THE USE OF PUNS TO GENERATE HUMOR IN DAD JOKES: A SCRIPT-BASED SEMANTIC THEORY OF HUMOR ANALYSIS

Dwi Khumaeroh Sa'adah*[1], Dewi Kustanti[2], Ruminda[3]
[123]State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, English Literature Department, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, Bandung, Jawa Barat, Indonesia
[1*]saadahdk@gmail.com [2]dewikustanti@uinsgd.ac.id [3]ruminda@uinsgd.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Dad jokes have become a trend lately. Despite often being perceived as boring and unfunny, dad jokes are still practical in generating laughter. A critical component that makes dad jokes humorous is the use of puns. This research aims to classify the types of puns and how these puns generate humor in dad jokes. The data were the sentences that contained puns gathered from the @Dadsaysjokes X account. The research applied a qualitative method and presented a descriptive analysis. The semantic analysis of the data is supported by the puns classification theory developed by Delabastita (1996) and the Script-based Semantic Theory of Humor (SSTH) developed by Raskin (1985). The results of this research show that there are four types of puns in the dad jokes, which are homonymy, homophony, homography, and paronymy, that generate humor through ambiguity. In conclusion, dad jokes consist of puns that carry multiple meanings and amuse people through creative wordplay, so it breaks down the societal stigma that views dad jokes as boring and unfunny.

Keywords: dad jokes; humor; puns

ABSTRAK

Dad jokes atau lelucon bapak-bapak sedang populer akhir-akhir ini. Meskipun sering dianggap membosankan dan tidak lucu, lelucon bapak-bapak tetap saja dapat membangkitkan tawa. Komponen penting yang membuat lelucon bapak-bapak lucu adalah penggunaan pun atau permainan kata. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengklasifikasikan jenis-jenis pun dan bagaimana pun tersebut menghasilkan humor pada lelucon bapak-bapak. Data tersebut adalah kalimat yang memuat pun yang diambil dari akun X, yaitu @Dadsaysjokes. Penelitian ini menerapkan metode kualitatif dan menampilkan analisis deskriptif. Analisis semantik data didukung oleh teori klasifikasi pun yang dikembangkan oleh Delabastita (1996) dan Script-based Semantic Theory of Humor (SSTH) yang dikembangkan oleh Raskin (1985). Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada empat jenis pun dalam lelucon bapak-bapak, yaitu homonimi, homofoni, homografi, dan paronimi, yang menghasilkan humor melalui ambiguitas. Kesimpulannya adalah lelucon bapak-bapak memuat pun yang mengandung makna ganda dan menghibur orang melalui permainan kata yang kreatif, sehingga hal tersebut memecah stigma masyarakat yang memandang lelucon bapak-bapak sebagai lelucon membosankan dan tidak lucu.

kata kunci: lelucon bapak-bapak; humor; permainan kata

How to cite: Sa'adah, D. K., Kustanti, D., & Ruminda. (2024). *The Use of Puns to Generate Humor in Dad Jokes: A Script-Based Semantic Theory of Humor Analysis.* ELITE: English and Literature Journal,*11(2)*. 174-187

INTRODUCTION

Language provides meanings to express many attitudes (Maula & Ilyas, 2021). It is often utilized to create humor, such as puns. A pun is a linguistic device that utilizes words with similar sounds or spellings. Puns enable us to show our wit and intellect by grasping the humor, referred to as 'the pleasure of the text,' which provides readers with the enjoyment and excitement gained by understanding figurative language (Zohidjon et al., 2022). Furthermore, Satvoldievna and Qizi assert that the humorous effect generated by puns depends on the ambiguity of the utilized words (Satvoldievna & Qizi, 2020). Pun generates a humorous effect, and it is frequently used to create jokes, especially in the context of dad jokes.

Dad jokes are a contemporary humorous phenomenon (Dooner, 2024). The phrase 'dad jokes' is typically associated with fathers or older men who targeted the jokes at their children or younger generation. Furthermore, dad jokes are short, typically characterized by puns in the punchline, delivered as either one-liners or in a question-and-answer format rather than as long narratives (Syahputra et al., 2024). The widespread use of dad jokes makes them present across all social media platforms. In platform X, numerous accounts frequently share these dad jokes and gain many followers; for instance, the account @Dadsaysjokes (Dad Jokes (@Dadsaysjokes), 2024). Similarly, according to the latest research conducted by Hye-Knudsen, Google Books presents lists with no fewer than 300 books containing a collection of dad jokes (Hye-Knudsen, 2023).

