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## Verbal Humor in Louis C.K.'S Stand-Up Comedy Concert “Oh My God”: The Pragmatic Strategies

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### ABSTRACT

*A stand-up comedy performance is not only about amusing the audiences with the joke, but it also has other functions. This research analyzes the pragmatic strategies and function of Louis C.K.'s stand-up comedy concert “Oh My God”. Raskin and Attardo's (1992) General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) and Grice's (1975) maxims of cooperative principle were employed as the framework of the analysis. A descriptive qualitative method was also used to analyze the data. The result reveals that Louis C.K.'s jokes in this concert mostly violate the maxim of quantity to generate laughter through exaggeration and faulty reason. Furthermore, Louis C.K.'s stand-up comedy is not only a way to entertain but it also has another function, that is, to deliver certain messages to the audience. Louis C.K.'s joke is also a form of giving a narrative to the audiences to understand the reality that people face in another point of view.*

*Keywords: Cooperative Principle; GTVH; Knowledge Resource; Pragmatics; Stand-up Comedy*

### INTRODUCTION

In society, people communicate with the other to deliver message one to another. In communicating, people use language as the media to deliver the message. This media can be used through two ways either directly or indirectly. Direct way means no mediator is involved between the users; it is usually called spoken language. Spoken language is also a means of form of communication which is produced by human voice and released through the mouth to produce a series of word arranged systematically, called utterance. The common example of spoken language is conversation between people. On the other hand, indirect communication is a communication which comes through the other communication bridge called communication device. This kind of communication usually called written language. Several examples, not limited to, to interpret the device is, letter, newspaper, and short message service (SMS). Social media becomes the newest media in indirect communication and mostly used by millennial language user. The study of Domingo and Aguillon's (2021) results that most of students perceive social media as contributory and effective application for enhancement language as its accessibility and its role in lowering communication anxiety.



Nevertheless, the representation of those direct and indirect phenomena can be seen from an activity called public speaking.

Public speaking, as literally viewed, can be divided into two words, public and speaking. Public means in mass and which deals with a lot of people while speaking means talk or say about something and as one of communication method. Thus, public-speaking is generally described as communication between one person to other people in a mass scale. Public speaking is now become necessity because it is one of an effective way to share idea to a massive scale of people. There are many situations which use public speaking as the media of communication such as presidential speech and sermon of some religions. However, public speaking is not only limited to formal occasion, but also an informal one such as a stand-up comedy performance.

Stand-up comedy is the term for special genre of comedy in which a performer called stand-up comedian stands on the stage and speaks directly to the audiences. What makes stand-up comedy different from other public speaking is this individual intends to deliver jokes to the audiences. Stand-up comedy has already been famous since the Renaissance era where it was performed by the clown to entertain the king (Schwarz, 2010). However, the essence of stand-up comedy is to entertain people in general, not limited to certain group of people.

Stand-up comedians usually tell jokes in front of the audiences to amuse the audiences. According to Raskin (1994) the joke carrying text should be opposed to the other script. Moreover, the opposing scripts result in jokes that violate Grice's maxim. The maxim violations are caused by the opposing script which is intentionally created by the comedian to make the joke work. This violation of maxim is caused by the untrue statement which is delivered to the audience in the performance. In addition, joke involves fantasies, hyperbole, fiction, etc. in which the audience know the intention of the performer.

An illustration of a stand-up comedy is given below. The joke is delivered by Louis C.K, an American stand-up comedian, in his show entitled "Oh My God" on February 2013 in Phoenix, Arizona.

*I live in New York. I always— like, there's this old lady in my neighborhood, and she's always walking her dog. She's always just—she's very old. She just stands there just being old, and the dog just fights gravity every day, just—The two of them, it's really—The dog's got a cloudy eye, and she's got a cloudy eye, and they just stand there looking at the street in two dimensions together, and— and she's always wearing, like, this old sweater dress. I guess it was a sweater when she was, like, 5'10", but now it's just, like, this sweater and her legs are—her legs are awful. I saw a guy with no legs wheeling by, and he was like, "yecch, no thank you. I do not want those. I'd rather just have air down here like I have than to look down at that shit." (Louis C.K. – Oh My God)*

In the example above, Louis C.K. gives too much information about the oldness of the lady in his neighborhood. According to the cooperative principle, the message should be as concise as possible and straight to the point. Louis C.K. describes the oldness of the lady by giving more information than the audience need. The audience who receive an unusual description of the lady and the dog and the leg, somehow, laugh as the reaction.

Furthermore, stand-up comedy performance can be categorized into two. First, stand-up comedy gigs routine. This category means the stand-up comedian is invited by some corporation to entertain and amuse the audiences. In gigs routine, the stand-up comedians, mostly, do not have a general topic that the comedian focuses. They prefer to deliver the funniest material of theirs. Second, stand-up comedy concert. In this category, the stand-up comedians mostly initiate to conduct their own routine. Usually, the stand-up comedians deliver their jokes in a big topic. Stand-up comedians distinguish the joke from their routine gigs with the concert, so the concert can be felt more personal than corporate gigs routine. The example of stand-up concert is one performed by Louis C.K. as can be seen above.

