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A Socio-Pragmatic Analysis of Taiwanese and Polish Humor:
Casual Conversations and Television Variety Shows

A doctoral dissertation written under the supervision of
prof. dr hab. Piotr Cap

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ABSTRACT

Based on transcribed spoken data from casual conversations among friends, as well as from television variety shows, this study intends to illustrate and discuss how Taiwanese and Poles produce humor, perceive humor and use humor to achieve different communicative goals. In my analysis of the data, I have adopted the methodological approaches informed by conversation analysis, multimodality and interactional linguistics.

Analyzing the data, I have observed that both laughter and smiling help regulate a talk-in-interaction. Laughter, for example, can be used to show one's appreciation of humor/teasing, as an invitation to laugh or to show disagreement. On the other hand, smiles can be used to reject humor/teasing, to show sarcasm or to provoke conflict in a dramatic way. In addition, Taiwanese friends are observed to use six discourse strategies in their conversations, including the use of quotation, rhetorical question, theatrical performance, back-handed remark, fictional episode and choice of dramatic expression/code. Polish friends, on the other hand, are observed to use five discourse strategies to construct humor, including the use of quotation, back-handed remark, fictional episode, choice of dramatic expression and highlighting contradiction.

I have further observed that there are eight types of humor employed in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, which may include the use of personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and 無厘頭 *Wúlítóu* “nonsense.” In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, on the other hand, the types of humor may include personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and teasing.

As for the organization of the study, Chapter One introduces the problem, background information of the data, transcription systems and research objectives. Chapter Two reviews

previous studies on humor, with a special focus on its social functions and how it has been developed in Taiwanese and in Polish societies. In addition, the methodological approaches used for analysis are also introduced in this chapter. Chapter Three analyzes the pragmatic/interpersonal functions of laughter and smiling. Chapter Four and Chapter Five illustrate and discuss the discourse strategies used by Taiwanese and Polish friends to construct humor, so as to negotiate previously established friendships and intimate relationships. Chapter Six and Chapter Seven further analyze how different types of humor are used on television variety shows in Taiwan and in Poland, respectively. Chapter Eight discusses some of the most important issues concerning humor and summarizes the characteristics of Taiwanese and Polish humor. Finally, Chapter Nine concludes the findings of this study and discusses implications for future work in this area of research.

Sociopragmatyczna Analiza Tajwańskiego i Polskiego Humoru: Swobodne Rozmowy i Telewizyjne Programy Rozrywkowe

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STRESZCZENIE

Przedmiotem rozprawy doktorskiej jest przedstawienie i analiza sposobów tworzenia, postrzegania i używania humoru przez Tajwańczyków i Polaków do osiągnięcia różnych celów komunikacyjnych. Badania oparte zostały na zapisach danych mówionych zaczerpniętych z potocznych rozmów pomiędzy przyjaciółmi oraz telewizyjnych programów rozrywkowych. W analizie danych przyjęto założenia metodologiczne bazujące na analizie konwersacji, multimodalności oraz lingwistyce interakcyjnej.

Analiza danych wykazała, że śmiech i uśmiech pomagają regulować interakcje podczas rozmowy. Śmiech, na przykład, może być używany do wyrażania uznania dla czyjegoś poczucia humoru lub przekomarzania się, jest zaproszeniem do żartów ale także może wyrażać dezaprobatę. Z drugiej strony, uśmiech może być używany w celu odrzucenia żartu lub przekomarzania się, może wyrażać sarkazm lub wywoływać konflikt w dramatyczny sposób. Ponadto zaobserwowano, sześć różnych strategii dyskursu stosowanych przez Tajwańczyków, są to cytaty, retoryczne pytania, teatralne wystąpienia, dwuznaczne uwagi, fikcyjne epizody oraz wybór dramatycznych zwrotów/kodów. Z drugiej strony, u Polaków zaobserwowano stosowanie pięciu strategii dyskursu w tworzeniu humoru: używanie cytatów, dwuznacznych uwag, fikcyjnych epizodów, wybór zwrotów dramatycznych i podkreślających sprzeczności.

W dalszej części badań wykazano istnienie ośmiu typów humoru w programie 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. Uczestnicy programu używają narracji personalnej, gry słów, sarkazmu, insynuacji, humoru polegającego na deprecjacji innych, samo-deprepcji, przechwalaniu się oraz 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* „nonsensu”. Rodzaje humoru stosowane w programie *Kuba Wojewódzki* to narracja personalna, gry słowne, sarkazm, insynuacja, humor polegający na deprecjacji innych i samo-deprepcji, przechwalanie się oraz przekomarzanie się.

Badanie zostało przedstawione w następujący sposób: w rozdziale pierwszym zawarto przedstawienie przedmiot badań, informacje o danych, sposoby transkrypcji oraz cele badania. Rozdział drugi omawia badania nad humorem ze szczególnym naciskiem na jego społeczne funkcje oraz rozwój humoru w tajwańskim i polskim społeczeństwie. Ponadto w rozdziale tym przedstawiono metodologiczne podejścia użyte do analizy. Rozdział trzeci analizuje pragmatyczne i interpersonalne funkcje śmiechu i uśmiechu. W rozdziałach czwartym i piątym przedstawiono i omówiono strategie dyskursu stosowane przez Polaków i Tajwańczyków w celu tworzenia humoru dla uzgadniania wcześniej zawartych przyjaźni i bliskich relacji. W rozdziałach szóstym i siódmym zawarto dalszą analizę różnych typów humoru używanych w programach telewizyjnych w Tajwanie i Polsce. Rozdział ósmy omawia niektóre z ważnych kwestii dotyczących humoru i podsumowuje cechy humoru tajwańskiego i polskiego. Rozdział dziewiąty podsumowuje wyniki badań i omawia implikacje dla dalszych prac w tej dziedzinie.

To my family, *in every sense of the word*

(Family: A group of individuals related by blood or by a feeling of closeness.)

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I have also benefited greatly from my friends in Taiwan and in Poland throughout writing this dissertation. I especially would like to thank Prof. Chihsia Tang (from the Department of Applied Foreign Languages at National Kaohsiung University of Applied Sciences) for generously sharing with me her access code and password of the National Tsing Hua University online library, so that I could get access to tons of books and journal papers for my research. I was also inspired by each conversation with her. I am glad that we both are doing discourse analysis and pragmatics. I also thank Mr. Thomas Bennett for helping polish my English writing, so that the quality of this dissertation has improved. Special thanks go to Mr. Chia-Feng Su and Ms. Karolina Walenczak for the spoken data from

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I am also happy that part of my research findings were based on conversational data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, as I was a huge fan of this late-night Taiwanese variety show. This program was first aired in 2004, during which time I first took Prof. Feng-Fu Tsao's linguistic pragmatics course (in the Graduate Institute of Linguistics at National Tsing Hua University) and was immediately intrigued by this linguistic field. This program went off the air in January 2016, and in the same month I completed the first draft of my dissertation. While its debut symbolized my first step into the world of linguistic pragmatics, its close down further marked the end of my career as a student. From this perspective, my academic life as a student could be regarded as having grown up with this program. Studying the mechanism of humor in this program, thus, was particularly meaningful to me.

Finally, and most importantly, I am deeply indebted to my family in Taiwan, including my parents, sister and many of my relatives. Without their spiritual and financial support, I would not have been able to come to Poland to learn Polish and later do my Ph.D. I, in particular, wish to thank my parents and sister. For the past four years, they have been showing their affectionate support to me with full understanding and tolerance of my bad temper. Their endurance and unconditional love have also brought peace to my mind and heart in the midst of chaos. To them, I dedicate this dissertation.

PREFACE

Based on the notion that humor is culturally shaped, the present study investigates the process of how humor is created, used and perceived by Taiwanese and Polish speech participants in talks among friends, as well as on television variety shows. Since the aftermath of World War II, Taiwan and Poland have undergone a process of rapid social and economic change triggered by modernization. These socio-economic changes, I believe, are influential to Taiwanese's and Poles' behavioral patterns and their everyday linguistic practices, as manifested in their humor.

The main body of the present study comprises nine chapters. Chapter One describes the problem that this study intends to address. In this chapter, major social-psychological theories of humor (i.e., *Superiority*, *Relief* and *Incongruity Theories*) and linguistic theories of humor (i.e., *the Semantic Script Theory of Humor*, *the General Theory of Verbal Humor* and *the Audience-Based Theory of Verbal Humor*) are reviewed in the discussion of the problem. In addition, the background information of the data, transcription systems and research objectives are also stated in this chapter.

Chapter Two reviews various strands of research on humor that are related to the theme of the present study. I first discuss the uses of humor in society and its social functions. In addition, what has constructed modern Taiwanese humor is also discussed, including previous works on Chinese and Japanese humor, as well as on the style of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” in Stephen Chow’s farces. With regard to Polish humor, this chapter focuses on how humor is used in Polish politics, in prose and poetry, in fantasy literature, in drawings and posters, in visual arts, in contemporary press, on the Internet and in broadcast media. Finally, the analytic framework informed by conversation analysis, multimodality and interactional linguistics is also introduced.

Chapter Three presents my analysis of laughter and smiling. In this chapter, the pragmatic/interpersonal functions of laughter and smiling are illustrated and discussed. This chapter is based on the notion that laughter and smiling are not only expressions of emotion or subconscious responses to stimuli. Laughter, for example, can be used to show one's appreciation of humor/teasing, as an invitation to laugh or to show disagreement. Smiling, on the other hand, can be used to reject humor/teasing, to show sarcasm or to provoke conflict in

a dramatic way.

Chapter Four and Chapter Five present my analysis of the discourse strategies used by Taiwanese and Polish friends to negotiate previously established friendships and intimate relationships in a humorous way. Taiwanese friends use six discourse strategies in their conversations, which may include the use of quotation, rhetorical question, theatrical performance, back-handed remark, fictional episode and choice of dramatic expression/code. On the other hand, five discourse strategies are observed in my Polish data, including the use of quotation, back-handed remark, fictional episode, choice of dramatic expression and highlighting contradiction. While the same discourse strategies are observed in both cultures to construct humor, they are used differently in different interactions.

Chapter Six and Chapter Seven analyze different types of humor on television variety shows in Taiwan and in Poland, respectively. In my analysis, there are eight types of humor found in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xi Láile*, including the use of personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, on the other hand, the humor types observed include personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and teasing. My qualitative analysis of these types of humor has further reflected cultural difference between Taiwan and Poland.

Chapter Eight discusses the implications of the present study. In this chapter, various social issues concerning the findings of the present study are discussed, including politics, religion and the LGBT community. In addition, the frequent use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” in contemporary Taiwanese society, as well as Poles' directness reflected in their humor are also discussed. This chapter also deals with gender issues which remain untouched in the previous chapters. In addition, this chapter also discusses the talking styles of the hosts in both programs, in an attempt to find out whether they are being humorous or vulgar. In the end of this chapter, characteristics of Taiwanese and Polish humor are summarized.

Finally, Chapter Nine summarizes the major findings of the present study and suggests future research directions. In this chapter, I argue that quantifying the speech acts of humor, including its discourse strategies and types, should be possible and meaningful. It may also be interesting to investigate how Taiwanese and Polish children perceive and use humor in their interactions, and whether gender is also influential. In the end of this chapter, I suggest that future studies on humor should focus more on how humor regulates cross-cultural communication between Taiwanese and Polish speech participants.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

“Analyzing humor is like dissecting a frog. Few people are interested and the frog dies of it.”

—Elwyn Brooks White (1899-1985)

Humor has long attracted scholarly interest in many academic disciplines, such as linguistics, psychology, anthropology, cultural studies, etc., which is against White on his second point that few people are interested in analyzing humor. While I hold an opposite attitude towards White on his second point, I completely agree with him on his first and third points. That is, to understand the mechanism of humor, one needs to first destroy the humor. And, while you learn a lot in the process, you might kill the humor in the end. However, the analysis of the mechanism of humor perhaps has become a key ingredient to the understanding of how the mind works in human interactions. Indeed, humor is prevailing in our daily life and in all corners of the world. It can be observed in talks among friends, on television programs, in newspapers, in magazines and so on. In other words, humor is ubiquitous in our everyday social interactions, an intriguing human behavior which requires explanations and studies.

The present study, thus, aims at understanding the mechanism of humor in social interactions in Taiwan and in Poland, respectively, as well as how the difference between the two cultures is reflected in Taiwanese's and Poles' uses of humor. In the following, Section 1.1 discusses the problem of the past studies on humor. Section 1.2 describes the data used for analysis and the research procedure. Finally, Section 1.3 describes the research objectives of the present study.

1.1 The Problem

Social-psychological theories of humor are commonly clustered into a tripartite division: *Superiority*, *Relief* and *Incongruity Theories* (Raskin 1985). These three major theories are further labeled by Attardo (1994) as social, psychoanalytical and cognitive frameworks, as

manifested in the following table:

Table 1: *The Three Families of Theories*

Cognitive	Social	Psychoanalytical
Incongruity	Hostility	Release
Contrast	Aggression	Sublimation
	Superiority	Liberation
	Triumph	
	Derision	
	Disparagement	

(Attardo 1994: 47)

The superiority theories of humor assume that people frequently laugh at others' misfortunes to show superiority. Such theories are often connected to the great philosophers. According to Chapman and Foot (2007: 1), laughter was viewed by Plato as “malevolent behavior stemming from hurtful aggression, envy, or spite at seeing the enemy vanquished,” while Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian regarded it as “a form of behavior from which civilized man should shrink.” In addition, comedy, as a form of humor, was viewed by Aristotle as “an imitation of men worse than the average; worse, however, not as regards any and every sort of fault, but only as regards one particular kind, the *Ridiculous*, which is a species of the *Ugly*” (*Poetics*, quoted after Raskin 1985: 36). This has also shown superiority theorists' viewpoint towards humor. Relief theories, on the other hand, treat humor from a physiological or psycho-physiological perspective (Rutter 1997). Freud's (1905/1960) psychoanalysis of jokes and humor has revealed not only their psychological process, but also their tension relief function. As explained by Raskin (1985: 38), “the basic principle of all such theories is that laughter provides for mental, nervous and/or psychic energy and thus ensures homeostasis after a struggle, tension, strain, etc.”

Departing from the first two groups of theories concerning humor, incongruity theories view humor from a cognitive perspective and focus on its incongruity and resolution. In his philosophical study of humor and laughter, Morreall's (1987) has observed that many historical figures (e.g., James Beattie, Immanuel Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer, etc.) already connected the cause of laughter with incongruity. Shultz (1976) and Suls (1972, 1983) have further proposed a two-stage incongruity-resolution model to perceive humor, which was later applied to the analysis of garden-path jokes (see, e.g., Yamaguchi 1988; Dynel 2009).

Linguistic theories of humor, on the other hand, may include *the Semantic Script Theory*

of Humor (Raskin 1985, 1987), *the General Theory of Verbal Humor* (Attardo and Raskin 1991; Attardo 1994, 1997, 2001; Raskin and Attardo 1994) and *the Audience-Based Theory of Verbal Humor* (Carrell 1993, 1997). As defined by Raskin (1985: 81), the script is “a large chunk of information surrounding the word or evoked by it” or “a cognitive structure internalized by the native speaker and it represents the native speaker's knowledge of a small part of the world.” In light of this, the semantic script theory of humor argues that when a text is fully or partially compatible with two opposite scripts, this text can be characterized as a single-joke-carrying text. This humor theory, however, ignores other factors, as it assumes that the most influential factor is script opposition. The general theory of verbal humor, thus, “incorporates, subsumes and revises” the semantic script theory of humor (Attardo and Raskin 1991: 329) and suggests more influential factors that inform the joke: script opposition, logical mechanism, situation, target, narrative strategy and language. Finally, the audience-based theory of verbal humor focuses on the audience of the joke texts. This humor theory argues that whether a text is humorous is decided by its audience. While the above theories can capture the complex phenomenon of humor from either social-psychological or linguistic perspectives, they focus exclusively on the structure, form or content of jokes or joking.

Certain types of joking behaviors in conversations were also investigated. For example, Tannen (1984) illustrated the roles of joking and irony in talk among friends, as well as their relation to different conversational styles. Norrick (1993, 2003) also analyzed joking behaviors in naturally occurring conversations. Norrick's works are inspiring in the study of conversational joking, in the sense that he has not only categorized different conversational joking forms, but also distinguished them by examining their humor mechanisms. Nevertheless, there is no clear distinction between each joking form, as one joking form may fade into another in conversation. As Norrick (2003: 1338) has further argued, “The flexibility and protean character of conversational joking forms is an integral part of their attraction: joke punchlines turn into wisecracks, witty repartees grow into anecdotes, anecdotes develop into jokes, and soon.” Norrick's categorization of conversational humor, however, needs modification to account for the data collected in Taiwan and in Poland, since humor is culture-specific.

In Taiwan, conversational humor is seldom academically studied. Many previous studies focused on 相聲 *Xiàngshēng* “the traditional humorous Chinese verbal performance” (see, e.g., Tong 1999) or ancient Chinese jokes (see, e.g., Chen 1985; Huang 2009). Kuo's (1996)

study focused on conversational humor in the context of Taiwan. She applied Norrick's (1993) categorization of humor (i.e., personal anecdotes, jointly produced narratives, wordplay, punning, wordplay interaction, sarcasm and mocking) to her analysis, in particular focusing on the gender difference. Her research, however, was limited by Norrick's model and could not capture the whole gamut of conversational humor in Taiwan. Liao's (2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c) studies also analyzed how humor was expressed and perceived in contemporary Taiwan, with a special focus on the latter. Her studies, however, were mostly based on old Chinese jokes, instead of conversational data. Both Kuo's (1996) and Liao's (2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c) studies cannot be used to account for the data collected in contemporary Taiwan, since the language has changed greatly within the recent decade. Moreover, while Kuo's (1996) research findings were based on conversational data in Taiwan, she did not discuss how humor is used in institutional discourse (e.g., television variety shows), which has greatly influenced the use of humor in casual conversations.

On the other hand, the studies on Polish humor have flourished like mushrooms. In his overview of Polish humor studies in philosophy, literary studies and linguistics in the 20th and 21st century, Chłopicki (2012) has pointed out that Polish researchers, in particular linguists, are focusing more and more on international humor research. His observation is evidenced in tons of studies on Polish humor. For example, many studies on Polish humor have discussed how humor is presented in different written genres, such as in prose and poetry (see, e.g., Jarniewicz 2012; Kamocki 2012; Lemann 2012a; Lemann and Gucio 2012), in fantasy literature (see, e.g., Lemann 2012b), in drawings and posters (see, e.g., Libura 2012; Libura and Kielbawska 2012), in visual arts (see, e.g., Curyłło-Klag 2012), in contemporary press (see, e.g., Wojtak 2012) and on the Internet (see, e.g., Grochala and Dembowska-Wosik 2012b). Others have focused on how humor contributes to political discourse (see, e.g., Brzozowska 2012; Dynel 2012b; Świątkiewicz-Mośny 2012) and the broadcast media (see, e.g., Dynel 2012a; Grochala and Dembowska-Wosik 2012a; Grzegorzczak 2012). While these studies have outlined the overall perspective of contemporary Poland by looking at Poles' uses of humor in different genres, they looked at Polish humor from within the Polish society. In other words, they did not discuss how Polish humor is from outside the Polish culture.

Therefore, this study intends to present a cultural perspective towards thinking about the Taiwanese and Polish humor in casual conversations and on television variety shows. It is hoped that the research findings can not only make a complement to the studies on Taiwanese and Polish humor, respectively, but also show the difference between the two cultures. I

believe that studying cross-cultural patterns in humor can provide invaluable insights into how the mind works.

1.2 Database and Research Procedure

In the following subsections, the data used for analysis and the background of the two television variety shows, (which part of my research findings are based on) are introduced. Next, Taiwan's multilingual environment and the two transcription systems used for transcribing the Mandarin and Southern Min data are also introduced.

1.2.1 Background Information of the Data

The data used in this study come from casual conversations among Taiwanese and Polish friends, as well as from television variety shows in Taiwan (i.e., 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*) and in Poland (i.e., *Kuba Wojewódzki*). As for the data from casual conversations, all the recordings were from private conversations among close friends, made either at home or in a quiet coffee shop. Although the conversations were quite personal, all the speech participants fully understood that the recordings would be studied and used for academic purposes. In addition, while just a few of them knew that I was interested in humor used in everyday social interactions, none of them were told about my research procedure. Moreover, none of them had received trainings in linguistics, psychology, human behaviors or in any of other relevant fields. Although many of the recording were made without my presence, the speech participants were asked to interact in different groups, including same- and mixed-sex groups. In other words, the variable of sex was controlled.

As for the data from the two television variety shows, I did not record any all-female interactions, as there was always a male host on each of the two programs. In the following, the background of the two programs is introduced. 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* was a late-night variety show structured like a talk show. It had received high viewing rates since its first broadcasting on television in 2004. It was popular not only in Taiwan, but also in China, Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore, Malaysia and some South East Asian communities where Mandarin is spoken. On October 16, 2015, the host 蔡康永 *Cài Kāng-Yǒng* officially

announced that he was quitting for personal reasons. Upon hearing Cài's announcement, Cài's co-host 徐熙娣 *Xú Xī-Dì* immediately announced to stand shoulder to shoulder with him. This program went off the air in the beginning of 2016, and the last episode was broadcast on January 14, 2016. As evidenced in its constant high viewing rates, many people born in the 1980s have claimed that they were fans of this program and grew up with it. This program was conducted by pairing two hosts with different interviewing styles. While Cài was quiet, straightforward and liked to ask serious questions, Xú was an unruly, sexy woman who frequently joked about her guests or did things to embarrass them. The chemistry between the two hosts made the program extremely popular and become one of the longest running television variety shows in Taiwan. In addition, the name of this program was a mash-up of the hosts' names, each being taken a character; that is, 康 *Kāng* and 熙 *Xī*. Interestingly, the combination of these two characters coincided with the reign-title of 玄燁 *Xuányè* (1654-1722), the second Chinese emperor of the Qing Dynasty, who is usually referred to as 康熙帝 *Kāngxīdì* “The Kangxi Emperor.” In 2007, 陳漢典 *Chén Hàn-Diǎn* joined the program as a regular assistant host to liven up the atmosphere, in particular when the invited guests were silent types. Each episode, about 45 minutes in length, featured celebrity interviews, and the invited guests might include entertainers, politicians, sportspersons, Internet celebrities, and so on. The humorous remarks examined in this study come from six episodes randomly selected in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Kuba Wojewódzki, on the other hand, is a televised entertainment talk show in Poland, first aired in 2002. This talk show was broadcast in Polsat, Poland's second biggest television channel till June 2006. From September 2006 it has been broadcast in TVN (TV Nowa), another Polish commercial television network. This entertainment talk show, as its name suggests, is hosted by Jakub Władysław Wojewódzki, a Polish journalist, television personality, drummer and comedian. In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, numerous controversial issues are explored. The humorous remarks examined in this study come from five episodes randomly selected in 2006, each episode lasting for about 45 minutes.

Interestingly, 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* and *Kuba Wojewódzki* have many characteristics in common. They both last for an hour with commercials, and the hosts Cài, Xú and Wojewódzki are more likely to ask face-threatening questions to entertain the audience. In addition, opinions about both programs are controversial and widely divided. While some viewers think that the three hosts' talking styles are quite entertaining and can be viewed as “humorous,” still some think that they are simply being rude to their invited guests. To use

the data coming from both programs, therefore, helps highlight the difference between the humor employed on the television and that in everyday interactions.

1.2.2 Taiwan's Multilingual Environment, Data Collection and Transcription

My data come from casual conversations and television variety shows in Taiwan and in Poland, respectively. Although Mandarin Chinese (hereafter Mandarin) is the official language spoken in Taiwan,¹ many Taiwanese also speak Southern Min and Hakka. All the three languages belong to the Sino-Tibetan language family. In addition, aboriginal groups are also found in Taiwan, with 16 tribes speaking different versions of Formosan. These languages belong to the Austronesian language family. There is also a Japanese Creole in Taiwan, which is blended with two Taiwanese Austronesian languages (i.e., Atayal and Seediq), Southern Min and Mandarin in phonology, lexicon and grammar (see, e.g., Sanada and Chien 2009; Chien and Sanada 2010).

With all these languages spoken in Taiwan, Southern Min is spoken by the majority of people in Taiwan in addition to the official language. According to Huang's (1995) and Ang's (2013) investigations, about 70-75% of the Taiwanese people speak Southern Min. Sandel (2003) has further pointed out that although the language practices of a particular group or individual were once evaluated negatively because of the ruling KMT's (Kuomintang, the Nationalist Party) language policy,² thanks to the liberalization in Taiwan's political environment under President Lee Teng-Hui's leadership in the 1990s, there has been a new market value attached to the local languages. Therefore, it will not be surprising to find, in my data from casual conversations among Taiwanese friends, that speech participants code-switch to this language from time to time.

¹ The term *Mandarin Chinese* may also refer to the official language spoken in China. However, there are many linguistic differences between Taiwan and China (see, e.g., Chen 1999: 41-49). In addition, Chung's (2001) study further points out that as Japanese was once the official language in Taiwan, the linguistic borrowing from the Japanese language reflects cultural dominance in Mandarin spoken in Taiwan. In other words, Taiwanese Mandarin (or Taiwanese-accented Mandarin) has its distinctive linguistic features that might reflect its own culture. In order not to obfuscate the issue in discussion, the data used for my analysis only come from the interactions among native Mandarin speakers who were born in Taiwan, or were brought up in Taiwan. Regional linguistic varieties in Taiwanese Mandarin (e.g., Taipei accent vs. Taichung accent (see, e.g., Liao 2008); Taipei accent vs. Tainan accent (see, e.g., Su 2012)) that do not influence the discourse/pragmatic functions of an utterance will not be discussed.

² As investigated by Sandel (2003), the KMT government enforced its Mandarin Language Policy from 1945 to 1987, strictly sanctioning the use of the local languages or dialects in fields it could control. For example, students' use of the local languages or dialects will lead them to severe physical punishment or heavy fines. Sandel further points out that the policy has the impact on the successive generations of bilingual speakers in Taiwan.

As my data are not only from Mandarin, but also from Southern Min, two transcription systems will be adopted. For the Mandarin data, I will use 漢語拼音 *Hànyǔ Pīnyīn* “Transcription into Chinese Characters,” which is commonly used by many international institutions. As Mandarin is a tonal language, the tone of each transcribed character will be marked on the vowel.³ For the data in Southern Min, I will use 閩南方言拼音方案 *Bbánlám Hōng'ggián Pìngyīm Hōng'àn* “Southern Min Dialect Spelling System,” a romanization system for Hokkien Southern Min.⁴ For the data in Polish, on the other hand, no transcription system is needed since Poles also use an alphabetic writing system in their language. Each of the examples in Mandarin, Southern Min and Polish will be accompanied by an English translation, which is marked with transcription symbols.⁵ As part of my data come from casual conversations among Taiwanese and Polish friends, pseudonyms will be used in order to protect the confidentiality of the speech participants. In addition, due to the fact that different cases of proper names in Polish are morphologically distinguishable, cases of Polish speech participants' pseudonyms will be used in accordance with those of their real names in original conversations. To present the data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* and *Kuba Wojewódzki*, on the other hand, speech participants' real names will be used, as they are already well-known celebrities in Taiwan and Poland, and that their conversations are broadcast to the public.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study will illustrate and discuss how humor is employed in Taiwanese and Polish interactions, in particular by analyzing casual conversations and television variety shows. I intend to address the following questions:

- (1) Are laughter and smiling expressions of emotion or subconscious responses to humorous stimuli? Do they have pragmatic/interpersonal functions in social interactions? If so, what are they?

³ For example, *ma* marked with different tones has different meanings. 媽 *mā* “mother” is marked with a high-level tone. 麻 *má* “linen” is marked with a rising tone. 馬 *mǎ* “horse” is marked with a falling-rising tone. 罵 *mà* “to scold” is marked with a falling tone. Finally, 嘛 *ma* “a modal particle” is marked with nothing as a neutral tone.

⁴ The transcription of the Southern Min data in my study is based on Lin's (2007) *Dictionary of Mandarin and Minnan Dialect*.

⁵ See Appendix I.

- (2) What are the discourse strategies adopted by the speech participants to create humor to negotiate previously established friendships and intimacy? Are they verbal or non-verbal? And, what are the pragmatic functions of these discourse strategies in talks among friends?
- (3) What are the types of humor on television variety shows? How are these types of humor constructed? And, what are their pragmatic functions in interactions on television?
- (4) What do the uses of humor in casual conversations and in television variety shows reveal about the difference between the two genres?
- (5) Do Taiwanese's and Poles' uses of humor reflect the societies where they live, as well as their personality traits? If so, how is that?
- (6) Is gender an influential factor in the production and appreciation of humor? If so, how is that?
- (7) Are the controversial talking styles of the hosts in both programs indeed humorous or simply vulgar?
- (8) Does humor reflects cultural difference between Taiwan and Poland? How is the difference reflected in the characteristics of Taiwanese and Polish humor?

In order to provide a rough answer to each of the above addressed questions, it is important to review some of the major related works on humor in the literature in the next chapter.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, previous major related works are reviewed and discussed. In the following, Section 2.1 discusses the uses of humor in society and its social functions. Section 2.2 discusses what has constructed modern Taiwanese humor. In this section, some ink is spent on the discussion of Chinese, Hong Kongese and Japanese humor. Section 2.3 discusses humor and its historical development in Poland, as manifested in different genres. Section 2.4 introduces the methodological approaches used in the present study. Finally, Section 2.5 concludes the literature review and the relevant discussion in this chapter.

2.1 Humor, Its Uses in Society and Social Functions

According to Weems (2014), humor is a psychological coping mechanism, resulting from “a battle in our brains between feelings and thoughts” – “a battle that can only be understood by recognizing what brought the conflict on” (p. 9). It can be used to shape human interactions in intragroup situations, intergroup situations and intergroup interactions (Martineau 1972). For example, joke-telling (as an expression of humor) can be used to replace face-threatening acts in addition to its entertaining functions. In her analysis of joke-telling in Taiwan, for example, Liao (2003b) has observed that one might tell a self-disparaging joke to get out of the danger thanks to the politeness involved in joke-telling. In observing Nigerian stand-up comedies, Adetunji (2013) has also observed that comedians may use self-deprecatory scripts to “[reduce] their stage-authority and social or economic aloofness” (p. 19).

The pragmatic/interpersonal functions of humor can also be seen in different societies and across generations and gender. In her investigation of humor in business meetings in New Zealand and in Japan, Murata (2014) has observed that humor can be used to create team spirit among meeting members, despite the difference between the two cultures. Franzén and Aronsson (2013) have analyzed staff-resident interactions at a treatment home for boys. The result of their findings shows that humor and teasing are essentially ambiguous. By using the

ambiguity of humor and teasing, staff members are allowed to temporarily violate the social order, but strengthen local rules of conduct. On the other hand, the boys may magnify or transgress institutional and generational boundaries by joking together with the staff members.

Reichenbach's (2015) recent study on young Bahraini women's laughter has also indicated the ambiguity of humor, which allows women to juggle with gendered identities in a society ruled by men. As she further points out, different types of humor can be used by a young Bahraini woman to "negotiate closeness or distance in social relations" (p. 533). Men, on the other hand, may use sexist humor to predict male in-group cohesion, to serve as a form of sexual harassment and to enlarge self-reported rape proclivity and victim blame (Thomae and Pina 2015). Sexist humor, as Thomae and Pina conclude, helps men "establish positive distinctiveness through intergroup comparisons and reduce male in-group threat," which results from their "adherence to in-group norms and a perceived instability or illegitimacy of the intergroup hierarchy" (p. 200). Indeed, women and men may use humor to construct a stereotypical gender identity, despite the fact that the norms are frequently challenged (Holmes 2006; Schnurr and Holmes 2009).

Strain, Saucier and Martens (2015) have also investigated how men and women perceive the anti-men, anti-women and neutral jokes in printed Facebook profiles. According to their findings, both men and women rate anti-women jokes as more sexist than neutral ones. Women also rate anti-men jokes as sexist humor. When men display anti-women humor, they are perceived less positively than men displaying anti-men humor and women displaying either anti-men or anti-women humor. Ford et al. (2015), however, have further warned that sexist humor may have a lasting and harmful outcome for women, as it can result in a temporary state of self-objectification in women.

Some researchers have focused on recipients' reactions to humor. Hay (2001), for example, has analyzed the strategies used to support humor in an interaction, as well as the implicatures showing full support of humor. According to her investigation of conversational data, a recipient of humor may show his/her support by contributing more humor, playing alone with the gag, using echo or overlap, offering sympathy or contradicting self-deprecating humor. The implicatures indicate that the recipient recognizes a humorous frame, understand the humor, appreciates the humor or agrees with any message associated with humor.

In sum, while humor is mainly produced for entertainment, it can be further employed for various purposes in different societies and cultures. In addition, gender is also influential

on the production and perception of humor. Although humor differs across societies, cultures and gender, the bottom line is that “We all enjoy a good laugh” (Boxer and Cortés-Conde 1997: 293). As humor may further elicit laughter, it may bring about positive effects on people. By laughing together, the closeness and solidarity are further established.

2.2 What Has Constructed Modern Taiwanese Humor?

The present study believes that Taiwanese humor greatly overlaps with Chinese humor and is also influenced by Hong Kongnese and Japanese humor. Before going into our discussion regarding what has constructed modern Taiwanese humor, I would like to give a brief introduction of the history of Taiwan.

The Han Chinese are believed to be the largest ethnic group in Taiwan. Before their immigration, however, Taiwan was mainly inhabited by its aborigines, the Austronesians who first came to Taiwan more than 8,000 years ago. In 1542, Portuguese mariners came across a forest-cloaked island on their way to Japan. Amazed by its natural beauty, they named it *Ilha Formosa* “Beautiful Island.” This island, now known as Taiwan, was later colonized by the Dutch and Spanish during the 17th century.⁶ Both colonies fell subsequently. The Spanish colony fell because of the Dutch invasion in 1641. After Koxinga (鄭成功 *Zhèng Chéng-Gōng*)⁷ defeated the forces of the Dutch East India Company in 1662, the first Han Chinese polity was established in Taiwan. Koxinga later took over Taiwan and used it as his base against the Manchu-ruled Qing Dynasty of China, in an attempt to restore the Ming Dynasty. After the Taiwan-based Ming loyalists were defeated in 1683, Taiwan became part of the Qing Empire. In 1895 Taiwan was ceded to Japan, and in 1945 the Republic of China assumed its control over Taiwan after Japan's surrender. The historical development of Taiwan has constructed this small island as a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural community. The present study believes that such diversity is further reflected in modern Taiwanese humor.

There is no direct evidence showing that modern Taiwanese humor is influenced by the Spanish and Dutch cultures, as their colonies occurred more than three hundred years ago. However, this study believes that modern Taiwanese humor is a big melting pot of Chinese, Hong Kongnese and Japanese humor, but with certain change to be best adapted to its

⁶ As investigated by Andrade (2008), there was also a short-lived Spanish colony in northern Taiwan (1626-1642) during the Dutch colony (1624-1662).

⁷ Koxinga is a Ming loyalist. More information about Koxinga can be seen on Wikipedia (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Koxinga>).

diversified environment. In the following, Subsection 2.2.1 reviews previous studies on Chinese humor and discusses how it overlaps with modern Taiwanese humor. Next, Subsections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 discuss Stephen Chow's 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense" and characteristics of Japanese humor, which are believed to have influenced Taiwanese's thinking ideas and their use of humor in their life.

2.2.1 Chinese Humor, Its Types and Historical Development

Chinese humor first appeared in the form of riddles or jokes (Liao 2001). Chen (1985) has observed four sources of Chinese written jokes, including 笑話 *xiàohuà* "common people's talk," 先秦寓言 *xiān-Qín yùyán* "pre-Chin parables" (prior to 221 B.C.), 滑稽戲 *huájī xì* "huaji play" and 清言集 *Qīngyán jí* "Ching-yan anthology." The term 滑稽 *huájī* first appeared in the ancient Chinese literary work 楚辭 *Chǔcí* written by 屈原 *Qū Yuán* (343-290 B.C.) to describe "a smoothen and ingratiating manner with the prince which he obviously did not possess" (Kao 1974: xix). Chen (1985) further argued that the concept of 滑稽 *huájī* later changed to that of modern humor and had five types, including *mean*, *obscene*, *witty*, *ironic* (*sarcastic*) and *humorous*. Liao (2003c), however, questioned this idea and argued that modern humor contains more wisdom and elegance than 滑稽 *huájī*, despite the fact that the latter also contained funny action, ridiculous speech and witty thought.

According to Yue (2010), Chinese humor has a history of over 3,000 years. Yue has further categorized different types of Chinese humor according to its forms and the periods when it first occurred, as shown below:

Table 2: Major Forms of Humor in Chinese History

Form	Appearing time	Brief description
Comics		
Comic acts <i>Pai you</i> (俳優)	around 800 B.C.	Humor performed by professional comedians plying comics and acrobatics for royals and aristocrats.
Two-person show <i>Can jun play</i> (參軍戲)	around 500 B.C.	Humor performed by two comedians, one playing a smart person and one playing a dumb person, trying to make fun of life, political or otherwise.
Witty show <i>Qu yi</i> (曲藝)	around 600 A.D.	Humor shown via cross-talks, single man talk shows, etc. to riddle funny and unfair things in life.
Comic drama <i>Xi ju</i> (戲劇)	around 800 A.D.	Humor shown through plays and operas to portray funny or humorous scenes, events, and figures in life.
Cross-talk	around late 1800	Humor shown via comedic performance in the form of a monologue

<i>Xiang Sheng</i> (相聲)		or a dialogue.
Satires		
Satire prose (諸子散文)	around 500 B.C.	Humor shown via various idioms, scripts, proverbs, fables, parables in ancient time.
Folk satires (民間笑話)	around 500 B.C.	Humor shown via folk jokes, folklores, folk shows, folk rhymes, etc.
Satire novels (諷刺小說)	around late 1800	Humor shown via novels, short essays, to ridicule undesirable political reality.
Political satires (政治笑話)	around early 1900	Humor shown via various political jokes, satires, and stories to ridicule undesirable political reality.
Modern Humor		
Cold humor (冷幽默)	around early 1970	Dry, harsh, bitter humor shown via various verbal and non-verbal acts.
Jerk humor (痞子幽默)	around early 1980	Humor shown via self deprecation, other deprecation, and self bragging.
Non-sense humor (無厘頭幽默)	around early 1980	Malicious, and self-entertaining humor shown via various verbal and non-verbal acts.

(Yue 2010: 407)

As Yue's (2010: 407) table shows, modern Chinese humor first appeared in the 1970s and has three forms: *cold humor*, *jerk humor* and *non-sense humor*. These three types of humor also overlap with modern Taiwanese humor. For example, jerk humor, based on its characteristics, can be further categorized into three humor types frequently used in the Taiwanese society: self-deprecating humor, other-deprecating humor and self-bragging humor.⁸ In addition, non-sense humor is also a frequent humor type in contemporary Taiwan.⁹

It is believed that Confucius (551-479 B.C.) and his sayings have greatly influenced the mind of Chinese people. However, whether Confucius was a humorous person still remains controversial. In quoting the conversations between Confucius and his disciples, Kao (1974) has come to the conclusion that Confucius was indeed humorous. He, however, did not explain why the conversations are funny. While Liao (2001) holds the same viewpoint as Kao's (1974), she goes a step further in explaining why Confucius was humorous. As she has observed, Confucius employed verbal techniques to create humor, mainly by self-deprecating, other-deprecating and self-bragging. However, Liao has also pointed out that Confucius was not regarded by 林語堂 *Lín Yǔ-Táng* as humorous. 林語堂 *Lín Yǔ-Táng* was called 幽默大師 *Yōumò Dàshī* “Master of Humor” in China because it was he that first brought the concept of humor into Mandarin and translated it as 幽默 *yōumò* “humor,” a neologism first coined in 1924. According to Lee's (2009) investigation, 林語堂 *Lín Yǔ-Táng* was China's most well-

⁸ See Sections 6.5-6.7.

⁹ See Subsection 2.2.2 and Section 6.8.

known bilingual writer, who had been writing books in English to promote the Chinese culture from 1935-1967. While many of his books were bestsellers, he also set up many magazines published in Mandarin to promote the Western literary humor. For example, he launched the magazine 論語 *Lúnyǔ* “*The Analects Fortnightly*” in Shanghai in 1932 to support a humorous writing style, which immediately changed literary trends.

To better understand the humor of 林語堂 *Lín Yǔ-Táng* and Confucius, Liao (2001) has proposed the psychological distance theory. In the meantime, she has also proposed the social theory of 寓教娛樂 *yù jiào yú lè* “wrapping instructions in entertainment/amusement” to understand Chinese and Taiwanese verbal humor. Her findings are as the following: Firstly, as humor has both entertaining and educational functions, it is regarded as a good thing for both Chinese and Taiwanese. Secondly, humor mainly serves to educate and trigger a thoughtful smile. Thirdly, recycled jokes are the favorite joke type in Taiwan. Fourthly, Taiwanese think that a man with a sense of humor does not need to laugh hilariously because laughing hilariously is considered abnormal. Fifthly, joking is not always regarded as “being humorous” by Taiwanese. Sixthly, Taiwanese think that it is improper to build a joking or humorous relationship with fathers and superiors at work. Finally, for Westerners, humor may include joking, magic, clowning, cartoon, comic strips and so on. For Taiwanese, these terms are not parallel.

Although Liao's (2001) study intended to understand Taiwanese's perception of humor, her research was conducted from a traditional Chinese perspective. In other words, Liao can be regarded as studying Taiwanese perception of traditional Chinese humor (i.e., humor of 林語堂 *Lín Yǔ-Táng* and Confucius). Her findings, therefore, cannot be used to explain why certain types of humor are popular in contemporary Taiwan. Nevertheless, Liao's study has indicated the vague boundary between traditional Chinese humor and modern Taiwanese humor. While modern Taiwanese humor has perhaps developed its own characteristics, it at the same time overlaps with Chinese humor and is greatly influenced by it.

2.2.2 Hong Kongese Humor: The Style of 無厘頭 *Wúlítóu* “Nonsense”

Hong Kongese humor can be said to be characterized by 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense,” which is an important element in Stephen Chow's farces (Tan 2000; Jiang 2004; Chueh 2006; Yen

2009; Tao 2010).¹⁰ As a farce is intended to promote laughter through highly exaggerated and extravagant situations, the style of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense,” therefore, is embedded with these characteristics, usually through the rhetorical devices of hyperbole and irony. The term 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” consists of three Chinese characters: 無 *wú* “without,” 厘 *lí* “millimeter” and 頭 *tóu* “head.” According to Tan’s (2000) investigation, this term first appeared as a popular Cantonese saying in 佛山 *Fóshān*, a prefecture-level city in central 廣東 *Guǎngdōng*, China. When a person’s behavior and words are hard to comprehend, as they are vulgar, arbitrary and without a clear purpose, this person might be referred to as expressing 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” Tan further adds that 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is expressed through ridiculing or mocking each other. In an interaction, may it be verbal or non-verbal, a participant’s use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” still gets to the essence of the topic, but with a playful attitude towards life. The use of it therefore conveys a profound social connotation. Jiang (2004: 159-171) further summarizes the characteristics of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” as having no rhyme or reason in one’s verbal and non-verbal behaviors.

Based on the viewpoints above, we may conclude that when a speech participant’s contribution is out of expectation in a certain speech context, as it may deviate from the main topic but still gets to the essence of it, this participant can be referred to as 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” The verbal and non-verbal acts of this person are sometimes malicious and may also be highly exaggerated and ironic. The use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” as a humor strategy in a verbal interaction, therefore, can be regarded as a type of conversational implicature, since it may exploit or flout the maxim(s) of Grice’s (1975) Cooperative Principle. The following extract from Stephen Chow’s film illustrates the characteristics of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense”:

Extract (01) 《*凌凌漆大戰金鎗客*》¹¹

Línglíngqī Dàzhàn Jīnqiāngkè

01. → 女人：你以為你躲起來我就找不到你了嗎？沒有用的，你是那樣拉風的男人，不管在什麼地方，就好像漆黑中的螢火蟲一樣，那樣的鮮明、那樣的出眾。你那憂鬱的眼神、稀虛的鬍渣子、神乎其技的刀法，還有那杯 Dry Martini，都深深地迷住了我。

nǚrén: nǐ yǐwéi nǐ duǒ qǐlái wǒ jiù zhǎo bú dào nǐ le ma? méi yǒuyòng de, nǐ shì nà yàng lǎfēng de nánrén, bùguǎn zài shénme dìfāng, jiù hǎoxiàng qīhēi zhōng de

¹⁰ Stephen Chow, also named 周星馳 *Zhōu Xīng-Chí*, is a famous Hong Kongese actor, comedian, film director and producer. More information can be seen on Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Chow).

¹¹ 凌凌漆大戰金鎗客 *Línglíngqī Dàzhàn Jīnqiāngkè* “From Beijing with Love” is a 1994 Hong Kongese action and comedy film. More information can be seen on Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/From_Beijing_with_Love).

yínguǒchóng yíyàng, nàyàngde xiānmíng, nàyàngde chūzhòng. nǐ nà yōuyùde yǎnshén, xīxūde húzhāzi, shénhūqì de dǎofǎ, háiyǒu nàbēi dry martini, dōu shēnshēnde mízhù le wǒ.

02. → 不過，雖然你是那樣地出色，但是行有行規。不管怎麼樣，你要付清昨晚的過夜費呀！叫女人不用給錢嗎？

búguò, suīrán nǐ shì nàyàngde chūsè, dànshì hángyǒuhánguī. bùguǎn zěnmeyàng, nǐ yào fùqīng zuówǎn de guòyèfèi ya! jiào nǚrén búyòng gěi qián ma?

03. 男人：我以為憑我們倆人的交情，可以談一點感情的，想不到還是一筆買賣。
nánrén: wǒ yǐwéi píng wǒmen liǎngrén de jiāoqíng, kěyǐ tán yìdiǎn gǎnqíng de, xiǎng bú dào hái shì yìbǐ mǎimài.

04. 女人：講感情也是要付錢的啊！
nǚrén: jiǎng gǎnqíng yě shì yào fù qián de a!

Translation

From Beijing with Love

01. → Woman: You think you can hide away from me? You will not make it. A chic man like you is like fireflies in the darkness. You are always bright and outstanding no matter where you are. Your gloomy eyes, stubble, wonderful kitchen knife skills and that cup of Dry Martini. All these have deeply attracted me.
02. → However, even though you are such a perfect man, I am not supposed to break my own rules. Anyway, you should pay me for last night! Do you think prostitution is free?
03. Man: I thought we are already on a friendly term and could go out sometimes, but it still turned out to be transactional sex.
04. Woman: Going on a date with me also costs money!

The above extract is taken from one of Stephen Chow's films 凌凌漆大戰金鎗客 *Línglíngqī Dàzhàn Jīnqiāngkè* "From Beijing with Love." In a scene of the film, a man and a woman are talking in the market. The man is a vendor selling pork, his upper body naked but with a blue apron. He is somewhat dirty since he is chopping pork. On the side of his cutting board is also a cup of Dry Martini. The woman is wearing a white dress, gazing at the man soulfully. From the outfits of both characters, it seems reasonable to suppose that the man and the woman, in the film, belong to the lower-middle class.

The dialogue starts in such a way that the woman is showing how much she appreciates the man. From the utterances in line 1, we might be lured into a parse that the woman is pursuing the man, longing to win his heart. She, in line 2, however, abruptly changes the topic and shows us her real intention; that is, she is a prostitute and she is asking the man to pay her for her sexual service the previous night. This abrupt change of the proposition is unexpected and can be regarded as an expression of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense." This can be seen in many of Stephen Chow's films. In addition, the woman's description of the man is also worth a mention in passing. She uses many expressions to show her appreciation to the man, e.g., 憂鬱的眼神 *yōuyùde yǎnshén* "gloomy eyes," 稀虛的

鬍渣子 *xīxūde húzhāzi* “stubble” and also a metaphor, e.g., 漆黑中的螢火蟲 *qīhēi zhōng de yínghuǒchóng* “fireflies in the darkness.” It is interesting to note that the first two expressions are about the details of the man’s face, both denoting “sexiness” of the man that attracts the woman. In the scene of the film, however, the man looks sloppy and unkempt. All these expressions, therefore, are highly exaggerated and ironic.

Interestingly, many supporting roles in Stephen Chow’s films are not overlooked. Instead, they are as famous as the leading roles, thanks to their remarkable and unique traits expressed by breaking the social norm of speaking, which further results in a humorous effect of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” In her analysis of Stephen Chow’s films, Chueh (2006) argues that the use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” also implies transfer of power to the speaker. Goffman (1999: 319) in studying the elements of human behavior points out that “societies everywhere, if they are to be societies, must mobilize their members as self-regulating participants in social encounters.” More specifically, elements that are related to universal human nature are built into an individual, which may include the ethical rules that each of us acquires from our society. In other words, people’s everyday interaction is bound by an established set of rules. The use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” in a verbal interaction, however, is in an attempt to break the social norm of speaking. The speaker very often goes off the track in his/her narration, ignoring the rules that s/he should abide by. The use of this humor strategy, therefore, can be regarded as a speaker’s struggle against power.

While Hong Kongese humor is known to be characterized by 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense,” it is intriguing to know when this type of humor first influenced Taiwanese’s sense of humor. During the 1980s when there were only three government-controlled wireless television stations in Taiwan, Hong Kongese dramas were broadcast on television and were extremely popular among the Taiwanese audience. It is therefore reasonable to believe that the influence of Hong Kongese humor perhaps began in the 1980s. In fact, as observed by Yue (2010: 407), 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” first appeared as a type of modern Chinese humor almost the same time when jerk humor first appeared in China, both around early 1980s. Yue’s categorization of these two types of humor has implied that while jerk humor seems to be focusing on the target(s) of the humor (i.e., by self-deprecating, other-deprecating or self-bragging), the production of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is more goal-oriented. It is because 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is created verbally and non-verbally to serve a self-entertaining function, despite its malicious effect.

Since the Cable Television Law was enacted in Taiwan in 1993 to regulate the “Fourth Channels”,¹² as well as to rein in copyright violators (Byrd 1996), Hong Kongese dramas have not been as popular as they were in the 1980s, as Japanese dramas came to dominate on television in Taiwan. However, Stephen Chow’s farces have been repeatedly broadcast on fourth channels even nowadays, to the extent that his movie lines have become well-known and actually used by many Taiwanese. Additionally, Taiwan is a high-context society. According to Hall (1976), in high-context societies or groups, people are closely connected to each other and are aware of the rules of communication. As most in-group members know how to interact with others because of years of interaction, understandings of communication are already internalized, and thus the rules of communication do not need to be explicitly stated. As Stephen Chow’s farces have been repeatedly broadcast on television, most Taiwanese are familiar with his style of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” Based on Hall’s (1976) discussion of high-context culture, we may say that this type of humor is perhaps not understood by those in the outer circle, i.e., those who do not watch his movies.

Although modern Taiwanese humor can be regarded as including 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense,” there has not been much discussion on how this type of humor is used in the contemporary Taiwanese society. While the studies reviewed above have discussed 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” from different perspectives, they simply focused on how it was used in Stephen Chow’s farces, as well as its implicated social meanings. In view of this, some ink shall be spent on the discussion of how 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is used in Taiwan, as well as what it has revealed about the Taiwanese society and its frequent users.

2.2.3 Japanese Humor and Its Adaptation in Contemporary Taiwan

Japan can also be regarded as a high-context society, where rules of communication are not always stated explicitly (Hall 1976). Maemura (2014) has further argued that because of the high-context setting in Japan, *kuuki* (which literally means “air” or “atmosphere”) has greatly influenced Japanese people’s behaviors in social interactions. In her cross-cultural analysis of humor in business meetings in New Zealand and in Japan, Murata (2014) has observed that while the main function of humor is to create team spirit among meeting members in both cultures, there are significant cultural differences. In the Japanese society, more humorous

¹² This term first appeared in the 1970s and was used to refer to the illicit cable television entrepreneurs presenting news and entertainment alternatives to the three government broadcasters (see Byrd 1996).

remarks are produced by those who are more authoritative or are in charge of the interaction. Other less powerful members are found to simply respond or to react with laughter. Such behaviors have reflected the importance of hierarchy in Japanese corporate culture, which can be said to be governed by the implicit social norm in Japan.¹³

In addition, Japanese people's sense of humor is also influenced by the high-context setting where humorous remarks are created and perceived. According to Oshima's (2013) investigation, in Japan the function of telling funny stories is to make sure what is normal within the inner circle, i.e., the Japanese society, as the in-group members already possess the so-called common knowledge. In other words, Japanese funny stories are not intended "to send messages, identify themselves, or reduce tension for the outer circle" (p. 107). Rather, these funny stories (based on personal experiences) are told to reinforce the in-group solidarity.

As Japanese humor is not intended to entertain the outsiders, it is uniquely suited to the mind of the Japanese and may have its unique characteristics, which are very often knocked by foreigners for being too silly or too hard to understand. The most important elements of Japanese humor can be said to be vagueness and imperfection, as further evidenced in the structure of the Japanese slapstick comedy 漫才 *manzai*, a dyadic exchange of ボケ *boke* "vagueness" and ツツコミ *tsukkomi* "to poke." The *boke-tsukkomi* exchange, to borrow Tsutsumi's (2011: 147) words, is "a comical verbal battle of words and worldviews between the *boke* player and the *tsukkomi* player." While the *boke* player serves to entertain the audience by uttering silly and out-of-context words, the *tsukkomi* player uses straight and sharp responses (usually with funny quips) to bring the dialogue back to the topic. The funniness comes from the misunderstandings between the two comedians. The intentionally constructed stupidity by the *boke* player and their witty interaction based on the punning wordplay have further suggested Japanese people's preference for vagueness and imperfection. While the *tsukkomi* player's responses represent most Japanese people's thinking ideas, the *boke* player can be regarded as those whose behaviors are different from the majority of people. More specifically, it is acceptable and forgivable when a Japanese diverges from the regulated social norms once in a while. This is in particular evidenced in the Japanese idiomatic expression: 旅の恥は掻き捨て *tabinohaji wa kakisute* "Once over the border, a Japanese is allowed to discard his shame and do anything." Although the Japanese *manzai* is exclusive to the Japanese culture, similar chemistry between the *boke* player and the

¹³ Liao (2001) has observed a similar phenomenon in Taiwanese society, in which joking with one's father or with one's superior at work is regarded as inappropriate.

tsukkomi player in *manzai* can also be seen on television variety shows in Taiwan, but with certain adjustment.

Japanese humor is also characterized by self-deprecation, as evidenced in many Japanese comedians' deliberately uglified styles, such as the Japanese comedian 志村ケン *Shimura Ken*'s popular shtick 変なおじさん *Henna Ojisan* "Obnoxious Uncle." This funny character is also well-known by most Taiwanese and has later become the source of inspiration for many Taiwanese celebrities to entertain their audience.¹⁴ More specifically, Japanese self-deprecating humor created by uglifying oneself or by acting like a silly fool has become acceptable and even popular in contemporary Taiwan.

Obviously, certain characteristics of Japanese humor can be found in modern Taiwanese humor, but with certain adjustment. Like Japan, Taiwan is also a high-context society. The Taiwanese media environment can be said to be influenced by Japan, not only because Taiwan was once under Japanese rule, but also because Taiwan is geographically close to Japan. The influence of the Japanese culture can be seen in Taiwanese younger generation's frequent use of modern Mandarin neologisms, which are borrowed from the Japanese kanji, but with more abundant usages (Chen and Chen 2011a). In other words, while the Japanese culture has certain impact on the Taiwanese society, it is not fully accepted by Taiwanese. Instead, Taiwanese may change its form or interpret it differently to adapt it to the multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Taiwanese society. This perhaps can also be seen in modern Taiwanese humor. In addition, it is perhaps more diversified than its Japanese counterpart. As argued by Mintz (1999: 237), "relatively stable and homogeneous societies have less use for humor than dynamic and heterogeneous ones." While modern Taiwanese humor has perhaps absorbed certain characteristics of Japanese humor, it has turned into a more diversified one.

To conclude, Taiwan's maritime geography has made this small island a fusion of a number of cultures, as evidenced in its multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. In addition, thanks to the prevailing of Stephen Chow's farces and the import of Japanese culture, modern Taiwanese humor is like a big melting pot of Chinese, Hong Kongese and Japanese humor. To be best adapted to its diversified society, modern Taiwanese humor has combined the above humor types and further developed them into a more local one that is exclusive to the Taiwanese society.

¹⁴ See Appendix II for the Japanese comedian's and other Taiwanese celebrities' popular shticks.

2.3 Humor in the Society of Poland

In this section, previous studies on Polish humor in different written and spoken genres are reviewed. Subsection 2.3.1 discusses Polish humor in different written genres. Subsections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 discuss Polish political humor and humor used in broadcast media in Poland.

2.3.1 Development of Written Polish Humor

Polish humor can be observed in various written genres, such as in prose and poetry (see, e.g., Jarniewicz 2012; Kamocki 2012; Lemann 2012a; Lemann and Gucio 2012), in fantasy literature (see, e.g., Lemann 2012b), in drawings and posters (see, e.g., Libura 2012; Libura and Kielbawska 2012), in visual arts (see, e.g., Curyłło-Klag 2012), in contemporary press (see, e.g., Wojtak 2012) or on the Internet (see, e.g., Grochala and Dembowska-Wosik 2012b). The above studies on written Polish humor suggest that Poles' uses of humor in these written genres have not only reflected the changes in their sense of humor across different ages, but they have also shown the socio-political situations in different eras in Poland, as well as the social changes between each era.

Lemann (2012a), for example, analyzed humor in Polish prose from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. Old Polish humor, according to Lemann, was present in the literature of the old Polish era, including the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque. In the Middle Ages, there was a contrast between gentry laughter and its ludic, plebeian counterpart, which reflected the tensions of conflicts in politics and the society. In Renaissance, Poles favored *facetiaestics*, a branch of literature filled with verbal humor that was based on homonymy and anthroponomastics. Sarmatian literature was popular in the Baroque period, as its style and humor are known as *gawęda szlachecka* “gentry tale,” which “is characterized by spontaneity, color, comedy of manners, jovial humor and numerous anecdotes” (p. 24). As Lemann further argues, “[I]n old Poland people laughed readily and had a high cultural and literary awareness of humor” (p.18).

In addition, Lemann (2012a) also analyzed the humor of the Polish Enlightenment. She has found that humor of this age was in relation with the reforms in politics and the society, such as political satire written by the reformers of the Stanisławian times (see, e.g., Ignacy Krasicki, Adam Naruszewicz or Stanisław Trębecki). In the era of the partition of

Poland, which may include Romanticism (1822-1863), Positivism (1864-1890) and Young Poland (1819-1918), laughter was not dominant in the literature. For example, in the era of Romanticism, Poles dared not laugh, as it was sad in that era. In the era of Positivism, however, the situation improved, as evidenced in various prose forms containing humor elements, such as novellas, scenes and novels. Newspaper columns, current affair chronicles and humorous pieces were also popular in this era. In the era of Young Poland, however, humor became less favorable, as decadence, catastrophism, pessimism, nihilism and slogans that declared the autotelic nature of art dominated it. As Lemann further argues, “This is an age of lyricism, anxiety, sense of antinomy between the world available to the senses and the inner one, more inclined towards frenetic seizures than warm, gentle humor of the previous era” (p. 33).

Kamocki (2012) also analyzed literary humor from the Middle Ages to the Polish Enlightenment. In his analysis, he focused on the grotesque humor of the superb Renaissance trifles by Jan Kochanowski (i.e., *The Dialogue between Master Polikarp and the Death*) and the absurd poetry and prose works in the Sowizdrzał literature (e.g., the mock *Criminal Codes*, *Maciek's Peregrinations*, trifles by Jan of Kijany, the 18th century mock-heroic poem *Monachomachia* or *The War of the Monks* by Bishop Ignacy Krasicki). Based on his analysis of humor in these Polish literary works, Kamocki concludes that “even though ideologies or value systems have changed over the ages, the human being has remained the same *homo ludens*” (p. 55). In other words, Poles laugh at different things in the same way, which has further proven that the comic is everlasting.

Analyzing the Polish prose between the 20th and early 21st century, Lemann and Gucio (2012) attempted to map out the situation of humor in contemporary literature. As they have observed, when Poland regained its independence during the interwar period (1918-1939), grotesque works became popular in Poland, thanks to their nonsensical, surrealistic and political nature. Laughter also had its own therapeutic value in this era, as catastrophic moods were evoked. The domineering humor in the World War II included the gallows variety, black, grotesque, mocking death, seeking to ridicule and make light of it. In the age of People's Republic of Poland, Poles resisted the new times with satirical works. After the “thaw,” known as the Polish October Revolution that marked a change in Polish politics in 1956, literature deprecating absurdities of the new order developed or made use of Aesopian language. After 1989, censorship was abolished and authors enjoyed full freedom in writing. During this period, a new repertoire of humor was introduced, such as playing with traditions

and conventions, intertextual humor feeding on literature and the rapidly developing media and new topics (e.g., the new mentality and subculture).

Jarniewicz (2012) also analyzed literary humor in poetry, but focused on the changes after the fall of Communism in Poland in 1989. He has observed that new poetic voices came into existence, which were against the established tradition, characterized by the opening of poetry to numerous types of humor. Among them, the irreverent and subversive type of humor was domineering. As this type of humor is constructed by the apparently contrastive sense of despair and anxiety, it was frequently used in poems to voice dissatisfaction with the new social and economic order. In other poems, the poets' playful confrontation with mass culture was accompanied by the subversive humor, which was used to suspend the distinctions between the high-brow and the low, between the elitist and the popular.

As an extremely syncretic genre, fantasy literature provides one of the most interesting and unique phenomena of Polish literary humor. Lemann (2012b) categorized fantasy into various subgenres (e.g., high and low fantasy, heroic fantasy, urban fantasy, sword and sorcery, comic fantasy, etc.), in an attempt to find out how humor functions in them. As she has observed, there is a distinction between high and low fantasy, which can be used to label comic discourse in Polish fantasy. While the former uses the intellectual humor immersed in the element of the empirical world to create the secondary worlds, the latter uses humor to comment and transform the empirical reality, not only to entertain the readers, but also to establish harmony with them.

