



**GENDER HUMOR DISCOURSE IN ‘FRIENDS’ COMEDY SERIES**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study deals with Gender Humor Discourse in ‘*Friends*’ Comedy Series. The aims of the study are 1) to categorize the types of gender humors used in ‘*Friends*’ comedy series, 2) to describe how gender humors realized in ‘*Friends*’ comedy series, and 3) to explain the reason of realizing gender humors in ‘*Friends*’ comedy series in the ways they are. The study used a qualitative descriptive method and a critical discourse analysis approach. The data of the study is drawn from scripts consisted clauses of gender humor discourse in ‘*Friends*’ comedy series. The techniques for collecting data were observing the plot of the comedy series and selecting episodes which the one that contained the most humor in friendship then download the episodes selected to be observed, after that make documentations by trimming the scenes for making the transcript of dialogues from cut scenes and finding expressions appeared of all players in the comedy series to be observe. The results of study found that there were twenty-six clauses consisted humor types found in this study namely: Self-defeating types were eight (31%). Aggressive types were seven (27%), Affiliative types were six (23%) and elf-enhancing types were five (19%), It can be concluded that Self-defeating types became had high frequency in ‘*Friends*’ comedy series. From forty-three clauses in ‘*Friends*’ comedy series, there were nine form of ten humor form realized in ‘*Friends*’ comedy series, they are Pun form, Riddle form, Joke form, Satire form, Anecdote form, Farce form, Irony form, Sarcasm form, and Wit form. From nine forms of verbal humor, Farce form became had high frequency in the kind of verbal humor of ‘*Friends*’ comedy series. Finally the last study results, there were three reason of realizing humors discourse namely: Universal joke, Cultural Joke, and Linguistic joke.

**Keywords:** *Gender, Humor, Discourse, Comedy Series*

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most frequently searched for hilarious subjects is gender differences. Males have been demonstrated to appreciate and employ most sorts of comedy more than females, although not all. When it comes to unpleasant or offensive humor, gender disparities are more noticeable. According to Groch (1974) males were less offended by racist and sexist jokes than females, and they regarded sexual jokes and insult humor to be funnier than females. On the other hand, Decker and Rotondo (1999) stated that men showed a higher level of enjoyment and usage of sexual and insult humor at work than women.

There have been many researches on comedy and gender, but few of them have particularly looked at the workplace. On the other hand, the bigger stream definitely produces generalizations about gender disparities. Both self-report studies and studies in which other people's judgments of humor are recorded suggest that men use and appreciate humor (both non-offensive and offensive) more than women. Females may be at a disadvantage in this conversation if humor is associated with how effectively and how a leader is considered to act. Positive humor is more likely to help men than women. Additionally, men are more likely than women to utilize rude and derogatory humor, increasing the likelihood that such communications will be acceptable if they are expected from men. This is also consistent with some previous studies conducted during research period, namely: Wilson and Kumar (2019); Sahin (2021); and Wu, et al. (2016).

Hoffman et al. (2020) stated that in conveying humor, some people will remember and repeat other people's jokes, while others will create new events or situations that they find funny. And in appreciating the humor, it is not the same for everyone, there are those who respond by continuing the funny moment, some just laugh and some are not provoked at all. In their 2003 paper, Martin et al. proposed the idea of "humor styles", which are classified as affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating (Salavera, et al 2020). We can better comprehend how people interact with one another and use humor on a personal and interpersonal level by becoming more knowledgeable about comedy styles.

It is indeed necessary to do research study on the connection between humor and gender over time. In this case, it is done to find out whether there were similarities or differences regarding the humors presented by gender from previous studies and the newest phenomena. One of the mediums that can present humor, the person who conveys it and interacts in the same time and place is film. A film whose purpose was to entertain and trigger laughter in the audience was a comedy genre film. Therefore, this research

focuses on comedy series that have received many awards and have high ratings to be discussed, namely *'Friends'*.

