

Language Style of Comedy: A Study in Stylistics

BY

JULIUS JAMES

MAT NO: ART1105341

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of
Bachelor of Arts (B.A) Degree in Linguistics and African Languages,
University of Benin.**

August 2015.

LANGUAGE STYLE OF COMEDY: A STUDY IN STYLISTICS

BY

**JULIUS JAMES
MAT NO: ART1105341**

**DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS
FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

AUGUST, 2015.

CERTIFICATION

I **JULIUS JAMES** a student in the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Benin with Matriculation Number **ART1105341** has completed the requirements for course work and research for the Bachelor of Arts Degree of the University of Benin. The work embodied in this Project is original and has been submitted in part or whole for any other degree or diploma programme of this or any other university or institution.

_____ **Mr./Mrs./Miss/** _____
Author

Prof. /Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss _____
Supervisor

Prof. Dr. /Mr. /Mrs./Miss _____
Head of Department

External Examiner

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the almighty God for his love and guidance. Also, to my mum, Mrs. Omolayo James.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my profound gratitude to every member of my family especially my mother Mrs. Omolayo James, she's more than two thousand men put together, her support have been exceptional and also to my special one.

More especially, my sincere gratitude goes to my project supervisor, Dr. Mrs. Ikoyo-eweto. A woman of excellence who made sure that this work was a huge success. I'm not forgetting Mr. A. Godsent for his invaluable, constructive advice and suggestions which was of a great help to me.

I am also grateful to all lecturers of the Department of Linguistics, University of Benin, Mr. W. Aigbedo, Dr. Mrs Omorogbe and late Mr. J. Nweke of blessed memory, just to mention a few, especially all my course mates, Perfect, Donalson, Yemi, Chinyere and others.

Finally, to all Uniben students. It has been an eventful and wonderful time with you all. I promise to be an Ambassador of you all in whatever sphere of human endeavor I might eventually find myself.

ABSTRACT

This work is **a study in stylistics**. Its goal is to examine the language of comedy in our society. It shows the effect of the language of comedy on the audience and what the audience has to benefit from the language used by comedians.

The theoretical framework, ‘ethnography of communication’ using the speaking model, is used to accurately and satisfactorily describe any speech event, more especially the joke extract for this study. The data for the study are joke extract, the sources of the data were fathered from various comedy shows and radio station in Nigeria.

The work shows, through critical analyses that comedy is beyond entertainment, it mirrors the society. It also shows what makes a comedian special from other character, by examining their style of language and the message; what it communicate.

In conclusion the main contribution of this work is that it suggest re-examination of people towards comedy. It is also noticed that there is a link between linguistics and literature. Hence, there is need for other linguist to work on literature.

TABLE CONTENTS

Title page	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-i
Certification-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-iii
Dedication	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-iv
Acknowledgement		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-v
Table of Content		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-vi
Abstract		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-vii

CHAPTER ONE

1.0. Background of Study		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-1
1.1. Methodology		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-4
1.2. Purpose of Study		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-4
1.3. Significance of Study and Justification		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-5

CHAPTER TWO

2.0. Review of Related Literature	-	-	-	-	-	-7
2.1. Conceptual Review of Literature	-	-	-	-	-	-7
2.1.1. What is Language	-	-	-	-	-	-8
2.1.2. What is Style	-	-	-	-	-	-10
2.1.3. Types of Style	-	-	-	-	-	-10
2.1.4. What is Comedy	-	-	-	-	-	-12
2.1.5. Brief History of Comedy	-	-	-	-	-	-13
2.1.6. What is Stylistics	-	-	-	-	-	-15
2.2. Previous Study	--	-	-	-	-	-15
2.2.1 Sociolinguistic	-	-	-	-	-	-18
2.3. Concern of Present Study	-	-	-	-	-	-20

CHAPTER THREE

3.0. Theoretical Framework	-	-	-	-	-	-22
3.1. Ethnography of Communication	-	-	-	-	-	-22
3.2. History of Ethnography of Communication	-	-	-	-	-	-23
3.3. How it Works (Usage)	-	-	-	-	-	-25

3.4. Aspects of the Theory of Ethnography of Communication-28

3.5. Use of Aspects of the Theoretical Framework. - - -30

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1. Analysis and Discussion - - - - - 32

4.1.1. Analysis of Written Extracts (Joke 1) - - - -32

4.1.2. Joke 2- - - - -36

4.1.3. Joke 3- - - - -39

4.1.4. Joke 4- - - - -41

4.1.5. Joke 5- - - - -44

4.2. Summary and Conclusion - - - - -47

4.2.1. Results and Findings - - - - -48

4.2.2. Recommendation - - - - -48

Appendix - - - - -50

References - - - - -56

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This work examines how language is used in comedy. It is therefore a study in stylistics. The work would show the style of languages used in comedy on television, at theatre, film shows and stand-up comedy. The study concerns the manner, ways and choice of language employed in comedy. It falls within the sub-branch of linguistics called sociolinguistics.

According to Labov (1960) sociolinguistics is the descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations and context on the way language is used and the effects of language use in society. Sociolinguistics differs from sociology of language, in that the focus of sociolinguistics is the effect of the society on the language, while sociology of language focuses on language effect on society. Therefore, sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between society and language.

Uwajeh (2002) defines language as any system structure of sign and meaning for the communication of experience.