In addition to literature, humor also contributes to the artistry of drawings and posters. Curyłło-Klag (2012), for example, has observed the black humor in the works of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, a Polish modernist polymath. According to Curyłło-Klag, while the artist's drawings are characterized by "monsters" and "demons," which are not considered funny, they are at the same time infused with humor, which results from the conflict between the visual content and the title, or between the incongruous elements conveyed in them. His drawings, therefore, are likely to elicit a smile from their viewers, despite the fact that they might cause mental discomfort. In addition, like humor in literary works, humor in drawings and posters are also in close relation with the historical changes in Poland. For example, Libura (2012) has observed that humor in the images of cartoons is sensitive to the socio-political changes after World War II. After the communist times, in particular after Stalin's death and the Polish October Revolution, there existed a mainstream of satirical cartoons, as the above historical events guaranteed partial freedom of speech. While many satirical

cartoons created allusive messages during those times, cartoonists were more likely to convey trivial and brutal messages after the 1989 breakthrough in Poland. In addition, after the censorship was canceled, many satirical drawings are now considered not as refined as before. They, however, still reflect the debates in contemporary Poland. The development of Polish satirical cartoons has further shown Poles' sense of humor. As Libura further argues, Poles are more attracted by cartoons "which involve intellectual play based on a wordplay or surprising visual interpretation of conventional phrases" (p. 403). Poles' sense of humor is also seen in Polish posters. Analyzing posters that address different themes (i.e., political, social, occupational safety, advertising film and theater events, circus performances, exhibitions, commemorative events, commercial products, sports and tourism), Libura and Kielbawska (2012) have observed that some posters show humor in a more sarcastic or obscene way. As they further argue, sarcastic or obscene humor represents the style of the younger generation and counterculture graphic designers in Poland.

In contemporary Poland, daily newspapers, periodicals and online social networking services also contribute to the success of non-verbal communication between an editor and his/her readers, including those Internet users. As humor brings about laughter, more and more researchers have paid attention to the comic discourse in these genres. Wojtak (2012), for example, analyzed the various components of the comic discourse on daily newspapers and periodicals. As she has observed, the contemporary Polish press is characterized by using "the convention of genres typical for the press in its informing version as a vehicle of parodist functions and other shades of tendentious humor" (p. 237). In other words, the contemporary Polish press aims at amusing its readers by presenting the political, social and moral reality in a parodist manner. Additionally, due to the development of many online social networking services, more and more people begin chatting, exchanging information and self-promoting online. While online communication can be fast and in real time (e.g., instant messaging), it is still not face-to-face verbal interaction. It, therefore, has developed its own genre with its unique humor. Grochala and Dembowska-Wosik (2012b), for example, analyzed how Poles present humor on the Internet. They analyzed funny status updates in instant messaging and social networks and presented how emoticon, acronyms and humor are used in online etiquette. They also analyzed online Polish jokes about blondes, mother-in-law and police officers, which are popular topics for joking in Poland. In addition, how Polish politicians use humor in their self-presentation on their weblogs was also discussed in their study. While online communication has developed its own genre for humor research, Grochala and

Dembowska-Wosik have concluded that it is impossible to describe humor only in relation to this medium. More specifically, the Polish-ness of humor on the Internet is greatly influenced by the Polish language itself, which is based on wordplay and choosing specific topics for joking.

In sum, results of findings of previous studies on written Polish humor have shown that while Poles' sense of humor is greatly influenced by the society where they live, their uses of humor also reflect the socio-political situations in different eras. Moreover, Poles' uses of humor in daily newspapers, periodicals and online social networking services have further shown the importance of humor in non-verbal communication.

2.3.2 Humor in Polish Political Discourse

Politics is a popular source of humor in Poland, which can be traced back to the period of the People's Republic of Poland (i.e., Polska Republika Ludowa, PRL, 1945-1989). During the PRL period, however, many Poles were punished or sentenced to prison for telling political jokes. Jokes at that time reveal a true history of the Polish society, which is different from the truth set up by the national apparatus. In her analysis of political jokes in Poland during the PRL period, Świątkiewicz-Mośny (2012) has found that different characters were used in jokes due to the political changes at that time. For example, the Polish Workers' Party (i.e., Polska Partia Robotnicza, PPR) became the formal authority in Poland in 1947, and from December 1948, the PPR and other parties formed the Polish Workers' United Party (i.e., Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR). During the period of the PPR and PZPR, many jokes about a mountain shepherd appeared. These jokes were used to mock the party and the new system of authority, in an attempt to show a different viewpoint that was not suggested by the authority. After the death of Stalin in 1953, repressions decreased. Stalin became the target of jokes at that time. In 1956, Bolesław Bierut, a Polish communist activist and the first leader of the PRP, died in Moscow. His unexplained death was regarded as the beginning of de-stalinization of Poland. Jokes about Bierut, leaders of the revolution, Russian people and discoveries of the USSR scientists flourished like mushrooms. In addition, during the 1960s, Poles started to realize that there was little development and progress, and that there was economic backwardness in Poland. Jokes about the difficult social situation and the authority's lack of basic knowledge appeared. Anti-Semitic activities of the government also

took place during the 1960s. In 1968, riots also broke out. Because of all these, Jews and students became the enemies of the government, and further were used as the main characters in the jokes. Moreover, there was a significant growth of economy in the 1970s. Shops in Poland started to offer products which had not been available for a long time. However, the policy of the government was incompetent and later brought about crisis. Jokes about the crisis, in particular about the low salaries, vouchers for products and empty shops, appeared during this period. In December 1981, martial law was introduced in Poland and a special role was played by militias. Jokes during the 1980s not only mocked the authorities' stupidity, but also laughed at the activities of militias, e.g., Civil Militia (Milicja Obywatelska, MO), Motorized Division of Civil Militia (Zmotoryzowane Oddziały Milicji Obywatelskiej, ZOMO) and Voluntary Reserve of Civil Militia (Ochotnicza Rezerwa Milicji Obywatelskiej, ORMO). Świątkiewicz-Mośny has further pointed out that political jokes during the PRL period can be amusing, but "the ridiculed reality was very gloomy indeed" (p. 431). Besides, as they showed a dichotomy of *we* (e.g., people who laughed at jokes) vs. *they* (e.g., people who were laughed at), it was much easier to tell jokes to ridicule politicians. By contrast, it seems to be more difficult to tell political jokes in modern society, in the sense that all the listeners can be potential supporters of the mocked politician.

Interestingly, among the political jokes in Poland, many are ethnic. In her investigation of ethnic Polish jokes, Brzozowska (2012) has found that in the interwar period, there were many jokes about Jews. These jokes were more likely to focus on Jews' intelligence, sharp tongues, specific logic and philosophy of life. They were also presented as traders. Besides Jews, Germans were also made fun of in the jokes, mainly because Germany has for a long time been a powerful neighbor. More jokes about Germans were found during the Second World War. These jokes reflect Poles' attitude towards Germans. On the one hand, Germans are respected for their abilities. On the other, they are perceived as a threat. After the Second World War, the image of Russians drinking vodka frequently appeared in the jokes. In the "Cold War" period, Russians appeared in the jokes accompanied by Americans to form a contrast.

In analyzing political humor in contemporary Poland, Dynel (2012b) has found that Poles still express their dissatisfaction with both current and past political situations, despite the political changes taking place since 1989. This is done by joking about political figures and events. According to Dynel, among the three joke types, Polish political jokes belong to

the category of *problematic* ones (cf. Davies 2005).¹⁵ Jokes as such can be understood only intraculturally, as they require the knowledge of the Polish history and culture. The following is an example of political jokes of Polish provenance. To understand this joke, hearers should have the knowledge of Nelly Rokita, a Polish politician disreputable for her lack of eloquence and ludicrous claims.

Nelly Rokita mówi za dużo, bez sensu i źle po polsku, a więc spełnia wszelkie warunki, aby zostać czołowym politykiem. (**Translation:** Nelly Rokita talks too much, without sense, and uses poor Polish, which is why she meets all the conditions to be a top politician.)

(Dyner 2012b: 438)

Dyner further points out that humor can be produced by politicians in various genres, as in an interview, a debate or a speech. Humor as such can be *unintentional* or *intentionally employed*. While the former is an unintentional verbal faux pas by politicians, the latter comes from prepared speeches to give a positive presentation of politicians. In addition, political satire and parody are prevailing in Polish media channels. The former can be understood as an aggressive commentary on a political event or on a political figure for his/her unfavorable actions, while the latter can be regarded as a subtype of the former, but the understanding of it is firmly decided by the knowledge of the verbalization to which it refers. Therefore, political satire is also frequently used in Polish magazines and newspapers.

In fact, using political humor to show dissatisfaction is a worldwide phenomenon. In investigating the nationwide anti-government demonstrations in Turkey, Görkem (2015) has also observed that protestors used humor to target and degrade Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the government and the police forces. Political humor as such can be found in captions, caricatures, graffiti, posters and slogans. In analyzing political jokes from materials about the current Greek debt crisis, Tsakona (2015) has also observed that political jokes help show a critical perspective towards the current socio-political conditions in Greece. To sum up, political humor in Poland has reflected different socio-political situations during different periods in Poland. In addition, as can be found in other countries, Poles use humor to show their dissatisfaction towards the current socio-political situation, while they at the same time use it to reinforce solidarity with their fellow countrymen.

¹⁵ Dyner (2012b) uses Davies' (2005) categorization of jokes. According to Davies, jokes can be divided into three types: *transposable*, *switchable* and *problematic* ones. *Transposable* jokes are available cross-culturally. *Switchable* jokes are with equivalents in different countries. Finally, *problematic* jokes can be understood only intraculturally.

2.3.3 Humor in Polish Broadcast Media

Humor is also observed in interactions in the airing of audio and video to the public, such as on television, in the movies or on the radio. As these broadcast media aim at attracting a large number of audience members, and that entertainment can be seen as an important function of media use, humor is therefore indispensable in these broadcast media forums. In the meantime, studying humor in Polish broadcast media is important, as it helps understand Poles' attitudes and views on the world at different times.

While many humor studies focused on how humor is employed in different Polish broadcast media forums (e.g., Dynel 2012a; Grochala and Dembowska-Wosik 2012a; Grzegorzczak 2012), their findings have outlined the development of the contemporary Poland. Grzegorzczak (2012), for example, analyzed humorous public television programs produced in Poland, starting with the 1950s' *Kabaret Starszych Panów* "The Cabaret of Elderly Gentlemen." He has observed that the performances of Zielony Balonik and the poems of Gałczyński and Tuwim from the pre-television era have had a great influence on the convention based on refined allusion, grotesque, parody and ridicule. This convention and the political situation of communist Poland later contributed to an original and unique form of humor on public television in contemporary Poland. Grzegorzczak has further pointed out that although more politically inclined humor is demanded, which is satisfied by satirical television programs, humor has further developed a new form in the modern society. Poles' taste for humor can be seen in their openness to foreign, comedy series and liberal treatment of formerly tabooed issues, such as religion, sex and coarse language.

The Polish taste culture is also characterized by different sources of humor in the movies, which can be seen in the comedy genres. In analyzing Polish films and series, Dynel (2012a) argues that Polish comedies are diversified, which shape and respond to the audience's requirements. These comedies can be divided into different genres based on the prevailing types of humor: grotesque comedies, slapstick comedies, satirical comedies, lowbrow comedies, comedy-dramas and romantic comedies. Dynel has further pointed out that although there were many grotesque, slapstick and satirical comedies in the past decades, Poles are developing a taste for comedies that require less thinking, which is manifested in the overpowering data of lowbrow or romantic comedies in the modern society. However, classic comedies are still popular among the younger generations, as evidenced in constant DVD re-releases and television listing schedules.

Polish radio programs are also important sources for humor research. Grochala and Dembowska-Wosik (2012a), for example, analyzed public radio programs specializing in entertainment, such as *Ilustrowany Tygodnik Rozrywkowy* “Illustrated Entertainment Magazine,” *60 Minut na Godzinę* “60 Minutes Per Hour” and *Akademia Rozrywki* “The Academy of Entertainment,” as well as commercial stations. As they have observed, “[E]ntertainment has become an indispensable element of the radio” (p. 267). In addition, unintentional humor resulting from radio presenters' mistakes is perceived by their listeners as the most interesting.

Obviously, the media make and spread a set of meanings, which are highlighted by an orderly, logical and consistent relation of parts. As Filas and Płaneta (2009: 141) have argued, the media can be regarded as “the most important source of cognitive models of reality,” from which people in modern societies develop their knowledge about issues that are important for the community. To sum up, Poles' uses of humor in these broadcast media have reflected their attitudes and viewpoints towards their society and the world.

2.4 Methodological Approaches to Humor

In choosing the methodological approaches to humor, we are now entering a potential minefield of terminology. I argue that there is no fixed definition of what humor is. While humor is culture-specific, and can be used in different genres within the same culture, the most salient function of it can be said to be achieving a certain communicative purpose. In many empirical cases, however, there is no direct evidence showing that humor is created intentionally for such a communicative function, as an utterance or a move may trigger humor unintentionally. In addition, intentional humor may not be perceived as humor by its receiver(s) in many social interactions. The present study, therefore, takes a broader definition. That is, any verbal or non-verbal expression that triggers laughter or smiling because of one's appreciation of such an expression can be defined as humor. In addition, a humorous utterance or move used in the present study is signaled by any linguistic or paralinguistic cues observed in an ongoing speech event. More specifically, the contextualization cue(s) may help decide whether a speech participant intends to create humor and whether an utterance or a move is perceived by its receiver(s) as humorous. The contextualization cue(s) will also be used to analyze a speech participant's verbal and non-

verbal behaviors. In addition, many social and cultural factors will be taken into consideration in explaining how humor functions in talk-in-interaction. The methodological approaches used in the present study are thus informed by conversation analysis, multimodality and interactional linguistics.

2.4.1 Conversation Analysis

Conversation analysis (henceforth CA) is a methodological approach used to study naturally occurring spoken data. It is used to analyze the structures, patterns and processes of various social interactions, which may include everyday verbal and non-verbal practices. As once described, CA is “perhaps the only completely new sociological research methodology developed in the United States since World War II” (Heritage 2003: 1). Heritage has further stated that the published expression of CA first appeared in Schegloff's (1968) study on sequencing in conversational openings, and that since that time CA has been developed greatly and applied to the analysis of various languages. The development of CA was inspired by Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology and Goffman's (1983) interaction order. The former's interpretive procedures that underlie social action helps understand how people in their everyday life use commonsense knowledge to achieve a success of interaction. This methodology also uses social factors to account for different situations of speaking. The latter, on the other hand, focuses on the moral underpinning of social interactions. More specifically, the ritual procedures may influence the orderly conduct of people's daily life.¹⁶

While the methods of CA are frequently used to analyze casual conversations, CA was first developed to investigate interactions that were institutional by nature.¹⁷ According to Schegloff (1992a, 1992b), CA was first developed by Sacks and his colleagues when they analyzed recorded data from telephone calls to a suicide prevention center in San Francisco and from other interactions in group therapy sessions, with a special focus on turn-taking, adjacency pairs and story-telling. Based on the CA approach, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) have further set up the turn-taking system in conversations. Their study is significant in the fields of both linguistics and sociology in that its focus is on how the language interacts with the social order. Schegloff (1996) has further used the CA approach to review the past

¹⁶ Although the development of CA is influenced by Goffman's (1983) interaction order, Goffman himself was critical about CA, which according to Schegloff (1988) was due to his misreadings of the CA studies.

¹⁷ Although CA was first developed to analyze interactions that were institutional, many studies using CA did not distinguish the distinctive features of institutional talks until the late 1970s (Heritage 2005).

treatment of “action” in sociology, focusing on the practice of agreeing with another by repetition in a talk-in-interaction.¹⁸ Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998) have pointed out that the transcripts are not simply considered as “data,” but are seen as representing the data. They have further argued that many CA studies today are still based on audio data. As speech participants who are being recorded have visual access to each other and that a face-to-face interaction also involves non-verbal communication, focusing on speech participants' utterances exclusively might miss out some salient features in their management of the social exchanges. In the following subsection I will discuss the importance of using multimodality in analyzing humor in talk-in-interaction.

2.4.2 Multimodality

Each individual possesses a wealth of knowledge and experience regarding language use. In a social interaction, speech participants not only send verbal messages, but also non-verbal ones, despite their complex interplay. Seyfeddinipur and Gullberg (2014: 1) have also pointed out in the beginning of their book that “[l]anguage use is fundamentally multimodal.” That is, in an ongoing talk speakers may point to locations with hands, position their bodies, use facial displays and engage in mutual gaze for different communicative purposes. Knapp, Hall and Horgan (2014) have further listed the dynamic body movement and positioning:

Dynamic body movement and positioning typically include the following: gestures; movements of the limbs, hands, head, feet, and legs; facial expressions, such as smiles; eye behavior, including blinking, direction and length of gaze, and pupil dilation; and posture. The furrow of the brow, the slump of a shoulder, and the tilt of a head are all considered body movements and positions. Specifically, the major areas are gestures, posture, touching behavior, facial expressions, eye behavior, and vocal behavior.

(Knapp, Hall and Horgan 2014: 12)

A speech participant may use visible bodily actions to show how s/he is engaged with other speech participants in a social interaction. As argued by Kendon (2004: 1), “[H]umans, when in co-presence, continuously inform one another about their intentions, interests, feelings and ideas by means of visible bodily action.” As Kendon has further pointed out, while these visible bodily actions may be combined with spoken words, they can also be used “as complements, supplements, substitutes or as alternatives to them” (p. 1).

¹⁸ According to Schegloff (1996), the practice of repeating what one has said constitutes the action of “confirming allusions.”

Similarly, in creating humor in a social interaction, a speech participant is very likely to resort to the simultaneous use of multimodal resources, as humor can be created both verbally and non-verbally. As pinpointed by Kendon (2004: 108), “speakers create *ensembles* of gesture and speech, by means of which a semantic coherence between the two modalities is attained.” Furthermore, based on Kendon's (2004: 13-14) account of gestures as having “features of manifest deliberate expressiveness,” we may expect a speech participant to intentionally use gesticulation to create humor, either alone or combined with verbal speech. Such an approach is particularly important to the study of humor in Polish interactions. As Wierzbicka (1999: 269) has observed, “In Polish culture, the expectation seems to be that the expression of a person's face mirrors their current psychological state, and that to fully understand another person one has to engage not just in verbal dialogue, but also in a 'facial dialogue'.” From this perspective, to understand Polish humor one should also understand the visible bodily action.

To the above, it is important to examine how speech participants resort to multimodal resources when analyzing their humor, including the discourse strategies they use, as well as different types of humor they create. In addition, the multimodality approach also facilitates the understanding of laughter and smiling. As I will illustrate and discuss in Chapter Three, although laughter and smiling can be stimulus-responses to humor, many of their occurrences are observed to be irrelevant to humor (e.g., Van Hooff 1972; Ekman and Friesen 1982; Glenn 2003; Holt 2011; Warner-Garcia 2014). In other words, many occurrences of laughter and smiling can be regarded as gesticulation in Kendon's (2004) view, as they are employed for certain communicative purposes. Taking speech participants' use of multimodal resources into consideration helps understand their laughter and smiling in their interactions. In a nutshell, the multimodality approach is significant in the analysis of humor.

2.4.3 Interactional Linguistics

As pointed out by Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (2001: 4), linguistic studies inspired by the Chomskian paradigm are more likely to treat what happens in a talk-in-interaction as “merely a contextual, real-time application of structures whose well-formedness is determined out of context by the linguistic system.” This viewpoint is questionable from an interactional perspective, as Couper-Kuhlen and Selting further put it:

Rather than conceptualizing language as an abstract and balanced system of pre-established discrete elements which are combined with one another into “sentences” that are then realized in speech, interactional evidence suggests that language forms and structures must be thought of in a more situated, context-sensitive fashion as actively (re)produced and locally adapted to the exigencies of the interaction at hand.

(Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 2001: 4-5)

Different from formal linguistics, interactional linguistics is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language structure and use in social interactions. It is used in the fields of linguistics, anthropology and the sociology of language. As pinpointed by Li (2014), interactional linguistics is developed from three research approaches, including British CA-informed phonetics/phonology (cf. Local, Wells and Sebba 1985; Local, Kelly and Wells 1986), interactional prosodic study (cf. Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 2001) and discourse-functional linguistics (Ford, Fox and Thompson 2002). Interactional linguists draw from three perspectives, including functional linguistics, linguistic anthropology and CA. As Schegloff, Ochs and Thompson (1996) further put it:

Functional linguists with interests in language as it appears empirically in conduct have found a potentially attractive resource in work developed in the last thirty years – largely under the aegis of sociology – on the organization of conversation interaction. Conversation analysts have sought input from linguists for at least twenty years to help describe the grammatical shaping of one of the most fundamental units in talk-in-interaction, namely turns; the research efforts of functional grammarians can be a prime source of such input. For at least thirty years, since the introduction of the *Ethnography of Communication* (Gumperz and Hymes 1964), if not longer, linguistic anthropologists have appreciated the centrality of careful examination of recorded communicative events, and in recent years have come increasingly to articulate ways in which social order and cultural understandings are constituted and socialized through the moment-by-moment, turn-by-turn organization of everyday conversational interaction.

(Schegloff, Ochs and Thompson 1996: 3)

More specifically, this research approach draws upon Gumperz's (1982, 1992) interactional sociolinguistic theory, focusing on language in its social context, while it at the same time adopts the CA methodological methods to study how grammatical structures and recursive patterns contribute to a talk-in-interaction. Selting (1996), for example, analyzed the role of linguistic schemata when speech participants organize and project turn-constitutive units and their ends. As she further suggested, syntax and prosody are relevant and complementary, as “syntactic units are locally contextualized by prosody” (p. 384).

In writing an introduction for those interaction-based studies of German and English languages, Ford and Wagner (1996) have claimed that language should be closely and carefully studied at the interactional level, as it would be impossible to fully understand its mechanism without examining its interactional functions. As concluded by Couper-Kuhlen

and Selting (2001: 3), the goal of interactional linguistics is to better understand “how languages are shaped by interaction and how interactional practices are molded through specific languages.” To fully understand how humor is created and perceived, we should examine it at the interactional level.

In sum, the three methodological approaches of CA, multimodality and interactional linguistics focus on how language is used from an interactive perspective. Adopting the three methods thus helps understand how humor is culturally shaped and how it contributes to a talk-in-interaction.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have reviewed previous works on humor that are relevant to the present study. It is argued that humor is not only produced to entertain others, but it can also be used for different functions across societies, cultures and genders. In addition, I have also argued that Taiwanese humor is a big melting pot of Chinese, Hong Kongese and Japanese humor, but with certain changes to be better adapted to its diversified environment. On the other hand, Polish humor is diversified, as can be seen in various genres, i.e., in politics, in prose and poetry, in fantasy literature, in drawings and posters, in visual arts, in contemporary press, on the Internet and in broadcast media. The diversity of Polish humor has also built up a picture of the historical development of Poland. In addition, the methodological approaches used in the present study are informed by CA, multimodality and interactional linguistics. The following five chapters are based on these three approaches and present my analysis of the pragmatic/interpersonal functions of laughter and smiling, through the lens of modern Taiwanese and Polish humor.

Chapter Three

LAUGHTER AND SMILING

“Laugh, and the world laughs with you; weep, and you weep alone.”

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850-1919), "Solitude," (1888)

As the lines of the above famous poem reveal, laughs are contagious, and that laughter invites laughter in many social interactions, especially in humorous talks. My analysis in this chapter focuses on laughter, smiling and their pragmatic/interpersonal functions in humorous talks in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* and *Kuba Wojewódzki*. I argue that laughter and smiling are not only expressions of emotion or subconscious responses to humorous stimuli. They, in fact, can be used by speech participants as a device to regulate an ongoing social interaction for different communicative purposes. On television variety shows, smiling can be further used to elicit an entertaining effect. In the following, Sections 3.1 and 3.2 illustrate the different pragmatic/interpersonal functions of laughter and smiling, respectively. For the ease of understanding, each extract is accompanied by an English translation and screenshots. As the functions of laughter and smiling are similar on both television variety shows, no further ink is spent in discussing the cultural difference between the two programs. Finally, Section 3.3 summarizes and concludes the findings in this chapter.

3.1 Laughter and Its Pragmatic/Interpersonal Functions

Laughter, according to O'Donnell-Trujillo and Adams (1983: 175), “is not a linguistic construction but an acoustic one, with no readily apparent semantic or syntactic features.” More specifically, laughter is a non-lexical component in an interaction, which is very different from speech. Van Hooff (1972) has classified smiling and laughing from an anthropological perspective. He argues that increased baring of the teeth shows increasingly non-hostile or friendly attitude. Increased mouth opening and vocalization, on the other hand, accompany increased playfulness. In other words, a broad smile can be used as an indicator

for a highly friendly attitude, but not necessarily for the high degree of playfulness, and vice versa for laughter.

There was a tendency to “treat laughter simplistically as a response to humor and thus to imply a casual, stimulus-response relationship from humorous event to perception of humor to laughter” (Glenn 2003: 24). Treating laughter as only a response to humorous remarks, however, is questionable and improper. For example, Provine's (1996) study has observed that less than 20% of the laughter in his data corpus were a reaction to humor. Holt (2011) has the same observation and has further claimed that laughter is an action in itself that shows the recipient is willing to bring the topic closer. Its presence arises from the incongruity, as there are various candidates to which the recipient orients in laughing, which may include the preceding figurative expressions that are exaggerated, dramatic or overdone. The recipient may also orient to other properties, such as the laughter or smile voice in the preceding turn.

While laughter is very often unplanned and produced subconsciously, it can also be produced strategically to cope with face-threatening aspects of disagreement. Warner-Garcia (2014) calls this type of laughter *coping laughter*, which has four interactional functions: *face-threat mitigation*, *face-loss concealment*, *serious-to-nonserious frame switch* and *topic transition facilitation*. Schnurr and Chan's (2011) study has also argued that while laughter is not an adequate response to certain types of humor at work (regarding rapport management), the result of their findings has suggested that laughter may have different types and functions. As they have found, laughter may serve “as a signal for the listeners to acknowledge the non-serious intention of the speaker's comments rather than to express agreement with the speaker's self-denigrating utterance” (Schnurr and Chan 2011: 32). In analyzing the data from the two television variety shows, I have observed three major pragmatic/interpersonal functions of laughter. More specifically, laughter can be used by a listener to show his/her appreciation of humor/teasing, by a speaker to invite his/her listener(s) to join in the laughter, or by a listener to show disagreement to a proposition in the prior speaking turn(s). In the following subsections, all these functions will be illustrated and discussed.

3.1.1 Laughter Used to Show Appreciation of Humor/Teasing

Jefferson (1979) has observed three possible responses to an invitation to laugh. Listeners may accept the invitation by laughing together with the invitation offerer, remain silent or decline the invitation, perhaps by speaking seriously on a certain topic. I have observed similar responses in my data. While listeners may reject humor/teasing by smiling,¹⁹ they are more likely to show appreciation of humor/teasing by laughing. The following extract illustrates this point, in which the victim of teasing Billie shows her appreciation of the hostess Xú's teasing by laughing.

Extract (02) [KXLL 05.01.2010]

01. → 比莉：嗯，第三胎的時候以為是胖了，因為我也不曉得說，好幾個月那個沒有來，就去看醫生，醫生說：「欸，妳懷孕了。」我好害怕，我那時候高齡產婦耶，天啊！

billie: en, dì sāntāi de shíhòu yǐwéi shì pàngle, yīnwèi wǒ yě bù xiǎodé shuō, hǎo jǐge yuè nàge méiyǒu lái, jiù qù kàn yīshēng, yīshēng shuō, “èi, nǐ huáiyùn le.” wǒ hǎo hàipà, wǒ nà shíhòu gāolíng chǎnfù ye, tiān a!

02. 蔡康永：她說她不曉得她，好一陣子沒有來嗎？

cài kāng-yǒng: tā shuō tā bù xiǎodé tā, hǎo yízhènzǐ méiyǒu lái ma?

03. → 徐熙娣：妳感情生活到底是有多亂啊？

xú xī-dì: nǐ gǎnqíng shēnghuó dàodǐ shì yǒu duō luàn a?

Translation

01. Billie: Well, I did not realize that I was pregnant with the third child. I thought I simply became fat. I had not had my period in several months, so I went to see a doctor. The doctor told me, “Hey, you are pregnant.” I was very afraid, because I was a woman of advanced maternal age. Oh, my God! #fig.1

02. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: [Cài asks Xú.] Did she say that she did not know she had not had her period in a while?

03. → Xú Xī-Dì: How complicated was your love life? (L: Cài #fig.2) (L: Billie #fig.3)



In the beginning of the sequence, Billie shares her experience of being a pregnant woman of advanced maternal age. Her fear of such an experience is evidenced in her frowning during narration (fig.1). Without showing concern for Billie, the host Cài focuses on Billie's mention of not realizing that she had not had her period in a while (line 2). Building on Cài's question

¹⁹ See Subsection 3.2.1.

to her, Xú further teases Billie by implying that Billie's being unaware of her pregnancy results from her complicated love life (line 3). Upon hearing Xú's teasing remark, Còi first bursts out laughing (line 3, fig.2), followed by Billie's laugh (line 3, fig.3). Their laughter can be regarded as a cue that signals their understanding and even appreciation of Xú's teasing of her.

Interestingly, laughter used to show appreciation of humor/teasing is always accompanied by a specific type of smiling, which very often consists of an open mouth, bared teeth and shrinking eyes. As these facial expressions are frequently used to display pleasure or happiness, laughter accompanied by such a smiling face can therefore be used as a cue to show acceptance and appreciation of humor/teasing. Billie's smiling continues even when her laughter fades away. Ruusuvuori and Peräkylä (2009) have observed that facial expression can stretch the temporal boundaries of an action. In light of this, the smile produced in the prior turns of speaking is very likely to continue in the following speaking turns. This phenomenon is evidenced in the above sequence.

In my data I have also observed that laughter used to show appreciation of one's humor/teasing is not only accompanied by the above mentioned facial expressions, but also accompanied by hand gestures and body movements. The following extract illustrates this point, in which the invited guest Górníak further uses hand gestures and body movements to show that she really appreciates the host Wojewódzki's humor.

Extract (03) [KW 13.03.2005]

01. Edyta Górníak: Dobry wieczór.

02. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Tak się cieszę, dziecko moje.

Translation

01. Edyta Górníak: Good evening. (l: Górníak #fig.4)

02. → Kuba Wojewódzki: I am so happy, my kid. (L: Górníak #fig.5, 6)



In the above sequence, after Górníak greets, Wojewódzki expresses his pleasure to have her as his guest. In expressing his pleasure, Wojewódzki further calls Górníak *dziecko moje* “my

kid,” which makes her burst out laughing. We have no idea whether Wojewódzki intends to entertain his guest by using this address form, but Górniak's laughter (line 2) can be used as a cue signaling that Górniak perceives this address form as an expression of humor, and that she is further entertained by it. As we can see in line 2, Górniak's laughter is accompanied by an open mouth, bared teeth and shrinking eyes (fig.5 and 6). Upon hearing Wojewódzki's address form, Górniak throws her whole body backwards (fig.5) and further uses her hand to cover her smiling face (fig.6). All these physiological changes accompanying laughter shows that Górniak appreciates Wojewódzki's humor. This can be seen in Sakuragi's (2005) detailed description of the physiological changes that accompany natural laughter:

Laughter begins with the widening of the mouth and pulling up at its corner accompanied by repetitive contractions of the diaphragm, continuous contractions of the facial muscles, raising corners of the eyes and eyebrows, flaring of the nostrils, elevation of the cheeks, retraction of the mandible and head, vasodilation of the face, neck and hands, exophthalmia and tears (...). Excessive laughing would often throw the whole body backward, shake and disturb the respiration, especially in infants when sitting.
(Sakuragi 2005: 48-49)

Indeed, laughter does not come straight from the body, but is very often accompanied by a series of facial expressions and hand gestures, as well as body movements. As all these are used to display pleasure and happiness, they are further used to show appreciation of humor/teasing in social interactions.

3.1.2 Laughter Used to Invite More Laughter

Zijderveld (1983) has found that laughter is not only a subconscious response to humorous stimuli, but can also be used to constitute a comic frame. Glenn and Knapp (1987) have also found that laughter is one of the primary frame markers used to signal playfulness. Glenn (2003) has further pointed out that the current speaker may use laughter as a cue to indicate that the ongoing utterance is laughable, even before the utterance is completed. In light of the above, we may therefore conclude that laughter can be used strategically to attract more laughter, perhaps by serving as a reminder. The following extract illustrates this point, in which the hostess Xú immediately burst out laughing upon finishing her funny anecdote based on 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense”.²⁰ Her laughter, not surprisingly, attracts more laughter from others.

²⁰ See the discussion of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” in Subsection 2.2.2.

Extract (04) [KXLL 05.01.2010]

01. 徐熙娣：可是有一些媽媽會突然沉迷於那種好萊塢式的那種推車，很大，然後輪子也很大，然後就是好萊塢明星很喜歡，你知道一邊晨跑，然後一邊這樣推嬰兒車。

xú xī-dì: kěshì yǒu yìxiē māmā huì túrán chénmí yú nàzhǒng hǎolái wú shì de nàzhǒng tuīchē, hěn dà, rán hòu lúnzi yě hěn dà, rán hòu jiùshì hǎolái wú míngxīng hěn xǐhuān, nǐ zhīdào yìbiān chénpǎo, rán hòu yìbiān zhèyàng tuī yīngér chē.

02. 蔡康永：對。

cài kāng-yǒng: duì.

03. 徐熙娣：像那種你在台灣就不能用，因為它太大，有時候騎樓摩托車很多，你就會卡在那邊。

xú xī-dì: xiàng nàzhǒng nǐ zài táiwān jiù bù néng yòng, yīnwèi tā tài dà, yǒushíhòu qílóu mótuōchē hěn duō, nǐ jiù huì kǎ zài nàbiān.

04. → 你就只好把小孩放在那邊，你自己先回家。

nǐ jiù zhǐhǎo bǎ xiǎohái fàng zài nàbiān, nǐ zìjǐ xiān huí jiā.

Translation

01. Xú Xī-Dì: But some mothers, for no reason, become fond of those Hollywood type baby carriages, which are big, and their wheels are also very big. Hollywood celebrities like to use them. You know, they can do jogging in the morning, while they at the same time can push their baby carriages.

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Right.

03. Xú Xī-Dì: But you cannot use those baby carriages in Taiwan, because they are too big. Sometimes if there are many motor scooters in the arcade, your baby carriage probably will be stuck there.

04. → In that case, you will have to leave your baby there and go home alone. #fig.7 (L: Xú #fig.8) (L #fig.9)



The beginning of the sequence is Xú's narration of her experience with other Taiwanese mothers. She argues that while the Hollywood type baby carriages are beautiful and exotic, they in fact are not useful in Taiwan, as this type of baby carriages might get stuck in the crowded arcades (line 3). Without offering any solutions to such a problem, Xú directly jumps to her conclusion, saying that mothers therefore have no choice but to leave their babies there and go home alone. Xú is joking for sure, as no mothers would abandon their children simply because the baby carriage was stuck somewhere. It is noteworthy that during the whole narration (including the joking part), Xú's facial expression remains the same (line 4, fig.7). That is, she does not show any signs that she will jump to an unexpected conclusion.

Her co-host Cǎi's facial expression (fig.7) indicates that he is still pondering on Xú's narration and conclusion. Upon finishing her utterance, Xú bursts out laughing, which further makes Cǎi laugh with her (fig.8). Both Xú and Cǎi laugh even harder, as we can see in the changes of their facial muscles (fig.9). This perhaps shows that Xú (the humor producer) and Cǎi (the humor recipient) appreciate the unexpected, but funny conclusion of the narration.

Indeed, laughter is contagious. When one laughs, others are very likely to laugh with him/her for no reason. According to Neuendorf and Fennell's (1988) observation, students who watched a video accompanied by canned laughter laughed more, but they did not regard the program as funnier. As laughter can be used to invite others to join the laughing squad, many instances are found at the end of an anecdote. Despite the fact that Xú's unexpected conclusion is regarded by Cǎi (and perhaps by other invited guests and the television viewers) as funny, Xú's laughter serves as a reminder, indicating that her utterance is laughable, thereby inviting others to join the laughing squad.

3.1.3 Laughter Used to Show Disagreement

Laughter can be planned and produced consciously in certain situations. It can be fake and produced by imitating the sound of natural laughter that displays pleasure and happiness. As it is not produced naturally, listeners, upon receiving this type of laughter, might understand that the current speaker laughs not because s/he is happy or intends to invite more laughter. On the contrary, the current speaker may be using fake laughter to show disagreement. The following extract illustrates this point, in which the host Wojewódzki's fake laughter is produced by imitating its natural counterpart. Furthermore, many gestural cues accompanying this type of laughter can be observed.

Extract (05) [KW 26.02.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Takiej twojej, przepraszam bo ty nie lubisz, ale takiej jędrności twojej.
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: Znaczy to jędrność to niby takie macanie. To ma oznaczać ten gest, tak?
03. → Kuba Wojewódzki: To to jest twoja interpretacja. O, ho, ho, ho, ho.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Your, sorry, because you do not like your firmness. #fig.10
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: By firmness you mean groping. #fig.11 This is what your gesture means, right? (l: Szczuka)

03. → Kuba Wojewódzki: This is your interpretation. Oh, ho, ho, ho, ho. #fig.12



In the beginning of the sequence, Wojewódzki mentions the word *jędrności* (the possessive case of *jędrność* “firmness”), which is frequently used to describe a female body (line 1). Wojewódzki’s mention of the word is accompanied by a hand gesture (fig.10), which is perceived by Szczuka as groping (line 2). In this line, Szczuka also imitates Wojewódzki’s hand gesture (see fig.11) when she says that Wojewódzki perhaps intends to use the word *jędrność* “firmness” to refer to a fit female body. Such an interpretation is later rejected by Wojewódzki, accompanied by a particular type of deep-throated laugh of Santa Claus and the Jolly Green Giant: “Oh, ho, ho, ho, ho” (line 3). Wojewódzki’s laughter is accompanied by a hand gesture. To illustrate, he moves both hands forwards and points at Szczuka with index fingers, no smiling face observed (fig.12). From Wojewódzki’s utterance and other gestural cues, his laughter “Oh, ho, ho, ho, ho” is not used to display pleasure or happiness. Rather, it is used to show disagreement.

Interestingly, in social interactions in Taiwan, speech participants also use the same type of laughter to show disagreement. Different from Wojewódzki’s deep-throated laugh, speech participants in Taiwan are more likely to use fake laughter to reject one’s humor/teasing, but in a sarcastic way. This is done by distinctly pronouncing a string of 哈 *hā* or a string of 呵 *hē*. Sakuragi (2005: 48-49) has defined natural laughter as “short and broken sounds produced by an abrupt, strong expiration followed by deep inspirations of air generated by short, interrupted, spasmodic contractions of the chest and especially the diaphragm.” The production of it is therefore arbitrary, as each person has his/her own distinctive laughter, of which the quality is influenced by many factors. Fake laughter, however, has fixed phonetic forms in Taiwanese verbal interactions. When a speech participant distinctly utters 哈哈 *hāhāhā* or 呵呵 *hēhēhē* as a response to humor/teasing, for example, one may immediately know that s/he is rejecting the humor/teasing in a sarcastic manner by imitating the sound of natural laughter. This type of laughter is perhaps followed

by a further explanation, as in 哈哈，不好笑！*hāhāhā, bù hǎo xiào!* “Hahaha, it is not funny!”

3.2. Smiling and Its Pragmatic/Interpersonal Functions

Facial expression is no longer considered as a subconscious expression of emotion. Many studies on facial gestures have found that faces can be used by speech participants to regulate a social interaction. Kendon's (1975: 330) pioneering work, for example, has illustrated how facial gestures serve as a “delicate tuning device.” Ekman and Friesen (1982) have also distinguished three types of smiles: *felt smiles* (showing positive emotion), *false smiles* (intending to appear as if positive emotion was felt) and *miserable smiles* (acknowledging feeling miserable). Mehu and Dunbar (2008) have applied the power asymmetry hypothesis to the analysis of three affiliative human behaviors: *spontaneous smiles*, *deliberate smiles* and *laughter*. They have observed that young men show higher proportions of deliberate smiles (in comparison to laughter) when they interact with people of a different age than when interacting with people of the same age. Age, however, is not a factor to women in affecting their affiliative behaviors. In other words, deliberate smiles in men play a significant role in regulating the hierarchical relationships.

Bavelas, Gerwing and Healing (2014) have further observed different pragmatic/interpersonal functions of facial gestures: *modal functions*, *performative functions*, *parsing functions* and *interactive or interpersonal functions*. Smiling, according to them, serves some of these functions. For example, its modal function can mark ironic humor (cf. Coates 1991), its performative function can serve as a back channel (cf. Brunner 1979) and its parsing function can punctuate narratives (cf. Chovil 1989, 1991/1992). In my data, I have observed different pragmatic/interpersonal functions of smiling. While smiling can be regarded as part of laughing that displays pleasure and happiness, it can also be used to reject humor/teasing, to mark non-verbal sarcasm or to provoke conflict in a dramatic way, as will be illustrated and discussed in the following subsections.

3.2.1 Smiling Used to Reject Humor/Teasing

While laughter can be used to show appreciation of humor/teasing, smiling is more likely to be used for the opposite purpose. As the use of it signals politeness in social interactions, it can be used to reject one's humor/teasing, but in a polite way. However, such a smile demonstrates power in negotiation. The following extract illustrates this point, in which the host Wojewódzki's silence accompanied by a smile can be taken as a cue, showing that he does not appreciate his guest Ibisz's humor.

Extract (06) [KW 02.04.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Jest nawet taki dowcip na jego temat, że przylecieli kiedyś Marsjanie i pytają: „A gdzie ja wylądowałem? Co to jest?” A, a rolnik mówi: „To jest ziemia.” A on mówi: „A to ja słyszałem, to tutaj pracuje ten Ibisz.” Krzysztof Ibisz. Wielkie brawa! Jest!
02. Krzysztof Ibisz: No tego dowcipu nie słyszałem.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Nie słyszałeś tego?
04. Krzysztof Ibisz: Prosty spiker, prawie jak Kuba. Prawie, tylko dykcja lepsza.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: There is even such a joke about him. One day a Martian came, asking, “Where did I land? What is this?” A farmer says, “This is Earth.” And the Martian says, “I heard that Ibisz is working here.” Krzysztof Ibisz. A big round of applause for him! Here he is!
02. Krzysztof Ibisz: Well, I have not heard of that joke.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: You have not heard of that?
04. Krzysztof Ibisz: A simple anchorman is almost like Kuba. (l: Wojewódzki #fig.13, 14) (L) Almost, (l: Wojewódzki #fig.15) only that he has better elocution. (l: Ibisz) (L)



13



14



15

The above sequence occurs in the beginning of the show. Wojewódzki introduces Ibisz by telling a joke (line 1), implying that Ibisz is so famous that even an extraterrestrial from Mars has heard of him. In response, Ibisz tells a joke about Wojewódzki (line 4). Ibisz's joke implies that Wojewódzki is like an anchorman without elocution, who has no other skills but broadcasting. Ibisz's joke therefore can be regarded as teasing Wojewódzki. While Ibisz's joke attracts laughter from the audience (line 4), Wojewódzki simply smiles as a response. Interestingly, upon hearing the first part of Ibisz's joke, Wojewódzki turns his head to the other side to refrain from looking at Ibisz (fig.14). As eye contact helps place one's

interactant under some obligation to interact, Wojewódzki's avoiding looking at Ibisz perhaps shows his intention to reject Ibisz's teasing of him, but in a polite way, as cued by his smile. Goffman's (1963) observation also supports this argument:

[M]utual glances ordinarily must be withheld if an encounter is to be avoided, for eye contact opens one up for face engagement (...). [T]here is a relationship between the use of eye-to-eye glances as a means of communicating a request for initiation of an encounter, and other communication practices.
(Goffman 1963: 95)

Wojewódzki later turns his head back and gazes at Ibisz directly (fig.14 and 15). His gazing at Ibisz without a word can be interpreted as facing Ibisz's teasing of him directly, which demonstrates power. In other words, Wojewódzki is in control of the whole interaction, as his gaze places Ibisz under some obligation to interact more, which however might not receive an equal response. By putting on a smile, Wojewódzki also maintains his face and Ibisz's, as it signals politeness.

While maintaining strong eye contact demonstrates power, avoiding eye contact shows weakness and a lack of confidence. In other words, smiling while refraining from gazing at the teaser can be regarded as partially accepting humor. The following extract illustrates this point, in which the victim of teasing Xǔ avoids eye contact when he at the same time keeps smiling.

Extract (07) [KXLL 25.02.2011]

01. 許建國：他還跟彥甫說，他生日的時候要叫他幫他畫一個畫像給他，送他做生日禮物。
xǔ jiàn-guó: tā hái gēn yàn-fǔ shuō, tā shēngrì de shíhòu yào jiào tā bāng tā huà yíge huàxiàng gěi tā, sòng tā zuò shēngrì lǐwù.
02. 蔡康永：你幹嘛那麼吃醋啊，許建國？
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ gànma nàme chīcù a, xǔ jiàn-guó?
03. → 許建國：...
xǔ jiàn-guó: ...

Translation

01. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: He also asked Yàn-Fǔ to draw a portrait for him on his birthday, as a birthday present. (l: Jiāotáng)
02. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Why are you so jealous of him, Xǔ Jiàn-Guó? (l: Cài)
03. → Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: (S) (l: Xǔ #fig.16, 17, 18)



The above sequence is from a conversation on the friendship between Xǔ and his two male friends (Jiāotáng and Yàn-Fǔ). In the beginning of the sequence, Xǔ says that Jiāotáng once asked Yàn-Fǔ to draw a portrait for him as a birthday present. Xǔ's mention of this personal anecdote is later commented by the host Càì as 吃醋 *chīcù*, which literally means “eating vinegar.” As this expression is used to describe the jealousy caused by the third person that appears between two lovers or between a couple, Càì's use of this expression can be regarded as teasing Xǔ. In receiving teasing, Xǔ perhaps intends to continue with his anecdote or to argue with the teaser Càì, as we can see in his facial gesture (fig.16). He, however, stops talking and turns his head to the other side to avoid eye contact, while he at the same time still keeps smiling (fig.17 and 18). Xǔ's refraining from gazing at Càì can be interpreted as rejecting to further interaction. We have no idea whether Xǔ appreciates Càì's teasing of him, but he is forced to partially accept Càì's teasing. His choice of avoiding eye contact also shows his weakness and a lack of confidence in rejection.

Comparing Extracts (06) and (07), we may note that although both Wojewódzki and Xǔ use smiling as a response to teasing, they demonstrate different levels of rejection. While Wojewódzki rejects Ibisz's teasing completely, Xǔ partially accepts Càì's teasing. The different levels of rejection results from the asymmetrical relationship between a host (more powerful one) and his/her guest (less powerful one) on television variety shows. As Holmes (2000: 175) has observed, “[Humor] is often used to legitimize an emphasis on power relationships; in such situations, more powerful participants tend to make fun of those who are less powerful.” It is therefore understandable why Wojewódzki rejects his guest's teasing completely, while Xǔ, as a guest, partially accepts his host's teasing. Despite the different levels of rejection, their smiling is used to signal politeness in performing the act of rejection. In addition, their smiling as a response to teasing may be further perceived by the audience and perhaps other speech participants as funny.

3.2.2 Smiling Used to Mark Non-Verbal Sarcasm

While laughter may signal that something is funny, people sometimes attempt to suppress the feeling of laughing out owing to some social norms, even when they are much entertained. For example, laughing at another's lack of intelligence is regarded as ethically wrong in many cultures, and therefore speech participants might manage to repress the urge to laugh, so as to appear polite and good mannered. Repressing such a feeling, however, might further constitute a specific smiling face. When a speaker says something funny, which however is perceived by the listener as stupid, such a smile can be observed. This type of smiling is used to mark non-verbal sarcasm. The most obvious facial gesture of this type of smiling is formed by having lips pressed tightly together. While the listener is very likely to be silent without further showing any opinions, the current speaker might still know that something has gone wrong in the prior turn(s) of speaking if s/he is sensitive to the listener's smiling. In addition, the listener might use eye contact to look for support from other speech participants (besides the current speaker).

In a nutshell, the sarcastic nature of this type of smiling results from the listener's attempt to suppress the feeling of mocking the current speaker, while s/he at the same time shows it indirectly, but obviously. The following extract illustrates this point, in which the host Wojewódzki's smiling shows the above mentioned features that are used to mark non-verbal sarcasm.

Extract (08) [KW 21.05.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Masz dysleksję i dysgrafię?
02. Michał Koterski: Dokładnie.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Co to znaczy?
04. → Michał Koterski: Nie wiem.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: You have dyslexia and dysgraphia?
02. Michał Koterski: Exactly.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: What does it mean?
04. → Michał Koterski: I do not know. (l: Koterski) (L: Koterski, Poniedziałek #fig.19)
(l: Wojewódzki #fig.19, 20, 21)



In the above sequence, the host Wojewódzki asks his guest Koterski whether he has dyslexia and dysgraphia. After receiving a positive answer, he asks Koterski to explain further why he thinks he has these learning disabilities. Koterski, however, simply says he does not know, which echoes his previous response to Wojewódzki's question. That is, Koterski's *nie wiem* “I do not know” (line 4) has perhaps indirectly proven that he has dyslexia and dysgraphia, regardless of the actual fact. In addition, while Koterski's smiling and laughter might signal “playfulness” in his self-disclosure, his simple response greatly entertains Wojewódzki and the other invited guest Poniedziałek. This is perhaps due to his successful role in a 2002 Polish comedy-drama *Dziń Świra* “Day of the Wacko.” As Koterski has successfully enacted the role of a dopey son in the movie, people might make a connection between him and his role in the movie. In other words, Koterski's simple response also echoes his role in the movie. Wojewódzki's smiling formed by pressing the lips tightly (fig.21), therefor, marks non-verbal sarcasm, as he can be regarded as managing not to laugh at Koterski's funny response, which is considered as not intelligent.

Previous studies (e.g., Gibbs 2000; Smoski and Bachorowski 2003; Bryant 2010, 2011; González-Fuente, Escandell-Vidal and Prieto 2015) have shown that laughter and smiling can be used as ironic gestures during the production of verbal irony. The above analysis has further shown that smiling alone can be used to mark non-verbal sarcasm. In fact, during the whole program, Wojewódzki frequently uses this type of smiling as a response to Koterski's funny answers. While he chooses not to show any opinions, he frequently exchanges eye contact and smiling with Poniedziałek to look for support. As this type of smiling marks non-verbal sarcasm, getting positive feedback from someone else therefore rationalizes the sarcastic nature of this smiling. In doing so, solidarity is also established.

3.2.3 Smiling Used to Provoke Conflict

A smile can also be used to provoke conflict. As defined by Kendon (2004: 310), facial gestures include “eyebrow movements or positionings, movements of the mouth, head postures and sustainments and changes in gaze direction.” The facial gesture of this type of smile is characterized by slightly raising one corner of one lip and by looking somebody up and down. It is very often accompanied by different forms of verbal aggression and hand gestures that are used to pick a fight.

In my data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, I have observed the most instances of this type of smiling, all of which are used by the hostess Xú to result in a humorous effect to attract laughter. The following extract illustrates this point, in which Xú's smile is accompanied by hand gestures and is synchronized with her deprecation of the invited guest Liú in timing and meaning.

Extract (09) [KXLL 29.12.2010]

01. 徐熙娣：可是重點是妳又不厲害。
xú xī-dì: kěshì zhòngdiǎn shì nǐ yòu bú lìhài.
02. 蔡康永：妳應該不是要講這句話吧？妳是要講別的吧！妳怎麼會冒出這一句來？
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ yīnggāi búshì yào jiǎng zhèjù huà ba? nǐ shì yào jiǎng biéde ba! nǐ zěnmē huì màochū zhèyíjù lái?
03. → 徐熙娣：妳是需要被教吧！
xú xī-dì: nǐ shì xūyào bèi jiāo ba!

Translation

01. Xú Xī-Dì: But the point is, you are not good at all. (L: Liú) (L)
02. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: (L: Xú) You did not intend to say this, right? I think you intended to say something else! How could you say this unexpectedly?
03. → Xú Xī-Dì: (Xú looks at Liú.) You need to be taught instead! (l: Xú #fig.22, 23, 24) (L)



The above sequence is from the interaction on Liú's latest released ballroom dancing instructional DVD, in which Xú argues that Liú is not qualified to release such a product, as she is not good at dancing at all (line 1). The laughter triggered by Xú's deprecation signals other speech participants' (including Liú's) understanding of Xú's deprecation as play. Xú's laughter in line 2 also signals a playful frame. Building on everyone's understanding that she

is simply joking, Xú further dramatizes her deprecation of Liú. This is done not only verbally, but also non-verbally (line 3, fig.22, 23 and 24). As the above figures show, Xú's smile shows contempt, produced by slightly raising one corner of her lip. She also looks Liú up and down and speaks in a sneering manner, while she at the same time leans to one side and flips her hair to show that she is sexier than Liú. In other words, Xú can be regarded as using her smile to provoke a conflict between her and Liú. The dramatic nature of her facial and hand gestures, as well as body movement, results in a humorous effect.

3.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have illustrated and discussed different pragmatic/interpersonal functions of laughter and smiling from an interactional perspective. The writing of this chapter is based on the notion that laughter and smiling are not only expressions of emotion or subconscious responses to stimuli. With the inspection of the data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* and *Kuba Wojewódzki*, I have observed various pragmatic/interpersonal functions of laughter and smiling. Laughter, for example, can be used to show one's appreciation of humor/teasing, as an invitation to laugh, or to show disagreement. Smiling, on the other hand, can be used to reject humor/teasing, to show sarcasm or to provoke conflict in a dramatic way. My findings of these functions are summarized below.

Firstly, laughter used to show appreciation of humor/teasing is always accompanied by a specific type of smiling, characterized by an open mouth, bared teeth and shrinking eyes. It is sometimes characterized by body movements and hand gestures, such as moving the whole body backwards and using hand to cover the smiling face. Secondly, laughter can be used as a reminder, indicating that the utterance is laughable, thereby inviting others to join in the laughter. In addition, many instances are found in the end of an anecdote. Thirdly, laughter can be fake, produced by imitating the sound of natural laughter that displays pleasure and happiness. Upon receiving this type of laughter, listeners might understand that the current speaker laughs not because s/he is happy or intends to invite more laughter. It can be used to show disagreement. Fourthly, the use of a smile signals politeness in social interactions, and it therefore can be used to reject humor/teasing, but in a polite way. However, such a smiling face demonstrates power in negotiation. Fifthly, repressing the feeling of laughing out loud might constitute a specific smiling face. When a speaker says something funny, which is

perceived by the listener as inappropriate, such a smile can be observed. This smiling is used to mark non-verbal sarcasm. The sarcastic nature of this type of smiling results from the listener's attempt to suppress the feeling of mocking the current speaker, while s/he at the same time shows it in a passive-aggressive manner. Finally, the facial gesture of smiling used to provoke conflict is characterized by slightly raising one corner of one lip and by looking somebody up and down. It is very often accompanied by different forms of verbal aggression and hand gestures that are used to pick a fight.

To conclude, laughter and smiling have their distinctive pragmatic/interpersonal functions, which can be used by speech participants as a device to regulate an ongoing social interaction for different communicative purposes. On television variety show, moreover, smiling further results in an entertaining effect.

Chapter Four

DISCOURSE STRATEGIES IN TAIWANESE VERBAL INTERACTIONS

“A general theory of discourse strategies must therefore begin by specifying the linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge that needs to be shared if conversational involvement is to be maintained, and then go on to deal with what it is about the nature of conversational inference that makes for cultural, subcultural and situational specificity of interpretation.”

Gumperz (1982: 3)

Unlike television variety shows that aim at entertaining the audience to attract high viewership, casual conversations are less humorous and may have other purposes. Jenlink and Carr (1996) have identified three broad purposes of conversation (i.e., *transacting*, *transforming* and *transcendent*),²¹ all of which can be observed in talks among friends. As humor may attract laughter, it plays an important part in helping speech participants negotiate previously established friendships and intimate relationships. This chapter, thus, analyzes how humor is constructed in conversation among Taiwanese friends through the deployment of various discourse strategies, which may include the use of quotation, rhetorical question, theatrical performance, back-handed remark, fictional episode and choice of dramatic expression/code. In addition, Gumperz's (1982: vii) observations on discourse strategies have shown that “an individual's choice of speech style has symbolic value and interpretive consequences that cannot be explained simply by correlating the incidence of linguistic variants with independently determined social and contextual categories.” To fully understand the mechanism of these discourse strategies, as well as how they are used to construct humor by close Taiwanese friends, many social factors will be taken into

²¹ As Jenlink and Carr (1996) observe, conversation is conducted for three broad purposes. Firstly, it is conducted to negotiate or to do exchange in an existing problem setting (i.e., *transacting*). Secondly, it is for individuals to suspend their own opinions, assumptions and judgment of others' viewpoints (i.e., *transforming*). Thirdly, it helps speech participants to move beyond the existing mindsets (i.e., *transcendent*).

consideration. In the following, Sections 4.1-4.6 illustrate and discuss the above discourse strategies. Section 4.7 summarizes the findings in this chapter.

4.1 The Use of Quotation

Quoting someone's remarks is a common verbal behavior in conversation. Among the various types of quotation, the use of direct quotation most helps dramatize the speech event. It is worth noting that the dramatic nature of direct quotation is perhaps reinforced with the use of personal pronouns. In recent years, there has been renewal of interest in how personal pronouns are used in directly quoted speech, with a special focus on their pragmatic functions (see, e.g., Biq 1991; Lin 1993; Chen 2007). As there is a role shift from the actual discourse to the situation being described in direct quotation, the utterance is therefore dramatized. Due to this dramatic nature, direct quotation containing a personal pronoun is frequently used to achieve various communicative purposes.

In my Mandarin spoken data, I have observed that directly quoting someone's remark can be used as a discourse strategy to construct humor due to the aforementioned dramatic nature. In the following extract, Tāng directly quotes her boyfriend Tomek's remark to her as a self-directed humor, which is prefaced by a Mandarin exclamative particle 齁 *hòu* "hey" to show impatience and anger of Tomek. Tāng's use of the second-person singular pronoun 妳 *nǐ* "you" as self-reference in the directly quoted speech also helps her assume her role in the described situation, but in a more vivid way.

Extract (10) [Chén (F), Tāng (F), Wú (F)]

01. 陳：欸，不過像妳啊，Tomek，妳跟 Tomek 吵架吵到哭之後，Tomek 當下的第一個反應是什麼？
chén: èi, búguò xiàng nǐ a, tomek, nǐ gēn tomek chǎojià chǎo dào kū zhīhòu, tomek dāngxiàde dì yíge fǎnyìng shì shénme?
02. 湯：他一開始看到我哭的時候他不會不為所動，他覺得說妳為什麼要...
tāng: tā yì kāishǐ kàndào wǒ kū de shíhòu tā bú huì bùwéisuǒdòng, tā juéde shuō nǐ wèi shénme yào...
03. 陳：好像男生第一個反應都會這樣，嚇到。
chén: hǎoxiàng nánshēng dì yíge fǎnyìng dōu huì zhèyàng, xiàdào.
04. 湯：對，可是就是當我們兩個都冷靜下來的時候，想一想為什麼，痾，為什麼，他為什麼會覺得...
tāng: duì, kěshì jiùshì dāng wǒmen liǎngge dōu lěngjìng xiàlái de shíhòu, xiǎngyìxiǎng wèi shénme, e, wèi shénme, tā wèi shénme huì juéde...
05. 陳：那他會不會把姿態放軟？

- chén: nà tā huì bú huì bǎ zītài fàng ruǎn?*
06. 湯：他會啊！他會跟我道歉。
- tāng: tā huì a! tā huì gēn wǒ dàoqiàn.*
07. 陳：妳知道我那個，臺灣那位女生的老公不會。
- chén: nǐ zhīdào wǒ nàge, táiwān nàwèi nǚshēng de lǎogōng bú huì.*
08. 他看到她當下流眼淚，因為我就問她說妳有沒有，就是用女生這種，強，比較強，比較優勢，就是我們很容易把我們的那種眼淚啊，悲傷的那種負面情緒，比較，比較就是，比較容易...
- tā kàndào tā dāngxià liú yǎnlèi, yīnwèi wǒ jiù wèn tā shuō nǐ yǒuméiyǒu, jiù shì yòng nǚshēng zhèzhǒng, qiáng, bǐjiào qiáng, bǐjiào yōushì, jiù shì wǒmen hěn róngyì bǎ women de nàzhǒng yǎnlèi a, bēishāng de nàzhǒng fùmiàn qíngxù, bǐjiào, bǐjiào jiù shì, bǐjiào róngyì...*
09. 吳：嗯。
- wú: en.*
10. 陳：表達，尤其是誇張式地表達，其實我們是這方面還蠻有技巧的。
- chén: biǎodá, yóuqí shì kuāzhāngshìde biǎodá, qíshí wǒmen shì zhè fāngmiàn hái mán yǒu jìqiǎo de.*
11. 我說：「妳有試著就是誇張式地表達？讓老公知道其實妳，因為他這種反應跟動作跟態度會生氣。」
- wǒ shuō, “nǐ yǒu shìzhe jiù shì kuāzhāngshìde biǎodá? ràng lǎogōng zhīdào qíshí nǐ, yīnwèi tā zhèzhǒng fǎnyìng gēn dòngzuò gēn tàidù huì shēngqì.”*
12. 然後她就說：「有啊。」她有哭過。
- ránhòu tā jiù shuō: “yǒu a.” tā yǒu kū guò.*
13. 可是他竟然當下的反應是：「又來了。怎麼是這一招？」
- kěshì tā jìngrán dāngxià de fǎnyìng shì: “yòu lái le. zěnmé shì zhè yìzhāo?”*
14. 吳：我跟妳講，這個比較不準的是，因為他們是夫妻。
- wú: wǒ gēn nǐ jiǎng, zhège bǐjiào bù zhǔn de shì, yīnwèi tāmen shì fūqī.*
15. 因為夫妻是一起睡在同一張床上。
- yīnwèi fūqī shì yìqǐ shuì zài tóng yìzhāng chuáng shàng.*
16. 陳：可是他們之前在上海就這樣耶，因為她說她現在不用這個方式，他們一年前才結婚...
- chén: kěshì tāmen zhīqián zài shànghǎi jiù zhèyàng ye, yīnwèi tā shuō tā xiànzài bú yòng zhège fāngshì, tāmen yì'nián qián cái jiéhūn...*
17. 吳：嗯、嗯、嗯。
- wú: en, en, en.*
18. 陳：是之前。
- chén: shì zhīqián.*
19. 吳：我、我、我自己是...
- wú: wǒ, wǒ, wǒ zìjǐ shì...*
20. 陳：他說：「妳幹嘛哭？怎麼哭？怎麼？」就，就，那個男生的反應竟然是這樣...
- chén: tā shuō, “nǐ gànma kū? zěnmé kū? zěnmé?” jiù, jiù, nàge nánshēng de fǎnyìng jìngrán shì zhèyàng...*
21. 湯：可是我覺得，因為我一開始哭...
- tāng: kěshì wǒ juéde, yīnwèi wǒ yì kāishǐ kū...*
22. 陳：而且他當下，他後來也沒有...
- chén: érqǐě tā dāngxià, tā hòulái yě méiyǒu...*
23. 湯：可是我一開始哭，他會安慰我，直到最近我開始一直哭。
- tāng: kěshì wǒ yì kāishǐ kū, tā huì ānwèi wǒ, zhīdào zuìjìn wǒ kāishǐ yìzhí kū.*
24. → 然後他就說：「夠，妳不要再哭了好不好？妳哭那麼久也沒用。」

- ránhòu tā jiù shuō, “hòu, nǐ bú yào zài kū le hǎo bù hǎo? nǐ kū nàme jiǔ yě méiyòng.”*
25. 然後後來自己去廁所想一想後。「我為什麼要一直哭？」
ránhòu hòulái zìjǐ qù cèsuǒ xiǎngyíxiǎng hòu. “wǒ wèi shénme yào yìzhí kū?”
26. 然後也有點我會不會太過頭？
ránhòu yě yǒudiǎn wǒ huì bú huì tài guòtóu?
27. 然後後來回來我們就直接睡覺了，隔天早上就好了。
ránhòu hòulái huílái wǒmen jiù zhíjiē shuìjiào le, gétiān zǎoshàng jiù hǎo le.
28. 陳：對啦，每個人不一樣，可是我那位朋友她...
chén: duì la, měige rén bù yíyàng, kěshì wǒ nàwèi péngyǒu tā...
29. 吳：我、我的意思是說眼淚是個工具，可是它不能常常被拿出來用。
wú: wǒ, wǒde yìsi shì shuō yǎnlèi shì ge gōngjù, kěshì tā bùnéng chángcháng bèi ná chūlái yòng.
30. 湯：對、對，到了後面都沒用。
tāng: duì, duì, dào le hòumiàn dōu méiyòng.
31. 吳：真的，它不能夠被常常拿出來用。
wú: zhēnde, tā bù nénggòu bèi chángcháng ná chūlái yòng.