This research focuses on the characteristics of the jokes which are delivered by Louis C.K. on his stand-up comedy concert “Oh My God”. This research is aimed at exploring the pragmatic strategies used by Louis C.K. in his stand-up comedy concert entitled “Oh My God” and to find out the functions of the joke in the concert. The problems were analyzed by using the frameworks the Knowledge Resources of General Theory of Verbal Humors (GTVH) and Grice’s maxim violation especially in the Language element of the Knowledge Resources. In addition, the study is limited only on the verbal joke excluding the performance aspects such as gesture, tone, etc.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous studies related to humor study have been done by some researchers. Ghafourisaleh & Modarresi (2013) conduct research on the humor study. That research analyzes Persian joke to prove whether the GTVH approach from Attardo is applicable into other joke than English. The research is conducted by analyzing one hundred of Persian jokes taken from the websites. The result of the research shows that GTVH is appropriate for analyzing Persian jokes.

On another study of humor, Lamuño (2014) conducts the research from some scenes of the situation comedy “The Big Bang Theory”. The theory also used GTVH as the approach for the data. The data of the research are from three chosen scenes of the sitcom. The episodes are chosen randomly. The main goal of the study is to analyze the humorous texts according to the GTVH and provide how the opposing script that makes the text funny could be given to the audiences. The result of this study is the hypothesis succeeded to analyze the linguistic humor of some texts from the sitcom and concluded that it is possible for the viewer to be the one adding the opposing script to some of the humorous dialogue.

This research has different aims from those two previous studies. This study uses stand-up comedy performance which is only limited to the utterance of the performer without considering the gesture, tone, etc. Compare to the previous studies, this research is an attempt to analyze the GTVH and maxim violation as the linguistic parameter of the joke.

General theory of Verbal humor (GTVH) is the revised and developed theory of Raskin’s SSTH (Semantic Script Theory of Humor). This theory has more specific approach to humor, specifically verbal humor. SSTH hypothesis reveals that the joke carrying text is when it has overlapping script oppositeness. GTVH has expanded the description of it. GTVH also originated from five level-model of Attardo (1989), completed into six dimensions which also incorporates which script oppositeness from SSTH is the most important of these dimensions. These are referred to as Knowledge Resources (KRs) (Raskin, Hempelmann, & Taylor, 2009). These Knowledge Resources are presented hierarchically as follows.



FIGURE 1. List of known LMs

This hierarchy of the joke presents itself as a mechanism capable of generating infinite number of jokes by combining the various values that each parameter can take. Various considerations of interdependence and/or independence among the knowledge resources have allowed the determination of the hierarchical organization. Each Knowledge Resource is elaborated below.

SCRIPT OPPOSITION (SO)

This KR deals with the script oppositeness presented in SSTH by Raskin. It should be noted that SO is the most abstract of all KRs. However, this is, still, the most important aspect of the KRs because humor can be reflected because of the oppositeness of the script. This script is, basically, relay on the main hypothesis from Raskin (1985) that a joke should overlaps and/or opposites the other script partially or fully. An example of script opposition is provided below:

*How many pole does it take to screw a light bulb? Five. One to take his shoe of, get on the table, and screw in the light bulb and four to wave the air deodorant to kill his foot odor*

(Raskin, 1992:90).

In this example, the joke has two scripts that overlap. In the first script, the joke is questioning the number of pole needed to screw a light bulb. In the second script, the joke partially overlaps because the second script answers the first script.

LOGICAL MECHANISM (LM)

The idea is that the LM of a joke embodies the logic of that particular joke. Not every joke has to have its own specific ‘alien’ form of logic, so the LM is an optional parameter in the GTVH.

Role-reversals	Role exchanges	Potency mappings
Vacuous reversal	Juxtaposition	Chiasmus
Garden-path	Figure-ground reversal	Faulty reasoning
Almost situations	Analogy	Self-undermining
Inferring consequences	Reason From false premise	Missing link
Coincidence	Parallelism	Implicit parallel
Proportion	Ignoring the obvious	False analogy
Exaggeration	Field restriction	Cratylism
Meta-humor	Vicious circle	Referential ambiguity

FIGURE 2. List of known LMs

An example of logical mechanism can be seen in this joke:

*How many pole does it take to screw in a light bulb. Five. One to hold the light bulb and four to look for the right screwdriver.*

Here, the joke teller uses faulty reason as the logical mechanism to generate laughter. Faulty reason means wrong statement to make a point. On the punch-line of the joke, the joke teller gives the reason why five poles are needed to screw in a light bulb, but the reason is not logically acceptable.

#### SITUATION (SI)

Basically, a joke must have some situation to be explained, thus the joke can be transferred better into the audiences. Roughly, SI can refer to the place, the participants, and the background where the joke happens. For example:

*“Can you write shorthand?”  
“Yes, but it takes me longer”*

(Attardo & Raskin, 2001:24)

The joke presupposes stenography. It takes the situation of the joke that the writing in shorter way, but the second script makes the situation about the matter of the speed of writing.

#### TARGET (TA)

This is also known as the “butt” of the joke. As stated by Attardo, a joke has person or object that is directed as the target. It can be seen in the following example:

*How many Irishmen does it take to screw in a light bulb? Five. One to hold the light bulb and four to the table he’s standing on.*

(Raskin, 1992:90)

In this joke, the target of the joke is Irishmen. The hearer would interpret the Irishmen as stupid people because they even need four people to hold for one person screwing in the light bulb.

