

## TYPES AND FUNCTION OF SATIRE IN RONNY CHIENG'S STAND-UP COMEDY PERFORMANCE: AMERICA NEEDS MORE ASIANS (2019) AND EVERYTHING'S STUPID (2020)

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to analyze types and functions of satire used in two of Ronny Chieng's stand-up comedy performances; America Needs More Asians (2019) and Everything's Stupid (2020). This study uses descriptive qualitative method with observation and note-taking technique. The analysis show that the types of satire found in the utterances of Ronny Chieng are; satire (15), cynicism (7), sarcasm (3), and innuendo (2). The satire functions as ridiculing of thoughts and ideas, sarcasm, laughing at ideas and habits and understating facts. Satire is used in the stand-up comedy as a critic, specifically for Caucasians, African Americans and Asians.

**Keywords:** satire, type and function, stand-up comedy

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### BACKGROUND

The role of language as a medium of communication permeates various fields, including education, politics, religion, commerce, including the world of comedy. Language is also a medium to convey ideas, thoughts and feelings to others. Language is one of the most distinctive characteristics of humans that distinguishes it from other creatures. Thus, language can be said plays an important part of the communication process.

Comedy has a fairly central role in communicating in everyday life. Almost everyone is familiar with comedy. Comedy is often found in everyday environments, both in the community, workplace, print

media, electronic media, all of which do not escape the communication activities that intersect in communication interactions.

Stand-up comedy is a form of the art of communicating which is delivered in monologue to the audience. Is not only useful as entertainment, but also useful as a medium for delivering messages, opinions, and social criticism covering phenomena that exist in the local, national, and even international environment. Using humor, stand-up comedy uses language that contains messages and criticisms which are easily accepted by listeners

Satire is one type of language style that is usually used to express something with the intention of being sarcastic, or directly free. In this case, the satire language style

used in the stand-up comedy Ronny Chieng is not only intended to be satirical, but also aims to educate. This study is interested in analyzing the types and function of satire in two of Ronny Chieng's stand-up comedy performances; *America Needs More Asians* (2019) and *Everything's Stupid* (2020). The types and function of satire both refer to the theories from Keraf (2004, 2009).

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research does not require data in the form of calculations or numbers, so this research is a qualitative research that will be analyzed using descriptive analysis methods. The method used in this study is the observation method with note-taking techniques. The primary data is taken from Ronny Chieng's stand-up comedy performances; *America Needs More Asians* (2019) and *Everything's Stupid* (2020). The researcher listens to the stand up comedy, observe the transcript then records the utterances that contain satire. The data is then classified into types and functions.

Data were analyzed and then presented with informal methods which are ordinary words to formulate rules using statements that describe domains, constraints, and relationships between rules for research purposes. Data is presented in ordinary language and expressions in the form of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, or statements (Muhammad 2011: 288).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Stand-up comedy is described as a humorous monologue (although comedians usually start with an attempt to engage the audience in dialogue), presented to the audience in a seemingly spontaneous and conversational manner (Misje, 2002: 87). It

is not impossible if there are satire, obscene, racist, and vulgar jokes in Stand Up Comedy. They make scripts and small notes in order to make their comedy easier, (Nugroho, 2012: 1-4). Humor also serves to convey opinions or ideas in an effort to influence them to think and act wisely. This influential idea has a logical reason for it to be carried out by the reader or listener. In this research, 10 data presenting the types and functions of satire in 2 videos of Ronny Chieng's performances will be analyzed. Data 1 to 5 is taken from *America Needs More Asian* (2019) and data 6 to 10 from *Everything's Stupid* (2020).

### Data 1

“We need more Asian people in this country I'll tell you why, because we are the only objective referees ... in your ongoing race war between white and black people.”

The type of satire in data 1 is cynicism with the function of ridiculing thoughts and ideas. In the context of this sentence, the speaker uses satirical language style to insinuate the white race in America, which always has problems with the black race. Ronny Chieng stipulates that America needs a lot of Asian citizens to solve the problem of the war between white and black races in America. Ronny Cheing tries to convey that the only way to stop war between races is to be objective.

### Data 2

“White people calling the police on black people for very innocent activities, like barbecuing in the park or entering your own homes.”

The utterances above again show satire language style with the function of ridiculing thoughts and ideas. In the context of this sentence, the speaker uses to insinuate the white race in America which always limits the activities of the black race in carrying out their daily activities. The satire conveyed by Ronny Chieng is an educational message for Americans not to be racist and limit activities that appear normal and harmless to black Americans.

### **Data 3**

“We will come in and arbitrate any situation for you impartially and without bias because we don't care.”