Style is a particular procedure, manner or way by which an act is performed. According to Labov (1960) in linguistics variation. Style is a set of linguistics variants with specific social meanings. In this context, social meanings can include group membership, personal attribute or beliefs. Linguistics variation is at the heart of the conception of linguistic style. Without variation there is no basis for distinguishing social meanings. Variation can occur syntactically, lexically and phonologically.

In this study, the interest would be in the syntactic and lexical structure of comedy. By syntactic structure we mean how words are arranged in comedy. In lexical we are looking at the vocabulary, the kind of words that are used in comedy.

The term comedy can be traced to ancient Greece, where Aristophanes the father of comedy, did a lot of work on this area. According to Aristophanes (422BC) who is known as the greatest comic writer, play writer and poet, comedy is anything that creates humor in the mind of the audience, in his work, he explains how words are arranged in comedy. According to modern views, comedy refers to any discourse or work generally intended to be humorous or to amuse by inducing laughter

especially in theatre, television, film and stand up comedies. It can be said that the literary genre started in Greece.

This work falls within the study of stylistics, because the focus is on the style employed in comedy.

According to Jakobson (1970) stylistics as a conceptual discipline may attempt to establish principles capable of explaining particular choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language such as in the literary production and reception of genre, in the study of folk art, in the study of spoken dialects and registers, and can be applied to areas such as discourse analysis as well as literary criticism.

1.1. METHODOLOGY

Data for this work were collected at events (comedy shows; nite of a thousand laughs) where comedians told jokes. Jokes extracts for my analysis were collected from professional comedians. Specifically from the professional comedians in Nigeria. The focus of this study is to uncover the style of language used by comedians.

1.2. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The aim for this work is to examine the styles of language used in comedy.

There have been misconceptions about comedy over the years; these misconceptions concern the comedians and the audience. In the part of the audience, this has to do with the attitude of the society towards comedy. Jokes are generally regarded as a comic relief and as such not much attention is paid to comedy and the important role it plays in the lives of human beings.

On the part of comedians, how comedians construct their joke, their choice of language. Just because someone is funny does not mean he or she can do good comedy.

These misconceptions have given the society the notion, that the words used in comedy are common; hence comic works are not seen as intelligent. Most comedians especially in Nigeria have not been able to work on their choices of words. They lack stylistic skills.

This work would help to resolve these misconceptions; it would do an analysis of the style and choice of words used in comedy by some professional comedians.

In this way it would help and encourage some comedians to work more on how to improve their language style in comedy.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY AND JUSTIFICATION.

This study investigates the style employed in comedy, and the message that is conveyed in a joke. This study would help the society at large, especially comedians, comedy mirrors the society, so when a comedian tells jokes that is not so professional and funny, the society might not sponsor and support comedy. Comedians make the people of the world happy at occasional cases like events. So, the work is helpful to the comedian and to the society.

Furthermore, it will build in the mind of people a new and professional concept of comedy.

Generally, it should show the importance of linguistic study in literature because comedy is a genre of literature. There is no comedy

without language, and no style of comedy without language. The study would show this relationship between language and comedy. It would also serve as an opportunity to document some instances of comedy.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is a review of literature relevant to this study. This review is in three sub-sections and is as follows:

- i. Conceptual review of literature
- ii. Previous studies
- iii. The concern of the present study.

2.1. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

This section examines terms central to the topic of this study. These concepts are as follows:

Language style

What is language

What is style

Comedy

- What is comedy
- Brief history of the origin of comedy.

A study in stylistics

What is stylistics.

2.1.1. WHAT IS LANGUAGE

Language is a human system of signs used in expressing ideas, feelings, and emotions. It is a very intrinsic part of human nature. In view of this, writers and authors have done a lot of work to bring in a very distinct definition of the term “language”. It has attracted scholars in different fields in philosophy, psychology, anthropology and science. Several of those disciplines have examined language in relation to specific concern or interest. But to the language scholars or linguists, language is an independent unity with a system of its own being discoverable through scientific observation and study Alo (1995:7).

Generally, the view of “what language is”, varies as some scholars may see language as a “purely communication tool used for communicating feelings, emotions and ideas”, others see it as a human characteristic which differentiates them from other animal society, yet others see it as a set of organized symbols (sound) of vocal apparatus.

Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication, Wardhough (1986:9). Here, language is seen as a “system” which is arbitrary in the sense that there is no relation between the word and the object it represents. He also restricted language to only spoken form (vocal symbols) leaving out other signs and forms which are not spoken.

As change is constant in nature, many modification is and research have been done by many scholars to modify the definition of language as an arbitrary symbol.

Uwajeh, (2002:16) states that “language is any system of signs for the communication of experience”. Uwyeh recognizes language as a “system”. He made a slight difference by using the word “sign” which he assumes to consist of both vocal (verbal) and non-vocal (non- verbal) language.

This is the definition of language adopted in my work. Because it explains the ‘eye’ at which language is used in our society.

Therefore, Uwajeh (2002) definition of language is adopted in this work.

2.1.2. WHAT IS STYLE

According to advanced learner's dictionary, style is a manner of doing or presenting things, especially a fashionable one. This also means 'style' is a way of doing things different from the norm. As an illustration, someone would say Mr. Godsent is a good M.C (Master of Ceremony), because he handles the microphone with style.

