

Humor and the critique of knowledge: A pragmatic analysis of *Cunk on Life* (2024)***Humor dan kritik ilmu pengetahuan: Analisis pragmatik dalam “Cunk on Life” (2024)*****Retno Wulan^{1,*}, Marsandi Manar¹, Aji Royan Nugroho², & Aryawira Pratama³**¹Universitas Bangka Belitung, Indonesia³STIKES Mitra Husada Karanganyar⁴Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) CurupCorresponding Email: retnowulan@ubb.ac.id**Article History**

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**Abstract**

Anchored by a theory of nine types of humor systematically proposed by Morrison (2008), this research aimed at analyzing types and functions of humor in a mockumentary series entitled *Cunk on Life* (2024). This mockumentary depicted humor as not only an entertainment or amusement medium but also social critics to the knowledge, popular culture, and how societies realize the reality. This research employed the qualitative-descriptive approach. The data were obtained through dialogues transcript and context observation of each scene. The findings pointed out that absurd humor, verbal humor, and incongruity humor were dominantly used in *Cunk on Life* (2024). They all served to highlight ignorance, unawareness, logical contradictions, and the authority of knowledge and the media. In addition, the findings also revealed four main social functions of humor used in this series and elaborated its implication in EFL classroom. This research contributes to the development of pragmatic linguistics and semiotics studies by expanding the application of Morrison's theory to the mockumentary genre, which has rarely been studied academically.

Abstrak

Berlandaskan teori sembilan jenis humor yang secara sistematis diusulkan oleh Morrison (2008), penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis jenis dan fungsi humor dalam serial *mockumentary* berjudul *Cunk on Life* (2024). Serial *mockumentary* ini menggambarkan humor tidak hanya sebagai media hiburan atau kesenangan, tetapi juga sebagai kritik sosial terhadap pengetahuan, budaya populer, dan cara masyarakat memahami realitas. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif yang terintegrasi dengan unsur verbal. Data diperoleh melalui transkrip dialog dan pengamatan konteks setiap adegan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa humor absurd, humor verbal, dan humor ketidakcocokan dominan digunakan dalam *Cunk on Life* (2024). Ketiganya berfungsi untuk menyoroti ketidaktahuan, ketidakpedulian, kontradiksi logis, serta otoritas pengetahuan dan media. Selain itu, temuan juga mengungkap empat fungsi sosial utama humor yang digunakan dalam serial ini dan menguraikan implikasinya dalam kelas bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL). Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan linguistik pragmatik dan studi semiotika dengan memperluas penerapan teori Morrison pada genre *mockumentary*, yang jarang diteliti secara akademis.

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A. Introduction

Humor is essential part of communication tools in different languages. It is shaped by the context, background knowledge, and cultures of the speakers and interlocutors. Principally, humor is not only a medium to amuse people but also to convey an emotional situation and social criticism (Meilia, 2022). It is considered effective, neutral, and safe method due to lack of intense or confrontation felt by the targets. Meanwhile, according to Martin & Lefcourt (1984); Polimeni & Reiss (2006); Sukardi et al., (2019); and Suaib et al, (2019); Rnic et al, (2016) humor should be new and is complicated cognitive behaviors leading to constant laughter and funny anecdotes. Moreover, humor constantly expresses inner feelings leading to happiness, relief, and refreshment (Hariyanto, 2022) although ambiguity in humors sometimes causes different perceptions due to multiple meanings (Hermintoyo, 2011; Polimeni & Reiss, 2006; Ratnawati, 2019). The actors do all types of humors bring and stimulate the targets through all the word, actions, and mimics. As the consequences, it will make people happy and gain positive vibes.

Mockumentary as a contemporary entertainment genre is increasingly popular due to its ability to portray social criticism within a fictional narrative resembling a documentary. One of the most notable mockumentaries is *Cunk on Life* (2024), which features the fictional character Philomena Cunk in a satirical exploration of history and human existence. While humor is the main vehicle for conveying messages, the types and functions of humor have not been studied academically. Morrison (2008) identifies nine humor types including exaggeration (humor that uses exaggerated words), incongruity (humor that connects two opposites-logics and hope-in common), surprise (humor that takes advantage of unexpected events or facts), slapstick (humor that relies on the effects of something boisterous), absurd (humor that does not have a strong reason, so it is considered stupid or ridiculous), human predicaments (difficult circumstances/danger from humans), ridicule (humor that teases and mocks others or oneself), defiance (humor that is carried out by showing hostility or aggression through rebellion), and verbal humor (by manipulating language through word play, jokes, name-calling, and so forth, in positive or negative forms).

