Berkelakar and Directives in Palembang Malay: The Islamic Humor Discourse in Indonesia¹

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Abstract: This paper identifies cultural-linguistic practices in Palembang Malay humor and directives in Islamic speech in Indonesia. *Berkelakar* (make a joke), as part of everyday interactions among the people of Palembang, has not previously been examined. This mixed method research, using Partington's theory of affective face and affiliation alignment, applies discourse analysis to 10 Islamic speeches to explore Palembangnese humor and directives. Humor in the form of *kelakar* (jokes), puns and abbreviations and directives in the form of advice appear most frequently in the lectures and teachings on Islam. As a result, this paper raises cultural awareness and highlights the tradition of humor for the people of Palembang and for Muslim and other communities across Indonesia.

Keywords: Humor, Palembang Malay, Islamic speech.

Introduction

Palembang, in Sumatera Island, is the oldest city in Indonesia.² Most of the population (96%) adhere to Islam³ and the local language

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² Djohan Hanafiah, *Kuto Besak: Upaya Kesultanan Palembang Menegakkan Kemerdekaan* (Jakarta: Haji Mas Agung, 1989).

³ Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia, "Penduduk menurut Wilayah dan Agama yang dianut" https://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=0 accessed on 25 September 2019.

is referred to as Palembang Malay (hereafter referred as Palembangnese). Palembangnese has two levels: *Baso Pelembang Alus* (BPA) which is more formal and *Baso Palembang Sari-sari* (BPS) which is used in everyday interactions.⁴ This research focuses on *Baso Palembang*; this is because it is the language widely used in Islamic speech/lecture⁵ broadcasts on television, radio, YouTube videos and in *tabligh akbar* 'a mass religious meeting', live broadcasts of comedy conversation series such as *Kelakar*⁶ *Bethook* studio 42, *Bicik Waya* and *Buser*, and for the purposes of *da'wah* 'calling for people, both Muslims or non-Muslims to Islam'.⁷ Humor in this study is defined as a factor that can cause the audience to laugh;⁸ directive speech acts refer to speech acts which require interlocutors to do something.⁹ To investigate how humor and directives function in the Islamic context of Palembangnese language and culture, the current research explores the salient cultural-linguistic practices in Palembang Malay Islamic speech humor and directives.

This article explores Palembangnese humor and directives in Palembangnese Islamic speech through texts from 10 digital lectures delivered by *Kyai/Ustadz*⁴⁰ in Palembang city. Data were randomly

⁶ Berkelakar (to joke) is a verb in Palembangnese. This verb can be interpreted as joking or making a joke. See, Dian Susilastri et al., *Kamus Palembang Indonesia*, second edition (Palembang: Balai Bahasa Provinsi Sumatera Selatan, Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2013).

⁴ Baderel Munir Amin et al., *Tata Bahasa dan Kamus Baso Palembang* (Palembang: Yayasan Madrasah Najahiyah, 2010).

⁵ Semantically, the term *ceramah* in Indonesian context can be translated into "lecturer" and "speech". However, in Indonesian contexts, *ceramah* are meaningfully closer to *lecturers* than *speeches*. This is because the speaker gives an Islamic lecturer aimed at giving enlightenment. The speaker is also usually having a higher power and knowledge of Islam. Although the characteristics of *lectures* such as the opening greetings, the contents and closing can also be found in speech. This paper will use these terms interchangeably.

⁷ Andri Rosadi, "The Dynamics of Salafism in Pekanbaru: From Deprived Muslims to a Community of Memory" unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, Western Sydney University Australia (2019), p. 237.

⁸ Alison Ross, The language of Humor (London and New York: Routledge, 1998).

⁹ John Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

¹⁰ An *ustādh* is the term for a religious teacher (male) who teaches his knowledge to the community. In line with the increasing knowledge and consistency of its practice, over time the community increased its designation to become *kyai*. Even higher is the level of *'ulamā*, namely elderly kyai who have produced many students who become kyai as well. See Amin, *Tata Bahasa dan Kamus Baso Palembang*.

selected from 2015 to 2018 with consideration of differences in titles and diversity of themes.

Humor and Its Context

Humor has a universal nature, but its form of expression varies greatly depending on culture.¹¹ Humor is broadly interpreted as being contextually contradictory (in scripts) but humorous to the listener, reader, or observer.¹² Humor is thereby often derived from mismatches and resolutions.¹³ This formula, grounded in linguistic theory, was founded on script-based semantics¹⁴ and is used by the author to determine the conditions needed for a text to be funny. Humor is seen from the perspective of style, especially verbal humor. According to Simpson and Bousfield, the language features of a text do not immediately become a humorous text; specific linguistic characteristics help to explain why humor occurs.¹⁵ Glenn and Holt argue that the term humor represents the typification of an event in an interaction.¹⁶ Typification refers to an abstract category to describe a social action. That is, humor represents the conceptual category and is recognised as cultural.

In general, even though it is abstract, something funny (humor) focuses on laughter. That is, laughter refers to a participant's orientation (speaker-listener) at the time of the interaction.¹⁷ Trouvain and Truong argue that laughter and humor are often thought to have the same meaning.¹⁸ Humor is not always associated with laughter however because laughter can also be the result of nervousness, excitement and/or as a form of action to save and/or threaten the

¹¹ Annarita Guidi, "Humor Universals," Salvatore Attardo (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Humor* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

¹² Wladyslaw Chlopicki, "Humor and Narrative," Salvatore Attardo (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Humor* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

¹³ Cristina Larkin Galinanes, An Overview of Humor Theory (New York: Routledge, 2017).

¹⁴ Victor Raskin, Semantic Mechanisms of Humor (Boston: D. Reidel Pub. Co., 1985)

¹⁵ Paul Simpson and Derek Bousfield, "Humor and Stylistics," Salvatore Attardo (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Humor* (New York: Routledge, 2017)

¹⁶ Phillip Glenn and Elizabeth Holt, "Conversation Analysis of Humor," Salvatore Attardo (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Humor* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

¹⁷ Cecilia Ford and Barbara Fox, "Multiple Practices for Constructing Laughable," *Prosody in Interaction*, 23 (2010), p. 339. See also, Ibid.