Despite their popularity, dad jokes are often considered boring and unfunny. This is because dads or men have a rigid manner in conversation, and their regular topics are considered severe. Current research shows that men frequently discuss sports, politics, and technology (Ginarti et al., 2022). Therefore, the relevance of this study to real-world situations is that this research seeks to break down societal stigma by showing that dad jokes possess humor derived from their multiple meanings of unexpected puns. As Jaroenkitboworn stated, the basis of jokes lies in their ability to create serious expectations only to break them with unexpected outcomes or a lack of expected results (Jaroenkitboworn, 2020). The stereotype that dad jokes is unfunny deserves further examination.

The previous research that led to the conduct of this study was Rosyad Mahasin Miranto's research entitled "Classification of Dad Jokes in icanhazdadjoke.com," which resulted in the hypothesis that puns can be classified into five types: homophonic, homographic, compounded, recursive, and visual. Furthermore, the research showed that dad jokes derive humor from puns or wordplay (Miranto, 2020). Another previous research reviewed is entitled *"Mayor's Puns on Instagram: Classification and Function of Pun in Ridwan Kamil's Instagram Account"* by Shafa Firda Nila. This study aims to determine the classification and purpose of puns revealed in Ridwan Kamil's Instagram posts. This research was achieved by analyzing data extracted from Instagram posts made by the account @ridwankamil, which serves as a source of pun examples. The applied method is qualitative, using Delabastita's theory of pun classifications, which include homonymy, homophony, homography, and paronymy. In addition, this research used Bader's theory to combine additional types of puns, notably compound, recursive, and visual puns, to achieve a comprehensive classification. This research's findings combine two established theories and identify six types of puns: homonymic puns, homophonic puns, paronymic puns, compound puns, recursive puns, and visual puns (Nila, 2018)

The difference between this research and the existing research is that this research examines how puns in dad jokes generate humor by employing Raskin's semantic and humor theory.

Although both researches classify puns, this research used Delabastita's theory, which specifically divided puns in dad jokes into four categories (homonymy, homophony, homography, and paronymy). Furthermore, the classification of puns is examined in a qualitative approach by providing analysis and arguments, which will not merely be supplied in numeric tables as in the previous quantitative research.

      This research aims to examine the various types of puns employed in dad jokes and analyze how these puns generate humor on the @Dadsaysjokes X account. The study also seeks to break down the social stigma surrounding father's jokes that are often considered unfunny by presenting a semantic analysis of the puns that generate humor through their double meanings. This is supported by Azmi's statement that puns have explicit and implicit meanings depending on the language's aim (Azmi et al., 2024). Understanding the puns' ambiguities in dad jokes and their way of generating humor can clear up any misconception that makes these jokes perceived as unfunny.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Semantics

      Semantics is defined as the study of meaning (Pangestu & Kustanti, 2023). Semantics examines the construction of words within sentences, evolving into rationality (Pratiwi & Darmadali, 2022). It may be more precise to define it as research on the connection between linguistic units and their meanings (Kroeger, 2019). Researching semantics means researching the relationship between linguistic components and the underlying meanings. Moreover, semantics pertains to exploring the meanings commonly related to morphemes and sentences (Beltrama, 2020). The primary object of semantic analysis is a linguistics unit that possesses or conveys meaning. Words, lexemes, phrases, clauses, and sentences are language units that contain meaning, whereas morphemes are language units with no meaning yet convey meaning. Consequently, the semantic approach is most effective for analyzing multiple interpretations of the meanings of linguistic units independently without context.

      Semantics addresses various topics. For instance, semantics addresses the multiplicity of interpretations associated with a single word, generally called ambiguity. Furthermore, semantics also addresses the meanings of words and sentences that are possibly connected, including phenomena such as wordplay or puns.

Puns

      Puns are one of the topics in semantics because puns explicitly play with the meaning of words and create ambiguity or double meaning. A pun, or paronomasia in Greek, is a form of wordplay incorporating multiple meanings inside a single word or term (Šimon, 2019). Many perceptions correspond to a single word's various meanings and interpretations. This aligns with Kadwa's and Alshenqeeti's statement that punning is a type of wordplay in which a word is employed to produce multiple meanings simultaneously (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2019). Delabastita in Kadwa and Alshenqeeti claim puns can utilize various characteristics, including phonological, graphological, orthographic, morphological, syntactic, or semantic features (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2019). Puns are also a linguistic strategy utilized for humor because of their ambiguity. To comprehend the concept correctly, look at the example sentence provided below.

        I told a chemistry joke, but there was no **reaction**.