Previous research emphasized the function of humor as medium of reflection and way of coping the stress (Sukardi et al., 2019; Rnic et al., 2016; Hariyanto, 2022; Al Arief, 2023). A study conducted by Grases Colom et al., (2011) revealed a positive engagement of a comedy video towards 31 participants. The results found out significant decrease of anxiety and stress levels after watching the comedy videos. On the other hand, a study investigated a television program and found out that the dominant function of humor is to release tense and confronted situations (Suaib et al., 2019). Moreover, they stated that humor is essential to drive critical thinking by analyzing types or functions of humor as a strategy during daily communication. Furthermore, an analysis of humor used in animated movies was conducted by Fazal (2024) using textual analysis. He revealed that the selected animated movies embraced certain both positive and negative stereotypes concerning with race and social status. He further suggested multimodal humor to neutralize the stereotypes. In terms of English classroom, the EFL learners showed positive attitude towards teachers' humor in the classroom. It strengthened teacher-student rapport and facilitated students' enthusiasm in the classroom (Thuy & Thao, 2022). On the other hand, humor contributes to enhancing the students' motivation, social engagement (Solhi & Elahi, 2023), communication skills, and sense of belonging in EFL classroom (Al Arief, 2023). Another study also revealed the use of humor contributes to gender and learning motivation that male teachers used humor more frequently than female teachers (Alemi et al., 2021).

The current study offered novelty by systematically applying Morrison's (2008) classification of nine humor styles to the contemporary mockumentary *Cunk on Life* (2024)-a genre and object that has not been subjected to much academic research, especially in the context of content-based qualitative analysis. The study also integrated visual and linguistic narratives, which enriched the understanding of how humor is constructed in popular media. The originality of this research lies in how to analyze humor in terms of rhetorical function and social context. The salience of the

present study is that it elaborates humors with measurable framework. Further, its results can be used by English language practitioners especially teachers in their classrooms. As elucidated earlier based on previous studies, teachers who can make a joke in the classrooms tend to be able to boost students' motivation for learning English. As a response to the limitation of existing relevant studies and to the salience of current research issue, this study analyzes the form and function of humor used in *Cunk on Life* (2024) using a qualitative approach based on content analysis. It aims to answer two main questions: (1) What are the categories of humor used in *Cunk on Life* (2024) based on Morrison's (2008) classification? (2) How does each type of humor convey the message or shape the narrative in the mockumentary series?

Mockumentary genre emerged and gained its popularity in the second half of the 20th-the beginning of the 21st century (Honcharuk et al., 2022; Sethi, 2025) blending satire with documentary style to delve into social issues (Sethi, 2025). *Cunk on Life* (2024) pictures a fictional character namely Philomena Cunk as the pseudo-intellectual narrator who depicts the history and human civilization in a ridiculous way with logical contradiction. Principally, the *Cunk on Life* (2024) presents humor not only as entertainment but also criticism towards the way modern society consumes knowledge, science, and culture.

Humor is a multidimensional phenomenon which involves the verbal deviation, absurd, odd, and incongruity stimulating amusement to people (Hariyanto, 2022). The current study employed the humor theory proposed by Morrison (2008). Morrison's theory does not frame humors in isolation. Rather, it views humors in the context of pedagogy. Further, the theory takes into account not only the emotive aspect, but also cognitive domain. In other words, it considers both emotion and cognition in viewing humors. Thus, Morrison's theory about humors underpins the researched issued of the present study.

Humor in the context of education often stimulates laughter or amusement and this results in decreasing stress levels on students as well as increasing bonding between them and their teachers (Fata et al., 2018). A joke used by the teachers in English classroom engaged the students' motivation to learn and participate in learning (Fata et al., 2018; Al Arief, 2023). Furthermore, he claimed three different types of linguistic jokes used in EFL atmosphere namely pragmatic, phonology, and pun jokes in which the word puns and sound build the linguistic jokes (Hermintoyo, 2011). Meanwhile, humor always embeds and holds the pragmatic function either to amuse, mock, or negotiate social power (Ratnawati, 2019). In addition, Ruch & Heintz (2017) claimed four styles of humor consisting of affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating. Thus, humor is always engaged and closely related to social context and utterances' cultures.