Translation

01. Chén: [Chén is talking to Tāng and stretches her left hand towards Tāng.] Hey, but how about you and Tomek? When you started to sob after having a quarrel with Tomek, what was his first reaction to your tears?
02. Tāng: When he first saw me sobbing, he reacted to my sobbing behavior. He was wondering why I...
03. Chén: [Chén turns around and looks at Wú.] It seems to be a common reaction of all men. They become shocked.
04. Tāng: Right, but later when we both calmed down and were thinking why, well, he was wondering why...
05. Chén: Would he swallow his own pride?
06. Tāng: Yes! He would apologize to me.
07. Chén: [Chén talks to Wú and points at her.] You know that the Taiwanese woman's husband has never done that.
08. He saw her shedding tears, and I asked her whether she had used woman's weapons, such as our tears or negative emotions, which are easier to, easier to... [Chén moves both hands in front of her chest.]
09. Wú: Okay.
10. Chén: to express, especially to express in a dramatic way. We in fact are quite good at this.
11. I asked her, “Have you ever tried to express your emotions dramatically to show your husband that you are not happy about his behaviors and attitude?”
12. Then she said, “Yes.” She did it by crying.
13. But his reaction was, “[Chén sighs.] Oh, not again. Why this again?”
14. Wú: [Wú points at Chén.] Let me tell you. It did not work because they are a couple.
15. It is because couples sleep in the same bed.
16. Chén: But they were already behaving like this in Shanghai, because she said she had stopped acting like that. They got married a year ago...
17. Wú: Okay.
18. Chén: She did it before.
19. Wú: As for me, I...
20. Chén: He asked her, “Why are you crying? What are you crying for? Why?” That was the reaction of that guy...

21. Tāng: But I feel that, I cried in the beginning...
22. Chén: And he later did not...
23. Tāng: I cried in the beginning and he would comfort me. But recently I cried again. (l: Chén)
24. → Then he said, “Hey, would you please stop crying? Crying is not going to work.” (L: Wú, Chén)
25. Then I went to the bathroom and thought for a while. “Why am I crying?” [Tāng ponders.] (l: Tāng) (L: Wú, Chén)
26. I was thinking whether I had over-reacted. (L: Tāng) [Tāng stretches both hands, palms up.]
27. Then when we returned, we went to bed directly. The next day, everything went back to normal. (L: Chén)
28. Chén: Right, it is case by case, but that Taiwanese friend...
29. Wú: I, I think tears can be used as a weapon, but we cannot use them often. (l: Wú)
30. Tāng: (l: Tāng) Right, right, tears did not work at all in the end. (L: Tāng)
31. Wú: It is true, tears cannot be used often. (l: Wú)

The above conversation is about men's reaction to women's tears. In the beginning of the conversation, Chén asks Tāng how her boyfriend Tomek reacted when she cried after having a quarrel with him (line 1). In her response, Tāng says that Tomek did react to her tears (line 2). For example, he apologized to her and comforted her (lines 6 and 23). But recently when she cried again, Tomek became indifferent to her sobbing behavior and even directly asked her to stop it (line 24). What has to be noticed here is that when Tāng shows how Tomek asked her to stop crying, she uses 然後他就說 *ránhòu tā jiù shuō* “then he said” to indicate that her following remark is directly quoted from Tomek. In addition, the directly quoted speech is prefaced by 齁 *hòu* “hey,” a Mandarin exclamative particle frequently used to show impatience and anger. Tāng's use of 妳 *nǐ* “you” as self-reference also helps her assume her role in the described situation. In brief, Tāng's use of 齁 *hòu* “hey” and 妳 *nǐ* “you” to show Tomek's reaction to her tears further helps her vividly present the direct confrontation between herself and Tomek.

It is interesting to note that Tomek is Polish, who cannot speak Mandarin at all. Clearly Tāng translates Tomek's remark when she quotes it. Her use of 齁 *hòu* “hey” and 妳 *nǐ* “you” in her translated quoted speech perhaps further shows her intention to dramatize the speech event. Tāng's use of direct quotation is perceived by her friends Wú and Chén as humorous, as we can see in the laughter occurring after Tāng's remark (line 24). Reflection on the above may make clear that the funniness perhaps results from the dramatic nature of Tāng's directly quoted speech.

There is another type of quotation. Sams (2010) has observed that many quotations in conversation do not quote words uttered in the past or created in the context of hypothetical

world. That is, speakers are not demonstrating something they know to have happened in the past. Quotations as such can be regarded as acting of mental states, rather than those of a particular situation. These special quotations can be categorized into two subtypes: *inner speech* and *future dialogue*. The former can be considered as a demonstration of the speaker's mental state (cf. Barnes and Moss 2007),²² whereas the latter is proposed speech for participants in stories that happen in the future. Sams has also investigated their discourse functions. According to her, while inner speech can be used to signal a cognitive change or for its recipients to align themselves with a narrative, future dialogue can be used to co-construct a narrative for a hypothetical event.

Differing from Extract (10), in which Tāng directly quotes Tomek's remark as a discourse strategy to construct humor, quoting one's own inner thoughts can be used as a discourse strategy to attract laughter. Inner speech as such is usually prefaced by one or more Mandarin exclamative particles and followed by speaker's own laughter. In the following interaction, Shěn quotes her inner speech as a discourse strategy, which successfully elicits laughter from other speech participants. Her quoted inner speech is prefaced by exclamation of wonder (i.e., 哇 *wa* "wow"), which, I suggest, can be used as a possible prosodic cue for humor.

Extract (11) [Wú (F), Shěn (F), Xú (F), Huáng (M)]

01. 吳：喔，對，然後禮拜四是因為，他就跟我講，因為我們就討論到文學。
wú: o, duì, ránhòu lǐbài sì shì yīnwèi, tā jiù gēn wǒ jiǎng, yīnwèi wǒmen jiù tāolùn dào wénxué.
02. 喔，我們是先約，後來我們，就是我又陪他去工作的地方。
o, wǒmen shì xiān yuē, hòulái wǒmen, jiùshì wǒ yòu péi tā qù gōngzuòde dìfāng.
03. 反正他從頭到尾就一直很希望我能夠一直在他旁邊，就是多一點時間。
fǎnzhèng tā cóngtóudàowěi jiù yìzhí hěn xīwàng wǒ nénggòu yìzhí zài tā pángbiān, jiùshì duō yìdiǎn shíjiān.
04. 然後我那時候就想說，好，我要幫我那個同志朋友問他是不是 gay 這樣子。
ránhòu wǒ nà shíhòu jiù xiǎng shuō, "hǎo, wǒ yào bāng wǒ nàge tóngzhì péngyǒu wèn tā shìbúshì gay zhè yàngzi."
05. 因為想說，就是，他好喜歡，他很喜歡聊文學，我很訝異，因為多半妳知道聊那種文學卦的，然後電影卦的不都很多同志嗎？
yīnwèi xiǎng shuō, jiùshì, tā hǎo xǐhuān, tā hěn xǐhuān liáo wénxué, wǒ hěn yàyì, yīnwèi duōbàn nǐ zhīdào liáo nàzhǒng wénxué guàde, ránhòu diànyǐng guàde bù dōu dōu hěn duō tóngzhì ma?
06. 然後那時候想說我不想要表錯情。
ránhòu nà shíhòu xiǎng shuō wǒ bù xiǎngyào biǎo cuò qíng.
07. 其實我禮拜一跟他見面的時候，我也有點害怕他是同志。
qíshí wǒ lǐbài yī gēn tā jiàn miàn de shíhòu, wǒ yě yǒudiǎn hàipà tā shì tóngzhì.

²² According to Barnes and Moss (2007), quotations that are used to demonstrate inner speech are sometimes termed *Reported Private Thoughts* (RPTs).

08. → 沈：他跟我講說妳擔心他是同志，我就心裡想：「哇，大衛也很喜歡聊文學和電影，那是不是也是一名同志？」

shěn: tā gēn wǒ jiǎng shuō nǐ dānxīn tā shì tóngzhì, wǒ jiù xīnlǐ xiǎng: “wa , dàwèi yě hěn xǐhuān liáo wénxué hé diànyǐng, nà shìbúshì yě shì yì míng tóngzhì?”

09. → 害我很緊張。

hài wǒ hěn jǐnzhāng.

Translation

01. Wú : Oh, right, and on Thursday he told me. We talked about literature.
 02. Oh, first we made an appointment, and then we, I accompanied him to the place where he was working.
 03. Anyway, he hoped that I could stay by his side all the time, he wanted to have more time to be together with me.
 04. And I was thinking, “Okay, I should do my gay friend a favor by asking him whether he is gay.” (l: Wú, Xú)
 05. It was because he liked it so much. He liked to talk about literature. I was surprised, [Wú looks at Xú and stretches out her left hand.] because you know, people who like to talk about literature or movies are very likely to be gay. (l: Xú) [Xú nods her head.]
 06. I did not want to confess my love to the wrong person at that time.
 07. [Wú turns her head and looks at Shěn.] In fact, I was afraid that he might be gay when we met on Monday.
 08. → Shěn: [Shěn points at Huáng and then at Wú.] When he told me that you were worried about whether he is gay, I was thinking, “Wow, David also likes to talk about literature and movies. Is it possible that he might also be gay?” (L: Shěn, Wú, Xú, Huáng)
 09. → I was worried about that.

The above sequence is composed of two parts. The first part is on Wú's new date and her doubt about his sexual orientation, which is evidenced in her remark to Xú (line 5). According to Wú's experience, men who like to talk about literature and movies are very likely to be homosexual. The second part is on Shěn's self-disclosure of the same experience. In sharing with others about her story with her date David, Shěn quotes her inner thoughts, as shown in line 8. In this line, Shěn's inner speech is prefaced by 哇 *wa* “wow,” a Mandarin exclamative particle used to show wonder. Shěn's remark in line 8 can be regarded as a type of self-directed humor presented by self-quoting previous, inner thoughts. By using inner speech prefaced by the Mandarin exclamative particle 哇 *wa* “wow,” Shěn successfully dramatizes her inner thoughts of finding that her date David also liked to talk about literature and movies, like Wú's. As Shěn is known by other speech participants as a strong, tough woman who seems to accept whatever comes to her, her self-disclosure of her worries about her date David's sexual orientation shows an expectation gap. Shěn's self-disclosure, therefore, helps her evoke sympathetic feelings from other speech participants towards her. That is, Shěn is showing others that she is not afraid to reveal her weakness. In so doing, she perhaps also attracts sympathy from others. In addition, she can be regarded as building

solidarity with Wú, as she is showing Wú that she is not the only person to have had such worries. Shěn's laughter in line 8 also frames her inner speech as humorous, thereby inviting others to join in the laughter. The laughter from other speech participants in the same line perhaps indicates their appreciation of Shěn's humor.

It is interesting to note that Shěn's inner speech is prefaced by the Mandarin exclamative particle 哇 *wa* "wow" and followed by her own laughter. In analyzing Russian spoken data, Bolden (2004: 1113) has observed that the onset and offset of quotations are generally marked by "a variety of devices that include grammatical framing, re-anchoring devices, and prosodic shifts for their onset and several reposition devices and sequences practices for their offset." Sams (2010), however, claims that Bolden's observation is far-fetched and further argues that when inner speech is used as a type of quotation in conversation, the recipient must depend on contextual cues to fully understand the use of it. It is due to the fact that the speaker does not appear to employ specific prosodic cues to indicate what type of quotation is being used. However, the above interaction shows that when inner speech is used as a discourse strategy to construct humor, prosodic cues as exclamation can be expected, as the speaker perhaps intends to dramatize his/her utterances.

4.2 The Use of Rhetorical Question

Many questions are produced to seek a response, such as information, confirmation or agreement, while still some are interrogatively formatted but not intended to seek an answer. Ilie (1999) has observed three recurring types of non-standard questions employed in talk shows, i.e., *expository questions*, *rhetorical questions* and *echo questions*. These three types of questions are in contrast with standard response-eliciting questions, and thus are frequently used to serve several argumentative functions in talk shows.

In my data, I have observed that rhetorical questions can be used as a discourse strategy to result in a humorous effect in conversation among friends. Although the speaker does not intend to seek a response when asking a rhetorical question, it is still a question by nature. As a question, it is very often in need of an answer, which further requires the listener to consider the how's and why's of the interrogator. Furthermore, during the thinking process, the listener is very likely to get the metamessage of the speaker's question. That is, the speaker is perhaps attempting to attract laughter by asking a question that does not seek an

answer. The following extract illustrates this point. In Extract (12), Zhèng asks a yes-no question in response to Táng's disclosure of other students' poor hygiene habits in the dormitory and immediately provides an answer to it. It, therefore, can be regarded as a rhetorical question, which invites other speech participants to ponder on the humor encoded in his question.

Extract (12) [Guō (F), Táng (F), Sòng (F), Zhèng (M)]

01. 郭：我印象最深刻是有人就是大便大到，就是四周都有。
guō: wǒ yìnxiàng zuì shēnkè shì yǒu rén jiùshì dàbiàn dà dào, jiùshì sìzhōu dōu yǒu.
02. 唐：對不對？小學的時候常常會，國中也會。
táng: duì bú duì? xiǎoxué de shíhòu chángcháng huì, guózhōng yě huì.
03. 郭：可是妳，妳們的廁所，宿舍廁所，記得我有一次去...
guō: kěshì nǐ, nǐmen de cèsuǒ, sùshè cèsuǒ, jìdé wǒ yǒu yíci qù...
04. 唐：也是這樣子。
táng: yě shì zhè yàngzi.
05. 郭：對，也是這樣耶。
guō: duì, yě shì zhè yàng ye.
06. 唐：而且它旁邊就有個刷子，你為什麼不去刷一刷？
táng: érqǐ tā pángbiān jiù yǒu ge shuāzi, nǐ wèi shénme bú qù shuā yì shuā?
07. 郭：它已經有一個刷子了哦！
guō: tā yǐjīng yǒu yíge shuāzi le ó!
08. 宋：喔。
sòng: o.
09. 唐：而且，而且 Maciej 還跟我講說，他發現我們宿舍的人上完廁所都不會洗手。
táng: érqǐ, érqǐ maciej hái gēn wǒ jiǎng shuō, tā fāxiàn wǒmen sùshè de rén shàng wán cèsuǒ dōu bú huì xǐ shǒu.
10. 他說就是大家一打開門就直接走出去了。
tā shuō jiùshì dàjiā yì dǎkāi mén jiù zhíjiē zǒu chūqù le.
11. 然後前面是，他們都不會去洗一下手再走。
ránhòu qiánmiàn shì, tāmen dōu bú huì qù xǐ yíxià shǒu zài zǒu.
12. → 鄭：妳、妳確定他沒有洗嗎？他搞不好是已經伸進去裡面洗一洗了。
zhèng: nǐ, nǐ quèdìng tā méiyǒu xǐ ma? tā gǎobùhǎo shì yǐjīng shēn jìnqù lǐmiàn xǐ yì xǐ le.
13. 宋：喔，好嚟喔，你！你在吃東西耶。
sòng: o, hǎo ǎ o, nǐ! nǐ zài chī dōngxi ye.
14. 唐：對啊，你在吃東西。誰會在那邊洗手啊？
táng: duì a, nǐ zài chī dōngxi. shéi huì zài nàbiān xǐ shǒu a?
15. 郭：而且那個形狀很像那個東西哦。
guō: érqǐ nàge xíngzhuàng hěn xiàng nàge dōngxi ó.
16. 宋：他照吃。
sòng: tā zhào chī.
17. 鄭：我，我百毒不侵。
zhèng: wǒ, wǒ bǎidúbùqīn.

Translation

01. Guō: What has impressed me most is that someone shat everywhere.

02. Táng: See? It usually happens in elementary school or junior high school.
03. Guō: But you, your toilet, the toilet in the dormitory. I remember I was once there...
04. Táng: The same.
05. Guō: Yes, the same.
06. Táng: And there was a toilet brush. Why did you not clean it with the brush?
07. Guō: There was already a toilet brush! [Zhèng is looking at Sòng.]
08. Sòng: Okay.
09. Táng: And, and Maciej also told me that he had found that people in the dormitory do not wash their hands before leaving the toilet.
10. He said that everyone simply opens the door and directly walk out.
11. And there is a sink in front of them, but they do not wash their hands before leaving. [Táng imitates the way people wash their hands.]
12. → Zhèng: You, are you sure he did not wash his hands? Maybe he already put his hands inside and washed them. (l: Zhèng)
13. Sòng: (L: Sòng) Oh, you are disgusting! And you are eating. (L: Guō, Sòng, Táng, Zhèng)
14. Táng: Yes, you are eating. Who is going to wash their hands there? (L: Guō, Sòng, Táng, Zhèng)
15. Guō: (l: Guō) And the shape of that looks like that thing. [Guō points at the sausage on Zhèng's plate. (l: Zhèng) Zhèng keeps eating.] (L: Táng)
16. Sòng: He still keeps eating. (L: Guō, Sòng, Táng)
17. Zhèng: I, I am invulnerable. (L: Táng)

The above interaction is on personal hygiene practices, such as cleaning the toilet after messing it up or washing one's hands after using the toilet. To point out that some people do not have good hygiene, Táng quotes her boyfriend Maciej's words and says that many students in the dormitory do not wash their hands before leaving the toilet, despite the fact that there is a sink close to them (lines 9-11). In response to Táng's disclosure of others' poor hygiene habits, Zhèng asks a yes-no question by using the Mandarin question particle 嗎 *ma* (line 12). He immediately provides an answer to it, as can be seen in the same line. Zhèng's yes-no question, therefore, can be regarded as a rhetorical question, as he does not intend to seek an answer.

It is interesting to note that Zhèng immediately gives a smile after he provides an answer to his own question (line 12). Zhèng's smiling perhaps shows his intention to use this rhetorical question as a discourse strategy to entertain others, which has not only resulted in laughter, but has also provoked attacks from other speech participants. For example, Sòng directly attacks Zhèng by saying that he is disgusting (line 13). Her laughter before her utterance, however, indicates her appreciation of Zhèng's humor in the previous turn. In addition, all the speech participants start to laugh upon hearing Sòng's remark to Zhèng, including Zhèng himself (line 13).

In lines 13-15, the humor producer, Zhèng, becomes the target of an attack. That is, Sòng, Táng and Guō start to form a league against Zhèng. For example, Táng partially repeats Sòng's words in line 13 你在吃東西 *nǐ zài chī dōngxi* "you are eating" (line 14). Táng's echoing of Sòng's utterance indicates that she agrees with Sòng; that is, both Sòng and Táng do not understand why Zhèng could think of such a disgusting thing while he is still eating. Indeed, as many scholars have observed (e.g., Norrick 1987; Tannen 1987, 1989), when a person echoes the utterance of the other, s/he asserts the same evaluation while at the same time showing agreement and rapport with him/her. Guō also shows her support of Sòng's utterance in the previous turn. Different from Táng's echoing of Sòng's utterance 你在吃東西 *nǐ zài chī dōngxi* "you are eating", Guō uses 而且 *érqiě* to preface her remark to Zhèng (line 15). Exploring the semantic-discourse-pragmatic functions of the Mandarin lexeme 而且 *érqiě*, Chang (2012) has observed that 而且 *érqiě*, in semantics, is the sum of the corresponding statements. While it marks the continuation of the preceding statement, it also introduces new information. In other words, Guō not only shows support to Sòng by continuing with the same topic initiated by Sòng, but she also adds something new to tease Zhèng. As can be seen in line 15, she implies that what Zhèng is eating at the moment, a sausage, in fact looks like excrement. Interestingly, while Guō uses 那個東西 *nàge dōngxi* "that thing" to implicitly refer to excrement, her smiling perhaps shows her intention to invite Zhèng to make a connection himself between the sausage he is eating and excrement.

Zhèng gives a smile upon hearing Guō's utterance (line 15), which suggests that he understands Guō's reference. He, however, keeps eating his meal and subsequently claims that Guō's referring to his sausage as excrement will not work at all, as he is invulnerable (line 17). Zhèng's self-disclosure also attracts Táng's laughter. We have no idea whether Zhèng has already expected to provoke attacks from Sòng, Táng and Guō when he uses his rhetorical question as a discourse strategy to construct humor. What the above interaction makes clear at once is that Zhèng's use of this discourse strategy immediately puts him in the center of the attention, extends the conversation and results in more laughter in the following speaking turns. When the four speech participants laugh together, the conversation may be carried on in a harmonious way.

4.3 The Use of Theatrical Performance

Before turning to the term *theatrical performance* used in this section, we must draw attention to two relevant terms, i.e., *theatricality* and *performance*. According to Postlewait and Davis (2003), theatricality is an expansive concept, which touches upon “the aspects and nature of performance, the history of aesthetic styles, the means and modes of representation, the communicative power of art and artistry, the formation of subjectivity, and the very operations of public life (from politics to social theory)” (p. 2), whereas performance is categorized as “illusory, deceptive, exaggerated, artificial, or affected” (p. 4). Given the above contending meanings of theatricality and performance, respectively, we may briefly define theatrical performance as showy mannerisms or behaviors, usually exemplified by exaggerated self-display, and practically inextricable from artificiality.

When theatrical performance is used as a discourse strategy, the humor producer very often resorts to the performing body, i.e., dramatic gesticulation or body movement, to result in a humorous effect. In other words, the funniness relies on the speaker’s non-verbal communicative skills, rather than on the content of the utterance itself. Extract (13) illustrates this point, in which Dù uses theatrical performance as a discourse strategy to result in a humorous effect. In the meantime, she cooperates with Zhào in constructing a negative identity for Jennifer, the target for a gossip exchange. Her use of this discourse strategy to construct humor is based on her body movement.

Extract (13) [Dù (F), Chén (F), Zhào (F)]

01. 杜：欸，照你這樣講，真的 Jennifer 付出很多耶。
dù: èi, zhào nǐ zhèyàng jiǎng, zhēnde jennifer fùchū hěn duō ye.
02. 陳：是啊。
chén: shì a.
03. 杜：就是跟王經理那樣，然後我知道就一個。
dù: jiù shì gēn wáng jīnglǐ nàyang, ránhòu wǒ zhīdào jiù yíge.
04. 趙：對啊，常常就會覺得說，為什麼？
zhào: duì a, chángcháng jiù huì juéde shuō, wèi shénme?
05. 杜：就偶爾穿個什麼，妳知道，V 領的有沒有。
dù: jiù ǒuěrchuān ge shénme, nǐ zhīdào, v lǐng de yǒuméiyǒu.
06. 趙：啊，我真的做不了，我覺得自己都...
zhào: a, wǒ zhēnde zuò bùliǎo, wǒ juéde zìjǐ dōu...
07. 杜：她很喜歡穿 V 領，她超喜歡穿那個就是...
dù: tā hěn xǐhuān chuān v lǐng, tā chāo xǐhuān chuān nàge jiùshì...
08. 陳：她身材有很好嗎？
chén: tā shēncái yǒu hěn hǎo ma?
09. 杜：有，她身材不錯。
dù: yǒu, tā shēncái búcuò.
10. 趙：她，對，她會把，我，她就每次都把自己弄得非常煞。
zhào: tā, duì, tā huì bǎ, wǒ, tā jiù měicì dōu bǎ zìjǐ nòngde fēicháng shà.

11. 然後別人就說：「不會啦，Jennifer，妳怎麼樣，怎麼樣。」
ránhòu biérén jiù shuō, “bú huì la, jennifer, nǐ zěnmeyàng, zěnmeyàng.”
12. 然後她就說：「真的嗎？」
ránhòu tā jiù shuō, “zhēnde ma?”
13. 然後我就在旁邊...
ránhòu wǒ jiù zài pángbiān...
14. → 杜：然後就是前胸就開始抖動，這樣。
dù: ránhòu jiùshì qián xiōng jiù kāishǐ dǒudòng, zhèyàng.
15. 趙：抖動？也沒有到抖動啦。抖動也太誇張了。
zhào: dǒudòng? yě méiyǒu dào dǒudòng la. dǒudòng yě tài kuāzhāng le.

Translation

01. Dù: Hey, according to what you just said, Jennifer has made great efforts.
02. Chén: Exactly.
03. Dù: [Dù looks at Zhào.] It is evidenced in how she interacted with Manager Wáng, and I also know the other example.
04. Zhào: Right, and very often I could not help but ask myself why. [Zhào is shaking her head.] (l: Zhào)
05. Dù: She sometimes would put on a V-neck shirt, you know. [Dù touches her chest with both hands.] (l: Dù)
06. Zhào: I will never be able to do that. I feel that I...
07. Dù: She likes to put on a V-neck shirt. She likes to wear... [Dù touches her chest with both hands.] (l: Dù)
08. Chén: Is she in good shape?
09. Dù: Yes, she is in good shape.
10. Zhào: She, yes, she is more likely to make herself extremely attractive.
11. Then others would say, “Not at all, Jennifer, you blah blah blah.”
12. Then she would say, “Really?”
13. And I was there... [Zhào rolls her eyes.]
14. → Dù: Then she would start to shake her boobs, like this. [Dù starts to shake her body.] (l: Dù)
15. Zhào: Shaking boobs? (L: Dù, Zhào) [Chén shows her surprise with both eyes wide open.] Maybe not shaking boobs. Shaking boobs is too ridiculous. (L: Dù, Chén, Zhào)

The above sequence is mainly on Jennifer’s dress sense. In the beginning of the interaction, Dù introduces Jennifer for negative gossip. In lines 1 and 3, Dù says that Jennifer is trying everything possible to attract men’s attention, which can be seen in her interaction with Manager Wáng, as well as with other men. Dù’s opinion about Jennifer is immediately supported by Chén and Zhào, as evidenced in their tokens for agreement, i.e., 是啊 *shì a* “exactly” (line 2) and 對啊 *duì a* “right” (line 4). The topic of the conversation then shifts to Jennifer’s preference for sexy clothes. In lines 5 and 7, Dù says that Jennifer seems to have a preference for V-neck shirts. Dù’s hand gesture (i.e., touching her own chest with both hands) accompanying her utterance and her intended smiling suggest Jennifer’s motivation of wearing a V-neck shirt. In other words, Jennifer perhaps intends to show off her cleavage in a

deep V-neck shirt. Zhào, in her turn speaking, immediately shows her agreement by saying that she will never be able to act like Jennifer does (line 6).

Chén hardly speaks in the interaction, as she probably has never met Jennifer. This is evidenced in her question in line 8, in which she asks whether Jennifer is in good shape. This question suggests that she does not know how Jennifer actually looks, and that women who like to put on a V-neck shirt are very likely to be in a good shape. From the responses of Dù and Zhào in lines 9 and 10, respectively, we may say that both of them think that Jennifer has got the means to attract men, as she is in a good shape, and that she is doing everything possible to make herself even more attractive to men. In lines 11-12, Zhào has a step further and directly quotes Jennifer's utterance with others to dramatize the speech event. Zhào's rolled eyes (as described in line 13) further reveal her loathing of Jennifer's hypocritical reaction to others' flattery of her, as she was the witness of the whole interaction.

To make Zhào's directly quoted speech more interesting, Dù uses theatrical performance as a discourse strategy to expand the dramatized speech event, i.e., Jennifer's interaction with others which Zhào witnessed. In line 14, Dù starts to imitate how Jennifer, in the imagined interaction, shakes her breasts in deep V-neck shirt to attract men's attention. The humorous effect results from Dù's dramatic body movement accompanying her utterance 胸前就開始抖動 *qián xiōng jiù kāishǐ dǒudòng* "start to shake her boobs." Clearly, Dù's aping of the way Jennifer shows off her sexiness is exaggerated and artificial, as we can see in Zhào's response in the following turn. In line 15, Zhào says that it would be ridiculous if Jennifer did it that way, despite her intention to attract men's attention.

Dù's use of theatrical performance as a discourse strategy not only attracts laughter from Zhào and Chén in the following turn, but it also helps her build rapport with Zhào. In other words, she cooperates with Zhào in constructing a negative identity for the gossip target Jennifer, but in a humorous way. In so doing, both Dù and Zhào may claim "social capital"²³ by discursively achieving acceptable self-image at the expense of Jennifer. As Jennifer is a woman in good shape, who dares to show off her sexiness by wearing a V-neck shirt, it is very likely she will attract the attention of men. Jennifer can therefore be regarded as the potential marketplace rival for Dù and Zhào. By constructing a negative identity for Jennifer, Dù and Zhào work together in lowering the esteem of Jennifer's dress sense. Indeed, Guendouzi

²³ Bourdieu (1987) coined and expanded upon the term "symbolic capital." Based on this term, Eckert (1993) argues that while the value of men's capital is established by the marketplace, women, on the other hand, must compete to prove their moral worth in terms of community norms, so as to achieve their social identity, and therefore their "social capital." Coates (2000) further suggests that women should pay attention to norms of femininity even when getting involved in small talk backstage.

(2001) has observed that women's roles in the current social marketplace are still restricted by attributes, such as "physical appearance," "moral worth" and being regarded as a "good mother." Therefore, women are frequently found to discursively compete for the social capital, which has been tied to these attributes, perhaps by "bitching".²⁴

I have also observed that the discourse strategy based on the use of theatrical performance in verbal interactions among Taiwanese friends also largely relies on the use of exaggerated, artificial expression of emotion. More specifically, a speaker perhaps intends to cause a humorous effect by dramatizing his/her fake feelings. The listener, on the other hand, has to find the indexical signs to appreciate the humor. The following extract illustrates this point. In the interaction of Pān, Sūn, Huáng, and Zhào, Sūn reacts to Pān's self-disclosure by dramatizing her fake emotion to result in a humorous effect. Sūn's use of theatrical performance as a discourse strategy to result in a humorous effect is immediately recognized and perhaps appreciated by Pān, as there are contextualization cues in Sūn's non-verbal behavior.

Extract (14) [Pān (F), Sūn (F), Huáng (F), Zhào (M)]

01. 潘：我們禮拜五去吃飯嘛。然後其實他三點要上班。
pān: wǒmen libàiwǔ qù chī fàn ma. ránhòu qíshí tā sāndiǎn yào shàngbān.
02. 孫：上班。
sūn: shàngbān.
03. 潘：所以其實很趕。然後我那時候想說：「其實你可以不用就是，我們可以不用一起吃這樣子。」
pān: suǒyǐ qíshí hěn gǎn. ránhòu wǒ nà shíhòu xiǎng shuō, "qíshí nǐ kěyǐ búyòng jiùshì, wǒmen kěyǐ búyòng yìqǐ chī zhè yàngzi."
04. → 孫：咳，咳！
sūn: hài, hài!
05. 趙：難怪現在妳單身。
zhào: nánguài xiànzài nǐ dānshēn.
06. 潘：對啦！但我們後來還是一起吃啊，我們後來還是一起吃啊！
pān: duì la! dàn wǒmen hòulái hái shì yìqǐ chī a, wǒmen hòulái hái shì yìqǐ chī a!
07. 孫：是、是、是、是、是、是！
sūn: shì, shì, shì, shì, shì, shì!
08. 潘：我們後來還是一起吃啊。
pān: wǒmen hòulái hái shì yìqǐ chī a.
09. 孫：總算我們看到一些希望了。
sūn: zǒngsuàn wǒmen kàndào yìxiē xīwàng le.

²⁴ Guendouzi (2001) studies the genre of gossip and suggests two distinctive sub-genres, i.e., *bitching* and *peer group news-giving*, both of which are operating in the private domain. Focusing on the sub-genre of *bitching*, Guendouzi argues that *bitching* is a backstage, off-the-record talk that relies heavily on "a 'safe' discursive environment to avoid any risk to the gossip instigator's positive self-image" (p. 34).

Translation

01. Pān: We ate together last Friday. In fact he had to work at three o'clock.
02. Sūn: Working.
03. Pān: So his schedule was tight. And I was thinking at that time, "You do not have to, we do not have to eat together."
04. → Sūn: [Sūn shakes her head a little bit and closes her eyes for a moment.] (h) [Sūn covers her own face with her left hand.] (l: Sūn) (L: Pān) (h) (l: Huáng)
05. Zhào: No wonder you are still single. (l: Sūn) (L: Huáng) (l: Pān)
06. Pān: You are correct! (L: Pān) But we ate together in the end. We still ate together in the end!
07. Sūn: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes! (l: Sūn, Huáng)
08. Pān: We still ate together in the end.
09. Sūn: At long last we see a ray of hope. (L: Sūn)

In the beginning of the sequence, Pān talks about the date with her potential new boyfriend. In line 3, she quotes her "inner speech" (see Sams 2010), saying that her potential new boyfriend did not have to insist on eating lunch with her, as his schedule was tight. Pān's utterance presupposes that while she shows her understanding of her potential new boyfriend's tight schedule, she at the same time gave up a good opportunity to have another date. To remind Pān of this, Sūn reacts in a dramatic, but humorous way, as we can see in line 4. In this line, Sūn sighs dramatically, which is the source of humor. Although sighing is traditionally viewed as a breathing behavior associated with negative emotional states, according to a questionnaire study conducted by Teigen (2008), there is a tendency for people to connect sighing with negative and deactivated emotions. That is, sighs in other people are very likely to be perceived as sadness, whereas one's own sigh is believed to serve as an indicator of "giving up" something or someone. This can be explained from a physiological perspective. Vlemincx et al. (2009), for example, support the explanation that people sigh during stress and negative emotions (e.g., panic and pain).²⁵ From this perspective, Sūn's sighing twice, as we can see in line 4, can be interpreted as showing her negative emotions for Pān, suggesting that Pān should not have had such a thought of giving up this chance of going to lunch with her potential new boyfriend. However, Sūn's smiling in the same line frames her sighing and body movement as play. In other words, her sighs can be viewed as a discourse strategy based on theatrical performance. When sighing is used as a discourse

²⁵ Vlemincx et al. (2009) also claim that people sigh not only to show negative emotions, but also positive emotions (e.g., relaxation and relief). Based on the results of three experiments on sigh rate during short imposed states of stress and relief, they further propose that how people sigh can be used to detect their different psychological conditions (i.e., stress or relief). Their findings show that stress is induced by exposure to a loud noise stress or by anticipation of it, whereas relief is induced by the end of the stressor or the anticipation that no stressor would follow.

strategy to result in a humorous effect, it is no longer a physiological reaction that is automatically generated to show the sigh producer's true emotional state.

Sūn's smiling immediately following her sighing can be viewed as a cue for humor, which is understood by Pān, as evidenced in her laughter. Having reviewed literature on facial and vocal expressions of emotion, Russell, Bachorowski and Fernández-Dols (2003) argue that there are many determinants of sending an expression of emotion, which may influence the receiver in various ways. That is, expressions that seem to be "emotional" are not always the expressions of the assumed emotions. To decode the message encoded by the sender, the receiver needs to find out possible cues, such as the tension and relaxation of facial muscles of the sender. Analyzing Finnish two-party verbal interactions, Ruusuvuori and Peräkylä (2009) have also observed that facial expression can stretch the temporal boundaries of the turns at talk. Furthermore, the temporal flexibility of the face may enforce its role as a device to secure shared understanding and affiliation.

While the above interaction shows that facial expression can be used as a contextualization cue to frame the verbal interaction as play, it can also be used as a subtle device to produce humor. In my data I have observed that the funniness based on the use of theatrical performance may rely on the speaker's intended smile, which is used for provocation. That is, the speaker perhaps intends to use smiling as an act of provoking or to excite anger from the listener, so as to result in a humorous effect. The following extract illustrates this point.

Extract (15) [Wú (F), Zhèng (F), Pān (M), Sūn (F)]

01. 吳：鄭雅麗，為什麼妳每次都沒有吃得很乾淨？
wú: zhèng yǎ-lì, wèi shénme nǐ měicì dōu méiyǒu chī de hěn gānjìng?
02. 鄭：我，因為只有沾醬油，只有沾醬油。
zhèng: wǒ, yīnwèi zhǐ yǒu zhān jiàngyóu, zhǐ yǒu zhān jiàngyóu.
03. 潘：我有、我有美乃茲啊！
pān: wǒ yǒu, wǒ yǒu měinǎizī a!
04. 鄭：我不喜歡吃美乃茲。
zhèng: wǒ bù xǐhuān chī měinǎizī.
05. → 潘：沒有！就只有醬油而已。
pān: méiyǒu! jiù zhǐ yǒu jiàngyóu éryǐ.
06. 鄭：什麼醬油？我聽不懂，什麼東西？
zhèng: shénme jiàngyóu? wǒ tīng bùdǒng, shénme dōngxi?

Translation

01. Wú: Zhèng Yǎ-Lì, why are you not able to finish the food on your plate? [Zhèng is eating. Wú is looking at the lettuce on Zhèng's plate.]
02. Zhèng: I, (L: Sūn), it is because there is only soy sauce, only soy sauce. (L: Zhèng)

03. Pān: I have, I have mayonnaise! [Pān is looking at Zhèng.]
 04. Zhèng: I do not like mayonnaise. (L: Sūn) (I: Wú)
 05. → Pān: [Pān is looking at Zhèng.] (I: Pān) No (other sauces)! I only have soy sauce. (L: Wú, Sūn, Pān)
 06. Zhèng: Why did you mention about soy sauce? (L: Wú, Sūn, Pān) I cannot get it. What?

The above interaction takes place in Pān's place. In the beginning of the sequence, Wú asks Zhèng why there is still food left on her plate (line 1). In her response, Zhèng says that it is because there is a lack of choices for sauce, implying that she does not like what she is eating, i.e., lettuce with only soy sauce (line 2). Pān, the host, then offers to provide another sauce mayonnaise, which, however, is immediately rejected by Zhèng in her speaking turn (lines 3 and 4). Zhèng's rejection can be regarded as a face-threatening act to Pān. Her rejection of Pān's kind offer is later perceived by Sūn as a funny act, as evidenced in Sūn's laughter. In his response, Pān changes his facial expression and claims that he only has soy sauce for Zhèng (line 5).

It is interesting to note that Pān's utterance in line 5 provokes laughter from the other two speech participants Wú and Sūn, which, therefore, can be regarded as humorous. Also note that Zhèng's utterance 我不喜歡吃美乃茲 *wǒ bù xǐhuān chī měinǎizī* "I do not like mayonnaise" can have possible readings. While Zhèng perhaps intends to show that she simply does not like mayonnaise, this utterance can also be interpreted in a negative way. That is, Zhèng's rejection can be interpreted as blaming Pān for not having enough sauce choices for his guests. Pān's use of the Mandarin negator 沒有 *méiyǒu* "no (other sauces)" further suggests his intention to interpret Zhèng's utterance in such a manner. More specifically, Zhèng's utterance 我不喜歡吃美乃茲 *wǒ bù xǐhuān chī měinǎizī* "I do not like mayonnaise" is perhaps interpreted by Pān as "Why do you not have more choices for sauce?" In other words, Pān can be regarded as introducing an answer to his imagined question encoded in Zhèng's utterance.

From Pān's response, on the other hand, we can assume that he perhaps intends to provoke a confrontation, which is also evidenced in his intended smiling, i.e., smiling by lifting the corners of his closed mouth. Such smiling can be viewed as an instigating facial expression for provocation.²⁶ From the laughter that follows Pān's response, we may assume that Pān perhaps intends to result in a humorous effect by using provocation. This is

²⁶ Also see Subsection 3.2.3 for my analysis of smiling used to provoke conflict in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, in which the same type of smiling is dramatized and accompanied by different forms of verbal aggression and hand gestures that are used to pick a fight.

particularly evidenced in his own laughter, which has framed his provocative utterance as play. In addition, as Zhèng's response in line 4 can be seen as a face-threatening act to Pān, Pān's use of theatrical performance as a discourse strategy based on provocation successfully dissolves the awkwardness after Zhèng's rejection, but in a funny way.

In my data I have also observed that pretended anger and the ensuing aggression can be the source of humor in an interaction. That is, the speaker may pretend to be angry or to be irritated by other speech participants. The anger may be expressed both verbally and non-verbally to result in a humorous effect. In the following interaction, Tāng's discourse strategy is based on the use of theatrical performance, which is further based on his pretended anger and the ensuing aggression.

Extract (16) [Sūn (F), Guō (F), Dù (F), Tāng (M)]

01. 孫：然後反正就是，誒，我就是吃完飯嘛！
sūn: ránhòu fǎnzhèng jiùshì, ē, wǒ jiùshì chī wán fàn ma!
02. 因為吃完飯他問我超多問題的，包括就是我喜歡看哪些書，然後他看哪些書。
yīnwèi chī wán fàn tā wèn wǒ chāo duō wèntí de, bāokuò jiùshì wǒ xǐhuān kàn nǎxiē shū, ránhòu tā kàn nǎxiē shū.
03. 他就不斷地推薦我電影跟書妳知道嗎？就是吃飯，一路上。
tā jiù búduànde tuījiàn wǒ diànyǐng gēn shū nǐ zhīdào ma? jiùshì chī fàn, yílùshàng.
04. 然後中間他就問我說，喔，他先吃飯的第一個問題他就問我說：「妳這個禮拜，就是這個週末有什麼計劃？」
ránhòu zhōngjiān tā jiù wèn wǒ shuō, o, tā xiān chī fàn de dì yíge wèntí tā jiù wèn wǒ shuō, "nǐ zhège lǐbài, jiùshì zhège zhōumò yǒu shénme jìhuà?"
05. 喔，我說：「我會去找朋友。」
o, wǒ shuō, "wǒ huì qù zhǎo péngyǒu."
06. 然後他就很詳細地問我說，他就一直很在意我去找你。
ránhòu tā jiù hěn xiángxìde wèn wǒ shuō, tā jiù yìzhí hěn zàiyì wǒ qù zhǎo nǐ.
07. 因為我說：「我去找我的 kolega。」
yīnwèi wǒ shuō, "wǒ qù zhǎo wǒde kolega."
08. 杜：嗯。
dù: en.
09. 孫：找 kolega。
sūn: zhǎo kolega.
10. 湯：妳要說：「找 znajomy。」
tāng: nǐ yào shuō, "zhǎo znajomy."
11. 杜：Tež。
dù: tež.
12. 孫：可是 znajomy 不可能是那種...
sūn: kěshì znajomy bù kěnéng shì nàzhǒng...
13. 杜：都是男的啊！
dù: dōu shì nán de a!
14. 孫：親密的，你知道嗎？
sūn: qīnmìde, nǐ zhīdào ma?
15. 湯：可是不熟啊，妳就離開了。

- tāng: kěshì bù shú a, nǐ jiù líkāi le.*
16. 孫：好啦，反正就是...
sūn: hǎo la, fǎnzhèng jiùshì...
17. 郭：很好。
guō: hěn hǎo.
18. 杜：他有一點小在意。
dù: tā yǒu yìdiǎn xiǎo zàiyì.
19. 郭：比爾也很在意他耶。
guō: bǐ'ěr yě hěn zàiyì tā ye.
20. 我從來沒有跟他講。
wǒ cónglái méiyǒu gēn tā jiǎng.
21. 孫：誒，妳知道嗎？他超在意的。
sūn: ē, nǐ zhīdào ma? tā chāo zàiyì de.
22. 杜：眾矢之的！
dù: zhòngshǐzhīdì!
23. 孫：很糟糕耶，你真的是...
sūn: hěn zāogāo ye, nǐ zhēnde shì...
24. → 湯：都搬出去，都搬出去，都搬出去。
tāng: dōu bān chūqù, dōu bān chūqù, dōu bān chūqù.
25. → 我那個，我那個房間我當倉庫用。
wǒ nàge, wǒ nàge fángjiān wǒ dāng cāngkù yòng.
26. 郭：比爾也這樣問我，我跟他是怎麼認識的。
guō: bǐ'ěr yě zhèyàng wèn wǒ, wǒ gēn tā shì zěnmē rènshì de.
27. 孫：我那個男生也是這樣。
sūn: wǒ nàge nánshēng yě shì zhèyàng.
28. 他說：「妳怎麼會跟他認識？」
tā shuō, "nǐ zěnmē huì gēn tā rènshì?"
29. 然後我那時候想說糟糕，這個解釋，我也不想幫他間接出櫃。
ránhòu wǒ nà shíhòu xiǎng shuō zāogāo, zhège jiěshì, wǒ yě bùxiǎng bāng tā jiànjiē chūguì.
30. 我想說，「痾，痾，其實他有一個女生同學，我也要去拜訪她。」
wǒ xiǎng shuō, "e, e, qíshí tā yǒu yíge nǚshēng tóngxué, wǒ yě yào qù bài fǎng tā."
31. 我就把妳說成是 koležanka。
wǒ jiù bǎ nǐ shuō chéng shì koležanka.
32. 我說：「他們兩個現在住在一起，我要一起去拜訪他們。而且他們是住在一個波蘭的家庭，所以我會拜訪很多人。」
wǒ shuō, "tāmen liǎngge xiànzài zhù zài yìqǐ, wǒ yào yìqǐ qù bài fǎng tāmen. érqǐ tāmen shì zhù zài yíge bōlānde jiātíng, suǒyǐ wǒ huì bài fǎng hěn duō rén."
33. 可是我這樣解釋之後...
kěshì wǒ zhèyàng jiěshì zhīhòu...
34. 郭：太迂迴了。
guō: tài yūhuí le.
35. 孫：那個男生就說：「可是他到底是誰？」
sūn: nàge nánshēng jiù shuō, "kěshì tā dàodǐ shì shéi?"
36. 郭：沒有，我就很直接跟比爾講，我說：「他有男朋友。」
guō: méiyǒu, wǒ jiù hěn zhíjiē gēn bǐ'ěr jiǎng, wǒ shuō, "tā yǒu nán péngyǒu."
37. 我就很直接。
wǒ jiù hěn zhíjiē.
38. 孫：我，我是後來，就是想說他有男朋友。
sūn: wǒ, wǒ shì hòulái, jiùshì xiǎng shuō tā yǒu nán péngyǒu.

39. 郭：因為我覺得，這，沒有什麼好...
guō: yīnwèi wǒ juéde, zhè, méiyǒu shénme hǎo...
40. 孫：是沒錯，但是我那時後很怕他是如果不接受的話。
sūn: shì méicuò, dànshì wǒ nà shíhòu hěn pà tā shì rúguǒ bù jiēshòu de huà.
41. 他後來就是，因為我先，反正就是，真的拗不過，因為他就一直很想知道對方的底。
tā hòulái jiùshì, yīnwèi wǒ xiān, fǎnzhèng jiùshì, zhēnde āo búguò, yīnwèi tā jiù yìzhí hěn xiǎng zhīdào duìfāngde dǐ.
42. 然後我想說...
ránhòu wǒ xiǎng shuō...
43. → 湯：關我屁事啊！
tāng: guān wǒ pì shì a!
44. 郭：對不起喔！對不起。
guō: duìbùqǐ o! duìbùqǐ.

Translation

01. Sūn: Anyway, eh, I finished eating (with him)!
02. He asked me tons of questions after eating, including what kind of books I like to read, and he also told me about his favorite type of books.
03. He continuously recommended movies and books to me, you know? Not only during the meal, but also during the walk.
04. And during the conversation he asked me, oh, the first questions he asked me during the meal was, "As for this week, what is your plan for the weekend?"
05. Oh, I answered, "I will visit a friend."
06. Then he asked me about the details. He cared about you very much. [Sūn stretches her left hand and points at Tāng.] (L: Sūn)
07. It is because I said, "I will visit my kolega (male friend)."
08. Dù: Okay. [Dù is nodding her head.]
09. Sūn: Visiting a kolega (male friend).
10. Tāng: You should have said, "visiting a znajomy (an acquaintance)."
11. Dù: Też (Also).
12. Sūn: But znajomy (acquaintance) is not...
13. Dù: Both words refer to male! [Dù looks at Tāng.]
14. Sūn: close, you know?
15. Tāng: But not close, so you simply visit him and leave. (L: Tāng)
16. Sūn: Okay, anyway...
17. Guō: Well done.
18. Dù: He seemed to be concerned about this male friend. (L: Dù)
19. Guō: Bill was also concerned about him. (L: Guō) [Guō points at Tāng.]
20. I have never told him about that. (L: Dù, Sūn, Guō)
21. Sūn: [Sūn moves her body towards Guō.] Hey, do you know that he was so concerned about him?
22. Dù: You have become a common target for scorn! [Dù stretches her right hand towards Tāng and imitates the raking with the machine gunfire.] (L: Dù, Sūn, Guō)
23. Sūn: [Sūn looks at Tāng.] (L: Sūn) You are really so terrible at this...
24. → Tāng: [Tāng moves his right hand forward and backward and raises his voice.] All of you move out, move out, move out. (L: Tāng) (L: Dù, Sūn, Guō) [Sūn is clapping hands.]
25. → That, that small room of mine will be used as a warehouse.
26. Guō: (L: Guō, Sūn) [Guō looks at Sūn, with her mouth covered by her left hand. She

- points at Tāng with her right hand. Sūn also points at Guō.] Bill also asked me like this, asking me how I met him.
27. Sūn: (l: Sūn) The guy that I met also behaved like this.
 28. He asked me, “How did you meet him?”
 29. Then I was thinking, oh no, how could I explain, because I did not want to make him come out indirectly.
 30. I told him, “Well, he has a female friend staying with him. I am visiting her, too.”
 31. I told him that you are my koležanka (female friend). [Sūn points at Guō.]
 32. I said, “They live together now. I am going to visit both of them. Besides, they are staying with a Polish family, so I will meet many people at the same time.”
 33. But after I explained to him...
 34. Guō: [Guō stretches her right hand.] You were being too indirect.
 35. Sūn: And that guy asked me, “Who on earth is he?” [Sūn points at Tāng.] (L: Dù)
 36. Guō: I did not do that. I told Bill directly. I said, “He has got a boyfriend.”
 37. I was being very direct.
 38. Sūn: I, later I wanted to tell him that he has a boyfriend.
 39. Guō: It is because I think that there is no need to...
 40. Sūn: You are right, but I was afraid maybe he would not accept that.
 41. Later he, because I, anyway, I was not able to hide anything, because he really wanted to know who this male friend was.
 42. Then I wanted to tell him that... [Tāng raises his head and looks at Sūn.] (l: Tāng) (L: Sūn) (l: Guō, Dù)
 43. → Tāng: It is none of my fucking business! (l: Tāng) (L: Sūn, Guō, Dù)
 44. Guō: Sorry! I am so sorry.

The beginning of the interaction is about Sūn’s dating someone. In line 4, Sūn shows her date’s curiosity about her plan for the coming weekend by directly quoting his question to her. She subsequently points out that her date was concerned about the male friend that she is going to spend the weekend with (lines 5-7 and 9). From her use of the second-person singular pronoun 你 *nǐ* and her pointing at Tāng (line 6), it becomes clear that Sūn is talking about Tāng. The other participant Dù later shows her agreement by summarizing Sūn’s date’s feelings (line 18). Guō, in the following turn, also shows agreement by offering the same experience. She says that her date Bill is also concerned about Tāng, as she is currently staying in Tāng’s place (line 19). In her turn of speaking, Dù summarizes the conversation so far by using the Mandarin idiom 眾矢之的 *zhòngshǐzhīdì*, which literally means the target of a multitude of arrows (line 22). As this idiom is derogatory in semantic meaning, Dù’s use of it to refer to Tāng suggests that Tāng is to be blamed for causing such concerns. Following Dù’s idiom, Guō also attacks Tāng by adding 很糟糕耶, 你真的是 *hěn zāogāo ye, nǐ zhēnde shì* “you are really so terrible for this.”

From the interaction so far, we may say that Sūn, Dù and Guō have formed a coalition against Tāng, the only male, despite the fact that their laughter and smiling have framed the

whole interaction as play. In response to the coalition of Sūn, Dù and Guō, Tāng asks all of them to leave his place (line 24), which can be seen as an expression of his anger. Lazarus (1991, 2001) assumes that emotions are associated with specific appraisals, which reflect the core meaning of the event that elicits each emotion, including anger. He further adds that the motive used to preserve self-esteem against assault is activated for anger to appear. In other words, Tāng's anger results from his intention to preserve his self-esteem against attack from other speech participants. In addition, when Tāng asks other speech participants to leave his place, he also uses hand gestures to signal his anger. His use of the direct imperative 都搬出去 *dōu bān chūqù* "all of you move out" combined with his hand gestures can be viewed as an aggressive act, motivated by anger. Averill (1983: 1147) has clearly explained the connection between anger and aggression: "Anger is the drive or motive behind many, if not most, forms of aggression. Alternatively (by more phenomenologically oriented psychologists), anger is the subjective experience that accompanies aggressive impulses." Clark, Pataki and Carver (1996) also argue that anger expressions can be used as an intimidation strategy to gain immediate compliance, in the sense that they create the impression that the expresser is strong. Also note that Tāng's anger is evidenced in his use of the vulgar expression 關我屁事啊! *guān wǒ pì shì a!* "It is none of my fucking business!" (line 43). In Tāng's swearing, the lexeme 屁 *pì* literally means "fart" and is frequently used as an expletive in conversation. As Jay (1992; 2000) has observed, swearing helps a speaker express his/her emotional state, especially anger and frustration, as well as communicate that information to the listener. That is, Tāng perhaps intends to convey his anger to other speech participants by swearing.

However, the ensuing laughter of Dù, Sūn and Guō in line 24 suggests that they perceive Tāng's anger and his verbal and non-verbal aggressions as humor. Tāng's smiling also shows his intention to frame his anger and verbal and non-verbal aggressions as play. In other words, Tāng can be regarded as using theatrical performance as a discourse strategy to construct humor, based on pretended anger and the ensuing aggression. In so doing, Tāng successfully copes with the awkward moment when all the other speech participants treat him as a target for attack, but in a humorous way.

4.4 The Use of Back-Handed Remark

In everyday verbal interactions, Taiwanese speech participants use different linguistic strategies to show criticisms in an indirect way for different communicative purposes. In his analysis of political debates in Taiwan, Chen (2007) has found that one debater intended to show rapport with his political opponent in a sarcastic way. This is done by using the inclusive first-person plural pronoun and the referring form (e.g., surname plus title) to address his debating opponent (p. 44). A back-handed compliment or remark can also be viewed as an indirect linguistic strategy to show criticism. While it is disguised as a compliment to express praise or admiration, it in fact is used to belittle or to insult someone in an indirect way.

In my data, I have further observed that a back-handed remark can be used to show the speaker's contempt for someone else, but in an indirect way. As the use of it entertains not only the speaker him/herself, but also other speech participants who can sniff out the true meaning of it and also appreciate its funniness, it can be regarded as a discourse strategy to elicit laughter. Moreover, the indirect nature of the back-handed remark is the source of the humor. Extract (17) illustrates this point. In the following, Zhāng shows her distaste for someone else in a sarcastic way, which subsequently elicits laughter.

Extract (17) [Zhāng (F), Wú (F), Gāo (F), Cài (M)]

01. 張：開玩笑的啦！
zhāng: kāi wánxiào de la!
02. 但我對她穿著品味非常地，我覺得提到性感也不是她那一種的。
dàn wǒ duì tā chuānzhuó pǐnwèi fēichángde, wǒ juéde tídao xìnggǎn yě bú shì tā nà yìzhǒng de.
03. 就是她穿得太明顯，那個意味太明顯了。
jiùshì tā chuān de tài míngxiǎn, nàge yìwèi tài míngxiǎn le.
04. 吳：我、我一直覺得真正的性感其實並不是在穿得少，露得多。
wú: wǒ, wǒ yìzhí juéde zhēnzhèngde xìnggǎn qíshí bìng bú shì zài chuān de shǎo, lù de duō.
05. 高：嗯。
gāo: en.
06. 張：她都露蠻多的啊，妳不覺得嗎？
zhāng: tā dōu lù mán duō de a, nǐ bù juéde ma?
07. 有露到該露的，都有露到該露的。
yǒu lùdào gāi lù de, dōu yǒu lùdào gāi lù de.
08. 吳：唉，人家喜歡展現自己。
wú: ài, rénjiā xǐhuān zhǎnxiàn zìjǐ.
09. 張：對啦，也是，那也是展現自己的一種方式。
zhāng: duì la, yě shì, nà yě shì zhǎnxiàn zìjǐ de yìzhǒng fāngshì.
10. 吳：對啊，那是展現自己。
wú: duì a, nà shì zhǎnxiàn zìjǐ.
11. → 張：好啦，我好羨慕喔！

- zhāng: hǎo la, wǒ hǎo xiànmù o!*
12. 高：妳很羨慕？咳，妳比她好一百倍妳還羨慕她？
gāo: nǐ hěn xiànmù? hài, nǐ bǐ tā hǎo yībǎibèi nǐ hái xiànmù tā?
13. 吳：就是嘛！
wú: jiùshì ma!
14. 蔡：張妙霞做不了。
cài: zhāng miào-xiá zuò bù liǎo.
15. 張：開玩笑。
zhāng: kāi wánxiào.
16. 高：不是啦，這我說張妙霞...
gāo: bú shì la, zhè wǒ shuō zhāng miào-xiá...
17. 張：我做不了。
zhāng: wǒ zuò bù liǎo.
18. 蔡：她的那些動，動作...
cài: tāde nàxiē dòng, dòngzuò...
19. → 張：我做不了，超羨慕她的。
zhāng: wǒ zuò bù liǎo, chāo xiànmù tā de.
20. 高：妳俱有聰明、智慧、自信所有的一切，都是她沒有的...
gāo: nǐ jùyǒu cōngmíng, zhìhuì, zìxìn suǒyǒude yíqiè, dōu shì tā méiyǒu de...
21. 蔡：請問對邱經理...
cài: qǐngwèn duì qiū jīnglǐ...
22. 高：為什麼要羨慕？
gāo: wèi shénme yào xiànmù?
23. 蔡：請問對邱經理有用嗎？
cài: qǐngwèn duì qiū jīnglǐ yǒuyòng ma?
24. 張：沒有用啊，完全沒有用哦，完全一丁點兒都、都沒有用！
zhāng: méi yǒuyòng a, wánquán méi yǒuyòng ó, wánquán yìdīngdiǎnr dōu, dōu méi yǒuyòng!
25. 而且我皮膚不白。
érqiě wǒ pífu bù bái.

Translation

01. Zhāng: I was joking!
02. But I have a strong feeling towards her dress sense. I think it is not sexy at all.
03. Her intention to get dressed like this is too obvious. That intention is too obvious.
04. Wú: It has always been my opinion that the real sexiness does not equal to wearing less clothing or showing more skin.
05. Gāo: Okay.
06. Zhāng: She shows a lot of her body. Do you not think so? [Zhāng looks at Gāo.]
07. She has shown what she is supposed to show. [Gāo ponders.]
08. Wú: Well, she simply likes to show herself. (l: Wú)
09. Zhāng: Okay, you are right. That is also a way to show oneself.
10. Wú: Right, that is a way to show oneself.
11. → Zhāng: Anyway, I **envy** her very much! (l: Zhāng) (L: Wú)
12. Gāo: (l: Gāo) You are envious? Hey, you are much better than her. How could you be envious of her? (L: Zhāng)
13. Wú: It is true! (l: Wú) (L: Zhāng)
14. Cài: Zhāng Miào-Xiá will never be able to do it. [Cài looks at Gāo seriously.]
15. Zhāng: You must be joking.
16. Gāo: No, I mean Zhāng Miào-Xiá is...

17. Zhāng: I will never be able to do it.
18. Cài: Her behavior...
19. → Zhāng: I cannot do it. I super **envy** her. (l: Zhāng)
20. Gāo : [Gāo talks to Zhāng.] You are smart, intelligent (L: Zhāng), and confident. You have got all these qualities which she lacks.
21. Cài : [Cài looks at Gāo.] Excuse me, as for Manager Qīu...
22. Gāo: Why are you envious of her?
23. Cài : [Cài looks at Zhāng.] (l: Cài, Zhāng) Excuse me, will all these qualities work on Manager Qīu? (L: Cài)
24. Zhāng: They will not work. They will not work at all. (L: Zhāng, Wú, Gāo, Cài) They are not useful at all!
25. Besides, I have dark skin.

The above interaction is about sexiness. In talking about sexiness, all the speech participants use someone as a target for a gossip exchange. Zhāng initiates the topic, focusing on the gossip target's dress. In line 2, she directly shows how she feels about the gossip target's dress sense, which is not sexy at all to her. Zhāng, in line 3, further claims that the gossip target's dress sense perhaps has shown her intention to attract the attention of others. Wú subsequently shows her support in the following turn (line 4). After getting feedback from Wú, Zhāng then turns to Gāo and asks for support (lines 6 and 7). While Gāo is still pondering on Zhāng's question, Wú provides her opinion on the gossip target's dress sense, but in a sarcastic way. In line 8, Wú claims that the gossip target simply likes to show herself, which can be seen as Wú's defense for the gossip target. However, Wú's subsequent smiling can be seen as an indicator for sarcasm. That is, while she seems to be speaking for the gossip target, she is in fact criticizing the gossip target sarcastically, thereby building rapport with Zhāng.