From the explanation above, this study expected to categorize the types of humor related to gender differences, what types of gender humors used by men and women in *'Friends'* comedy series when interacting with the same gender, and when interacting with a different gender, also with the realization and the reason they realized. Then, based on representative studies, there were no previous studies that conducted gender and humor discourse in comedy series.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a critical discourse analysis approach to conduct a qualitative descriptive analysis. This CDA was used to elucidate the significance of social phenomena or difficulties (Creswell, 2012). The study's primary foundation method was based on Norman Fairclough's paradigm (2010). The data of study were clauses consisting of gender humor discourse in *'Friends'* comedy series. The data sources were taken from the ten-season script for the David Crane and Marta Kauffman comedy sitcom *'Friends'* which aired on NBC from September 22, 1994, to May 6, 2004. The data of study consisted of clauses used by actors and actresses, three males (Rs, Ch, Jy) and three females (Mn, Pb, Rh). These data were used for linguistic analysis, which was then used as input for the CDA. Moreover, observation and documentation technique was used in the data collection.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this study, types of humor were analyzed based on the theory of humor types proposed by Martin et al. (2003). Types of humor classified as affiliative type, self-enhancing type, aggressive type, and self-defeating type. Types of gender humor can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. Types of Humor**

No	Types of Humor	Males	Percentages (%)	Females	Percentages (%)	Total Frequencies
1	Self-defeating	5	36	3	8	61
2	Aggressive	4	29	3	7	54
3	Affiliative	3	21	3	6	46

4	Self-enhancing	2	14	3	25	5	39
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>200</b>

Based on table above, the data showed that in this study there were four types of humor used in 'Friends' comedy series. There had been different percentages between male and female. They were Self-defeating type 5 (36%). Aggressive type 4 (29%), Affiliative type 3 (21%), and Self-enhancing type 2 (14%) used by males and the total number were 14. Females Self-defeating type 3 (25%), Aggressive type 3 (25%), Affiliative type 3 (25%) and Self-enhancing type 3 (25%) and the total number were 12. Self-defeating became had frequency because in this comedy series males and females apply humor with includes the incorrect use of comedy as a means of emotion concealment. Humor that is harmful to oneself is person-centered. Those who parody themselves are engaging in self-defeating humor. In an effort to fit in or get acceptance by a group, people may use self-defeating humor, however this humor is geared at the individual rather than the group.

There was a relationship between gender disparities and humor in this type men also reported more enjoyment and offends humor at work than women. The majority of types of humor have been demonstrated to be better understood and implemented by men than by women. In this humor, it is clear that men utilize comedy more frequently than women. Women tend to have lower humor scores than men. This confirmed that men are more relaxed when talking in same gender and different gender. They like to melt a cold atmosphere while women tend to be more serious in responding to problems.

### A. Self-defeating Humor

Self-defeating humor was mostly used in males and females clause. They divided by males 5 clauses or 36% and females 3 clause or 25% in the 26 data. There are examples the used of humor types by males and females:

(Male) **Ch:** *That's not true! I wanted to wear my bathrobe and eat peanutclusters all day. I wanted to start drinking in the morning. Don't say that I don't have goals! (f=5).*

(Female) **Mn:** *I'm fine-d. I'm fine-d! Y'know, it's a really hard word to say.(f=3).*

### B. Aggressive Humor

Aggressive humor was used in males and females language. Males used 4 clauses or 29% meanwhile female used 3 clauses or 25% in the 26 data. The examples of clauses used by males and females:

(Male) **Jy:** *Ch, you have to start getting over her. All right, if you play, you get some fresh air, maybe it'll take your mind off Janice, and if you don't play, everyone will be mad at you 'cause the teams won't be even. Come on. (f=4).*

(Female) **Pb:** *Why? Just 'cause you're too lazy to get up off your touchie (f=3.)*

### C. Affiliative Humor

Affiliative humor was used in males and females clauses. They have same frequencies. Males have frequencies 3 or 21% and females 3 or 25%. The following example of males and females clauses:

(Male) **Rs:** *When you put a 'D' at the end of 'Fine' you're not fine.(f=3).*

(Female) **Rh:** *Yeah so get ready to hear alot of ehm...boohaki, goshdarnit and brotherpucker. (f=3).*