In EFL classroom, humor has positive contribution to enhance a joyful and relax learning. (Morrison, 2008) classified nine types of humor based on linguistics nature and its context. They systematically consisted of exaggeration, incongruity, surprise, slapstick, absurd, human predicament, ridicule, defiance, and verbal humor.

In the context of mockumentary, the nine types of humor could be used through visual expression and interaction between fictional character and real source person. The mockumentary combined two contradictive things (real documenter and fictional absurdity). The *Cunk on Life* (2024) presents a character named Philomena Cunk who talks in a serious documentary style but misguided and ridiculous content. At this point, humor was emerged from the tension between objective documenter and irrational content. Morrison (2008) emphasized that humor does not only amuse people but also advance the critical awareness. In the present study, humors are seen as a systematically critical tool to criticize the 'bias' representation between certain authority and the public, namely with amusement style considered indirectly.

In the context of *Cunk on Life*, humor is used to laugh at human foolishness and arrogance in understanding the world and to criticize how the popular media often produce 'false information' in scientific mode. Relying on the nine types of humor proposed by Morrison (2008), the current study reveals how the humors in *Cunk on Life* criticize the 'knowledge' produced by certain authority including the media. Knowledge based on the present study is defined as the representation of information produced by certain parties especially authorities. In other words,

the meaning in the information can be driven according to needs of the producer. Thus, the represented knowledge needs to be disclosed measurably by using a scientific framework, namely Morrison’s nine types of humors.

B. Method

The present research is qualitative in nature. This approach was selected to investigate and interpret the types of humor used in a mockumentary genre entitled *Cunk on Life* (2024) based on nine humor classification proposed by Morrison (2008). The verbal humors were derived from the dialogues among the narrator and all the source people. This method enabled the researchers to explore how humors present not only in verbal utterances but also discourse strategy to construct the social critics. The content or discourse analysis was in line with the researchers oriented towards meaning, context, and language use in audiovisual media (Krippendorff, 2019).

The researchers selected the mockumentary genre as it gained its popularity nowadays and the *Cunk on Life* was one of the well-known mockumentary series where the director depicts the history or a narrative through a unique way-satire blended with documentary style. In addition, the source person presented in the series were all the real experts; only the narrator was the fictional character. This mockumentary was aired in 2023 under the name of Cunk on Earth. In 2024, the director named AI Campbell directed similar program with slightly different name. Thus, the *Cunk on Life* was aired in 2024. Based on the series description on the Netflix and IMDb website, the writers comprised of Charlie Brooker, Ben Caudell, Erika Ehler, Charlie Geroe, Eli Goldstone, Jason Hazeley, Lucia Keskin, Joel Morris, and Michael Odewale. Meanwhile, this mockumentary was starred by Diane Morgan as the presenter whose name is Philomena Cunk. She interviewed several people as the source person and asked random questions while all the interviewee work as experts in their real each life. However, their status did not seem to bother the Philomena Cunk to ask random and sometimes ridiculous questions.

The researchers watched the *Cunk on Life* twice on March 2025 and the beginning of April 2025. The first activity was conducted due to one of the researcher’s curiosities of the series. The second screening was made by focusing on several phrases or clauses uttered by the host to all her guests while highlighting fascinating relevant clauses in form of humor. This series lasted for one hour and eleven minutes. To ensure all the clauses and phrases, the researchers downloaded the available English subtitle, copy the transcript, match the phrases, and carefully highlighted the relevant information.

Referring to the theory of humor classification proposed by Morrison (2008), the researchers began the data analysis. The units of analysis comprised of verbal utterances such as dialogue and monolog accompanied by social and situational contexts strengthening the meaning of the humor. The researchers created an excel file to secure all the data and began the classification under nine categories namely exaggeration, incongruity, surprise, slapstick, absurd, human predicament, ridicule, defiance, and verbal humor. The researchers named each column based on each humor category and carefully classified the phrases or clauses under each category. The classification of humor types in the present study relied on nine types proposed by Morrison (2008), as stated in the following table.

