

* THE INTENDED
MEANING OF HUMOR
ACTS IN “THE BORN
LOSER”

dian arsitades wiranegara

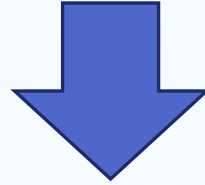
* This study investigated the intended meaning of humour act produced by the characters in “The Born Loser”. It deals with the production of the utterances as well as the semantic process of how the humour considered funny based of the text and picture appeared in the comic strips.

* **Background**

*: (1) What are the kinds of humour acts produced by the characters in “the Born Loser” (2) How are the semantic mechanisms of humour acts produced by the characters in “the Born Loser” (3) What kinds of visual images appeared in “the Born Loser” and (4) Why are the humour acts used by the characters in “The Born Loser”.

*The problems are

* How speakers and hearers use language



* 3 components of communications: speaker, message, hearer.

* **Speech Act theory**

3 components of a communication



Speaker



Message



Hearer

3 components of a speech act



Message



Illocution

What speaker means
to convey

Locution

Actual words of
the message

Perlocution

Hearer's reaction to
speaker's message

* language is closely related to thought, this also means that humour may be seen here as involving all of the emotion, thought and action—a fundamental principle—and later can lead to laughter. The findings have shown that the act of humour can be a way to ease stress as well as keeping one's health. (http://www.ur.umich.edu/0405/Oct11_04/02.shtml) an article by Katie Gazella that's the kind of outcome that could result from the University's new three-year project titled Humour at Michigan.

* **Humor Act**

* Discussion



- *Wilberforce: Why do we recycle our old newspaper instead of just throwing them out?
- *Brutus : To do our part to help save the environment! New paper is made of trees you know!
- *Wilberforce : You're puttin' me on! No one can slice a tree that thin!

*Speech act classification

Participants		Utt	Locution	Illocution	Perlocution
Addresser	Addressee				
Wilberforce	Brutus	(1.1)	Interrogative	Directive questioning i.e.	Asking for information
Brutus	Wilberforc	(1.2)	Declarative	Representative telling & asserting i.e.	Explaining to the addressee
Wilberforce	Brutus	(1.3)	Declarative	Representative asserting & Directive i.e. daring	Getting confused and daring to the addressee

*Wilberforce's utterances (1.1) "why do we recycle our old newspaper instead of just throwing them out?" can be interpreted as an innocent question that he has no idea about recycling the old newspaper. Therefore, he tries to ask it to his father (Brutus) to whom he is expected to know more than he does. After a while, Brutus explains it to Wilberforce by saying (1.2) "To do our part to help save the environment! New paper is made of trees you know!". Brutus' utterances "to help save the environment" can be interpreted as a logical answer as an old man who tries to explain to his son the concept of saving the environment by recycling the old newspaper. He thinks that the new paper is made of trees. For this reason, Brutus wants to recycle them.

***Humor act**

* continuation

* By contrast, Brutus' explanation is not properly understood by Wilberforce, as he is unable to understand about his father's thought. In this case, the illocutionary act done by Brutus in order to make Wilberforce knows what he is trying to explain, has failed. Consequently he gets confused by saying (1.3) "You're putting me on!" then he dares and twists it around by making fun to his father by saying "no one can slice a tree that thin!". As a result, neither Brutus nor Wilberforce can get the real meaning or notion of recycling the old newspaper as a part of saving the environment.

*These arguments have led into different assumptions caused by both participants, i.e. Brutus and Wilberforce where both Brutus and Wilberforce have different background of knowledge or schemata. Brutus thinks that a new paper is made of trees; it means that the making of paper is processed by the factory to be a new paper. On the other hand, Wilberforce thinks that no one can slice a tree into that thin; it means that it takes a lot of time or even impossible for everyone to slice a tree as thin as a paper. This is quite reasonable regarding that Wilberforce is only a little kid who doesn't understand what his father's mean. Meanwhile, Brutus as the father never explained about the process of making a new paper from trees to Wilberforce.

*The intended meaning of the utterances sometimes do not depend on the forms of the sentences produced by the characters. It can be captured that the basic act of utterance has got various functions that are independent from the real utterance. For example, a declarative is not always asserting, however it can be for telling, suggesting, informing, asserting, stating, criticising, showing curiosity, showing annoyance, showing surprise and deploring. An interrogative is not always asking, but it can be used for ordering, questioning, showing surprise, making fun and showing curiosity. An imperative is not always used for ordering, yet it can be used for ridiculing, daring, and requesting.

***conclusion**

*The Speech acts, or in this comic strip humor acts, which are used by the characters in the comic strip ‘The Born Loser’ are carried out through three related acts as pointed out by Austin namely, locution, illocution, and perlocution. In carrying out locution, they use interrogative, declarative, and imperative. In performing illocutionary acts, they use four kinds of illocution namely; representative, directive, commissive, and expressive. While in performing the perlocutionary acts, the characters understand about what the other characters’ intention.

*Critics and suggestions
are welcome