In the above sentence, a word printed in bold is a pun that shares identical spelling and sound with a similar term, although possessing a different meaning. The term 'response' may have multiple interpretations. One interpretation of 'reaction' refers to a process that leads to chemical transformation, whereas another interpretation refers to an individual's response upon listening to a joke. The sentence is considered ambiguous due to the displayed pun. Delabastita categorizes puns into four types: homonymy (similar sounds and spelling), homophony (similar sounds but different spellings), homography (different sounds but similar spelling), and paronymy (slight differences in both sounds and spellings). A summary of the four types of puns is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Types of puns and its examples

	Sounds	Spellings	Meanings	Example
Homonymy	Similar	Similar	Different	Bank (part of the river) Bank (financial institution)
Homophony	Similar	Different	Different	Here (adverb of place) Hear (verb)
Homography	Different	Similar	Different	Resume (CV) Resume (continue)
Paronymy	Slight different	Slight different	Different	Eclipse (astronomical event) Ellipse (closed curve)

1. Homonymy
   Homonymy is described as the coincidence of words that share the same form (Dmitrievna Tabanakova & author, 2021). The puns may be considered coincidental due to their sound and spelling similarities. Delabastita also believes that homonymy utilizes terms with identical sounds and spellings (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2019). An instance is the term 'bank' as 'financial institution' compared with 'bank' as 'part of the river.'

2. Homophony
   Homophony refers to the phenomenon in which two or more words have identical spellings while possessing different meanings (Trott & Bergen, 2020). This pun creates an impression of ambiguity; if two different words are spoken similarly, their meanings can be interpreted based on the context of the sentence. Delabastita states that homophonic puns switch words that share the same sound but have unrelated meanings (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2019). An example is the term 'here,' which indicates the adverb of place, in contrast to 'hear,' which signifies the verb.

3. Homography
   Homography puns occur when multiple meanings arise from a single homograph (Zheng & Wang, 2022). Homograph refers to words that share the exact spelling. Delabastita points out that homographic puns utilize the multiple meanings of essentially the same word (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2019). An instance of homography can be seen through the term 'resume,' which has two distinct pronunciations: 'ˈrɛzəˌmeɪ,' referring to a 'CV,' and 'rɪˈzum,' indicating 'continue.'

4. Paronymy

Paronyms can be misspelled or formed in speech due to their partial phonemic and morphological similarities (Juraeva et al., 2021). Paronymy is characterized by terms pronounced and written nearly identically, resulting in a resemblance between them. Delabastita noticed that paronymic elements utilize words with slight differences in both spelling and sound (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2019). The terms 'Eclipse' and 'Ellipse' exhibit significant similarity in pronunciation and writing.

Humor

Humor is equivalent to something funny. It means a tendency to perceive or convey what is entertaining and hilarious. Emotional reactions and vocal-behavioral appearances, like laughter and smiling, typically accompany humor (Jiang et al., 2019). Humor is generally conveyed through spoken words or expressions. This humor relies on semantics and the resemblance of two linguistic forms: sounds and spelling (Attardo, 2020).

The Script-based Semantic Theory of Humor (SSTH)

The Script-based Semantic Theory of Humor, formulated by Victor Raskin, is a theory that examines humor from a semantic perspective. The primary hypothesis stated that each joke was compatible, whole or partially, with two opposing scripts (Raskin, 2023). A script corresponds to the lexical meaning of a term. All humor can be defined as a juxtaposition of two opposing ideas. According to Raskin's theory, a text qualifies as a single-joke-carrying text if it fulfills both qualifications. First, the text is partially or entirely compatible with two distinct semantic scripts. Then, the two scripts compatible with the text are oppositional, and their compatibility is described as complete or partial overlap with this text. Moreover, humor is generated when a stimulus or trigger is present at the end of the joke, typically called the punchline. The following example shows how this theory works.

I tried starting a hot air balloon business, but it never **took off**.

The humor derives from the dual meanings or ambiguity of the term "take off." In its first script or literal meaning, it implies rising into the air. In the second script, or this context relating to an idiom, it implies accomplishment.

Dad Jokes

Dad jokes are unusual humor that usually involves a cheesy delivery and consist of simple, harmless puns (Rogers & Hye-Knudsen, 2023). In the eyes of society, gentlemen are associated with bland personalities, which is why it is said that they appear awkward when delivering jokes, making them sound cheesy. Consequently, these jokes typically create either a chuckle or an exaggerated groan from the audience (Rogers & Hye-Knudsen, 2023). In the context of dad jokes, these responses may even indicate that the jokes are entertaining. The following example shows a dad joke.

My niece calls me **Ankle**.
I call her my **Knees**.

The previously mentioned dad joke exemplifies paronymy with the word 'ankle' in relation to 'uncle' and homophony with 'knees' in connection to 'niece.' The ambiguity of meaning resulting from wordplay gives these dad jokes a sense of humor.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research utilizes a descriptive qualitative method, which is considered the most suitable for answering topics requiring descriptive analysis. Qualitative research attempts to comprehend and investigate rather than simplify and control variables. It is contextual and interpretative, focusing on the processes or patterns of development rather than the conclusion or ends of the investigation (Nassaji, 2020). Meanwhile, descriptive analysis is a type of synchronous analysis in which content is examined independently of normative assessment (Kurbanova & Ataeva, 2020). Consequently, the upcoming research will derive from the author's subjective reading of the texts, disregarding the dominant societal perspectives.