¹⁸ Jurgen Trouvain and Khiet Truong, Laughter (New York: Routledge, 2017).

face. Laughter in this latter mode usually occurs spontaneously. Laughter in this paper is defined as a form of spontaneous response and agreement to the humor delivered.

Humor is a discourse that can make people smile and laugh.¹⁹ Humor can also make relationships closer and indicate agreement on perceptions of funny meanings. Humor is also considered as an expression of solidarity and can sometimes build closeness or relationships. Through jokes, puns, and abbreviations, for example, humor can make speech easier for the interlocutor. Thus, humor can make giving or receiving a piece of advice more acceptable. Advice is included in the directive speech act category.²⁰ Directive speech acts are speech acts that require someone to do something.²¹ Every speech act that asks someone to do something, for example in the form of ordering, advising, and commanding, usually has the potential to threaten the face of the other person. To reduce this threat someone can use "jokes", one of the politeness sub-strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson.²² Here, humor works as an act of saving face, and not as an act of threatening face.²³

Humor has been discussed since early Islam.²⁴ In Islamic literature, humor is used both functionally and intellectually to provoke critical thinking, highlight ignorance, and/or share knowledge and wisdom in a moderate and wise manner. Although the ways of joking are regulated in Islamic law, the tradition of humor in the Islamic tradition in Indonesia has developed in various forms or discourses. This study focuses on explaining the peculiarities of humor in Islamic lectures in Palembangnese. Therefore, in order to understand how humor in the Indonesian Islamic tradition is used in Indonesia to date, the following section provides examples of research on humor in Islam and on the tradition of humor in the Islamic tradition in Indonesia. It is important

¹⁹ Ross, The Language of Humor.

²⁰ Searle, Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, "Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena," E. Goody (ed.), *Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). See also, Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Franz Rosenthal, Humor in early Islam (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011)

to note that the issue of whether humorous discourse in the Indonesian Islamic tradition does or does not adhere to Islamic law is not the focus of this study and is therefore outside the scope of this paper.

Humor in the Islamic Tradition in Indonesia

In Indonesian Islamic studies, humor is now a well-established research topic. Graf described the Indonesian humorous tradition in 2010, arguing that Islamic humor is an important folk literature in a traditional genre.²⁵ Graf identified three types of humor in Indonesian Islamic tradition: Sufi humor, *pesantren* humor, and humor about the pilgrimage to Mecca. *Pesantren* humor is traditionally conveyed within the *pesantren* environment (between *kyai* and *santri*), while Sufi and pilgrimage humor appear to be elements of mass culture. Gunawan and Alimin discuss the humor that occurs among lecturers at Islamic universities in Indonesia.²⁶ According to them, the humor evident in the lecturer's conversation is created through word plays. In an earlier study, Istiningtyas examined laughter and humor in Islamic psychology.²⁷ More recently, Lesmana has examined humor and language errors in Arabic and English²⁸ to illuminate how humor arises from language errors.

Humor in Islam is also evident in the story of the prophet Muhammad SAW and his friends.²⁹ The humor in the story upholds the tenets of humor (jokes) in Islam; that is, it cannot contain lies and must always be true. Marwan discusses eight functions of habit and community relations in the view of Islamic humor.³⁰ First, there should not be any lies in the joke; second, there should be no element of insult or abuse of Islam; third, there should be no elements of "design" and

²⁵ Arndt Graf, "Researching the Humorous in Indonesian Islam," Orient. German Journal for Politics, Economics and Culture of the Middle East, (2010), pp. 36-42

²⁶ Fahmi Gunawan and Alimin, "Humor, Happiness and Work Relationship Among Faculty Members In Islamic Higher Education of Indonesia," *Langkawi: Journal of The Association for Arabic and English* 4, 1 (2018), pp. 106-122

²⁷ Listya Istiningtyas, "Humor dalam Kajian Psikologi Islam," Jurnal Ilmu Agama UIN Raden Fatah 15, 1 (2014), pp. 37-59.

²⁸ Maman Lesmana, "Teks-teks Humor Politik di Indonesia: Sekedar Hiburan atau Sekaligus Kritikan?," Susurgalur 2, 1 (2014), pp. 91-99

²⁹ Iwan Marwan, "Rasa Humor dalam Perspektif Agama," *Buletin Al-Turas* 19, 2 (2013), pp. 267-278

³⁰ Ibid.

reflection on a particular person, ethnicity or nation; fourth, people may not take other people's things, even if they are joking; fifth, the humor should not scare others; sixth, people should not spend all their time joking; seventh, the humor must not speak or do things that violate *Sharia* (Islamic law) such as: mentioning the characteristics of a woman who is not halal to others, cheating, cursing and so on, and eighth, every person is expected not to use jokes to overthrow and demonize others.

In addition to the stories of the prophet and his friends, humor has been researched in relation to the Islamic boarding school as a cultural institution, and the *pesantren*, as an educational institution characterized by Islam. Sumadi found that humor among *pesantren* is gender biased and dominated by a patriarchal culture.³¹ Fox extended the focus and discussed religious-ethnic humor in Bali, a province of Indonesia; Fox emphasised the changing development of humor in theatre as an arena for political and social discussion.³² By analyzing the character of a Muslim "clown" with rabbit lips, Fox showed the clown's antics reflected the frustrations of the Balinese people in relation to economic difficulties, the 2002 and 2005 Bali bombings and also the problem of tolerance in Indonesia. In the wider Islamic literature, several Muslim figures produce humorous works such as Nasruddin Hoja, Bahlul, Hani al Arabiy, Abu Nawas, and a number of humorous figures feature in several fables and Islamic literary sagas.³³

This study of humor in 10 Palembangnese Islamic speeches highlights the elements of *aqeedah* (creed), *muamalah* (human relations) and morality. In Islamic speeches in Palembangnese, jokes are consciously used by speakers (*kyai* and *ustadz/ustdaza*) to provoke listeners to think critically about the message. While some people may argue humor does not exist in Islam and describe the Prophet Muhammad as a rigid figure, Islam, as a religion, allows its people to joke.³⁴ The Messenger of God, for example, made jokes to please the heart of the interlocutor and have a good time with him: "I am also joking, but I do not say except the right".