#### NARRATIVE STRATEGY (NS)

The information in this KR accounts that any joke has to be cast in some form of narrative organization, either as a simple narrative, as dialogue, or combination of two ways. This KR is also known as the genre of the joke. An example is given below:

*It takes five poles to screw in a light bulb: one to hold the light bulb and four to turn the table he’s standing on.*

(Raskin, 1992:90).

The joke is presented in a narrative way. This strategy is mostly used in stand-up comedy performances.

#### LANGUAGE (LA)

This KR contains all the information necessary for the verbalization of a text. It is responsible for exact wording of the text and for the placement of the functional elements that constitute it. This KR gives the information for the verbalization of a text and determines how it should be said in order to be functional; for example, a joke like the following:

*How many pole does it takes to screw the light bulb? Five, one to hold light bulb and four to turn the table*

It can be paraphrased as:

*The number of Pollacks needed to screw in a light bulb? Five – one to hold the bulb and four to turn the table.*

(Raskin, 1992:90)

In this KR, the exact wording of the punch line is extremely important because it is necessary for the linguistic element to be ambiguous and to connect the two opposed senses in the text.

On the recent study of humor, Raskin stated that humor as the non-bona fide (NBF) communication which also the most cooperative communication (Raskin, 1992). When hard-pressed for real-life example of Grice's true bona-fide (BF) mode of communication, one realizes that BF is often lightened up by brief humorous diversions. Unlike BF mode of communication, humor is most committed to the truth of what it said. Jokes involve fictions, fantasies, hyperbole, or different kinds of figurative language. Gibbs & Colston in Rejeki et al (2022) explained figurative language is used in communication so that information or message expressed can be received properly, connected and to minimize misunderstanding. Nevertheless, humor is a very cooperative mode of communication, and it is used for productive and efficient discourse when both sides of the speaker and the hearer operate in the same mode.

Meanwhile, Grice argued that the information given by the speaker should be mattered as the cooperative principle where the cooperation between the speaker and the hearer are mutual. This argument led to the cooperative principle which consisted four maxim proposed by Grice (1975). These maxims are maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relation, and maxim of manner. Grice (as cited in Jafari, 2013) argues that people basically try to cooperate to convey their intention on construct meaningful conversation.

## METHODOLOGY

This research describes the characteristics of the verbal humor from stand-up comedy concert by Louis C.K. Therefore, the research is not only on collecting and organizing the data, but also describing and analyzing the data. The research is also qualitative. It means the research is not be presented in statistic procedure. The data were obtained from the video of Louis C.K.'s stand-up comedy concert "Oh My God" and its transcription. The data only involved verbal humor, and jokes involving slapsticks were not considered. The unit of analysis of this research is the utterance from the transcription of the stand-up comedy solo concert by Louis C.K. titled "Oh My God". The analysis focused only on the joke utterances, not on the performance of the stand-up comedy such as gesture and tone.

The transcription of the video was obtained from [www.tvsubtitle.com](http://www.tvsubtitle.com), downloaded in March, 2016. The steps of data analysis consist of: (1) sorting the utterance containing maxim violation. The analysis only focused on utterances which contain maxim violation and acknowledge as the joke from the laugh of the audiences; (2) classifying the maxim violation. After sorting all the utterances containing maxim violation, the data were classified. They were classified into the categories of Grice's maxims; (3) analyzing the joke. The utterances which were classified as the joke and contain maxim violations were analyzed. The analysis focused on the KRs of GTVH and the maxim violations of the jokes; (4) analyzing the function of the joke. In this step, the whole topics were analyzed to draw the conclusion of the functions of the stand-up comedy concert. This is elaborated from the analyses of the GTVH and maxim violations in the jokes previously mentioned.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides the finding and the analysis of the data. The analysis focuses on the pragmatic strategies (the maxim violations) and their relation to other verbal humor parameters (the knowledge resources) in General Theory of Verbal Humor.

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows that the characteristic of the joke can be identified by analyzing six Knowledge Resources (KR) from General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH). The table shows that the script oppositeness is not always between one and another jokes. The joke may carry different type of script oppositeness, but it always has the script oppositeness. On the other hand, the logical mechanism of the joke may vary, depending on how the performer to make the joke incongruent of the audiences.

Nine different types of logical mechanism were found in Louis C.K. show “Oh My God”. The most frequent logical mechanism used in this joke is faulty reasoning and exaggeration (15 occurrences respectively). Furthermore, 17 different situations were used in the joke. The situation that is mostly used is on Louis C.K.’s old life (10 occurrences). Moreover, there are five different categories of joke target. The target of the joke is supposed to make the audiences feel superior. Louis C.K. uses other people (29 occurrences) as the party who become the target of the joke. The narrative strategy of the joke is mostly description (34 occurrences). The last knowledge resource is language. This element is primarily concerned on the cooperative principal violation based on Grice (1975) as the basis of language aspect of the joke. In delivering his joke, Louis C.K. mostly violates maxim of quantity (18 occurrences).

