

TYPES AND MEANINGS OF HUMORS USED IN T-SHIRT SLOGANS IN THE *BAD IDEA T-SHIRT* ONLINE

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Penelitian ini menganalisa tentang penggunaan humor dalam slogan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah (1) menganalisa tipe-tipe humor yang digunakan dalam slogan baju *Bad Idea T-shirt* online, (2) menganalisa makna yang terkandung dalam slogan-slogan lucu dengan menggunakan teori *conversational implicature*. Data penelitian berjumlah 111 slogan. Data dikumpulkan langsung dengan cara mengunduh slogan-slogan dari situs resmi *Bad Idea T-shirt*. Dari hasil analisa ditemukan bahwa penggunaan jenis humor *disparagement* lebih banyak dari pada jenis humor lainnya yaitu sebanyak 33,3% (37 slogan). Sedangkan dari segi makna humor, makna *flouting a maxim* paling banyak ditemukan yaitu 42,4% (47 slogan).

Kata kunci: Humors, slogans, types of humors, meanings of humors

A. Background of the Problem

Humors cannot be separated from the social life. They become one of important parts of it. Since humors are used in every single aspect of social life, people should know the communication among participants in the humorous stories, the meaning of each words used, and where the main point takes place. As stated by Ritchi in his book “Linguistic Analysis of Joke (2004)” that a humor is present throughout social conventions and cultural

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artefacts, and the use of humor is highly valued in interactions between people.

Humors facilitate social interaction in people's life. People usually use humors in their conversation with others to make the conversation interesting. The existence of humors in facilitating conversation is important because without humors, the conversation seems to be monotonous. It causes a problem in people's communication. Thus, a pragmatic analysis let people know what makes people laugh and people may say the stones are interesting.

People may have different experiences in reading humorous text or stories. Some people may consider something funny but some other may not. Those who laugh are able to understand how the speakers or characters create the funniness so that they can laugh. A good communication cannot only depend on literal meaning of sentences but also concern about context that takes place in communication. The study concerning these three concepts (meaning, context, and communication) is called pragmatics. Therefore, pragmatics is the study about how we recognize what is meant even when it is not actually said or written.

T-shirts as popular clothes have many varieties not only in its colors but also with complex combination of words or sentences that stick on them, which is called as slogan. Especially among young people, it is popular to wear a t-shirt which is imprinted with a slogan. Blank (2006) stated that a slogan is a group of words that promise a reward in dramatic way: easy to read, easy to say, easy to memorize. It is created to make people interested in

the T-shirt. The slogans are usually short, interesting, and easily to be remembered. It is arranged as attractive as possible. It must be communicative and understandable for people; therefore the language used in slogan is so important. The slogan sometimes is combined with picture or icons. The producer creates slogan as the part of the style of fashion, so that t-shirts are liked by people especially by teenager.

Every slogan reveals something about its own time and as a means to catch and to hold the public attention. For example, the slogan from *Bonjour* t-shirt is “John is gay. My name is John”. “Gay” is the phenomenon which is still taboo to be revealed in social life. It becomes a contrary when a person proudly wears that t-shirt as a joke that makes the terminology of “Gay” is not longer confounded. In short, some people wear the t-shirt with an awkward slogan in order to catch others’ attention.

Slogans in t-shirts also have become instruments that bring messages which can be interpreted by the reader. The producer creates slogan not only as an utterance printed into T-shirt but also as a message. The messages sometimes tell about feeling, anger, backing, refusing, and others. The messages in t-shirts’ slogans are used to communicate the wearer’s identity. For example, the slogan “Be free” in a t-shirts can be meant as the identity of the wearer that she or he wants to be free. Sometimes the slogans on T-shirts are provocative that persuade, invite, and sacrilege. For example:

Dua tipe birokrat:

*-Birokrat yang pertama adalah birokrat yang mempunyai semboyan,
”Mengapa harus mempersulit kalau kita memang bisa mempermudah?”*

-Birokrat yang kedua adalah birokrat yang mempunyai semboyan, "Mengapa harus mempermudah kalau kita memang bisa mempersulit?"