³¹ Sumadi, "Islam dan Seksualitas: Bias Gender dalam Humor Pesantren," *El-Harakah* 19, 1 (2017), pp. 21-40

³² Richard Fox, "Om Swasty-Alaikum... Interpreting Religio-Ethnic Humor on the Balinese Stage," *Archipel*, 86, 1 (2013), pp. 43-72

³³ Istiningtyas, "Humor dalam Kajian Psikologi Islam.

³⁴ Marwan, Rasa Humor dalam Perspektif Agama.

following discussion reviews previous The studies in Palembangnese linguistics to establish the research area and identify the gap this research contributes to filling. Palembang Malay research have been examined using various approaches; these include the science of meaning/semantics;³⁵ word order/syntax;³⁶ and the meaning behind the speech/pragmatics.³⁷ However, until now, no research has specifically analysed the humor evident in Palembangnese Islamic speeches. This is important because humor has become a hallmark in Islamic speeches/lecturers throughout Indonesia,³⁸ with popular lecturers/speakers such as Ustadz Abdul Somad, Ustadz Wijayanto dan Ustadz Adi Hidayat increasingly using humor in each of their da'wah or Islamic lectures. Scholars in Islamic societies are important interpreters of the original sources of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. Their knowledge of religion is profound and represents the height of morals. These scholars engage audience through various social mediums and across various social layers of society and have great strength and influence. Their knowledge of religion creates and sustains a powerful force that positively impacts wider society. The use of human in Islamic speeches/lecturers can enhance and extend the impact and relevance of the message.

In Palembang city, the people use Palembangnese in their daily interactions. Palembangnese is therefore widely and easily accepted, and familiar. The implication is that the message of Islam is more easily conveyed and understood when it is delivered in Palembangnese.

³⁵ Mashyur Dungcik, "Kewujudan Bahasa Melayu Palembang Ditinjau Berdasarkan Segitiga Semiotik Ogden dan Richards; Kajian Semantik Terhadap Kosa Kata dalam Kamus Baso Palembang," Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation University of Brunei Darussalam (2017).

³⁶ P. Dunggio, *Struktur bahasa Melayu Palembang* (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1983).

³⁷ Susi Herti Afriani, "Realisasi Strategi Kesantunan Direktif di dalam Bahasa Palembang (Baso Pelembang) di Kalangan Anggota Kelompok Etnis Palembang di Kota Palembang: Sebuah Studi Sosial Budaya," paper presented at the Bahasa Ibu Pelestarian dan Pesona Bahasanya (Bandung, 2014). See also Susi Herti Afriani, "The Realization of Politeness Strategies in English Directives Among Members of Palembangnese Ethnic Groups in Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia: Teaching Journey," *Istinbath* 15, 1 (2015).

³⁸ Aang Ridwan, "Humor dalam Tabligh sisipan yang sarat estetika" *Ilmu Dakwah* 5, 15 (2010), pp. 921-956

Approaching Humor

This mixed-method research employed discourse analysis.³⁹ Discourse analysis is the close study of texts to identify form and meaning.⁴⁰ This approach enabled the researcher to examine texts using one or more levels of discourse analysis. This paper analyses 10 Islamic speeches at the linguistics level in the form of "talks" (speeches) based on a checklist of discourse analysis; it conducts a multilevel analysis to examine discourse at the level of the text along with the context of the speech (Palembangnese culture). This approach identifies important characteristics and topics in each text, different types of humor and the directives that appear in each topic.

Ten Islamic speech (IS) lectures delivered in the city of Palembang from 2015 to 2018 were randomly selected as the data set. The speeches were delivered via YouTube videos, radio and *tabligh akbar* 'a mass religious meeting'. Each text was downloaded, transcribed, translated into English, examined, and notated with cultural descriptions. Each text was then analysed to identify the main idea/topic in the transcription. Each text contains words, phrases, sentences, or discourses that show the topic and form of humor and directives in the Palembang language (the specificity of humor and directives in Palembangnese). The name of the selected text and the number of words examined in each text are detailed in the table below.

Name of the texts (in Palembang Malay and English)	Year of Publication	Number of word (raw data)	Number of words (after data notations and cultural explanations)
<i>Allah Maha Melihat</i> 'Allah the All-seeing' (IS1)	Television 2017	2370 words	7280 words
Menyambut bulan suci Ramadan Welcoming Ramadan the Holy month' (IS2)	Television 2017	3780 words	9342 words
<i>Iblis di bulan Ramadan</i> 'Demons in R <i>amadan</i> ' (IS3)	Radio RRI Pro 4 2015	610 words	2034 words
<i>Lima hal penting di bulan</i> R <i>amadan '</i> Five important	Radio Ramona FM	469 words	1634 words

Table 1. Name of	Islamic Speech	(IS) Lecture	Data in P	alembangnese
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³⁹ Ibnu Hamad, "Lebih Dekat dengan Analisis Wacana," *MediaTor* 8, 2 (2007), pp. 325-344.

⁴⁰ Jan Renkema, *Introduction to Discourse Studies* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004).