Interestingly, Wú uses 人家 *rénjiā* to refer to the gossip target, as in line 8. In her study of 人家 *rénjiā* in Mandarin, Chiu (2000) has observed that while 人家 *rénjiā* is a long distance anaphor to refer to someone mentioned in prior speaking turns, it can be used by the speaker as a discourse marker to signal that the upcoming proposition is in contrast with his/her interactant's knowledge/meta-knowledge. In addition, the interactant can use it as a cue to detect the speaker's communicative intention, such as for defense, dispute or refusal (cf. Liu 1994).²⁷ From this perspective, we may say that Wú's use of 人家 *rénjiā* can be seen as her defense for the gossip target, which is against Zhāng's accusation in prior speaking turns. Wú's smiling, however, indicates that her utterance should not be taken literally. That is, while she literally shows that her thinking is in contrast with Zhāng's, she in fact agrees

²⁷ Liu's (1994) study is on the non-referential 人 *láng*, which is the Taiwanese counterpart of the Mandarin 人家 *rénjiā*.

with Zhāng. This is manifested in her utterance in line 4, in which she agrees with Zhāng. Wú's use of 人家 *rénjiā* in her defense for the gossip target is therefore sarcastic. In other words, Wú can be viewed as building rapport with Zhāng, but in a sarcastic manner.

Following Wú's sarcasm, Zhāng not only agrees with Wú (line 9), but she also expresses her envy of the gossip target, as we can see in her use of the emotion verb 羡慕 *xiànmù* "envy" (lines 11 and 19). According to Hong's (2009) categorization, the emotion verb 羡慕 *xiànmù* "envy" is an experience-oriented verb directed towards a target because of certain stimuli. More specifically, it is a stative verb used to express an emotional state of an experiencer who feels discontent because of a target-entity, which may be someone with superior abilities, advantages, or because of a target-situation, which describes an advantageous situation (p. 108). In light of this, Zhāng's use of the emotion verb 羡慕 *xiànmù* "envy" can be literally viewed as showing her inner feelings towards the gossip target, to whom she feels inferior and is therefore discontented with herself. Zhāng's smiling following her use of the emotion verb 羡慕 *xiànmù* "envy" frames her utterances as not meant literally, which can be seen as back-handed remarks. In other words, she perhaps intends to criticize the gossip target in a sarcastic way.

It is interesting to note that the emotion verb 羡慕 *xiànmù* "envy" is preceded by degree adverbs 好 *hǎo* "very" (line 11) and 超 *chāo* "super" (line 19), both of which are used as intensifiers to strengthen the oppositeness of Zhāng's actual thoughts. In addition, Zhāng also uses an affective sentence-final particle 喔 *o*, which is frequently used as the modal marker to signal the attitude of the speaker (line 11). Zhāng's use of it can be regarded as reinforcing the sarcasm encoded in her remark, in the sense that her being envious of someone is in fact not true. Her use of back-handed remarks, therefore, can be regarded as a discourse strategy to elicit laughter, as she perhaps intends to criticize the gossip target in an indirect, but funny way.

From Gāo's reactions in lines 12 and 20, it is hard to tell whether she understands Zhāng's humor. However, Zhāng's smiling following her own back-handed remarks in lines 11 and 19, respectively, prove clearly that she perhaps intends to attack the gossip target, but in a humorous way. In addition, while Zhāng's humor is further understood and appreciated by Wú, as indicated by Wú's laughter (line 11), her self-deprecating also successfully attracts positive feedback from Gāo (lines 12 and 20). As self-deprecating is considered benign in social interaction according to Leech's (1983) Modesty maxim, we may say that Zhāng's use of back-handed remarks as a discourse strategy not only helps her criticize the gossip target

without herself losing face, but she also successfully builds rapport with other speech participants in a humorous way.

4.5 The Use of Fictional Episode

The term *fiction* can be generally defined as something created by the human mind (Phillips 1995). I therefore use *fictional episode* to refer to an imagined situation created by a speaker for a specific communicative purpose, such as resulting in a humorous effect. In the following extract, Zhāng quotes Cài's utterances and uses a fictional episode as a humorous response to Cài's joking behavior in the prior speaking turn. Both Cài and Zhāng are found to use touch as a cue for the subsequent humor.

Extract (18) [Cài (M), Zhāng (M), Sūn (M)]

01. 蔡：一戶五千萬？那麼快就賣完了啊？
cài: yīhù wǔqiānwàn? nàme kuài jiù mài wán le a?
02. 張：賣完了啊！那個...
zhāng: mài wán le a! nàge...
03. 蔡：我還想說，誒...
cài: wǒ hái xiǎng shuō, ē...
04. → 張：還想說你也想買一戶喔！是不是？
zhāng: hái xiǎng shuō nǐ yě xiǎng mǎi yīhù o! shì bú shì?
05. 蔡：想說，你蓋完，我、我搬去，我過去住啊。
cài: xiǎng shuō, nǐ gài wán, wǒ, wǒ bān qù, wǒ guòqù zhù a.
06. 簽你的名字就好了。
qiān nǐde míngzi jiù hǎo le.
07. 張：簽我的名字喔？
zhāng: qiān wǒde míngzi o?
08. 蔡：對。
cài: duì.
09. → 張：你可能會被人家趕出去啊。簽我的名字啊。
zhāng: nǐ kěnéng huì bèi rénjiā gǎn chūqù a. qiān wǒde míngzi a.
10. 蔡：我就說我是...
cài: wǒ jiù shuō wǒ shì...
11. 孫：來啦，來啦，這個給你住啦！
sūn: lái la, lái la, zhège gěi nǐ zhù la!

Translation

01. Cài: A house costs fifty million NT dollars? All of them were already sold out?
02. Zhāng: [Zhāng looks at Cài.] They were sold out! As for...
03. Cài: I was thinking, well... [Cài pats Zhāng on the shoulder.]
04. → Zhāng: You were thinking about buying one, right? (L: Zhāng) (I: Sūn)
05. Cài: I was thinking, [Cài pats Zhāng on the shoulder.] when you finish the interior

- decorating, I, I can move, I can move over. (l: Zhāng)
06. I can simply claim that I know you.
07. Zhāng: You claim you know me?
08. Cài: Yes.
09. → Zhāng : [Zhāng puts his right hand on Cài's shoulder.] You probably will be swept out if you claim you know me. (L: Zhāng) (l: Sūn) [Cài does not know how to react.]
10. Cài: [Cài imitates holding a microphone.] I would say that I am...
11. Sūn: [Sūn passes a house-shaped pepper shaker to Cài.] Glad to be of help. You can live in it!

As the background information shows, one of the speech participants Zhāng is working for an interior design company. Prior to the above interaction, Zhāng was talking about the houses that he had decorated. Although these houses were extremely expensive, all of them sold out in a very short period of time. Cài, therefore, expresses his surprise at the wealth of those who could afford to buy the houses (line 1). He subsequently shows his interest in moving into one of these houses (lines 3 and 5). As shown in line 4, Zhāng does not wait for Cài to finish his utterance, but interrupts him and directly assumes an answer for him. Zhāng's answer is based on an imagined situation, which is prefaced by a directly quoted speech from Cài's utterance in the prior speaking turn, i.e., 還想說 *hái xiǎng shuō* "was/were thinking." Here, Zhāng can be regarded as using a fictional episode, assuming that Cài already planned to buy an expensive house. Zhāng's laughter further reveals his intention to frame his created fictional episode as play, which is appreciated by the other speech participant Sūn, as evidenced in his smiling (line 4).

Not following Zhāng's fictional plot, Cài says that he was in fact thinking about moving into one of these expensive houses (line 5), but did not intend to pay the construction company for the house. As he further explains, he could simply claim that he knows Zhāng, as manifested in the expression 簽你的名字就好了 *qiān nǐde míngzi jiù hǎo le*, which literally means "I could simply sign your name" (line 6). By using this expression, Cài perhaps intends to construct Zhāng as an extremely important person in the construction company, who can give away houses at his discretion. Obviously, Cài is simply joking. In his turn speaking, Zhāng repeats Cài's expression and says that this expression will get Cài swept out instead (lines 7 and 9). Zhāng's utterance is also based on an imagined situation. By replying in this way, he can be regarded as rejecting Cài indirectly. His subsequent laughter and Sūn's smiling have further framed his indirect rejection as humor.

Also note that Zhāng touches Cài on his shoulder before he rejects Cài (line 9). Similar touch is also found in lines 3 and 5, in which Cài pats Zhāng on his shoulder before he

requests. In fact, the act of touching is socially influential and persuasive, and is frequently used in requesting, as it may increase compliance to the request due to the conveyed psychological intimacy (e.g., Kleinke 1977; Willis and Hamm 1980; Smith, Gier and Willis 1982; Hornik and Ellis 1988; Hornik 1992; Kaufman and Mahoney 1999; Guéguen and Fischer-Lokou 2003; Guéguen 2007).²⁸ Inspired by these studies on the effect of touching, we may further ponder on Càì's and Zhāng's non-verbal behaviors accompanying their request and indirect rejection, respectively. Càì's request to Zhāng can be perceived as simply joking. By patting Zhāng on his shoulder, Càì perhaps intends to reinforce the persuasive function of his request. As Càì is simply joking, not in an attempt to request something from Zhāng, the persuasive nature encoded in Càì's touch may thus dramatize the speech event and result in a humorous effect. On the other hand, Zhāng's indirect rejection is expressed in the form of reminding. More specifically, Zhāng can be regarded as rejecting Càì's request by reminding him of the consequences of claiming to be his friend. Accompanied by the act of reminding, Zhāng's touch can be interpreted as showing psychological intimacy to Càì, in the sense that he kindly reminds Càì of the possible outcome. However, Zhāng's indirect rejection (in the form of reminding) can be regarded as teasing Càì if judged by its content. While his use of touch may convey intimacy to Càì, the teasing content contradicts the benevolence conveyed by his touch. The contradiction also dramatizes the speech event and further strengthens the humorous effect.

It is interesting to note that Zhāng's use of touch also conveys power and status. It is because this bodily action is used in the act of reminding, and that only people who know more are considered eligible and qualified to remind those who know less (cf. Hall, Coats and Smith LeBeau 2005).²⁹ While Càì's touch dramatizes the speech event and further results in a humorous effect, Zhāng's touch also has similar function. In other words, Zhāng's touch serves as a booster to his use of fictional episode as a discourse strategy to create humor. Furthermore, Càì's initial move and Zhāng's subsequent moves can be regarded as a competition disguised in humor. In light of this, it seems reasonable to assume that Zhāng and Càì, both male, perhaps intend to use touch as a cue for their subsequent humor. I cannot say for certain whether shoulder touching or shoulder patting can be used as a non-linguistic cue for humor in interactions as such. The above sequence seems to be in favor of the hypothesis that touching is perhaps a cue for humor created by conveying fake benevolence.

²⁸ Doliński's (2013) study, however, has argued that the compliance to a request is more likely to be decreased when a man touches another man. Such a phenomenon is frequently seen in a homophobic society.

²⁹ Hall, Coats and Smith LeBeau's (2005) meta-analysis of several non-verbal behaviors shows that touch may indicate power and status, as higher-status, powerful people are found to initiate touch more frequently.

As the use of touch in certain social interactions conveys psychological intimacy and perhaps benevolence, the use of this bodily action in joking or teasing may dramatize the speech event and further result in a humorous effect. In other words, the psychological intimacy may be fabricated by shoulder touching or shoulder patting, by using which a playful frame can be signaled.

4.6 The Choice of Dramatic Expression/Code

This discourse strategy is based on speaker's dramatization of a certain speech event to result in a humorous effect in an interaction. Different from the discourse strategy of theatrical performance as discussed in 4.3, the funniness of this strategy relies heavily on the content of the utterance itself, rather than on the speaker's non-verbal communicative skills. In the following interaction, Zhāng responds to Cài's joking behavior with dramatic expressions. The funniness of Zhāng's utterances result from his deliberately created appreciation, which appears awkward in a casual interaction among friends.

Extract (19) [Cài (M), Zhāng (M), Sūn (M)]

01. 蔡：那個、那個以後我家要裝潢就靠你了。
cài: nàge, nàge yǐhòu wǒ jiā yào zhuānghuáng jiù kào nǐ le.
02. 張：靠我喔？
zhāng: kào wǒ o?
03. 蔡：對啊。
cài: duì a.
04. → 張：是喔？感謝你給我這個機會！
zhāng: shì o? gǎnxiè nǐ gěi wǒ zhège jīhuì!
05. 蔡：我、我會通知你的。
cài: wǒ, wǒ huì tōngzhī nǐ de.
06. 孫嘉豐，張晟年的電話幾號？叫他過來啊！
sūn jiā-fēng, zhāng shèng-nián de diànhuà jǐhào? jiào tā guòlái a!
07. 沒有唸錯名字吧？
méiyǒu niàn cuò míngzi ba?
08. 張：沒有、沒有唸錯，那你要裝潢幾戶？蛤？
zhāng: méiyǒu, méiyǒu niàn cuò, nà nǐ yào zhuānghuáng jǐhù? há?
09. 蔡：我一戶就好了。
cài: wǒ yīhù jiù hǎo le.
10. 張：一戶喔？
zhāng: yīhù o?
11. 孫：一戶而已。
sūn: yīhù éryǐ.
12. 張：太少了啦，一戶太少了啦。

- zhāng: tài shǎo le la, yìhù tài shǎo le la.*
13. 孫: *至少愛幾千戶起跳*
- sūn: *zìziǎo ài guǐcīng hoó kǐtiào*.*
14. 張: 我是、我是打算下半輩子都靠你了吶。
- zhāng: wǒ shì, wǒ shì dǎsuàn xiàbàn bèizi dōu kào nǐ le ne.*
15. 蔡: 好, 沒問題, 我、我家一千坪啊。
- cài: hǎo, méi wèntí, wǒ, wǒ jiā yìqiānpíng a.*
16. 張: 一千坪喔?
- zhāng: yìqiānpíng o?*
17. 蔡: 我家有一千坪, 然後九層樓高, 就交給你了。
- cài: wǒ jiā yǒu yìqiānpíng, ránhòu jiǔcéng lóu gāo, jiù jiāo gěi nǐ le.*
18. 孫: 好, *啊明仔載愛開始圖愛交出來啊哦*。
- sūn: hǎo, *ā bbín 'ǎzài ài kāisǐ doó ài gāo cūtlái ā oó*.*
19. 蔡: 這一票讓你幹大的啊!
- cài: zhè yípiào ràng nǐ gàn dàde a!*
20. → 張: 喔, 感謝你的膽識!
- zhāng: o, gǎnxiè nǐde dǎnshì!*

Translation

01. Cài: [Cài pats on the bag on Zhāng's leg.] Well, in the future if my house needs interior decoration, I will depend on you.
02. Zhāng: (l: Zhāng) You want to depend on me? [Zhāng looks at Cài.] (l: Zhāng)
03. Cài: Yes.
04. → Zhāng: Really? I appreciate your giving me this opportunity! (L: Sūn, Zhāng) (l: Cài)
05. Cài: I, I will call you. [Cài imitates making a phone call.]
06. Sūn Jiā-Fēng, tell me the number of Zhāng Sheng-Nián. Ask him to come over!
07. This is your name, right? [Cài points at Zhāng.]
08. Zhāng: [Zhāng puts his right hand on the shoulder of Cài and looks at him.] (l: Zhāng) Yes, it is correct. So how many houses of yours need interior decoration? Huh?
09. Cài: (l: Cài) [Cài stretches his index finger.] One is enough. (L: Sūn, Zhāng) (l: Cài)
10. Zhāng: [Zhāng turns around and looks at Sūn.] (l: Zhāng) Only one?
11. Sūn: Only one. (L: Sūn)
12. Zhāng: That is not enough. One is not enough. [Cài pats the shoulder of Zhāng.]
13. Sūn: *At least a few thousand houses*.
14. Zhāng: [Zhāng puts his right hand on Cài's shoulder and looks at him.] (l: Zhāng) I, I have decided to depend on you for the rest of my life. (L: Sūn)
15. Cài: Okay, no problem. My house measures a thousand pyeong.³⁰
16. Zhāng: (L: Zhāng) A thousand pyeong?
17. Cài: My house measures a thousand pyeong and it has nine floors. You will be responsible for it. (L: Zhāng)
18. Sūn: Great, *and tomorrow you have to hand in the house layout plan*.
19. Cài: You will get a pretty good haul! (l: Cài)
20. → Zhāng: Oh, I appreciate your courage and insight! (L: Zhāng) (l: Sūn, Cài)

Prior to the above interaction, Zhāng was talking about his job as an interior decorator. Cài then says that he will ask Zhāng for help if his house needs interior decoration in the future

³⁰ A pyeong is an area unit used in Asian countries, such as Taiwan, Japan and Korea. One pyeong is approximately $\frac{400}{121}$ square metres (i.e., 3.3058 square meters, 3.954 square yards or 35.586 square feet). Also refer to Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyeong>).

(line 1). Cài's choice of the verb 靠 *kào* "to depend on" suggests his intention to exaggerate the speech act of requesting (i.e., asking Zhāng for doing interior decoration for his house), as this verb also encodes the semantic molecule of trusting. In other words, Cài's request can be regarded as a joking behavior. In his response, Zhāng repeats Cài's verb 靠 *kào* "to depend on" in his confirmation about Cài's request (line 2), which suggests that he has noticed Cài's intention for joking. He subsequently expresses his gratitude to Cài for trusting him (line 4). Zhāng's response, thus, can be regarded as framing Cài's request as a favor to him.

Note that Zhāng's expression of gratitude in line 4 consists of the verb 感謝 *gǎnxiè* "to thank because of appreciation," followed by the imposition caused by the favor 你給我這個機會 *nǐ gěi wǒ zhège jīhuì* "your giving me this opportunity." Zhāng's expression of gratitude belongs to the appreciation strategy category, which is not a preferred thanking strategy by Mandarin native speakers (see Cheng 2005).³¹ As Cheng further argues, native speakers of Mandarin use significantly less thanking, appreciation and repayment strategies than English native speakers. In addition, among the eight thanking strategies used by Mandarin native speakers, the appreciation strategy is still not a preferred one.³² Zhāng's choice of this thanking strategy is therefore intriguing. In addition, as the degree of gratefulness encoded in 感謝 *gǎnxiè* "to thank because of appreciation" is higher than that encoded in 謝謝 *xièxiè* "to thank," it would be awkward to use it as an expression of gratitude in a talk among friends. Additionally, it would also be awkward to possess a high level of gratitude towards a favor in an imagined situation, as thanking is a speech act based on a past act (see Searle 1969).³³

From the above, we may reasonably assume that Zhāng's high level of gratitude in a talk among friends, especially for the favor that does not exist, can be regarded as an intended humorous response to Cài's prior joking behavior. The inappropriateness and awkwardness of Zhāng's appreciation strategy in such a context is the source of the humor. Zhāng's laughter perhaps indicates his intention to frame his utterance as play. The other participant Sūn's laughter further indicates that Zhāng's discourse strategy to construct humor is understood and appreciated. Zhāng's intention to frame his high level of gratitude as play is also

³¹ Cheng (2005) has observed eight thanking strategies (i.e., thanking, appreciation, positive feelings, apology, recognition of imposition, repayment, other and alerters) used by Mandarin and English native speakers.

³² According to Cheng (2005: 55), frequency of preferred thanking strategies for Mandarin native speakers shows that directly expressing thanking is mostly preferred (36%), followed by strategies of alerters (23%), positive feelings (12%), repayment (10%), appreciation (7%), apology (6%), recognition of imposition (4%) and other (1%).

³³ In analyzing speech acts, Searle (1969) has defined thanking as an illocutionary act performed by a speaker, which is based on an act performed by the listener in the past. As the speaker benefits from this past act, or at least s/he believes has benefited from it, s/he therefore makes a statement to show how grateful or appreciative s/he feels. This statement can be counted as an expression of gratitude, which belongs to the category of *Expressives* (cf. Searle 1976).

evidenced in the subsequent interaction with Cài. In line 8, for example, Zhāng asks Cài how many of his houses need interior decoration. Zhāng's smiling and his touching Cài on the shoulder can be used as cues for humor.³⁴ Zhāng's subsequent reinforcement of the imposition on Cài (lines 10, 12 and 14) and the other participant Sūn's cooperation with Zhāng (line 13) further suggest that Zhāng's appreciation strategy is not to express gratitude, but to result in a humorous effect, while at the same time as a response to Cài's joking behavior. In line 20, Zhāng uses the same discourse strategy again in response to Cài's utterances in prior speaking turns. In this line, Zhāng not only shows a high level of gratitude, but he also uses the positive word 膽識 *dǎnshì* "courage and insight" to strengthen the degree of gratefulness.

Among the dramatic expressions that are used as a discourse strategy to construct humor, many are found to be metaphors, more specifically conceptual metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) pioneering work argues that how people think or act are metaphorical by nature, as metaphors are pervasive in our everyday life. In addition, conceptual metaphors are embodied human experiences. This idea further suggests that metaphors are functional in everyday verbal interactions, and that they can be used for certain communicative purposes. In Extract (20), for example, Wāng uses a metaphor to dramatize the speech event. In so doing, Wāng not only clearly illustrates his point, but he also successfully attracts laughter from other speech participants. The humorous effect results from how other speech participants process Wāng's selection of a certain concrete source domain and mapping it onto the abstract target domain.

Extract (20) [Wāng (M), Zhāng (F), Wú (F), Xióng (F)]

01. 汪：妳什麼時候，妳什麼時候認識的？
wāng: nǐ shénme shíhòu, nǐ shénme shíhòu rènshì de?
02. 張：談...
zhāng: ē...
03. 吳：早就知道他了。
wú: zǎojiù zhīdào tā le.
04. 張：早就知道他，只是沒有...
zhāng: zǎojiù zhīdào tā, zhǐshì méiyǒu...
05. 吳：你們不可以講話。
wú: nǐmen bù kěyǐ jiǎnghuà.
06. 張：稱讚他，就是，我不是一年前認識他，他是跟我講說他在那個咖啡店大概是半年前，半年前開始工作，然後後來遇到。
zhāng: chēngzàn tā, jiùshì, wǒ bú shì yìnián qián rènshì tā, tā shì gēn wǒ jiǎngshuō tā zài nàge kāfēi diàn dàgài shì bàn'nián qián, bàn'nián qián kāishǐ gōngzuò, ránhòu

³⁴ See my analysis of Extract (18).

- hòulái yùdào.*
07. 然後我們就在街上遇到，然後他很開心地跟我打招呼。
ránhòu wǒmen jiù zài jiēshàng yùdào, ránhòu tā hěn kāixīnde gēn wǒ dǎ zhāohū.
08. 我那時候都沒有覺得怎麼樣，因為我那時候還有其他的對象在煩惱。
wǒ nà shíhòu dōu méiyǒu juéde zěnmeyàng, yīnwèi wǒ nà shíhòu hái yǒu qítāde duìxiàng zài fán'nao.
09. 吳：嗯。
wú: en.
10. 張：所以都沒有...
zhāng: suǒyǐ dōu méiyǒu...
11. 吳：看吧！嗯，好。
wú: kàn ba! en, hǎo.
12. 熊：嗯，好。
xióng: en, hǎo.
13. 吳：不適合的就趕快斬斷。
wú: bú shìhéde jiù gǎnkuài zhǎnduàn.
14. 張：所以都沒有把他...
zhāng: suǒyǐ dōu méiyǒu bǎ tā...
15. 熊：同意，不要浪費時間。
xióng: tóngyì, bú yào làngfèi shíjiān.
16. 吳：對。
wú: duì.
17. 張：都沒有把他看，就是，都沒有把他放在眼裡。
zhāng: dōu méiyǒu bǎ tā kàn, jiùshì, dōu méiyǒu bǎ tā fàng zài yǎnlǐ.
18. 然後其實我，我在，我去那家咖啡廳，我蠻常去，因為它是一家英文書店。
ránhòu qíshí wǒ, wǒ zài, wǒ qù nàjiā kāfēitīng, wǒ máncáng qù, yīnwèi tā shì yìjiā yīngwén shūdiàn.
19. 吳：嗯、嗯、嗯，對，妳跟我講過。
wú: en, en, en, duì, nǐ gēn wǒ jiǎng guò.
20. 張：等一下就是可以給你們看一下。
zhāng: děngyíxià jiùshì kěyǐ gěi nǐmen kàn yíxià.
21. 汪：那一個是不是妳之前說長，就是，很像是同志的那一個？
wāng: nà yíge shì bú shì nǐ zhīqián shuō zhǎng, jiùshì, hěn xiàng shì tóngzhì de nà yíge?
22. 張：喔、對！
zhāng: o, duì!
23. 汪：早搭訕，早，早就有結果，我跟妳講。
wāng: zǎo dāshàn, zǎo, zǎo jiù yǒu jiéguǒ, wǒ gēn nǐ jiǎng.
24. 吳：沒關係啦，他們就需要這樣子的時間，沒關係。
wú: méi guānxi la, tāmen jiù xūyào zhèyàngzide shíjiān, méi guānxi.
25. → 汪：火慢慢燒還是燒起來了！
wāng: huǒ mànman shāo hái shì shāo qǐlái le!

Translation

01. Wāng: When, when did you get to know him?
02. Zhāng: Well,... [Zhāng ponders.]
03. Wú: She has known him.
04. Zhāng: I have known him, but I did not...
05. Wú: You people be quiet.
06. Zhāng: I did not mention anything good about him. [Zhāng looks at Wāng.] I got to

- know him a year ago. He told me that he began working in that coffee shop about half a year ago. [Zhāng turns around and looks at Wú.] He began working there half a year ago, and then we met.
07. Then we bumped into each other on the street, and he said hi to me joyfully.
 08. I did not have any feelings towards him at that time, because I was suffering simultaneously the problems with the other guy. (l: Zhāng)
 09. Wú: Okay.
 10. Zhāng: So I did not...
 11. Wú: See? Well, okay. (l: Wú) [Zhāng looks at Wú.] (L: Zhāng)
 12. Xióng: Well, okay.
 13. Wú: Get rid of those who are not suitable for you.
 14. Zhāng: So I did not...
 15. Xióng: I agree. Do not waste your time. [Xióng raises her hand.]
 16. Wú: Right.
 17. Zhāng: I did not pay any attention to him.
 18. In fact I go to that coffee shop very often, because it is also a book shop selling English books.
 19. Wú: Okay, you already told me about that.
 20. Zhāng: I can show you later. [Zhāng takes out her iPad.]
 21. Wāng: Is he the guy that you talked about before, who looks gay?
 22. Zhāng: Oh, yes! [Zhāng nods her head.] (l: Zhāng) (S)
 23. Wāng: If you had chatted him up earlier, you would have got to know him earlier. I told you. (l: Zhāng)
 24. Wú : [Wú stretches her hand.] It is okay. They needed time. It is okay. (L: Zhāng)
 25. → Wāng: Although they were slow in making a fire, they did it at last! [Wāng uses hand gesture to imitate starting a fire.] (L: Wú)

The above conversation is about Zhāng's new date. Wāng initiates the topic for conversation (line 1), as he and Xióng know almost nothing about Zhāng's new date. The other participant Wú has heard something about Zhāng's new date, which is evidenced in line 3. In her turns of speaking, Zhāng tells details of how she met her new date and how they later became more familiar with each other (lines 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14, 17 and 18). Zhāng's self-disclosure of her and her new date perhaps reminds Wāng of someone, whom Zhāng told Wāng about before. This can be seen in Wāng's polarizing question, which is immediately confirmed by Zhāng (lines 21 and 22). Note that there is a short silence following Zhāng's confirmation, as (S) indicates (line 22). Wāng's question can be regarded as introducing a new topic on a previous interaction between himself and Zhāng, with which only they are familiar. As Wú and Xióng perhaps know nothing about their previous interaction, they cannot join the conversation. To get past the awkward silence because of his unexpectedly switching the topic, Wāng goes back to the original topic, focusing on Zhāng's new date. In line 23, Wāng states that he has already suggested that Zhāng should have chatted up her new date. His use of 我跟妳講 *wǒ gēn nǐ jiǎng* "I told you" can be regarded as his blaming Zhāng for not accepting his

suggestion earlier. Zhāng's smiling in the same line indicates her understanding of Wāng's pretended anger as humor. In response to Wāng's blame of Zhāng, Wú uses 沒關係 *méi guānxi* "it is okay," followed by an excuse for Zhāng (line 24). While Wú can be regarded as speaking for Zhāng, she is in fact teasing Zhāng in a sarcastic way, which is appreciated by Zhāng, as her laughter indicates (line 24). Wú's humor can be regarded as showing her support to Wāng's humor in the previous speaking turn.

To further construct the funniness of the conversation based on the romance between Zhāng and her new date, Wāng subsequently uses the LOVE IS FIRE metaphor as his support to Wú's humor, which is regarded by Wú as funny (line 25). Although Kövecses (1986) argues that the feeling towards romantic love is universal, as "[r]omantic love is a feeling which is characterized by affection, enthusiasm, interest, longing and intimacy" (p. 78), such a feeling can be dramatized in various ways for different communicative purposes. As the above interaction shows, while Wāng's choice of the LOVE IS FIRE metaphor perhaps shows his intention to result in a humorous effect, the funniness results from how other speech participants perceive Wāng's metaphor, which can be explained by Ahrens' (2002) Conceptual Mapping Model and the concept of mapping principles. Ahrens has suggested that metaphors can be studied in terms of the entities, qualities and functions that can map between a source domain and a target domain. We may therefore say that the romantic love between Zhāng and her new date can be understood as fire, in the sense that fire involves being caused by someone, and that romantic love also involves being caused by someone, i.e., by Zhāng, her new date or both. In addition, the difficulty of starting a fire is like that of starting a romantic relationship, which can be seen in Wāng's use of 火慢慢燒 *huǒ màn màn shāo* "being slow in making a fire" (line 25). While this utterance suggests that the romance between Zhāng and her new date was full of twists and turns in the beginning, the following utterance 還是燒起來了 *háishì shāo qǐlái le* "the fire being set in the end" shows that the romantic love between Zhāng and her new date can be as strong as a burning fire. As Wāng's LOVE IS FIRE metaphor is framed as play by his intended choice of such a dramatic expression, other speech participants Zhāng, Wú and Xióng may use different mapping principles to obtain the funniness encoded in this metaphor.

Noteworthy, speech participants are also found to use fixed expressions as a strategy to dramatize certain speech events, so as to result in a humorous effect. As fixed expressions are frequently used in everyday verbal interactions, hearers may quickly perceive the dramatic effect of the expressions, and further appreciate the humor encoded in them. In the following

extract, Chén uses a fixed expression to show her support to Jiǎn's point of view, but in a humorous way.

Extract (21) [Chén (F), Jiǎn (F), Lín (F)]

01. 陳：不過妳剛說到就是情侶互補，我看我姐姐跟她男朋友也是互補。
chén: búguò nǐ gāng shuōdào jiùshì qínglǚ hùbǔ, wǒ kàn wǒ jiějie gēn tā nán péngyǒu yě shì hùbǔ.
02. 簡：對啊！我跟妳講，兩個相像的人會很衝耶。
jiǎn: duì a! wǒ gēn nǐ jiǎng, liǎngge xiāngxiàngde rén huì hěn chòng ye.
03. 妳跟妳男朋友是比較互補吧？你們的個性。
nǐ gēn nǐ nán péngyǒu shì bǐjiào hùbǔ ba? nǐmen de gèxìng.
04. 林：互補？
lín: hùbǔ?
05. 陳：就一個比較...
chén: jiù yíge bǐjiào...
06. 簡：比如說一個比較，痾，快...
jiǎn: bǐrú shuō yíge bǐjiào, e, kuài...
07. 陳：急躁，一個比較慢。
chén: jíào, yíge bǐjiào màn.
08. 簡：比較很慢。
jiǎn: bǐjiào hěn màn.
09. 林：如果這樣比的話，是有。
lín: rúguǒ zhèyàng bǐ dehuà, shì yǒu.
10. 簡：因為兩個都急或兩個都慢不行耶，那沒辦法。
jiǎn: yīnwèi liǎngge dōu jí huò liǎngge dōu màn bù xíng ye, nà méi bànfǎ.
11. → 陳：那會出事！
chén: nà huì chūshì!
12. 簡：對！不是很大的衝突就是冷掉。
jiǎn: duì! bú shì hěn dàde chōngtú jiùshì lěngdiào.
13. 陳：對。
chén: duì.

Translation

01. Chén: But you just mentioned about complementary personalities of lovers. I have observed my big sister and her boyfriend. They are also complementary.
02. Jiǎn: Exactly! Let me tell you. Lovers with similar personality traits will have conflicts.
03. [Jiǎn looks at Lín.] You and your boyfriend are complementary, right? Your characters.
04. Lín: Complementary?
05. Chén: I mean one is more...
06. Jiǎn: For example, one is more, well, hasty...
07. Chén: More quick-tempered, while the other is more lukewarm.
08. Jiǎn: More lukewarm.
09. Lín: If you compare our personality traits like this, then yes.
10. Jiǎn: It is because it is impossible for lovers to be together if they are both quick-tempered or both lukewarm. They cannot live together in peace.
11. → Chén: There will be an accident! (L: Chén, Lín)
12. Jiǎn: (L: Jiǎn) Exactly! They would either have a big conflict or live together without

- any passion.
13. Chén: Exactly.

The above interaction is an exchange of opinions about whether lovers in a relationship should have similar personality traits. Chén first gives an example of her sister to show her support of the idea that lovers should be complementary (line 1), which is immediately supported by Jiǎn (line 2). Jiǎn further claims that lovers with similar personality traits might have problems (line 10). To show her support to Jiǎn's viewpoint on this issue, Chén further specifies Jiǎn's viewpoint by using 那會出事 *nà huì chūshì* "there will be an accident," which attracts laughter from Lín and Jiǎn (lines 11 and 12). Chén's laughter can be treated as an indicator of humor, which is appreciated by other two speech participants, as we have seen previously.

Note that the Mandarin expression, which consists of two lexemes 出 *chū* "out" and 事 *shì* "thing," is a fixed expression used to refer to an unexpected, extremely unfavorable accident. As Moon (2003: 2) has observed, fixed expressions may include frozen collocations, grammatically ill-formed collocations, proverbs, routine formulae, sayings and similes. She further claims that fixed expressions may be fully understood only when they are considered with the texts in which they are used. The use of this fixed expression to refer to a relationship between lovers seems awkward. Chén's use of it, thus, can be regarded as dramatizing the speech event, and other speech participants may quickly make a connection between the actual speech event and Chén's dramatization of it due to "short-circuited implicature" (Morgan 1978: 274). Other speech participants, therefore, can perceive Chén's humor in an extremely short period of time and appreciate it.

The above examples of dramatic expressions have further shown that there is perhaps a cognitive selection mechanism in the process of producing humor. That is, speech participants are standing at the crossroads of choosing between different potential expressions/codes that can be used to result in a humorous effect because of their dramatic nature. Furthermore, although not shown above, many dramatic expressions in Taiwanese social interactions, including online communication (e.g., Facebook), are based on the shared in-group knowledge about the common community. Most of these dramatic expressions are found to be associated with the Taiwanese society, such as the current socio-economic situation in Taiwan. Because of the shared in-group knowledge, humor based on such

knowledge may evoke a hearty laugh or smile from the in-group members, which probably are not considered as humorous by the out-group members.³⁵

4.7 Conclusion

Based on empirical data from casual conversations among Taiwanese friends, I have taken an interactional perspective in analyzing how speech participants employ verbal and non-verbal discourse strategies to negotiate previously established friendships and intimate relationships in a humorous way. These strategies include the use of quotation, rhetorical question, theatrical performance, back-handed remark, fictional episode and choice of dramatic expression. Findings of these strategies are summarized below.

Firstly, a speech participant may directly quote someone else's remark or his/her inner speech as a humor strategy. S/he may also use an exclamative particle in a quoted speech to dramatize the speech event. Secondly, a rhetorical question may help put the humor producer in the center of attention, further extending the conversation. Thirdly, in using theatrical performance as a humor strategy, a speech participant very often resorts to the performing body. The use of it also largely relies on the use of exaggerated, artificial expression of emotion, e.g. sighing. A speech participant may also use smiling (as an act of provoking) or pretended anger and the ensuing aggression to result in a humorous effect. Fourthly, as a back-handed remark can be viewed as an indirect linguistic strategy to show criticism, a speech participant frequently uses a degree adverb as an intensifier to strengthen the oppositeness of his/her actual thoughts, so as to result in a humorous effect. Fifthly, a speech participant may use a fictional episode as a discourse strategy to create humor. The humorous effect may be further reinforced by dramatizing the speech event. This is perhaps done by touching, thanks to the psychological intimacy conveyed by it. Finally, a speech participant may choose a dramatic expression or code, of which the funniness relies heavily on the content of the utterance itself. These expressions may also include metaphors and fixed expressions.

In the next chapter, the discourse strategies adopted by Polish friends to result in a humorous effect in their conversations will be illustrated and discussed.

³⁵ See Appendix III.

Chapter Five

DISCOURSE STRATEGIES IN POLISH VERBAL INTERACTIONS

In this chapter, how Polish friends use different discourse strategies to construct humor to negotiate previously established friendships and intimate relationships is illustrated and discussed. Analyzing the data, I have observed five discourse strategies used by Polish friends, including the use of quotation, back-handed remark, fictional episode, choice of dramatic expression and highlighting contradiction. In Sections 5.1-5.5, the above discourse strategies are carefully examined and discussed. Next, Section 5.6 concludes the findings in this chapter.

5.1 The Use of Quotation

As illustrated and discussed in the previous chapter, a speech participant may directly quote someone else's remark or his/her inner speech to result in a dramatic effect. Such a dramatic effect comes from the role shift from the actual world to the situation being described. In other words, the use of quotation as a discourse strategy helps a speaker dramatize the speech event that s/he wants to share with others. In my Polish data, I have observed that Poles also frequently use this discourse strategy to result in a dramatic effect. In conversations among friends, moreover, this discourse strategy is further used to elicit laughter and smile, thanks to its dramatic nature.

The following extract is from an interaction among three Polish friends, all female. In describing how one dealt with her sick boyfriend Łukasz earlier that day, Tatiana uses direct quotation to dramatize the speech event. She also employs paralinguistic devices, such as facial gesture and raising vocal volume, to enact the role of Łukasz. Tatiana's use of quotation in different speaking turns successfully elicits laughter and smile from Ewa and Anna.

Extract (22) [Tatiana (F), Ewa (F), Anna (F)]

01. Tatiana: Ale musimy porozmawiać o czymś wesołym.
02. Ewa: Możesz opowiedzieć o tym, jak Grawcu pomógł jej z dzisiaj.
03. Tatiana: Aaa, bo Łukasz jest bardzo chory, leży w łóżku od rana i w ogóle nic nie mówi prawie, znaczy to co zdążył powiedzieć, to zdążył powiedzieć.
04. Ewa: Tatiana się zmyła godzinę przed spotkaniem do mnie.
05. Tatiana: Wracam w ogóle od lekarza, nie dość, że jestem podłamana tym wszystkim i w ogóle, dzwonię do niego pod tym szpitalem. Tak bluźnił, tak kurwami rzucił. Przez tych lekarzy, miał taką siłę. Taką dostał takiego kopa. Tak się wnerwił, że...
06. Anna: Adrenalina.
07. Tatiana: Jeszcze nie słyszałam, żeby on tak bluźnił, nie? No i jadę do domu, wchodzę do domu. On leży w łóżku i do mnie, tak jakby nie miał siły ze mną gadać. No i ja mówię, znaczy on się mnie pierwszy zapytał, jak ja się czuję, no i mówię, że widzę, że ty gorzej no i mówię, że fizycznie to jakoś się czuję, tak? Gorzej tak psychicznie.
08. Anna: Yhym.
09. Tatiana: „Ojejku, a jak ja się czuję...”
10. Ewa: Ja bym go walnęła normalnie.
11. → Tatiana: „Zrób mi herbaty.” Zrobiłam mu herbatę. „Nie chcę herbaty!”
12. Tatiana: Ja już taka zmieszana. O co w ogóle chodzi?
13. → A on tak: „Chce mi się pić.” „No to ci zrobiłam. Chcesz herbaty?” „Nie, nie chcę herbaty.” „Chcesz sok?” „Nie, nie chcę soku.” „To co chcesz?” „Wody.”
14. Nalałam mu ten wody.
15. → „No masz wypij tą wodę?” „Nie chcę wody!”

Translation

01. Tatiana: But we need to talk about something cheerful. (l: Tatiana, Ewa) (L: Anna) (S)
02. Ewa: [Tatiana and Anna look at Ewa. Ewa lowers her head while speaking.] Maybe you can tell us how Grawcu helped her today. (l: Ewa)
03. Tatiana: [Tatiana turns away and looks at Anna.] Ahh, it is because Łukasz is very sick, lying on the bed from morning. And in general he says almost nothing. That is, he only said what he had to say. [Tatiana looks at Ewa.] (l: Tatiana) He only said what he had to say.
04. Ewa: Tatiana ran away to my place an hour before the gathering. (L: Ewa) (l: Anna)
05. Tatiana: I am coming back from the doctor. I not only feel in despair because of all these. I call him in front of the hospital. He was swearing so much, uttering a lot of damn. (L: Anna) Because of those doctors he got so much strength. [Tatiana clenches her fist and moves her left hand upward and downward.] He suddenly became full of energy. He was so angry that...
06. Anna: Adrenalin. (L: Anna) (l: Ewa)
07. Tatiana: I had not heard him swear like that, had I? Well, and I am driving home and entering the house. He is lying on the bed and acting to me, [Tatiana imitates her boyfriend Łukasz by squinting her eyes.] (l: Ewa), as if he did not have any strength to talk to me. Well, and I say, that means he first asked me how I feel. Well, and I say that I can see that you are worse, well I say that physically I feel somehow okay, right? But mentally I feel worse. [Tatiana squints her eyes again.]
08. Anna: Uh-huh.
09. Tatiana: [Tatiana imitates her boyfriend's sick voice.] “Oh, but I am feeling really badly...” (l: Tatiana, Ewa, Anna)
10. Ewa: (l: Ewa) [Ewa covers her face with both hands.] I would have punched him normally. (L: Anna) (l: Tatiana)

11. → Tatiana: "Make me tea." I made him tea. (V) „I do not want tea!" (l: Tatiana) (l: Ewa) (L: Anna)
12. Tatiana: I am so confused. What on earth is going on?
13. → And he is like this: "I am thirsty." "Well, I made you something. You want tea?" "No, I do not want tea." "You want juice?" "No, I do not want juice." "What do you want?" "Water." (l: Anna, Ewa)
14. I poured him water.
15. → "Well, you drink this water?" (V) "I do not want water!" (L: Anna, Ewa) (l: Tatiana)

Prior to the above sequence, the three speech participants were talking about something unpleasant. Tatiana thus proposes to change the topic of conversation and talk about something cheerful (line 1). After a long silence, Ewa suggests the episode of Tatiana's boyfriend Łukasz, as indicated by Łukasz's nickname Grawcu (line 2). As Ewa lowers her head while speaking, it becomes difficult to tell to whom she is talking. Upon hearing Ewa's mention of Łukasz's nickname, Tatiana begins her self-disclosure of how Łukasz interacted with her earlier that day, as can be seen in her subsequent narrative (lines 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15). To enact the role of Łukasz as an unsatisfied, spoiled boyfriend, Tatiana uses quotation as a discourse strategy, which further brings about laughter.

As the above extract shows, in lines 7, 11, 13 and 15, Tatiana both indirectly and directly quotes Łukasz's utterances. Most of these quoted remarks are accompanied by certain paralinguistic devices. In line 7, for example, Tatiana indirectly quotes Łukasz's reaction to her after she came back from the hospital, as in *on się mnie pierwszy zapytał, jak ja się czuję* "he first asked me how I feel." Tatiana's indirectly quoting Łukasz's utterance is dramatized by her facial gesture, made by imitating Łukasz's tired face. Tatiana's facial gesture which portrays Łukasz as an exhausted patient further entertains Ewa, as indicated by her smiling in the same line. In lines 11, 13 and 15, moreover, Tatiana can be regarded as directly quoting her conversation with Łukasz.

It is also interesting to note that, in passing, Tatiana raises her vocal volume when quoting Łukasz's responses *Nie chcę herbaty!* "I do not want tea!" (line 11) and *Nie chcę wody!* "I do not want water!" (line 15), as indicated by (V) in the same lines. While her use of direct quotation has dramatized the speech event, shifting from the actual discourse to the situation being described, Tatiana's change of her vocal volume in direct quotation further makes Łukasz's enacted role more vividly presented. To the above, Tatiana's quoting of Łukasz's utterances accompanied by her facial gestures and raised vocal volume successfully enacts the role of Łukasz, results in a dramatic effect and further elicits laughter and smiles.

5.2 The Use of Back-Handed Remark

In the previous chapter, I have analyzed and discussed how a back-handed remark is used as a discourse strategy to construct humor in a conversation among Taiwanese friends, most female. I have pointed out that the indirect nature of this discourse strategy is the source of humor. Recall that in Extract (17), Zhāng uses this discourse strategy to criticize the gossip target in an indirect but funny way, while she at the same time successfully builds rapport with other speech participants.

Analyzing the data from an interaction among three Polish friends, all female, I have observed a similar function of this discourse strategy. In the following interaction, the conversation concerns Tatiana's father, who likes to keep unnecessary stuff, but always forgets where he has put important documents. In her response to Tatiana's complaint about her father, Ewa uses a back-handed remark to build rapport with Tatiana, while her remark at the same time entertains the other participant Anna.

Extract (23) [Tatiana (F), Anna (F), Ewa (F)]

01. Tatiana: Mój ojciec to jest ewenement taki, że po prostu.
02. Anna: Ale nie wiem, nie przeglądałam tego, tylko szukałam właśnie.
03. Tatiana: Ale ty, to że znalazłaś pomiędzy obrusami to nie jest głupie, to tylko świadczy o tym, że on będzie jak dziadek, kurwa, chomikował wszędzie. On ma tak, przyjechałam do niego do Anglii i patrzę, a on ma taką stertę leków i patrzę.
04. Jadłam coś i to było na stole, patrzę i kurwa 2011, 2009 i mówię „Tato, to są przeterminowane leki, to trzeba wyrzucić.” I chcę to wyrzucić, a on „Nie absolutnie, nie wyrzucamy,” W ogóle, on mówi, że on to schowa.
05. Mówię „Kurwa, po co ci te leki? One są przeterminowane, tak?” „Nie martw się.”
06. → Anna: Może będzie jakoś przerabiał.
07. Tatiana: „Może jeszcze się do czegoś przyda.”
08. → Ewa: Tak, zawsze się do czegoś przyda.

Translation

01. Tatiana: Simply put, my father is unbelievable.
02. Anna: But I do not know. I did not browse. I was simply searching.
03. Tatiana: But you, you found it between the table clothes, which is not stupid. (L: Tatiana) This only proves that he will be like grandfather, damn it, collecting stuff everywhere. He is like this, I came to him, to England, and I see that he has such a pile of medications, and I see that.
04. I was eating something and they were on the table. I see and damn it, 2011, 2009, and I say, "Dad, these are expired medications. You should throw them away." I want to throw them away, and he (V) "Absolutely no, we are not throwing them away." In general, he says that he will keep them somewhere. (I: Ewa)
05. I say, (I: Tatiana, Anna) "Damn it, what are these medications for? They are expired, right?" (L: Anna) "No need to worry."

06. → Anna: Maybe they will be converted into something. (L: Anna)
07. Tatiana: "Maybe they can still be used as something useful."
08. → Ewa: Yes, they can always be used as something useful. (l: Anna)

Prior to the above interaction, the topic of the conversation was Tatiana's father, who forgot where he had kept an important document. As Anna was renting Tatiana's father's flat, this important document was found by her. Tatiana comments on her father as an exceptional and unusual person (line 1). In lines 3-5, Tatiana gives another example, illustrating his father's habit of keeping unnecessary stuff, such as unused but already expired medications. In so doing, Tatiana uses quotation as a discourse strategy to dramatize the conversation between her and her father, which entertains Ewa, Anna and perhaps Tatiana herself, as signaled by their smiling faces and laughter.

Anna first comments on Tatiana's father's insistence of keeping expired medications, as we can see in line 6. In this line, Anna can be regarded as showing agreement with Tatiana's father. She, however, bursts out laughing upon completing her utterance. Anna's laughter perhaps indicates that she is simply joking, and that she is entertained by her own remark. In other words, Anna can be regarded as criticizing Tatiana's father in an indirect but funny way. In line 7, Tatiana continues and quotes her father's remark to show his attitude towards expired medications. That is, her father thinks that expired medications should not be thrown away, as they can still be used as something useful in the future. In her response, Ewa directly quotes Tatiana's quote from her father and further adds *tak* "yes," which shows that she agrees with Tatiana's father. Although Ewa's facial expression cannot be seen due to the angle of the camera, judging from the whole interaction containing the above sequence, Ewa can be thought of as not agreeing with Tatiana's father. Thus, Ewa's quote in line 8 can be regarded as showing disagreement with Tatiana's father, but in an indirect and sarcastic way. The humor comes from the indirect nature of her quote, of which the sarcasm is intensified by her use of *zawsze* "always." More specifically, Ewa's back-handed remark is constructed by using quotation with an intensifier. Her humor is immediately appreciated by Anna, as signaled by her smiling in the same line.

The above interaction has revealed that both Anna and Ewa use back-handed remarks to show indirect criticism towards Tatiana's father, and that their back-handed remarks are used in response to Tatiana's narration. While Anna and Ewa perhaps intend to use back-handed remarks as a support to Tatiana's complaint about her father, their back-handed remarks can also be regarded as a discourse strategy used to construct humor, regardless of

their intention. Anna's laughter in line 6 perhaps indicates her intention to use this discourse strategy to construct humor. Although I cannot say for certain whether Ewa intends to construct humor via the same discourse strategy, her back-handed remark in line 8 is appreciated by Anna, as signaled by her smiling. In a nutshell, in both Polish and Taiwanese interactions, a back-handed remark is frequently used to build solidarity, uniting all the speech participants as a whole in an ongoing interaction. While it is used to build rapport with one another, it simultaneously is against someone outside this speech activity. The humor comes from the indirect nature of this discourse strategy, which is reinforced by sarcasm.

5.3 The Use of Fictional Episode

As defined in the previous chapter, a fictional episode is an imagined situation created by a speaker for a specific communicative purpose, such as creating humor. In analyzing data from conversations among Polish friends, I have also observed examples of speech participants using this discourse strategy to construct humor. While all the examples used in this study indicate that the purpose of using this discourse strategy is to construct humor, it is used in different ways. In the following, how this discourse strategy is used to construct humor in conversations among Polish friends is illustrated and discussed.

Extract (24) is an interaction of Anna, Ewa and Tatiana. The conversation begins with Ewa's question directed at Anna, which is based on a presumption that Anna has not seen Ewa's boyfriend Leszek for a long time. After Ewa has gotten a positive answer, she immediately creates an imagined situation, in which Anna wants to see Leszek. Ewa's use of fictional episode as a discourse strategy brings about laughter.

Extract (24) [Anna (F), Ewa (F), Tatiana (F)]

01. Ewa: Już dawno go nie widziałaś chyba?
02. Anna: Mateusza?
03. Ewa: Nie, Leszka.
04. Anna: Dawno nie widziałam.
05. → Ewa: To jest.
06. Anna: Spoko.
07. Tatiana: Niech przyjdzie na moment.
08. Ewa: Leszek.
09. Tatiana: Pokaż się.
10. → Ewa: Chodź na chwilę, bo Ania nie wiedziała, że jesteś.

Translation

01. Ewa: Maybe you have not seen him for a long time?
02. Anna: Mateusz?
03. Ewa: No, Leszek.
04. Anna: I have not seen him for a long time.
05. → Ewa: He is here. [Ewa raises her right hand.] (L: Ewa) [Ewa stands up.]
06. Anna: (L: Anna) Calm down. [Ewa walks to the door.]
07. Tatiana: Let him come for a moment.
08. Ewa: Leszek.
09. Tatiana: Show up.
10. → Ewa: Come for a moment, because Ania (Anna) did not know you are here. [Anna covers her face with left hand.] (l: Anna)

In the beginning of the sequence, Ewa presumes that Anna has not seen her boyfriend Leszek for a long time, as we can see in her question directed at Anna (line 1). Anna subsequently gives a positive answer (line 4). Anna's answer, however, is taken by Ewa as an indirect request to see Leszek, as we can see in Ewa's subsequent response and action. In line 5, Ewa's *to jest* "he is here" followed by her hand gesture can be used as a signal that she thinks that Anna wants to see Leszek and expresses her request in an indirect way. Following Blum-Kulka's (1987) typology of request patterns based on the scale of indirectness, it is possible to regard Anna's answer as an indirect request, more specifically via the use of a mild hint.³⁶ From Anna's subsequent response *spoko* "calm down" (line 6) to stop Ewa from bothering Leszek, it becomes clear that her answer in line 4 is simply a statement of the fact that she has not seen Leszek for a long time, not a request to see him. Ewa, however, ignores Anna's response and walks to the door to ask Leszek to come in. Ewa's laughter in line 5 and her ignoring of Anna's response *spoko* "calm down" perhaps indicate that she intends to misinterpret Anna's answer in line 4. In other words, Ewa can be regarded as creating an imagined situation, in which Anna wants to see Leszek but requests in an indirect way.

Ewa's use of fictional episode as a discourse strategy in this context further results in a humorous effect. While Ewa entertains herself by getting immersed in her created imagined situation, as signaled by her laughter in line 5, part of the funniness perhaps comes from Anna's embarrassment, who does not intend to impose on Leszek. The embarrassing incident is caused by Ewa's imagined, in which Anna asks her to tell Leszek to come in. Although

³⁶ According to Blum-Kulka (1987: 133):, there are nine request categories, including *mood derivable* (e.g., Clean up the kitchen./Move your car.), *performative* (e.g., I'm asking you to move your car.), *hedged performative* (e.g., I would like to ask you to move your car.), *obligation statement* (e.g., You'll have to move your car.), *want statement* (e.g., I would like you to clean the kitchen./I want you to move your car.), *suggestory formulae* (e.g., How about cleaning up?/Why don't you come and clean up the mess you made last night?), *query preparatory* (e.g., Could you clean up the mess in the kitchen?/Would you mind moving your car?), *strong hints* (e.g., You've left the kitchen in a right mess.) and *mild hints* (e.g., We don't want any crowding (as a request to move the car)).

Ewa has heard Anna's *spoko* “calm down,” she chooses to ignore it. While she perhaps intends to arrange a meeting for both Anna and Leszek, she simultaneously creates a chance for Anna to impose on Leszek. In line 10, Ewa further makes it clear that it is Anna that requests Leszek to come in, which has embarrassed Anna even more, as we can see in her covering of her face with left hand.

It is interesting to note that creating a slightly embarrassing situation for a close friend can be regarded as part of the process of negotiating friendships and intimacy. In analyzing embarrassment and social organization, Goffman (1956) has observed that when an individual is flustered because of embarrassment, s/he will make effort to hide this emotional state, as each individual does not like to feel or appear embarrassed. However, as embarrassment is an emotional state that cannot be faked, expressing it also indicates to others that the embarrassed individual is trustworthy and pro-social (see Feinberg, Willer and Keltner 2012). Weisfeld and Weisfeld's (2014) study has further indicated that the embarrassing situation may be amusing and is not always accompanied by anxiety. The frequent and distinctive smiling and laughter accompanying such embarrassment may signal the humorous aspect of the embarrassing incident. In other words, embarrassment may consist of two universal emotions (i.e., shame and humor appreciation) experienced by the victim or other speech participants. In light of the above, close friends are more likely to show their emotional state when they feel embarrassed, as it is a potentially humorous situation. Therefore, making a friend embarrassed and seeing how s/he reacts to such an embarrassing situation can be amusing sometimes. Functionally, both the embarrassed friend and others can also learn from the uncomfortable position of the embarrassed friend. In addition, the embarrassed friend's subsequent reaction might further trigger a series of exchanges and laughter.

The following is another example, in which the same discourse strategy is also used to create humor. Different from Extract (24), in the following, the imagined situation is not constructed by a single person, but is co-constructed by some of the speech participants. The following sequence illustrates this point, in which two fictional episodes are co-constructed by some of the speech participants to make fun of Paweł. It is because Paweł is so focused on the computer game that others have to wait for him. Laughter, smiling and other contextualization cues can be observed during the whole interaction.

Extract (25) [Leszek (M), Ewa (F), Dominik (M), Paweł (M), Jacek (M)]

01. → Leszek: Dobra to my się najebmy, bo Paweł to już chyba nie schodzi.

02. → Ewa: Fajnie, że wpadliście.

03. Dominik: Cicho tam! My będziemy grać.
04. Leszek: Kurwa no chujowo, że się tego nie da puścić na ten no...
05. Paweł: No wiem, próbuję właśnie coś z tym zrobić.
06. → Dominik: A tam porno.
07. → Leszek: I jeszcze dźwięk w tym.
08. → Dominik: My czekamy aż puści Aliena, a on...
09. Paweł: Chłopaki, spokojnie, zaraz.
10. → Jacek: Paweł, może zgasimy światło? Będzie lepiej.

Translation

01. → Leszek: [Leszek looks at Paweł, who is playing the video game with an immersive virtual reality headset. Leszek then turns to Dominik sitting next to him.] We had better go and get drunk, because maybe Paweł has already decided not to leave the game. (L: Leszek) (I: Dominik, Ewa)
02. → Ewa: It is good that you came over. (L: Leszek)
03. Dominik: [Dominik looks at Ewa.] You be quiet! (I: Dominik) We are going to play it. (S)
04. Leszek: Damn it, well, do not put that on that...
05. Paweł: Well, I know. I am just trying to do something with it. [Leszek looks at Dominik, nodding his head.] (I: Leszek, Dominik)
06. → Dominik: But there is porn over there. [Dominik points at Paweł.] (L: Dominik) (I: Leszek)
07. → Leszek: And there is even sound in it. [Leszek points at Paweł.] (I: Leszek) [Leszek starts singing a song from a porn movie and shakes his body.] (L: Dominik)
08. → Dominik: [Dominik turns to Jacek.] (L: Dominik) We are waiting to play alien, but he...
09. Paweł: Boys, calm down, soon.
10. → Jacek: [The music of the video game plays.] Paweł, maybe we turn off the light? It will be better. (I: Jacek) [Jacek pretends as if he is giving a massage to Paweł.] (L: Dominik) (I: Leszek, Ewa)

In the beginning of the sequence, Leszek tells Dominik that Paweł does not show any sign of allowing others to play the game (line 1). His laughter and his use of the vernacular form *my się najebmy* “we go for a drink and get drunk” frame his complaint-like utterance as simply joking, which is understood by Dominik and Ewa, as signaled by their smiling faces. Although Leszek can be regarded as proposing to go for a drink, he in fact is showing his frustration in a funny way. Ewa further treats Leszek's complaint-like utterance as an invitation to co-construct a fictional episode, as evidenced in her subsequent remark *Fajnie, że wpadliście* “It is good that you came over” (line 2). In Ewa's constructed fictional episode, all the guests will be leaving for a drink soon. It is not clear whether Ewa intends to use this discourse strategy to create humor, as Ewa does not show any signs. Leszek's laughter in the same line, however, indicates that he is entertained by Ewa's utterance. In fact, the other speech participant Dominik is also entertained. Although Dominik's utterance *Cicho tam!*

“You be quiet!” can be taken as a sign for being offended, his smiling in line 3 indicates his appreciation of Ewa's humor. In other words, Ewa can be regarded as co-constructing the fictional episode with Leszek to attract laughter and smiles.

The second fictional episode is also initiated by Leszek. Interestingly, although it is Dominik that accuses Paweł of playing an adult erotic game (line 6), Leszek's non-verbal cues should not be overlooked. In response to Paweł, Leszek turns to Dominik, nodding his head and smiling. These non-verbal cues can be used as an invitation to tease Paweł, despite the fact that both Leszek and Dominik know that Paweł is in fact playing an alien-related game. Dominik's smile perhaps shows his understanding of them. As Paweł is wearing an immersive virtual reality headset, others can pretend that they do not know exactly which computer game Paweł is playing. Dominik's laughter following his accusation frames his remark as play. His accusation can be regarded as a subsequent move in co-constructing a fictional episode for Paweł. Following Dominik, Leszek further indicates that the music of the adult erotic game can be heard (line 7). Leszek's support of Dominik's accusation also entertains Dominik, as signaled by Dominik's laughter in the same line. Dominik further implies that Paweł is so immersed in the adult erotic game that others cannot play the other game (line 8). Dominik's gaze directed at Jacek can be regarded as an invitation to join the teasing squad, which is quite successful. Although Jacek was simply observing when Leszek and Dominik co-constructed the fictional episode for Paweł, he joins the teasing squad when he is invited by Dominik. In line 10, Jacek suggests to turn off the light, as the atmosphere will probably make Paweł more comfortable playing the adult erotic game. Jacek's smile suggests his intention to frame his suggestion as play. His suggestion followed by his body gesture further attracts laughter from Dominik and smile from Leszek and Ewa.

It is interesting to note that while the co-construction of the fictional episode is signaled by many contextualization cues, the source of the co-construction is based on a *we* vs. *him* contrast. For example, in line 8, Dominik's first-person plural pronoun *my* “we” has constructed Dominik and others as a whole against *on* “he,” namely Paweł, who keeps playing the “adult erotic game.” Indeed, the use of the first-person plural pronoun implies both authority and communality. As Pennycook (1994: 175) has stated, “[The first-person plural pronoun] is always simultaneously inclusive and exclusive, a pronoun of solidarity and of rejection, of inclusion and exclusion.” However, as a victim of the humor, Paweł is also invited to co-construct the fictional episode, as evidenced in the use of the address form in line 10. In the above sequence, both the proper noun *Paweł* (line 1) and the third-person

singular pronoun *on* “he” (line 8) are used as a third-person reference to Paweł. In line 10, however, the proper noun *Paweł* is used as an address form. Clearly, there is a pronominal shift from the third-person reference to the second-person reference. More specifically, this pronominal shift indicates Jacek's direct invitation to Paweł to participate in co-constructing the fictional episode. It thus becomes clear that when this discourse strategy is used to create humor, many contextualization cues can be observed. In addition, a speech participant may also invite others to co-construct a fictional episode, perhaps by using gaze.

The following is another example, in which the fictional episode is co-constructed by two speech participants. While the humor is created via the use of the same discourse strategy, the funniness may also come from the listener's processing of the speaker's humor in a created imagined situation. In other words, the listener has to carefully ponder on the speaker's words to get the humor. In Extract (26), Paweł is playing an adult erotic game, in which a woman is dancing in front of him.³⁷ Leszek's further question directed at Paweł can be regarded as constructing a fictional episode for Paweł, in which Paweł probably has forgotten that he is not playing the game alone.