This research utilizes dad jokes presented in four short sentences with puns as the object. The dad jokes are derived from social media platform X, specifically the account @Dadsaysjokes (Dad Jokes (@Dadsaysjokes), 2024). The supplied texts comprise dad jokes featuring puns classified as homonymy, homophony, homography, or paronymy, with each pun serving as an ambiguous and humorous punchline.

A purposive sampling technique for data collection is utilized in this research. Purposive sampling involves selecting data most likely to provide relevant and valuable information (Campbell et al., 2020). This method identifies and chooses cases that optimize limited research resources. The selected data's criteria include posts featuring puns, utilizing easily comprehensible or familiar vocabulary, and addressing polite topics, avoiding abusive language or ridicule. Meanwhile, the data collection process includes reading dad joke posts on @Dadsaysjokes's account, identifying the occurrence of puns in posts featuring dad jokes, comprehending the significance of dad jokes that feature puns and comedic aspects, sorting the dad joke posts that align with the specified characteristics, and finally collecting the chosen dad jokes as complete sentences.

The research has two steps of data analysis. Firstly, the data is classified based on the theory of puns proposed by Delabastita (1996): homonymy, homophony, homography, and paronymy. Secondly, the data is analyzed sentence by sentence to find the ambiguity of meaning that generates humor based on the Script-based Semantic Theory of Humor (SSTH) formulated by Raskin (1985). Based on Raskin's theory, a pun is considered one of the varieties of a joke because it is compatible with two opposing scripts or ambiguity. So, this research identified the multiple meanings of the puns and interpreted them as ambiguous, then explained that the ambiguity creates a humorous effect in dad jokes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This part presents the findings obtained through the data analysis steps outlined in the research methodology section. The researcher discovered a variety of puns utilized as punchlines

from observations of dad jokes on the @Dadsaysjokes account on platform X. The following explanation clarifies these findings.

A.   Types of Puns in Dad Jokes

When reading and understanding the meaning of the latest dad jokes posted by @Dadsaysjokes accounts on platform X, researchers found four types of puns. The four dad jokes can be classified into homonymy, homophony, homography, and paronymy. Briefly, the four types of puns and their use in dad jokes can be shown in the following table.

Table 1. Dad jokes found in @Dadsaysjokes X account and its classification

Dad Jokes	Types of Puns
Dad, how do I **look**? With your eyes, son.	Homonymy
Apparently to start a zoo you need at least two pandas, a grizzly and three polars. It's the **bear** minimum.	Homophony
If you ever think English is not a weird language just remember that **read** and **lead** rhyme and **read** and **lead** rhyme. But **read** and **lead** don't rhyme, and neither do **read** and **lead**.	Homography
Whenever my artist girlfriend is sad I let her draw things on my body. I gave her a shoulder to **crayon**.	Paronymy

1.   Homonymy

Dad, how do I **look**?
With your eyes, son.

The dad joke employs a pun utilizing homonymy, specifically with the term 'look.' Homonymy is a word that shares identical spelling and sound with other words, although it contains distinct meanings. The term 'look' contains two distinct meanings. 'Look' denotes an individual's self-image or the action typically executed by the eyes. The son may inquire about his appearance in the initial sentence. However, his dad provided an irrelevant response because he interpreted the term 'look' differently, specifically as a verb associated with eyesight. Consequently, the reader will understand the term differently while scanning this humor because the term is ambiguous. Delabastita's theory of puns claims that these two interpretations derive from the homonym, which shares identical spelling and sound yet conveys distinct meanings.

2. Homophony

Apparently to start a zoo you need at least two pandas, a grizzly and three polars. It's the **bear** minimum.

The dad jokes employ homophonic puns as their punchlines. The term 'bear' phonetically resembles 'bare,' both pronounced as 'bɛr,' despite the difference of spellings. Although phonetically identical, the two terms possess distinct meanings; 'bear' denotes a mammal species, but 'bare' denotes a standard. The term 'bare' is usually juxtaposed with 'minimum,' indicating that specific circumstances must exist at least to a specified limit. When examining the original term in separation, the term 'bear' is indeed ambiguous and does not precisely match the following term, 'minimum.' After reading this joke, linguistically proficient readers may identify a mistake in the term 'bear minimum,' which appears to be a spelling mistake or inadequate. By the utterance of the term 'bɛr,' the reader will notice that the pronunciation resembles other words, and the writing is also almost the same, but these two terms express distinct different meanings. However, when considered in the prior text, the term 'bear' usage aligns with the subject of the preceding sentence, which addressed the population of bear species in the zoo. This may indicate that the zoo has a limited quantity of bears. This ambiguity aligns with Delabastita's theory that the dual meanings associated with a single phonetic expression arise from the homophony of the words, which have identical pronunciation but differ in spelling and meaning.