English Translation:

Two types of bureaucrat:

-The first one is bureaucrat who has slogan, "Why do we have to complicate if we can facilitate?"

-The second one is bureaucrat who has slogan, "Why do we have to facilitate if we can complicate?" (Example taken from Joger t-shirt slogan)

Nowadays, people do not only find humors in comedy program in television and in anecdote, but also in t-shirts' slogans. It can be seen in every t-shirts that are produced; most of them use slogans which are funny and interesting. The funny slogans are created to make people interested in the T-shirt.

There are many T-shirts in the market which are sold with the funny slogans or humors. This is a kind of strategies of the producer in selling their product. Every t-shirt brands have their own characteristics. One of company that sells t-shirts with funny slogans is *Bad Idea T-shirt*. *Bad Idea T Shirt* is a company that sells t-shirts online. It specializes in funny t-shirt slogan. Its collection of funny shirts encompasses hundreds of designs. It offers more than 1,000 different t-shirt styles in a variety of categories, including political, seasonal and etc.

There are some reasons why this topic is chosen. First, it is expected to give contribution to the development of linguistics studies of humors in slogan especially for English Department students that study about pragmatics. Second, few of people study about humor especially in t-shirt slogan. There are few researchers who analyze humor in t-shirt slogan in

online media. *Bad Idea T-shirt* is an online company which sells funny t-shirt via internet, so that it can be browsed by anybody anywhere. Third, by knowing how the humors are used in t-shirt slogan, the writer hopes that the types, the meaning, and the functions of humors can be explored. Fourth, from all the types, the meaning, and the function of humor, people should know what are the examples of humor which can be found in *Bad Idea T-shirt*'s and what humors which have negative meaning based on pragmatics analysis. If people do not understand what the meanings of slogans in t-shirts are, it can be a problem because clothes that people wear describe their identity. Thus, it can describe a new phenomenon especially about humor in *Bad Idea T-shirt* online.

B. Method

This research was designed as a descriptive research because the researcher described the data in the form of words rather than number. Selinger (1989) states that a descriptive research involves a collection of techniques used to specify or describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation. The data were collected from the *Bad Idea T-shirt*'s website then the data were analyzed based on linguistic analysis of humor theory.

The data of this research were the slogans used in the *Bad Idea T-shirt* online. The data were limited into form of words or sentences. The source of

research was taken from www.funny-C3.aspx.com. The limitation of the data was the slogans of the t-shirts which were produced from 2009 to 2010.

This research needed some instruments which can help in working on this research. Internet access was used to download the data and the note book to write some important things about the *Bad Idea T-shirt* slogans found in its website in www.funny-C3.aspx.com.

The data were collected by downloading some pictures of the t-shirt from the *Bad Idea T-shirt* website named www.badiseatshirt.com/Funny-C3.aspx to find out the slogans used in the t-shirt. Next, the data were collected by taking a note the language used that became the slogans for each t-shirts. The slogans of *Bad Idea T-shirt* are in form of words and some of them contain picture. The researcher only chose the slogans which are in form of words or sentences. Then, the researcher made list of the data

C. Result and Discussion

The researcher made categorizes of the types of humors based on Rithie's theory. It helped researcher in finding the percentage of the types that applied among the others. These major findings used table as the media to categorize the data. The data would be presented by the percentage. So the researcher found the percentage of the dominant type of humor used in slogans in *Bad Idea T-shirt* online.