Name of the texts (in Palembang Malay and English)	Year of Publication	Number of word (raw data)	Number of words (after data notations and cultural explanations)
things in Ramadan' (IS4)	Palembang 2015		
<i>Tujuan Hidup Manusia</i> 'Human's life purposes' (IS5)	Radio, Frequency 88 FM 2015	918 words	2874 words
Macam-macam jin 'Types of	Radio RRI	1353	3792 words
Jinn' (IS6) Hukuman berat bagi orang yang melakukan kemaksiatan 'Severe punishment for those who commit disobedience' (IS7)	2015 Radio RRI 2015	words 559 words	2338 words
Mengikuti sunnah Rssullullah agar termasuk umatnya Being the people of Muhammad by doing his sunnah' (IS8)	YouTube Video 2018	1712 words	5610 words
Hikmah Bulan Muharram 'The	YouTube	2894	8601 words
wisdom of Muharram' (IS9) Bekal di Akhirat 'Preparation of the hereafter' (IS10)	Video 2018 YouTube Video 2018	words 3558 words	10140 words

Based on Table 1, the IS data was downloaded and then transcribed in accordance with the adaptation of the transcription of discourse and laughter,⁴¹ with laughter indicated in brackets e.g. (lauder/laugh/audience laughing). After completing the initial transcription process, all data were translated into English through two processes: by word and to communicate meaning. Finally, each topic

⁴¹ Alexa Hepburn and Scott Varney, "Beyond ((laughter)): Some Notes on Transcription," P Phillip Glenn and Elizabeth Holt (eds), *Studies of Laughter in Interaction* (Great Britain: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013). See also Gail Jefferson, "A Technique for Inviting Laughter and its Subsequent Acceptance/Declination," *Everyday Language: Studies in Ethnomethodology* (1979), pp. 79-96; Gail Jefferson, "On the Organization of Laughter in Talk about Troubles," *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis* 346, (1984), p. 369; Gail Jefferson, "An exercise in the Transcription and Analysis of Laughter," Teun Van Dijk (ed.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (London: Academic Press., 1985), pp. 25-34; Gail Jefferson, "Sometimes a Frog in Your Throat is just a Frog in Your Throat: Gutturals as (sometimes) Laughter-implicative," *Journal of Pragmatics* 42, 6 (2010), pp. 1476-1484.

was examined, and data notes and cultural explanations provided. This process enabled a holistic picture of the research context and situation for each text/situation. Table 2 depicts the process.

	Table 2. 1 10ccss marysis of Islamic Speecen Data Sets
Step	Description
1	Ten videos of Palembangnese Islamic speech
2	The data were downloaded, transcribed, translated into English, examined by data notations and cultural explanations
3	Each text divided by 'topics'; a topic decided based on main idea; every paragraph that contains a main idea called a topic
4	Every topic examined and explained by cultural explanation and written in the footnote
5	After all the examinations, every text that contains the topic were summarize; focused on distinctive main feature and the specificity of Palembangnese humor and directives
6	The result of each text's summary will show an overview of the important features found in the text

 Table 2. Process Analysis of Islamic Speech Data Sets

After the six steps shown in table 2, the data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively using a discourse analysis approach. The quantitative analysis calculated the number of occurrences of important characteristics in the IS data sets and calculated the distribution of their appearance, the type of humor and types of directives across IS1-IS10. The qualitative analysis illuminated why each statement in the IS data set was funny. As humor may not transfer in the process of translating the text from Palembangnese to English, it is very important to make this point clearly.

Partington's theory⁴² of affective face and affiliation alignment informs the analysis. The affective-face theory proposes the concepts of politeness and face arise from the laughter that occurs in a small violation in a conversation or situation involving the listener (audience). The concept of face is related to politeness because face is a concept of self-esteem⁴³ and a listener's laughter is a sign of a participant being part of the group.⁴⁴ In this research, the group is wider Palembang society.

⁴² Alan Partington, *The Linguistics of Laughter: A Corpus-assisted Study of Laughter-talk* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

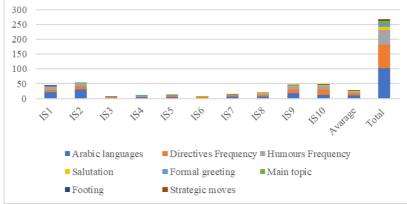
⁴³ Brown and Levinson, Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage.

⁴⁴ Partington, The Linguistics of Laughter.

Distinctive Cultural-linguistic Practices in Palembangnese Humor and Directives

The important features found in the 10 IS Palembang Islamic speeches are: Arabic languages (103 times), directives (79 times), humor (50 times), salutation (10 times), formal greeting (10 times), play topic (10 times), footing (10 times) and strategic moves (3 times). These results are depicted in Figure 1 below. Arabic is the main characteristic that appears in the text, followed by the emergence of directive speech acts and humor. The directives and humor appear side by side in all 10 lecture texts. Other characteristics present in every lectures are salutations, formal greetings, main topic, and footings.

Figure 1. Overview of important features that appear in Palembangnese Islamic speech.



Across IS1-IS10, humor appears in various forms, namely jokes, puns, and abbreviations with jokes occurring in almost all texts. For this reason, the jokes are classified into seven categories according to context. The groupings are detailed and accompanied by examples in the following discussion.

Figure 2 shows the frequency of jokes, puns, and abbreviations across the data set. As seen in Figure 2, seven humor groups were identified. They are 1) *kelakar* (jokes); 2) jokes (satire/teasing); 3) humor about women and sex, 4) jokes (irony), 5) jokes (social and human characters); 6) jokes (understanding Islam) and 7) abbreviation. The examples below demonstrate distinctive cultural-linguistic practices in Palembangnese jokes.

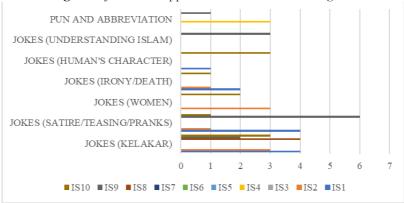


Figure 2. Jokes that Appear in IS1-IS10 in Palembangnese

Palembangnese Humor in Islamic Speech

Kelakar (Jokes)

(1) IS1-Topic 7: "...those who are less-lucky mostly come to the mosque (audience laughing). Well, time has been already five minutes, time is up (audience laughing)".⁴⁵

Example (1) is entitled *Allah Maha Melihat* 'Allah is All-Seeing'. This lecture was delivered by *K.H Taufik Hasnuri* (deceased), one of the most popular lecturers in the city of Palembang. In accordance with the title, the content of the lecture invites the audience to remember God (the *dhikr*). In example (1), the lecturer uses Palembang's special jokes in the context of only *berkelakar* 'joke'. Example (10) is funny because the speaker says that someone's poverty is an offspring. Although joking, this speech conveys that if someone wants to be rich, then he can not only rely on prayer, but must also work. *Jamaah* laughs in response to *Ustad Taufik*'s jokes, this shows that the joke was accepted because the congregation understood what was meant by the lecturer. Laughter in the context of this joke indicates the congregation's agreement, approval of the joke delivered; this is referred to as an expression of solidarity.