Table 1. The Distribution of Humor Types in *Cunk on Life* (2024)

No	Classification
1	Exaggeration
2	Incongruity
3	Surprise
4	Slapstick
5	Absurd
6	Human Predicament
7	Ridicule
8	Defiance

In classifying the data into nine categories of humor according to Morrison (2008), three criteria were adopted to define humor, namely funniness, laughter, and appreciation (Köhler & Ruch, 1996; Martin, 2007; Ruch, 1998). Firstly, an expression is classified as humor when it has funny content. Further, it is considered as humor when it leads the listeners to laughing. Last but not least, in the present study, an expression is defined as humor when it leads listeners to giving positive appreciation like applause.

The researchers described the types of humor and interpreted the meaning related to satire messages or utterances. Moreover, the researchers evaluated how the humor contributed to social critics brought by the series. The validity of data was derived using theoretical triangulation-referring the results of the analysis to Morrison's theory of humor (2008) and related empirical studies (Martin & Lefcourt, 1984; Suaib et al., 2019).

C. Results and Discussion

1. Humor classification based on Morrison's theory (2008)

Based on the data collection and analysis, there were total 32 data specified into each humor type as in the following table:

Table 2. Number of Frequency of Humor in *Cunk on Life* (2024) based on Humor Category by Morrison (2008)

No	Classification	Number of Freq (%)	Data or statements
1	Exaggeration	5 (15.63%)	Datum 12 "Did you know only 40% of people have skeletons?" Datum 13 "Sartre saw things differently to everybody else, partly because of his questioning mindset, but mainly because of those eyes. I mean, seriously, he could probably see the back of his own ears with them or write two books at once." Datum 14 "In fact, I'm surprised he could paint at all. My hands would have been shaking so much, I'd have had my own eye out with the brush." Datum 16 "It smashes subatomic particles together, and I'm actually walking into it now, wearing a hard hat in case a proton falls on me." Datum 27 "This is an atom. It's so tiny, you probably can't see it. Even if you're watching in 4K. In fact, it's so small chances are I dropped it before we started filming."
2	Incongruity	7 (21.88%)	Datum 3 "So, why are we here?" "You mean, why human beings exist?" "No, I mean why are we here in is this near your house or something?" Datum 15 "How did God manage to boil his terms and conditions down to just ten points, when the iPhone and user license agreement is about 100 pages long?" Datum 23 "God knows everything we're thinking. That's a data privacy nightmare, isn't it? Is there a way to opt out?" Datum 9 "Why do we say our ancestors came in apes?" Datum 10

			<p>“Imprisoned within every skull is a creature we've enslaved to do our thinking for us, a sort of smart cauliflower known as the brain.”</p> <p>Datum 18 “When a human body dies, which hole does the ghost come out of, north or south?”</p> <p>Datum 24 “Why do we say people are facing the electric chair when they've got their backs to it?”</p>
3	Surprise	1 (3.13%)	<p>Datum 19 “Let me tell you something. Don't dismiss it. In 2021, my aunt Carol got engaged to a man called Bob Collins. But one day, he just vanished and cleared out her bank account. And when she looked up the name Bob Collins, she discovered he'd died in 1958. He'd been a ghost all along.”</p>
4	Slapstick	0 (0%)	0
5	Absurd	10 (31.25%)	<p>Datum 4 “Does God have a brother called Simon? ... But they can't prove that either, so he might have. The universe could have been created by Simon”</p> <p>Datum 7 “When Michelangelo painted the Sistine Chapel, did he start on the floor and then they flip the building over, or was it always on the ceiling”</p> <p>Datum 8 “Did michelangelo use a really long brush, or did he have really long arms?”</p> <p>Datum 31 “How strong were Michelangelo's arms? Like, if a mad priest had leapt on his back while he was painting it, would he have been able to reach around and pull him off”</p> <p>Datum 28 “God is not in the sky, literally.” “Right. So where is he? Has he got an address?”....“What, even, like in cupboards?”</p> <p>Datum 11 “Are my cells dividing and multiplying all the time, like even when I'm sitting here now?” “Ah, no wonder i feel so worn out all the time.”</p> <p>Datum 20 “My mate Paul tried to create a new life form by inserting his DNA into a grapefruit, but halfway through the experiment, the greengrocer started hitting him. Why is science so controversial?”</p> <p>Datum 17 “One of life's biggest mysteries is how it's possible for me to look both like my mother and my father at the same time, even though I've only got one face”</p> <p>Datum 21 “The female reproductive organs are largely hidden indoors for safekeeping and normally only visible behind some kind of paywall”</p> <p>Datum 25 “Electrocuting people isn't very eco-friendly, is it? Could we steam them to death instead?”</p>
6	Human Predicament	0 (0%)	
7	Ridicule	0 (0%)	
8	Defiance	0 (0%)	
9	Verbal Humor	9 (28.13%)	<p>Datum 1 "Have you ever wondered how we got here? Wondered where we're going? Wondered about the biggest mystery of all, what is the meaning of life? Well, I haven't but others have. "</p> <p>Datum 2 “Hello, who are you? ... can i call you Brian, or do you prefer Cox?”</p> <p>Datum 5 “It sounds like a lot to achieve in such a short space of time, but unlike us, God wasn't constantly interrupted by iPhone notifications.”</p>