3. Homography

> If you ever think English is not a weird language just remember that **read** and **lead** rhyme and **read** and **lead** rhyme.But **read** and **lead** don't rhyme, and neither do **read** and **lead**.

The dad joke employs a pun involving a homograph, where a word is spelled identically but spoken differently and possesses several meanings. The term 'read' possesses two different pronunciations and meanings: 'rid,' denoting the infinitive verb form, and 'rɛd,' indicating the past participle. Similarly, the term 'lead' possesses two pronunciations and meanings: 'lid,' which denotes an infinitive verb, and 'lɛd,' which indicates the past participle form. The initial sentence of the joke illustrates that the phrases 'read and lead' share identical vowel sounds because they rhyme or create a harmonious sound result. However, due to the written format of this dad joke, the reader cannot discern whether 'read and lead' is pronounced as 'rid ænd lid' or 'rɛd ænd lɛd.' Likewise, the terms 'read' and 'lead' do not rhyme in the second phrase, leaving the reader uncertain whether 'read' is pronounced as 'rid' or 'rɛd' and whether 'lead' is pronounced as 'lid' or 'lɛd.' Delabastita (1996) claims that this occurrence arises from homography, which enables a word with identical spelling to possess two distinct pronunciations and meanings.

4. Paronymy

> Whenever my artist girlfriend is sad I let her draw things on my body.
> I gave her a shoulder to **crayon**.

This dad joke employs one type of pun, specifically paronymy. The term 'crayon' exhibits a subtle distinction in pronunciation and spelling compared to 'cry on.' In writing, the two are nearly identical, differentiated simply by the inclusion of the letter 'a' and a space. Similarly, the term 'crayon' is pronounced as ''kreɪˌɑn,' while 'cry on' is pronounced 'kraɪ ɑn,' showing a resemblance in their phonetic structures. In the prior text, the term 'crayon' refers to the previously mentioned drawing activity, wherein he permits his girlfriend to draw something on his body. On the other hand, when viewed from another perspective and related to the former clause about his girlfriend's grief, the term 'crayon' might quickly recall the phrase 'cry on,' which is nearly

identical in spelling and pronunciation. Consequently, as Delabastita (1996) states, a subtle similarity in sound and spell may arise due to the paronymy.

B. How Puns Generate Humor in Dad Jokes

The puns in dad jokes create an ambiguous effect, implying the existence of two contradictory ideas inside the words. Dad jokes are humorous due to their ability to generate unexpected double meanings while retaining their coherence and relevance to the previous text. To better comprehend, look at these examples of dad jokes that contain puns again.

Dad, how do I **look**?
With your eyes, son.

As previously said, this dad joke shows a double meaning, expressing ambiguity. Although the term 'look' possesses multiple interpretations in the joke, both interpretations are legitimate or make sense; nonetheless, this may not align with the son's desired response. This ambiguity is deemed humorous as it may lead the reader to agree with the dad's response, which can be perceived as rational, despite the son's intended meaning of 'look' concerning his appearance. It makes this wordplay amusing and enjoyable. The statement was supported by one of the comments from the @Jul93355 account that praised the dad jokes as nice (Jules (@Jul93355), 2024). The vagueness of this pun functions as a comedic punchline in this dad joke. This aligns with Raskin's SSTH, which states that humor arises from the ambiguity of the punchline. The term 'look' possesses two opposing semantic scripts or two different meanings, and its ambiguity serves as a source of humor. Moreover, linguistically proficient readers will easily identify the dual meanings attached to this word and get the humorous side of this dad joke.

Apparently to start a zoo you need at least two pandas, a grizzly and three polars.
It's the **bear** minimum.

The humor in the dad joke arises from the uncertainty created by pronunciation resemblance paired with diverse spelling and meaning. This aligns with Raskin's assertion that jokes might be deemed humorous due to the uncertainty of implicit punchlines. The sound 'bɛr' possesses two semantic scripts, each of which conveys an entirely different meaning. It generates a sense of trickery in the reader through the pun, eventually causing laughter. This is confirmed by the remark of @LiftAndReadDad, who stated that the joke elicited a giggle from him (Fotis (@LiftAndReadDad), 2024). Readers with language proficiency will instantly recognize the phonetic resemblance between 'bear' and 'bare' and enjoy this joke since it is also related and makes sense to the context presented. So, the pun ambiguity can be perceived as a punchline generating humor and provoking laughter.

