified by:

(32), where "*Kukodok-kodok kotangmu*" humorously translates to "I explore your bra." It is achieved through visual elements, including a frog and the number 2 to represent reading frequency and a picture of pincers to symbolize "*tang*" (pincers). "*Kodok*" has two unrelated meanings, "frog" and "explore," while "*tang*" is the final syllable of "*kotang*," meaning "bra." The sign employs colloquial Indonesian to create a humorous and somewhat risqué message.

These examples demonstrate the creative and witty use of language in truck container signs, where homonymic pairs and linguistic wordplay are harnessed to entertain and amuse readers.

Reciprocal Interference: Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition is a creative technique frequently employed by the creators of truck container signs. It involves replacing or substituting linguistic elements, such as words, phrases, or clauses, and arranging them in ways that form absurd or humorous constructions, either explicitly or associatively. In the case of associative constructions, it is essential for readers to fully understand the cultural context from which these signs are derived.

In typical driving contexts, people often offer prayers for safety and to avoid traffic accidents. Expressions like "*Utamakan selamat!*" (give priority to safety) or "*Jauhkanlah aku dari bahaya*" (keep me away from danger) are commonly used. However, truck signs playfully subvert these standard expressions to create humorous effects, as seen in (33) and (34), where the messages carry jokes despite the serious nature of the original expressions:

(33) "*Utamakan bayar hutang*" humorously translates to "Give priority to paying your debts." This juxtaposition replaces the notion of safety with the idea of settling financial obligations, adding a humorous twist to the message.

(34) "*Ya Allah jauhkanlah aku dari ibu-ibu pake motor yang lampu sennya ke kiri tapi beloknya ke kanan*" humorously conveys "Oh God, keep me far away from mothers on motorcycles who signal left but turn right." This playful reinterpretation of the prayer involves a specific and relatable scenario encountered on the road, emphasizing the humorous side of the situation.

These examples illustrate how juxtaposition infuses humor into truck container signs by creatively altering familiar expressions and cultural contexts to generate laughter or absurdity.

In the original birth control slogan in Indonesian, it reads: "Dua anak cukup. Laki-laki perempuan sama saja," which translates to "Two children are enough, boy or girl is just the same." However, truck driver copywriters often employ creative substitutions to deliver unexpected and humorous messages, as evident in (35) below:

(35) "*2 anak cukup. 2 istri bangkrut.*" This humorous adaptation translates to "Two children are enough. Two wives are bankrupt." Here, the wordplay replaces the original message about the sufficiency of two children with a surprising twist about the financial strain of having two wives. This shift in meaning adds humor and absurdity to the sign, demonstrating the clever use of language in these truck container messages.

The following are additional examples (36 to 39) of clever linguistic juxtaposition on truck container signs:

(36) *Pacar Isi Ulang.*

Translation: refilled boyfriend or girlfriend.

This humorous phrase suggests the idea of recharging or refilling one's romantic partner, comparing them to a rechargeable object, like a battery.

(37) *Mr. Ompong Panitia Hari Kiamat.*

Translation: Mr. Toothless, the committee of the end of the world.

This juxtaposition playfully implies that the person named "Mr. Ompong" is in charge of organizing an event as significant as the end of the world.

(38) "*Semarang kaline banjir, penak sing nyawang timbang sing mikir*" originally from Waljinhah's song "*Jangkrik Genggong*," translates to "Semarang, the river is flooding. It is more comfortable watching than thinking."

In this case, the witty change replaces the call to avoid anxiety with the suggestion to observe the flooding rather than overthinking it.

(39) *Jual bibit bayi.*

Translation; Selling baby seed.

While the word "bibit" usually refers to plant seed or seedlings, this sign provocatively plays with the word's associative reference, likening it to human sperm.

These examples demonstrate how truck container signs often use playful and creative language to convey humorous and absurd messages by juxtaposing unexpected elements or substituting conventional phrases.

Taboo and Insults

As described previously, Reciprocal interference can transform taboo topics into sources of pride or insults into humorous remarks in joking activities. In serious conversations, it would be considered inappropriate to claim that one's luck comes from another person's anus, openly label someone as physically unattractive, or refer to them as a monkey. However, in the context of humor, these elements can be found, as exemplified below:

(40) *Sedot WC. Rejekiku soko silitmu.*

Translation: Toilet suction. My luck is from your anus".