⁴⁵ The original version says: "Kaya menunggu nasib, kaya menunggu takdir, miskin sudah keturunan haa...haa... (jamaah tertawa)"

Jokes (Satire)

The second example is a joke that contains elements of satire or teasing in IS9 lecture.

(2) IS9-Topic 4: "If we are going to die 60 years old and when we are 59, it is up to the remaining one month because we cannot witness the president change, at most we will only change clothes; from the mosque's clothes to the shroud. (audience laughed)".⁴⁶

Example (2) was conveyed by Ustadz Taufik in the lecture titled Hikmah Bulan Muharram Wisdom of the month of Muharram'. The month of Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar year. In accordance with its title, the lecture was about the benefits that can be felt by Muslims with the Islamic New Year. One is that Muslims are asked to self-examine (introspection) themselves. That is, listeners are asked to prepare for charity before death arrives; because Islam teaches that there is an afterlife. In this example, the speaker makes a joke about age and death. Instead of conveying the threat that death could come at any time, the lecturer said that if at the age of 60 we die, (we) do not even have time to witness the change of President of the Republic of Indonesia; because our clothes are actually a shroud. Everyone laughed because they understood the context and satire of this joke. This message is aimed at those prioritising political interests or world passions rather than preparing provisions (worship in the hereafter). This joke is also very funny because the lecturer informs the fact that everyone will die and those who die in Islam will be wrapped in a kafan 'shroud' cloth (the shroud is a white cloth used by Muslims to wrap bodies in Muslim funerals).

Humor about Women and Sex

The third example deals with women, as follow:

(3) IS2-Topic 4: "We will not be tempted with everything like that, even our own wife's legs in Ramadan (audience laugh)".⁴⁷

⁴⁶ The original version says: "Kito kalo nak mati umur 60 tahun dan pas kito umur 59, serahlah untuk siso satu bulan lagi karno idak biso nyaksike ganti presiden, paling-paling kito cuma ganti baju, dari baju masjed jadi kain kafan. (jamaah tertawa)".

⁴⁷ The original version says: 'Kenapa? Kita puasa ini sudah punya niat pak! tidak bakalan tergoda dengan paha ayam itu pak, maaf...maaf... paha ayam paha bini lagi kita tidak seeer... haa..haa...(jamaah tertawa)".

Lecture IS2 is about the holy month of Ramadan. Ramadan is defined as a month of restraint or self-control so that Muslims can receive inner peace. In this holy month, Muslims maintain patience (mentally and spiritually), increase worship, ask Allah for forgiveness, and refrain from eating and drinking from dawn until sunset. This month is considered a human effort to establish a relationship with God. This relationship can be started from interpersonal relationships and relationships to the community. *Ustadz Taufik* was explaining that Muslims must control physical desires during Ramadan and joked that even he could endure hunger and his desire for his wife (having intercourse during Ramadan).

Jokes (Irony)

The next example is a joke that is categorised irony in Palembangnese humor. Irony can be defined as an event or situation that is contrary to the expected.⁴⁸ Example 4 uses IS1 as the context of the lecture. Like example 1, these jokes are delivered in lectures in the context of remembering Allah. It is called irony because the speech given in example 2 is contrary to reality or facts that occur in Palembang.

(4) IS1-Topic 14: "...but the money still goes to the right and left pocket (audience laughing) ...when people want to give money, I say, *no need* (audience laughing). This is what old clerics taught me".⁴⁹

The example 4 above shows the repetition phrase of *tidak usah pak, tidak usah* 'no need, no need'. This repetition is funny and irony. This is an expression of refusal from an *Ustadz* when someone would like to give his amount of money. An *Ustadz* is considered inappropriate to receive a "payment" (money) because giving an Islamic lecture is a type of *da'wah*. The audience laughed because they accepted and caught the intention of *Ustadz Taufik*. While joking, *Ustadz Taufik* said "No need". The phrase does not need to be followed by laughter making the speech funny because actually an *Ustadz* is also a human who has a family, so in fact the connotation of an *ustadz* does not want to accept money contrary to the facts. An *ustadz* is also the same as other human

⁴⁸ Tim Redaksi Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2002).

⁴⁹ The original version says: "Orang mau ngasih ai... tidak usah pak, tidak usah, haa...ha... (jamaah tertawa) ilmu kyai lama"

beings who need money for living and other operational needs. But this financially sensitive matter; it was delivered funny and interesting so that both the event organiser and audience did not lose face. *Kelakar* in the form of irony is something that can be understood by all audience.

Jokes (Social and Human Characters)

(5) IS10-Topic 7: "The audience feels good and it turns out *they are sleeping* because of the coldness of the room (audience laugh). People who speak are very enthusiastic, but worshipers do not hear".⁵⁰

The example 5 is a social criticism delivered through jokes. The IS10 title is the provision in the hereafter. As the name implies, the afterlife can be interpreted as the last day. Muslims believe that after life on earth, there is another life that is more eternal, which is life that is eternal after death. Joking in the example (5) above is the criticism conveyed by *Ustadz Taufik Hasnuri* regarding the attitude of the audience or listeners who sit and come to the mosque, but sleep. This is funny because *Ustadz Taufik* said that the air conditioners and a comfortable atmosphere made young people fall asleep in the mosque. This joke is funny because pilgrims accept and realise the phenomenon of sleeping in the mosque while listening to worshipers. Instead of directly mentioning pilgrims, *Ustadz Taufik* even said this happened because of the cold conditions of the room. This presents an intelligent joke.