If you ever think English is not a weird language just remember that **read** and **lead** rhyme and **read** and **lead** rhyme.
But **read** and **lead** don't rhyme, and neither do **read** and **lead**.

The ambiguity arising from puns has led to uncertain meanings and pronunciations of the two words. From Raskin's SSTH perspective, the puns in this dad joke present two opposing ideas

of a word, precisely a difference in pronunciation and meaning of identical writing, which generates humor from the contradiction between these multiple interpretations. The puns in this dad joke twist the expectations and challenge the understanding of the language, leading to a moment of amusement. If the reader successfully understands the puns, there will be inherent satisfaction in knowing they cannot be deceived. This aligns with @RyanBartholomee's response to the post, expressing his happiness and amusement at grasping the jokes' meanings (Ryan Bartholomee (@RyanBartholomee), 2024).

> Whenever my artist girlfriend is sad I let her draw things on my body.
> I gave her a shoulder to **crayon**.

Raskin's SSTH states that a text qualifies as a joke if it contains two opposing scripts. This dad joke contains the word 'crayon,' which has an ambiguous meaning and is unsuitable to pair with the previous phrase. In addition, it is phonetically and alphabetically similar to 'cry on,' which is more appropriate to pair with the previous phrase. 'Crayon' in its literal script or meaning is interpreted as a drawing tool. Nevertheless, the punchline changes the interpretation of the emotional distress narrative, implying that the woman is weeping and seeking comfort to 'cry on'. The term crayon embodies two opposing ideas that require the reader to employ linguistic proficiency to derive humorous interpretations. The claim was strengthened by @sanddevil76's response in the dad joke post, praising the joke as excellent, along with a laughing emoticon (My Info (@sanddevil76), 2024). This shows that such ambiguity generates humor.

Discussion
From the findings above, two aspects can be discussed further, namely as follows.

A.   Types of Puns in Dad Jokes
Dad jokes often use various puns, especially on the @Dadsaysjokes X accounts. Delabastita categorizes puns into four structural types: homonymy, homophony, homography, and paronymy. Aligning with this theory, the four categories of puns can be found in the dad jokes posted on the @Dadsasyjokes account. The homonymy pun in dad jokes is represented by the word 'look,' which shares a similar sound and spelling with another term yet possesses different meanings. The term 'look' can refer to appearance or self-image and may serve as a verb performed by the eyes. The homophony type also appears in the existing dad joke, namely the word 'bear,' which sounds like 'bare,' despite their different meanings. 'Bear' refers to mammals, whereas 'bare' implies a particular standard. Furthermore, a homography pun was identified using the terms 'read' and 'lead,' which possess similar spellings with different sounds. The terms 'read' and 'lead' possess two distinct pronunciations, dependent upon their verb forms, which might indicate present or past tense, leading to different meanings. The last type of pun is paronymy, exemplified by the term 'crayon,' which plays on the phrase 'cry on.' Although the two exhibit slight sound and spelling resemblance, their meanings differ significantly.

The four categories of puns seen in dad jokes show that puns can serve as a critical element for generating humor. This also renders dad jokes inseparable from puns to create an ambiguous impression. The four categories of puns utilized show that dad jokes can extensively exploit puns, resulting in an expanded and seemingly infinite variety of puns. A person's creativity in creating dad jokes is shown through their usage of varied puns in sentences. Furthermore, people proficient

in the language will find it easier to discover and comprehend the meanings of all types of puns that exist.

B.   How Puns Generate Humor in Dad Jokes

Puns in the dad jokes serve as punchlines, adding humor to the jokes. The humor of the puns derives from the ambiguity of the words used, whether consciously or unconsciously recognized. This aligns with Raskin's (1985) statement that all humor can be characterized as a juxtaposition of two opposing ideas. Each dad joke features a pun that encompasses two opposing semantic scripts. The first script consists of the original meanings of words written in the dad jokes, such as 'look' indicating appearance, 'bear' indicating animals, 'read and lead' indicating an infinite verb, and 'crayon' indicating a drawing tool. On the contrary, the second script opposes the original meaning of the word, leading to ambiguity. In this case, 'look' shifts into the verb, which means to see; 'bear' shifts its meaning due to sound similarity with 'bare,' which indicates standard; 'read and lead' shifts meaning as the written form resembles a past participle verb; and 'crayon' shifts meaning due to its slight similarity to 'cry on,' which indicates to cry. The two meanings represent two scripts that convey opposing ideas within the same word. Puns generate humor in dad jokes by creating ambiguity, wherein the two opposing meanings remain to make sense and are rational.