In the utterance above, the speaker uses satire to criticize the habits of Asian people who are ignorant on racial diversity. Asian people in stand-up comedy shows are described by Ronny Chieng as individuals who don't care about their surroundings but just want to work. Bias according to the Cambridge dictionary is 'the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, allowing personal opinions to influence your judgment'. In this sentence, Asian people don't care about the issue of skin race in America, by saying 'without bias'. Thus, the utterance above falls under the category of satire with the function of laughing at idea and habits.

### **Data 4**

“If you call us into Starbucks that day, we'd be like “Yo, these two black guys are sitting down drinking coffee. Why don't you drink your latte and shut the hell up.”

The above utterance is an example of satire which functions as sarcasm. In the sentence; 'Why don't you drink your latte and shut the hell up.' the speaker describes a situation if an Asian person is a police officer in America when dealing with reports of the white race against the normal activities of the black race.

### **Data 5**

“Because our skin is not in the game. Literally NFL, NBA, our skin is non of those games.”

The utterance in data 5 relates with satire language style with the function of laughing at ideas, habits, etc. These satire sentences are not meant to be sarcastic or to bring down others, but to laugh at the small population of Asians who play for the NBA. The satire used by Ronny Chieng above is related to the fact that Asian-American in the NBA consist of only 0.2 percent of the NBA but are 5.6 percent of the total American population. There is a clear disparity. It can be concluded that Ronny Chieng's satire about Asian indifference to racial issues can be seen in the lack of Asians participating in the “game” dominated by white and black Americans.

### **Data 6**

"The corona virus is not just making people sick, it's also making people stupid."

The type of satire language style found in data 19 from the video “Everything’s Stupid(2020)” is cynicism with the function of ridiculing thoughts and ideas. According to Ronny Chieng, the Covid-19 outbreak has another impact on people who have the

disease, namely ignorance in digesting news in the media. In that sentence there is a feeling of restlessness from Ronny Chieng, about the attitude of the world community easily trusting the news about Covid-19.

#### **Data 7**

"Really? Some people think eating garlic and sesame oil will prevent the disease? If that was true no Chinese person would have it, okay. That's not a treatment for us, that's breakfast."

The type of satire in the sentence is satire and serves to ridicule and laugh at the ideas and habits of Asians who are accustomed to consuming garlic and sesame oil. The satire that functions to laugh at the sentence can be identified in the word "that's breakfast".

#### **Data 8**

"Drinking bleach isn't gonna cure the virus it's just gonna get the stains out you idiots."

The sentence above is a satire aimed at the media and society. In the sentence there is the word 'idiots' which is aimed at news writers and readers who believe in the news. Data 8 shows satire which function as sarcasm.

#### **Data 9**

"Getting in the backseat of your Nissan Sentra. Yo, that one time I was an uber pool with the monkey that started Ebola."

Data 9 show cynical satire with the function of ridiculing thoughts or ideas. Ronny Chieng responded to the news saying that some uberpool drivers refused passengers with "Asian-ness" names, because uberpool

drivers were afraid of the spread of Covid-19 caused by Asians. Ronny Chieng ridiculed the thoughts of Americans about Asians being the main cause of the spread of Covid-19. It is unacceptable for Americans to discriminate and act racist towards Asians in America, because Asians living in America have nothing to do with the main cause of the spread of Covid-19.

#### **Data 10**

"Ohh.. no you have to wait ten extra days to get your iPhone."

The utterance above is an example of cynicism with the function of ridiculing thoughts or ideas. The satire above is addressed to the media in conveying news. Ronny Chieng ridiculed the media, which instead of discussing facts about the spread of Covid-19, the media instead raised the issue of delayed shipments due to the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Ronny Chieng, there is still a lot to worry about and report on in the midst of the widespread spread of Covid-19, compared to discussing the delay in sending iPhone.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the analysis, there are 27 types of satire shown in the utterances of Ronny Chieng's stand-up comedy. The types include satire (15), cynicism (7), sarcasm (3), and innuendo (2), with the functions of ridiculing thoughts and ideas, sarcasm, laughing at ideas and habits and understating facts.

Based on the research, the most dominant type of satire language style appears is the satirical satire. Meanwhile, the most dominant function of satire language style used is the function of laughing at ideas and habits. From this description, it can be concluded that in addition to the types and functions of satire language styles

in the sentences spoken by Ronny Chieng, the 27 analyzed data can also be seen as a form of critic for white and black races, as well as Asians. The critics are related with racism towards African American. It carries the stereotype of Asian people's working habits and other stereotypical behavior such as; ignorance.

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