Extract (26) [Leszek (M), Paweł (M), Jacek (M), Dominik (M), Janusz (M)]

01. Leszek: A możesz się rozglądać?
02. Paweł: No kurwa.
03. Leszek: Tak? O fuck man, muszę to zobaczyć.
04. Paweł: Ale jakiś koleś mnie po jajach masuje.
05. Leszek: Ja pierdolę, dobra bania, nie?
06. Jacek: Ja pierdolę, ale to wirtualnie, wirtualnie.
07. → Leszek: Ty tylko pamiętaj, że my tu siedzimy, nie?
08. → Janusz: Właśnie powinno być uczucie takiego 4D.

Translation

01. Leszek: And can you look around?
02. Paweł: Yes, damn it.
03. Leszek: Yes? (l: Leszek) Oh fuck man, I have to see this. (L: Jacek)
04. Paweł: But someone is rubbing my balls. (L)
05. Leszek: Fuck, nice stuff, isn't it?
06. Jacek: Fuck, but it is virtual, virtual. (L: Jacek) [Leszek leaves the room.]
07. → Leszek: [Leszek talks in the other room.] You only need to remember that we are sitting here, don't you? (L: Dominik)
08. → Janusz: [Janusz looks at Dominik while giving a massage to Paweł.] There certainly should be such a 4D virtual feeling. (L: Dominik, Jacek) (l: Janusz)

³⁷ According to the background information of the data, in Extract (26), Paweł is playing an adult erotic game, whereas in Extract (25), he is playing an alien-related game.

In the context where the above interaction takes place, Paweł is playing an adult erotic game with an immersive virtual reality headset. In line 1, Leszek asks Paweł whether he can look around, as the game is in three-dimensional space. After getting a positive answer from Paweł (line 2), Leszek shows his keen interest to play it. Paweł's self-disclosure *ale jakiś koleś mnie po jajach masuje* "but someone is rubbing my balls" in line 4 portrays himself as a victim of the dancing woman in the game, which triggers not only laughter (as indicated in the same line), but also responses from other speech participants. For example, in response to Paweł's self-disclosure, Leszek uses an imperative sentence *ty tylko pamiętaj, że my tu siedzimy* "you only need to remember that we are sitting here," which is resolved into an interrogative by his additional use of the tag *nie* "don't you," as we can see in line 7. Leszek's response, however, is not intended to seek an answer. While seeking an answer might be a possible assumption encoded in Leszek's utterance, there is still the other assumption. In other words, Paweł's live broadcast of his experience of being massaged by a dancing woman might give other speech participants an impression that he is so involved in the game that he probably has forgot that others are still sitting close to him. Leszek perhaps intends to make manifest to Paweł that he is not playing the adult erotic game alone in his room and therefore should not act as if no one were watching.

Leszek's response can be regarded as teasing Paweł, which elicits laughter from Dominik (line 7). In addition, Paweł's self-disclosure in line 4 can be regarded as self-deprecating humor, as his portraying himself as a victim of the dancing woman is self-directed and elicits laughter. As the use of this type of humor shows that the speaker is not afraid of revealing his/her own weakness, it helps evoke mixed feelings (e.g., pity, sympathy, appreciation and love) from the listener towards the speaker (see Zajdman 1995). In the above case, Paweł's self-disclosure successfully attracts such mixed feelings from other speech participants, as evidenced in Leszek's reminder (line 7) and Janusz's offer on body massage (line 8). Leszek and Janusz can be regarded as co-constructing a fictional episode for Paweł to tease him, as they both assume that Paweł is so immersed in the game in their created imagined situation.

It is interesting to note that while Leszek's reminder can be regarded as a discourse strategy based on using a fictional episode, its funniness also comes from the listener's processing of the implication conveyed by the utterance. His utterance disguised in the form of an imperative with a tag requires other speech participants to search for its implication in such an interaction. That is, other speech participants have to take the addressee of his

utterance, namely Paweł, into consideration. By combining Leszek's reminder and Paweł's self-disclosure as a whole, Leszek's humor can be understood. Sperber and Wilson's (1986) insightful relevance theory and Howard's (1983) schema theory can be used together to account for Leszek's humor. According to Sperber and Wilson, a speaker's utterance conveys a number of conversational implicatures. That is, his/her listener is always searching for possible meanings encoded in each of his/her utterances. Having found the meaning that most fits the listener's expectation of relevance, the processing will stop. On the other hand, the assumption of the schema theory is that each person has schemata for many familiar events, which can be used to fill in the gaps in an interaction. In other words, a person may search for the most relevant meaning of his/her interlocutor's utterance(s) according to the context where the interaction takes place, as well as his/her past experience. In sum, while Leszek can be regarded as co-constructing a fictional episode with Janusz to create humor, he is also inviting others to get ponder on Paweł's self-disclosure and get the implication encoded in his reminder to Paweł.

A fictional episode may also be co-constructed by a group of speech participants. Different from Extracts (25) and (26), the fictional episode is distinguished from the actual world by the speech participants' intentional choice of the formal register in a conversation among friends. In the following extract, Dominik, Leszek and Janusz co-construct a fictional episode on purpose, in which certain linguistic features of formality can be observed. Such features, however, might seem awkward in a conversation among close friends. The awkwardness is the source of humor, as the following extract illustrates.

Extract (27) [Dominik (M), Leszek (M), Janusz (M), Ewa (F)]

01. Dominik: Aha, coś się nagrywa, tak? Aha, to trzeba.
02. → Leszek, czy ty też czujesz się dzisiaj wspaniale?
03. → Leszek: Ależ oczywiście, Dominiku. Uważam, że dzisiejsza pogoda wygląda naprawdę super.
04. → Dominik: Powiem ci, że bardzo się cieszę, że spotkaliśmy się dziś tutaj, w takim bardzo naszym, fajnym dawnym gronie.
05. → Leszek: Nie śmiałbym z tobą polemizować.
06. Pluszak,³⁸ użyj jakichś mądrych słów ze swojego słownika.
07. → Janusz: Asertywność.

Translation

01. Dominik: Aha, it is recording, right? [Dominik looks at the camera.] Aha, it is necessary. [Dominik turns to Leszek.]
02. → Leszek, do you also feel great today? (I: Dominik, Leszek)

³⁸ Pluszak is a teddy bear-like plush toy and is used by others as Janusz's nickname.

03. → Leszek: Of course, Dominik. (l: Dominik) I think that the weather today looks really great. (l: Leszek) (L: Ewa)
04. → Dominik: [Dominik looks at the camera.] I shall tell you, I am very glad that we are meeting each other here today, in such a good company of old friends. [Dominik turns to Leszek.] (l: Dominik)
05. → Leszek: I would not dare to argue with you. (l: Leszek) (L: Ewa) [Leszek looks at Janusz] (l: Leszek)
06. Teddy, use some sophisticated words from your own lexicon.
07. → Janusz: Assertiveness. (L)

Prior to the above sequence, Ewa changes the position of the camera and asks the male speech participants in a whisper not to curse or to swear that much. As a sarcastic response to Ewa's request, Dominik changes his speaking style on purpose and talks in a more polite and formal manner. For example, he addresses Leszek when asking a question (line 2). Dominik's smiling further frames his formality as play, which is understood by Leszek, as signaled by Leszek's smiling in the same line. In his response, Leszek also addresses Dominik in return, as evidenced in the vocative form *Dominiku* (line 3). Leszek's smiling also frames his formal speaking style as play. He continues and further uses weather as a topic of conversation. As talking about weather is a good strategy to start a first encounter conversation with a stranger, Leszek's use of it as a conversational topic with a friend is therefore awkward. Such awkwardness is the source of humor, which makes Ewa burst out laughing.

Dominik and Leszek continue with their fictional episode, as we can see in lines 4 and 5. For example, their choice of certain words has framed the casual conversation as extremely formal, as if it were a formal speech delivered by an extremely old professor in a gala dinner. These words/phrases used to mark formality may include *cieszę się* "I am glad," *w takim bardzo naszym, fajnym dawnym gronie* "in such a good company of old friends," and *polemizować* "argue." However, their smiling frames their formality as play and is appreciated by Ewa as humor, as signaled by her laughter in line 5. In line 6, moreover, Leszek further asks a question and invites Janusz to co-construct the fictional episode. His question has framed the fictional episode as an interaction of intelligent people, who always use sophisticated words. Janusz's response with a deliberately chosen word *asertywność* "assertiveness" not only indicates his participation in co-constructing the fictional episode, but also is an expression of humor, which makes everyone laugh, as we can see in line 7. While a person's use of a sophisticated word in a conversation may be an indicator of his/her high intelligence, the intentional choice of it to show off one's educational background regardless of its appropriateness in such a context may sound funny.

According to Urbanová (2005), there are, in total, eleven types of dialogic structure classified in accordance with the level of formality and the relationship between the speech participants. As Urbanová has observed, in a first encounter conversation intended to seek common ground and show respect to each other, the conversation is rather formal. The features of formality may include “polite formulae, address and expression of appreciation” (p. 159). As I have illustrated, the co-constructed fictional episode in Extract (27) is based on the speech participants' intentional use of the formal register, such as their strategic use of the address form and certain words/phrases and their choice of weather as a topic of conversation. Clearly, these features belong to the first encounter conversation and are not expected in a casual conversation among friends. The awkwardness, therefore, results in a humorous effect.

5.4 The Choice of Dramatic Expression

The choice of dramatic expression, as defined in the previous chapter, is a discourse strategy used to result in a dramatic effect, so as to bring about laughter in an interaction. In analyzing Mandarin data from conversations among Taiwanese friends, I have observed that a dramatic expression can be either a metaphor or a fixed expression. This discourse strategy is also observed in my data from casual conversations among Polish friends. The following extract is from a conversation about Ewa's father. Her father is a doctor, but he does not know how to take care of himself. In commenting on Ewa's father, Tatiana uses a fixed expression to result in a dramatic effect. Tatiana herself is immediately entertained by her use of this fixed expression, as the following interaction shows.

Extract (28) [Ewa (F), Tatiana (F), Anna (F)]

01. Ewa: Mój tata operował ze złamanymi żebrami, przez miesiąc.
02. Tatiana: No co ty?
03. Ewa: No tak, bo on nie pójdzie do lekarza, bo jego tylko boli, trzy żebra miał złamane po nartach.
04. → Tatiana: Lekarz się znalazł!
05. Ewa: Naprawdę, najgorzej to lekarza wyleczyć.
06. Anna: Szewc bez butów chodzi.
07. Ewa: No naprawdę, to jest adekwatne idealnie.

Translation

01. Ewa: My father has been performing operations for people with broken ribs, for a month.
02. Tatiana: [Tatiana looks at Ewa with eyes wide open.] Really?

03. Ewa: Well yes, it is because he is not willing to see any doctor, since it only hurts. Three ribs got broken while skiing.
04. → Tatiana: [Tatiana looks at Ewa.] What a good doctor. (L: Tatiana) (I: Ewa, Anna)
05. Ewa: True, the worst thing is to treat a doctor!
06. Anna: [Anna looks at Ewa.] A shoemaker walks without shoes. [Anna swings her left hand upward.] (L: Anna)
07. Ewa: Well true, this expression is perfectly adequate for him.

The above interaction begins with Ewa's mentioning of her father's recent life. Ewa's father is a doctor. From line 1 it is known that her father is an orthopedist and has been working for a month. He, however, broke three of his ribs while skiing and was not willing to have the broken ribs checked by another doctor (line 3). Lines 1 and 3 can be regarded as Ewa's complaint about her father. As her father is also a doctor, more specifically an orthopedist, he should know that as a wounded patient, he should take a break from his work or at least not perform any operations. In addition, he should have his broken ribs checked by another doctor. He, however, still chose to work with broken ribs and was not willing to see a doctor. Both Tatiana and Anna comment on Ewa's father's behavior in different speaking turns (lines 4 and 6). Their comments are immediately approved by Ewa, as we can see in her use of *naprawdę* "true" (lines 5 and 7).

It is interesting to note that Tatiana's comment *Lekarz się znalazł!* "What a good doctor!" results in a dramatic effect in this context. The Polish verb phrase *znaleźć się* literally means "to find oneself." It is used in a context in which someone finds him/herself in a position that gives him/her authority to comment on others or teach them something. However, this person is not considered by others as authoritative and s/he therefore does not have the right to comment or teach. This verb phrase later becomes a fixed expression and is used to refer to someone's self-centered behavior in a sarcastic way. As this fixed expression is frequently used as criticism to attack someone, Tatiana's use of this fixed expression implies that Ewa's father is a bad doctor. This, however, is not true. Recall that in the beginning of the above sequence, Ewa complains about her father for not being able to take care of himself. This also results from her father's identity as a doctor. Focusing on Ewa's father's identity as a doctor, Tatiana comments with this fixed expression. As *Lekarz się znalazł!* "What a good doctor!" is frequently used to mock a bad doctor, and that Ewa's father simply does not know how to take care of himself because he is a doctor, Tatiana's use of it to refer to Ewa's father therefore results in a dramatic effect. The dramatic nature of using this fixed expression in this context is the source of humor. Tatiana's use of this fixed expression can be regarded as a discourse strategy to create humor. Indeed, Tatiana herself is immediately entertained by this

expression, as signaled by her laughter in the same line. Smiling of Ewa and Anna also indicates their appreciation of Tatiana's humor.

In my data I have also observed that a referring expression can be used to result in a dramatic effect to create humor. As a referring expression may refer to a member from a group of people sharing common characteristics, using it to refer to someone in a talk-in-interaction may directly connect this person to that group. As the connection as such is often arbitrary and is not based on any actual facts, directly connecting someone to a certain group helps dramatize the speech event. The dramatic effect comes from the speaker's direct projection of the source domain (i.e., certain well-known traits of a certain group) onto the target domain (i.e., the person being referred to), regardless of actual facts. In the following extract, Mateusz uses the referring expression *lewak* "far leftist" to refer to Leszek in a negative manner, as a means to tease him.

Extract (29) [Leszek (M), Mateusz (M), Paweł (M)]

01. Leszek: Ale właśnie nie pierdolisz stary, ale właśnie nie.
02. Stary widzisz, dzisiaj gadałem. Dzisiaj nawet jadąc samochodem z moim ojcem gadałem na temat komuny właśnie z moim ojcem jadąc samochodem, nie?
03. I mówię mu tak: „Jak to było podczas tej komuny? Bo kurwa cały czas mi mówisz, że było zajebiście i w ogóle wszyscy mieli robotę, ale co z tego, jak wy nigdy nie mogliście nic kupić.”
04. A on powiedział tak: „Komuna trwała tam powiedzmy 10 czy 15 lat, i to nie jest tak, że my nie mogliśmy coś, czegoś tego kupić kurwa przez cały ten okres...”
05. No czy tam więcej nawet, dobra więcej, więcej, tak dobra może teraz dojechałem.
06. Mateusz: No było od 1945 do 89-go.
07. Leszek: No dobrze, to trwała w chuj lat człowieku, a on powiedział, że tak naprawdę ten ocet stary i te kolejki i to wszystko.
08. I te kartki stary, gdzie naprawdę chodziłeś z tą kartką i nie mogłeś nic dostać.
09. To było stary przez dwa ostatnie lata trwania komunizmu w Polsce.
10. To nie było tak, że przez cały okres nie mogłeś dostać nic.
11. To było przez dwa ostatnie lata, kiedy już na przykład ludzie zaczynali się buntować stary i...
12. → Mateusz: Mamy tu lewaka.
13. Leszek: Co?
14. → Mateusz: Mamy tu lewaka.
15. Leszek: Nawet nie wiem, co to znaczy, kurwa. Ty mi weź na ten temat nic nie mów.
16. Paweł: Spytaj się Korwina.³⁹

Translation

01. Leszek: But actually you are not bullshitting, man, but actually not.
02. Man, look, I talked today. Today while driving a car with my father, I even talked with my father about communism, actually with my father in the car, no?
03. And I tell him like this: "How did it feel during the period of communism? It is

³⁹ Janusz Ryszard Korwin-Mikke is a libertarian conservative Polish politician.

- because, damn it, you are telling me all the time that it was fucking good and everyone in general had a job, but also because of that you were not able to buy anything.”
04. But he said like this: “Communism lasted, let us say, 10 or 15 years, and it is not like we were not able to buy anything, damn it, not like we were not able to buy anything all the time...” [Mateusz rolls his eyes, thinking in silence.]
 05. Well, it was even longer, okay longer, longer, okay maybe I now fucked it up.
 06. Mateusz: Well, it was from 1945 to 1989.
 07. Leszek: Okay good, it lasted for fucking years man, and he said that it is true that all you got were vinegar, man, and those queues.
 08. And those ration cards, man, where you could take the ration card and you could not get anything.
 09. It was, man, during the last two years of communism in Poland.
 10. It was not that you could not get anything all the time.
 11. It was during the last two years when people started to protest, man, and...
 12. → Mateusz: We have a far leftist here. (L: Mateusz, Paweł)
 13. Leszek: What?
 14. → Mateusz: We have a far leftist here.
 15. Leszek: (I: Leszek) I even do not know what it means, damn it. You had better not tell me anything about that.
 16. Paweł: Ask Korwin yourself. (L: Paweł)

The above interaction begins with Leszek's self-disclosure of what his father told him earlier that day when taking a ride in a car. The conversation between Leszek and Leszek's father is on the topic of communist Poland and is presented with directly quoted speech. In line 4, for example, Leszek quotes his father's speech, saying that it is not true that people could not buy anything during the communist era. In lines 9, 10 and 11 he further adds that it was only in the last two years of communism that Poles had difficulty in buying things. Leszek's self-disclosure can be regarded as showing his father's viewpoint towards communist Poland. Without waiting for Leszek to finish his sentence, Mateusz interrupts, comments on Leszek's self-disclosure and indirectly refers to Leszek as someone holding an extreme-left political point of view. As evidenced in line 12, Mateusz uses the accusative case of the referring expression *lewak* “far leftist” to refer to Leszek. Instead of calling Leszek a far leftist, Mateusz's reference is presented in an indirect manner, as we can see in *Mamy tu lewaka* “We have a far leftist here.” Mateusz's laughter in the same line frames his reference to Leszek as a far leftist as simply “play,” which is perceived by the other speech participant Paweł as humor.

The funniness of Mateusz's referring expression *lewak* “far leftist” comes from the dramatic nature of it in this context. That is, Mateusz refers to Leszek as a far leftist while he actually is not. From Leszek's presentation of his father's viewpoint, one may think of Leszek's father as supporting the far-left regime during the communist era. Although Leszek

presents his father's viewpoint as if he also held the same attitude towards communism, there is no direct evidence showing that he is a far leftist. According to March and Mudde (2005), a far leftist is radical first in the sense that s/he “rejects the underlying socio-economic structure of contemporary capitalism and its values and practices” (p. 25).⁴⁰ Evidently, Leszek is not a far leftist, as he simply presents his father's viewpoint, and that he is not a radical.

Interestingly, Leszek presents his father's viewpoint as if he was defending the communist-dominated Polish government against Mateusz's accusation. This can be seen in lines 9-11, in which Leszek's use of the address form *stary* “man” can be regarded as focusing Mateusz's attention on his points, and that his continuous use of the sentence structure *To (nie) było...* “It was (not)...” can be regarded as highlighting his points that Poles did not have difficulty in buying things in the communist Poland (lines 9-11). As Leszek's presentation is in an argumentative tone, Mateusz's use of *lewak* “far leftist” to refer to Leszek is perhaps based on his use of such a tone, associating him with those radicals, regardless of the actual facts. Although Leszek rejects Mateusz's humor, as indicated by his subsequent response (line 15), he is perhaps slightly entertained by Mateusz's humor, as indicated by his smiling in the same line.

5.5 Highlighting Contradiction

In my data I have also observed that highlighting the contradiction between two events can be used as a discourse strategy to result in a humorous effect. In an interaction a speech participant may talk about two events that are usually regarded by most people as contradictory, e.g., eating fast food vs. losing weight. While the connection between the two events may seem contradictory in a normal situation, the speech participant may juxtapose them as two closely related events. Instead of explaining the rationality of juxtaposing the two events, the speech participant may choose to highlight the contradiction between them. The funniness comes from their intentionally created contradiction. In Extract (30), Ewa talks about her experience of going to an all-you-can-eat pizza festival, in which she could eat all she could eat to her heart's content within a limited time period. She, however, mentions that she was also going on a diet, thereby highlighting the contradiction between fast food and diet.

⁴⁰ In March and Mudde's (2005) study, the term “radical left” is used.

Extract (30) [Anna (F), Ewa (F), Tatiana (F)]

01. Anna: Wiecie ja, kiedy ja ostatnio jadłam jakieś jedzenie w Mc'u? Piłam kawę.
02. Tatiana: Nie pamiętam kiedy ja ostatnio jadłam fast fooda.
03. Anna: To jedzenie.
04. → Ewa: Ja pamiętam, przed dietą, dzień przed dietą poszliśmy na ostatni dzień festiwalu pizzy. Pamiętam.
05. Tatiana: A ja nigdy w życiu nie byłam na festiwalu pizzy, nie.
06. Ewa: To jest takie fajne.
07. Anna: Też nie.

Translation

01. Anna: Do you know I, when I ate something in MacDonald's last time? I was drinking coffee.
02. Tatiana: I do not remember when I ate fast food last time.
03. Anna: It was food.
04. → Ewa: I remember, before going on a diet, [Ewa moves her left hand with index finger sticking out.] the day before going on a diet we went to a pizza festival, because it was the last day. (L: Ewa, Anna) I remember.
05. Tatiana: But I have never been to any pizza festival in my life, never.
06. Ewa: It is really good.
07. Anna: I have not, either.

The above sequence is from a conversation, in which Anna, Ewa and Tatiana are talking about food. In the beginning of the sequence, the topic changes to fast food. In response to Tatiana, who admits to having forgotten when she last ate fast food (line 2), Ewa claims that she still remembers it. As can be seen in line 4, Ewa says that she went to a pizza festival the day before going on a diet. The topic, then, changes to pizza in the subsequent speaking turns.

It is interesting to note that Ewa's additional information *przed dietą* "before going on a diet" immediately follows her response *ja pamiętam* "I remember." Ewa's hand gesture perhaps further frames her additional information as play. Decomposing the word "diet," we may know that the semantic molecules⁴¹ of this word may include *FOOD*, *THIN* and *EATING LESS*. On the other hand, fast food is usually considered by the public as containing a lot of fat and calories, which are not healthy for those on a diet. The semantic molecules applied to the word "fast food," therefore, may include *FOOD*, *FAT* and *UNHEALTHY*. Clearly, Ewa's additional information *przed dietą* "before going on a diet" can be regarded as highlighting the contradiction between eating fast food and going on a diet.

Ewa further adds that she went to a pizza festival the day before going on a diet, which can also be interpreted as her self-disclosure of eating too much pizza the previous day. In

⁴¹ In Wierzbicka's (1985a) study of animal terms, there are explications containing semantically complex words. These words, according to Goddard (1998), are termed as "semantic molecules," the semantic competence or knowledge of native speakers.

other words, while Ewa perhaps intends to result in a humorous effect by highlighting the contradiction between “diet” and “fast food,” the funniness also comes from her self-disclosure of having eaten so much pizza that she had to go on a diet immediately the next day. Ewa's additional information *dzień przed dietą poszliśmy na ostatni dzień festiwalu pizzy* “the day before going on a diet we went to a pizza festival, because it was the last day” also entertains Anna, as indicated by her laughter. Ewa's self-disclosure also entertains herself, as signaled by her laughter in the same line. In fact, Ewa's self-disclosure can be regarded as self-deprecating humor,⁴² which according to Zajdman (1995), helps create a positive image in the sense that the speaker is not afraid of revealing his/her weakness.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter is based on empirical data from interactions among Polish friends. Results have shown that there are various discourse strategies used by Polish friends to construct humor, including the use of quotation, back-handed remark and fictional episode. Speech participants are also observed to choose a dramatic expression or to highlight contradiction to result in a humorous effect. The functions of the five discourse strategies are summarized below.

Firstly, the use of quotation as a discourse strategy is frequently accompanied by paralinguistic devices to enact the role of someone to result in a dramatic effect and further elicit laughter and smiles. Secondly, while back-handed remarks can be used to construct humor either intentionally or unintentionally, speech participants may also use them to support another speech participant. Thirdly, the use of fictional episode is the most frequently used discourse strategy to construct humor. A fictional episode can be constructed by a single person or co-constructed by a group of people. In my data I have observed that a speech participant may create an imagined situation to make another speech participant embarrassed, so as to see how s/he reacts to such an embarrassing situation, which can be amusing sometimes. In addition, when a fictional episode is co-constructed by some of the speech participants, many contextualization cues can be observed. Speech participants may also use the formal register to co-construct a fictional episode, which is distinguished from the actual world. Fourthly, speech participants may use dramatic expression as a discourse strategy to create humor, which may include a fixed expression or a referring expression. Finally,

⁴² See Sections 6.6 and 7.6.

highlighting the contradiction between two events can be used as a discourse strategy to result in a humorous effect. The funniness can be understood from the semantic molecules of the contradictory events.

As my examples in Chapter Four and Chapter Five have shown, language use is always strategic. Verschueren's (1999: 56) theory of linguistic adaptation suggests that speech participants constantly make linguistic choices "at every possible level of structure," and that they not only choose forms, but also strategies. To conclude, while humor can be used as a strategy to reach different communicative purposes in social interactions, various discourse strategies are also involved in the production of humor.

Chapter Six

HUMOR IN 康熙來了 *KĀNG XĪ LÁILE*

My analysis in this chapter focuses on various humor types employed in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. In his analysis of conversational joking, Norrick (1993) has observed a range of joking types, including personal anecdotes, wordplay (e.g., punning, hyperbole, and allusion), mocking and sarcasm. These joking types, as Norrick indicates, serve the interpersonal functions of “self-presentation, testing and rapport-building” (p. 44). In this chapter, I attempt to illustrate and discuss the interpersonal functions of different humor types in this program. In Sections 6.1-6.8, I first categorize different types of humor based on their linguistic forms and potential communicative functions. Then, I analyze and discuss how each type of humor is employed in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, including the use of personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and 無厘頭 *Wúlítóu* “nonsense.” Finally, Section 6.9 concludes the findings in this chapter.

6.1 Personal Narrative

Tannen (1984) has indicated that many conversational devices (e.g., pace, overlap, rate of speech, etc.) operating in story-telling are also found in other forms of talk. As she further assumes, story is the prototypical narrative, which “recounts events that occurred in the past.” Story-telling is also identified as one of the primary strategies for building rapport (Tannen 1989). More specifically, when we tell other speech participants a story about ourselves, we simultaneously create solidarity and rapport with them, since “we present a self for ratification by other participants in the conversation” (Norrick 1993: 43). Additionally, story-telling is also a popular rapport-building strategy in many Asian cultures, which are more likely to be other-oriented. In his study of small talks among Chinese friends, for example, Chen (2009) has observed that Chinese people, in general, hold a negative attitude towards “assertiveness and self-presentation” (p. 110). However, as he has further noted, while story-telling is a self-effacing verbal behavior that contradicts the other-oriented image, Chinese

people frequently tell stories about themselves, in the sense that their stories may not be considered as gossips, and they therefore might escape from being accused of gossiping.

In 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, moreover, many personal stories are funny anecdotes. To attract the attention of the audience, the narrator very often dramatizes the speech event to result in a humorous effect. Extract (31) illustrates this point, in which the host Cài asks his invited guests, all mothers, whether their children would express gratitude to them after they have done something for their children. One of the guests Xiǎozhēn shares a humorous anecdote about her and her daughter and successfully elicits laughter in the end of her narration. As the following extract will show, although Xiǎozhēn's personal narrative is already a humorous anecdote if judged by its content, her use of direct quotation accompanied by her constant hand gestures further helps reinforce its humorous effect.

Extract (31) [KXLL 05.31.2310]

01. 蔡康永：可是妳們的小孩，當做完這些麻煩的事情，他們，妳們、妳們有訓練他們說謝謝妳們這樣？
cài kāng-yǒng: kěshì nǐmende xiǎohái, dāng zuò wán zhèxiē máfánde shìqíng, tāmen, nǐmen, nǐmen yǒu xùnlìan tāmen shuō xièxie nǐmen zhèyàng?
02. → 小禎：會，我女兒會耶。我每次提臀，
xiǎozhēn: huì, wǒ nǚér huì ye. wǒ měicì tí tún,
03. 蔡康永：就妳幫她按摩什麼這些，她都要說謝謝嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: jiù nǐ bāng tā ànmó shénme zhèxiē, tā dōu yào shuō xièxie ma?
04. → 小禎：會。但是有一陣子我就訓練到，因為我只要她要，比如說我拿東西給她，我就說：「那妳有沒有說什麼？」
xiǎozhēn: huì. dànshì yǒu yízhènzǐ wǒ jiù xùnlìan dào, yīnwèi wǒ zhǐyào tā yào, bǐrú shuō wǒ ná dōngxī gěi tā, wǒ jiù shuō, “nà nǐ yǒuméiyǒu shuō shénme?”
05. → 她說：「謝謝媽媽。」這樣。
tā shuō, “xièxie māmá.” zhèyàng.
06. → 然後，所以她有時候，而且她現在還會彎腰。
ránhòu, suǒyǐ tā yǒushíhòu, érqǐ tā xiànzài hái huì wānyāo.
07. → 她說：「謝謝媽媽。」這樣。
tā shuō, “xièxie māmá.” zhèyàng.
08. → 對，她都會彎得很誇張這樣。
duì, tā dōu huì wān de hěn kuāzhāng zhèyàng.
09. → 然後，所以一直到，導、導致於就是，
ránhòu, suǒyǐ yìzhí dào, dǎo, dǎozhìyú jiùshì,
10. 蔡康永：這樣謝妳有高興嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: zhèyàng xiè nǐ yǒu gāoxìng ma?
11. → 小禎：很高興啊，因為她真的很誠懇。
xiǎozhēn: hěn gāoxìng a, yīnwèi tā zhēnde hěn chéngkěn.
12. → 然後導致於現在我都會跟她說「妳有沒有說什麼」的時候，她都會說「謝謝」。
ránhòu dǎozhìyú xiànzài wǒ dōu huì gēn tā shuō “nǐ yǒuméiyǒu shuō shénme” de shíhòu, tā dōu huì shuō “xièxie.”
13. → 就以至於我在罵人的時候，我就說：「妳看！妳怎麼會把這個弄倒？妳有沒有跟媽媽說什麼？」

jiù yǐzhìyú wǒ zài mǎrén de shíhòu, wǒ jiù shuō, “nǐ kàn! nǐ zěnmē huì bǎ zhège nòng dǎo? nǐ yǒuméiyǒu gēn māmá shuō shénme?”

14. → 「謝謝媽媽！」
“*xièxiè māmá!*”

15. 蔡康永：她應該說對不起，對不對？
cài kāng-yǒng: tā yīnggāi shuō duìbùqǐ, duìbúduì?

16. 小禎：對啊！
xiǎozhēn: duì a!

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: But your kids. After you have done these troublesome things for them, do they, you, have you taught them to say “Thank you?”
02. → Xiǎozhēn: Yes, my daughter would say “Thank you.” Whenever I helped her with butt tightening exercises,
03. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Did she have to say “Thank you” after you had given her a massage?
04. → Xiǎozhēn: Yes, [Xiǎozhēn looks at the hosts and speaks with her left hand moving up and down.] I even have taught her to the extent that, because whenever I gave her something, I would ask, “What are you supposed to say?”
05. → Then she would say, “Thank you, mommy.”
06. → So she sometimes, and recently she even bowed.
07. → She said, “Thank you, mommy.” [Xiǎozhēn sits on the chair, stretches her both hands and bows dramatically.] (L: Xú)
08. → Yes, she always bowed dramatically.
09. → So she had been doing this till, and in the end, [Xiǎozhēn speaks with her right hand moving slightly forward.]
10. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Did you feel happy when she thanked you this way?
11. → Xiǎozhēn: Yes, because she seemed to be doing it sincerely. [Xiǎozhēn speaks with her both hands moving forward, palms up.]
12. → So whenever I asked her, “What are you supposed to say,” she always answered, “Thank you.”
13. → It happened even at the moment when I scolded her. [Xiǎozhēn speaks with her right palm turned upward.] I told her, [Xiǎozhēn raises the volume of her voice and points at the ground with the index finger in her right hand.] “Look! How could you pour this? What are you supposed to say to mother?”
14. → [Xiǎozhēn changes to a smiling face, stretches her both hands and bows again.] “Thank you, mommy.” (L) (L: Xiǎozhēn)
15. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: She was supposed to say, “I am sorry,” right? (L: Cài, Xú)
16. Xiǎozhēn: Right! (l: Xiǎozhēn)

In the beginning of the above sequence, Cài asks whether his guests, all mothers, would teach their children to express gratitude when their children receive a favor from the parents (line 1). Then, one of the guests Xiǎozhēn shares a personal story about her and her daughter. Xiǎozhēn’s narration is composed of utterances in different speaking turns, as indicated by the arrows. In her narration, Xiǎozhēn says that whenever she helps her daughter with butt tightening exercises or gives something to her daughter, she would teach her to be thankful. Her daughter, therefore, has cultivated the habit of expressing gratitude at all hours, even

when she is supposed to apologize. In line 13, Xiǎozhēn quotes her own scolding remark to her daughter, and in line 14, she quotes her daughter's improper speech act. Xiǎozhēn's imitating of her daughter's overgeneralization of the speech act of thanking elicits laughter not only from other speech participants, but also from Xiǎozhēn herself. While Xiǎozhēn's laughter perhaps shows her appreciation of her own humor, it may also be used to signal a play frame, thereby inviting others to join in the laughter.

It is also interesting to note that Xiǎozhēn, in lines 5, 7 and 14, can be regarded as directly quoting her daughter's utterances 謝謝媽媽 *xièxiè māmá* "Thank you, mommy," as she is imitating children's way of talking. Chen and Chen (2011a) have observed that in the society of contemporary Taiwan, reduplicated address forms are more likely to be pronounced in the order of a falling-rising tone and a rising tone in order to show intimacy. Therefore, 媽媽 "mother, mom, mommy" is more likely to be pronounced by children as *māmá*, instead of *māmā* (two high-level tones) or *māma* (a high-level tone followed by a neutral tone) when they address their mothers. Furthermore, in line 7, Xiǎozhēn's direct quotation is accompanied by hand gestures and body movement. By using direct quotation and the performing body, Xiǎozhēn successfully dramatizes her utterance and acts out the words of her daughter. Xiǎozhēn's non-verbal performance further elicits laughter from the hostess Xú. In lines 13 and 14, Xiǎozhēn further shows her daughter's improper speech act in apologizing, which is manifested in the host Cài's response (line 15). Cài's elaboration of Xiǎozhēn's funny anecdote and his subsequent laughter in the same line show his appreciation of Xiǎozhēn's humor.

One may notice that, in the above interaction, direct quotation, hand gestures and body movement are used to reinforce the funniness of the personal narrative, and that the laughter immediately follows the directly quoted speech. The narrator Xiǎozhēn also uses laughter to frame her personal narrative as a funny anecdote. In fact, a narrator's use of directly quoted speech and exaggerated self-display as a booster to strengthen the humorous effect is not uncommon in my Mandarin data, including those from casual conversations among Taiwanese friends. Recall that in Sections 4.1 and 4.3, I have illustrated and discussed how Taiwanese friends use quotation or theatrical performance as a discourse strategy to construct humor because of the dramatic effect. The funniness of Xiǎozhēn's personal anecdote also results from the dramatic nature of the two discourse strategies.

The above features are found to be more salient when the narrator tells about someone else's funny anecdote, despite the fact that the narrator's use of other-oriented topics in story-

telling can lead to the risk of being accused of gossiping (see Chen 2009). In the following extract, the host Cài asks the invited guests whether they still drink medicinal liquor to strengthen their bodies. After answering the question, one of the guests Hóngdūlāsī shifts the topic from medicinal liquor to a story of his friend Báiyún, whose breathing is repeatedly interrupted. In his narration, Hóngdūlāsī directly quotes Báiyún's words and tells how Báiyún thinks about his health problems. By using direct quotation to construct humor, Hóngdūlāsī successfully evokes the image of Báiyún in a humorous way. Hóngdūlāsī's ensuing laughter also frames his direct quotation as play, thereby inviting other speech participants to join in the laughter. The host Cài's humorous response and laughter also show his understanding and appreciation of the humor.

Extract (32) [KXLL 30.03.2012]

01. 蔡康永：欸，你們應該不再喝這種酒了，藥酒還喝嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: èi, nǐmen yīnggāi bú zài hē zhèzhǒng jiǔ le, yàojiǔ hái hē ma?
02. 洪都拉斯：當然喝啊！
hóngdūlāsī: dāngrán hē a!
03. 沈玉琳：喝啊！
shěn yù-lín: hē a!
04. 洪都拉斯：而且會有供應商耶！真的供應商。就是我們有、有某位藝人他非常地注重養生。
hóngdūlāsī: érqǐ huì yǒu gōngyìngshāng ye! zhēnde gōngyìngshāng. jiùshì wǒmen yǒu, yǒu mǒuwèi yìrén tā fēichángde zhùzhòng yǎngshēng.
05. 蔡康永：是。
cài kāng-yǒng: shì.
06. 洪都拉斯：他會去，比方說去鹿谷啊。
hóngdūlāsī: tā huì qù, bǐfāngshuō qù lùgǔ a.
07. 蔡康永：嗯。
cài kāng-yǒng: en.
08. 洪都拉斯：去找一些關於這個，可以清血的那種酒。
hóngdūlāsī: qù zhǎo yìxiē guānyú zhège, kěyǐ qīng xiě de nàzhǒng jiǔ.
09. 蔡康永：OK。
cài kāng-yǒng: ok.
10. → 洪都拉斯：大黨裡面，郇哥每次都會跟白雲講說：「白雲啊，真的真的，你真的身體要注意一下。你那個肚子已經不是胖了，它裡面都是虛的。而且我真的看到你的臉色。」
hóngdūlāsī: dàdǎng lǐmiàn, táigē měicì dōu huì gēn báiyún jiǎngshuō, “báiyún a, zhēnde zhēnde, nǐ zhēnde shēntǐ yào zhùyì yíxià. nǐ nàge dùzi yǐjīng búshì pàng le, tā lǐmiàn dōu shì xūde. érqǐ wǒ zhēnde kàndào nǐde liánsè.”
11. → 他有時候站著都會打呼耶！
tā yǒushíhòu zhànzhē dōu huì dǎhū ye!
12. 徐熙媛：缺氧是不是？
xú xī-yuán: quē yǎng shìbúshì?
13. → 洪都拉斯：就是他有一種那種呼吸的時候很大聲，然後旁邊就覺得：「你是在睡覺嗎？」其實他不是睡覺，他就是那個氣吸不上來。

- hóngdūlāsī: jiùshì tā yǒu yìzhǒng nàzhǒng hūxī de shíhòu hěn dàshēng, ránhòu pángbiān jiù juéde, “nǐ shì zài shuìjiào ma?” qíshí tā búshì zài shuìjiào, tā jiùshì nàge qì xī bú shànglái.*
14. 蔡康永：嗯。
cài kāng-yǒng: en.
15. → 洪都拉斯：有時候睡覺的時候，睡到一半會短暫地，
hóngdūlāsī: yǒushíhòu shuìjiào de shíhòu, shuì dào yībàn huì duǎnzhànde,
16. 沈玉琳：對。
shěn yù-lín: duì.
17. → 洪都拉斯：停止呼吸這樣。然後我們就很擔心白雲，我說：「你真的要注意一下。」
hóngdūlāsī: tíngzhǐ hūxī zhèyàng. ránhòu wǒmen jiù hěn dānxīn báiyún, wǒ shuō, “nǐ zhēnde yào zhùyì yíxià.”
18. → 白雲說：「沒關係啦，我都已經準備好了，無所謂。」
báiyún shuō, “méiguānxì la, wǒ dōu yǐjīng zhǔnbèi hǎo le, wúsuǒwèi.”
19. 徐熙媛：看開了，是不是？
xú xī-yuán: kànkāi le, shìbúshì?
20. 蔡康永：豁達、豁達！
cài kāng-yǒng: huòdá, huòdá!
21. 吳明珠：睡眠中止症啦！
wú míng-zhū: shuìmián zhōngzhǐ zhèng la!
22. 洪都拉斯：對對對！
hóngdūlāsī: duì duì duì!

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: You no longer drink this kind of wine, right? Do you still drink medicinal liquor?
02. Hóngdūlāsī: Of course, we drink it!
03. Shěn Yù-Lín: We drink it!
04. Hóngdūlāsī: And there are always suppliers, real suppliers! We have, there is a entertainer who cares a lot about regimen.
05. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Yes.
06. Hóngdūlāsī: He goes to, for example, he goes to Lùgǔ Township.
07. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Okay.
08. Hóngdūlāsī: To find the liquor that can help clear blood vessels.
09. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Okay.
10. → Hóngdūlāsī: In Celebrity Imitated Show, Brother Tái is telling Báiyún each time he meets him, [Hóngdūlāsī touches the guest sitting next to him to imitate how Brother Tái talks.] “Báiyún, seriously, you really need to take care of your body. Your belly is not simply fat. Your fat belly shows that your body is weak. And I also see your weak face.”
11. → Sometimes he snorts even when standing!
12. Xú Xī-Yuán: Lacks of oxygen, right?
13. → Hóngdūlāsī: [Hóngdūlāsī uses hand gesture and knits his eyebrows to show his concern.] It is because he breathes loudly and those standing by him would think, “Are you sleeping?” He in fact is not sleeping. He simply has a hard time breathing.
14. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Okay.
15. → Hóngdūlāsī: Sometimes when he sleeps, there will be a short period of,
16. Shěn Yù-Lín: Right.
17. → Hóngdūlāsī: There are pauses in breathing. So we are worried about Báiyún. I told him,

- [Hóngdūlāsī points at the guest sitting next to him.] “You really need to be aware of that.”
18. → And Báiyún answered, [Hóngdūlāsī raises his right hand and waves it.] “It is okay. I have prepared myself for that. It is fine with me.” (L: Hóngdūlāsī) (L)
 19. Xú Xī-Yuán: He has decided to move on, right?
 20. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Very light-hearted! He is very light-hearted! (L: Cài)
 21. Wú Míng-Zhū: He has got sleep apnea!
 22. Hóngdūlāsī: Absolutely right!

In the above interaction, the original topic is on medicinal liquor, which is regarded by many Taiwanese men as a tonic. In line 10, the topic shifts to the health problem of Hóngdūlāsī’s friend Báiyún. In line 17, Hóngdūlāsī quotes his own words to Báiyún to show his concern for him. And in line 18, he further quotes Báiyún’s ensuing response. In this line, Báiyún jokes about his own health problem as a response. We do not know, however, whether Báiyún has uttered these words, since when a speech uttered in one context is repeated later in another, it is fundamentally changed even if it is reported accurately (Tannen 1986, 1989). Hóngdūlāsī, however, successfully reminds other speech participants of the image of Báiyún by directly quoting his remarks. As Báiyún is already a well-known comedian in Taiwan who likes to joke about others and about himself all the time, Hóngdūlāsī’s direct quotation of Báiyún’s self-joking behavior evokes the image of Báiyún and successfully elicits laughter from other speech participants. His use of gestures also helps reinforce the funniness of his direct quotation.

There are other things to note, in passing. Right after Hóngdūlāsī finishes his direct quotation of Báiyún’s words, he starts laughing, and then other participants also join in the laughter. Therefore, we can say with a fair amount of certainty that Hóngdūlāsī perhaps intends to highlight the funny part of his anecdote about Báiyún, thereby inviting other speech participants to laugh with him. In lines 19 and 20, the host Cài and his co-host Xú elaborate Hóngdūlāsī’s narration about Báiyún. More specifically, the two hosts can be regarded as elaborating Báiyún’s attitude towards his own health problem in a humorous way. In line 20, for example, Cài laughs when he summarizes Báiyún’s attitude as 豁達 *huòdá* “very light-hearted.” While this phrase may be used to refer to Báiyún as a very light-hearted person, who is always optimistic about his life, Cài perhaps is also in an attempt to strengthen Báiyún’s funny characteristics, but in a sarcastic manner. It is because the phrase 豁達 *huòdá* is frequently used in Buddhism or in 禪學 *chánxué* “Zen” as a philosophy of life. A person who is 豁達 *huòdá* is not only light-hearted and optimistic about life, but is more likely to emphasize cultivating moral character and a nourishing nature. Such a person always lives a

simple life and is indifferent to fame and fortune. Cài's use of this phrase to conclude Báiyún's optimistic attitude towards his health problem, therefore, reinforces the contrast between a Buddhist or a Zenist and a funny comedian. In other words, Cài's verbal behavior in line 20 can be regarded as a humorous response to build solidarity with Hóngdūlāsī. Cài's laughter further shows his understanding and appreciation of Hóngdūlāsī's humor, as he and Hóngdūlāsī both hold the same attitude towards Báiyún's funny characteristics.

6.2 Wordplay

Different from a personal narrative that elicits amusement with story-telling, wordplay has little to do with personal experience. As defined by Norrick (1993: 60), the use of wordplay in a conversation is "to present a general self-image of someone willing to suspend the conversational business at hand for a laugh, of someone attentive to the form of talk and its potential for playful manipulation as well as for communication proper." In my Mandarin data, I have observed that participants hardly employ wordplay to elicit amusement. However, wordplay successfully elicits laughter each time it is used by the participants. The following extract is from the opening remarks of the program, in which the humor is based on the use of wordplay by three speech participants: the invited guest Billie and the two hosts Cài and Xú. In the episode which Extract (33) comes from, celebrities who are already mothers are invited to talk about how they raise their children. Billie, however, is not only a mother, but also a grandmother, since she already has grandchildren. Cài, therefore, teases Billie by calling her 祖母 *zǔmǔ* "grandmother," implying that Billie is the oldest of all the guests. In response, Billie proposes another address form, which is based on the use of wordplay. Her proposal, however, elicits more teasing from the two hosts, which is also based on the use of wordplay.

Extract (33) [KXLL 05.01.2010]

01. 蔡康永：今天的康熙來了，媽媽都要站一整集，只有祖母可以坐著。
cài kāng-yǒng: jīntiān de kāngxīláile, māmā dōu yào zhàn yì zhěng jí, zhǐ yǒu zǔmǔ kěyǐ zuòzhe.
02. 歡迎五位，嗨，妳們好！
huānyíng wǔwèi, hāi, nǐmen hǎo!
03. 徐熙娣：歡迎。
xú xī-dì: huānyíng.
04. 蔡康永：妳、妳真的是祖母耶，妳坐著吧！

- cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ, nǐ zhēnde shì zǔmǔ ye, nǐ zuòzhe ba!*
05. 徐熙娣：我以為你是因為尊重她咧，結果你是為了要羞辱她嗎？
xú xī-dì: wǒ yǐwéi nǐ shì yīnwèi zūnzhòng tā lie, jiéguǒ nǐ shì wèile yào xiūrù tā ma?
06. 蔡康永：祖母是尊重吧！她沒有不高興別人知道她是祖母啊！
cài kāng-yǒng: zǔmǔ shì zūnzhòng ba! tā méiyǒu bù gāoxìng biérén zhīdào tā shì zǔmǔ a!
07. 徐熙娣：可是被稱為祖母還是有點煞風景吧！
xú xī-dì: kěshì bèi chēngwéi zǔmǔ hái shì yǒudiǎn shàfēngjǐng ba!
08. → 比莉：欸，我是天母欸！
billie: èi, wǒ shì tiānmǔ èi!
09. → 徐熙娣：天母？
xú xī-dì: tiānmǔ?
10. → 比莉：有人說我是天母，天母只有一個。
billie: yǒurén shuō wǒ shì tiānmǔ, tiānmǔ zhǐ yǒu yíge.
11. → 蔡康永：那大直是？
cài kāng-yǒng: nà dàzhí shì?
12. → 徐熙娣：我仁愛路。
xú xī-dì: wǒ rénàilù.

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Today, mothers have to keep standing till the end of the show, and only **grandmothers** are allowed to sit.
02. Let's welcome our five guests. Hi! How are you? (L: Xú) [Xú turns to the guests.] (L)
03. Xú Xī-Dì: Welcome.
04. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: You, you really are a **grandmother**. You can keep sitting! (L) (L: Càì) (L: Billie)
05. Xú Xī-Dì: [Xú turns to Càì.] (L: Xú) I thought you were showing respect to her, (L: Càì) but turned out to be insulting her? (L: Càì)
06. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Calling her **grandmother** is also showing respect! She is not unhappy that others know that she is already a **grandmother**!
07. Xú Xī-Dì: [Xú turns to Càì.] But to be called **grandmother** still spoils the fun!
08. → Billie: Hey, I am **Tiānmǔ (fashion pioneer)**! [Billie speaks sternly.]
09. → Xú Xī-Dì: **Tiānmǔ (District)**?
10. → Billie: Someone said I am **Tiānmǔ (fashion pioneer)**. There can only be one **Tiānmǔ (fashion pioneer)**. [Billie gives the hand gesture with her index finger up.]
11. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: And who is **Dàzhí Area**? (L) (L: Billie)
12. → Xú Xī-Dì: I am **Rénài Road**. [Xú points at herself.] (L: Xú) (L)

In the beginning of the sequence, Càì can be regarded as teasing Billie. In line 1, he first states that only grandmothers have the privilege of sitting on the chairs. Of all the invited guests, only Billie is a grandmother, but she does not look old and is quite energetic. Therefore, there is no need to single her out from other guests, in that she is not too old to stand. Here, Càì can be regarded as teasing Billie in an indirect manner. He, then, directly calls Billie 祖母 zǔmǔ “grandmother.” In response, Càì's co-host Xú points out that the address form 祖母 zǔmǔ “grandmother” is an insult, in the sense that that no woman would feel happy to be called this way (lines 5 and 7). Here, Xú perhaps intends to highlight Càì's

humor by creating the confrontation between Càì and Billie. As the conversation occurs on the television variety show, Càì's tease of Billie and Xú's subsequent enforcement of the confrontation, therefore, is framed as play. In other words, they can be regarded as producing humor to entertain their audience. In line 4, Billie's laughter also signals her understanding and perhaps appreciation of Càì's humor.

In her response, Billie proposes another address form 天母 *tiānmǔ* (line 8). While 天母 *tiānmǔ* can be a short form of 時尚天母 *shíshàng tiānmǔ* "fashion pioneer," it is hardly used in this way. Billie's self-reference as 天母 *tiānmǔ* "fashion pioneer" perhaps results from her public image that she has taste in fashion. In addition, it is noteworthy that both 祖母 *zǔmǔ* "grandmother" and 天母 *tiānmǔ* "fashion pioneer" consist of the lexeme 母 *mǔ* "mother." In other words, these two address forms are close in pronunciation, despite the fact that they are completely different in meaning. Billie's use of 天母 *tiānmǔ* "fashion pioneer" as self-reference perhaps shows her intention to focus people's attention on her good taste in fashion, mainly by rhyming. Interestingly, the word 天母 *tiānmǔ* is ambiguous, as it also refers to a district in Taipei City. Billie's use of 天母 *tiānmǔ* as a self-reference term is thus funny, as other speech participants and the audience may wrongly connect her self-reference to that district in Taipei City. In other words, Billie's use of the word 天母 *tiānmǔ* can be regarded as a humor type based on the punning wordplay. As Dynel (2010) has observed, puns can be used to puzzle the audience purposefully. Cruz (2015) has also regarded puns as a type of false texts,⁴³ which are intentionally used to "(mis)lead the audience through ambiguity to an interpretation which, though seemingly plausible and relevant, is unintended or incorrect" (p. 470).

However, as the humor based on the punning wordplay requires quick thinking, it very often leads to silence, in the sense that thinking takes time, and that the humorous effect might fade away during the thinking process. Indeed, as lines 8 and 10 show, no laughter follows Billie's humor. Xú first casts her doubt towards Billie's self-reference term (line 9). To highlight the funniness of Billie's use of 天母 *tiānmǔ* to refer to herself, Càì intentionally interprets the word 天母 *tiānmǔ* as the district in Taipei City, as evidenced in his question to her: 那大直是 ? *nà dàzhí shì?* "And who is Dàzhí Area?" (line 11). As revealed by this question, if 天母 *tiānmǔ*, a Taipei City district, can be used as self-reference by Billie, then the Dàzhí Area must be used by someone for the same purpose. Obviously, Càì's humor is

⁴³ Leekam (1991: 160) has identified many false statements, which may include mistakes, lies, jokes, irony, hyperbole, banter, understatement and hypocrisy. Based on Leekam's categorization, Cruz (2015) has further identified puns as a type of false texts.

also based on the use of wordplay, initiated by Billie. As he has highlighted the humor encoded in Billie's self-reference term, and that his humor is based on it, it therefore becomes easier to understand. Cài's intentional misinterpretation of Billie's self-reference term can be thus regarded as an icebreaker, as evidenced in the laughter from other speech participants, including the teased target Billie (line 11). In other words, Cài's humor is appreciated by other speech participants, including Billie herself. His use of wordplay further triggers his co-host Xú's participation in the teasing. In line 12, Xú also uses the same type of humor by volunteering to be Rénài Road. More specifically, both Cài and Xú can be regarded as forming a conversational duet to tease Billie to attract laughter.

To conclude, wordplay is not a preferred humor type in my data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Lái le*, as its cognitive processing can be time-consuming, and that it may lead to silence. As the hosts of the program, whose responsibility is to liven up the program continuously, Cài and Xú thus need to cultivate quick thinking, so as to help their audience get the humor in a short time. In addition, there should be an unspoken, tacit understanding between the two hosts, which may further help them form a conversational duet to produce more humorous remarks.

6.3 Sarcasm

Sarcasm, as Tannen (1984: 130) defines, is a stylized way of talking that frames an utterance or a string of utterances as “not meant literally.” The purpose of sarcasm is often hostile, which distinguishes it from irony or joke. In her analysis of the parliamentary interpellations in Taiwan, Kuo (1992: 254) has found that “sarcasm conveys hostile criticism and reprimand in an indirect way” and is frequently used in criticizing one's political opponents in a political speech event. In the data, it is observed that sarcasm can be used as a humor type. In the following extract, the host Cài asks one of the invited guests Andy, who is working as an entertainment agent, whether he would stop any two of his male entertainers from acting like a gay couple, such as cleaning and combing each other's hair. In his response, Andy uses sarcasm to indirectly attack the other guest Jiāotáng to result in a humorous effect. Andy's sarcasm towards Jiāotáng further elicits laughter. His use of sarcasm as humor, however, also makes him a good target for teasing.

Extract (34) [KXLL 25.02.2011]

01. 蔡康永：所以如果兩個棒棒堂男孩在餐廳整理對方的頭髮，你會立刻喝止嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: suǒyǐ rúguǒ liǎngge bàngbàngtáng nánhái zài cāntīng zhěnglǐ duìfāng de tóufǎ, nǐ huì lìkè hēzhǐ ma?
02. → Andy：一定。我一定會罵說：「你們要不要臉啊！」
andy: yídìng. wǒ yídìng huì mà shuō: “nǐmen yào bú yào liǎn a!”
03. 焦糖：有這麼嚴重？我們不過抓個頭髮而已耶。
jiāotáng: yǒu zhème yánzhòng? wǒmen búguò zhuāge tóufǎ éryǐ ye.
04. 蔡康永：弄頭髮有什麼不要臉的啊？你是宋朝人啊你？
cài kāng-yǒng: nòng tóufǎ yǒu shénme búyàoliǎn de a? nǐ shì sòng cháo rén a nǐ?
05. 路嘉怡：宋朝人。
lù jiā-yí: sòng cháo rén.
06. 蔡康永：為什麼？
cài kāng-yǒng: wèi shénme?
07. Andy：不是，因為偶像藝人你常常會被人家...
andy: bú shì, yīnwèi ǒuxiàng yìrén nǐ chángcháng huì bèi rénjiā...
08. 蔡康永：喔！
cài kāng-yǒng: o!
09. Andy：就是用這個畫上等號。
andy: jiù shì yòng zhège huàshàng děnghào.
10. 蔡康永：喔！
cài kāng-yǒng: o!
11. Andy：所以我不、我不會希望，除非他們是真的。
andy: suǒyǐ wǒ bú, wǒ bú huì xīwàng, chúfēi tāmen shì zhēnde.
12. 蔡康永：那如果劉德華幫成龍在弄頭髮，你也敢這樣？
cài kāng-yǒng: nà rúguǒ liú dé-huá bāng chénglóng zài nòng tóufǎ, nǐ yě gǎn zhèyàng?
13. Andy：劉、劉德華不是我的藝人，我不會啊，我不敢。
andy: liú, liú dé-huá bú shì wǒde yìrén, wǒ bú huì a, wǒ bù gǎn.
14. 徐熙娣：可是你不覺得男性會說「你要不要臉啊！」就是...
xú xī-dì: kěshì nǐ bù juéde nánxìng huì shuō “nǐ yào bú yào liǎn a!” jiù shì...
15. 蔡康永：這句話...
cài kāng-yǒng: zhè jù huà...
16. 徐熙娣：這不像偉忠哥。
xú xī-dì: zhè bú xiàng wěi-zhōng gē.
17. 蔡康永：這句話很古怪。
cài kāng-yǒng: zhè jù huà hěn gǔguài.
18. 徐熙娣：對啊。
xú xī-dì: duì a.
19. 蔡康永：我沒有聽過這句話。
cài kāng-yǒng: wǒ méiyǒu tīngguò zhè jù huà.
20. 徐熙娣：這也是潑辣啊。
xú xī-dì: zhè yě shì pōlǎ a.
21. 焦糖：潑辣。
jiāotáng: pōlǎ.
22. 蔡康永：他想要摔椅子耶。
cài kāng-yǒng: tā xiǎngyào shuāi yǐzi ye.
23. 焦糖：好可怕。
jiāotáng: hǎo kǐpà.
24. 路嘉怡：我先回去安撫他一下。

lù jiā-yí: wǒ xiān huìqù ānfǔ tā yíxià.

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: So if two Bang Bang Tang boys are cleaning and combing each other's hair in the restaurant, would you stop them?
02. → Andy: Sure. I for sure will scold them by saying, "You two should be ashamed of yourselves!" (L) (L: Andy)
03. Jiāotáng: (L: Jiāotáng, Xǔ) Is it really that serious? We are only doing hair.
04. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: (L: Cài, Xú) What is wrong with doing hair? Are you from the Song Dynasty?
05. Lù Jiā-Yí: (L: Lù) From the Song Dynasty.
06. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Why would you do that?
07. Andy: (L: Andy) No, it is because as an idol or an entertainer, you are very likely to be...
08. Jiāotáng: Okay!
09. Andy: to be connected to the image of being gay.
10. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Okay!
11. Andy: So I do not, I do not want them to act that way, unless they are in fact a gay couple.
12. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: If Liu De-Hua was doing Jackie Chen's hair, (L: Xú) do you dare to scold them?
13. Andy: (L: Andy) Liu, Liu De-Hua is not my entertainer. I will not do this and dare not, either.
14. Xú Xī-Dì: [Xú looks at Cài.] But don't you feel that, when a guy says, "You should be ashamed of yourself," he is...
15. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: This remark...
16. Xú Xī-Dì: It is not the style of (my agent) Wei-Zhong.
17. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: This remark is weird.
18. Xú Xī-Dì: I agree.
19. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: I have never heard anyone saying that.
20. Xú Xī-Dì: He can be regarded as **shrewish**. (L) (L: Andy) [Andy clenches his right fist and touches the chair next to him.]
21. Jiāotáng: **Shrewish**. [Everyone looks at Andy] (L)
22. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: He seems to feel the urge to throw away his chair.
23. Jiāotáng: It is scary.
24. Lù Jiā-Yí: (L: Lù) Let me take him back to calm him down.

In this sequence, the host Cài asks the invited guest Andy what he would do if any two of his male entertainers are acting like a gay couple, such as cleaning and combing each other's hair (line 1). In his response, Andy quotes his own remark uttered in the imagined situation created by Cài, as in 你們要不要臉啊! *nǐmen yào bú yào liǎn a!* "You two should be ashamed of yourselves!" (line 2). Andy's self-quotation, according to Sams (2010), serves to act out the mental state of the speaker, instead of demonstrating something that the speaker knows to have happened in the past. Obviously, while Andy is showing his attitude towards the inappropriate behavior of his entertainers in the imagined situation, he can be regarded as

attacking the other guest Jiāotáng in the actual world, but in a sarcastic manner. It is because in a previous conversation, Jiāotáng was also talking about a similar experience of him and his close male friend. In addition, Andy's use of the second-person plural pronoun 你們 *nǐmen* “you” also signals a role shift from Andy's entertainers in the discourse world to Jiāotáng and his friend in the actual world. While Andy's humor is based on the indirect nature of sarcasm via a role shift from the discourse world to the actual world, the funniness is also based on the face-threatening force encoded in Andy's direct use of the second-person reference. As argued by Kuo (2002), including the second-person singular pronoun 你 *nǐ* “you” in questioning or accusing “explicitly exposes the target of the attack and directly confronts it, and therefore strengthens the face-threatening force of the speech act” (p. 38). In other words, Andy can be regarded as attacking Jiāotáng and his friend in a sarcastic, but extremely face-threatening way.

Andy's use of sarcasm is framed as play by his laughter which immediately follows his scolding remark (line 2). His humor is immediately understood and perhaps appreciated by everyone, including the victim of the sarcasm Jiāotáng, as signaled by their laughter (lines 2 and 3). Although Andy's humor successfully elicits laughter, he later becomes a good target for teasing also because of his humor based on sarcasm. For example, the host Cài is the first to show disagreement with Andy, as we can see in his rhetorical question: 弄頭髮有什麼不要臉的啊? *nòng tóufǎ yǒu shénme búyàoliǎn de a?* “What is wrong with doing hair?” (line 4). Here, Cài can be regarded as criticizing Andy's thinking for being out of date, as he refers to him as someone in the ancient world, i.e., 宋朝人 *sòng cháo rén* “(someone) from the Song Dynasty.”⁴⁴ Cài's co-host Xú, in line 14, also questions the appropriateness of Andy's use of the expression 你要不要臉啊! *nǐ yào bú yào liǎn a!* “You should be ashamed of yourself!” As this expression in Xú's thinking is more like an expression by women, Andy's use of it is therefore absurd. Xú later concludes that Andy's use of this expression makes him more like a bad-tempered, nagging woman, as we can see in her choice of the dramatic expression 潑辣 *pōlà* “shrewish” to refer to Andy, which also elicits laughter (line 20).