2.1.3. TYPES OF STYLE

Crystal D. (1987:66). Asserted that " the many sense of style can be classified into two broad types; the evaluative and the descriptive". According to Crystal.

(i) Evaluative style.

Here, style is thought of in a critical way, the features that makes someone or something stand out from an undistinguished excellence in

performance, or a desired standard of production as when someone is complimented for having style or condemned. For writing without style.

(ii) Descriptive Style.

Descriptive style lack the value judgment as stated above in evaluative style. it simply describe the set of distinctive characteristics that identifies objects, periods or places for example we can tale about Shakespearean style, house style of an institution, legal style and so on.

Descriptive styles are found more in scientific studies such as the various branches of linguistics, where there is a concern for objective identification without evaluation.

According to Labov (1960), style is a set of sociolinguist variant with social meanings. Here, Labov try to explain the uniqueness of style and its perceived meanings in the society. Labov's definition of style is widely accepted and adopted in this work also.

2.1.4. WHAT IS COMEDY

According to advanced learner's dictionary, a comedy is a play/film or movies that are intended to be "AMUSING" with a happy ending.

- An amusing aspect of something "humour" from the above definition comedy is intended to be FUNNY, there is however something that makes it funny that is, what this work will examine.

Aristophanes (422BC) refers comedy as anything that creates humor in the mind of the audience. Aristophanes sees comedy as humorous in the mind of the audience which means there is a connection between the play (comedy) and the audience.

2.1.5. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF COMEDY

The evolution of comedy is similar than that of its sister arts though as to its origin and earlier development there is a little exact information. All that Aristotle can tell us is that it first took shape in Megara and Sicyon, whose people are noted for their coarse humor and sense of the

indicious, while Susarion, the earliest comic poet was a native of Megarian town.

Add to this is that it rose from Phallic procession of the Greek, as did tragedy from the dirty ramb and we have about all that is known as to the inception of the higher branch of the drama. At county festivals held in celebration of the vintage it was the custom of the people to pass from village to village. Some in cart uttering the vile jest and abuse unjustly attribute to the tragic choruses, others on foot, bearing aloft the phallic emblem and singing the praise of phallos the comrade of Bacchus in cities it was also the custom, after an evening banquet for young men to roam around the streets with torches in their hands preceded by lyre or flute players, such as band revelers. Was called a *comus* and a member of the band a *comedia* or comedy just as a song of satire was named a *tragoedia* or tragedy.

The phallic processions, on as late as the days of Aristotle riotous youths who infested the street of Athens delighted in their comic buffooneries hence, it was that comedy found at home. In Athens, during

the time of panicle for it furnished the damages with a safe and convenient means of attacking their political opponents when formally established as a branch of the drama. It chorus, though less numerous and costlier than the dirty rambic features by sinearing them with less of wines, by a consensus of authorities comedy has been arranged in three division or rather should they be termed variation inform they are the old, the middle and new.

2.1.6. WHAT IS STYLISTIC

Stylistic is a discipline under the field of applied linguistics. A goal is to establish Principles which explain a particular choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language. Stylistics as a discipline examines through critical analysis the choice of words made by individuals. This is the reason for the adoption of stylistics in this work to explain language style.

2.2. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Todd and Hancock (1990) examines the words we use in communicating our ideas which are determined by our past experience and

out-world view. He further describes why we use words, intrinsically according to him the extent or way one talks is the way one thinks. The limit of ones thought and ones language determine ones verbal style. For example the way a child in kindergarten talks is different from the way a secondary school leaver talks. Because, the child is limited to what he/she is taught in class or at home.

This work shows through vivid analysis that stylistic choices maybe deliberate and conscious or automatic and unthinking. The same individual can alter his/her style due to change in the communication situation or the setting. In other words every speaker has a unique style which maybe influence by time and circumstances. For example, in the year 1990, there was no such word as “selfie” (taking a picture by yourself with your phone). But the word is currently in use, and situation make you individuals to use it at times too, during when the want some to send them their picture through social platform like facebook and the others.

The work shows the meaning of style and stylistics which is related to this present study and in the last paragraph situation and individual choice of

words (style) were analyzed. The work gives an insight about language style in general, that's why its relevant in this study.

Izzard (2013) Tried telling jokes in foreign language, and discovered that humor doesn't translate. Its not that the play on words (pun) doesn't work, it's because the funny bone (amusing part) doesn't always synchronize. For example a joke told in pidgin, if copied and a German comedian wants to tell it, in German using the same line of structure, its not going to be amusing as the pidgin joke was.

Izzard's work was to oppose the fact that there's no such thing as national sense of humor.

This work showed through critical analysis that humor varies from region to region, and that humor cannot be translated. The style of a country is different from that of another. This work is relevant to the present study because it talks about comedy and its style, in relation to the area and audience.

David (1987:8) the magical influence of language is a theme which reverberates through out the literature and legends of the world.

Language is a universal and a significant attribute of man. They believe that words control object, people and spirit can be seen in the use of magical formulae, incantation litanies of names and many others, rites in black and white magic, and in organized religion. The language is thought to be able to cure sickness, keep evil away, bring good to one self, and harm an enemy, such languages usually has to be with great exactitude of an effect is to be obtained.

Thus, from the above it is obvious that language perform several activities in human life, we ought to bear in mind that as the functions of language varies , so also how we put it in use varies. For example the language use in law court by lawyers cannot be the same as the one use by medical doctors in the hospitals these professional terminologies are distinct from each other. This why the study is relevant to the present study.

