

## The Understanding Javanese Conversational Jokes

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**Abstract:** This article tries to understand some Javanese jokes. It begins with some theoretical views of jokes consisting of *jab* and punch lines. The idea of script is also discussed where the script can be written or oral as well as well-prepared or done instantly.

The Javanese jokes normally accompany other performances such as *wayang* and *kethoprak* performances. There is sometimes a performance of joke only called *dhagelan*. To be a good Javanese comedians, one should be creative in inventing scripts.

**Keywords:** *jab*, *punch*, *script*, *joke*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Javanese humor, which in many occasions accompanies many traditional plays or performances such as *wayang* or shadow puppet shows, *kethoprak* or traditional Javanese plays, which normally last whole night long, is interesting to discuss. Its existence in the performances is very important to keep the audience awake. The form of humor in such performance is called *dhagelan* and can be classified as situational humor in its real meaning for the players instead of characters bring no text or script in the show. Their ability to produce instant humorous conversations bring them to their own popularity.

It is true that characters in a play do not bring any script in their show but they bring it in their memory. It means that their conversations or the words have been determined by the playwright. On the other hand, in traditional Javanese performance especially involving humorous scenes such things rarely happen. The characters can determine any introductory lines called *jab* and their partner respond them in their capacity to produce humor or if they fail the first speaker can conclude the punch lines as humorous part. Before going on to the elements of humor, it is better to understand the idea of script, which is very essential in humor analysis as well as in the making of it.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The discussion of verbal joke always involves what is called script and from the script we can overview whether the script contains humorous lines or not.

#### 2.1. Script

A script, according to Raskin, is a real or imaginary object i.e. prototypical of the entity being described, such as well-established routines and common ways to do things and to go about activities. At the simplest level, a script is equivalent to the lexical meaning of a word.

The idea of script is described in the following joke:

(1) "Is the doctor at home?" the patient asked in his bronchial whisper "No," the doctor's young and pretty wife whispered in reply. "Come right in."

As stated in the definition that the simplest level of script is a word in reality or imaginary, a word in the above text can be considered as a scrip. For that reason, any unit of meaning in the joke can be considered and analyzed as a script. The word doctor, for example, is said to be a script carrying common accepted meaning covering semantic elements of

- a. Subject:
  - human
  - adult
- b. Activity:
  - studies medicine,
  - receives patients: patients come or the doctor visits,
  - listens to patient's complains,
  - examines the patients' bodies,
  - cures diseases: the doctor diagnoses patients' disease,
  - prescribes medicine.
  - take patient's money.
- c. Place:
  - medical school
  - patient's home or doctor's home
  - doctor's reception room or hospital
- d. Time:
  - many years
  - every day
  - immediately
- e. Condition:
  - face to face

Such a semantic description is a piece of information provided by language users of a language serving as denotative interpretation. The use of semantic interpretation other than the above-mentioned description will cause a question and will present different interpretations, which, of course, new situations and possibly produce a laughter.

In the case of (1) the activity of accepting a patient is replaced by the doctor's wife due to his absence. This fact causes a different interpretation of her activity she cannot act as a doctor. Other activities can be done by a young pretty lady. The activities of receiving other persons may include her as the activities of, say, a lover, who receives other persons for love purposes. If interpreted like that and the invited one is not proper for her purpose then in can produce a laughter.

### 2.2. Jab and Punch

In the above example, the introductory part of the joke called a jab (Rochmawati, 2017; Attardo, 1996a; Attardo, 1994; Oring 1989b) is the arrival of a patient with bronchial case in the doctor's house. He is accepted by the doctor's young pretty wife, having different semantic activity interpretation not as a doctor. If the lady provides acts as she is interpreted in her proper semantic role such as giving information that the doctor is not at home, this will produce no joke. The jab becomes a joke after it is closed with a punch (Attardo 1994; Raskin 1985) of the lady's invitation for the bronchial patient to enter the house. In this case the patient's purpose and the lady's do not meet and it seems something impossible. Thus, the presence of punch is very important in creating a joke.