Datum 6	"God started by saying "let there be light", which makes sense because he needed to be able to see what he was doing. Then he divided light from dark, like I do when I'm doing a clothes wash."
Datum 22	"With its culture of casinos, strip clubs, and round-the-clock drinking, it's a mecca for people who aren't going to Mecca"
Datum 26	"Have you heard of D and A? Yes. Do we all have D and A, or do some of us have D or A, but not both?"
Datum 29	"How do you know cats aren't thinking about their existence? They might be really anxious, and when they say "meow" they're expressing their own pain like "me, ow".
Datum 30	"Why do people say the universe came out of a big bag?" "I think you mean big bang?" "A big bag that went bang?" "No, no. Just a big bang no bag."
Datum 32	"People worry a lot about AI. What about you?" "You mean am I worried about ...?" "No, I mean, should they worry about you?"
Total	100%

2. The Dominance of Absurd, Verbal, and Incongruity Humor

The finding showed five of total nine humor categories proposed by Morrison (2008) were used in *Cunk on Life* (2024) series. They were exaggeration (5 data = 15.63%), incongruity (7 data = 21.88%), surprise (1 datum = 3.13%), absurd (10 data = 31.25%), and verbal humor (9 data = 28.13%). Meanwhile, slapstick, human predicament, ridicule, and defiance humors were not used at all (0%). The absurd humor (31.25%), verbal humor (28.13%), and incongruity humor (21.88%) are the most dominant types of humor used in *Cunk on Life* (2024). All three complement each other in constructing Philomena Cunk's character identity as a "foolish intellectual" who speaks in an academic style but contains logical errors. According to Morrison (2008), absurd humor uses irrational logic and ridiculous mindset while the verbal humor is wordplay, meaning, or sound. The incongruity humor depicts jokes through logical or context contradiction. In the *Cunk on Life* series, the absurd humor (31.25%) mostly used in the dialogue which twisted the scientific logic representing the nonsense scenario of Cunk's mindset towards general truth or fact. For instance:

"Does God have a brother called Simon? No. But they can't prove that either, so he might have. The universe could have been created by Simon." (Datum 4)

"Electrocuting people isn't very eco-friendly, is it? Could we steam them to death instead?" (Datum 25)

Datum 4 and 25 were the sample dialogues in which they could not be resolved or explained logically. Both data left the audiences complicated yet irresolution view. Thus, they kept wondering the answer but laughing because it was naturally funny. These dialogues reveal an extreme irrational mindset which is conveyed in an argumentative style creating a significant contrast between form and content. Usually, the absurd humor creates an absurd or nonsense logic for the recipients or audiences (Sukardi et al., 2019; Sund & Paasonen, 2021). The absurd humor used in

Cunk on Life (2024) aimed to criticize the pseudoscientific thinking and the societies relying on their superficial logic to understand how the world works. In addition, this humor serves as a tool for epistemic parody, mocking how scientific knowledge is often reduced to empty rhetoric in popular media.