2.2.1 SOCIOLINGUISTICS

William Labov born December 4, 1927. Is an American linguist, widely regarded as the founder of the discipline of variationist sociolinguistics. He has been described as an enormously original and influential figure that has created much of the methodology of

sociolinguistics. He is employed as a professor in the department of linguistics university of Pennsylvania, and pursues research in sociolinguistics, language change, and dialectology. He semi-retired at the end of spring 2014.

Labov(1960) defines and explains sociolinguistics as the descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations and context, on the way language is used, and the effect of language use on society. Sociolinguistics differs from sociology of language in that the focus of sociology of language is the effect of the society on the language, while the sociolinguistics focuses on language effect on the society. Sociolinguistics overlaps to a considerable degree with pragmatics. It is historically closely related to linguistic anthropology and the distinction between the two fields has even been questioned.

It also studies how language varieties differ between groups separated by certain social variables (e.g, ethnicity, religion, status, gender, level of education, age, e.t.c) and how creation and adherence to these rules is used to categorize individuals in social or socioeconomic classes. As the usage

varies from place to place, language usage also varies among social classes, and it is these sociolects that sociolinguistics studies.

Understanding language in society means that one also understands the social network in which language is embedded. A social network is another way of describing a particular speech community in terms of relations between individual members in a community. A network could be loose or tight depending on how members interact with each other.

Labov(1960) tell us about the interaction of linguistics with the society. And this is what forms the bases for the current work

2.3. CONCERN OF PRESENT STUDY

Previous works cited on this chapter shows the importance of language and how comedy is used across various contexts.

The present study examines how language is used in comedy, the style employed, by critically analyzing comedy extracts. This analysis however, will be seen through the eyes of ethnography of communication. In other words, this work would examine the pattern of communication employed in comedy, more importantly the language used.

Socially and literally speaking, there can't be language or communication if style is not involved. This means that different social context with their style, for example the doctors have registers.

Finally this work is concern about what goes through the mind of the audience during a play/film (comedy).

CHAPTER THREE

3.0. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter throws light on the theoretical framework by which this study is conducted.

This theoretical framework is that known as ethnography of communication¹. The founders, history and the relevance of ethnography of communication to the present study are presented as follows:

3.1. ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION

The ethnography of communication (EOC) formally called ethnography at speaking, is the analysis of communication within the wider context of the social and cultural practices and beliefs of the members of a particular speech community. It is a method of discourse analysis in linguistics that draws on the anthropological field of ethnography. Unlike ethnography proper, E.O.C takes into account both the communicative form, which may include, but is not limited to spoken language and its function within the given culture.

General aims of this quantitative research method include being able to discern which communication acts and or codes are important to different

communication events and group. Members learn these codes, in order to provide insight into particular communities. This additional insight maybe used to enhance communication with group members, make sense of group member's decision, and distinguish groups from one another, among other things.

3.2. HISTORY

Hymes (1962) proposed the ethnography of communication as an approach towards analyzing patterns of language use within speech communities, in order to provide support for his idea of communicative competence, which itself was a reaction to Noam Chomsky distinction between linguistic competence and linguistic performance.

Originally coined “ethnography of speaking”. In Dell Hymes (1962) paper it was redefined in his (1964) paper, Introduction: Towards ethnographies of communication. To accommodate for the non-verbal characteristics of communication, although most E.O.C researchers still tend to focus upon speaking as it is generally considered to be a prominent – even primordial means of communication. The term ethnography of communication is meant to be descriptive of the characteristics than an

approach towards language from an anthropological standpoint must take.

Namely, according to Hymes, it must

1. Investigate directly the use of language in contexts of situations so as to discern patterns proper to speech activity.
2. Take a context, a community, investigating its communicative habits as a whole, in other words, rather than divorcing linguistic from its function, the analysis of a culture's or community communication, linguistic and otherwise, must occur with respect to the socio-cultural context of its use and the functions of the meaning conveyed. As Deborah Cameron puts it, "if you are mainly concern with the way a certain speech event fits into a whole network of cultural beliefs and practices, you will spend more time describing things that are actual to the talk itself, who the speakers are, where they are, what beliefs and customs are important in their lives."

3.3. HOW IT WORKS (USAGE)

In other words qualitative communication research method communication scholars Thomas R. Lindlof and Bryan C. Taylor explain "ethnography of communication conceptualize communication as a

continuous flow of information rather than as a segmented exchange of messages”. According to Deborah Cameron, ethnography of communication can be thought of as the application of ethnographical methods to the communication patterns of a group. Little John and Foss recall that Dell Hymes suggest that “culture communication in different ways, but all forms of communication require a shared code, communications who know and use the code, a channel, a setting, a message from, a topic, and an event created by transmission of a the message”. Ethnography of communication studies according to Lindlof and Taylor produce highly detailed analysis of communication codes and other moment-to-moment function in various contexts. In these analyses, speech communities are constituted in local and continuous performance of cultural and moral matters.

Ethnography of communication can be used as a means by which to study the interaction among members of a specific culture or “speech community”. If speech community is any group of people that creates and establishes their own speaking codes and norms. Philipsen explains that each community has it’s own cultural values about speaking and these are linked to judgments of situational appropriateness.