Jokes (Understanding Islam)

(6) IS9-Topic 13: "Imagine that if the total of cow's head meat is three kilos, the tongue to the neck can be five kilos, *it will be so heavy*. (audience laughed) All is equal".⁵¹

The lecture in example (6) is a representation of jokes in understanding the concept of Islam in Palembangnese. Particularly, concepts relating to the law of justice in the distribution of sacrificial animals *hari raya kurban* 'Eid Adha'. This joke is conveyed in the IS9

⁵⁰ The original version says: 'Para jamaah merasa enak dan ternyato mereka tedok (jamaah tertawa) kareno dinginnyo ruangan. Wong yang berceramah sudah semangat tapi jamaah idak denger''.

⁵¹ The original version says: "Seluruh badan dari korban itu idak sah untuk dapatke imbalan kalau kepala buat yang foto itulah layarnyo kadang panjang bapak. (jamaah tertawa)".

text. The text deals with wisdom in the month of Muharram. As is known in the Islamic calendar, Muharram is the first month or referred to as the Islamic New Year. The main characteristic of the IS9 data is that this lecture is very well planned and structured. The findings in IS9 show a balance between advice and how to convey religious knowledge in a very smart and entertaining way. The expression of solidarity can also be seen from the response of pilgrims in understanding the suggestions and jokes delivered by *Ustadz Taufik*. As a religious lecture, the Face Threatening Act (FTA) also appears several times in the form of teasing. However, this was once again welcomed by the worshipers (audience).

As is known to the wider community in the city of Palembang, Ustadz Taufik is a lecturer who has strong character and specialisation using local languages (Palembang) in each of his lectures. The relationship between lecturers and the audience in the context of the IS9 data can be described as quite close, because as mentioned earlier, Ustadz Taufik is widely known by the public, he has power that is respected by many scholars and Muslims, people in Palembang city, and the weight of the lectures discussed in each topic is universal for every Muslim.

Specifically, in example 6, Ustadz Taufik joked to convey the concept of justice. This serious concept is conveyed through a very simple story and invites laughter. The thirteenth topic is the topic of sharing in the subject of sacrificial animals and who has the right to sacrifice meat. Sacrificial animals are usually animals (in the form of cows and goats), which are slaughtered at the mosque and donated by Muslims. The main purpose of slaughtering sacrificial animals is to share with the poor (for example, people who have never tasted meat).

As a note, beef and goats are considered luxurious foods in Indonesia because the prices are relatively expensive and cannot be reached by the poor. The joke was delivered to make the pilgrims (audience) understand how many parts the committee got (the sacrificial slaughtering committee) and how many parts should be divided for the community. Legally, the funds used must be from people who make sacrifices, and not mosque funds. The phrase *kadang panjang bapak* in example 6 makes *Ustadz Taufik's* speech very funny. This phrase may not be "funny" if it has to be translated into English, because after being translated this level of comicality is no longer felt. *Kadang-kadang* (sometimes), *panjang* (long), and *bapak* (father). In the communicative meaning translation, this phrase can be interpreted in the context of the IS9 text topic that the committee of sacrificial animals only has the right to slaughter sacrificial meat, but does not have the right to take the largest (long) and/or most preferred part.

Puns in Palembangnese Humor

Pun is also defined as part of a play on words and a type of joke that comes from a sequence of sounds in a word, but this sequence of sounds has two meanings and similarities. As a result of the similarity of these sounds, the funny comes about and creates humor.⁵²

(7) IS4-Topic 2: "an ada'i naa adaan, adaan itu tunai (eeeem), bawanyo kodo an, kodok tu ngutang (penceramah tertawa)". An ada'i naa adaan (in Arabic), adaan means paid immediately, meanwhile qada means debt (audience laughed)).

Apart from jokes, puns are examples of the types of humor that are also found in Palembangnese Islamic speech. Example (7) above is taken from the IS4 text, which talks about five important things in the month of Ramadan. As almost all Muslims in the world know, that Ramadan is a glorious month and its presence is highly awaited because this month promises a lot of forgiveness for the sins we have committed and gives us the opportunity to worship to find merit. Example (7) speaks in the context of debt because someone is negligent or does not pray. Lecturer explains two meanings of words in Arabic. The first word *adaan* which means cash and the word *qodo* which means debt. That is, if someone is in debt, then it is obligatory to pay the debt. What makes the word *qodo* funny in Palembangnese and its culture is because the sound of this word has the same sound as the word *kodok* 'frog', which means an animal (frog); so the pilgrim's imagination appears to the shape, face and sound of the animal.

Partington says that "Humor reception and evaluation are not hugely dependent on context and whether or not the audience is primed for laughter".⁵³ In the context of the speech situation in Palembang, the *qodo* sound becomes very funny and is spoken in the right context. According to Freud as cited in Partington, a 'good' also

⁵² Debra Aarons, "Puns and Tacit Linguistic Knowledge," Salvatore Attardo (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Humor* (New York: Routledge, 2017). See also Christian Hempelmann, "Puns," Salvatore Attardo (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Humor Studies* (California: Sage, 2014)

⁵³ Partington, The Linguistics of Laughter, p. 117

... is occasioned when 'the similarity between the words' - we might prefer 'sound sequences' – 'is shown to be really accompanied by another, important similarity in their sense'."⁵⁴ In addition to the Palembangnese humor typology, IS1-IS10 data show the category of directive speech acts that have a role as part of the Palembangnese humor itself. The example below is given based on the frequency of occurrence in Islamic speech data sets (advice, commands, requests, and suggestions).

Palembangnese Directives in Islamic speech

The example below is an example representation of Palembangnese directives found in IS data sets. Directives below show that they are part of Palembangnese humor. These examples were mentioned based on the most frequent number of occurrences. In summary, the figure is shown below.