To conclude, Andy's humor based on sarcasm comes from other speech participants' mental process of his scolding remark, which is further reinforced by the face-threatening force encoded in his use of the second-person plural pronoun 你們 *nǐmen* “you.” While Andy's humor makes him the target of teasing in the following speaking turns, he successfully

⁴⁴ 宋朝 *sòng cháo* “the Song Dynasty” (960-1279 AD) was an era of Chinese history. Also refer to Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Song_dynasty).

extends the conversation centering on him, and perhaps also attracts the attention from the audience of the program.

6.4 Innuendo

Innuendo, as defined by Fraser (2001: 323), is "an implied message in the form of an allegation whose content constitutes some sort of unwanted ascription towards the target of the comment." In the present study, innuendo can be used as a humor type, which is usually found in the two hosts' questions. Among them, many are asked not to elicit an answer, but to result in a humorous effect. The following extract is on one of the invited guests Jiāotáng's interpersonal relationship with his male friends. To elicit more laughter, the host Cài uses innuendo to imply that Jiāotáng, Xǔ and their common friend Guō are gay. Taking the hint, his co-host Xú joins him by using the same humor. Instead of rejecting the two hosts' implied messages, both the teased targets Jiāotáng and Xǔ seem to be in an attempt to cooperate with the hosts to make the story more plausible and amusing.

Extract (35) [KXLL 25.02.2011]

01. → 蔡康永：你們有看過兩個男生，一起逛 IKEA 嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐmen yǒu kànguò liǎngge nánshēng yìqǐ guàng ikea ma?
02. 焦糖：我昨天才跟郭彥甫一起逛 IKEA。
jiāotáng: wǒ zuótiān cái gēn guō yàn-fǔ yìqǐ guàng ikea.
03. 許建國：而且你看，又找另外一個人了！
xǔ jiàn-guó: érqǐě nǐ kàn, yòu zhǎo lìngwài yíge rén le!
04. → 蔡康永：然後兩個人跳到床上去試那個床墊嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: ránhòu liǎngge rén tiào dào chuángshàng qù shì nàge chuángdiàn ma?
05. 焦糖：真的！我們去試一張沙發，他說要買一張沙發，我們在那邊試...
jiāotáng: zhēnde! wǒmen qù shì yìzhāng shāfā, tā shuō yào mǎi yìzhāng shāfā, wǒmen zài nàbiān shì...
06. 許建國：他說等會兒還要跟郭彥甫去喝下午茶，等會兒錄完。
xǔ jiàn-guó: tā shuō děnghuǐr hái yào gēn guō yàn-fǔ qù hē xiàwǔchá, děnghuǐr lù wán.
07. → 徐熙娣：這件事你有、你有生氣吧？
xú xī-dì: zhèjiàn shì nǐ yǒu, nǐ yǒu shēngqì ba?
08. 許建國：沒有，我剛剛才聽到，我說怎麼可能沒有我呢？
xǔ jiàn-guó: méiyǒu, wǒ gānggāng cái tīngdào, wǒ shuō zěnméi kěnéng méiyǒu wǒ ne?
09. 焦糖：對，他有點生氣說。我昨天在那個微博傳一張彥甫。
jiāotáng: duì, tā yǒudiǎn shēngqì shuō. wǒ zuótiān zài nàge wéibó chuán yìzhāng yàn-fǔ.
10. 許建國：放一張郭彥甫的照片。
xǔ jiàn-guó: fàng yìzhāng guō yàn-fǔ de zhàopiàn.

11. 焦糖：因為我們去喝茶。
jiāotáng: yīnwèi wǒmen qù hē chá.
12. 許建國：而且上面寫說「帥哦、帥哥」。
xǔ jiàn-guó: érqǐ shàngmiàn xiěshuō "shuài ó, shuàigē."
13. → 蔡康永：S，我覺得這集太 Gay 了！怎麼辦？
cài kāng-yǒng: s, wǒ juéde zhèjí tài gay le! zěnmé bàn?
14. → 徐熙娣：對啊，你們倆應該有在一起養黃金獵犬吧？
xú xī-dì: duì a, nǐmen liǎng yīnggāi yǒu yìqǐ yǎng huángjīnlièquǎn ba?
15. 焦糖：彥甫有養啦，我沒有養。
jiāotáng: yàn-fǔ yǒu yǎng la, wǒ méiyǒu yǎng.
16. 蔡康永：萬一是貴賓狗。
cài kāng-yǒng: wànyī shì guìbīngǒu.
17. 許建國：他還跟彥甫說，他生日的時候要叫他幫他畫一個畫像給他，送他做生日禮物。
xǔ jiàn-guó: tā hái gēn yàn-fǔ shuō, tā shēngrì de shíhòu yào jiào tā bāng tā huà yīge huàxiàng gěi tā, sòng tā zuò shēngrì lǐwù.
18. → 蔡康永：你幹嘛那麼吃醋啊，許建國？
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ gànmá nàme chīcù a, xǔ jiàn-guó?
19. 許建國：...
xǔ jiàn-guó: ...
20. 曾少宗：你們好像在熱戀喔。
cēng shào-zōng: nǐmen hǎoxiàng zài rèliàn o.
21. 蔡康永：你在、你在製造每件事耶！
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ zài, nǐ zài zhìzào měijiàn shì ye.
22. 許建國：沒有啊、沒有、沒有、沒有、沒有！
xǔ jiàn-guó: méiyǒu a, méiyǒu, méiyǒu, méiyǒu, méiyǒu!

Translation

01. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Did you ever see two guys doing shopping in IKEA? (l: Cài) [Andy and Lù look at each other.] (l: Andy, Lù)
02. Jiāotáng: I happened to do shopping in IKEA with Guō Yàn-Fǔ yesterday. (L: Jiāotáng) (L)
03. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: See? He was with another guy again! [Xǔ stretches his right hand to point at Jiāotáng.] (l: Xǔ)
04. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: (l: Cài, Xú) And you two jumped onto the bed to test the quality of the mattress?
05. Jiāotáng: (l: Jiāotáng) You bet! We were sitting on a sofa, because he said he wanted to buy one, so we were doing this... (l: Andy, Lù, Xǔ)
06. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: He said he would meet with Guō Yàn-Fǔ later to drink afternoon tea, right after he finishes this show. [Xǔ touches the shoulder of Jiāotáng.] (L: Jiāotáng)
07. → Xú Xī-Dì: (l: Cài, Xú) Did you get mad because of this? (L: Jiāotáng)
08. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: No, I heard of it just now, and I asked him why he goes without me. [Xǔ looks at Jiāotáng and pretends to be angry.] (l: Jiāotáng)
09. Jiāotáng: (l: Jiāotáng) [Jiāotáng points at Xǔ while still looking at the two hosts.] Yes, he was a little bit angry. I uploaded a photo of Yàn-Fǔ to my blog yesterday. [Jiāotáng stretches out his hand to imitate the act of uploading the photo.]
10. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: A photo of Yàn-Fǔ. [Xǔ also stretches out his hand to imitate the act of checking the photo.]
11. Jiāotáng: It was because we were drinking afternoon tea.
12. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: And he wrote "Such a handsome, handsome guy" beside the photo. [Xǔ

- turns his head towards Jiāotáng again.]
13. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: S (Xú), I think our show today is so gay! (L: Cài, Xú) What should we do with it?
 14. → Xú Xī-Dì: [Xú turns her head towards Cài and knits her eyebrows.] Right, [Xú then turns her head towards Jiāotáng and Xǔ and asks them in a questioning tone.] you two are keeping a golden retriever dog at home, right? (L: Jiāotáng, Xǔ) (L)
 15. Jiāotáng: (Jiāotáng, Xǔ) Yàn-Fǔ has one, but I do not.
 16. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Maybe it is a poodle.
 17. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: He also asked Yàn-Fǔ to draw a portrait for him on his birthday, as a birthday present. (l: Jiāotáng) [Xǔ touches Jiāotáng's shoulder and then imitates the act of drawing.]
 18. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Why are you so jealous of him, Xǔ Jiàn-Guó? (l: Cài)
 19. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: (S) (l: Xǔ) [Xǔ turns to the other side with deep resignation.]
 20. Cēng Shào-Zōng: You seem to be passionately in love. (l: Xǔ) (L: Jiāotáng)
 21. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: (l: Cài) You, you are making scandals of yourself!
 22. Xǔ Jiàn-Guó: No, no, no, no, no!

In the beginning of the conversation, the host Cài initiates a question, implying that two guys doing shopping in IKEA is beyond people's understanding (line 1). As IKEA is a store selling furniture and housewares, it has successfully created an image in the mind of many Taiwanese that a young couple can easily find what they need for their new home, and therefore usually couples go there for shopping. Cài's question can be regarded as an initial move, implying that two men doing shopping in IKEA are very likely to be a gay couple. Instead of rejecting the implied message encoded in Cài's question, both the teased targets Jiāotáng and Xǔ seem to be in an attempt to be cooperative with the host to bring laughter, as in lines 2 and 3. In line 2, Jiāotáng mentions that he just went to IKEA the day before, and in line 3, Xǔ immediately responds to Jiāotáng's remark. Xǔ's response, however, may give other speech participants and the audience an impression that he is jealous of Guō, whom Jiāotáng went shopping with in IKEA the day before.

In addition, Cài, in line 4, asks Jiāotáng whether he and his friend Guō jumped onto the bed to test the quality of the mattress when they were in IKEA. As the word 床 *chuáng* "bed" in Mandarin may connect people's thinking with sex, as evidenced in the phrase 上床 *shàng chuáng* "to be on the bed, to have sex," Cài's question can be regarded as an expression of innuendo, inviting others to make a connection. This type of humor, not surprisingly, brings laughter from other speech participants. In lines 5 and 6, both the teased targets Jiāotáng and Xǔ are still cooperating with Cài to make the story more plausible. Following their remarks, the hostess Xú joins the conversation and asks Xǔ whether he is angry with Jiāotáng, as he went to IKEA with the other guy, Guō, the previous day, and is meeting him again after the show. Xú's question is also an expression of innuendo intended to elicit more

interesting remarks from the teased target, namely Xǔ. In answering Xú's question, both Xǔ and Jiāotáng form a conversational duet, as we can see in lines 8-12, in which Jiāotáng keeps making his relationship with Guō and Xǔ controversial, and Xǔ keeps showing his jealousy.

Cài, in line 13, comments on the two guests' answers to the questions by saying that the show is so gay. Cài's comment is also an expression of innuendo. Directly pointing out that Xǔ and Jiāotáng are gay is not amusing at all. Instead of doing that, Cài simply says that the show today is so gay, implicitly inviting other speech participants and the audience to speculate the relationship of Jiāotáng, Xǔ and Guō. The analogical process in making a connection between the two guests' remarks and "gayness" also helps result in a humorous effect. Xú, in line 14, asks another question, which is also an expression of innuendo. The innuendo embedded in Xú's utterance is based on her mention of 黃金獵犬 *huángjīnlièquǎn* "golden retriever dog," a sturdy, large-sized dog usually kept by a Taiwanese young couple as a witness of their love. Also note that Xú's question 你們倆應該有在一起養黃金獵犬吧? *nǐmen liǎng yīnggāi yǒu yìqǐ yǎng huángjīnlièquǎn ba?* "You two are keeping a golden retriever dog at home, right?" agrees with Cài's utterance in line 13. This is evidenced in her use of 對啊 *duì a* "right" placed before the question. According to Kuo's (1998) investigation, when 對啊 *duì a* "right" appears in the initial position in a turn unit, it functions as an agreement token to affirm the other interlocutor's utterance in the prior turn.⁴⁵ It, therefore, seems reasonable to suppose that Xú is implying that Jiāotáng and Guō are a gay couple. Both the teased targets Jiāotáng and Xǔ are still in cooperation with the hosts to make the story more plausible and entertaining. Jiāotáng, in line 15, says that his friend Guō does have a golden retriever dog at home; that is, the hostess Xú's speculation is partially true. The other teased target Xǔ changes the topic and adds that Jiāotáng also asked Guō to draw a birthday card for him (line 16). Xǔ's utterance, not surprisingly, attracts more teasing not only from the host Cài (line 18), but also from the other guest Cēng (line 20).

It is interesting to note that in line 18, Cài describes Xǔ's responses in prior turns as 吃醋 *chīcù*, which literally means "eating vinegar." This metaphor is used to describe the jealousy caused by the third person that appears between two lovers or between a couple. According to Xu's (2011) investigation, the phrase 吃醋 *chīcù* that connotes jealousy first appeared in the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD). Chen's (2012) study of food metaphors in

⁴⁵ Kuo's (1998) investigation shows that 對啊 *duì a* "right" has three functions in Mandarin spoken discourse depending on where it occurs in a turn unit. It functions as an agreement token in a turn-initial position. When it appears in the turn-final position, 對啊 *duì a* "right" can close a talk, while at the same time strengthening what the speaker has just said. Finally, when 對啊 *duì a* "right" occurs in the turn-internal position, it can acknowledge the listener's minimal responses and confirm the speaker's previous utterance.

Taiwanese Mandarin has further pointed out that the production of phrases as such is arbitrary, and that understanding these phrases requires the shared cultural background of speaker and listener towards the language. Nevertheless, as Chen further argues, many of these phrases are fixed expressions, which have been repeatedly used in interactions. Listener, thus, understands the derived meaning of a fixed expression immediately.⁴⁶ Cài's deliberate use of this 吃醋 *chīcù* to refer to Xǔ's responses in prior turns can be regarded as a fixed expression. While it is also an expression of innuendo to implicitly construct Xǔ as gay, the humor is quickly and correctly perceived by other speech participants. The other guest Cēng, for example, understands Cài's humor and immediately joins in the teasing, as evidenced in his phrase 在熱戀 *zài rèliàn* "be passionately in love." The above interaction shows that innuendo can be used a form of humor, which can be created by asking questions. These questions are further based on the co-constructed fictional episode by the two hosts, in which Xǔ is homosexual and is jealous for Jiāotáng. Although there is no direct evidence showing that the two hosts do not intend to seek an answer when asking a question, the questions above successfully bring laughter. In pondering the how's and why's of the questions, speech participants are very likely to get the derived humor encoded in them during the thinking process.

In my data, I have also found that a referring expression, e.g., a proper name, may contain an implied message to result in a humorous effect. Innuendo of this type is also embedded in a question. To understand the humor as such, it very often requires the "common knowledge" of a particular-language community. In other words, this type of humor helps assume the in-group membership of the community. In the following, Extract (36) is about Andy's wife. As it is rumored that Andy got married in order to disguise his homosexual orientation, and that among all the speech participants only Andy's good friend Lù (female) has seen his wife, the two hosts therefore ask Lù to describe what Andy's wife looks like. Humorous remarks appear in one of the hosts' questions, as well as in Andy's ensuing response. As the extract will show, the humorous remarks are based on the use of innuendo, which essentially is based on the use of proper names, e.g., names of celebrities.

Extract (36) [KXLL 25.02.2011]

01. 蔡康永：路嘉怡，小 Andy 時期，Andy 跟誰在交往？
cài kāng-yǒng: lù jiā-yí, xiǎo andy shíqí, andy gēn shéi zài jiāowǎng?
02. 路嘉怡：他的女朋友從高中就在...
lù jiā-yí: tāde nǚ péngyǒu cóng gāozhōng jiù zài...

⁴⁶ See Morgan's (1978: 274) term of "short-circuited implicature."

03. 蔡康永：來來來，妳到這邊來，來，你到這裡來，我們有話要問妳。
cài kāng-yǒng: lái lái lái, nǐ dào zhèbiān lái, lái, nǐ dào zhèlǐ lái, wǒmen yǒu huà yào wèn nǐ.
04. 徐熙娣：有一個，真的？好多問號。
xú xī-dì: yǒu yíge, zhēnde? hǎo duō wèn hào.
05. 蔡康永：妳跟他是好朋友，對不對？
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ gēn tā shì hǎo péngyǒu, duì bú duì?
06. 路嘉怡：對。
lù jiā-yí: duì.
07. 蔡康永：妳作為他多年的好友，妳應該知道。
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ zuòwéi tā duō nián de hǎo yǒu, nǐ yīnggāi zhīdào.
08. 路嘉怡：其實我真的從來沒懷疑過。
lù jiā-yí: qíshí wǒ zhēnde cónglái méi huáiyí guò.
09. 徐熙娣：妳給我們一個最堅定的，讓我們永遠不會再懷疑的理由或故事。
xú xī-dì: nǐ gěi wǒmen yíge zuì jiāndìngde, ràng wǒmen yǒngyuǎn bú huì zài huáiyí de lǐyóu huò gùshi.
10. 蔡康永：他就是愛他太太？
cài kāng-yǒng: tā jiùshì ài tā tàitai.
11. 路嘉怡：嗯。
lù jiā-yí: en.
12. 徐熙娣：他太太的外型是什麼樣子？
xú xī-dì: tā tàitai de wàixíng shì shénme yàngzi?
13. 路嘉怡：呃，娟秀。
lù jiā-yí: e, juānxiù.
14. → 徐熙娣：不是潘美辰的那一種？
xú xī-dì: bú shì pān měi-chén de nà yìzhǒng?
15. 路嘉怡：不是，是還蠻...
lù jiā-yí: bú shì, shì hái mǎn...
16. → Andy：我還林良樂咧！
andy: wǒ hái lín liáng-lè lie!

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Lù Jiā-Yí, when Andy was young, whom did he date?
02. Lù Jiā-Yí: She was his girlfriend in high school... [Lù sometimes turn her head towards Andy, who is sitting next to her.]
03. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Come, you come here. [Cài asks Lù to go to their side.] (L: Lù) We have to ask you some questions. [Lù walks to the two hosts.]
04. Xú Xī-Dì: A girlfriend? I have got so many doubts.
05. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: You and he are good friends, right?
06. Lù Jiā-Yí: (L: Lù) Right. (L: Andy) [Andy cocks his head to one side with folded arms and glares at Lù and the two hosts]
07. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: As his good friend for so many years, you should know something.
08. Lù Jiā-Yí: I in fact have never had any doubt of that.
09. Xú Xī-Dì: Give us a strong reason or story to never have a doubt again.
10. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: He really loves his wife? [Lù turns her head towards Andy.]
11. Lù Jiā-Yí: Yes. [Lù nods her head.]
12. Xú Xī-Dì: What does his wife look like?
13. Lù Jiā-Yí: Well, she is beautiful and graceful. (L: Lù)
14. → Xú Xī-Dì: Not the type like **Pān Měi-Chén**?
15. Lù Jiā-Yí: No, she is more like... (L) (L: Andy)

16. → Andy: (L: Andy) It would have been more convincing if **Lín Liáng-Lè** had been mentioned instead! (L)

In lines 1-11, the topic of the conversation focuses on Andy's relationship with his wife. While the two hosts are casting their doubts towards Andy's sexual orientation, the invited guest Lù (Andy's good friend) helps to clarify Andy's relationship with his wife. In line 12, the hostess Xú asks Lù to portray the attributes of Andy's wife. In her answer, Lù uses the phrase 娟秀 *juānxiù* "beautiful and graceful," which is tagged as being feminine in the Mandarin-speaking communities (line 13). Based on Lù's description, Xú casts a yes-no question: 不是潘美辰的那一種? *bú shì pān měi-chén de nà yìzhǒng?* "Not the type like Pān Měi-Chén?" (line 14). This question containing the name of a celebrity, namely 潘美辰 *pān měi-chén*, can be regarded as a type of humor based on innuendo, as the bearer of the name is a female singer known for her masculinity. While Xú's question can have many possible readings, all of them seem to be focusing the attention of other speech participants (including the audience) on Andy's sexual orientation. When Xú intentionally connects Andy's wife to a masculine female singer, she at the same time highlights Andy's preference for a masculine partner, regardless of the truth. In other words, Xú's question is a humor type based on innuendo, inviting others to question Andy's sexual orientation. The laughter in line 15 also indicates that the Xú's humor is understood and is considered amusing by other speech participants. Indeed, a proper name may have different connotations, which are associated by different people, as claimed by Lyons (1977):

[M]any proper names have quite specific connotations, or associations. The connotations which one person associates with a name may be different from the connotations which another person associates with the same name, even in cases where both persons would use the name to refer to or address the same individual (or set of individuals). When the bearer of the name is a historically, politically or culturally prominent place or person, the connotations of the name of this place or person may be relatively constant for members of a particular language-community sharing the same culture.

(Lyons 1977: 220)

Xú's use of innuendo as humor and the ensuing laughter that occurs in a split second can be best accounted for by Morgan's (1978: 274) term of "short-circuited implicature." As Morgan argues, when a linguistic expression (in our case the name of a celebrity) recursively appears in a certain context, the speaker does not need to make any reference to it, but it is still understood and correctly perceived by other speech participants who share the same knowledge. As a member of the same language-community, the teased target Andy understands Xú's humor and responds with the same humor type, as we can see in line 16. In

this line, Andy mentions another name 林良樂 *lín liáng-lè*, a female singer also known for her masculinity.⁴⁷ It is interesting to note that this proper name is embedded in the sentential construction 我還...咧 *wǒ hái...lie*, which is frequently used to show disagreement. Andy's utterance in line 16, therefore, can be regarded as his understanding and rejection of Xú's humor, but expressed in an indirect way. In fact, it is not uncommon to see an interlocutor responding to an innuendo with another innuendo. In his analysis of Akan informal discourse, Obeng (1994) has found that one interesting feature of *akutia* (innuendo) is that one can only respond indirectly if his/her interlocutor uses *akutia* (innuendo).

To conclude, as innuendo is "an implied message in the form of allegation" (Fraser 2001: 323), understanding the humor based on it requires taking many factors into account. Xú's humor, thus, serves to solidify the in-group membership of the Mandarin community, as only the in-group members would get the funniness of her humor based on innuendo. On the other hand, as innuendo very often requires a response based on innuendo (see Obeng 1994), Andy's response via the use of the same type of humor also helps him assume his in-group membership of the Mandarin-community. The analysis of the above extract has further supported the argument that humor in a high-context society, e.g., Taiwan, serves to reinforce the in-group solidarity.

6.5 Other-Deprecating Humor

In conversations, humorous remarks are at times created by means of deprecating others. This type of humor, to borrow Brown and Levinson's (1987) term, can be regarded as a face-threatening act, since it is used by the speaker, i.e., the creator of the humorous remarks, to threaten the positive face of the listener, i.e., the receiver of the humorous remarks. More specifically, other-deprecating humor is employed by speech participants to disapprove or criticize other speech participants, so as to elicit laughter. In Taiwan, more instances of this type of humor are found in interactions on television variety shows. To elicit laughter from the audience, hosts frequently deprecate their guests to construct humor. As this face-threatening act is done to attract high viewing rates, both the deprecated guests and the audience of the programs know that hosts' face-threatening act is only to result in a humorous

⁴⁷ Using a celebrity's name to refer to someone (instead of pointing out the shared traits with that celebrity) is a frequent discourse strategy used in Taiwan to tease someone in a talk-in-interaction. Taiwanese's preference to use this discourse strategy to result in a humorous effect can also be seen in the translation of Japanese comic books (See Appendix IV).

effect. In my Mandarin data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, as most of the invited guests are celebrities, the hosts' deprecating of their guests helps these guests receive more attention from the audience. The following extract illustrates this point. In this extract, the hostess Xú criticizes one of the invited guests Liú for releasing a nonsense product. By deprecating Liú and her new product, Xú successfully brings the audience's attention to Liú's latest released product and promotes it in a humorous way.

Extract (37) [KXLL 29.12.2010]

01. 蔡康永：好，在介紹大家帶來的配件之前呢，劉真又要惹妳生氣了。
cài kāng-yǒng: hǎo, zài jièshào dàjiā dài lái de pèijiàn zhīqián ne, liú zhēn yòu yào rě nǐ shēngqì le.
02. 徐熙娣：不是，因為這個商品。你們大家評評理，有這個必要嗎？
xú xī-dì: búshì, yīnwèi zhège shāngpǐn. nǐmen dàjiā píngpínglǐ, yǒu zhège bìyào ma?
03. 蔡康永：請說。
cài kāng-yǒng: qǐng shuō.
04. 徐熙娣：妳講講看這個內容。
xú xī-dì: nǐ jiǎngjiǎng kàn zhège nèiróng.
05. 劉真：這個就是那個我最新出的舞蹈教學 DVD。
liú zhēn: zhège jiùshì nàge wǒ zuìxīn chū de wǔdǎo jiāoxué dvd.
06. 徐熙娣：OK，好，舞蹈教學 DVD，這個部份都還很合理哦，對不對？
xú xī-dì: ok, hǎo, wǔdǎo jiāoxué dvd, zhège bùfèn dōu hái hěn hélǐ ó, duìbúduì?
07. 劉真：嗯。
liú zhēn: en.
08. 徐熙娣：因為舞蹈本來就需要教學。
xú xī-dì: yīnwèi wǔdǎo běnlái jiù xūyào jiāoxué.
09. 劉真：對。
liú zhēn: duì.
10. → 徐熙娣：可是重點是妳又不厲害。
xú xī-dì: kěshì zhòngdiǎn shì nǐ yòu bú lìhài.
11. 蔡康永：妳應該不是要講這句話吧？
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ yīnggāi búshì yào jiǎng zhèjù huà ba?
12. 妳是要講別的吧！
nǐ shì yào jiǎng biéde ba!
13. 妳怎麼會冒出這一句來？
nǐ zěnmé huì mào chū zhèyījù lái?
14. → 徐熙娣：妳是需要被教吧！
xú xī-dì: nǐ shì xūyào bèi jiāo ba!
15. 劉真：我也沒有預料剛剛說出這句話來。
liú zhēn: wǒ yě méiyǒu yùliào gānggāng shuōchū zhèjù huà lái.
16. → 蔡康永：她出了一個舞蹈被教的 DVD 嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: tā chūle yíge wǔdǎo bèi jiāo de dvd ma?
17. 劉真：沒有啦！
liú zhēn: méiyǒu la!
18. → 徐熙娣：請教教我之 DVD！
xú xī-dì: qǐng jiàojiāo wǒ zhī dvd!

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Okay, before I demonstrate our guests' accessories, [Cài turns his head towards Xú, while Xú keeps looking at Liú.] I have to remind you that Liú Zhēn probably will irritate you again. (L: Liú)
02. Xú Xī-Dì: (l: Cài) [Xú looks at Liú poker-faced and moves her right hand forward, palm up.] No, my anger results from her product. Everyone can judge whether I am wrong. Is it proper to have this product? (l: Xú)
03. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: (l: Cài) Please tell us.
04. Xú Xī-Dì: Say something about your product.
05. Liú Zhēn: [Liú holds her DVD.] This is my latest released ballroom dancing instructional DVD. [Liú looks at Xú.] (l: Liú)
06. Xú Xī-Dì: (l: Cài) [Xú stretches her right hand to stop Liú from talking and looks at the camera.] Okay, a ballroom dancing instructional DVD. So far it is still reasonable, right? [Xú turns her head towards Liú, looks at her and moves both hands forward, with palms turned to the front.]
07. Liú Zhēn: Right.
08. Xú Xī-Dì: It is because ballroom dances need to be taught.
09. Liú Zhēn: Correct. (l: Liú) [Liú looks at Xú and nods her head to show agreement.]
10. → Xú Xī-Dì: But the point is, you are not good at all. [Liú slightly bounces up from the chair with eyes open wide in surprise.] (L: Liú) (L)
11. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: [Cài shows his surprise by touching Xú's shoulder.] (L: Xú) You did not intend to say this, right?
12. I think you intended to say something else!
13. How could you say this unexpectedly?
14. → Xú Xī-Dì: You need to be taught instead! (l: Xú) [Xú gives a pose of a professional dancer and looks at Liú to deliberate provocation.] (L)
15. Liú Zhēn: I did not expect her to say this, either. (L: Liú)
16. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Did she just release a DVD to show that she needs to be taught how to dance? (L: Cài, Xú) (L)
17. Liú Zhēn: No! [Liú looks innocent and talks as if she felt wronged.]
18. → Xú Xī-Dì: The title of that DVD is PLEASE TEACH ME HOW TO DANCE! (L: Cài, Xú) (L)

The above interaction is from the opening of the program. Before the program begins, the host Cài directs everyone's attention to one of the invited guests Liú, by saying that she probably will irritate his co-host Xú later. In line 2, Xú takes the speaking turn and directs everyone's attention to Liú's latest released product, and in line 4, she asks her to introduce her product, a ballroom dancing instructional DVD. In lines 6 and 8, Xú agrees that such a DVD is necessary, since ballroom dance must be taught. In line 10, however, Xú deprecates Liú by saying that Liú is not a good dancer and therefore is not qualified to release a DVD product like this. These remarks are face-threatening by nature, in the sense that Xú's direct criticism hurts the positive face of Liú. Xú's face-threatening act, however, elicits laughter. In line 14, Xú adds that Liú needs to be taught, instead of teaching others. When she says this, she also gives a pose of a professional dancer and looks at Liú to deliberate provocation.

Her non-verbal act, more specifically her exaggerated pose, further frames her deprecation as play. As Bateson (1972) suggests, when a hostile phrase is cast with a metamessage that signals a frame as play, this hostile phrase should not be taken literally. It might convey participant rapport instead. As Liú is a famous ballroom dancer in Taiwan, it is clear that Xú's words are not meant literally.

In line 16, moreover, Xú's co-host Cài joins and casts a question: 她出了一個舞蹈被教的 DVD 嗎 ? *tā chūle yíge wǔdǎo bèi jiāo de dvd ma?* “Did she just release a DVD to show that she needs to be taught how to dance?” This question also elicits laughter but is immediately rejected by Liú in her speaking turn. In line 17, Liú uses the Mandarin negator 沒有 *méiyǒu* “no” combined with a sentence-final particle 啦 *la*. As Wang (2008) and Wang, Tsai and Ling (2007) have observed, the Mandarin negator 沒有 *méiyǒu* “no” at the interactional (pragmatic/speech-act) level can be used as a discourse marker, which performs such functions as “responding to provide information,” “correcting/clarifying,” “evading” and “responding to praise and gratitude.” It is most frequently used to preface non-agreement. Clearly, Liú's use of 沒有啦 *méiyǒu la* “no” perhaps shows her intention to clarify that she did not release a DVD to show that she needs to be taught. Ignoring Liú's clarification, Xú follows Cài's created imagined situation, in which Liú has just released a DVD to show that she needs to be taught how to dance. In line 18, Xú further creates a title for this DVD by using 之 *zhī*, a Mandarin auxiliary word, which literally means “of” and is frequently used to construct a formal title. Her use of 之 *zhī* to construct the formal title of Liú's DVD but in an imagined situation is awkward, and therefore also helps reinforce the humorous effect. In conclusion, while Xú's other-deprecating humor successfully elicits laughter, she also succeed in promoting Liú's latest released product in a humorous way.

6.6 Self-Deprecating Humor

Self-deprecating humor, by its literal meaning, is a humor type in which the speaker chooses to belittle or mock him/herself in front of others in order to bring about laughter. As Zajdman (1995: 337-338) observes, the use of self-deprecating humor has many advantages.⁴⁸ It can help evoke mixed feelings (e.g., pity, sympathy, appreciation and love) from the listener

⁴⁸ “Self-deprecating humor” in the present study is termed as “self-denigrating humor” or “self-directed humor” in Zajdman's (1995) study. All the three terms can be categorized as the same type of humor in which the speaker employs a self-denigrating face-threatening act to bring about laughter.

towards the speaker, as the speaker is not afraid of admitting his/her own weakness. The listener may feel a sense of superiority. However, the inferiority presented by the speaker in his/her self-deprecating humor may also convey a message of superiority, as the weakness s/he reveals may give the listener an impression that the revealed weakness is probably the only one that the speaker has. In using self-deprecating humor, the speaker also creates a positive image by showing that s/he is in control of the situation, while at the same time the listener is left bewildered, as the listener cannot know what the speaker actually thinks about him/herself. In brief, the use of self-deprecating humor contains a circular message: “I am weak, I admit it. To admit means to be strong. So, I am strong” (Zajdman 1995: 338). In the following extract, the hosts Càì and Xú ask the invited guest Andy to present the way he scolds the entertainers of his company, of which he is the executive creative director. As some of the ensuing questions seem to be aiming at teasing Andy, the hostess Xú uses self-deprecating humor not only to entertain the audience, but also to cope with the potential risks that these questions may trigger.

Extract (38) [KXLL 25.02.2011]

01. 徐熙娣：好啦，那你呈現你現在真實的罵人的狀態。
xú xī-dì: hǎo la, nà nǐ chéngxiàn nǐ xiànzài zhēnshíde mà rén de zhuàngtài.
02. 蔡康永：你就罵徐熙娣說：「徐熙娣，妳如果再敢指控我！」
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ jiù mà xú xī-dì shuō, “xú xī-dì, nǐ rúguǒ zài gǎn zhǐkòng wǒ!”
03. Andy：不要，我罵路嘉怡啦，我怕小 S...
andy: bú yào, wǒ mà lù jiā-yí la, wǒ pà xiǎo s...
04. 蔡康永：喔，OK。
cài kāng-yǒng: o, ok.
05. 路嘉怡：為什麼？
lù jiā-yí: wèi shénme?
06. Andy：因為很熟啦。
andy: yīnwèi hěn shóu la.
07. 路嘉怡：好啦，好啦。
lù jiā-yí: hǎo la, hǎo la.
08. Andy：我就說：「欸，路嘉怡，妳在幹嘛？」這個，就是，什麼什麼。
andy: wǒ jiù shuō, “èi, lù jiā-yí, nǐ zài gànma?” zhège, jiù shì, shénme shénme.
09. 蔡康永：沒有啊，她剛剛演的不是這樣啊。
cài kāng-yǒng: méiyǒu a, tā gānggāng yǎn de bú shì zhèyàng a.
10. 路嘉怡：氣勢、氣勢！
lù jiā-yí: qìshì, qìshì!
11. 焦糖：氣勢！
jiāotáng: qìshì!
12. 路嘉怡：平常罵人的那種氣勢。
lù jiā-yí: píngcháng mà rén de nàzhǒng qìshì.
13. 焦糖：你罵硬體單位那種氣勢啊。
jiāotáng: nǐ mà yìngtǐ dānwèi nàzhǒng qìshì a.

14. 徐熙娣：不會說：「老子花了那麼多錢在你身上，你竟然給我拿出這種表演。」
xú xī-dì: bú huì shuō, “lǎozi huā le nàme duō qián zài nǐ shēnshàng, nǐ jìngrán gěi wǒ náchū zhèzhǒng biǎoyǎn.”
15. Andy：我不會用「老子」。
andy: wǒ bú huì yòng “lǎozi.”
16. 徐熙娣：老娘、老娘、老娘！
xú xī-dì: lǎoniáng, lǎoniáng, lǎoniáng!
17. 「老娘花了多少錢啊！」
“lǎoniáng huā le duōshǎo qián a!”
18. 路嘉怡：講出來後悔了吧？
lù jiā-yí: jiǎng chūlái hòuhuǐ le ba?
19. Andy：唉呦！
andy: āi you!
20. 焦糖：Andy 哥。
jiāotáng: andy gē.
21. Andy：我們會有自稱啦，不會是說什麼「老子不老子」之類的。
andy: wǒmen huì yǒu zì chēng la, bú huì shì shuō shénme “lǎozi bù lǎozi” zhīlèi de.
22. 徐熙娣：你不會說：「今天我 Andy 站出去就是要怎麼樣。」
xú xī-dì: nǐ bú huì shuō, “jīntiān wǒ andy zhàn chūqù jiù shì yào zěnmeyàng.”
23. 路嘉怡：他不會用第三人稱。
lù jiā-yí: tā bú huì yòng dìsān rénnchéng.
24. 徐熙娣：不會嗎？
xú xī-dì: bú huì ma?
25. 路嘉怡：對。
lù jiā-yí: duì.
26. 徐熙娣：不是這種變態的？
xú xī-dì: bú shì zhèzhǒng biàntài de?
27. 路嘉怡：嗯。
lù jiā-yí: en.
28. Andy：我承認有的時候我會，因為可能小時候沒有媽媽，因為是爺爺奶奶帶大...
andy: wǒ chéngrèn yǒude shíhòu wǒ huì, yīnwèi kěnéng xiǎo shíhòu méiyǒu māmā, yīnwèi shì yéye nǎinai dài dà...
29. 徐熙娣：他又想給我搬，你不要再給我搬溫情牌了。
xú xī-dì: tā yòu xiǎng gěi wǒ bān, nǐ bú yào zài gěi wǒ bān wēnqíng pái le.
30. 蔡康永：你搬出這一句來，我們...
cài kāng-yǒng: nǐ bān chū zhè yíjù lái, wǒmen...
31. 路嘉怡：欸，你跟他們講。
lù jiā-yí: èi, nǐ gēn tāmen jiǎng.
32. Andy：沒有，是黑人叫我用這招對付妳啊。
andy: méiyǒu, shì hēirén jiào wǒ yòng zhèzhāo duìfù nǐ a.
33. → 徐熙娣：我們兩個就是沒人性出名的，你還在那邊。
xú xī-dì: wǒmen liǎngge jiù shì méi rénxìng chūmíng de, nǐ hái zài nàbiān.

Translation

01. Xú Xī-Dì: Okay, so show us how you actually scold others. (I: Cài)
02. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: You can scold Xú Xī-Dì, “Xú Xī-Dì, if you dare to accuse me again!”
03. Andy: (I: Andy) No, I can present it by scolding Lù Jiā-Yí instead. I am afraid of Xú Xī-Dì...

04. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Oh, okay.
05. Lù Jiā-Yí: Why me? (L) (L: Lù, Andy)
06. Andy: It is because we are close to each other.
07. Lù Jiā-Yí: Okay, okay.
08. Andy: [Andy speaks with folded arms.] I would say, “Hey, Lù Jiā-Yí, what are you doing?” Something like this. (l: Andy)
09. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Really, she was not imitating like this.
10. Lù Jiā-Yí: More imposing manner! (l: Lù) [Lù stretches out her left hand forward and shakes it a few times while looking at Andy.]
11. Jiāotáng: Imposing manner!
12. Lù Jiā-Yí: The imposing manner that you usually have in scolding others. (l: Lù)
13. Jiāotáng: The imposing manner that you have in scolding the people of the hardware department. [Jiāotáng also move his hand towards Andy.]
14. Xú Xī-Dì: Would you say, “Your father has spent so much money on you. How can you give such a bad performance?”
15. Andy: I have never used “your father” (as a self-address form). (l: Andy)
16. Xú Xī-Dì: Your mother, your mother, your mother! (L: Andy) (L)
17. “Your mother has spent such a great amount of money!” (L) (l: Andy)
18. Lù Jiā-Yí: You must be regretting having said that, right? (L: Cài, Xú)
19. Andy: Oops! (L: Andy)
20. Jiāotáng: Andy.
21. Andy: I do use self-address forms, but not something like “your father.”
22. Xú Xī-Dì: Would you say, “I, Andy, want you to...”
23. Lù Jiā-Yí: He has never used third-person singular (as a self-address form).
24. Xú Xī-Dì: Never?
25. Lù Jiā-Yí: Never.
26. Xú Xī-Dì: Not any abnormal one like this?
27. Lù Jiā-Yí: No.
28. Andy: I must admit that sometimes I would use the self-address form like this. Maybe it is because my mother left when I was young. I was brought up by grandparents...
29. Xú Xī-Dì: [Both Cài and Xú stretch out their right hand to point at Andy.] (l: Cài, Xú) He is trying to win our sympathy again. Do not do that again.
30. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: You seemed to mention it on purpose. (l: Andy) We...
31. Lù Jiā-Yí: You can tell them.
32. Andy: (l: Andy) [Andy stretches his hand forward to point at the two hosts.] I did not mean to do that, but Blackie suggested I should use this strategy to avoid your questions.
33. → Xú Xī-Dì: (l: Cài, Xú) We two are notorious for having no sympathy for our guests. Why do you think it would work?

In the beginning of the above sequence, the hostess Xú asks the invited guest Andy to verbally and non-verbally present how he scolds his entertainers (line 1). As most of the Taiwanese audience feel that Xú frequently asks face-threatening questions on her program to bring about laughter, her co-host Cài therefore suggests that Andy should take Xú as a target to scold to make his presentation more entertaining to the audience (line 2). Instead of accepting the idea, Andy takes his good friend Lù as a target to scold. In line 8, Andy shows

how he usually scolds someone: 欸，路嘉怡，妳在幹嘛？*èi, lù jiā-yí, nǐ zài gànma?* “Hey, Lù Jiā-Yí, what are you doing?” His presentation, however, seems to be not convincing at all, as other guests Lù and Jiāotáng, both Andy’s friends, point out that Andy usually scolds others more fiercely. This can be seen in lines 10-13, in which both Lù and Jiāotáng ask Andy to show more 氣勢 *qìshì* “imposing manner” in his presentation. In line 14, moreover, Xú asks whether Andy, in scolding others, uses 老子 *lǎozi* “your father” as a self-address form, which is immediately denied by Andy in his turn of speaking (line 15). Following Andy’s answer, Xú quotes Andy’s remark in an imagined situation, as we can see in lines 16 and 17, in which Xú switches from 老子 *lǎozi* “your father” to 老娘 *lǎoniáng* “your mother,” implying that perhaps Andy uses the latter as a self-address form instead of the former. Both lines have other speech participants in stitches. In Taiwanese society, both terms are frequently used as self-reference, especially among friends. Their difference is marked out by gender. That is, Xú’s quoting Andy’s scolding remarks containing the self-address form 老娘 *lǎoniáng* “your mother” perhaps shows her intention to invite the audience to question Andy’s sexual orientation, as many Taiwanese think that he is a homosexual man. By embedding 老娘 *lǎoniáng* “your mother” in her direct quotation placed in quotation marks, Xú also successfully enacts the role of Andy by dramatizing her utterance, which further makes her utterance more amusing. However, whether Andy once used 老娘 *lǎoniáng* “your mother” or has cultivated the habit of using it remains a question, since it is in a quoted speech. However, as argued by Goffman (1974), a speaker may reduce personal responsibility when quoting someone else:

When a speaker employs conventional brackets to warn us that what he is saying is meant to be taken in jest, or as mere repeating of words said by someone else, then it is clear that he means to stand in a relation of reduced personal responsibility for what he is saying. He splits himself off from the content of his words by expressing that their speaker is not himself or not he himself in a serious way.
(Goffman 1974: 512)

From this perspective, Xú, in line 17, not only dramatizes her utterance to bring about more laughter, but she also avoids the potential risks.

Being teased by Xú, Andy later says that he sometimes uses self-address forms, and that his use of them is greatly influenced by his family background, especially by his childhood, during which his mother left him (line 28). This utterance is immediately interrupted by the two hosts. In lines 29 and 30, the two hosts question Andy’s motivation for switching the topic. Following the two hosts’ questioning, Andy says that mentioning his

miserable childhood is a strategy suggested by a common friend of him and the two hosts. This is done to avoid the unwanted questions, as the two hosts frequently ask face-threatening questions. In line 33, Xú uses 沒人性 *méi rén xìng* “without any human nature” to refer to themselves to show that they are notorious for having no sympathy for their guests, and that Andy’s strategy will not work. The expression of 沒人性 *méi rén xìng* “without any human nature” is dramatic, as it is only used to refer to those who lack in human nature. Clearly, Xú intends to dramatize the imposition that she and Cài have put upon Andy. Xú’s utterance can be regarded as self-deprecating humor, as she perhaps intends to create humorous remarks by deprecating herself and her co-host. This perhaps also helps her avoid the criticism coming from the audience. Indeed, as observed by Hay (2001), self-deprecating humor can be used to cope with difficult situations in troubles-talk. That is, this type of humor can be used as a strategy to protect the speaker from being deprecated by others, as s/he already deprecates him/herself. Indeed, 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* has received controversial comments from its audience. While some think that this variety show is funny and amusing, others find the two hosts’ interviewing style to be rude. In other words, Cài and Xú frequently ask face-threatening questions to create a humorous effect. Therefore, by using the self-deprecating humor, Xú not only makes the interview funny and amusing, but she also perhaps reduces the potential repugnance coming from part of the audience.

6.7 Self-Bragging Humor

As investigated by Scopelliti, Loewenstein and Vosgerau (2015), self-promotion may lead to being seen as bragging, as the speaker very often overestimates the extent to which the listener would feel proud or happy for them, and underestimates the extent to which the listener would get annoyed. Leech (1983) has proposed the Modesty maxim, claiming that while self-dispraising is considered benign in a social interaction, the breaking of the Modesty maxim can be regarded as “committing the social transgression of boasting” (p. 136). In other words, self-elevating behavior can be problematic in a social interaction, especially in the Mandarin-speaking societies, e.g., Taiwan. In his study of politeness phenomena in modern Mandarin, Gu (1990) has found that Mandarin speakers seem to be more willing to elevate their interlocutors, while they at the same time are frequently found to lower themselves. In so doing, they can strengthen their positive images and also maintain a

harmonious interpersonal relationship with others. As self-bragging is considered as breaking the social norm in the Mandarin-speaking societies, the use of it sometimes can result in a humorous effect to elicit amusement. Self-bragging as humor type, therefore, is frequently used in many television variety shows in Taiwan, either by hosts or by guests. However, as bragging is negative by nature, when one speech participant uses self-bragging humor to elicit amusement, very often other speech participants will show disagreement. In the following extract, the host Cài asks the four invited guests who is good at swimming. One of the guests Shěn, in replying to this question, employs the self-bragging humor to elicit amusement, which further elicits a resistant, quick verbal response from other speech participants.

Extract (39) [KXLL 30.03.2012]

01. 蔡康永：所以請問你們四位當中以當初以游泳見長的是誰？
cài kāng-yǒng: suǒyǐ qǐngwèn nǐmen sìwèi dāngzhōng yǐ dāngchū yǐ yóuyǒng jiàncháng de shì shéi?
02. → 沈玉琳：那我就當仁，當仁不讓了。
shěn yù-lín: nà wǒ jiù dāngrén, dāngrénbùràng le.
03. 蔡康永：是你嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: shì nǐ ma?
04. 洪都拉斯：是你啊！
hóngdūlāsī: shì nǐ a!
05. 蔡康永：是你？
cài kāng-yǒng: shì nǐ?
06. → 沈玉琳：我不但是游泳健將，我還是...
shěn yù-lín: wǒ búdàn shì yóuyǒng jiànjiàng, wǒ hái shì...
07. 蔡康永：等等！「健將」兩個字是有什麼標準？
cài kāng-yǒng: děngděng, “jiànjiàng” liǎngge zì shì yǒu shénme biāozhǔn?
08. 沈玉琳：健將就是要，第一就是要...
shěn yù-lín: jiànjiàng jiù shì yào, dìyī jiù shì yào...
09. 蔡康永：有比賽過嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: yǒu bǐsài guò ma?
10. 沈玉琳：我有比賽過，我代表班級參加全校的那個校運會。
shěn yù-lín: wǒ yǒu bǐsài guò, wǒ dàibiǎo bānjí cānjiā quánxiào de nàge xiàoyùnhuì.
11. 蔡康永：結果呢？
cài kāng-yǒng: jiéguǒ ne?
12. 沈玉琳：然後那時候，那個一游完以後呢，比賽完，我當時就得了，不是第一名，但是也得了，好像是得了第三名。
shěn yù-lín: ránhòu nà shíhòu, nàge yì yóu wán yǐhòu ne, bǐsài wán, wǒ dāngshí jiù déle, búshì dìyīmíng, dànshì yě déle, hǎoxiàng shì déle dìsānmíng.
13. → 沈玉琳：可是因為我的泳姿很優雅，看台上很多女生就，就幽幽地吐出兩個子：「哇，飛魚！」
shěn yù-lín: kěshì yīnwèi wǒde yǒngzī hěn yōuyǎ, kàntái shàng hěnduō nǚshēng jiù, jiù yōuyōude tūchū liǎngge zì, “wa, fēiyú!”
14. 徐熙媛：那個時候哪有飛魚啊？
xú xī-yuán: nàge shíhòu nǎyǒu fēiyú a?
15. 蔡康永：鹹魚吧！

- cài kāng-yǒng: xiányú ba!*
 16. 洪都拉斯：還是死魚！
hóngdūlāsī: hái shì sǐyú!
 17. 蔡康永：這種你也編得出來？
cài kāng-yǒng: zhèzhǒng nǐ yě biān de chūlái?

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: So among you four, who is good at swimming?
 02. → Shěn Yù-Lín: On hearing this, I should not lag behind. [Shěn stands up.] (l: Shěn) (L)
 03. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: You?
 04. Hóngdūlāsī: You!
 05. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: You?
 06. → Shěn Yù-Lín: I am not only a strong swimmer, but also...
 07. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Wait! How do you define the word “strong swimmer?” (l: Cài, Xú)
 08. Shěn Yù-Lín: A strong swimmer is, firstly... [Shěn uses hands to calculate.]
 09. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Have you ever participated in any races?
 10. Shěn Yù-Lín: Yes, I once participated in a race. I took part in the school sports meeting on behalf of my class.
 11. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: What was the result?
 12. Shěn Yù-Lín: That day when I finished swimming, when I finished the race, [Shěn imitates the act of swimming.] I was awarded, I did not win the first place. As far as I remember, I won the third place. [Shěn uses his fingers to show the result of his race.]
 13. → Shěn Yù-Lín: But because I swam elegantly, [Shěn imitates the act of swimming.] a lot of girls who watched the race slightly uttered, “Wow! Flying fish!” [Shěn claps his hands.] (L)
 14. Xú Xī-Yuán: How could the nickname of flying fish exist at that time? (l: Xú) (L)
 15. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Maybe dried salty fish. (l: Cài) (L: Shěn) (L)
 16. Hóngdūlāsī: Or dead fish!
 17. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: How can you make up a story like this? (l: Cài, Xú)

In the beginning of the sequence, Cài's question is directed at all the four male invited guests (line 1). In response, one of the invited guests Shěn uses the idiom 當仁不讓 *dāngrénbùràng* “should not lag behind,” which is cited from the Analects of Confucius. This idiom was first used to educate people never to decline to practice 仁 *rén* “charity, benevolence, compassion.” It now has a more general meaning and is used to educate people not to pass on to others what s/he is called upon to do. Both meanings of this idiom are positive. When the host Cài asks who was once good at swimming, however, Shěn uses this idiom as his response, which elicits laughter, as shown in line 2. His use of this idiom can be regarded as a humor type based on self-bragging, since this idiom is used only in referring to some positive activities, which should exclude admitting one's past achievement. The contrast between the positive meanings generated from this idiom and Shěn's use of it as an opening of his self-bragging humor has created a humorous effect. In line 6, Shěn has a step further and claims that he was once a strong swimmer, which is later questioned by Cài, as we can see in line 7. Shěn later,

in line 13, not only uses a direct quotation to dramatize his female audience's admiration of his elegant swimming style by calling him 飛魚 *fēiyú* "flying fish," but he also deliberately chooses an adverb 幽幽地 *yōuyōude* "slightly," which also dramatizes the speech event. That is, the female audience watching him swimming was so attracted to his elegant swimming style that they showed their admiration subconsciously.

Interestingly, 飛魚 *fēiyú* "flying fish," as everyone knows, is also the nickname of the famous American competition swimmer Michael Phelps. This humorous utterance, however, elicits a resistant, quick verbal response from other speech participants. The resistant, quick verbal response from someone else is well-known as 吐槽 *tùcáo*, and is not uncommon in the conversations among friends in Taiwan. In line 14, the hostess Xú quickly shows disagreement and argues that the nickname of 飛魚 *fēiyú* "flying fish" would not exist when Shěn was a student, since he is much older than Michael Phelps. Following Xú's remarks, Cài uses wordplay by calling Shěn 鹹魚 *xiányú* "dried salty fish" (line 15), which also elicits laughter. In fact, many comedians in Taiwan frequently use self-bragging humor to bring about laughter, which almost unexceptionally elicits a resistant, quick verbal response from other speech participants. Although, in general, people's excessive self-promotion may make them appear as braggarts and less likable to others (Scopelliti, Loewenstein and Vosgerau 2015), a comedian's self-promotion of his/her own positive qualities contradicts his/her funny image. The audience may immediately know that the comedian intends to brag to attract laughter.

In brief, the humorous effect of self-bragging humor can be regarded as coming from the comedian's obvious intention to brag, as well as the contradiction between his/her excessively promoted positive qualities and his/her funny image.

6.8 無厘頭 *Wúlítóu* "Nonsense"

The term 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense," as I have discussed in Subsection 2.2.2, can be summarized as a playful attitude towards life, which is very often expressed through ridiculing or mocking each other (Tan 2000). As defined by Yue (2010: 407), 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense" is "[m]alicious, and self-entertaining humor shown via various verbal and non-verbal acts." The verbal and non-verbal performances through the use of this type of humor are likely to be vulgar, arbitrary, highly exaggerated, ironic and without a clear purpose. The

following extract illustrates the above characteristics of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” In the following, the host Cài asks one of the invited guests Wáng whether she is willing to make friends with other two guests sitting next to her, both female. As these two guests are known for their very sexy images, Cài and his co-host Xú employ 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” for humorous effect, by describing them as spider demons.

Extract (40) [KXLL 18.11.2010]

01. 蔡康永：所以今天如果是旁邊那兩位要跟妳做朋友的話，妳願意嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: suǒyǐ jīntiān rúguǒ shì pángbiān nàliǎngwèi yào gēn nǚ zuò péngyǒu dehuà, nǚ yuànyì ma?
02. 王尹平：我覺得做朋友是 OK 啊。
wáng yǐn-píng: wǒ juéde zuò péngyǒu shì ok a.
03. 蔡康永：妳不會很怕她們嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: nǚ bú huì hěn pà tāmen ma?
04. 王尹平：如果是要真的很怕的話，我可以覺得...
wáng yǐn-píng: rúguǒ shì yào zhēnde hěn pà dehuà, wǒ kěyǐ juéde...
05. → 蔡康永：她們晚上可能會把皮拿下來在床上畫。
cài kāng-yǒng: tāmen wǎnshàng kěnéng huì bǎ pí ná xiàlái zài chuángshàng huà.
06. 林韋伶：哪有，才不會！
lín wěi-líng: nǎyǒu, cái bú huì!
07. → 蔡康永：然後吐絲出來。
cài kāng-yǒng: ránhòu tǔ sī chūlái.
08. → 徐熙娣：喝的飲料都是男人的血。
xú xī-dì: hē de yǐnliào dōu shì nánrén de xiě.
09. 王尹平：可是我覺得，我覺得可以先試做朋友，然後去了解她們到底是什麼樣子的人。
wáng yǐn-píng: kěshì wǒ juéde, wǒ juéde kěyǐ xiān shì zuò péngyǒu, ránhòu qù liǎojiě tāmen dàodǐ shì shénme yàngzi de rén.
10. → 蔡康永：把 B2 用蜘蛛絲捆起來！
cài kāng-yǒng: bǎ b two yòng zhīzhū sī kǔn qǐlái!

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: So if now these two guests sitting next to you tell you that they want to be your friends, are you willing to accept their friendship?
02. Wáng Yǐn-Píng: [Wáng looks at the two guests sitting next to her and turns back.] I think it is okay for us to be friends. [Wáng keeps nodding her head.]
03. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Aren't you afraid of them? [Wáng turns her head to look at the two guests again.]
04. Wáng Yǐn-Píng: If I was really afraid of them, [Wáng looks up and stretches her both hands slightly forward, palms up.] I think... (l: Wáng)
05. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: (l: Cài) They probably would spread their skin on the bed and paint it at night. [Cài imitates the way of spreading the skin.] (l: Xú) (L)
06. Lín Wěi-Líng: (L: Lín) [Lín speaks with arms akimbo] How could it be? I would never do that! (l: Wáng)
07. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: (l: Cài) And silk would come out from their mouths. [Cài moves both hands forward and backward to imitate silk coming out from the mouth.] (L)
08. → Xú Xī-Dì: (l: Xú) All the beverages they drink are men's blood. [Xú imitates the act of

- drinking.]
09. Wáng Yīn-Píng: (l: Wáng) But I think, I think we can first try to be friends, and then I can understand what kind of people they are.
10. → Cài Kāng-Yǒng: (l: Cài, Xú) They can bind B2 (the producer of the program) with their spider silk! [Cài imitates the act of binding.] (L)

The host Cài first initiates a question, asking Wáng whether she is willing to make friends with the other two guests, both of them with a completely different image on the screen, namely, being sexy and erotic (line 1). He later asks whether Wáng is afraid of them (line 3), since a sexy woman is very likely to be connected with an image of being glacial. Before Wáng finishes her utterance, Cài goes on and creates an imagined situation, in which the two guests are demons that would spread their skins on the bed and paint them at night (line 5). Cài, in line 7, further uses hand gestures to imitate how the two guests spin silk. The abrupt change of proposition, from the discussion of making friends with sexy women to an imagined plot, is a characteristic of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” Cài’s use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” also encourages his co-host Xú to join him to make the story more plausible, as we can see in line 8. It is interesting to note that Lin rejects Cài’s describing her as a spider demon (line 6), and that Wáng goes back to Cài’s original question to her and responds (line 9). Their utterances are ignored by the two hosts, as Cài and Xú are already highly involved in making the story. In other words, Cài and Xú play a conversational duet, intentionally breaking the norm of speaking. Instead of focusing on the interview, they employ 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” to create humorous remarks. Their utterances, however, still get to the essence of the topic, i.e., the sexiness of the two guests, but in a playful manner.

We shall note, in passing, that these humorous remarks are based on two famous classical Chinese novels 西遊記 *Xī Yóu Jì* “Journey to the West” and 聊齋誌異 *Liáozhāi Zhìyì* “Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio,” in both of which a demon takes the form of a beautiful, sexy woman. Cài’s use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” later joined by his co-host Xú, as well as others’ understanding of it (including other speech participants and the audience), we may say, require the common socio-cultural knowledge of all speech participants and the audience. In other words, this type of humor may fail if any of them does not share the same culture.

In fact, 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” conveys certain cues that can further frame the interaction as play. These cues can be detected by other speech participants within the same culture. In the following interaction, the invited guest Xiè is observed to choose a dramatic

code as a cue for 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” Xiè’s choice of certain English words is later taken by the hostess Xú as an invitation to co-construct the humor.

Extract (41) [KXLL 31.08.2011]

01. 蔡康永：請問，妳當時去《大學生了沒》表演這一段的時候，是本來想要推掉，要再準備久一點才要去的嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: qǐng wèn, nǐ dāngshí qù “dà xuéshēng le méi” biǎoyǎn zhè yíduàn de shíhòu, shì běnlái xiǎngyào tuīdiào, yào zài zhǔnbèi jiǔ yídiǎn cái yào qù de ma?
02. 謝依霖：沒有、沒有，因為那時候實在，一切來得太突然了。
xiè yī-lín: méiyǒu, méiyǒu, yīnwèi nà shíhòu shízài, yíqiè láidé tài túrán le.
03. → 因為我可能隔天有一個 **Paris** 的秀我要走，所以說...
yīnwèi wǒ kěnéng gétiān yǒu yíge paris de xiù wǒ yào zǒu, suǒyǐ shuō...
04. 徐熙娣：妳給我好好講話！
xú xī-dì: nǐ gěi wǒ hǎohǎo jiǎnghuà!
05. 謝依霖：Sorry、Sorry、Sorry。
xiè yī-lín: sorry, sorry, sorry.
06. 徐熙娣：所以是臨時被拱上臺，是不是？
xú xī-dì: suǒyǐ shì línshí bèi gǒng shàngtái, shìbúshì?
07. 謝依霖：臨時、臨時。
xiè yī-lín: línshí, línshí.
08. 蔡康永：是妳同學幫妳報名的嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: shì nǐ tóngxué bāng nǐ bàomíng de ma?
09. 謝依霖：嗯，是製作單位打電話到我們班上說：「請問你們班上有沒有很會搞笑的人？」然後就逼我去。
xiè yī-lín: en, shì zhìzuò dānwèi dǎ diànhuà dào wǒmen bānshàng shuō, “qǐng wèn, nǐmen bānshàng yǒuméiyǒu hěn huì gǎoxiào de rén?” ránhòu jiù bī wǒ qù.
10. 蔡康永：那結果妳在學校裡面就已經知道這一段是特別受歡迎的嗎？
cài kāng-yǒng: nà jiéguǒ nǐ zài xuéxiào lǐmiàn jiù yǐjīng zhīdào zhè yíduàn shì tèbié shòuhuānyíng de ma?
11. 謝依霖：yes。
xiè yī-lín: yes.
12. 蔡康永：還是妳只有這一段？
cài kāng-yǒng: hái shì nǐ zhǐyǒu zhè yíduàn?
13. 謝依霖：只有這一段。
xiè yī-lín: zhǐyǒu zhè yíduàn.
14. 徐熙娣：妳也、妳也、妳也，妳也沒有藏一些笑話或模仿嗎？
xú xī-dì: nǐ yě, nǐ yě, nǐ yě, nǐ yě méiyǒu cáng yìxiē xiàohuà huò mófǎng ma?
15. 謝依霖：沒有。
xiè yī-lín: méiyǒu.
16. 蔡康永：所以萬一我們...
cài kāng-yǒng: suǒyǐ wànyī wǒmen...
17. → 謝依霖：因為我都在學 **fashion**，所以 so...，我，我的，因為我專攻的那一塊是 **fashion**，我不知道搞笑是什麼，我不覺得我好笑啊。
xiè yī-lín: yīnwèi wǒ dōu zài xué **fashion**, suǒyǐ so..., wǒ, wǒde, yīnwèi wǒ zhuāngōng de nà yíkuài shì **fashion**, wǒ bù zhīdào gǎoxiào shì shénme, wǒ bù juéde wǒ hǎoxiào a.
18. 蔡康永：OK，妳是認真的。
cài kāng-yǒng: ok, nǐ shì rènzhēn de.
19. 謝依霖：yeah。

- xiè yī-lín: yeah.*
20. 蔡康永：所以妳現在，現在算是進入娛樂圈了耶。
cài kāng-yǒng: suǒyǐ nǐ xiànzài, xiànzài suànrú jìn rù yúlè quān le ye.
21. 謝依霖：對。
xiè yī-lín: duì.
22. 蔡康永：那妳以後...
cài kāng-yǒng: nà nǐ yǐ hòu...
23. → 謝依霖：比較 **busy**，我又要搞，搞 **fashion**，又要搞娛樂。
xiè yī-lín: bǐjiào busy, wǒ yòu yào gǎo, gǎo fashion, yòu yào gǎo yúlè.
24. → 徐熙娣：那怎麼辦？妳到底要怎麼取捨？妳要 **fashion** 還是要娛樂？
xú xī-dì: nà zěnmē bàn? nǐ dàodǐ yào zěnmē qǔshě? nǐ yào fashion háishì yào yúlè?
25. → 謝依霖：我不知道，我希望我都可以。
xiè yī-lín: wǒ bù zhīdào, wǒ xīwàng wǒ dōu kěyǐ.
26. → 徐熙娣：妳就 **both** 都來嘛！
xú xī-dì: nǐ jiù both dōu lái ma!
27. → 謝依霖：**both** 都來！
xiè yī-lín: both dōu lái!
28. → 徐熙娣：妳就 **enjoy** 啊！
xú xī-dì: nǐ jiù enjoy a!
29. → 謝依霖：**enjoy**，像妳一樣，哈哈！
xiè yī-lín: enjoy, xiàng nǐ yíyàng, hā hā hā!
30. 徐熙娣：有沒有、有沒有...
xú xī-dì: yǒuméiyǒu, yǒuméiyǒu...