TABLE 1. Pragmatic Strategies of Louis C.K.’s “Oh My God”

Parameter	Description	Frequency	
Script Oppositeness	Nice/bad	10	
	Walk/stand	1	
	Legs/no leg	1	
	In/out	2	
	Die/live	6	
	Care/do not care	1	
	Being eaten/eating	1	
	Smart/stupid	2	
	Poor/rich	1	
	Presentable/unpresentable	1	
	Come/leave	1	
	True/false	1	
	Healthy/not-so-healthy	1	
	Early/late	1	
	Old/young	2	
	Move/stay	1	
	Ineffectual/effectual	1	
	Sitting/standing	2	
	Hard/easy	1	
	Threat/opportunity	1	
	Granted/rejected	1	
	Divorce/married	1	
	Responsible/reckless	1	
	Blocking/directly see	1	
	Compassionate/reckless	1	
	Say/silent	1	
	Legal/illegal	1	
	Differently/same	1	
	Done with nut allergic/have problem with nut allergic	1	
	Build/destroy	1	
	Quickly/late	1	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	
	Logical Mechanism	Missing link	1
		Referential ambiguity	2
Analogy		3	
Faulty reasoning		15	
Exaggeration		15	

	Reason from false premise	6
	self-undermining	2
	Juxtaposition	3
	ignoring obvious	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>
Situation	Phoenix, Philadelphia	2
	Old lady	3
	Animal	2
	Human out of food chain	1
	Predator	1
	Guy in courtyard	4
	Louis C.K. old life	10
	Older, smarter	1
	Getting older	1
	Dating	2
	Touch two women breasts	1
	Divorce	3
	Kids dance event	1
	Life	2
	Different set of value	3
	Legal murder	3
Bad thought and good thought	8	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>
Target	Himself	10
	Animal	5
	People	29
	Place	2
	Situation	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>
Narrative Strategy	Dialogue	2
	Description	34
	Description and dialogue	12
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>
Language	Maxim of quality violation	7
	Maxim of quantity violation	18
	Maxim of relevance violation	17
	Maxim of manner violation	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>

## DISCUSSION

### MAXIM OF QUALITY VIOLATION

Maxim of quality is violated when Louis C.K. presents his joke by telling something logically wrong or does not have any proof in the real fact. The joke violates maxim of quality because of the logical mechanism Louis C.K. used in the joke. The joke that violates the maxim of quality has false premise. The following is an example followed by analysis to make comprehensive understanding.

#### Excerpt 1

(Line 92) I don't think they need to be separate things.

(Line 93) I really don't.

(Line 94) They don't care, and we don't care.

(Line 95) There's, like, three scientists who give a shit what we call all those things.

(Line 96) The scientists could go on TV tomorrow and say, "ok, everybody. From now on, seals and sea lions and walruses, and--you know what?—Penguins are all seals now,"

(Line 97) (laughter)

(Line 98) and we would all be like, "yeah, all right. Fine. Yes. Whatever, man."

(Line 99) (laughter)

<b>Script Oppositeness</b>	Care/do not care
<b>Logical Mechanism</b>	Reason from false premise
<b>Situation</b>	Animals
<b>Target</b>	Animals

<b>Narrative Strategy</b>	Description and dialogue
<b>Language</b>	Maxim of quality violation

Excerpt 1 can be explained as follows. The Script Oppositeness of the joke is care/does not care. The joke talks about the people who care and people who do not care about seals and sea lions. The Logical Mechanism of the joke is reason from false premise. Louis C.K. makes the premise that he thinks seals and sea lions should not be separated. The situation of the joke is on the topic of animal. The target of the joke is animal that been categorized by the scientists as same species with seals. The narrative strategy of the joke is description and dialogue. This is the way to make the audiences understand the situation of the joke. The language aspect of the joke is maxim of quality violation. This joke violates the cooperative principle because Louis C.K. brings the wrong fact about the animals.

The script oppositeness of the joke shows that the joke talks about the people who care and do not care about those animals categorized into. In line 95 and 96, Louis C.K. says that three scientists care about the category of seals, sea lions, walruses, and penguins. On the other hand, in line 98 Louis C.K. shows that the people do not care about what they are called. From the logical mechanism, the premise of the joke is when he thinks that seals and walruses should not be separated and this is wrong because as a matter of fact, those animals have different characteristics; hence they are called differently. Louis C.K. gives the reason that people do not care by making a parody on how people react when those animals are named as same species. This reason creates laughter from the audience because they do not expect the reason of the premise simply because people do not care about what those animals are called. The audience acknowledge these lines as a joke because of the aspect of amusement in the lines.

The situation of the joke is on the topic of animal. This topic talks about Louis C.K.'s experience when he took his kids to Boston aquarium. In that place, Louis C.K. saw animals. He did not really sure whether the animals were seals or sea lions. From that moment he thought those animals should not have been differentiated. The target of the joke is the animal, precisely seals and sea lions, because people do not care about the animals. It is a form of mockery. This makes people feel superior compared to the animals because they think that their life is not necessary to be considered. The narrative strategy of the joke is description and dialogue. Louis C.K. delivers his thought about seals and sea lions by describing the reason. The dialogues support the reason how people do not really care about seals and sea lions being called by making a parody of scientist who try to convince people that seals and sea lions are one species.

When delivering this topic, Louis C.K. violates maxim of quality. This violation occurs because Louis C.K. presents wrong statement in the joke. It can be seen in line 94. He thinks that these animals should not be distinguished. However, he does not have a decent reason and adequate prove to say that these animals should be on same species. Louis C.K. describes the reason, but, since the premise that he gives is factually wrong, it still cannot be accepted. It relates with the logical mechanism about the false premise that he uses to present his joke to the audiences. Louis C.K. intentionally presents a wrong fact, which according to the cooperative principle, a speaker should not give the message that does not have adequate evidence. This is related to the maxim of quality violation because the reason that he gives is not reliable.