Besides making use of different semantic interpretation in creating jokes, there are also other techniques in producing laughter such using polysemy, where meanings can also be manipulated to produce laughter. Similarly, pragmatic interpretation can also be used to create jokes. This article tries to understand Javanese jokes especially in creating ambiguity scripts. Examples. Thus, this article begins with the theory of humorous techniques with English setting followed by examples of such techniques in some Javanese jokes.

### 2.3. Incongruity in Humorous Scripts

An important part in jokes is the punch. The punch is the essential of joke because it has the characteristic of having ambiguity in meaning (Lew, Robert, 2021). The difference between a serious script and humorous script is that all lines in serious script do not make use of ambiguity script while the humorous script always contain ambiguous lines having more than one interpretation or meanings. In a different term Ramdlani, M. Masqotul (2021) calls it incongruity. The term incongruity means a reality or a thought that turns out to be inconsistent with what was expected while the term ambiguity means one thing having more than one meaning. Although the two terms are similar, the latter is more precise for the use of humor especially joke.

### 3. METHOD

The method employed to investigate the Javanese jokes includes the choice of jokes presented in Youtube. The joke, then, is divided into jab lines and punch lines where each of them is presented in the data presentation and discussion together with their English translation. The selection of joke is done at the basis of those lines, which constitute jokes i.e. the parts that constitute incongruity as the essence of the joke.

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Javanese performance of *wayang* or puppet show is accompanied by a scene of humor done by an invited comedian. The scene is called *dhagelan*, which means a joke performance of scene. Very often the comedians bring no prepared script or text. This fact is seen in the following: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNI-pkGiLs0&t=869s> (6:53 – 7:44)

(2) A: *Takgolekkeuwongyatakgolekkesindhen men njenglengya. .*

B: *Aa enggih*

A: *Eeikimungsuhmubedadengan yang lain,*

B: *Nggihmboten napa-napa*

A: *Lengganamuraonokabeh*

B: *nggihtekadegantilenggan*

A: *Coba coba, mbakAyuk. NgrungokesuaraneayukkaroSihonokikayangrungokere kamane Basiyokaroprenjakgekisihenom*

B: *Lhangapa e..*

A: *senengaku.*

B: *Lha koknikujareanyar...*

C: *Akukianya ya.*

B: *Anyajerjanapiktenaniki*

A: *yarapapa.*

(-) A: Let me find you a lady singer, yes? A lady singer to sing a song together right?

B: Aah yes

A: Em your partner is not the usual partner another new partner.

B: it does not matter.

A: your usual partners are not present

B: Yes I get a new partner.

A: Please Ayuk come. Listening to Ayuk and Sihono is like listening to Basiyo and Prenjak when they were young.

B: Why?.

- A: I like it.  
B: Why is she, you said it is a new partner.  
C: I am the new one.  
B: It were really new. Very good in fact.  
A: It does not matter.



From the dialogue, it is clear that the comedians are a man and a woman with no prepared script. The man is the invited and the woman is the newly appointed one.

Now let us see the joke consisting jab and punch lines from the following dialogue 8:19 – 8:35 of the same source:

- (3) A: (*mudhun*)  
B: *Ya rada mentulsithik.*  
A: *Ya karanganagajihe..*  
B: *Sikilkok (ana) gajih. Gajih ki raknggonsikil.*  
A: *Neng ngendi*  
C. *Nggonapa?*  
B: *Nek jenengsikilkethethelan.*
- (-) A: (Steps down)  
B: A bit elastic feet.  
A: Sure, there is fat there.  
B: Feet with fat? Fat does not stay in feet.  
A: Where?  
C. In which part?  
B: The term feet is associated with foot-bone soup.

The jab lines are about elastic step of A's feet. Supposed it is due to the fat at the soles. Then B remembers that feet can be associated with cow's foot bone soup, which is very popular in Javanese cuisine. There are two punches in the dialogue. The first is *In which part* and the second is *The term feet is associated with cow's foot-bone soup*. The first punch refers to other part of the body containing fat (breasts) and the second is related to the soup.

In both dialogues, there is no prepared scripts any comedians can present a jab a real or imaginary object that requires a punch to make a joke. In short, the comedian must be capable of creating introductory lines and the opponent must be skilled to find a real punch.