Hymes also used ethnography of communication to argue against the strong view of the Sapir-whorf hypothesis or idea that the language one speaks determines one cognitive ability. While, Hymes believe that language did affect ones world views, he argued that the extent of the effect is depended on the circumstances of its acquisition, and its place in the linguistic repertoire of a person and a community. The example will illustrate the working of E.O.C

Illustration of the Workings Data Analysis Sample

A man walked into the bank and said to the cashier, I want to see you stupid manager, the cashier said Sir, we don't use such words here, and I am afraid I will have to ask you to leave, the man started shouting; the manager then came down and said sir, calm down, the man said, because I wanted to open an account with this stupid bank, with \$50,000.000 (fifty million dollars) you people are telling me rubbish.

When the bank manager heard the amount the manager said; I am the stupid manager we can go to my stupid office lets talk.

Basket Mouth

A joke Extract at nite of thousands laugh

From the joke extract above, there are some socio-linguistic patterns that can be picked, through the eyes of ethnography of communication. Namely:

1. **Meaning:** The meaning of the joke.
2. **Location:** Where the joke was told, e.g Ghana.
3. **Participant:** The addressee, the audience
4. **Topic:** The bone of contention
5. **Key:** The tone or manner of performances (serious, or joking sincere, or ironic e.t.c)
6. **Communication Pattern:** Expository or narration of experience (narrating incidence, or giving experience etc.).

3.4. ASPECTS OF THE THEORY OF THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION

A model that Hymes developed as a framework for the analysis of a speech event within its context is the mnemonic speaking model. The model consists of sixteen components, which Hymes believed were necessary to consider in order to accurately and satisfactorily describe any particular speech event, message form, content setting, scene, speaker and sender, addressor, hearer, receiver and audience,

addressee purposes (outcome), purposes (goals), key, channels, forms of speech, norms of interaction, and genres. These sixteen components are organized into eight divisions to form the acronym speaking.

S - Setting Scene: Which the speech event is located in time and space.

p - Participant: Who takes part in the speech event, and in what role (e.g, speaker, addressee, audience).

E - Ends: What the purpose of the speech event and what its outcome meant to be.

A - Act Sequence: What speech acts make up the speech events and what order they are performed in.

K - Key: The tone or manner of performances (serious or joking, sincere or ironic etc).

I - Instrumentalists: What channel or medium of communication is used (e.g. speaking, singing, writing, drumming, whistling and what language variety is selected from the participant repertoire.

N - Norms of Interaction: What the roles are for producing and interacting speech acts.

G - Genres: What types does a speech event belong to (e.g. interview, gossip), and what other pre-existing conventional forms of speech are drawn on or 'cited' in producing appropriate contributions to talk (e.g. the people quite from mythology or poetry or scripture).

Cameron cautions that Hymes model should be used more as a guide than a template.

3.5. USE OF ASPECTS OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

From the above illustrations, in 'comedy' the setting/scene is examines the audience, the tone or manner of performances, genres, for example interview or gossip, the medium and to the rest of the divisions of the acronym of 'speaking'.

Hence, the work will employ the SPEAKING model to analyze the joke extract. The work: "Language style of comedy: A study in stylistics" is under the linguistics field known as sociolinguistics, therefore the importance of ethnography of communication as the theoretical framework cannot be over-emphasized. Using SPEAKING as the model for this work, it will help to identify the eight (8) divisions of the language style of comedy, by bringing out joke extract for analysis

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we would be looking at the style of language as it is used in comedy. Though valid analysis of joke extracts, using the speaking model.

4.1.1. ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN EXTRACT, (1)

JOKE 1

“In life, there are two things involved. Its either you’re a woman, you’re save, if you’re a man there are two things involve. Its either you’re a civilian or you’re in die military. If you’re a civilian you’re save, if you’re in the military, there are two things involved it’s either you are in the office or at the warfront. If you’re at the warfront, there are two things involved. It’s either you kill somebody or somebody will kill you. If you kill somebody, you are save, if somebody kill you, there are two things involved. It’s either you are buried or you’re used as manure. If you’re buried you’re save, if you’re been used a manure, there are two things involved it’s either you are used to grow flowers or used to

grow trees. If you have been used for flowers you are save, if you are been used to grow trees, there are two things involved. Its either you are used to make furniture, or tissue papers, if you have been used for furniture you have saved. If you have been used for tissue papers, there are two things involved. Its either you have been by a man or by a woman. If you have been used by a man, you are save, if you ve been used by a woman, there are two things involved its either she uses you from the back, or from the front. If she uses you from the back, you are safe. If she uses you from the front, there are two things involved it's either you contact Gonorrhoea or HIV. If you contact Gonorrhoea, you are saved, if you contact HIV... (Silence) there is only one thing involved, and that is death¹¹.

Basket mouth (Comedian)

Nite of a thousand laugh

Using the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model for analysis.

- S - Setting and scene: The joke was told in a comedy show called nite of a thousand laughs, held in Ghana.

- P- Participants: The show had in attendance, Ghanaians and some Nigerians, the comedian telling the joke is from Nigeria, basket mouth was telling the Joke to its audience (GH) at the show, who was participating live at the show.

- E- Ends: The purpose of comedy, especially this joke told by Basket Mouth, was to amuse and pass to the audience. The message of the joke however, is to let the audience know that AIDS is real, and that they should abstain from sex or use protective's. This is seen in the euphemistic expression "if you have been used for the frontits either you contact Gonorrhoea or HIV.