MAXIM OF QUANTITY VIOLATION

Maxim of quantity is violated when Louis C.K. brings the joke that has too much information to be transferred to the audience. This type mostly explains the thought of Louis C.K. to the

audience with more than enough information or just to emphasize the idea to the audience. Here is an instance followed by the explanation.

**Excerpt 2**

- (Line 22) She's always just— she's very old.
- (Line 23) She just stands there just being old, and the dog just fights gravity every day, just— The two of them, it's really— The dog's got a cloudy eye, and she's got a cloudy eye, and they just stand there looking at the street in two dimensions together, and— and she's always wearing, like, this old sweater dress.
- (Line 24) (laughter)
- (Line 25) I guess it was a sweater when she was, like, 5'10", but now it's just, like, this sweater and her legs are— her legs are a nightmare.
- (Line 26) They're just white with green streaks and bones sticking out.
- (Line 27) (laughter)

<b>Script Oppositeness</b>	Old/young
<b>Logical Mechanism</b>	Exaggeration
<b>Situation</b>	Old lady walking her dog
<b>Target</b>	Old lady.
<b>Narrative Strategy</b>	Description
<b>Language</b>	Maxim of quantity violation

The excerpt above can be explained as follows. The Script Oppositeness of the joke is old/young. This joke talks about the old lady that always walking her dog every morning and how old and awful the old lady is, especially her legs. The Logical Mechanism of the joke is exaggeration. Exaggeration is an explanation that is overwhelmed by the speaker in depicting the situation that he faces. The Situation of the joke is on the topic of old lady walking her dog. This situation talks about the situation that Louis C.K. faced. The target of the joke is the subject of the joke delivered by Louis C.K., in this example, the old lady. The Narrative Strategy of the joke is description. Description is the way Louis C.K. delivers his thought and transfers the message regarding the joke. The Language of the joke is maxim of quantity violation. Maxim of quantity means that the message delivered to the audience should be straight to the point.

From the KRs explanation above, it shows that the joke satisfies all the KRs from GTVH. From the first script, the Script Oppositeness of the joke is old/young. This joke talks about the old lady walking her dog every day. Line 22 and 23 show that the lady is very old, while line 25 talks about the old lady's leg. The explanations of the old lady and her legs are in line 23 and 26. The description of the old lady and her leg is related with the Logical Mechanism of the joke. The Logical Mechanism of the joke is exaggeration. Louis C.K. in intentionally exaggerates the condition of the old lady to make her look very awful and pity at the same time. These two Knowledge Resources make the audience laugh because of the incongruent message that is delivered by Louis C.K. The audience assume that the description of the oldness of the lady is about her appearance that is more on physical look. However, Louis C.K. describes the behavior of this lady that she and her dog are always standing there and being old. The unexpected message triggers the laughter from the audience.

The situation of the joke is when he saw an old lady walking her dog in New York. This situation is related with the Target of the joke which is the old lady. Louis C.K. explains the situation of the old lady that he saw when he was in his neighborhood in New York. The old lady becomes the target of the joke because most of the joke is talking about how old the lady is and how bad her condition is in his point of view. In line 23, Louis C.K. says the old lady “stands there just being old” and in line 26 he describes the old lady's leg by saying “They're just white with green streaks and bones sticking out.” These two lines refer to the old lady that he met in New York as the form of insult. The explanation makes the audiences feel more superior to the target. Therefore, it generates laughter from the audiences. The

Narrative strategy of the joke is description. This is the way Louis C.K. transfers the message to the audiences so they can understand the circumstance Louis C.K. faced at that moment.

When delivering this topic, Louis C.K. violates maxim of quantity. This is because Louis C.K. gives too much information about the oldness and the badness of the old lady. According to the cooperative principle, the message should be as concise as possible and straight to the point. Louis C.K. describes the oldness of the old lady with more information than the audience need. The Logical Mechanism of the joke also plays a role in this violation. The way Louis C.K. describes the oldness and the badness in line 23 and 26 is redundant and not straight to the point and it is not necessary for the audience to understand the condition of the old lady. Louis C.K. describes the old lady's life by her standing there and being old and how she and her dog have cloudy eyes. These are actually not necessary for the audience to know about that as he can simply say that the old lady is so terrible. These are also because the script oppositeness of the joke about old/young that Louis C.K. describes in the joke. These elements relate with the maxim of quantity violation because there is too much information about the description of the old lady.

MAXIM OF RELEVANCE VIOLATION

Maxim of relevance is violated because one single joke is not related to another topic or there is sudden change of topic when Louis C.K. delivers the joke. The joke which violates this maxim is mostly because it has faulty reasoning as the logical mechanism. This logical mechanism is an attempt to make reason of one action or statement that can be accepted. However, the reason is not relevant with the action or statement that Louis C.K. said before. Here is the excerpt followed by the analysis.