Table 1. The percentage of the dominant types of humors used in t-shirt slogans in *Bad Idea T-shirt* online

Types of Humors	Score	Percentage (100%)
Inappropriateness	-	-
Question-solving	-	-
Thwarted expectation	22	19,8%
Disparagement	37	33,3%
Superiority over joke character(s)	25	22,6%
Embellishment	-	-
Dramatic tension	-	-
Facilitation	-	-
Parallelism	4	3,6%
Prank	-	-
Ingenuity	11	9,9%
Funny words	12	10,8%
Total	111	100%

The researcher finds that the dominant types of humors used in t-shirt slogans in the *Bad Idea T-shirt* online is Disparagement. It can be seen from the total number of the disparagement type used in the slogans is 37 slogans or 33%. The next position is superiority over joke character(s). It is proven by the total number of the superiority over joke character(s) used is 25 slogans or 22,6%. Thwarted expectation has the percentage 18% and the total number of the type used in the slogans is 20 slogans. Funny word and Ingenuity almost have the same percentage that is 10,8% and 9,9% with the total number of slogans found is 12 and 11 slogans. The next type is parallelism. It can be seen from the total of parallelism type used in the slogans is 4 slogans or 2,7%. There are some types of humors that are not found in the *Bad Idea T-shirt* slogans. They are inappropriateness, question solving, embellishment, dramatic tension, facilitation, and prank.

Table 2. The percentage of the dominant Meaning of humors used in t-shirt slogans in *Bad Idea T-shirt* online based on the theory of conducting the maxims in conversational implicature

The meaning of humors	Score	Percentage (100%)
Doing an observance of the maxim	22	19,8%
Flouting a maxim	47	42,4%
Violating a maxim	25	22,5%
Infringing a maxim	-	-
Opting out a maxim	9	8,1%
Suspending a maxim	8	7,2%
Total	111	100%

Based on table above, the highest number of the tendency of meaning of humors used in the slogans are 47 and 25 which shows that the slogans have the implied meaning. The difference of the types is in flouting a maxim; the producer has ni intention to mislead the audience while in violating the maxim he intentionally does. The second position is doing an observance of a maxim. The score of this meaning of humor is 22 or 19,8%. However, there are several meanings that are at the low level. They are opting out a maxim (9 slogans) and simple (8 slogans). In addition, there is a meaning of humors that is not found in the *Bad Idea T-shirt* slogan, infringing a maxim. It has no score.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

The Findings of this research reveal that the dominant types of humors used in t-shirt slogans in the *Bad Idea T-shirt* online is Disparagement with total 37 slogans (33,3%). While there are 25 (22,6%)

slogans fulfill the characteristics of the type superiority over joke character(s). Those types of humor have a similarity; both bring an insulting message through the humors. What makes it different is that in disparagement, the insulting message may be aimed at a specific person or may be directed to a whole class of people while in superiority of joke character(s), the insulting message is brought by the writer or speaker's saying or acting foolishly so that this type is directed only at an imaginary joke character. It means humors that deliver an insulting message through the *Bad Idea T-shirt* slogans, whether they insult other people (outside joke character) or the speaker itself, appear dominantly in the *Bad Idea T-shirt* slogans. There are also types of humor that are not found in the *Bad Idea T-shirt* slogans. They are embellishment, dramatic tension, facilitation, and prank.

Then, most of the slogans tend to deliver an implied meaning behind. It is shown that most of the slogans have meanings flouting a maxim with the total number of slogans is 47 (42,4%) and violating a maxim with the total number of slogan is 25 (22,5%). Both of them imply the meaning and wish the audience to have such an implicature. The differences take place in the way the humor is delivered. In flouting a maxim, the speaker has no intention to mislead the audience while in violating a maxim, the speaker intentionally deceives the audience through the humor.

The results of this research do not fully complete about the type of humors. However, this is still far from completeness. But by this research,

it shows that humors do not only found in anecdotes, comedy programs in television, but humors also can be found in t-shirt slogans.

Furthermore, it is suggested to the next researcher conduct the same research to complete this research not only in the types and meanings of humors but also about the function of humors, how the language of humors used in comedy programs, the phenomena of how women and men in delivering the humor.

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