### D. Self-enhancing Humor

Self-enhancing humor was used in males and females language in the data. They occurred 26 times involve clauses used by males 2 clauses or 14% and females 3 clauses or 25% of 26 data. It can be seen female more used humor to mocking themselves than males. The example of clause as can be seen in the following male (RS) and female (RH):

(Male) **Rs:** *Y'know what? I'm good! I'm good!(f=2).*

(Female) **Rh:** *Well when I talk to her I almost feel like she understands what I'm saying. (f=3).*

The result of this study found that there was a phenomenon occurred when there was humor in terms of humor clauses in 'Friends' comedy series. Martin et al. (2003) state that there are four types of humor, namely: 1) Self-defeating humor, the use of self-defeating dominant used by males than females. It can be conclude that in the humor types gender males more dominant applied humor than females. In this case, it was found that clauses on 'Friends' comedy series applied all of them.

2) Aggressive humor dominant used by males than females. It happened because in general men were often aggressive in their actions and it happened in this comedy series. Men were very enthusiastic when they talk to every person they talk to. 3) Affiliative, it can be seen in this type that the use of affiliative humor balance with the numbers. They were three clauses used by males and there clauses used by females, so the total number of the use of this humor type as many as six clauses. 4) Self-enhancing, in this type the total number of clauses used by males and females five. Females had more clauses than male. As described in theory that affiliative refers to

the proclivity to say amusing things, tell jokes, and perform practical jokes in order to draw attention and entertain others, to assist in the establishment of relationships, and to alleviate any tension that may arise in interpersonal relationships. In this comedy series there was a lot of humor going on between fellow genders and different genders, one of which is a positive type of humor, namely affiliative. Then, self-enhancing refers to the proclivity to maintain a humorous outlook on life even when others do not share it.

In this study, it was found a few clauses of humor denote self-enhancing. It had a high frequency. Meanwhile, aggressive refers to the proclivity for using humor to criticize or manipulate others through the use of sarcasm, annoying others with jokes and making others appear silly. Humor is a person's way of conveying a funny impression and making people laugh, but in this research, it was found negative kinds of humor that is aggressive kind. It is caused by the data was shown that humor used by the men in this comedy series shows more aggressiveness and leads to ridicule of body parts.

In the types of humor, it can be concluded that men tend to used humor in every clause they issue, they do humor spontaneously. This was evident from the results of study that the percentage of humor in men was much higher than the percentage of humor in women. But there was one of four types that women had high percentages for using humor, it was Self-enhancing. It happened because basically women have feelings and words that are more polite than men. It tended to be in the clauses in this comedy series that women find humor better than men. The men's reasons enjoy using humor especially sexist humor in their group was to create a feeling of superiority over the other group that is being despised. No wonder if this kind of humor can be warmly welcomed by his peers and ultimately creates a stronger bond of friendship. Actually, throwing sexist humor was more of a goal not to demean women, but men just wanted to get recognition in their environment, be accepted, and create more intimacy with their friends. It is proven with Collins' theory that sexism as an understanding or belief system that believes in a phenomenon in which certain genders (men) were better than others (women). This can be seen from the form of language that used by men when communicating, or their monologue about women, which is assumed that women are ugly animals, or in reality (pragmatically) and metaphorically contains objects of negative value about women.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Humor types such as: Self-Defeating, Aggressive, Affiliative, and Self-enhancing had been used in the comedy series '*Friends*'. The dominantly clauses used by males and females was about

achieve intrapersonal rewards. In the types of humor, it can be concluded that men tend to use humor in every clause they issue, they do humor spontaneously. This was evident from the results of study that the percentage of humor in men was much higher than the percentage of humor in women. But there was one of four types that women had high percentages for using humor, it was Self-enhancing. It happened because basically women have feelings and words that are more polite than men. It tended to be in the clauses in this comedy series that women find humor better than men. The men's reasons enjoy using humor especially sexist humor in their group was to create a feeling of superiority over the other group that is being despised.

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