Translation

01. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: When you were invited to perform what you just did on “College Talk,” did you ever think of rejecting their invitation and spending more time practicing it?
02. Xiè Yī-Lín: No, no, but honestly the invitation just came unexpectedly.
03. → It is because probably on the next day, [Xiè moves her left hand forward and touches the back of her left wrist with right hand.] I might have a fashion show in **Paris**. [Xiè moves both hands slightly forward, forearms slightly upward, palms downward.] So...
04. Xú Xī-Dì: (V) You speak normally! (I: Xú) [Xú pretends throwing something onto the ground with her right hand.] (L)
05. Xiè Yī-Lín: **Sorry, sorry, sorry.**
06. Xú Xī-Dì: So you were invited to perform that unexpectedly, right?
07. Xiè Yī-Lín: Right, unexpectedly.
08. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Did your classmates put your name down for that show?
09. Xiè Yī-Lín: Well, the production unit of that show made a phone call to our class, [Xiè imitates making a phone call.] asking, “Excuse me, is there anyone in your class that is good at doing something comical?” Then I was forced to do it.
10. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: And when you were at school, did you already know that this part of your performance would become the most popular?
11. Xiè Yī-Lín: **Yes.**
12. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Or is it that this is all you can do?
13. Xiè Yī-Lín: [Xiè talks with her eyes wide open.] This is all I can do. (L) (I: Xiè)
14. Xú Xī-Dì: You, you, you, are you secretly good at telling jokes or impersonating celebrities?
15. Xiè Yī-Lín: [Xiè talks with her eyes wide open.] No.
16. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: So what if we...

17. → Xiè Yī-Lín: It is because I have devoted myself to **fashion**, so, **so**... [Xiè rolls her eyes, moves her left hand slightly forward, left forearm slightly upward, left palm downward.] I, my, my specialization is on **fashion**. I do not know how to do something comical. I do not think I am funny.
18. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Okay, you are taking it seriously.
19. Xiè Yī-Lín: Yeah.
20. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: So now you can be regarded as formally entering the entertainment industry.
21. Xiè Yī-Lín: Yes.
22. Cài Kāng-Yǒng: Then in the future you...
23. → Xiè Yī-Lín: I will become **busy**. [Xiè shakes her head.] I have to be engaged not only in **fashion**, [Xiè moves her right hand slightly forward, forearm slightly upward, palm downward.] but also in the entertainment industry. [Xiè moves her right hand slightly forward, forearm slightly upward, palm downward.]
24. → Xú Xī-Dì: So how could you deal with both of them? Which do you prefer, **fashion** or entertainment?
25. → Xiè Yī-Lín: [Xiè moves both hands slightly forward, forearms slightly upward, palms downward.] I do not know. I hope I can manage both at the same time. [Xiè pretends that she is troubled by this problem.]
26. → Xú Xī-Dì: You can try to do **both** at the same time! [Xú moves her right hand slightly upward, right forearm slightly upward, right palm downward.] (l: Xú) (L)
27. → Xiè Yī-Lín: Doing **both**! (l: Xiè) [Xiè moves both hands slightly forward, forearms slightly upward, palms downward. Shen then points at Xú.] (L)
28. → Xú Xī-Dì: You can just **enjoy** them!
29. → Xiè Yī-Lín: **Enjoy** them! (l: Xiè) [Xiè moves both hands slightly forward, forearms slightly upward, palms downward.] Just like you. [Xiè points at Xú.] Ha, ha, ha!
30. Xú Xī-Dì: You see that, you see that... (L: Xú) (L)

Before my analysis of the data, Xiè's background should be briefly introduced. Xiè is a net celebrity in Taiwan, who first became famous for being willing to entertain the audience, especially by making fun of herself. For example, right before the above interview, Xiè performs a one-man show, in which she is a fashion-loving socialite. She, however, puts on dramatic makeup to play the clown in terrifying fashion. In addition, she intentionally code-switches to English many times to show that she, in her one-man show, is not only a fashionable socialite, but also an intellectual who frequently speaks English, and therefore has difficulties in smoothly speaking the mother tongue.

In the beginning of the above interaction, the host Cài asks Xiè what she was thinking about when she was invited to have a debut on “College Talk,” which later made her well-known to most people in Taiwan (line 1). In her response, she briefly answers the question (line 2) and further constructs 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” (line 3). While she is an invited guest expected to answer the host’s question honestly, she chooses to continue with her created role in the one-man show: a fashionable socialite who needs to go to Paris

occasionally. Clearly Xiè plays this role in her interview to result in a humorous effect. However, Xiè can be viewed as not following the social norm, in the sense that a guest in an interview is not expected to distract from the topic in discussion. This is evidenced in the hostess Xú's ensuing reaction. In line 4, Xú pretends that she is irritated by Xiè's unexpectedly switching to the created role. Xiè's occasional role shifting implies transfer of power, which is a feature of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense" (Chueh 2006). In addition, despite the fact that Xiè unexpectedly switches to her created role, her answer still gets to the essence of the topic. Moreover, both Xú's smiling and others' laughter can be taken as cues which frame Xú's anger as play.

Furthermore, in lines 3, 5, 11, 17 and 23 Xiè intentionally chooses English words (as marked in bold). She also repeatedly uses similar hand gestures to imitate how an affected socialite overdoes, as we can see in lines 3, 17, 23 and 25. Both strategies frequently appear in Xiè's subsequent utterances. While they can be used as cues to frame Xiè's utterances as play, they are further used by Xú to co-construct the humor of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense." Xú's first move in co-constructing the humor is evidenced in line 24, in which she directly quotes Xiè's repeatedly used word *fashion*. She in the following speaking turns purposefully chooses two English words *both* (line 26) and *enjoy* (28) and also imitates Xiè's hand gestures (line 26). Xú's use of the same discourse strategies to construct humor further encourages Xiè to continue with role-playing. Xiè's repetition of Xú's English words (lines 27 and 29) and her pointing at Xú further show that she knows that Xú understands her humor. In other words, the humor of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense" in the above interaction is partially constructed by Xú.

In conclusion, the use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense" as a humor type also helps reinforce the in-group solidarity of the Mandarin community. As the above two sequences have shown, while its understanding requires the same cultural background of the speaker and the listener, its use very often triggers the other in-group member's participation in co-constructing the humor.

6.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have illustrated and discussed the various types of humor employed in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* from an interactional perspective. It is found that there are in total eight

types of humor employed in the program, including, personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and 無厘頭 *Wúlítóu* “nonsense.” My findings in this chapter are summarized below.

Firstly, a personal narrative can be the narrator’s past story or someone else’s funny anecdote. In 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, this type of humor is often accompanied by the use of direct quotation and bodily gesture to dramatize the event. Secondly, wordplay may include punning, hyperbole and allusion (Norrick 1993). Despite its entertaining function and potential humorous effect, instances of wordplay are hardly found in my data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. As my analysis has suggested, it is because humor based on wordplay requires quick thinking, and thus it very often leads to silence. Thirdly, the humor based on sarcasm is by framing an utterance or utterances as “not meant literally” (Tannen 1984: 130). While it helps bring about laughter in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, the deliverer of it is also found to later become a good target for teasing. Fourthly, innuendo can be used as humor. In 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, innuendo is found to appear in the form of a question or in a referring expression, such as proper names of celebrities. To understand this type of humor, a shared cultural background is required. Fifthly, other-deprecating humor in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* can be used not only to elicit laughter from the audience, but also as a means to promote the victim. Sixthly, self-deprecating humor in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* is found to be used not only to elicit laughter, but also to reduce the potential repugnance that might come from some of the audience. Seventhly, many instances of self-bragging humor are found in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. The use of it as humor may trigger an immediate resistant, quick verbal response from other participants. Both the speaker (who employs humor by bragging about him/herself) and the listener (who shows a resistant, quick verbal response immediately) can be regarded as building rapport and solidarity. Finally, 無厘頭 *Wúlítóu* “nonsense” can be regarded as a playful attitude towards life, which is very often expressed through ridiculing or mocking each other (Tan 2000). The verbal and non-verbal performances through the use of this type of humor are likely to be vulgar, arbitrary, highly exaggerated, ironic and without a clear purpose. In 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, the use of 無厘頭 *Wúlítóu* “nonsense” as humor very often requires a shared cultural background. The use of it, thus, reinforces the in-group solidarity of the Mandarin community.

In the next chapter, how different types of humor are employed in *Kuba Wojewódzki* will be illustrated and discussed.

Chapter Seven

HUMOR IN *KUBA WOJEWÓDZKI*

My analysis in this chapter focuses on various humor types employed in a famous television variety show broadcast in Poland. I have chosen *Kuba Wojewódzki* for analysis. While this program is controversial because of the host Wojewódzki's talking style, it is popular also for the same reason. The data used for my analysis come from five episodes of the program broadcast in Poland during 2005 and 2006. Different from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* in the previous chapter, which is more likely to focus on the invited guests' personal lives, more issues are touched upon and joked about in *Kuba Wojewódzki*, such as gender, religion, politics, etc. In Sections 7.1-7.8, different types of humor employed by the host Wojewódzki, as well as by his invited guests will be qualitatively analyzed. Responses to these types of humor will also be analyzed. As the audience members of this program include not only the viewers in front of the television screen, but also the spectators in the studio, the laughter from the latter will also be analyzed. Finally, Section 7.9 concludes the findings in this chapter.

7.1 Personal Narrative

In my analysis of the Mandarin data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, I have found that a personal narrative can be used as humor to elicit laughter. It can be the narrator's past story or someone else's funny anecdote. In my findings, this type of humor is often accompanied by the use of direct quotation and bodily gesture to dramatize the speech event.

In analyzing the spoken data from *Kuba Wojewódzki*, I have found that the host Wojewódzki also uses direct quotation and bodily gesture in his narration to act out his friend's words, so as to create a funny effect to bring about laughter. He, however, is not the only contributor to the funny anecdote. As the following extract will show, his guest Poniedziałek also joins Wojewódzki to make the anecdote more interesting. That is, both the

narrator and his listener can be regarded as co-constructing the funny anecdote. In the following extract, a conversational duet can be observed.

Extract (42) [KW 21.05.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Trampeczki ci się podobają?
02. Jacek Poniedziałek: Nie, patrzę na tą wodę którą wylałem.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Aha.
04. Jacek Poniedziałek: Trampek nie lubię.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Nie lubisz trampek?
06. Jacek Poniedziałek: Lubię solidne męskie buty.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: A ja lubię solidne męskie trampki.
08. Jacek Poniedziałek: Poważniej się czuję. Ja się czuję za miękki w takich butach, wiesz, troszeczkę.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: Czujesz się za miękki w takich butach?
10. Jacek Poniedziałek: Tak.
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale ty w ogóle nie masz takich miękkich ruchów. Bo ja znam, mam paru serdecznych kolegów i oni zupełnie inaczej mówią tak: „Oj Kubuś daj spokój w ogóle. Nie jest prawda.”
12. Jacek Poniedziałek: Ładnie, ładnie to pokazujesz.
13. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Nie, naprawdę. Miałem kiedyś takiego kolegę Murzynka, wiesz, geja.
14. Jacek Poniedziałek: To miał przesrane w takim razie. Gdyby był jeszcze Żydem?
15. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Tak blisko się nie znaliśmy.
16. Jacek Poniedziałek: Gdyby jeszcze Żydem był to napewno czasami...
17. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Był Żydem, ale po matce.
18. Jacek Poniedziałek: Był Żydem murzynem i pedałem.
19. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Tak...
20. Jacek Poniedziałek: Pięknie.
21. → Kuba Wojewódzki: I cyklistą jeszcze.
22. Jacek Poniedziałek: I mieszkał w Polsce?
23. → Kuba Wojewódzki: I mieszkał w Polsce.
24. Jacek Poniedziałek: Prze(*)!
25. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Jeszcze był garbaty.
26. Jacek Poniedziałek: Jezus!
27. → Kuba Wojewódzki: I pracował w TVN Meteo i ściemniał. Nie, nie, ale naprawdę on taki był, że: „Dzwoniłem do ciebie. Ciebie nie było. Ale potem sobie przypomniałem, że mam nienaładowaną komórkę.”

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Do you like my sneakers?
02. Jacek Poniedziałek: No, I am looking at the water that I spilled.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Aha.
04. Jacek Poniedziałek: I do not like sneakers.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: You do not like sneakers?
06. Jacek Poniedziałek: I like durable men's shoes.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: And I like durable men's sneakers. (L: Poniedziałek)
08. Jacek Poniedziałek: I feel I am more serious. I feel I am too soft in wearing that kind of shoes, you know, a little bit.

09. Kuba Wojewódzki: You feel you are too soft in that kind of shoes?
10. Jacek Poniedziałek: Yes.
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: But you do not have these soft gestures at all. Because I know, I have a few close friends and they speak completely differently, like: “Oh Kubuś, forget about it. It is not true.” [Wojewódzki imitates the gesture of his friend.] (L: Poniedziałek)
12. Jacek Poniedziałek: Very nice. You are showing it very nicely.
13. → Kuba Wojewódzki: No, seriously. I once had a friend, a black guy, you know, a gay.
14. Jacek Poniedziałek: This means he was in a shitty situation. What if he was also a Jew?
15. → Kuba Wojewódzki: We did not know each other so well.
16. Jacek Poniedziałek: If he were a Jew, for sure sometimes he...
17. → Kuba Wojewódzki: He was Jewish, but by his mother.
18. Jacek Poniedziałek: He was a Jew, a black guy and a queer.
19. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Yes...
20. Jacek Poniedziałek: Wonderful.
21. → Kuba Wojewódzki: And also a cyclist.
22. Jacek Poniedziałek: And he was living in Poland?
23. → Kuba Wojewódzki: And he was living in Poland.
24. Jacek Poniedziałek: That was so f(*)!
25. → Kuba Wojewódzki: And he was also hunchbacked. (L: Poniedziałek)
26. Jacek Poniedziałek: Jesus!
27. → Kuba Wojewódzki: And he was working in TVN Meteo and was sinking into corruption. No, no, but seriously he was like this, “I called you. You were not there. But later I reminded myself that my mobil phone was not charged.” [Wojewódzki imitates the gesture of his friend.] (L: Poniedziałek)

The first part of the conversation is on the taste for shoes, as we can see in lines 1-10, in which Poniedziałek says that he does not like wearing sneakers, since wearing sneakers might make him look *za miękki* “too soft” (line 8). As Poniedziałek is the first Polish celebrity confessing to be gay, Wojewódzki takes his word *miękki* “soft” to refer to the traits of homosexual men, and says that Poniedziałek is not feminine, because he seems to be not engaging in similar linguistic practices, like some of Wojewódzki's friends do (line 11). To make his point, as well as to elicit laughter, Wojewódzki imitates how a gay friend of his speaks. Wojewódzki's imitation not only attracts laughter from the audience, but also from Poniedziałek, as we can see in line 11.

The funny anecdote begins from line 13, in which Wojewódzki says that he once had a friend, who was black and gay. Not simply serving as a listener, Poniedziałek gives embellishment to the anecdote, as in *Gdyby był jeszcze Żydem?* “What if he was also a Jew?” (line 14). After Wojewódzki says that his friend is indeed Jewish, Poniedziałek tries to summarize the information that he has got so far. That is, Wojewódzki's friend is Jewish, black and homosexual (line 18). It is interesting to note that Poniedziałek uses *pedalem* (the

instrumental case of *pedał*), which is a pejorative term referring to homosexuals.⁴⁹ As a celebrity who has “come out of the closet” in Poland, we have a reason to believe that Poniedziałek certainly would not show any hatred towards homosexuals, as he belongs to the LGBT community himself. His use of this word in reference to Wojewódzki’s friend, we may say, perhaps is intended to create a humorous effect in a sarcastic way, which is evidenced in his ensuing comment on the three identities of Wojewódzki’s friend: *Pięknie* “Wonderful” (line 20). This comment also shows sarcasm, as Jews, blacks and homosexuals frequently receive discrimination, which, obviously, is nothing wonderful.

Poniedziałek keeps contributing to the funny anecdote. In line 22, he asks whether this friend was living in Poland. This question perhaps suggests that life in Poland is not easy for someone who is simultaneously Jewish, black and homosexual. This can be seen in Poniedziałek’s bleeped comment (*Przejebane!* “That was so fucked!”) in line 24 when Wojewódzki says that his friend was indeed living in Poland. Wojewódzki finally admits that the funny anecdote co-constructed by him and Poniedziałek is not true, but this friend did engage in certain linguistic practices of homosexuals. To illustrate his point, he uses direct quotation to act out the words of his friend (line 27). We have no idea whether his friend actually said these words in this way, but Wojewódzki’s bodily gesture successfully attracts laughter from the listener Poniedziałek.

It is noteworthy that Poniedziałek’s interactional style in the above interaction is close to that of women. According to her observation of four same-sex groups (two all-female and two all-male) in Wellington, New Zealand, Pilkington (1998) has found that women are more likely to co-construct a talk and give positive feedback. On the other hand, the features of all-male talk include silences, lack of verbal feedback, monologues and direct expression of disagreement. These features, however, are not found in Poniedziałek’s linguistic practices. On the contrary, Poniedziałek cooperates with Wojewódzki to contribute to the funniness of the anecdote. Besides, there is no silence in the above interaction. A question is immediately followed by an answer, and an answer by a comment. Poniedziałek also frequently gives verbal feedback, as in lines 12 (*Ładnie, ładnie to pokazujesz.* “Very nice. You are showing it very nicely.”), 24 (*Przejebane!* “That was so fucked!”) and 26 (*Jezus!* “Jesus!”).

In my data, I have found that Poniedziałek is highly involved in the interview by giving a lot of verbal feedback to Wojewódzki’s proposition during the whole show. However, it is a total fallacy to suppose that his interactional style results from his social

⁴⁹ According to Rodzoch-Malek (2012), the Polish term *pedał* used to refer to homosexuals was probably borrowed from the French word *pédéraste*, which first appeared in the early twentieth century.

identity as gay. In their study of “gay language” or Gayspeak, Cameron and Kulick (2003) argue that it is problematic to associate a certain speaking style with a particular social group. That is, we should not treat gay men as a homogeneous group and generalize how they talk, as their sexual identity interacts with other factors, such as age, ethnicity and social class. In other words, Poniedziałek’s talking style in the program simply indicates that he, while interacting with Wojewódzki, chooses to perform effeminately (i.e., being cooperative and supportive), rather than in a masculine manner (i.e., being competitive and belligerent). That is, the person he chooses to perform in interactions with others is not always the same. As Coates (2004: 138) concludes, “gender is no longer viewed as a static, add-on characteristic of speakers, but as something that is *performed* by speakers.”

While the above sequence shows that the funny anecdote may be co-constructed by the narrator and the listener, I have also observed that most of the laughter from the audience during the narration is preceded by the listener’s overlaps. Simply put, the listener’s overlaps contribute to the funniness of the anecdote. In the following extract about the invited guest Ibisz’s awareness in the public consciousness, the host Wojewódzki overlaps a few times during the narration of Ibisz, who shares a funny story about how he was recognized in public. Wojewódzki’s overlaps not only contribute to the funniness of the anecdote, as signaled by the ensuing laughter, they also show solidarity with Ibisz, but in a more competitive way.

Extract (43) [KW 02.04.2006]

01. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Słuchajcie, czytałem ostatnio strasznie, ostatnio, już dawno, taki strasznie śmieszny wierszyk w internecie.
02. Kuba Wojewódzki: Na swój temat?
03. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Tak. Prawdopodobnie to popełnił Tadzio Ross, że o Ibiszu, że generalnie to Ibisz. Wiesz, nawet nie potrafię tak powtórzyć, śpi w garniturze i cały czas jest gotowy. Jak ktoś go, na przykład, idzie ulicą i go nie pozna, nie poprosi o autograf to jest smutny, ale się okazuje na szczęście, że jest to wycieczka z Chin. I tak dalej, i tak dalej.
04. Kuba Wojewódzki: Tak jest. I to jeszcze ociemniała.
05. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Ale z tym się wiąże jeszcze jedna historia. Mianowicie, takie wyobrażenie ludzi o mnie. Najśmieszniejsza, nie wiem czy to już gdzieś nie mówiłem, ale powtórzę bo to jest tak komiczne, że się nie powstrzymam. Otóż, w galerii dominikańskiej we Wrocławiu jadę windą na parking. To jest takie centrum handlowe.
06. Kuba Wojewódzki: I przez parking do hotelu oczywiście.
07. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Oczywiście. I słuchajcie, wchodzi jakaś dziewczyna. Patrzy na mnie. A ja kupiłem papier toaletowy.
08. Kuba Wojewódzki: O Jezu!
09. → Krzysztof Ibisz: I trzymam go na moje nieszczęście...
10. Kuba Wojewódzki: Do dupy historia.

11. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Trzymam, słuchajcie, trzymam taką wielką paczkę papieru toaletowego. Trzymam, trzymam. Ona poznała mnie, ale mi się buja ten, ona, słuchajcie, poznała mnie i tak patrzy na mnie z taką wielką niechęcią. Tak coś jej się nie zgadza w wizerunku tego Ibisza, kurcze.
12. Kuba Wojewódzki: Wiadomo, gwiazdy nie srają.
13. → Krzysztof Ibisz: No, nie chciałem tego powiedzieć. Słuchajcie, i tak patrzy taka zde gustowana. Patrzy, drzwi się otwierają, wychodzi z tej winy, odwraca się do mnie, patrzy i z taką niechęcią mówi: „Ładne zakupy, nie ma co.” I zde gustowana poszła.
14. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale to znaczy, że cię poznała.
15. Krzysztof Ibisz: Tak, ale, wiecie...
16. Kuba Wojewódzki: Może ty kupiłeś jakąś taną markę?
17. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Tak, ideał sięgnął bruku, po prostu.
18. Kuba Wojewódzki: No tak. Nie dojść, że go spotyka w windzie to jeszcze idzie właśnie, no, ma biegunkę.

Translation

01. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Listen, recently I read something very, a short time ago, a very funny poem on the Internet.
02. Kuba Wojewódzki: About you?
03. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Yes. It was probably written by Tadzio Ross, about Ibisz, generally about Ibisz. You know, even though I cannot repeat it now, it is like he is wearing a suit while sleeping, and that he is always ready. When someone, for example, walks on the street but does not recognize him, he becomes sad. But fortunately, it is a tour group from China, and so on.
04. Kuba Wojewódzki: Exactly. And it is a blind tour group. (L)
05. → Krzysztof Ibisz: But there is another story connected with it. That is, it is about people's imagination about me. It is the funniest one. I do not know if I already told it somewhere, but I will repeat, because it is so funny that I should not avoid telling it. Now, I am taking an elevator in Galeria Dominikańska in Wrocław to the parking lot. This is a shopping mall.
06. Kuba Wojewódzki: And of course through the parking lot you go to the hotel. (L)
07. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Of course. And listen, some girl enters. She is looking at me. And I have bought toilet paper.
08. Kuba Wojewódzki: Oh, Jesus! [Wojewódzki turns his head to the other side.]
09. → Krzysztof Ibisz: And unfortunately I keep it in my hands...
10. Kuba Wojewódzki: It is a shitty story. (L)
11. → Krzysztof Ibisz: I am holding, listen, I am holding that sizable bag of toilet paper. I am holding, I am holding. She recognized me, but it is swinging, she, listen, she recognized me and is looking at me like this, with a great empathy. It is like the image of Ibisz does not suit her, darn it. [Ibisz stands up to imitate the girl in his narrative.]
12. Kuba Wojewódzki: Everyone knows that super stars do not poop. (L)
13. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Right, I did not want to talk about it. Listen, and she is looking at me disgusted. She is looking at me, then the door opens, and she gets off the elevator, turning to me and looking at me with reluctance, saying “What a nice shopping, absolutely.” And she walked away, disgusted. [Ibisz keeps acting.] (L)
14. Kuba Wojewódzki: But it means that she recognized you.
15. Krzysztof Ibisz: Yes, but you know...
16. Kuba Wojewódzki: Maybe you bought some kind of cheap brand?
17. → Krzysztof Ibisz: Yes, in brief, her ideal is ruined. [Ibisz raises his hands up.]
18. Kuba Wojewódzki: Exactly. It is not only because she meets him in the elevator, but

also because he has diarrhea. (L)

The narration includes two subtopics within the overall topic of the narrator Ibisz's awareness in the public consciousness. The first subtopic is about how Ibisz is portrayed in a poem on the Internet, in which he is described as a celebrity who is always wearing a suit and cares so much about whether he can be recognized by the public, even by foreign tourists (lines 1 and 3). The second subtopic is about how Ibisz was recognized by a young lady inside an elevator and her subsequent reaction to him (lines 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 17).

Although Ibisz's narration is about a funny anecdote of him, which is told to entertain the audience, during the whole narration, the laughter occurs only once when Ibisz directly quotes the young lady's sarcastic remark directed at him: *Ładne zakupy, nie ma co*. "What a nice shopping, absolutely" (line 13). Laughter from the audience, however, occurs a few times following Wojewódzki's overlaps. For example, when Ibisz quotes the poem and says that he is not recognized by foreign tourists, Wojewódzki subsequently comments by saying that the tour group must be blind, which immediately elicits laughter from the audience (line 4). In addition, when Ibisz begins his story by stating that he was taking the elevator to the parking lot of a shopping mall, Wojewódzki overlaps and makes a story for Ibisz, which also elicits laughter from the audience (line 6). When Ibisz continues with his narration, Wojewódzki keeps overlapping and commenting on his story. Wojewódzki's comments in the following speaking turns also successfully elicit laughter from the audience, as we can see in lines 10, 12 and 18.

Wojewódzki's overlaps may be regarded as his high involvement in the verbal interaction with Ibisz, which not only contribute to the funniness of the anecdote, as signaled by the ensuing laughter, but they also show his enthusiasm and interest in Ibisz's funny story. In other words, Wojewódzki perhaps is in an attempt to build rapport and solidarity with Ibisz, but in a more competitive way. In analyzing talk among friends, Tannen (1984) have observed that there are many devices used to show solidarity, enthusiasm and interest in others' talk, which may include "rapid rate of speech, overlap, and latching of utterances" (p. 77). However, Tannen also points out that due to different interactional styles, overlaps and latching may be considered as obstructive moves by some people, in the sense that these people may regard fast talkers as a conversational menace (or as "crowders"), and that non"crowders" may find it difficult to participate in the ongoing talk.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ According to Tannen (1984), the term "crowders" used to refer to people who like overlapping shows bias, as her study has revealed that "overlap [in a talk among friends] not only does not impede but in fact enhances communication" (p. 79).

Indeed, in his speaking turns, Ibisz is observed to frequently employ *szuchajcie* “listen,” an imperative form relating to the second-person plural. There are totally five tokens of *szuchajcie* “listen” in Ibisz’s narration, as in lines 1, 7, 11 and 13. While *szuchajcie* “listen” can be used as a discourse marker to draw the attention of Wojewódzki and the audience to the upcoming stretch of discourse (cf. Waltereit and Detges 2007), Ibisz’s frequent use of it perhaps has also revealed his intention to wrest the floor, but in a more indirect way. The use of this imperative form in Polish verbal interactions has its limits. That is, the use of it demonstrates power and solidarity. While *szuchajcie* “listen” can be used by a speaker with a higher status to show power (e.g., A Polish teacher may use *szuchajcie* “listen” to get the attention from his/her students.), any speaker in a talk among friends is allowed to use it to get the attention of others. However, a speaker with a lower status is hardly found to use it to get the attention from interlocutors with a higher status. As an interview is asymmetrical in terms of speaking rights, the division of the roles between Ibisz and Wojewódzki is well-defined, which in Fetzer’s (2006) view, is deduced from “the genre’s constitutive speech acts, their felicity conditions, the participants’ roles, and their complementary rights and obligations” (p. 181). In other words, both Ibisz and Wojewódzki understand that it is the host Wojewódzki that is in charge of the whole speech event, including allocating turns of speaking. In order to finish his story, Ibisz has to manage to allocate the turns that are taken by Wojewódzki, perhaps by using the attention-getter *szuchajcie* “listen.” Besides, by using *szuchajcie* “listen,” instead of *szuchaj* “you” (an imperative form relating to the second-person singular), Ibisz also avoids a direct confrontation with Wojewódzki, as he can be regarded as drawing the attention not only from Wojewódzki, but also from the audience.

In fact, Ibisz is found to frequently use discourse markers relating to the second-person plural, such as *szuchajcie* “listen,” *uwazajcie* “pay attention,” *wiecie* “you know,” etc. While other invited guests are found to choose the second-person singular forms of verbs to refer to his/her interlocutor Wojewódzki, Ibisz seems to have cultivated the habit of including the audience when he talks to Wojewódzki. Given that Ibisz is a Polish game show host, it is possible to build up the other hypothesis that his preference to use the second-person plural forms of verbs perhaps results from his identity as a host (on his shows), despite the fact that he is a guest on *Kuba Wojewódzki*. It is also noteworthy that before Ibisz allocates the turns by employing *szuchajcie* “listen,” he is found to show support and agreement with Wojewódzki’s propositions in his utterances. For example, he uses *oczywiście* “of course”

(line 7) and *no* “right” (line 13) placed before the attention-getter *sluchajcie* “listen” before he continues with his story.

To sum up, both Wojewódzki and Ibisz can be regarded as building rapport and solidarity through a verbal competition, as they both are highly involved in the talk. While Wojewódzki constantly shows his enthusiasm and interest in Ibisz’s funny story by contributing humorous remarks, Ibisz also shows support and agreement with the propositions in Wojewódzki’s utterances, despite the fact that Wojewódzki frequently overlaps and that Ibisz seems to be managing to wrest the floor.

7.2 Wordplay

In analyzing the data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, I have observed that speech participants hardly use wordplay as a humor type. However, it always attracts laughter whenever its humorous effect is highlighted. On the other hand, speech participants in *Kuba Wojewódzki* frequently use wordplay in their utterances to elicit laughter. As defined by Norrick (1993), wordplay may include punning, hyperbole and allusion. In the following interaction, both Wojewódzki and the invited guest Koterski use wordplay as humor. While their co-constructed humor is based on an allusion to a well-known Polish movie, Koterski’s humor is perhaps also based on the punning wordplay.

Extract (44) [KW 21.05.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Wyrzucasz dziewczuchy na kino? Na to że jesteś idolem?
02. Michał Koterski: Nie wyrzynam, bo jestem od siedmiu lat z tą samą kobietą.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Za(*)!
04. Michał Koterski: Którą pozdrawiam.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Jak ma na imię?
06. Michał Koterski: Sylwia.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Sylwia pozdrawiamy cię. Nie no, siedem lat? Ja nigdy, byłeś z jakąś dziewczyną, a przepraszam. Cięcie i wchodzimy. Niezwykłe prawda? Siedem lat? Ja nie byłem nigdy z dziewczyną siedem lat. To wy się ile znacie? Siedem lat!
08. Michał Koterski: Nie, znamy się dłużej.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: A to super. I będziecie, ten, będziecie małżeństwem?
10. Michał Koterski: No nie wiem, chyba tak. Jeśli ona ze mną wytrzyma to tak no.
11. → Kuba Wojewódzki: I będzie ci Sylwia **stawiała dzióbek**?
12. Michał Koterski: No.
13. → Kuba Wojewódzki: W miejsce tatusia?
14. → Michał Koterski: Już **stawia**.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Do you take chicks to the cinema? Taking advantage of your identity as an idol?
02. Michał Koterski: I do not do that, because I am with the same woman for seven years.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: F(*)ing awesome! (L)
04. Michał Koterski: I send her my greetings. [Koterski raises his left hand to greet the camera.]
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: What is her name?
06. Michał Koterski: Sylwia.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Sylwia, we send you our greetings. [Wojewódzki joins Koterski's greeting.] No, yes, seven years? I have never been with any girls, ah sorry. (L) (c) Cut and we start again. It is unusual, right? Seven years? I have never been with a girl for seven years. How long have you known each other? Seven years!
08. Michał Koterski: No, we have known each other longer than that.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: This is great. And are you going, are you going to get married?
10. Michał Koterski: Well, I do not know, maybe yes. If she can tolerate me, then yes.
11. → Kuba Wojewódzki: And Sylwia will **set the hood of your sweatshirt**?
12. Michał Koterski: Yes.
13. → Kuba Wojewódzki: In place of your father?
14. → Michał Koterski: She is already **setting the hood**. (l: Koterski) (L)

The above sequence is on the relationship between Koterski and his girlfriend Sylwia. To make the interview more interesting, Wojewódzki asks many details. He subsequently asks whether Sylwia will set the hood of Koterski's sweatshirt in place of his father, as we can see in lines 11 and 13. This question, in fact, is based on a quote from *Dziń Świra* "Day of the Wacko," a 2002 comedy-drama from Poland. In a scene of the movie, Koterski and his father (in the movie) are tidying up their appearance in front of a mirror in a funny way. When his father (in the movie) helps him set the hood of his sweatshirt, his father (in the movie) says, "*Jak tatuś robi dzióbek to nie ma chuja we wsi!*" 'When daddy makes the hood, fuckers got nothing on it!'" As this movie later became popular, this quote and Koterski also became well-known. In light of this, it may be that Wojewódzki perhaps intends to employ wordplay based on an allusion to this scene, inviting the audience to make a connection to the funny episode of this scene.

In his response to Wojewódzki's question, Koterski also uses wordplay based on the same allusion, as evidenced in line 14, in which he says, "*Już stawia*. 'She is already setting the hood.'" It is interesting to note that Koterski's humor is perhaps also based on the punning of sex, since it may be interpreted as *Już stawia kutasa* "She is already giving a blowjob." I cannot say for certain whether Koterski intends to employ wordplay based on the punning of sex, but some of the audience may still perceive this utterance as a joke about his sexual life. As Partington (2009) points out, although there is a default reading of the puns based on the

idiom, if joking is expected, hearers may retain the ability to interpret them by using the open-choice principle.⁵¹ That is, although Koterski's response in line 14 can be interpreted simply as an allusion to the funny scene in his movie, it is always possible for the audience to apply the open-choice principle in the perception of it. Nevertheless, the smile on Koterski's face perhaps suggests his intention to use wordplay as humor, which successfully attracts laughter from the audience, as evidenced in line 14.

In fact, the use of the punning wordplay is not uncommon in *Kuba Wojewódzki*. In the following extract, both Wojewódzki and the invited guest Szczuka employ a series of puns as humor to tease each other. Their puns are based on the ambiguity deliberately manufactured.

Extract (45) [KW 26.02.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Takiej twojej, przepraszam bo ty nie lubisz, ale takiej jędrności twojej.
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: Znaczy to jędrność to niby takie macanie. To ma oznaczać ten gest, tak?
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: To to jest twoja interpretacja. O, ho, ho, ho, ho.
04. Kazimiera Szczuka: Ale dlaczego?
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: O, ho, ho, ho Kazia! Nie wpuścisz mnie w to.
06. Kazimiera Szczuka: Ale dlaczego ja nie lubię, miałabym nie lubić słowa jędrność?
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Myślałem, że nie lubisz słowa macanie.
08. Kazimiera Szczuka: A to ja go użyłam.
09. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Ja lubię słowo jędrność, bo jędrność oznacza dla mnie wyrazistość, **pulchność** intelektualną.
10. → Kazimiera Szczuka: No ty jesteś **pulchny**, taki intelektualnie. Tak **wygrubaszony**, **otyły**.
11. → Kuba Wojewódzki: A ty jesteś **wypasiona** i jędrna.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Your, sorry, because you do not like your firmness. [Wojewódzki stretches his both hands slightly forward, turns the palms upwards and moves the fingers.]
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: By firmness you mean groping. [Szczuka also stretches her both hands slightly forward, turns the palms upwards and moves the fingers.] This is what your gesture means, right? (l: Szczuka)
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: This is your interpretation. Oh, ho, ho, ho, ho. [Wojewódzki stretches his both hands forward and raises index fingers to point at Szczuka.]
04. Kazimiera Szczuka: But why is that? [Szczuka sits with folded arms.]
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Oh, ho, ho, ho Kazia! Do not frame me up. [Wojewódzki uses palms against Szczuka.]
06. Kazimiera Szczuka: But why (did you say) I do not like the word firmness?
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: I thought you do not like the word groping. (l: Wojewódzki)

⁵¹ Partington's (2009) study of puns is based on the theoretical framework by Sinclair (1987; 1991; 2004). According to Sinclair, there are two basic principles of language organization: the phraseological and the terminological principles. The former refers to the idiom or words regularly occurring together, whereas the latter describes words as a series of open-ended choices.

08. Kazimiera Szczuka: But I use it.
 09. → Kuba Wojewódzki: I like the word firmness, because for me firmness means expressiveness and intellectual **abundance**. [Wojewódzki spreads fingers on his left hand.]
 10. → Kazimiera Szczuka: Well, you are **puppy fat** (l: Wojewódzki) (L), intellectually. So **puffy** and **fat**.
 11. → Kuba Wojewódzki: And you are **fancy/overly fed** and firm. (L)

In the beginning of the conversation, Wojewódzki mentions a word *jędrności*, which is the possessive case of *jędrność* “firmness” and is frequently used to describe a female body (line 1). As Szczuka is a well-known feminist in Poland, Wojewódzki seems to be implying that she personally has a prejudice against this word, since it is used to objectify women. Wojewódzki’s mention of the word is accompanied by a hand gesture (line 1), which is perceived by Szczuka as groping, as we can see in her reply in line 2: *Znaczy to jędrność to niby takie macanie. To ma oznaczać ten gest, tak?* “By firmness you mean groping. This is what your gesture means, right?” In this line, Szczuka also imitates Wojewódzki’s hand gesture. Her imitation combined with a smile on her face perhaps suggests her interpretation of Wojewódzki’s actual reference of the word *jędrność* “firmness” as a fit female body. Wojewódzki, then, rejects Szczuka’s interpretation of his hand gesture and shows his appreciation of the word *jędrność* “firmness.” He subsequently defines it as expressiveness and intellectual abundance (line 9).

It is interesting to note that Wojewódzki’s use of *pulchność intelektualną* “intellectual abundance” is ambiguous. While Wojewódzki perhaps intends to use it to refer to Szczuka as a really smart woman, he perhaps also implies that she is “overly” intellectual. It is because the word *pulchność* can refer to being plump or spongy. As Szczuka is known for her intelligence and eloquence, she perhaps understands the ambiguity encoded in the phrase *pulchność intelektualną* “intellectual abundance.” In her response, Szczuka uses three adjectives (*pulchny* “puppy fat,” *wygrubaszony* “puffy” and *otyły* “fat”) modified by an adverb (*intelektualnie* “intellectually”) to describe Wojewódzki, as we can see in line 10. These three Polish adjectives in normal contexts are used to describe human body shape, not intelligence, and it therefore seems reasonable to suppose that Szczuka perhaps intends to employ the punning wordplay to tease Wojewódzki in return. While she uses the adverb *intelektualnie* “intellectually” to modify them to refer to Wojewódzki as a smart person, she perhaps is also in an attempt to ridicule his body shape. Szczuka’s humor based on wordplay not only elicits laughter from the audience, the wry smile on the face of Wojewódzki also

shows that Wojewódzki perhaps finds the difficult situation (in which he is teased) slightly funny (line 10).

In his turn of speaking, Wojewódzki also employs the punning wordplay based on the ambiguity of the word *wypasiona*, which also attracts laughter from the audience (line 11). This word can be used to describe a luxurious mobil phone with many brand new functions (e.g., *wypasiona komórka*) or a very expensive car with luxurious equipments (e.g., *wypasiona bryka*). In light of this, Wojewódzki might be describing Szczuka as a fancy woman. At the same time, the word *wypasiona* also comes from the verb *paść* “to feed.” Therefore, we may also say that Wojewódzki perhaps also implies that Szczuka is well-fed. From the above interaction, it is possible to assume that while the punning wordplay may result from ambiguity, ambiguity itself is not sufficient in resulting in a pun. According to Attardo (1994) and Ritchie (2004), ambiguity is not the factor that results in punning, as all words are ambiguous by nature. One element that helps transform ambiguity into a pun is that the ambiguity has to be deliberately created or pointed out. As evidenced in the above interaction, both Wojewódzki and Szczuka can be regarded as engaged in the punning wordplay. They not only create their own puns, but also point out each other’s puns by employing similar ones.

7.3 Sarcasm

Analyzing the data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, I have observed that one of the invited guests Andy employs sarcasm to indirectly attack the other guest Jiāotáng, so as to elicit laughter. Although sarcasm is an indirect linguistic strategy that frames an utterance or a string of utterances as “not meant literally” (Tannen 1984: 130), the victim of the sarcasm Jiāotáng still understands it. In addition, the deliverer of the sarcasm Andy later becomes a good target of tease. In other words, while Andy employs sarcasm to attack Jiāotáng to result in a humorous effect, the way he speaks simultaneously invites other speech participants to see him as a target for teasing.

In my analysis of the data from *Kuba Wojewódzki*, on the other hand, I have observed that while sarcasm is still used as humor to elicit laughter, the victim of it does not always understand it. In the following extract, Wojewódzki’s humor based on sarcasm is not understood by the victim of it, namely Koterski. This type of humor, however, is understood

and appreciated by the other invited guest Poniedziałek and the audience. The following extract illustrates this point.

Extract (46) [KW 21.05.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Naprawdę. Mamo, jak on się cieszy. Nie, Michał bo to jest niesamowite, że stworzyłeś tak wyrazista postać a w ogóle ciebie nie ma w mediach. Nie udzielasz wywiadów. Co ty jesteś świr?
02. Michał Koterski: Nie, ja nie wiem dlaczego mnie nie ma. To jest właśnie pytanie na które nie znam odpowiedzi. Nie rozumiem.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale czy to nie jest trochę tak, bo na przykład nam mówiono, że odmawiasz wywiadów, nie chcesz się spotykać, jesteś kapryśny.
04. Michał Koterski: To nie prawda. Nikt mi nie proponuje ról. No teraz po tym filmie to zaczęły się propozycje tam wywiadów i tak dalej, ale ról nie ma i po „Dniu Świra” też, no po tak małej roli w ogóle ja byłem zdziwiony, że była taka popularność, że mnie ludzie rozpoznawali na ulicy i krzyczeli tam „Jak robi dzióbek no to nie ma (*)ja we wsi!”
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale nie tylko na wsi tak krzyczeli, w miastach też?
06. Michał Koterski: Wszędzie w ogóle jak szedłem ulicą to darli się z samochodów i wiesz, ale kurcze.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Czy ty byłeś to po prostu miałeś ksywkę dzióbek? Ty postaw mi kapturek.
08. Michał Koterski: Tak, postaw dzióbek.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: Postaw dzióbek.
10. Michał Koterski: Ale nie wiem dlaczego nie dostałem żadnej propozycji. Nie dostaje i po prostu nie rozumiem tego sam.
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale chciałbyś? Naprawdę Michał?
12. Michał Koterski: No chciałbym.
13. Kuba Wojewódzki: Serio?
14. Michał Koterski: Tak.
15. Kuba Wojewódzki: Wkręciłeś się.
16. Michał Koterski: No a jak.
17. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Boże ja kocham... Wiesz, że jak byłbym gejem to bym się normalnie z tobą całował.
18. Michał Koterski: O nie, nie, nie.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Really. Mom, he is so happy! [Wojewódzki imitates Koterski's greeting to his mother in the beginning of the show.] (L) (I: Koterski) No, Michał because this is awesome that you created such an expressive character, but you do not appear in the media at all. You are not invited to any interviews. Are you crazy?
02. Michał Koterski: No, I do not know why I do not appear. This is exactly the question that I do not know how to answer. I cannot get it.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: But is it not a little bit like, because for example, we heard that you are rejecting interviews, you do not want to meet, you are capricious
04. Michał Koterski: It is not true. No one has offered me a role. Now after this movie they have started to offer me interviews and so on, but also not any roles after “Day of the Wacko.” Well, after such a small role, in general, I was surprised by my popularity, that people recognized me on the street and there screamed “When he makes the hood,

- f(*)kers got nothing on it!” (L) (l: Wojewódzki) [Wojewódzki looks at the other guest Poniedziałek and stretches his left hand to point at Koterski.]
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: But they screamed not only in the village, but also in the cities?
 06. Michał Koterski: Everywhere in general when I was walking on the street, and they screamed from cars, you know? Darn it.
 07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Let me put it directly, did the hood become your nickname? You set my little hood. (l: Wojewódzki)
 08. Michał Koterski: Yes, set the hood.
 09. Kuba Wojewódzki: Set the hood.
 10. Michał Koterski: But I do not know why I did not get any offers. I do not get any and I simply do not understand. [Koterski keeps hitting the arm of the sofa with his right hand.]
 11. Kuba Wojewódzki: But you would like to? Really, Michał?
 12. Michał Koterski: Yes, I would like to.
 13. Kuba Wojewódzki: Seriously?
 14. Michał Koterski: Yes. [Koterski beams with mouth open.] (l: Koterski)
 15. Kuba Wojewódzki: You started to love it.
 16. Michał Koterski: Yeah. [Koterski beams with mouth open.] (l: Koterski) (L: Wojewódzki) (l: Poniedziałek) (L) [Wojewódzki looks at the other guest Poniedziałek and stretches his left hand to point at Koterski.]
 17. → Kuba Wojewódzki: God, I love... you know, if I were gay, I would just kiss you. [Wojewódzki uses both hands to point at himself.] (L: Poniedziałek)
 18. Michał Koterski: Oh no, no, no. (l: Koterski)

In the beginning of the conversation, Wojewódzki compliments Koterski for having lived the role of the dopey son in the movie *Dniu Świra* “Day of the Wacko.” Despite his successful acting in the movie, he hardly appears on television interviews (line 1). Wojewódzki later adds that perhaps it is because Koterski has rejected many interview invitations (line 3). In his turn of speaking, Koterski adds that he has been invited to attend interviews and similar activities, but none of the invitations are from the movie industry, despite his unexpected popularity after his successful acting in the movie (line 4). In lines 4 and 6, Koterski adds that his popularity is evidenced in his fans’ screaming of a quote from the movie anywhere, anytime: *Jak robi dzióbek no to nie ma chuja we wsi!* “When he makes the hood, fuckers got nothing on it!” In line 10, he refers to his previous doubt again. That is, he cannot understand why a popular actor like him has not been invited again to act in any movies. Hearing his doubt, Wojewódzki asks Koterski whether he actually wants to be an actor (line 11). When getting a positive answer, Wojewódzki asks again whether he takes his words seriously (line 13). In his turns of speaking, Koterski still claims that he takes his words seriously, and that he loves acting (lines 14 and 16). In line 17, Wojewódzki comments on Koterski’s utterances (in the prior speaking turns) by expressing how much he appreciates the way Koterski shows his interest in acting. Instead of putting it straightforwardly, Wojewódzki says that he would

have kissed Koterski to show his appreciation if he were gay. This utterance should not be taken literally, as Wojewódzki perhaps is in an attempt to ridicule Koterski's way of speaking in a sarcastic way. That is, Koterski's interactional style is probably amusing to Wojewódzki.

It is interesting to note that during the whole interview, Wojewódzki is frequently amused by Koterski's interactional style, which consists of two features: smiling foolishly and talking straightforwardly without considering the adequacy of the utterance. For example, Koterski is observed to be overly joyful or overexcited in answering questions. This is not only evidenced in Wojewódzki's description of Koterski's personality, as in *Jak on się cieszy!* "He is so happy!" (line 1), but also can be seen in Koterski's smiling face when he answers questions (lines 14 and 16). In addition, Koterski is observed to talk straightforwardly without considering the appropriateness of his utterances. In line 4, for example, when Koterski quotes his fans' remarks, he does not avoid using the word *chuja*, the possessive form of *chuj*. As *chuj* is the vulgar form referring to male sexual organ, the use of it on the television is therefore regarded as improper. Not surprisingly, Koterski's quoting of this word is bleeped by the television station. Koterski's interactional style on the television perhaps has also invited the audience to connect him with his role in the movie, i.e., a dopey son.

In light of the above, it is reasonable to argue that Wojewódzki perhaps intends to point out the two features encoded in Koterski's interactional style by employing verbal sarcasm as a humor type. In line 4, for example, when Koterski says something improper, Wojewódzki uses eye contact and hand gesture to focus the other guest Poniedziałek's attention on Koterski's verbal performance. The smile on his face perhaps also suggests that Koterski's utterance is regarded as improper. In line 16, Wojewódzki again uses eye contact and hand gesture for the same communicative purpose. The smile on Poniedziałek's face also shows his tacit understanding. While the utterance in line 17 can be understood as an expression of humor, as indicated by Poniedziałek's laughter, the sarcastic nature of this humorous remark should be understood by the whole verbal interaction. That is, Wojewódzki's humor based on sarcasm in line 17 is built up by his non-verbal behavior in prior speaking turns. His sarcasm, however, is not understood by the victim Koterski, as evidenced in his ensuing rejection to be kissed by Wojewódzki (line 18). Therefore, we may say that Wojewódzki's use of sarcasm as humor not only elicits laughter, but also helps to build solidarity and rapport with Poniedziałek and the audience who understand his humor.

The above interaction shows that while sarcasm can be used as humor to ridicule the other person, no hostile criticism is conveyed. The main purpose of using it is perhaps to

show Wojewódzki's appreciation of Koterski's verbal and non-verbal performances, but in a sarcastic way, while at the same time to build solidarity and rapport with Poniedziałek and the audience. Sarcasm, however, can also be used as a linguistic device to convey hostile criticism towards one's opponent in an indirect way (Kuo 1992). That is, while using it as humor, the speaker perhaps also intends to show hostile reprimand. The use of sarcasm, however, also serves the face-saving function due to its indirect or ambiguous nature (see Jorgensen 1996).

Analyzing the data from *Kuba Wojewódzki*, I have observed that in employing sarcasm as humor to attract laughter, Wojewódzki is frequently found to denigrate politicians or religious people in a sarcastic way. In the following extract, Wojewódzki ridicules Father Tadeusz Rydzyk and his conservative Radio Maryja station in a sarcastic way.

Extract (47) [KW 13.03.2005]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Droga Edyto, jak będziesz chciała wody to krzycz. Woda jest dla ciebie.
02. Edyta Górniak: A to jest jaka woda?
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: To jest woda święta.
04. Edyta Górniak: Bo ja jestem wybredna.
05. → Kuba Wojewódzki: To jest woda, którą dostałem ze źródeł Radia Maryja. Dziękuję. Ojciec Rydzyk **pędzi tą wodę** i dlatego jest to **woda mocno ognista**, szatańska.
06. Edyta Górniak: Dziękuję bardzo.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Dear Edyta, if you want water, then shout. Water is for you.
02. Edyta Górniak: What kind of water is that?
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: This is holy water.
04. Edyta Górniak: Because I am picky.
05. → Kuba Wojewódzki: This is water that I obtained from the source of Radio Maryja station. [Wojewódzki raises both of his hands up.] (L: Górniak) Thank you. Father Rydzyk **produces this water** (L) (l: Górniak), and that is why this is **strong firewater**, satanic water.
06. Edyta Górniak: Thank you so much. [Górniak takes the water.]

In the beginning of the conversation, Wojewódzki asks the invited guest Górniak whether she wants some water to drink (line 1). In lines 2 and 4, Górniak asks what kind of water Wojewódzki has got, as she is quite picky with water. To show that his water is one of a kind, Wojewódzki claims that his water is holy water obtained from the Radio Maryja station, as in lines 3 and 5. In referring to the Radio Maryja station, Wojewódzki uses a hand gesture, which elicits laughter from Górniak (line 5). He then expresses his gratitude to the Radio Maryja station and Father Tadeusz Rydzyk for producing this water, which immediately

elicits laughter from the audience (line 5). Clearly, Wojewódzki is not expressing his gratitude to the Radio Maryja station and Father Tadeusz Rydzyk for producing this water. On the contrary, he is ridiculing them in a sarcastic way, which is evidenced in his use of the verb *pędzi* “produce,” the third-person singular conjugation of *pędzić* “to produce” and that of the phrase *woda mocno ognista* “strong firewater.” In the Polish language, *pędzić wodę* “to produce water” may refer to illegally brewing liquor, and *woda ognista* “fire water” may refer to vodka. That is, Wojewódzki is employing the punning wordplay to mock Father Tadeusz Rydzyk. His use of *dziękuję* “I thank,” therefore, can be regarded as a booster for reinforcing sarcasm. The ensuing laughter in the same line also indicates that his humor is understood and appreciated.

Finally, he uses a religion-related adjective to modify water, as we can see in his use of *szatańska* “satanic” (line 5). Wojewódzki perhaps intends to mock Father Tadeusz Rydzyk and the Radio Maryja station in an indirect way, thereby encouraging the audience to make a connection between them and Satan. As sarcasm may be hostility disguised as humor, we may reasonably say that while Wojewódzki uses this type of humor to entertain the audience to elicit laughter, he is perhaps also in an attempt to build rapport with a certain audience by mocking Father Tadeusz Rydzyk and the Radio Maryja station in an indirect way. Although Father Tadeusz Rydzyk and those who support him and the Radio Maryja station might find it difficult to obtain the humorous implicatures, audience members who are against him and the Radio Maryja station may find Wojewódzki’s sarcasm amusing. In other words, Wojewódzki’s use of sarcasm as humor creates a *we* vs. *they* dichotomy. That is, those who are able to appreciate the humor are categorized as in-group members of the speaker, whereas those who are denigrated and therefore are not able to obtain the humorous implicatures are *they*, the outsiders. In light of this, Wojewódzki’s ridiculing of Father Tadeusz Rydzyk and the Radio Maryja station in a sarcastic way can be regarded as putdown humor. According to Dynel (2008), putdown humor is produced to amuse the speech participants (including the speaker him/herself), while it at the same time is employed to denigrate the third party that is completely unaware of the speech activity. In addition, the producer of the putdown humor also shows an in-group membership with the metarecipients and stigmatizes the victim as an out-group member, who is not able to obtain the humorous implicatures. In brief, as observed by Gockel and Kerr (2015), sharing putdown humor about out-group members enhances

positive feelings and in-group cohesion.⁵² The speaker's intention and the hearer's inference will decide whether the teasing should be categorized as putdown humor.

7.4 Innuendo

In analyzing the data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, I have observed that innuendo can be used to result in a humorous effect. It is frequently found to appear in the form of a question. The funniness comes from the listener's repeated deliberation of the implied message, including other speech participant and the audience. In addition, a referring expression, such as a proper name, can also be used to serve the same function. That is, the name of a celebrity can have an implied message when used in a certain context. As I have argued previously, the use of innuendo as humor and the understanding of it very often require the same cultural background of both the speaker and the listener.

In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, on the other hand, I have observed that the host Wojewódzki's utterances in different speaking turns may also contribute to humor based on the metamessages encoded in them. Each of these utterances may carry a proposition, and some of them are in the form of a question. In addition, the use of innuendo as a humor type may be signaled by the smile of the speaker. To understand the innuendo as such, one does not need to have a specific cultural background. Instead, understanding the connection between each utterance helps to bootstrap the complexity of innuendo. In the following extract, the conversation is on the invited guest Koterski's looks. According to Koterski, his mother thinks that he looks like a Turkish emigrant. Based on Koterski's self-disclosure, Wojewódzki employs innuendo to tease him, thereby inviting the audience not only to question his mother's intention of describing him as a Turkish emigrant, but also to make a connection between his Turkish looks and his mother's trip in Turkey.

Extract (48) [KW 21.05.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Jacek Poniedziałek, Michał Koterski. Dziękuję bardzo. Ale Jacek czy to nie jest rodząca się osobowość?
02. Jacek Poniedziałek: Absolutnie.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale nie boisz się, bo to będzie twój konkurent, bo to jest bardziej na razię aktor.

⁵² Gockel and Kerr (2015), however, have also claimed that putdown humor is like a double-edged sword. When an in-group member passively overhears the exchanges as such, the putdown humor may not have the same effect.

04. Jacek Poniedziałek: Nie, jest ogólnie w innej grupie trochę wiekowej. Na szczęście.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Tak, bo ty jesteś młody chłopak, nie?
06. Jacek Poniedziałek: I on jest taki przystojny.
07. Michał Koterski: Wcale nie taki młody.
08. Kuba Wojewódzki: Nie masz trzech dych. Nie, przystojny, jest przystojny dlatego, że ty nie masz polskiej urody.
09. Michał Koterski: Nie?
10. Kuba Wojewódzki: Nie.
11. Michał Koterski: A jaką?
12. Jacek Poniedziałek: Grecką. Grecką trochę.
13. Michał Koterski: Właśnie, moja mama mówi, że wyglądam jak turecki emigrant.
14. → Kuba Wojewódzki: I ty pozdrawiałeś mamę?
15. Michał Koterski: Tak.
16. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Wóz wytnijcie pozdrowienia. Turecki emigrant? To co twoja mama na wycieczce była?
17. Michał Koterski: Nie, dobra była.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Jacek Poniedziałek, Michał Koterski. Thank you very much. (c)
But Jacek, is it not a nascent personality?
02. Jacek Poniedziałek: Absolutely.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: But are you not afraid, because he will become your opponent, because he is already an actor.
04. Jacek Poniedziałek: No, he is in a different age group. Fortunately.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Yes, because you are a young guy, aren't you?
06. Jacek Poniedziałek: And he is such a handsome guy.
07. Michał Koterski: Not so young. (L: Poniedziałek)
08. Kuba Wojewódzki: You are less than thirty. No, handsome, he is handsome, because you do not have Polish looks.
09. Michał Koterski: No?
10. Kuba Wojewódzki: No.
11. Michał Koterski: What kind of looks?
12. Jacek Poniedziałek: Greek. A little bit Greek.
13. Michał Koterski: Exactly, my mom says that I look like a Turkish emigrant. (L) (l: Wojewódzki)
14. → Kuba Wojewódzki: And you sent greetings to mom?
15. Michał Koterski: Yes. (l: Koterski) (L) [Koterski raises his right hand to greet again.]
16. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Cut off the greetings. (L: Poniedziałek) A Turkish emigrant? What did your mom do in a tour? (L)
17. Michał Koterski: (l: Koterski) No, she was good.

In the beginning of the conversation, both Wojewódzki and the other invited guest Poniedziałek are complimenting Koterski's looks. In line 8, Wojewódzki says that Koterski is handsome and does not look Polish. In line 12, Poniedziałek joins the conversation and shows agreement with Wojewódzki by saying that Koterski looks like a Greek. In line 13, however, Koterski indirectly quotes his mother's remark and says that he looks like a Turkish emigrant. This self-disclosure not only elicits laughter from the audience, but also gives the

host Wojewódzki a chance to tease him in the following speaking turns. Wojewódzki's smiling in the same line perhaps further signals that what he is going to say should not be taken literally. Wojewódzki's question in line 14 (*I ty pozdrawiałeś mamę?* "And you sent greetings to mom?") and imperative in line 16 (*Wóz wytnijcie pozdrowienia.* "Cut off the greetings.") can be regarded as an expression of innuendo, which invites the audience to ponder on Koterski's self-disclosure about his mother's remark on his looks. More specifically, Koterski's mother's description of him as a Turkish emigrant is perhaps out of malevolent intent, and therefore he should not have sent greetings to his mother earlier before the above sequence.

Wojewódzki, in line 16, subsequently asks two questions: *Turecki emigrant? To co twoja mama na wycieczce była?* "A Turkish emigrant? What did your mom do in a tour?" These two questions should also be regarded as an expression of innuendo, which invites the audience to make a connection between Koterski's Turkish looks and his mother's trip in Turkey. Wojewódzki's use of innuendo is also appreciated as humor, as signaled by the ensuing laughter both from the invited guest, Poniedziałek, and from the audience. To understand the humor type as such, we should understand not only the proposition of each utterance that contributes to the innuendo, but also the metamessages encoded in these utterances. In addition, Wojewódzki's humor can be regarded as partially building on the fact that more and more Poles choose Turkey as a popular tourist destination, and that many Polish women are married to Turkish men. As investigated by Pędziwiatr's (2014), Poles' negative perception of Turks in the Polish society does not have much impact on the holiday plans made by Poles. The number of Polish tourists visiting Turkey has increased greatly within the past decade. Consequently, one of the results of Turkey as a popular tourist destination for Poles is the increasing rate of mixed marriages between usually Polish women and Turkish men. In other words, the funniness of Wojewódzki's humor based on innuendo comes from the metamessage that Koterski's real father is perhaps a Turk, not the one he knows to be.

Recall that in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, a referring expression can be used as an innuendo to create a humorous effect. The funny effect comes from the listener's repeated deliberation of the implied message. Analyzing the data from *Kuba Wojewódzki*, I have observed that innuendo is also found in a referring expression. More specifically, it is found in Wojewódzki's metaphor used to portray Renata Beger, one of the best known and controversial politicians in Poland. This metaphor first appears in the invited guest Szczuka's answer to Wojewódzki's question, in which she specifies Beger as *kobyła* "mare." The

funniness of this animal metaphor comes from the controversial image of the politician, as Beger has received criticism not only for her political activity, but also for her being frank in speaking her opinions.