Meanwhile, the verbal humor sometimes emerges from wordplay (Fazal, 2024), homonym, and ambiguity. For instance:

“God started by saying “let there be light”, which makes sense because he needed to be able to see what he was doing. Then he divided light from dark, like I do when I’m doing a clothes wash.” (Datum 6)

“Have you heard of D and A? Yes. Do we all have D and A, or do some of us have D or A, but not both?” (Datum 26)

The data brings humor effect through a wordplay-“light from dark, like I do when I’m doing a clothes wash”. In datum 6, semantic deviation and word meaning occurred between two different contexts (God and domestic works of human) represented by one clause (he divided light from dark). Meanwhile, datum 26 represents wordplay of DNA. Instead of stating or pointing out DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid), Cunk separated the letter D and A creating a joke and funny moment. Similar to datum 6, semantic deviation also took place. Thus, the function of verbal humor in this mockumentary series was to emerge the absurdity of pseudoscience logic in which the character seems logical but is actually misguided. On the other hand, the verbal humor also served as contradictory formal academic language and ridiculous content.

Meanwhile, the incongruity humor emphasized on the incompatibility between logic and expectation. For instance:

“When a human body dies, which hole does the ghost come out of, north or south?” (Datum 18)

“God knows everything we’re thinking. That’s a data privacy nightmare, isn’t it? Is there a way to opt out?” (Datum 23)

This dialogue described false logic which was seen rational but conceptually incongruent (Couder, 2019). Datum 18 presented satire towards exaggerating empirical mindset in which Cunk tried to employ the scientific method into metaphysics things. A hyperbole scheme leads to strong emotions and humor (Patrick, 2024). The incompatibility between scientific domain and spiritual led to funny situation yet logic. Meanwhile, the analogy used in datum 23 created overlapping domains (God’s power and data privacy) that are incompatible, but the analogy still “makes sense.” This type of humor invites the reflection of the audients to laugh at inconsistency and serious nonsense. In addition, incongruity describes how different logics perceived unreasonable incompatible even silly views and attitudes (Sund & Paasonen, 2021). Incongruity humor in *Cunk on Life* (2024) served to criticize the today’s knowledge, sophisticated technology, and human’s faith.

3. Social Function of Humor in *Cunk on Life* (2024)

Based on the analysis, the humor used in *Cunk on Life* (2024) have four main social functions. First, humor served criticism towards social knowledge. It used to mock or satire the way media presented the “scientific” knowledge or information to the audience with a serious but hollow tone (Sund & Paasonen, 2021). Datum 4 “Does God have a brother called Simon?” and datum 8 “Did Michelangelo use a really long brush, or did he have really long arms?” presented how most societies often receive and forward information without analyzing or validating it in advance. Questions regarding Gods, sciences, or arts revealed how some people understand sciences and religions in a simple

way. Other example could also be seen in datum 11 “... *Ah, no wonder I feel so worn out all the time*” satirizing scientific misconceptions that often emerged in our societies. Meanwhile, the statement obtained from verbal humor reflecting the critics towards social knowledge could be seen in datum 2 “... *Can I call you Brian, or do you prefer Cox?*” which criticized awkward social interaction and public ignorance of politeness in academic setting. In terms of incongruity, datum 10 “... *a sort of smart cauliflower known as the brain*” successfully criticized social knowledge by equalizing human’s brain with a vegetable ‘cauliflower’. It sarcastically simplified the concept of neurobiology. The host of this mockumentary-Cunk-is a perfect symbol of ignorance in a brilliant rhetoric.

Second, humor created ironic distance between audiences and narrator. Through a rigid, serious, and academic narrative, the audiences realized the contrast between manners and content leading to an intellectual superiority-based humor. For instance, the datum 4 “... *The universe could have been created by Simon*” explored how an extreme ignorance of the host made the audiences feel superior intellectually that the distance formed in the humor; the audiences understand the irrational statement, yet it resulted a perfect example of an irony. In addition, datum 22 “... *It’s a mecca for people who aren’t going to Mecca*” in verbal humor category also presented an extreme irony associating the wordplay and cultures. In terms of incongruity, datum 3 “...*Is this near your house?*” also constructed ironic distance because the narrator seemed to not understand the context while the audiences could clearly see the funny incompatibility between questions and reality.

Third, humor contributed to relieving the stress. This mockumentary series was popular with 7.3/10 score by IMDb in November 2025. Most of the people leave positive comments on the websites and wrote how enjoy and funny the scene was. This function created and provided space for amusement, stress release, and laugh to the audiences among the modern world absurdity. This function derived from a sample of datum 20 regarding an experiment of creating living beings “...*by inserting his DNA into a grapefruit*”. It produced simple yet complicated humor such as biology and scientific controversy. On the other hand, a complicated topic concerning the creation of the universe in datum 6 was analogized simply through domestic activity-washing the clothes. The use of simple analogy helped reduce stress when discussing about serious academic topic. Similar to datum 24 concerning the death due to electric chair, this dark topic was also lighter by presenting the irrational opinion.