This sign humorously associates personal luck with an unexpected source, creating a playful and absurd juxtaposition.

(41) *Truk ini memang jelek. Muatannya juga jelek. Yang baca, malah tambah jelek.*

Translation: This truck is really bad. The passenger is also bad. The reader, is even worse.

Here, insults are used in a lighthearted manner, where the insults get progressively more humorous and exaggerated.

(42) "*Mburiku munyuk*" humorously states, "In my back is a monkey," which playfully insults or teases the reader by comparing them to a monkey.

Truck sign creators often employ euphemisms to cloak taboo expressions, as demonstrated by (43):

(43) *Ora usah dolanan barang nyelempit. Enake sakmenit. Rekosone sundul langit.*

Translation: Do not play with a tucked-in organ. The pleasure is just one minute. The suffering is as if reaching the sky.

This sign uses the euphemistic phrase "barang nyelempit" to refer to a sensitive topic, highlighting how humor can transform a taboo subject into a humorous message.

Truck container quotes perform a repetition, inversion, reciprocal interference (phonological alteration, ambiguities, and juxtaposition), taboo, and insults to make a humorous nuance. These humorous signs often serve multiple communicative functions, including informative, poetic, directive, and expressive functions, albeit to varying degrees.

To fully grasp the meaning and humor conveyed by truck container signs, one must understand the social and cultural nuances of the Indonesian language and its usage. Indonesian cultures play significant roles in deciding whether the utterances or quotations are humorous. The interplay of regional customs, sexual references, and linguistic subtleties shapes the comedic elements embedded in these signs. Additionally, cultural sensitivity becomes paramount, as certain jokes may rely on shared experiences, social norms, or specific cultural references that might not be universally understood. Therefore, a nuanced appreciation of the cultural context is indispensable for interpreting the humor encapsulated in these unique expressions, ultimately enhancing cross-cultural communication and fostering a deeper understanding of Indonesian society.

The result of this study has supported Mulyadi's (2021). Relating to Mulyadi (2021), truck container signs also perform false analogy and word repetition. A false analogy in humor occurs when a comparison is made between two things that may seem similar on the surface but, upon closer inspection, have significant differences that render the analogy invalid or misleading. In humor, false analogies can be employed for comedic effect, often relying on unexpected or absurd comparisons. However, it is essential to note that the humor is derived from the deliberate exaggeration of similarities or the juxtaposition of dissimilar elements.

The present study's findings align with Harpriyanti's (2023). In the truck container signs, some of the humorous quotes are made up of pornographic humor relating to sexual interplays, as in (3), (4), (8), (39), and (43). Satires are also found in most of the truck container signs, such as in (25), (27), (31), (33),

and (42). Nevertheless, some of the truck container signs also deliver a cheerful nuance by conveying advice in quotes such as (5), (9), and (11). The positive nuance is also derived from Indonesian people's religious customs or traditions, as in (24).

CONCLUSION

Joking activities are a vital aspect of human life, providing a means to seek pleasure and amusement. These activities take various forms, with verbal play being a notable manifestation of humans as both playful beings (*homo ludens*) and creatures who engage in conversation (*homo loquens*). In the context of truck container signs, we can identify the presence of the three forms of verbal humor outlined in Henri Bergson's theory: repetition, inversion, and reciprocal interference. The third method, reciprocal interference, is the most prevalent among these. This technique is employed through phonological alterations, ambiguities, juxtaposed constructions, taboo subjects, and humorous insults. In summary, humor is deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of societies. It reflects shared experiences, values, and linguistic nuances within a specific cultural context. The cultural dependence on humor adds richness and diversity to human communication and underscores the importance of cultural awareness and sensitivity in interpreting and sharing jokes across different cultures.

While the exploration of humor in the context of truck container signs provides valuable insights into the diverse forms of verbal play, there are limitations to consider in this study. An in-depth exploration of the social and cultural factors influencing the creation and reception of truck container sign humor could enhance the current understanding. Investigating the historical, political, and socio-economic contexts that shape reciprocal interference and other humor techniques in this specific medium would contribute to a more nuanced analysis.

In conclusion, while this study sheds light on the verbal play found in truck container signs, future research should strive for a more inclusive and culturally diverse approach, consider a broader range of humor theories, and delve deeper into the societal factors influencing the creation and reception

of humorous expressions in this unique communicative context.

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