**Excerpt 3**

- (Line 73) And then my daughter comes home.
- (Line 74) "Why did he die, da--"
- (Line 75) Come on.
- (Line 76) What am I gonna say?
- (Line 77) "Why did he die?"
- (Line 78) Because who gives a shit?
- (Line 79) That's the reason.
- (Line 80) (laughter)

<b>Script Oppositeness</b>	Die/live
<b>Logical Mechanism</b>	Faulty reasoning
<b>Situation</b>	Fish's life
<b>Target</b>	Fish
<b>Narrative Strategy</b>	Description and dialogue
<b>Language</b>	Maxim of relevance violation

The excerpt above can be explained as follows. The Script Oppositeness of the joke is die/live. This joke talks about the life of Louis C.K.'s daughter's pet fish and how the fish dies. The logical mechanism of the joke is faulty reasoning. The audience laugh because of the faulty reasoning. The Situation of the joke is the life of the fish. This joke talks about the circumstance Louis C.K. faced when his daughter's fish died. The target of the joke is his daughter's fish because the joke explains the reason why the fish is dead. The Narrative Strategy of the joke is combination of description and dialogue. The way Louis C.K. presents his joke is in form of dialogue and describes his thought about the fish's life. The language aspect of this joke is maxim of relevance violation. The violation occurs because of the lack of relation between one line to another.

The Script Oppositeness of the joke is die/live. The joke mostly talks about the fish's life and the reason why it dies. The joke takes place when Louis C.K. found his daughter's fish dead when she is in school. His daughter leaves the home when the fish is still alive. The

logical mechanism of the joke is faulty reasoning. The faulty reasoning is in line 78. This line answers the question from his daughter about the reason it died in line 74. However, Louis C.K. does not necessarily answer the question about the reason, yet he asks another question as a response. The faulty of Louis C.K. to give the reason creates incongruity because the audience expect the factual reason of the fish's death. Moreover, the unexpected answer creates laughter as the form of amusement from the audience.

The situation of the joke is on the topic of fish's life. Louis C.K. explains that he found his daughter's fish dead when his daughter was on school and did not come home yet. Louis C.K. flushes it in the toilet. When his daughter came home, she found out that the fish was not on the bowl anymore and Louis C.K. tells that the fish is dead and he has flushed it. It makes his daughter ask the reason why her fish is dead. This situation can be seen in line 74. Louis C.K.'s answers the question by casting another question in line 78 which means nobody cares about the fish's life. This line also shows that the Target of the joke is the fish because it shows how people do not care about the fish as an insult. This makes the audiences feel superior compared to the fish as the target of the joke, hence this creates the laughter from the audiences. The narrative strategy of the joke is combination of dialogue and description. The dialogue is to show the situation when Louis C.K. met his daughter. This is a form of parody on how he imitates his daughter and it can be found in line 74. The description of the joke is on the way Louis C.K. delivers his thought about the fish's life.

When delivering this topic, Louis C.K. violates maxim of relevance. In this joke, Louis C.K.'s answer is not relevant with the question. The violation occurs in line 78 because he answers the question ("Why did the fish die?") with question ("Because who gives a shit?"). Normally, it is not appropriate to cast another question to answer a question. The appropriate response to a question is usually a statement. The violation of maxim of relevance also because of the Logical Mechanism of the joke which is faulty reasoning. The audiences expect that the reason given by Louis C.K. is a statement about the cause of the fish's death. Thus, these elements are related to the maxim of relevance because Louis C.K. asks another question to answer the question and makes the lines do not relate to each other.

MAXIM OF MANNER VIOLATION

Maxim of manner is violated when the joke possibly makes the audience confused with the information brought by Louis C.K. The joke can be categorized as the maxim of manner violation because the joke is not brief or creates an ambiguity. The violation that occurs in the joke has referential ambiguity, missing link, and juxtapose on the logical mechanism. The following is an example followed by the analysis.

**Excerpt 4**

- (Line 174) I live in New York City, and it's OK there.
- (Line 175) I live in a nice building.
- (Line 176) I never lived in a nice place before.
- (Line 177) When I was growing up, I had no money.
- (Line 178) I mean, my mom didn't.
- (Line 179) (laughter)

<b>Script Oppositeness</b>	Poor/rich
<b>Logical Mechanism</b>	Referential ambiguity
<b>Situation</b>	Guy in the courtyard
<b>Target</b>	Himself
<b>Narrative Strategy</b>	Description
<b>Language</b>	Maxim of manner violation

The excerpt above can be explained as follows. The script oppositeness of the joke is poor/rich. This joke talks about Louis C.K. in the present time and when he was still a kid. In

the moment when he was still a kid, he lived in a poor condition. However, he is one of successful comedians in the present time and he becomes a rich person. The logical mechanism of the joke is referential ambiguity. Referential ambiguity is a reference that the speaker uses that can be referred into two different things. The situation of the joke is in the topic of guy in the courtyard. This part talks of the condition of Louis C.K. when he was still a kid. The target of the joke is Louis C.K. himself. The joke refers to Louis C.K. because he tells the story about himself. The narrative strategy of the joke is description. This joke tells about the situation of Louis C.K. as the party involved in the joke. The language aspect of the joke is maxim of manner violation. The violation occurs because of the ambiguity found in this joke.

The Knowledge Resources above are described as follows. The script oppositeness of the joke is poor/rich. This joke talks about the life of Louis C.K. when he was growing up. The joke tells that he lived with a poor family back then. However, in the present time, he is successful to gain money as comedian and he becomes rich. It can be seen in line 174 and 175 that he life in a nice building in New York. It shows that he can afford to have a nice building in New York, which is one of big cities in the United States of America. In line 176 and 177, Louis C.K. tells the condition before he got to New York. The logical mechanism of the joke is referential ambiguity. It can be seen in line 177 and 178. In line 177 he says that he had no money when he was kid. However, in line 178, he clarifies that his mom was the one who did not have money. It creates confusion to understand the one who did not have money. On the other hand, it creates laughter from the audiences because they perceive the joke as a form of incongruence.