- A- Act sequence: The comedian, basket mouth started by explaining how life look like for "man", then made it seem like a joke, and later ended

like a joke really. This means that in comedy there is a sequence (order of speech).

K- Key: This is the attitude of the comedian. In the data (joke) above, basket mouth (the comedian) was calm but not looking very serious, when he was delivering the joke, and he didn't rush each of the lines. The attitudes of the comedian he joke make a whole lot of sense. From this analysis, you will see that the attitude of a speaker contribute to how the content of what he or she is delivering would be perceived.

I- Instrumentalities: The channel of communication; the show was a stand up comedy show. Standup comedy show is when a comedian climbs the microphone to tell audience his jokes. In t his show basketmouth was just in one place telling the jokes (vocally) no signing or otherwise.

N- Norms of interaction: What the rules are for interpretation it's a comedy show, so in the mind of the audience, they expect nothing serious but funny (amused)

G- Genres: It's a comedy show organized by Opa Williams called Nite of a thousand laugh. It belongs to the genre of comedy in literature.

4.1.2.

JOKE 2

“If God was to be sharing angels to countries; God will mention the country's name like America, And virtually all the angles will want to go there, But once he mentions Nigeria, no Angel will like to go there Because they

know the situation in Nigeria. Now, God

will now appoint the Angel that will go, the angel that God have appointed will go to his wardrobe, pick mosquito net, Carry torch light, and ask God for money incase of police

Check point. As soon as the angel leaves heaven, he will hit Electric pole and

falls down, carrying out for help,

Warri boys (Delta) will come out and kidnap the angel and ask God for the ransom of the angel's life”.

Bovi (Comedian)

At Basketmouth uncensored UK.

The comedian tries to make the audience imagine and think of how it will look like if God want angels to watch over a country. Because his (the comedian) is from Nigeria, he also try to imagine how it will look like if angels are assigned to Nigeria because of the ugly state of Nigeria, angels might not want to come.

The torchlight shows the power outage in Nigeria, the mosquito net shows the sickness and diseases that some Nigerians suffer. The Warri boys indicate the Delta militants that kidnap white men for money. In all, the comedian uses his joke to mimic the Nigerian society and how America looks pleasant, tat even the angels would love to go there.

S- The Event was a comedy show that happened in UK (London) the joke was told there.

- P- The comedian Bovi is from the southern part of Nigeria, Warri, the audience are UK based Nigerians (Nigerians that live in London) so, the (Comedian) speaks Nigerian pidgin
- E- The concept of the joke is to joke over the state of Nigeria. Through the angel's attitudes that grumble, when God said, we should come to Nigeria. There were several personifications that were employed. One was the "torchlight" which signifies no light, the mosquitoes net, signifies the dirty state of streets in Nigeria. Warri boys kidnapping angels, goes to show the high rate of unemployment and the frustration it has caused.
- A- Bovi the comedian was at all times having the Funny look, when he was telling the joke already was funny even to the end.
- K- Joking: The manner of performance was in a joking manner. Truthfully angels can't be kidnapped.
- I- It was a stand up comedy. Talking vocally and demonstrating.

N- Because of the nature of the show, and concept of the event it's easier for the audience to know and interpret the joke.

G- Comedy event organized by basket mouth.

4.1.3.

JOKE 3

There was a day when a pastor walked into the church and asks every body to do something crazy for the lord. A girl stood up and stoned the pastor with her heels, the pastor dodged it, and he commended and said somebody

Should do something crazier, a boy stood up and slapped a female usher. The pastor commended him, and said his looking for the craziest, and a guy stood up, walks to the alter and pack both the offering money and the tithe and he was walking towards the exist door, the

Pastor did not say anything, when he got to the exit door, the pastor shouted stop!! That is not crazy, that is madness.

Jaycruz (Comedian)

Ku Fm 92.7 Radio.

The comedian Jaycruz, was letting people know how pastor appreciated offering money. The boy that stood up to get the offering have watched how people have been doing crazy things and the pastor have been commending them, he thought same will apply to him as he was eyeing the money at the alter.

S- The joke was told in radio stations that have over 5 million listeners across Edo state. KU FM.

P- The full name of the comedian is Julius James, Popularly known as Jaycruz, he was telling the joke, to those who can receive the radio signal at that point or that tune to him.

E- There was basically no serious message pass across, the idea of the joke was to make people laugh at the attitude of the brethren (church members), also, reiterate the power of money. When the pastor told the boy to stop, because he was with the church money.

A- The joke was more like reporting a fake event. So it followed the order of narration.

- K- The tone was that of joking
- I- The comedian had to speak to the microphone, and use his voice to demonstrate to the listeners because he was on radio.
- N- Because the words were in Nigeria pidgin it was easy for the listeners to know it was a joke.
- G: The joke employs comic narration (Election: not real event)

4.1.4. JOKE 4

That was how a lady was testifying in a church,

She said she witnesses an accident that claimed

The life of the driver, passengers, claim the life of the journalist, but she thank God no one sustain injury. In the ghastly accident.

Youngest landlord

At gospel laughter.

The comedian wanted people to know how some persons lie during giving testimony, all in the name of giving testimony. The amusing part

of the testimony was that, she said on one sustain injury, meaning the dead victims were not injured which cannot happen. The funny (amusing) part of this was the way the woman was exaggerating about the victims that died.