The puns and their meanings significantly influence the power of a dad joke in delivering humor. If individuals perceive dad jokes as boring and unfunny, they will likely fail to grasp the underlying thoughts and ideas inside the puns. Conversely, individuals who have truly mastered a language would understand and enjoy puns, as these play on words simultaneously generate dual unexpected shifts of meanings. This occurs due to their familiarity with existing vocabulary and comprehension of how a language creates meaning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the previous sections, it can be inferred that four common types of puns are utilized in dad jokes on the @Dadsaysjokes account: homonymy, homophony, homography, and paronymy. Despite societal stereotypes that judge dad jokes as boring and unfunny, puns within these jokes generate humor when the meanings of the words are understood simultaneously with their ambiguity. Readers who struggle to grasp the humor in dad jokes tend to lack proficiency in the language used, as puns can only be comprehended by people who understand the language. Understanding humor in dad jokes can improve communication by making interactions more engaging, memorable, and enjoyable, whether in casual conversations or social media posts. As happened to the online humor content posted by the @Dadsaysjokes account reveals audience engagement that considers the dad jokes funny, as evidenced by the many likes and reposts; even some audiences praised the humorous puns in the dad jokes in the comment section and replied with other puns. This research has limitations, especially regarding the limited data analyzed, making it challenging to make strong generalizations about the ambiguity and humorous effect of puns in dad jokes. The limited previous research on dad jokes requires more scholarly attention for this subject, thus addressing the issue of research scarcity, considering its widespread use in society. The researcher anticipates a rise in future research by analyzing cross-cultural or multilingual dad jokes, investigating audience responses through surveys or social media data, or examining the cognitive or psychological aspects of humor.

REFERENCES

Attardo, S. (2020). The linguistics of humor an introduction. *The Linguistics of Humor: An Introduction*, 1–465. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198791270.001.0001

Azmi, N. U., Sabat, Y., & Sulistyaningsih. (2024). FLOUTING MAXIM PRODUCED BY LAY ZHANG IN I HEART RADIO INTERVIEW: A PRAGMATICS ANALYSIS. *Elite: English and Literature Journal*, *11*(1), 52–62. https://doi.org/10.24252/ELITE.V11I1.47761

Beltrama, A. (2020). Social meaning in semantics and pragmatics. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, *14*(9), e12398. https://doi.org/10.1111/LNC3.12398

Campbell, S., Greenwood, M., Prior, S., Shearer, T., Walkem, K., Young, S., Bywaters, D., & Walker, K. (2020). Purposive sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples. *Https://Doi.Org/10.1177/1744987120927206*, *25*(8), 652–661. https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206

Dad Jokes (@Dadsaysjokes). (2024). *Dad Jokes (@Dadsaysjokes) / X*. X. https://x.com/Dadsaysjokes

Dmitrievna Tabanakova, V., & author, C. (2021). Term "Homonymy" As A Semantic Category. *European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 197–205. https://doi.org/10.15405/EPSBS.2021.12.25

Dooner, E. (2024, June 14). *Why dad jokes crack us up: The surprising psychology explained - Odessa American*. Odessa American. https://www.oaoa.com/people/why-dad-jokes-crack-us-up-the-surprising-psychology-explained/

Fotis (@LiftAndReadDad). (2024, July). *Fotis on X: "@Dadsaysjokes Hahha made me giggle" / X*. X. https://x.com/LiftAndReadDad/status/1816167432224170342

Ginarti, D., Nurhapitudin, I., Ruminda, R., & Iksan, H. (2022, June 27). *Study of Language Features Used by Male and Female in #SaveJohnnyDepp on Instagram and Twitter | Ginarti | Az-Zahra: Journal of Gender and Family Studies*. Az-Zahra: Journal of Gender and Family Studies Has Been Indexed By: https://journal.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/azzahra/article/view/14388/7289

Hye-Knudsen, M. (2023). *'Dad jokes? That's the way eye roll…' | BPS*. The British Psychological Society. https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/dad-jokes-thats-way-eye-roll

Jaroenkitboworn, K. (2020). Funny English in the Digital World. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, *13*(1), 39–41.