The situation of the joke is on the general topic of a guy in the courtyard. This joke talks about Louis C.K. as a kid. The joke tells about Louis C.K. living with poor family as a kid. This is an opening from the topic. Before he tells the audiences that he has courtyard in his building, Louis C.K. explains how he lived when he was a kid. He explains that he never lived in a nice building before, because when he was a kid, he lived in the poor family and he had no money, as well as his mother. These lines emphasize the comparison between Louis C.K. when he was still kid and had no money and when he is in the present time and can afford to live in a nice building which has a courtyard. Someday, on a Sunday morning, he came down to the courtyard and found a guy that looks at Louis C.K. suspiciously. The target of the joke is Louis C.K. himself. Louis C.K. uses himself as the target because he talks about the poverty when he was still a kid. He describes his condition to the audiences that he had no money and did not live in a nice building like he does in the present time. The audiences perceive their superiority and laugh. The narrative strategy of the joke is description. The delivery of the joke is narrative because in those lines, Louis C.K describes his conditions both in the present and the past time, when he was kid.

When delivering this topic, Louis C.K. violates maxim of manner. The violation occurs because of the ambiguity in the joke. According to cooperative principle, the message sent to the hearer should be brief and prevent ambiguity. The ambiguity occurs in line 178 because the reference is not clear as to where it belongs to. In line 177, Louis C.K. says that he is the one that did not have the money, but it is clarified by him that his mom is the one that did not have the money. It makes the audiences confused whether he or his mom was the one who did not have the money. The Logical Mechanism in this joke also takes a part in this violation because Louis C.K. intentionally creates the confusion with the referential ambiguity to generate laughter from the joke. In line 175 to 177, Louis C.K. describes his conditions without necessarily mentioning other parties. However, in line 178 he mentions his mother as the one that did not have money back then. These elements are related to the maxim of manner violation because the ambiguity of the reference makes the information given to the audiences unclear.

FUNCTIONS OF THE JOKE

There are 20 different topics in Louis C.K.'s stand-up comedy show "Oh My God". The topics vary from his life experiences, his thought about people, and his thought about things like animal or human life. The title "Oh My God" implies that he is going to complain about everything in this world. This precisely happens in his show. Louis C.K. delivers his thought about the world in his point of view well. The analysis on this part is classified based on the general topic which he delivers in the show.

***Louis C.K.'s own life***

Louis C.K. transfers his thought about his life experience of having pets, his divorce, and his old life. He delivers the thought in a funny way since it generates the audience's laughter. The analysis is on the excerpt below.

**Excerpt 5**

- (Line 621) I've been divorced for five years, and it's been the best part of my life, being divorced, easily my favorite part of my life.  
(Line 622) I love being divorced.  
(Line 623) Every year has been better than the last.  
(Line 624) That is the only time I can say that about, And by the way, I'm not saying don't get married.  
(Line 625) If you meet somebody, fall in love and get married,  
(Line 626) and then get divorced because that's the best part.  
(Line 627) (laughter)  
(Line 628) It's the best part.  
(Line 629) Marriage is just like a larva stage for true happiness, which is divorce, because you just let go and everything's fine now.  
(Line 630) (laughter)

These lines show how Louis C.K. manages the divorce as the best thing that could ever happen in a marriage. He says to the audiences that divorce, unlike marriage, is a long last condition. He even advises married people to get divorce to get the best time of their life. Louis C.K. tells the audiences that divorce does not always mean bad for people because after divorce, people can share time to take care of their child.

This joke makes people realize that everything is not always black or white, but sometimes it is grey. This joke gives the depiction that divorce still has a good impact to the parents. He says that divorce gives true happiness after they get married.

The other message Louis C.K. wants to convey is when he tells a joke about his old life. It makes people realize that to live is not always good. He tells the audience about the difficulties that he gets when he needs to put on his sock. He compares his difficulties of putting on his socks to Michael J. Fox's difficulties of brushing his teeth because of his Parkinson. He exaggerates his difficulties of doing an easy task at a young age. He does this because he wants to prove that being old is not simple. It can be seen in the following excerpt:

**Excerpt 5**

- (Line 316) Putting on my socks, that means I have to— Here's what I have to do.  
(Line 317) I have to get my hands past my pointed toe.  
(Line 318) I don't even know how I do it.  
(Line 319) I'm sitting here.  
(Line 320) (laughter)  
(Line 321) I don't know how I do that.  
(Line 322) It's 'cause you have to—  
(Line 323) It's like folding a bowling ball in half.  
(Line 324) (laughter)  
(Line 325) Soon as I start, I can feel— I'm pushing all the fat up into my vital organs, and I just feel all the systems failing.  
(Line 326) "Beep, beep, beep!"  
(Line 327) (laughter)  
(Line 328) and I have to, like, lay on my back like an eight-year-old and go like this, and I start passing out.