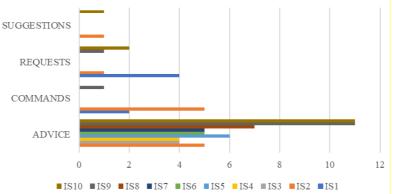


Figure 3. Directives that appear in IS1-IS10 in Palembangnese

As seen in Figure 3, there are four types of directives found in Palembangnese. They are advice, commands, requests, and suggestions. The advice appears most often in IS1-IS10. This is reasonable considering IS data sets are text lectures that are intended to provide advice and guidance in the life of the world and the hereafter.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Advice

The advice in example 6 is given in the IS5 text. This text conveys the purpose of human life. The contents of this advice are that a human should not be lulled by world affairs. Pilgrims are reminded through advice that the essence of the purpose of life includes remembering that what we do in the world will be considered good and bad in the akhirat 'hereafter'. Therefore, worshipers are given advice that there is another life after death. Besides being asked to believe in life after death, worshipers are also advised to serve God and not have to fear death. Because the essence of death is the perfection of life. The word ingat 'remember' is a typical word in the Palembangnese which means 'remember God'. Remember consists of the basic words ingat (remember) and suffix -lah (which means to invite). This advice was conveyed through a straightforward speaking strategy without further ado with positive politeness. Another substrategy that makes the speech in example (6) feel more polite is *dulur*dulurku. The word dulur means both brothers and sisters; while ku means it belongs. Thus, my dulur-dulurku are a substantive form of greeting in the language and culture of Palembang. If translated, the meaning is equivalent to the concept of brothers and sisters in Palembangnese.

(6) IS5-Topic 3: "Remember my brothers and sisters, all the possessions that we have will be asked for answers in front of the Almighty Allah, where we get them and for what we use them".⁵⁵

Commands

As mentioned in example 3, example 7 is also in the IS2 text, which talks about the concept of welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. Examples of commands that play a role in the Palembangnese humor text are found in IS2. Example (7) in IS2 above reminds worshipers to do *sunnab*. This command appears in the form of a complete imperative.

⁵⁵ The original version says: "Ingatlah dulur-dulurku, semua harta yang kita miliki seluruhnyo akan dimintakan pertanggungjawaban di hadapan Allah Swt, darimano kito peroleh dan untuk apo harto itu kito pergunakan,"

(7) IS2-Topic 9: "So, *don't waste your time in Ramadan*, especially doing *sunnah*, buk!". ⁵⁶

The concept of the word *sunnah* is an act that if done gets a reward and, if it is not done, it does not matter. Among the practices mentioned are the reading of the *sunnah*, performing evening prayers, performing prayers when entering a mosque. This practice of *sunnah* is intended to increase the deeds of worship as a form of petition for forgiveness and our obedience to God.

Example 7 is a direct order to practice the *sunnah*. This aims to a hope that all (lecturers and Muslims) can get forgiveness and meet with the night of *Laylat al-Qodar*, which is a night better than 1000 months. The *buk* greeting is another sub-strategy of the complete imperative form. This greeting of kinship is addressed to mothers who are one of the large numbers of worshiper's present. The word *buk* is another call from the word *ibu* (mother) which is a greeting for the kinship of the same group member. This greeting is used by the lecturer in the form of *kelakar* speech without further (bald on record), which makes the speech effect feel polite.

Even though the lecturer's utterance is an order, the typical greeting make the command more easily accepted among female worshipers. The nickname *buk* is a call and greeting of honour for women in the city of Palembang, because the greeting *buk* not only shows greetings where the interlocutor (usually) is considered older in age, but also the woman is usually considered more experienced in life issues, and high in social status. Thus, even though example (7) is a command, however, this command is easily accepted and is quickly captured by pilgrims.

Requests

Like the IS1 context in example (4) above, example (8) is also in the text that talks about the concept of *mengingat* (remembering God). The request on topic 7 is a request uttered by *Ustadz Taufik* about the concept of death. Every soul must die. In this topic 7, the speaker uses the word *tolong* (please) to the audience to remember that humans will be held accountable in the hereafter for what has been done in the world. In topic 7, for example, the speaker gives an award to the

⁵⁶ The original version says: "Makanya Ramadan tahun ini jangan remehkan yang sunah, buk!"

speaker who is used to soften illocutionary power, as well as seen in the other topics in IS1 context.

(8) IS1-Topic 7: "Please, remember, we have responsibilities toward everything we do". 57

Expressions on the topic are forms of appreciation that cause softening effects of illocutionary power so that speech feels polytheistic. Also, it is interesting to note that in topic 7 is the presence of other forms that accompany this strategy, namely the use of the word *tolong* 'please' on topic 7; and the word/our lexicon and *kito* (us) as minimising the threat on the congregation. The form of the strategy in Palembang shows the form of speaker appreciation to the listener. The award has a softening effect on illocutionary power so that speech feels polytheistic.

(9) IS2-Topic 8: "One thing to imagine is that this is the last Ramadan you have". 58

As discussed in example (3), example (9) is in the IS2 text, which contains the concept of welcoming Ramadan. These suggestions are given by lecturers to worshipers as a reminder to be earnest in their worship during the month of Ramadan. One way to be devoted to the worship is by remembering that this month of Ramadan is the last month of Ramadan that can be met and passed. Furthermore, the speaker in IS2 argues that by remembering a death, usually the feeling and willingness to perform worship because God will come out by itself. Example (9) is a statement that has a function as a suggestion. The strategy used is a straightforward-spoken strategy (bald on record) by also using the typical Palembang kinship greetings namely *bapak* (father), *ibu* (mother). The word *ye* is just an expression of emphasis in Palembangnese which shows the continuity of a statement and has no meaning.

⁵⁷ The original version says: "Ingat musti kito selalu ingat hidup ini nak gimana setiap yang kita buat harus kita pertanggungjawabkan di hadapan Allah harus ingat hidup ini di atur oleh Allah"

⁵⁸ The original version says: "Satu anggaplah Ramadan tahun ini sebagai Ramadan terakhirnya bapak/ibu ye!"