S- The joke was told in a church

P- The comedian is a Benin, base entertainer, he use pidgin to do most of it jokes, the audience, are church members who came to laugh to his jokes.

E- The meaning of the Joke is that some women especially when giving testimonies in church exaggerate a lot.

A- The joke followed a particular pattern, repeating “did” before the joke ends with injury.

K- The manner of performance was that of joke, in the sense that, he deliver joke as a comedian.

I- It was a stand up comedy. He was voicing his jokes to its audience.

N- Pidgin English is easy for people from the southern part of Nigeria to tell jokes. The Pidgin English makes it easier for the audience.

4.1.5

JOKE 5

If a pastor walks into a church and ask everybody to pray for Nigeria our country, our girls will not pray. But immediately the pastor said lets pray for our love-life; our girls will start... Jesus! That is my prayer, I need a

Rich man, father bring them my way that is when they are in their early and late 20's,

Once they have crossed over to their early 30's, their Prayer will change, they will go like this; God just give me a man, if the man is not working, I've been working, let them just come.

If they have crossed 35 years and the man is yet

To come, they will how kneel down with tears in eyes and begin to pray, father just give any man to me, Short or tall, a man is a man.

BUCHI
AT NITE OF A THOUSAND LAUGHS
GHANA.

This joke centered on girls and their attitude towards men in their early age.

Every woman's dream is to get married and have their children. The joke mirrors how young girls lust after material things at the same time mimicking the consequences through humor. Letting young girls know that, at the end of the day, they will settle for less, if not careful about their early life.

The joke started by showing how a church scene was like during prayer session, and the audience in the church. The comedian took his time to tell the joke in order to carry the audience along.

S- This joke was told at a comedy event in Ghana.

P- The comedian telling the jokes, from the eastern part of Nigeria (Anambra) His One of Nigeria prolific comedian, the audiences are Ghanaians mixed with some African countries.

E- The joke message is to let ladies know, time and age is not their friend, because a lot of girls, always live expensive life, without considering the future.

- A- Though the joke was fictional, but he followed expository pattern. But, this time around it was playing on the words by using Gold and the attitude of ladies.
- K- The manner of performance was mimicking the attitude of girls in a funny (amusing) way.
- I- Pure stand up comedy, which involves body movement, demonstration and audibility of the speaker's voice. This is what was displayed in the joke.
- N- The joke is in pidgin, and easy to interpret and relate with by the audience.
- G- The style here is expository, how ladies pray, and their odds, when they refuse to get married on time.

4.2. SUMARRY AND CONCLUSION

This study has been able to analyze to a reasonable extent the language of comedy in our society. We have looked at what language is, and relate it to how it is use. The study also look at how comedians use language

to arouse the interest and keep in suspense their audience, and also communicate to the larger society, the societal norms mimicked for example, the people in power, church leaders. And other individuals in the society, we analyzed the verbal languages of comedian used in the society employing parameters like figurative expression, verbal dwelling and other activities of these individuals.

The theoretical framework, “ethnography of communication” using the speaking model, is used to accurately and satisfactorily describe any speech event, more especially the joke extract for this study. The data for the study are joke extract; the sources of the data were fathered from various comedy shows and radio station in Nigeria.

4.2.1. RESULT AND FINDINGS

Firstly language as a tool plays an important role in achieving the aims of the comedy in our society.

Secondly, the language of comedy is not merely to amuse the spectator but to pass down information to them.

Thirdly, the use repetition and other rhetoric's are peculiar and is a special way of attracting attention and persuading the audience to accept the ideologies of the play.

Conclusively, it obvious that what distinct a comedian from other characters in our society is primarily his use of language which is a unique and peculiar characteristics that can distinguish him. And the language in general in our society.

4.2.2. RECOMMENDATION

This study shows the relationship between literature and linguistics (language). Because, comedy is a genre of literature. Philosophically, man cannot do anything without language. I'd employ grammarians and linguist to work more on literature as it relate to linguistics. This work should be a reference to other linguistic student, as the work gives an insight to how language influences the mind of the hearer.

It is important for comedians, especially in Nigeria, to review this work, in other for them to work more on themselves and do meaningful jokes.

Generally, this work will help the comedians, and the society at large to know the importance of comedy.

APPENDIX

In life, there are two things involved.

Its either you are a man or you are a woman.

If you are a woman you are safe,

If you are a man, there are two things involved,

Its either you are a civilian, or you are a military.

If you are a civilian you are safe, if you are in the

Military, there are two things involved.

It is either you are in the office or at the war front.

If you are in the office, you are safe.

If you are in the war front, there are two things involved, it is either you kill somebody or somebody kills you. If you kill somebody, you are safe,

If some body kills you, there are two things involved,

Its either you are being buried or you are being Used as manure. If you are being buried, you are safe, if you are being used as manure, there are two things involved. Its either you are Being used to Make furniture,

Or you are being used for tissue papers.

If you are being used for furniture you are safe,

If you are being used for tissue paper, there are

Two things involved,

Its either you are being used by a man or a woman.

If you are being used by a man, you are safe,

If you are being used by a woman, there are two

Things involved. Its either she use you from the back or she use you from the front.