Fourth, humor criticized social and ideology. The *Cunk on Life* (2024) ridiculed the obsessive modern human behavior towards sophisticated technology, science, and history but too native intellectually. For instance, datum 21 addressed the female reproduction organ “...*are largely hidden indoors for safekeeping and normally only visible behind some kind of paywall*”. It sarcastically depicted the objectivity of female bodies and sexual commercialization in digital era. In addition, a criticism towards iPhone notification as in datum 5 highlighted human dependence on modern technologies and digital distraction in their daily lives. Datum 23 “...*data privacy nightmare...*” also criticized the social and ideology when addressing God and modern cultures or technology that are obsessed with digital privacy and data regulation. Thus, humor serves as reflective tool to contradictive social construction.

By adopting the nine types of humor proposed by Morrison (2008), the current study reveals how the humors in *Cunk on Life* criticize the ‘knowledge’ produced by certain authority including the media. By means of humor analysis, the present study has disclosed that systematic mockumentary allows to challenge the ‘bias’ knowledge produced by certain authority by combining cognitive and emotive approaches. Through the cognitive approach, the viewers or the public are awakened by increasing their thinking awareness, relying on their sense of logic. By means of the emotive approach, they are affected by increasing their joy, making use of their feeling of comfort. Whereas the former assists in increasing their awareness, the latter plays its role ‘subconsciously’.

4. Implication for Classroom Practices

Whereas the present study limits its scope to the analysis of humor types and functions in the series of *Cunk on Life* (2024), its results can be linked to the sake of pedagogy especially language teaching and learning. Nevertheless, its benefit for language education in the classroom is in the form of insight into empirical findings of the previous relevant literature. Thus, the present study itself did not involve empirical testing

Based on the results of the present study, humor in the mockumentary series *Cunk on Life* (2024) reveals how language relates closely to the context. Learning English in the classroom by applying several clauses or phrases in a humor style could enhance the awareness and critical thinking of the students on how the semantics and pragmatics work in a similar situation and how the incompatibility of semantics produces funny circumstance. For instance, the absurd humor often stimulates the phonology and semantics (Kuperberg et al., 2000; Eviatar and Just, 2006). Furthermore, the language teachers could coin the idioms, metaphors, and puns through humor besides releasing the stress and boredom in the classroom (Ali Fadel & Al-Bargi, 2018; Thuy & Thao, 2022). Concerning with critical literacy and cultural awareness, the students might also learn how languages serve as tool for criticism, how humor presents the social values and mindset, and how the language is often constructed rhetorically.

Moreover, teachers and lecturers could lead the students to compare the cross-cultural humor strategy. For instance, comparing the humor used in England (deadpan satire) to humor used in Indonesia (situational). During its real implementation, the educators shall embed the humor in warm-up activity in pragmatics or speaking lesson or include it in reflective portfolio in critical discourse analysis to live the classroom atmosphere and enthusiasm (Al Arief, 2023). Thus, the humor analysis implication in EFL classroom contributes to enabling EFL learners learn the language and enhance their crucial analysis on the meaning and ideology in communication.

D. Conclusion

This research revealed that the mockumentary series of *Cunk on Life* (2024) dominantly used absurd humor, verbal humor, and incongruity humor in a fascinating and intellectual way as the main mechanism of comedy development. All these humors presented and served as tools for the social satire, highlighted the irony between knowledge and foolishness, serious academic and illogical mindset, relieved the stress, and criticized social and ideology. The classification of humor types proposed by Morrison (2008) was able to help investigate and explore the humor types used in mockumentary genre as it analyzed humor both from linguistics and visual aspects. The humor types in *Cunk on Life* did not only amuse and entertain the audiences but also criticize how today's media presented the truth and knowledge to the societies.

The finding contributes to pragmatic linguistics and semiotics study emphasizing the importance of multimodal analysis in humor in audiovisual media. Further research shall be able to compare the humor in *Cunk on Earth 2023* or other mockumentary series to enhance the understanding and elaboration towards types of parody in cross-cultural mockumentaries.

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