Cultural-linguistic Practices in Palembangnese Humor and Directives: A Discussion

Overall, this study found two main types of humor in IS1-IS10 data. The jokes and directives, in the forms of advice, commands, requests, and suggestions. In each lecture, the presenter uses humor to soften the message. This strategy aims to make the directive speech acts more easily accepted and to save the face of both the lecturer and the audience. This also reflects Alwi's observation that Palembang people like to joke to make things easier and convey something difficult in simple terms.⁵⁹ Audience enjoys the humor and directives given by the speaker, with the humor touching the listener's heart when listening to Islamic lectures. Humor and directives in Palembang are salient because their forms always appear together (co-occurring). When the speaker (Ustadz/Kyai) tells the audience to do something, he uses humor and creates the important co-occurring pattern/ sequence of alignment and affiliation.⁶⁰ Partington defines this affiliation alignment as "communicating agreement with what another person has said".61

Theoretically, the findings in this study indicate that humor, directives, and FTA show specific language and cultural practices and form a cultural system. Cultural systems are the norms and behaviours that are believed and carried out by the speech community in their daily interactions. In Palembang society, the humor, directives, and FTA evident in IS act as forms of communication, where the speech community likes to joke, and accepts directives, that are often delivered in IS. In relation to the humor tradition in the Indonesian context, this study extends Graf's research.⁶² Graf identified three main types of humor in the Islamic tradition in Indonesia, namely Sufi humor, *pesantren* humor and pilgrimage humor.⁶³

This article proposes a fourth type of humor, specifically *kelakar* with (extended jokes) and puns / abbreviations. The jokes may relate to the congregation's understanding of Islam. For example, in IS9 data,

⁵⁹ Alhamdu Alwi, "Karakter Masyarakat Islam Melayu Palembang," *Psikoislamedia* 3, 1 (2018)

⁶⁰ Partington, The Linguistics of Laughter.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 32.

 ⁶² Arndt Graf, "Researching the Humorous in Indonesian Islam," Orient. German Journal for Politics, Economics and Culture of the Middle East (2010), pp. 36-42.
 ⁶³ Ibid.

Ustadz Taufik Hasnuri, delivered the speech entitled the Wisdom in the month of Muharram. In the Islamic calendar, "Muharram is the first month of the Muslim lunar calendar" (Cavendish, 2011, p.32). The main characteristic of IS9 data is that the lecture is planned and well structured. The most interesting thing is that the number of speech acts asking pilgrims to do something, is equal to the frequency of Palembangnese humor. That is, these findings show a balance between advice and how to effectively convey it to the congregation, what is known as a marker of an intelligent speaker.

The expression of solidarity can also be seen from the response of pilgrims in understanding the advice and jokes delivered by Ustadz Taufik. In this religious lecture, FTA appear several times in the form of satire and teasing. However, this was again acceptable among worshippers. As is known to the wider community in the city of Palembang, Ustadz Taufik is a lecturer who has a strong character and specializes in using the local language (Palembangnese) in his lectures. The relationship between lecturers and worshippers in the context of the IS9 data can be described as quite close, because as mentioned earlier, Ustadz Taufik is widely known by the public and is respected by many scholars and the Muslim community in Palembang city; and the weight of ceramah discussed in each topic is universal for every Muslim. The thirteenth topic in the utterance "seluruh badan dari korban itu idak sah untuk imbalan kalau kepala buat yang foto itulah layarnyo kadang panjang Bapak (jamaah tertawa)" (Imagine that if the total of cow's head meat is three kilos, the tongue to the neck can be five kilos, it will be so heavy (audience laugh). This explanation regarding the distribution of sacrificial meat on Eid al-Adha tells who has the right to the sacrificial meat. Jokes were delivered to make pilgrims understand how many parts are distributed to them and how many parts are shared for the community.

Another example in the IS data are related to jokes which discuss social and human characteristics. "Para jamaah merasa enak dan ternyato mereka tedok (jamaah tertawa) kareno dinginnyo ruangan. Wong yang beceramah sudah semangat tapi jamaah tidak denger" (the audience feels good and it turns out they are sleeping because of the coldness of the room audience laugh). People who speak are very enthusiastic, but worshippers do not hear). In this example, Ustadz Taufik said that almost all mosques currently in Palembang use air conditioners, which impacts the enthusiasm of the lecturers to deliver their tausiah (advice) and also makes the pilgrims fall asleep in the mosque. This provokes laughter from the worshippers and is funny because it only describes social problems, namely the development of endowment and the construction of mosques in the city of Palembang, and also touches on/criticizes the behaviour of worshippers who like to fall asleep at the mosque. Despite the seriousness of the underlying message, this joke was accepted and considered "funny" by the audience.

The examples described above show that Palembangnese humor plays an important role in the enhancing the effectiveness of Islamic *da'wah* messages in the city of Palembang. Humor and directives always appear parallel in every topic in IS1 to IS10 and are widely used to convey advice, commands, requests and suggestions.

The findings in the Palembang IS lecture data identify special features in Palembang's language-culture practice in daily life, as outlined above. The IS data sets show how Palembangnese, as a local language in Indonesia, works to express identity, create solidarity and is very much a language that remains alive today.

Conclusion

In summary, this paper highlights cultural-linguistic practices in Palembang humor and directives in Indonesia, specifically in IS lecture data sets. Salient referred to here is a unique characteristic culturally, and it only found in Palembangnese language and culture. If it turns out, these findings may be the same or found in other cultures, then further research is needed. Overall, jokes and puns are the two main types of humor and advice, commands, requests, and suggestions are types of directives found in IS data sets. This paper shows the peculiar linguistic patterns and cultural practices that are visible in Palembangnese, with humor and directives always appear side by side, through the instances of humor and directives given previously. To put it another way, where there are directives, there is humor. Humor is often used to soften directives so they can more readily be enjoyed and accepted by the audience (the pilgrims). The humor also creates laughter and promotes a sense of solidarity. Further, the use of humor makes the FTA acceptable and ensures the audience members do not lose face. The popularity of the IS text also makes humor and directives unique in Palembangnese and culture. As a result, this paper dismantles the distinctive cultural linguistics practices through the special features of the Palembang language that uttered through humor

and directives. This paper also demonstrates that the existence of one of the local languages in Indonesia, namely *Baso Palembang Sari-Sari*, is still alive and thriving among the people of Palembang. This research thereby contributes to promoting the joke/humor tradition in the city of Palembang; it also affirms affective-face theory, as proposed by Partington, is appropriate to help understand humor in Palembang Malay.⁶⁴ Overall, this research contributes to increasing awareness of Palembangnese humor traditions in Indonesia to a wider audience.]]

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⁶⁴ Ibid.

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