(Line 329) (laughter)  
(Line 330) And I know other people's lives are hard.  
(Line 331) (laughter)  
(Line 332) Ha ha ha!  
(Line 333) I know.  
(Line 334) I saw an interview on TV with Michael J. Fox, and he has Parkinson's, and he was describing brushing his teeth, and he said it takes him two hours a day, and he said it's agony, and I saw this and I thought, "Ok. That's hard."  
(Line 335) That is hard, and so is putting on my socks.  
(Line 336) (laughter)

In this joke Louis C.K. wants to make the people try to open their mind in every stake. When Louis C.K. delivers the message about the old life is difficult even in a simple thing such as putting on his sock. Louis C.K. exaggerates how hard it is to put on a sock by comparing to people having Parkinson when they brush their teeth. This makes the people think that being old is not a simple thing.

#### LOUIS C.K.'S THOUGHT ON OTHER MATTERS

Louis C.K. has some thoughts about other people. He puts many thoughts about other people in "Oh My God", such as women who say yes to men to have a night together. Louis C.K. says that what women play to men when they are on a date is an ill-advised thing that women ever made. This is the line which talks about that.

##### Excerpt 6

(Line 496) A woman saying yes to a date with a man is literally insane and ill-advised, and the whole species' existence counts on them doing it, and I don't know how they—  
(Line 497) How do women still go out with guys when you consider the fact that there is no greater threat to women than men?  
(Line 498) We're the number-one threat to women.  
(Line 499) Globally and historically, we're the number-one cause of injury and mayhem to women.  
(Line 500) We're the worst thing that ever happens to them.  
(Line 501) That's true.  
(Line 502) You know what our number-one threat is?  
(Line 503) Heart disease.  
(Line 504) That's the whole thing.  
(Line 505) (laughter)

In this excerpt, Louis C.K. tries to give a narrative to the audience, especially to women, that men are the worst thing that ever happens to women. This thought is not merely an assumption from Louis C.K. himself, but it is on the statistic that men are the highest cause of the injury and mayhem to women. The injuries that women could get from man are abuses, rapes, and the worst thing is killing.

Moreover, Louis explains that in opposite, men do not have any problem with women in terms of threat. Louis C.K. explains that the number one threat to men is heart disease. This is because most men get threat because of some disease which does not involve other direct parties to cause that, not even women.

Another matter that people never consider is when Louis C.K. gets in the topic of bad thought and good thought. Louis C.K. comes with idea that he always has two different thoughts which is bad and good

##### Excerpt 7

(Line 868) Of course, of course slavery is the worst thing that ever happened.  
(Line 869) Of course it is, every time it's happened—  
(Line 870) Black people in America, Jews in Egypt.  
(Line 871) Every time a whole race of people has been enslaved, it's a terrible, horrible thing, of course...  
(Line 872) But maybe...  
(Line 873) Maybe every incredible human achievement in history was done with slaves.  
(Line 874) (laughter)

This joke talks about the thought inside Louis C.K.'s mind about a serious problem that people face. These lines say about his thought on the slavery. In the opening of this topic, Louis C.K. says that he always has two different thoughts that come up in his mind. The first thought is that he thinks that the thing is obviously wrong, the other is that he thinks that maybe because of some other considerations, it is not really that wrong.

The joke also talks about slavery that has happened in to some races or people in the world. Louis C.K. thinks that this is very wrong-doing that ever happens in the human life because people cannot have other people's lives. On the other hand, another thing comes up in his mind regarding to the slavery. He thinks that maybe because of slavery, people have incredible achievement such as pyramid.

This joke conveys a message that everything always has two sides of point of view. Even slavery, which is the worst thing that could ever happen in the world, still has a good role in the human life. This can make people think that whatever happens in this world, there is always a good thing in it.

The other topic brought by Louis C.K. in his solo stand-up comedy show is on his observational comedy which becomes the trade mark of his routine. People come to the Louis C.K.'s show because they know that Louis can bring a topic people tend to avoid in a fun way so they can laugh at the topic and think about it. Louis C.K. brings the joke of slavery which many people consider to avoid because of the sensitivity of the topic. However, this topic successfully creates a big laughter and applause from the audience because they do not even think that they are laughing on slavery.

From Louis C.K.'s stand-up comedy concert, it can be implied that his jokes are not just to amuse the audience, but they also deliver messages that make people think about their own life and their surroundings. The jokes not only create laughter but also change in the behavior of the audience.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis on the jokes delivered by Louis C.K., a conclusion can be drawn. In terms of the pragmatic strategies used by Louis C.K., his jokes in "Oh My God" stand-up comedy concert violate 4 maxims of Grice's cooperative principles. The violations occur in 20 different topics. All the elements of the Knowledge Resources are inherent with the maxim violations because the structure of the joke enables Louis C.K. to create such violations. Also, because of the knowledge resources, the cooperative principles are violated to create the incongruence, which in turn generate the audience's laughter. In this stand-up comedy concert, Louis C.K. mostly exaggerates and gives the faulty reason. The exaggeration and faulty reason work because the audiences do not expect the way Louis C.K. exaggerates and explains the reason the joke. This is the typical of Louis C.K. in doing his comedy and creates incongruence to the audience.

All in all, Louis C.K.'s stand-up comedy is not only a way to entertain but it also has another function, that is, to deliver certain messages to the audience. "Oh My God" has other functions besides amusement, that is, to make people understand the reality that people face in another point of view. Furthermore, since this research focuses only on the verbal humor especially the pragmatic strategies, it only analyzes verbal elements of the joke and does not analyze the elements that involve gesture, tone, and intonation to create laughter. Further research could analyze other aspects of joke including gesture, tone, and intonation with different framework, object, and different types of comedy.

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