If she use you from the back you are safe

If she uses you from the front, there's only one

Thing involved and that is STD

***BASKET MOUTH (COMEDIAN)
NITE OF A THOUSAND LAUGH,
GHANA.***

If God dey share Angels go countries,

God go say America! Angels go say I sir,

But once God say Nigeria! Angels go dey hide, because dem no wan go Nigeria! Den tud go front one Angel,

Dat one go dey grumble, e go dey arrange e luggage, e go cari mosquito net, becos of mosquitoes, he go carry torchlight, because light no dey Nigeria. E go cum ask God for money, God go ask de Angel why? The Angel go say, so dat e go settle

Police. As dey Angels dey fly cum Nigeria, Warri boys go use stone take break the Angel feather, dem go kidnap am, na the boys go dey ask God for de ransom of the Angel life. Dem go say: God! Bless us, or else your Angel go die.

***BOVI (COMEDIAN)
AT BASKET MOUTH
UNCENSORED SHOW, UK.***

Like so, one day, wan pastor cum dey preach,

E say brothers and sisters, today is a crazy Sunday, Stand up and do something crazy for de lord One girl stand up use her koko shoes take stone pastor, pastor dodge am, de pastor say mek anoda person do something crazy for d lord, one brother just stand up, slap usher hot slap, na pastor say, that is what I'm talking about, somebody else do something crazy, boy just stand up, go alter, cari offering money, put for tithe, cari thanksgiving put partnership, na de boy cari all the money dey go exit door, as he reach exit door, na the pastor hala, stop! That is not crazy, dat is madness!

JAY CRUZ (COMEDIAN)

AT KU FM 92.7 RADIO

“Na so one woman dey give testimony for church, she say she witness accident wey the driver die, passenger die, Okada man die, people mek dey die, but no body sustains injury”.

COMEDIAN- YOUNGEST LANDLORD

AT GOSPEL LAUGHTER

If pastor say mek we pray for our country, naija girls nor go pray. But once pastor say make we pray for our love life, dem go just start, 'Jesus dat is my prayer, I need a rich handsome and caring man, father bring them my way, if they don't have my number, give it to them.

Dat na wen dem dey 20-28.

Once dem reach 30, the prayer go change, dem go say 'God, I need a man, if the man is not working father, I don't care as long as he is a man and can take care of himself'.

Once dem reach 36, the prayer go change, dem go say "God I need a man, tall or short like Adams Oshiomhole, God I go marry.

***BUCHI (NIGERIAN COMEDIAN)
AT AY LIVE IN LAGOS***

A man walked into the bank and said to the cashier, I want to see you stupid manager, the cashier said Sir, we don't use such words here, and I am afraid I will have to ask you to leave, the man started shouting; the manager then came down and said sir, calm down, the man said, because I wanted to open an account with this stupid bank, with \$50,000.000 (fifty million dollars) you people are telling me rubbish.

When the bank manager heard the amount the manager said; I am the stupid manager we can go to my stupid office lets talk.

**Basket Mouth
Nite of a thousand laugh**

REFERENCES

Adeniyi, V. (2001): **Literature in English for Tertiary institution.**

Surulere: A Johnson Ltd.

Ager, D.E. (1970): **Styles and Registers in French.** London: University of

London press.

Awani G. (1993): "Lecture notes in broadcasting" Theatre Arts Department
of University of Benin.

Bell, A (1984): Language style as audience design. **Language in Society** 13,
145-180

Benneth, W.A (1968) **Aspect of Language and Language Teaching** New
York: Cambridge University Press.

Cherry, C. (1957): **On Human Communication** Massachussetts: MH.T
Press Cambridge.

Crystal, O. & Dary, D (1969): **Investigating English Style.** London
Longman.

Crystal, D. (1987): **The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language**. New York:
Cambridge university press

Dare, S. (1997): **English for the Mass Media** Ibadan: Kraft books

Defluer, M.L. (1985): **Understanding Mass Communication**. Boston:
Houghout Mittin.

Gimson, A. (1980): **An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English**.
3rdedn. London: Edward Anorld.

Good Enough W. H. (1981) **Culture, Language and Society**. California:
The Beryarmin Cummings.

Hadumund, B. (1996): **Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics**,
1st edn. New York: Thompson publishing company.

Hooper, R. and Whitehead, J. (1976): **Communication Concepts and Skills**.
New York: Harper and Row.

Hornby, S. (2000): **Advance Learners Dictionary**. 6th.Edn. Oxford: Oxford
University Press.

Izzard .E. (2013) comedy without borders: **Language of Stand up Comedy**

James M. (Ed) (1966): **Random House Dictionary**, 1st edit. New York.
Random house publication.

Labov, W. (1960). **Socio-Linguistics Variations**. New York: Cambridge
University press.

Leech, G.N, (1966): **English in Advertising a Linguistic Study of
Advertising Great Britain**. London; Longman.

Okolo B. A and Ezikeojiaku, (1999): **Introduction to Language and
Linguistics**, Benin City:

Proter, (1986): **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English**. London:
Longman university press.

Rotha, P. (1949) **Film till new: a Survey of World Cinema**. New York:
Twayne Publisher inc.

Sapir, E. (1921) **Language**, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Trager, G.L, (1972) **Language and Languages:** Normn Okla: Chandler publishing Coy

Uwajeh. M.K.C (2002): **A Course in Performative Linguistics.** Ibadan: Spectrum books Ltd.