The following joke, which is a part of puppet show: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeJ949n9LPY&t=139s> (2:26 -3:35) also shows no prepared script.



The dialogue is:

- (4) A: *Jalure ki angger wis mlebu jalan Solo Yogja ki mesthimenggoke ki nangdaerah sing rata, kecamatan rata*  
B: *Kecamatankok rata kikecamatanngendi?*  
A: *Ceper, ceperkilak rata.*  
B: *Ceperkicendhek.*  
A: *Ora isa Ceperki rata oo Wong YogjakokngeyelnengKlaten. Bar Ceperkiterus Petan..*  
B: *Petan? Pedanto.*  
A: *Apa?*  
B: *Pedan.*  
A: *Pedanki yen mungsijiyenakehdadi Petan.*  
B: *Oo*  
A: *Wong golek pangankok di eyel.*  
B: *Gekareptak loke di shisike.*  
A: *Aku ki wis eeaku karo kowe ki wis ana kemestrine. Kowemesthiarep ngelokketakpangkai. Wabengiikiakuentukmungsu.*  
B: *mboten*  
A: *A wis orapiye-piye ki wong padhanakalekekepethuk.*
- (-) A: The route is whenever reaching the street from Solo to Jogja for sure we enter a plain area, Plain subdistrict.  
B: Wha a district! How come a subdistrict is a plain.  
A: Ceper, means a plain.  
B: Ceper is short.  
A: No, no, it is not short, how a Jogjanese insists here in Klaten, Ceper is a plain. Next to Ceper is Petan.  
B: Petan? Pedan yes.  
A: What?  
B: Pedan.  
A: Pedan is when singular, when plural is Petan.  
B: Oo  
A: How striving for life is opposed.  
B. It was just about to comment, you had commented first.

A: You eer, you and me are in chemistry. You must have commented, before that I did it first. Aah this night I get a real opponent.

B: No, no

A: Aah do not refuse it, we are the same naughty boys. We must be together.

The above dialogue shows us once again that the comedians have no prepared scripts to follow. They are free to choose the jab and the punch lines. The jab lines show us a region called Ceper, which, according to A it is a plain while B says it is short. In this case A is right then it goes to Petan, which according to B it is Pedan. In this case B is right but A finds a reason that Petan is the plural form of Pedan. Thus, A is right and he says nobody can oppose him. Having the instantly made reason he says he comments we have the same chemistry but he adds this night I get a real opponent and A says, 'We are the same, the same naughty men.' Naughty men are always together.

The following joke is taken from the performance held in Suriname where exists Javanese community. The guest comedians are Kirun and Marwoto from Java. consider one of the dialogues found in [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_cVcdDRTLg0&t=2888s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cVcdDRTLg0&t=2888s) (6:50 – 7:24)



(5) A: *Untumukuwiarepdikon anu.*

B: *Ora papa sing pentingnduwegawean iso nyambutgawe.*

A: *Nyambutgaweapa? Jare kowenduweprestasineng Suriname. Maratonwingiapa*

B: *MenangdheweMarwata.*

A: *Maraton Suriname kemerdekaanwingi*

B: *Kemerdekaan Suriname sing ping telungpuluhsijimenangdheweMarwoto. Sikile during tekan finish untune wis ngethok pita thel.*

(-) A: Your teeth. They are for..

B: It does not matter. Most important I have a job. I can work.

A: What a job? I heard you coined a success here in Suriname. The last game Marathon.

B: the winner is me Marwoto.

A: Marathon in the last independence day

Suriname's 31<sup>st</sup> independence day the winner is Marwoto the feet haven't reached the finish line the teeth have cut the ribbon so he is the winner.

In the dialogue the jab lines are about B's teeth and punch line is the benefit of having such teeth in marathon.

## 5. CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, we can conclude that a script is either written or spoken and either well prepared or done instantly. The jab and punch lines form the joke, which causes laughter. Javanese jokes need creativity from the comedians. Very often, the jokes accompany other performances such as *wayang* and *kethoprak*.



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