Jiang, T., Li, H., & Hou, Y. (2019). Cultural differences in humor perception, usage, and implications. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*(JAN), 438919. https://doi.org/10.3389/FPSYG.2019.00123/BIBTEX

Jules (@Jul93355). (2024, August 20). *Jules on X: "@Dadsaysjokes Nice!" / X*. X. https://x.com/Jul93355/status/1825817207613387060

Juraeva, I. A., Ulugbek, M., & Sabirova, N. K. (2021). A Critical Review of Existing Views on the Problem of Paronymy and Related events. *Elementary Education Online*, *20*(4), 567–573. https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.04.61

Kadwa, M. S., & Alshenqeeti, H. (2019). Comparing and analyzing Puns and Metonymies based on Functions, Structures and Working Mechanism. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, *2*(5), 261–274. https://doi.org/10.32996/IJLLT

Kroeger, P. R. (2019). Analyzing meaning: An introduction to semantics and pragmatics. Second corrected and slightly revised edition. *Analyzing Meaning: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics. Second Corrected and Slightly Revised Edition*, 1–482. https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.2538330

Kurbanova, M. M. (M), & Ataeva, G. B. (G). (2020). Linguistic Methods for Investigating Concepts in Use. *European Scholar Journal*, *1*(1), 27–30. https://www.neliti.com/publications/340724/

Maula, U., & Ilyas, R. (2021, June). *THE CONNOTATIVE MEANING OF CORONAVIRUS IMPACT EXPRESSIONS IN TEMPO ENGLISH MAGAZINE | Maula | CALL*. CALL. https://journal.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/jcall/article/view/12489/5675

Miranto, R. M. (2020). Classification of Dad Jokes in icanhazdadjoke.com. *LITERA KULTURA : Journal of Literary and Cultural Studies*, *8*(1). https://doi.org/10.26740/LK.V8I1.32720

My Info (@sanddevil76). (2024, July). *My Info on X: "@Dadsaysjokes You're on fire. The last few jokes I've read are truly terrible. Surely you can't keep this up." / X*. X. https://x.com/sanddevil76/status/1815070678976209174

Nassaji, H. (2020). Good qualitative research. *Https://Doi.Org/10.1177/1362168820941288*, *24*(4), 427–431. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820941288

Nila, S. F. (2018). Mayor's Puns on Instagram: Classification and Function of Puns in Ridwan Kamil's Instagram Account. *Proceedings of the Fourth Prasasti International Seminar on Linguistics (Prasasti 2018)*, 277–282. https://doi.org/10.2991/PRASASTI-18.2018.53

Pangestu, Y., & Kustanti, D. (2023). PEIRCE'S SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS TOWARD COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTS ON 9GAG MEMES IN SEPTEMBER 2021. *ReALL - Research on Applied Linguistics and Literature*, *2*(1), 51–65. https://ejournal.lppmunsap.org/index.php/reall/article/view/1027

Pratiwi, A., & Darmadali, W. S. (2022). The STYLISTIC USAGE IN PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION REPORT IN MURDER CASE. *Elite : English and Literature Journal*, *9*(1), 32–41. https://doi.org/10.24252/ELITE.V9I1.27573

Raskin, V. (2023). The demise of the joke. *Humor*, *36*(2), 197–205. https://doi.org/10.1515/HUMOR-2022-0027/MACHINEREADABLECITATION/RIS

Rogers, S., & Hye-Knudsen, M. (2023, September 23). *How "dad jokes" may prepare your kids for a lifetime of embarrassment, according to psychology - ABC News*. ABC News. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-09-03/how-dad-jokes-may-prepare-kids-for-a-lifetime-of-embarrassment/102803330

Ryan Bartholomee (@RyanBartholomee). (2024, April 18). *Ryan Bartholomee on X: "@Dadsaysjokes I read this correctly in my head the first time!" / X*. X. https://x.com/RyanBartholomee/status/1780782227875401771

Satvoldievna, U. D., & Qizi, R. K. B. (2020). Linguistic analysis of puns in the English language. *Проблемы Современной Науки и Образования*, *2 (147)*. https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/linguistic-analysis-of-puns-in-the-english-language

Šimon, M. (2019). Puns in Internet Memes : A Study of 9GAG. *Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Institutional Repository*.

Syahputra, P. S., Seli, S., & Syafitri, D. (2024). The Sociolinguistic Analysis of Dad Joke on the Youtube Channel Yeahmad. *Indonesian Journal of Innovation Multidisipliner Research*, *2*(3), 450–458. https://doi.org/10.69693/IJIM.V2I3.200

Trott, S., & Bergen, B. (2020). Why do human languages have homophones? *Cognition*, *205*, 104449. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.COGNITION.2020.104449

Zheng, W., & Wang, X. (2022). Contextual Support for Less Salient Homophones and Pun Humor Appreciation: Evidence From Eye Movements in Reading Chinese Homophone Puns. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 875479. https://doi.org/10.3389/FPSYG.2022.875479/BIBTEX

Zohidjon, S., Kholmatov, O., Madaminjon, Y., & Mushtariybegim, Q. (2022). IMPORTANCE OF WORDPLAY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE (IN THE EXAMPLE OF PUN). *Academic Research in Educational Sciences*, *3*(6), 1. https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/importance-of-wordplay-in-english-language-in-the-example-of-pun