Extract (49) [KW 26.02.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: No dobrze, ale, ty mówisz o pewnej sublimacji polityki, albo seksu w politykę, polityki w seksie?
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: I to jest, wiesz.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: O tym, że to jest taki przejaw męski. Ale pamiętaj, że najbardziej taką wyuzdaną i wybuchaną pewną emanacją zatarcia się tych granic była Renata Beger i jej deklaracje. O owsie, prawda, o tym, o koniach, bykach, buhajach czy wszystkie metafory, których ja nie zdążyłem złapać, no. To ona, prawda?
04. Kazimiera Szczuka: Tak, tak. Ona jest w ogóle w swojej, naprawdę ona jest fenomenalna. Pod wieloma względami ona mi imponuje.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: No co ty. Pod jakim?
06. Kazimiera Szczuka: Słuchaj, to jest taki człowiek niesamowitej siły. Ona jest niesamowicie silna. To jest taki człowiek bez w ogóle oporów. Ona jest jakby taki. To znaczy nie chcę, żeby to zabrzmiało obraźliwie.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: No no no, ciekawe.
08. Kazimiera Szczuka: Ale ona jest jakby taki zwierz, który nie ma żadnych...
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale jaki zwierz? Taki bardziej pantera czy bardziej pająk?
10. Kazimiera Szczuka: Nie, nie. Bardziej chyba jakaś taka **kobyła**. Ale, ale...
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: Poczekaj Kazia, poczekaj. Żeby nam tego nie zdjęli. **Kobyła** w sensie komplement?
12. Kazimiera Szczuka: Tak.
13. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Że super **kobyła**.
14. Kazimiera Szczuka: Nie, ja nie.
15. Kuba Wojewódzki: Kurwo!
16. Kazimiera Szczuka: Nie, nie myślę o tym w takich kategoriach, wiesz.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Well, okay, but you are talking about the certain sublimation of politics, or sex in politics, politics in sex?
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: And this is, you know. [Szczuka stretches her right hand forward, palm up.]
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: This is such a sign of manhood. But remember that the most promiscuous person and the most outburst emanation that has blurred the boarder are Renata Beger and her declarations. Something about oats, right? About them, about horses, bulls, bulls kept for covering or all kinds of metaphors, which I was not able to catch. That is she, right?
04. Kazimiera Szczuka: Yes, yes. She is completely on her own, and it is true that she is extraordinary. She has impressed me in many respects.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Come on. In which part?
06. Kazimiera Szczuka: Listen, she is such a person of incredible strength. She is incredibly strong. She is such a person that does not have any obstacles at all. She is just like. I mean, I do not want to make it sound insulting. (l: Szczuka)
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Well, well, well, very interesting. [Wojewódzki raises his left hand to support his chin.]

08. Kazimiera Szczuka: But she is just like such an animal (l: Szczuka) [Wojewódzki turns to the other side and then turns back to look at Szczuka.] (l: Wojewódzki) that does not have any...
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: But what kind of animal? An animal like panther or spider?
10. Kazimiera Szczuka: No, no. Maybe like some kind of **mare**. [Szczuka shrugs her shoulders.] (l: Szczuka) (L) [Wojewódzki turns to look at the audience and points at them with index finger on his left hand.] But, but...
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: [Wojewódzki uses both hands to stop Szczuka from talking.] Wait, Kazia, wait. I do not want them to cut this part. **Mare** as a compliment (to her)?
12. Kazimiera Szczuka: Yes. (l: Szczuka)
13. → Kuba Wojewódzki: A super **mare**. [Wojewódzki spreads out both hands.]
14. Kazimiera Szczuka: No, I do not.
15. Kuba Wojewódzki: Damn! (l: Szczuka, Wojewódzki)
16. Kazimiera Szczuka: No, I do not think of it to be in such a category, you know.

In this sequence, Wojewódzki first casts his doubt about the connection between sex and politics (line 1). He later asks Szczuka how she thinks about Beger, as we can see in line 3, in which Wojewódzki mentions about oats, horses and bulls. Wojewódzki's use of these words perhaps results from an interview of Beger for the *Super Express* tabloid in 2003, in which she enlarged upon her sex life with her husband. In her response to a question about her sexual life, she used a metaphor to show how sex is to her: "*jak koń owies* 'like oates to a horse'." In her answer to Wojewódzki's question, Szczuka says that Beger is an extraordinary, impressive and strong woman who seems to have no obstacles at all (lines 4 and 6). When Wojewódzki later asks her to think of an animal that can better explain these characteristics of Beger, she uses *kobyła* "mare" to specify her. We have no idea whether Szczuka intends to make fun of Beger by characterizing her as *kobyła* "mare," but for sure this metaphor is funny to her and to the audience, as evidenced in her smiling and the ensuing laughter from the audience. The funniness perhaps comes from the derogatory semantic nature of this metaphor (see Fontecha and Catalán 2003).⁵³ While the metaphor *kobyła* "mare" may be used to positively present Beger as a strong woman who does not fear anything, it can also be used to refer to her uncouth behavior in the media. This is evidenced in Wojewódzki's reaction to Szczuka's metaphor, as in line 11, in which Wojewódzki stops Szczuka from continuing and asks whether this metaphor is used as a compliment to Beger. If not, the television station probably will cut it off, as it might be taken as a personal attack due to the derogatory nature of this animal metaphor.

⁵³ Fontecha and Catalán (2003) have pointed out that most animal metaphors are derogatory in semantic nature, which is based on a vertical hierarchy of beings. When one uses an animal metaphor, s/he can derogate others (human being, i.e., higher order forms of being) by specifying them as animals (non-human beings, i.e., lower order forms of being).

Additionally, this metaphor also occurs in line 13, in which Wojewódzki seems to be in an attempt to summarize Szczuka's remarks on Beger. Following Szczuka's metaphor, Wojewódzki further adds an adjective that has a positive connotation and specifies Beger as *super kobyła* "super mare." As *kobyła* "mare" can be derogatory in semantics, it may sound sarcastic when it is aligned with a positive modifier. The use of *super kobyła* "super mare" could be funny to some people, or at least it could be amusing to those who do not like Beger. Therefore, we may say that Wojewódzki perhaps intends to create a humorous effect by implying that Beger is an unequalled woman when it comes to coarseness and vulgarness. Wojewódzki's use of *super kobyła* "super mare," therefore, can be regarded as humor constructed by implicitly attacking Beger. In fact, using innuendo to attack a non-present party is not uncommon, as an innuendo may convey certain implicature. Bell (1997: 36) defines innuendo as "a non-overt intentional negative ascription, whether true or false, usually in the form of an implicature, which is understood as a charge or accusation against what is, for the most part, a non-present party." By employing innuendo to result in a humorous effect, Wojewódzki perhaps also avoids possible accusations from Beger and her supporters, as his negative ascription is simply implicature.

Interestingly, it is not surprising to see a woman who breaks the social norm and talks like a man, especially if she is in a man's position. As indicated by Pauwels (2003: 567), "women [are now] in the new roles or critical linguistic commentators, norm-breakers, and norm makers." Beger's being frank in speaking her opinions is nevertheless risky, as she might be regarded as coarse and vulgar. Indeed, simplistic gender expectations and gender roles can do harm to women in politics (Wei 2000). Beger's use of the *jak koń owies* "like oates to a horse" metaphor in describing her love for sex might make her the object of ridicule. In the program, for example, she is specified as *kobyła* "mare," which sounds funny to Szczuka and the audience. The negative meaning of *kobyła* "mare" also comes from the gender bias of this metaphor, as it is used to specify Beger, a woman. Schulz (1975) has documented a process of "semantic derogation" that affects sexual terms used to specify women. According to her, many words that had a positive meaning have now become slanderous towards women. In the English language, for example, men have made words like "cow" and "warhorse" to describe fat women (p. 43). It is because men fear to be inferior to women, and that this is the only way to let the fear out. As further defined by Wareing (2004: 80-82), semantic derogation can be regarded as "[the] process of words which refer to women acquiring demeaning or sexual connotations." In their study of animal metaphors in

Mandarin, Chen and Chen (2011b) have also observed that the semantic molecules applied to the metaphors containing the character 虎 *hǔ* “tiger” may include *ANIMAL*, *POWERFUL* and *VIOLENT*.⁵⁴ These are supposed to be characteristics of men, not of women. Therefore, tiger metaphors in Mandarin connote positive meanings when used to describe men, but not vice versa when used for women. As concluded by Spender (1998), the word that originally marked the same state of condition for men might later be assumed a negative connotation for women. That is, gender difference is the only variable to the semantic system of the word.

In sum, Wojewódzki’s humor constructed by connecting Beger to a mare is perhaps based on the semantic derogation of this animal metaphor against women. While this metaphor may positively present Beger as a strong woman who does not fear anything, it can also be used to put her in a negative manner. Thanks to the vague boundary between the derived negative and positive meanings of this metaphor, Wojewódzki may avoid possible accusations from Beger and her supporters.

7.5 Other-Deprecating Humor

In analyzing the data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, I have found that the two hosts may create humorous remarks by means of deprecating their invited guests. Recall that in my analysis in Section 6.5, when the hostess Xú deprecates one of the guests Liú to result in a humorous effect, she brings the audience’s attention to Liú’s newly released product and promotes it in a humorous way. In response to Xú’ deprecation, Liú uses the discourse marker of 沒有 *méiyǒu* “no” combined with a sentence-final particle 啦 *la* to correct/clarify the proposition made by Xú.

In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, the host Wojewódzki is also found to frequently employ other-deprecating humor to elicit laughter. In addition, this type of humor may be employed via the use of a malevolent address form. Different from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, the guests in *Kuba Wojewódzki* may use the same type of humor as a response. In the following extract, the invited guest Szczuka immediately counterattacks by calling Wojewódzki “old man” right after she receives a malevolent address form “chauvinistic hag” from the host.

Extract (50) [KW 26.02.2006]

01. Kazimiera Szczuka: Bo ty się, wiesz, tak na takiego młodzieniaszka w ogóle

⁵⁴ Also see Wierzbicka (1985a) and Goddard (1998).

- stylizujesz.
02. Kuba Wojewódzki: Jestem w twoim wieku. Dokładnie
 03. Kazimiera Szczuka: Nie. Ty jesteś troszkę ode mnie starszy.
 04. → Kuba Wojewódzki: A ty się zamknij! **Babulco szowinistyczna**.
 05. → Kazimiera Szczuka: **Dziadu**. Naprawdę jesteś trochę starszy.
 06. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ile troszkę? Malutkie petite tu?
 07. Kazimiera Szczuka: Wiesz co, jakieś parę lat. No nie wiem no. Ale słuchaj, w ogóle jesteś **gejem** więc nie mówmy o ty, bo to może być wiesz.
 08. Kuba Wojewódzki: Jak na geja trzymam się nieźle, nie?
 09. Kazimiera Szczuka: Jak na geja... Nie geje się właśnie dobrze trzymają i przede wszystkim nie należy, wiesz, wytykać wieku. Wyglądasz bardzo fajnie. Jesteś atrakcyjny i nie musimy, wiesz, jakby sobie.

Translation

01. Kazimiera Szczuka: Because you know, you in general are pretending to be a young man.
02. Kuba Wojewódzki: I am in your age. Exactly.
03. Kazimiera Szczuka: No. You are a little bit older than me. (l: Szczuka)
04. → Kuba Wojewódzki: And you shut up! (L) [Wojewódzki pretends to be angry.] You **chauvinistic hag**. (l: Wojewódzki, Szczuka)
05. → Kazimiera Szczuka: You **old man**. (l: Szczuka) It is true that you are a little bit older.
06. Kuba Wojewódzki: How much (older)? A little bit?
07. Kazimiera Szczuka: You know what, a few years (older). [Wojewódzki pretends to be angry again.] Well, I do not know. But listen, you in general are **gay**, so we are not talking about this, because it can be, you know.
08. Kuba Wojewódzki: For a gay man, I look pretty good, right?
09. Kazimiera Szczuka: For a gay man. Gay people actually look good, and first of all, age should not be talked about, you know. You look very good. You are attractive and we do not have to, you know, be like this.

In the beginning of the conversation, Wojewódzki and Szczuka are debating their respective ages. Disagreeing with Szczuka's statement that he is a few years older, Wojewódzki asks Szczuka to stop it and further calls her *babulco szowinistyczna* (the vocative case of *babulec szowinistyczny*) "chauvinistic hag," as we can see in line 4. Wojewódzki's use of the imperative *A ty się zamknij!* "And you shut up!" is understood by the audience as a humorous expression, as indicated by their laughter. His subsequent use of the malevolent address form *babulco szowinistyczna* "chauvinistic hag" to deprecate Szczuka is also framed as humor, as signaled by Wojewódzki's and Szczuka's smiling. In response to his humor, Szczuka calls Wojewódzki *dziadu* (the vocative case of *dziad*) "old man" and claims that Wojewódzki in fact is a little bit older than her, as in line 5. Her smiling also signals that this malevolent address form is an expression of humor. As this type of humor can be regarded as a face-threatening act, and that it is employed in a television variety show, both Wojewódzki and Szczuka, as well as the audience know that it is used only to create a humorous effect.

It is interesting to note that Szczuka frequently uses *wiesz* “you know,” as in lines 1, 7 and 9, which can be regarded as a hedge. According to Coates (2004), women’s language is more tentative, which is evidenced in their frequent use of hedges (e.g., *I think, I’m sure, you know, sort of, perhaps* and *like*). These hedges are used to show whether the speaker is certain or uncertain about the proposition under discussion. Lakoff (1975) also claims that women’s use of hedges is linked with their unassertiveness and lack of confidence. In our data, however, Szczuka’s frequent use of *wiesz* “you know” shows her confidence in asserting herself. This is evidenced in her use of assertives, in which she claims that Wojewódzki is a few years older than her, but is pretending to be a young man, as well as gay. According to Searle (1975), an assertive is a speech act that commits a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition. By employing assertives and the hedge *wiesz* “you know,” Szczuka perhaps feels confident in asserting herself.

The above interaction also shows the solidarity between the host Wojewódzki and the guest Szczuka, despite the competitive nature of the verbal interaction. Brown and Gilman’s (1960) work is the most influential in the study of address forms. In their analysis of the pronominal systems in four European languages, Brown and Gilman have observed “a shift from power to solidarity as the governing semantic principle” (p. 261). That is, modern people in the Western society are more likely to build solidarity with others in verbal interactions.⁵⁵ When Wojewódzki calls Szczuka *babulco szowinistyczna* “chauvinistic hag,” Szczuka also addresses Wojewódzki *dziadu* “old man” in return. Their verbal aggression is the source of humor, signaled by their use of such malevolent address forms. As argued by Norrick and Babel (2009: 44), whereas inappropriate address forms may be used to “establish a play frame and nonce identities within it for the sake of humorous interaction,” reciprocal direct address forms may further help in “playing a special role in teasing moves and serving as a contextualization cue for a non-serious key in the interaction as a whole.” In addition, a malevolent address form immediately followed by another also pertains to the semantic of solidarity, not that of power. In fact, power and solidarity are mutually evocative. In observing young boys’ verbal interactions, Tannen (1993) also argues that power may entail solidarity by opposing each other. That is, fighting may precipitate friendship. Wojewódzki’s

⁵⁵ Brown and Gilman (1960) first introduced the semantics of power and solidarity to analyze the pronominal systems in French, German, Italian and Spanish. In these languages, the second person pronouns can be categorized into two groups: familiar/informal (i.e., *T*, which represents the Latin *tu* “the second-person singular pronoun”) vs. polite/formal (i.e., *V*, which represents the Latin *vou* “the second-person plural pronoun”). According to Brown and Gilman, speakers’ uses of *T* and *V* demonstrate power and solidarity. When a speaker is allowed to give *T* and receive *V*, but not vice versa for his/her interlocutor, the power semantic is non-reciprocal and asymmetrical. On the other hand, both speakers may choose to use *T* or *V* to show solidarity.

and Szczuka's uses of these two malevolent address forms, therefore, can be regarded as signaling sameness and closeness. While their malevolent intention is framed as play to elicit laughter, their uses of these two address forms also help reduce the power relationship between them. In other words, being in a less powerful position (i.e., being a woman and the guest of the program), Szczuka can be regarded as struggling for power by co-constructing the humor with Wojewódzki, who is from a more powerful position (i.e., being a man and the host of the program).

Not surprisingly, Wojewódzki also uses the same type of humor to treat Poniedziałek, by calling him a faggot. Different from Szczuka's reaction in receiving deprecation, Poniedziałek finds Wojewódzki's malevolent address form (targeted at him) amusing. The following extract illustrates this point.

Extract (51) [KW 21.05.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Będiesz nosił moją koszulkę z napisem Wojewódzki na plecach?
02. Jacek Poniedziałek: Jadę jutro do konkurencyjnego showu, ubiorę ją.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Naprawdę?
04. Jacek Poniedziałek: No.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Do jakiego jedziesz?
06. Jacek Poniedziałek: Nie powiem ci.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Do jakiej telewizji? Na trzy litery?
08. Jacek Poniedziałek: Zobaczysz za parę dni.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: Na trzy litery?
10. Jacek Poniedziałek: Nie, nie, nie.
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: No mam nadzieję.
12. Jacek Poniedziałek: Nie pamiętam.
13. Kuba Wojewódzki: Włóż to. To jest dla ciebie. Możesz sobie to zabrać.
14. Jacek Poniedziałek: Tamten, ten na trzy litery. Nie podobał mi się ten show. Nie śmieszny.
15. Kuba Wojewódzki: Który? Który?
16. Jacek Poniedziałek: No ten konkurencyjny.
17. Kuba Wojewódzki: Szymona M? Bardzo dobry. Bardzo dobry.
18. Jacek Poniedziałek: Mnie nie śmieszny.
19. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Wy to się **cioty** czepiacie byle kogo.
20. Jacek Poniedziałek: Ale śmieszny był.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Are you going to wear my T-shirt with the name Wojewódzki on the back?
02. Jacek Poniedziałek: Tomorrow when I go to a rival show (of yours), I will wear it.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Really?
04. Jacek Poniedziałek: Yes.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: What kind of show are you attending?
06. Jacek Poniedziałek: I will not tell you.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: To which television station? The one with three letters?

08. Jacek Poniedziałek: After a few days you will see it.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: With three letters?
10. Jacek Poniedziałek: No, no, no.
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: Well, I hope so.
12. Jacek Poniedziałek: I do not remember.
13. Kuba Wojewódzki: Put it on. It is for you. You can take it with you.
14. Jacek Poniedziałek: That one, with three letters. I do not like that show. It is not funny.
15. Kuba Wojewódzki: Which one? Which one?
16. Jacek Poniedziałek: Well, the rival one.
17. Kuba Wojewódzki: That one of Szymon M? Very good. Very good.
18. Jacek Poniedziałek: I do not find it funny.
19. → Kuba Wojewódzki: You **faggots** are always dissatisfied with other people. (L: Poniedziałek) (L)
20. Jacek Poniedziałek: (l: Poniedziałek) But it was funny.

In the beginning of the conversation, Wojewódzki asks whether Poniedziałek is willing to wear the T-shirt with his surname Wojewódzki on it (line 1). In his response, Poniedziałek says that he can even wear the T-shirt to attend a program of the opponent channel of Wojewódzki's (line 2). His response, however, has aroused Wojewódzki's curiosity. As Poniedziałek declines to answer (perhaps for personal reasons), Wojewódzki uses polar questions to make sure whether this opponent television channel is TVN (lines 7 and 9), which is known for being the major opponent of Polsat, where Wojewódzki is working.⁵⁶ In line 14, Poniedziałek claims that he does not like the program on TVN (a television channel with three letters), as it is not entertaining. Disagreeing with Poniedziałek, Wojewódzki says that the program hosted by Szymon Majewski on TVN is actually very good (line 17). Poniedziałek again shows his dissatisfaction with the program (line 18), which triggers Wojewódzki's use of *wy cioty* "you faggots" to address him. In line 19, Wojewódzki asserts that homosexuals (including Poniedziałek) are not satisfied with other people. Wojewódzki's deprecation of Poniedziałek and other homosexuals is framed as play, as evidenced in the laughter from the victim Poniedziałek and from the audience (line 19).

It is interesting to note that the address form in line 19 is composed of *wy* "you, the second-person plural pronoun" and *cioty* "faggots," an offensive term for openly, often effeminate homosexual men.⁵⁷ In analyzing political debates, Kuo (2002) has observed that

⁵⁶ This interview was broadcast on May 21, 2006, when Wojewódzki was still working for Polsat. This television variety show has been broadcast on TVN since September 2006.

⁵⁷ In Rodzoch-Malek's (2012) investigation, the word *ciota* is the augmentative form of *ciotka* "aunt." In dictionaries published before 1990, there already appeared the word *ciota*, but the meaning of it had nothing to do with homosexuality. However, this word was already used before 1990 as a prison argot term in reference to a passive male homosexual. Both the words *ciota* and *pedał* can be used to refer to male homosexuals, but in a derogatory manner. While the word *pedał* can be used to refer to a male homosexual in general, the word *ciota* is only used to refer to an outwardly, obviously feminine male homosexual. In this sense, using the word *ciota* to address a male homosexual is more offensive than using the word *pedał*.

the second-person singular pronoun is used in accusatory statements or questions to explicitly refer to the target of the attack. As the use of it implies a direct confrontation, the face-threatening force of the speech act may be strengthened. Therefore, it would be possible to argue that Wojewódzki's accusation in line 19 (*Wy to się cioty czepiacie byle kogo*. "You faggots are always dissatisfied with other people.") implies his direct confrontation vis-à-vis Poniedziałek and other homosexuals. It is true that in all-male talk, all heterosexual, homosexual men often are targets of the attack. By verbally deprecating them together, a feeling of solidarity prevails among the speech participants. In analyzing a conversation by five friends, all male, Cameron (1997) has found that all the speech participants are bonded by their shared denigration of others whom they label "gay." However, Wojewódzki's linguistic practice should be regarded as a type of humor, but by means of putting others in a negative manner. Firstly, this program is not antagonistic by nature, as its purpose is to entertain the audience, not to resort to confrontation. Secondly, although it is found that heterosexual men might build up solidarity by attacking other homosexual men in their all-male talk (see Cameron 1997), it would be impossible for Wojewódzki to do it in this way, as Poniedziałek is a known gay celebrity in Poland. Besides, Wojewódzki's linguistic practice is recognized as humor even by the target of the attack, namely Poniedziałek. This is evidenced in line 20, in which Poniedziałek further shows his appreciation of Wojewódzki's other-deprecating humor.

So far, I have analyzed how other-deprecating humor is employed by the host Wojewódzki to create a humorous effect in his program. My findings show that malevolent address forms can be used as humor. The funniness results from the verbal confrontation between the host and the guest. For example, when Wojewódzki addresses Szczuka *babulco szowinistyczna* "chauvinistic hag," he is addressed *dziadu* "old man" in return. Their verbal aggression is the source of humor, and their uses of malevolent address forms also pertain to the solidarity semantic. In addition, Wojewódzki's verbal attack may be understood as an expression of humor, even by the target of the attack. For example, Poniedziałek's laughter combined with an ensuing positive verbal feedback shows his appreciation of the humor. It seems that other-deprecating humor is employed towards the invited guests exclusively. The following extract, however, shows that the same type of humor may also be employed to attack the audience in the studio of the program.

Extract (52) [KW 26.02.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Czy można zgwałcić prostytutkę?

02. Kazimiera Szczuka: Właśnie.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Tylko w samoobronie.
04. Kazimiera Szczuka: No właśnie i to jest, wiesz, to jest po prostu...
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Chamstwo.
06. Kazimiera Szczuka: Tak.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Chamówa.
08. Kazimiera Szczuka: To jest chamówa.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: To nie jest dla mnie, bo widzisz, ja definiuję feministki, feministów jako ludzi wolnych myślowo. Ja nie wiem czy, ja jestem feministą?
10. Kazimiera Szczuka: No wiesz co? No nie wiem. No tak chyba zdajesz się, nie wiem czy tak jest, ale zdaje się, że się usiłujesz teraz podszywać. W każdym razie jakoś nadążasz.
11. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Czekaj, czekaj, czekaj, widzę. Weźcie tą kamerę. Ta **grubaska** biła brawo, tak? Dobrze. Pamiętajcie, t-shirtu XXL nie rozdajemy.
12. Kazimiera Szczuka: Weź przestań. Kurde no, bo to są takie, ty, co?
13. Kuba Wojewódzki: To jest właśnie feminizm.
14. Deprecated Audience: Właśnie feminizm.
15. Kuba Wojewódzki: To jest feminizm? Panie Edku wywalić ją! Tylko żartowałem.
16. Kazimiera Szczuka: Nie, to było nie fajne, wiesz.
17. Kuba Wojewódzki: Wytniemy to.
18. Kazimiera Szczuka: Tak?
19. Kuba Wojewódzki: Znaczy, jak tobie wyślemy kopię to tego nie będzie a w telewizji będzie.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Is it possible to rape a prostitute?
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: Quite so.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Only in your self-defense. / Only in the Samoobrona (Self-Defense) Party.
04. Kazimiera Szczuka: Yes, exactly. And this is, you know, this is simply...
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Boorishness.
06. Kazimiera Szczuka: Yes.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: An insolent behavior.
08. Kazimiera Szczuka: This is an insolent behavior.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: This is not for me, because you see that I define both female and male feminists as mentally free people. I do not know if I am a feminist.
10. Kazimiera Szczuka: Well, you know what? Well, I do not know. Well, yes, maybe you seem to be. I do not know if it is true, but it seems to me that you are now trying to pretend that you are. (L) [Wojewódzki pretends to be unhappy.] You somehow can catch up each time.
11. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Wait, wait, wait, I see it now. Take this camera. This **fat woman** was clapping her hands, right? Good. Remember that we do not distribute T-shirts of XXL size. (L)
12. Kazimiera Szczuka: Come on. Darn it, because they are such, you, what? [Szczuka stretches one of her legs to kick Wojewódzki.]
13. Kuba Wojewódzki: This is exactly feminism.
14. Deprecated Audience: Exactly feminism.
15. Kuba Wojewódzki: This is feminism? Mr. Edek, throw her out! I was only joking.
16. Kazimiera Szczuka: No, it was not nice, you know.
17. Kuba Wojewódzki: We will cut it out.

18. Kazimiera Szczuka: Yes?
19. Kuba Wojewódzki: Meaning that we will send you a copy without that part, but it will still be shown on the television.

In the beginning of the conversation, Wojewódzki asks Szczuka whether she agrees that a prostitute could possibly be “raped” (line 1) and subsequently gives an answer to it (line 3), implicitly criticizing Andrzej Lepper for his improper joke about an incident in Belgium.⁵⁸ In lines 4-8, Wojewódzki and Szczuka can be regarded as building solidarity by expressing the same opinions towards Andrzej Lepper’s improper joke. In line 9, Wojewódzki has a step further and asks Szczuka whether he, in the eyes of a feminist (i.e., Szczuka), is a feminist, since they share the same point of view. Instead of saying that he is a feminist, Szczuka says that Wojewódzki seems to be pretending to be a feminist (line 10). Her response can be regarded as an expression of innuendo, which invites the audience to ponder on the implied message of her utterance. That is, Szczuka perhaps does not consider Wojewódzki to be a feminist, despite the fact that he understands what she is saying, and that they sometimes hold the same viewpoint. The laughter from the audience perhaps suggests their appreciation of Szczuka’s verbal tactics when interacting with Wojewódzki.

However, Szczuka’s response in the form of innuendo has also elicited applause from an audience member in the studio. The applause indicates that this audience member appreciates Szczuka’s verbal dexterity, which, however, is immediately noticed by Wojewódzki. The applause from this audience member can be regarded as isolated applause, which is different from collective applause by all the audience (Bull 2000). As Bull further claims, this type of applause is always coded as a mismatch, in the sense that it is not part of a wilder collective audience response. Therefore, it is not surprising when Wojewódzki notices it and later pretends to be infuriated by the applause. In line 11, Wojewódzki interrupts and focuses everyone’s attention on this audience member. In this line, he not only directly deprecates her by calling her *grubaska* “fat woman,” but he also employs innuendo to attack her, as we can see in his description of her figure: *Pamiętajcie, t-shirtu XXL nie rozdajemy* “Remember that we do not distribute T-shirts of XXL size.” His use of this malevolent address form combined with innuendo can be framed as humor, as signaled by the laughter in

⁵⁸ Andrzej Lepper was the leader of the populist Samoobrona (Self-Defense) farmers’ party in Poland. In December 2005, Bogdan Golik, a former Polish representative in the European parliament, as well as a member of the same political party, was accused of raping a prostitute in Belgium. Later Andrzej Lepper joked about the incident by asking, “*Jak można zgwałcić prostytutkę?*” How could it be possible to rape a prostitute?”

the same line. The funniness perhaps comes from Wojewódzki pretended anger, expressed by deprecating the audience member.⁵⁹

7.6 Self-Deprecating Humor

In my analysis of the data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, I have observed that the hostess Xú uses self-deprecating humor not only to elicit laughter, but also to reduce the potential repugnance that might come from some of the audience. As it helps to evoke mixed feelings upon the listener towards the speaker (see Zajdman 1995), this type of humor is used by Xú after her face-threatening utterances. In other words, Xú perhaps intends to avoid the potential criticism resulting from her face-threatening utterances in prior speaking turns by deprecating herself and her partner. Bippus' (2007) empirical test of a politician's use of humor during a political debate also shows that self-deprecating humor is more effective than its aggressive counterpart.

In analyzing the data from *Kuba Wojewódzki*, not so many examples of self-deprecating humor are observed. This type of humor, however, always elicits laughter when it is employed. In the following extract, the host Wojewódzki is found to create a humorous effect by deprecating himself. Wojewódzki's use of self-deprecating humor successfully evokes sympathy from the invited guest Górniak, which further encourages him to produce more humorous remarks, also by deprecating himself. His use of self-deprecating humor successfully elicits laughter not only from Górniak, but also from the audience.

Extract (53) [KW 13.03.2005]

01. Edyta Górniak: Przytyłam dwadzieścia sześć kilo w ciąży.
02. Kuba Wojewódzki: Naprawdę? Ale jesteś teraz na etapie, Jezu ale nóżka! Jesteś teraz na etapie zrzucania. Co ci się tutaj stało? Co to było? Uderzenie? Bolało?
03. Edyta Górniak: Koleżanka kiedyś mnie kopnęła kiedyś w szkole średniej i pękła mi rzepka. Miałam operację. Została blizna.
04. Kuba Wojewódzki: Mogę podmuchać?
05. Edyta Górniak: Nie już mnie nie boli.
06. Kuba Wojewódzki: Szkoda.
07. Edyta Górniak: Natomiast ja się nie wyrzekam swoich blizn, mimo że, można byłoby wydać pieniądze na to żeby się ich pozbyć ale ja się przyzwyczaiłam do nich.
08. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale blizny to jest taki rejestr życiowych i porażek i sukcesów. Ja też mam cięcia, przecież ja byłem gitem. Ja byłem gitowcem. Ja się ciąłem, wiesz.

⁵⁹ The example of other-deprecating humor in Extract (52) has further reflected Poles' direct nature. A more profound discussion is presented in Subsection 8.1.4.

09. Edyta Górniak: O Jezu! Słuchaj, uważam, że ciało to jest książka generalnie więc...
10. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Moja jest cieniutka książka. Taka!
11. Edyta Górniak: Tak?
12. Kuba Wojewódzki: I od razu spis treści.
13. Edyta Górniak: Cieniutka?
14. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Taki komiksik.
15. Edyta Górniak: Strasznie mi przykro!
16. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Poczekaj, czy ty mówisz o książce czy o zakładce?

Translation

01. Edyta Górniak: I gained twenty-six kilograms during pregnancy.
02. Kuba Wojewódzki: Really? But you are now at the stage of, Jesus, what a leg! (L: Górniak) You are now at the stage of losing weight. What happened to you here? [Wojewódzki notices the scar on Górniak's leg.] Did you hit yourself? Did it hurt?
03. Edyta Górniak: A female friend kicked me sometime in high school and I broke my kneecap. I had surgery. It became a scar.
04. Kuba Wojewódzki: Can I blow on it?
05. Edyta Górniak: It does not hurt anymore.
06. Kuba Wojewódzki: What a pity. (L) (l: Wojewódzki) (L: Górniak)
07. Edyta Górniak: However, I do not hide my scar, even though I could spend money to remove it, but I have gotten used to it.
08. → Kuba Wojewódzki: But scars are just like a register of life, of failures and of successes. I also have cuts, yet I was a git (L). I was a gitowiec. I cut myself, you know.
09. Edyta Górniak: Oh Jesus! Listen, I think the human body is generally like a book, so...
10. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Mine is a very thin book. [Wojewódzki sits back.] (l: Wojewódzki) (L) Like this! [Wojewódzki uses his hand to describe.]
11. Edyta Górniak: Is it? (l: Górniak)
12. Kuba Wojewódzki: And once you open it, you see only a table of contents. (L)
13. Edyta Górniak: A very thin one? (l: Górniak) (L)
14. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Such a thin comic book.
15. Edyta Górniak: I am sorry to hear that! (l: Górniak) (L)
16. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Wait, are you talking about the book or about the bookmark? (l: Wojewódzki) (L: Górniak) [Górniak claps her hands.]

In the beginning of the interaction, Wojewódzki notices the scar on Górniak's leg and shows his concern for her. In line 7, Górniak says that she accepts her scar and does not want to spend money to remove it. Following Górniak's topic on scars, Wojewódzki claims that a scar is like a register of life. He then says that he also has cuts somewhere on his body, which he got when he was a git. His reference to himself as a git immediately elicits laughter from the audience (line 8). In his pocket dictionary of youth subcultures, Pęczak (1992) has discussed the practices and attitudes of *gitowcy/git-ludzie/gity* towards the outside world. They are members of a 1970s Polish subculture inspired by the prison and criminal underworld. People from this subculture are found to have low education. They also have tattoos and like to attack people from other areas or from other countries. They are also not

afraid of killing people. In fact, they are found to use a razorblade to cut their hands or breasts as a ritual. We have adequate reason of thinking that Wojewódzki was not a git. His pretending to be a member of this subculture perhaps shows his intention to elicit laughter by presenting a contrast of two completely different images (i.e., the image of Wojewódzki on the television vs. the image of a git). In other words, his humor is based on deprecating himself to entertain Górniak and the audience.

Hearing Wojewódzki self-cutting experience, Górniak says that human body is like a book (line 9). Following Górniak's *BODY AS A BOOK* metaphor, Wojewódzki keeps deprecating himself for amusement. In line 10, he says that his body is like a very thin book, which immediately elicits laughter. In line 12, he continues and describes his body as a table of contents, which also immediately elicits laughter. It is interesting to note that in lines 11, 13 and 15, Górniak's smiling perhaps shows her understanding of Wojewódzki's humor, and that her feedback seems to encourage Wojewódzki to create more humorous remarks by deprecating himself. For example, Górniak, in line 15, comments on Wojewódzki's description of his body as a very thin comic book by showing sympathy towards him: *Strasznie mi przykro!* "I am sorry to hear that!" Although showing sympathy or a contradictory statement is perhaps a universal response to self-deprecating humor (see, e.g., Holmes 2000; Hay 2001), Górniak's smiling perhaps indicates the sarcastic nature of this utterance. This utterance has encouraged Wojewódzki to create another humorous utterance, also by deprecating himself, as we can see in line 16. In this line, Wojewódzki uses a new metaphor *zakład* "bookmark" to refer to his sexual organ, based on Górniak's *BODY AS A BOOK* metaphor. His utterance not only elicits laughter from Górniak, but also applause from her.

Sometimes the use of self-deprecating humor may trigger an immediate mocking response from the listener, not sympathy. The listener's use of mocking as a comment on the speaker's self-deprecation perhaps shows his/her intention to make the self-deprecation more amusing. In the following interaction, the invited guest Schejbal's self-disclosure about her past experience as a Depeche Mode fan can be regarded as an expression of self-deprecating humor, in the sense that she seems to be emphasizing the contradictory nature of her characteristics to result in a humorous effect. That is, while she was a cool Depeche Mode fan, she was at the same time an emotional girl, crying all the time. Wojewódzki's subsequent mocking comment helps her to elicit laughter from the audience.

Extract (54) [KW 18.06.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Co było powodowane tym? Co powodowało, że się tak dziwnie ubierałaś, czesałaś na żółto, jakieś spodnie tutaj opuszczone, takie dziwne. Rozumiesz no?
02. Magdalena Schejbal: Pewnie dla frajdy, bo to duża frajda się tak bawić.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Tak?
04. Magdalena Schejbal: Życiem, nie wiem.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Uhm.
06. Magdalena Schejbal: Uhm. No nie wiem. Nie wiem.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Depeszowa. „Nie wiem, oczywiście podpalałam kolegów, tak ale...” No przecież jak się nie zdepta to się leje tych co byli nie-depeszowcami.
08. Magdalena Schejbal: O przepraszam.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: Myśmy lali.
10. → Magdalena Schejbal: Nie, jak ja byłam depeszową to ja siedziałam w domu i płakałam, bo w tedy to był taki czas, że się dużo zakochiwałam i siedziałam i płakałam przy szybie i deszcz padał. To było takie, to nie...
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale wiocha!
12. Magdalena Schejbal: Wiem, no wiem.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: What was the reason? What made you put on strange clothes, have your hair dyed yellow, some kind of trousers pulled down here, a strange pair. You understand?
02. Magdalena Schejbal: Probably just for fun, because there is a lot of fun to play in this way.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Yes?
04. Magdalena Schejbal: (Play) with life, I do not know.
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Uhm.
06. Magdalena Schejbal: Uhm. (S) Well, I do not know. I do not know. [Schejbal stretches both hands towards Wojewódzki and speaks faster and faster, her voice becoming lower and lower like murmuring.]
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: A Depeche Mode fan. [Wojewódzki looks at the camera and uses a hand to point at Schejbal.] “I do not know, of course I set my friends on fire, yes but...” [Wojewódzki raises his pitch and imitates how Schejbal talks.] (L: Schejbal) [Wojewódzki spreads both hands and talks louder.] It was obvious, if you do not trample, then you have to beat up those who were not Depeche Mode fans.
08. Magdalena Schejbal: Oh, I am sorry.
09. Kuba Wojewódzki: We were beating them up.
10. → Magdalena Schejbal: No, when I was a Depeche Mode fan, I was sitting at home and crying, because at that time I often fell in love and was sitting and crying by the window, and it was raining (outside). It was so, it was not...
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: You sucked! (I: Wojewódzki) (L) (L: Schejbal)
12. Magdalena Schejbal: I know, yes I know.

Earlier before this conversation, Schejbal says that she was a fan of Depeche Mode (a British electronic band) and admits that she went out in bizarre dress. In line 1, Wojewódzki asks Schejbal what made her dress herself distinctively. His question probably results from a general public image in Poland that *Depesze/Depeszowcy* “Polish fans of Depeche Mode”

have a distinctive fashion style, as they can be easily distinguished from others by their clothing and accessories: a worn black jacket, white denim trousers, thick-soled shoes, a cross necklace and an emblem logo of the subgroup.⁶⁰ In her turn of speaking, Schejbal says that she dressed herself distinctively simply because she thought it was fun (line 2), and that she cannot think of more reasons for her distinctive fashion style as a Depeche Mode fan, as we can see in line 4. In his speaking turn, Wojewódzki says nothing as a response to Schejbal's *nie wiem* "I do not know," as evidenced in his interjection *uhm* in line 5. Schejbal in her speaking turn purposefully imitates Wojewódzki's interjection; that is, she also says nothing as a response (line 6). Her imitation further elicits another silence, as we can see in the same line. Schejbal's imitation of Wojewódzki's interjection *uhm* perhaps can be taken as her inability or unwillingness to further answer this question, as she in the prior speaking turn has shown that she cannot think of other reasons why she was dressed distinctively. The ensuing silence from Wojewódzki perhaps shows his insistence on getting the answer from Schejbal. Both use silence as a strategy to avoid the question and to elicit the answer respectively.

Lee, Chen and Tan (2013) argue that due to the limited air time on television talk shows, silence is not preferred, and therefore instances of it can be seen as meaningful conversational turns. For example, they have observed that guests may use the deliberated silence as a "Do not do the face-threatening act" strategy, whereas hosts may use it to do a non-verbal face-threatening act to their guests. As the above interaction shows, Schejbal cannot bear the silence and becomes somewhat hysterical. She keeps saying *nie wiem* "I do not know," but faster and faster. Her voice also sounds like murmuring. Her hand gesture perhaps also shows that she is a little bit offended by Wojewódzki's forcing her to answer the question. Her being hysterical further elicits a mocking response from Wojewódzki, as we can see in line 7. Wojewódzki's utterance in this line perhaps shows his expectation from a Depeche Mode fan. In addition, in line 10, Schejbal says that despite her identity as a Depeche Mode fan, she was emotional and crying by the window when it rained. Schejbal's self-disclosure can be regarded as a self-deprecating humor, in the sense that she seems to be emphasizing the contradictory nature of her characteristics to result in a humorous effect. While she was a cool Depeche Mode fan with a distinctive fashion style, she was also a fragile girl who easily became beset with memories in her old haunts. Her self-disclosure about her past experience can be regarded as a self-deprecating behavior, and her ambiguous dual identity is perhaps the source of humor. Although self-deprecating humor may help the

⁶⁰ See Wikipedia (<http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Depesze>).

speaker to evoke sympathy from his/her listener towards him/her (Zajdman 1995), Schejbal's self-deprecating humor elicits a mocking comment from her listener Wojewódzki instead, as evidenced in his use of the slang *Ale wiocha!* "You sucked!" (line 11). This negative comment not only elicits laughter from the audience, but also laughter and supportive feedback from the victim Schejbal, as we can also see in her *Wiem, no wiem* "I know, yes I know" (line 12).

7.7 Self-Bragging Humor

In my analysis of the data from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, I have observed that self-bragging humor is frequently used in the program. Although self-bragging is considered as breaking the social norm in the Mandarin-speaking societies, as both verbal and non-verbal interactions in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* are framed as play due to the entertaining nature of the program, the purposeful violation of the social norm in the program may therefore contribute to more humorous effect. Furthermore, self-bragging humor triggers an immediate resistant, quick verbal response from other participants. In other words, both the speaker (who employs humor by bragging about him/herself) and the listener (who shows a resistant, quick verbal response immediately) can be regarded as building rapport and solidarity.

In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, however, just a few examples of self-bragging humor are observed. In the following extract, Wojewódzki claims that he has successfully helped the invited guest Szczuka to cure her problem of pronouncing the Polish alveolar trill/tap. His use of self-bragging as humor immediately elicits laughter from the audience.

Extract (55) [KW 26.02.2006]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: No dobrze ale jak byś w takim razie opakowała dzisiaj swój przekaz, bo bardzo dużo osób nie ma zielonego pojęcia czym jest feminizm, o co wam chodzi. Naprawdę!
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: Chodzi nam, myślę, że chodzi nam po prostu o to, ale aż nie mogę tego powiedzieć, bo się wiesz, rozumiesz, wstydzę się, zapułam zaraz. Bo to jest takie **potworne**, to o co nam chodzi. I takie nie kobiece i tak nie przystojne.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: A teraz mówisz a raz nie mówisz. Czy ty się ze mną drażnisz?
04. Kazimiera Szczuka: Chodzi po prostu...
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: Powiedziałas **potworne** a nie **potwohne**.
06. Kazimiera Szczuka: Nie, powiedziałam pewnie **potwohne** ale jakoś tam szybko to przeleciało.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Mów szybko to nie będziesz miała.
08. Kazimiera Szczuka: No dobrze ale...

09. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Wyleczyłem cię, zobacz!
10. Kazimiera Szczuka: Słuchaj, mogę dokończyć?
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: Bij mnie, bij mnie!

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Okay, but in that case how would you wrap your own message today, because there are a lot of people who have no idea what feminism is, and what you mean by it. It is true.
02. Kazimiera Szczuka: For us, I think that for us it is quite straightforward, but I cannot tell it, because you know, you understand, I am ashamed of saying it, I am almost exploding. It is because it is so **terrible** about what we want. And it is not feminine and appropriate.
03. Kuba Wojewódzki: Are you going to tell it or not? Are you teasing me?
04. Kazimiera Szczuka: It is quite simply...
05. Kuba Wojewódzki: You said **terrible** and not **tehhible**.
06. Kazimiera Szczuka: (p) (l: Szczuka) No, I probably said **tehhible**, but it was just too fast.
07. Kuba Wojewódzki: Speak fast and you will not have this problem.
08. Kazimiera Szczuka: Yes, okay, but...
09. → Kuba Wojewódzki: I cured you, see! [Wojewódzki raises his pitch and stretches both hands towards Szczuka.] (L)
10. Kazimiera Szczuka: [Szczuka raises her right hand to stop Wojewódzki from interrupting her.] Listen, can I finish my words?
11. Kuba Wojewódzki: (l: Wojewódzki) Hit me, hit me!

Previously in his interview with Szczuka, Wojewódzki pointed out that Szczuka seems to have a problem of pronouncing the alveolar trill/tap /r/ (Polish script “r”) and frequently replaces it with the velar fricative /x/ (Polish script “h” or “ch”). Later, when Wojewódzki asks Szczuka what feminists should do to make their needs understood by the public (line 1), Szczuka seems to avoid telling it directly, as what feminists want is not feminine and appropriate to the public (line 2). In line 5, Wojewódzki says that Szczuka has correctly pronounced *potworne* “terrible,” instead of *potwohne* “tehhible.” Szczuka’s smile in line 6 perhaps indicates the unexpectedness of Wojewódzki’s switch of topic, and says that maybe it is because she speaks too fast, and therefore her pronunciation sounds correct. Following Szczuka’s logic, Wojewódzki suggests that she should speak fast to make herself sound correct (line 7). Not waiting for Szczuka to finish her utterance, he immediately claims that he has just cured Szczuka’s pronunciation problems (line 9), which successfully elicits laughter.

Although self-bragging humor successfully elicits laughter as the above sequence shows, just as few examples of this type of humor is observed in *Kuba Wojewódzk*. This perhaps shows the fact that self-elevating behavior in Poland is not as problematic as it is in

Taiwan. As self-praising is perhaps more common in Poland than in Taiwan, the use of it as humor seems to be less effective in resulting in a humorous effect. That is, a speaker's bragging about him/herself probably will not be regarded by his/her interlocutor as an intention for entertainment. Therefore, to reinforce the entertaining effect of bragging about oneself in Polish verbal interactions, a speaker should exaggerate his/her self-elevating behavior. As we can see from the above interaction, Wojewódzki's bragging about his medical skill (*Wyleczyłem cię, zobacz!* "I cured you, see!") is uttered in high pitch with an exaggerated hand gesture, which has shown his intention to frame this self-elevating behavior as play. Viewed in this light, it is entirely fair to say that part of the funniness of Wojewódzki's self-bragging results from his high pitch and exaggerated hand gesture.

7.8 Teasing

Teasing, to borrow Drew's (1987) definition, can be regarded as mocking or playful jibing produced with twofold intention, both malignant and benevolent. In light of this, teasing can be the teaser's benign attempt to joke about others or can be produced intentionally to hurt the teased target's feelings. Kotthoff (2007) further points out that there are three moments when teasing may occur. Firstly, teasing can be a playful provocation based on behavioral differences between each social group member. Secondly, the recipient of the criticism can reframe the criticism as teasing, thereby inviting other speech participants to emergently co-construct the teasing episode. Thirdly, a teasing episode can be fictional; that is, it can be a provocation without any underlying real event or critical attitude. Analyzing the data from *Kuba Wojewódzki*, I have found that teasing is exclusively employed by the host Wojewódzki as humor to elicit laughter. Furthermore, Wojewódzki's use of this type of humor is based on fictional teasing. That is, he creates an imagined situation for the teased target. The following extract illustrates this point.

Extract (56) [KW 13.03.2005]

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: Ale on jest młodszy od ciebie. Przepraszam, że to mówię.
02. Edyta Górniak: Tak, tak. No i dlatego też się przestraszyłam, że zdecydowałam się na wszystko. Na powrót do Polski czyli...
03. → Kuba Wojewódzki: No właśnie. Młodszy partner. Jak ty będziesz miała lat osiemdziesiąt to on będzie miał siedemdziesiąt parę.
04. Edyta Górniak: No.
05. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Gówniarz!

06. Edyta Górniak: No.
 07. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Będzie ciebie ścigał na wózku. Będzie mówił: „Edzia!”
 08. Edyta Górniak: No tak. Zawsze będzie ode mnie młodszy.
 09. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Zabierze ci laski to nie wyjdiesz z domu. A on pójdzie w szachy, na rozbierane.

Translation

01. Kuba Wojewódzki: But he is younger than you. Sorry for saying this.
 02. Edyta Górniak: Yes, yes. And that is why I was scared, because I had to decide on everything. Coming back to Poland and...
 03. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Exactly. A younger partner. When you are eighty years old, he will be in his seventies. (L)
 04. Edyta Górniak: Yes. (l: Górniak)
 05. → Kuba Wojewódzki: Brat! (L)
 06. Edyta Górniak: Yes. (l: Górniak) [Górniak nods her head.]
 07. → Kuba Wojewódzki: He will chase you on a wheelchair. [Wojewódzki imitates chasing on the wheelchair] (L) He will say, “Edzia!” (L) (l: Górniak)
 08. Edyta Górniak: Yes. He will always be younger than me.
 09. → Kuba Wojewódzki: He will take away your walking sticks and you will not be able to leave the house. (L) And he will play chess, strip chess. [Wojewódzki imitates how an old man plays chess.] (L)

The above sequence is on the relationship between the invited guest Górniak and her partner, who is younger than her. In line 1, Wojewódzki directly points out that Górniak’s partner is younger than her, but he subsequently apologizes. Not getting offended, Górniak shares more about her personal struggle in life when having a younger partner (line 2). Following Górniak’s utterance, Wojewódzki creates an imagined situation to tease Górniak and her partner. More specifically, Wojewódzki perhaps intends to point out that no matter how old Górniak has become, her partner will always be younger than her.

The teasing episode starts when Wojewódzki asks Górniak to imagine a situation, in which both she and her partner are quite old (line 3). He subsequently conjures up an imagined plot, inviting Górniak (and perhaps the audience as well) to imagine a situation, in which Górniak’s partner is chasing her on a wheelchair (line 7). It is interesting to note that in lines 5 and 7, Wojewódzki uses two address forms: *gówniarz* “brat” and *Edzia*. The former is used by Wojewódzki to refer to Górniak’s partner as a wimpy kid, even already in his seventies (in the imagined situation). The latter is a variant of Górniak’s first name Edyta, which is used only by those who are intimate to her, e.g., her partner. Wojewódzki’s choice of this variant and placing it in quotation marks help act out the words of Górniak’s partner in the imagined situation. The laughter following these two address forms shows that the audience appreciate Wojewódzki’s humor expressed in the quoted speech.

In addition, line 8 shows Górniak's understanding of the implied message in Wojewódzki's teasing towards her and her partner. In line 9, Wojewódzki continues with his imagined plot and adds more details to it. The whole teasing episode successfully evokes laughter occurring at different moments of the teasing. As Wojewódzki's utterance in line 1 is about age difference between Górniak and her partner, it can be regarded as face-threatening. Wojewódzki's use of teasing in the following speaking turns helps to minimize the imposition of it. Górniak's smiling perhaps shows her appreciation of Wojewódzki's teasing. As Dynel (2008) argues, despite the fact that teasing is apparently aggressive, it is oriented towards rapport or solidarity building. Teasing, therefore, has a few subordinate functions in verbal interactions, such as defunctionalization and mitigation. While the former is produced by flouting the Gricean maxim of Relation (see Grice 1975), so as to bring about amusement, the latter helps to alleviate the face-threatening effect in a playful way. By teasing Górniak (and her partner who is not on the spot) and laughing together with her, Wojewódzki perhaps maintains a harmonious relationship with her in the verbal interaction.

7.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have illustrated and discussed the various types of humor employed in *Kuba Wojewódzki* from an interactional perspective. It is found that there are totally eight types of humor employed on this program including personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and teasing. My findings in this chapter are summarized below.

Firstly, a personal narrative can be the narrator's past story or someone else's funny anecdote. In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, both the narrator and the listener are found to co-construct the funny anecdote. In addition, it is also found that most of the laughter from the audience during the narration is preceded by the listener's overlaps. That is, the listener's overlaps contribute to the funniness of the anecdote. Secondly, wordplay may include punning, hyperbole and allusion (Norrick 1993). In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, the use of wordplay as humor is based on allusion or the punning of sex. Other instances further show that the puns are based on the ambiguity deliberately manufactured by the speaker and the listener. Thirdly, the use of sarcasm as humor frames an utterance or utterances as "not meant literally" (Tannen 1984: 130). In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, the use of sarcasm also successfully elicits laughter. The

producer of it can be regarded as building solidarity and rapport with those who understand the humor. In addition, sarcasm is also found to be hostility disguised as humor. It serves as a face-saving device due to its ambiguous and indirect nature. Fourthly, innuendo can be used as humor. In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, the use of innuendo as humor is based on the propositions carried by the speaker's utterances in different speaking turns. In addition, it can also be a referring expression, more specifically, an animal metaphor. Fifthly, the funniness of other-deprecating humor in *Kuba Wojewódzki* comes from the confrontation between the host and his guests, in particular, by using malevolent address forms. As both verbal and non-verbal behaviors are framed as play, no hostility is triggered. Instead, solidarity and rapport are built up when speech participants deprecate each other. Sixthly, not as many instances of self-deprecating humor are found in *Kuba Wojewódzki* as are found in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. However, the use of this type of humor helps the speaker to evoke sympathy from the listener to encourage him to produce more humorous remarks. It may also trigger an immediate mocking response from the listener, not sympathy, which also elicits laughter. Seventhly, fewer instances of self-bragging humor are found in *Kuba Wojewódzki* when compared to 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. To reinforce the funniness, the speaker needs to exaggerate the self-elevating behaviors. Finally, teasing is exclusively employed by the host Wojewódzki as humor to elicit laughter in *Kuba Wojewódzki*. His use of this type of humor is based on creating an imagined situation for the teased target. By teasing and laughing together, a harmonious relationship in a verbal interaction is therefore maintained.

Chapter Eight

DISCUSSION

“So that good humour may be said to be one of the very best articles of dress one can wear in society.”

—William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863)

In previous chapters, I have illustrated and discussed how humor is used in casual conversations and on television variety shows in Taiwan and in Poland, respectively. In Chapter Four and Chapter Five, I proposed various types of discourse strategies used to create humor in talks among friends. This is done in order to negotiate previously established intimacy and friendships. In Chapter Six and Chapter Seven, I took a step further in analyzing how different types of humor are used on television variety shows. There are differences between casual conversations and television variety shows regarding the use of humor. For example, more instances of humor were found in television variety shows than in casual conversations. In addition, my examples from television variety shows are more dramatic and face-threatening than those from casual conversations. It is because the purpose of television variety shows is to entertain their audience.

In addition to the difference between the two genres reflected in Taiwanese's and Poles' uses of humor, many issues were raised in these chapters, yet they still remain untouched. In the following, Section 8.1 discusses how humor reflects the difference between the Taiwanese and Polish societies. Section 8.2 discusses how the factor of gender serves as a constraint on humor. Section 8.3 discusses the talking styles of the hosts in both programs, centering on the question of whether their hosting style are indeed humorous or simply vulgar. Section 8.4 summarizes the characteristics of Taiwanese and Polish humor based on the findings of the present study, as well as the relevant literature. Finally, Section 8.5 concludes the discussion in this chapter.

8.1 Humor Reflects Society

In my analysis of conversational data on television variety shows in Taiwan and in Poland, I have observed cultural differences reflected in many aspects of humor in verbal interactions. Firstly, politics and religion are never regarded as topics for humorous talks in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, while they very often are the source of humor in *Kuba Wojewódzki*. Secondly, while gay-related humor is frequently observed in my data from both programs,⁶¹ this type of humor is used differently. Thirdly, while the hosts in both programs are found to frequently “attack” their guests to attract laughter, they show different attitudes towards their audience, including those in the studio. For example, the two Taiwanese hosts Cài and Xú have never attempted to create humor by deprecating their audience, whereas the Polish host Wojewódzki is found to use other-deprecating humor directed at his audience (see Extract (52)). Although Wojewódzki rarely creates humor by attacking live studio audience and television viewers, such cases are still observed. Finally, Taiwanese's frequent use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” and Poles' directness reflected in their humor also need a more profound discussion.

Before we turn to the discussion of the above issues, we should first understand why a speech participant's habitual preference for certain topics for joking reflects his/her society. This is first evidenced in Extract (48). Recall that Wojewódzki used innuendo as humor to invite the audience to make a connection between Koterski's Turkish looks and his mother's trip in Turkey. While Wojewódzki's humor partially builds on the fact that more and more Poles choose Turkey as a sightseeing place and that many Polish women are married to Turkish men (Pędziwiatr 2014), the funniness also results from Poles' negative perception of Turks, which is due to the widespread Islamophobia in Polish society (Pędziwiatr 2007; Pędziwiatr 2010). As Pędziwiatr further argues, although Arabs are the major victims of this anti-Muslim feelings in Poland, Turks are viewed as stereotypical Muslims due to the media's popularizing of this image. In other words, Wojewódzki's humor not only reflects the Polish society, but also shows certain Poles' attitude towards Turks.

From the above, it seems reasonable to presume that when a certain amount of people (usually the majority of a culture) hold a negative attitude towards another group of people (usually the minority from within or without the culture of the majority), it is possible for this minority group to become the topic for joking, as manifested in the gay-related humor in both programs and in Wojewódzki's humor by portraying his guest as a Turk. Based on the assumption that humor reflects the social environment where it occurs, we may now answer

⁶¹ Gay-related humor is a type of humor based on people's prejudice against homosexual men. In my data corpus (composed of six video clips from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* and five video clips from *Kuba Wojewódzki*), invited guests' sexual orientation is frequently used as a source of humor. The hosts, however, have never used lesbians, bisexuals or transgenders as sources of humor.

the question why certain issues such as politics and religion are joked about in *Kuba Wojewódzki*, whereas they are never used as topics in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. In addition, this section also discusses what the gay-related humor in both programs has revealed about Taiwanese and Polish societies, as well as Taiwanese's and Poles' personality traits reflected in their humor.

8.1.1 Politics and Humor

In the society of Taiwan, hosts on television variety shows never joke about politics. This does not mean that Taiwanese audience are not interested in politics. On the contrary, there are many political (call-in) talk shows broadcast on television in Taiwan to satisfy those who are fanatic about politics. Lee (2011), for example, has observed that each political talk show in Taiwan has a political orientation and has its loyal viewers. Each of them is financially supported not only by profits from commercials, but also by a certain political party. Political talk shows, therefore, have become “one of [television]'s prime-time outlets feeding viewers' political enthusiasm” (p. 54) during the electoral campaigns in the 2000s. Lee further points out that some communicative agents in talk shows “spin, deceive, and manipulate for self-interest, occasionally using abusive language” (p. 66). As a result, many political talk shows in Taiwan are criticized for being produced to manipulate their viewers' perceptions of certain political or social events by provoking their emotions.

Obviously, the boundary between television variety shows and political talk shows in Taiwan is clear-cut. The purpose of 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* is to entertain all the audience regardless of their diverse political ideologies. Moreover, the commercial profit of this program depends on its viewing rate.⁶² It therefore becomes taboo to reveal its political ideology, as it might be criticized for overstepping the boundary. In fact, most celebrities in Taiwan, including hosts, singers, actors and directors are afraid of having to pay the price of speaking out on political issues, as they might be politically labeled and risk their reputation. Moreover, as many of them manage to develop their own careers in China, they are also afraid of being boycotted by the Chinese government. To joke about politics on television variety

⁶² As Yang (2002) has observed, commercials have greatly influenced Taiwan's television programs since the early 1960s. The legalization and privatization of the cable system in the 1990s has made the influence of commercials even greater. Without the financial support from commercials, it would be impossible for a show to continue. The support from commercials is further based on the viewing rate of a show, as the rating system helps the potential advertisers decide on the number and the kind of customers for their products.

shows in Taiwan, therefore, also means being at risk of losing opportunities to develop new careers in China.

On the other hand, although *Kuba Wojewódzki* is produced not to talk about serious issues but aims at entertaining its audience, it in fact is like a big melting pot of television variety show and political talk show. The boundary between both genres on this program is not as clear-cut as it is in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. Recall that in Extract (49), Wojewódzki joked about a Polish politician Renata Berger with his invited guest Szczuka. Different from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* which avoids talking about politics to stay away from potential risks, *Kuba Wojewódzki* embraces political issues and uses them to entertain its audience. The vague boundary between television variety show and political talk show in *Kuba Wojewódzki* is perhaps due to the fact that politics is very often the source of humor in daily social interactions in Poland. According to Dynel's (2012b) observation, despite the political change in 1989, Poles are still not satisfied with the current or past political situations. To show their dissatisfaction, Poles often joke about political figures and events. It is therefore reasonable to argue that as one of the in-group members in Poland, Wojewódzki perhaps feels comfortable with using politics as a source of humor, like many of his fellow countrymen. Talking about politics is perhaps acceptable and even welcome in most Polish television variety shows, especially when each television station has its own political orientation. Not surprisingly, like many Taiwanese hosts of political talk shows, Wojewódzki is frequently criticized by those with an opposite political viewpoint. He, however, successfully builds rapport with those who share the same political ideology with him and his television station.

8.1.2 Religion and Humor

Similarly, the rejection of or the preference for religion as a topic for joking also reflects the differences between Taiwan and Poland. More specifically, Taiwanese's and Poles' attitudes towards their own religions might further influence their topic choice in creating humorous utterances. In Taiwan, there are many religions. While some come from other cultures, many are developed locally. According to Yeh (2009), there are more than 20 religions registered with the Taiwanese government, which include Buddhism, Taoism, I-Kuan Tao, Christianity, Islam, etc. As Yeh further explains, many religions thrive in Taiwan because the Han Chinese people have not had any monotheistic beliefs, and they therefore are not against other gods. It

is therefore possible to see people from the same household with different religious beliefs. Buddhism and Taoism, however, are dominant in Taiwan, as evidenced in the density of temples per square kilometer in Taiwan, which might be the highest in the world.⁶³

Although Buddhists and Taoists occupy the highest proportion of religious people in Taiwan, they are quite tolerant of other religions and social events. This is also evidenced in the findings of Clobert et al. (2014). As they have observed, many Eastern religions, especially Buddhism and Taoism, “are less marked by doctrinal purity and the need for a systematic integration of all beliefs into a coherent whole of theological ideas” (p. 1516). They further explain from both historical and philosophical perspectives. As they argue, Eastern religions have long tended to interpenetrate each other and subsequently blend each other, as in contrast with other monotheistic religions. Moreover, Taoism's yin-yang symbol focuses on interdependence and complementarity, and Buddhism accepts the idea that two phenomena which seem to be incompatible in fact can be true at the same time. Furthermore, Buddhists generally are more spiritually engaged, rather than socially engaged, and they therefore are less involved in controversial social issues.⁶⁴

We may now reasonably argue that the two hosts of 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* have never used religion as a source for humor, perhaps because they do not want unnecessary trouble. That is, the two hosts do not joke about religion because as in-group members in Taiwan, they perhaps know that joking about religion might not be funny to certain religious groups, who are potential viewers of their show. In addition, except for certain socially engaged Buddhist groups, most Buddhists and Taoists rarely intervene in the controversial social issues, and they may escape from being joked about by the public or on political talk shows, not to mention their potential as a topic for humor on television variety shows.⁶⁵

On the other hand, Wojewódzki frequently touches upon some formerly tabooed issues, such as religion and sex. Recall that in Extract (47), Wojewódzki ridiculed Father Tadeusz Rydzyk and his conservative Radio Maryja station in a sarcastic way. Wojewódzki's use of religion as a source of humor does not mean that Poles are less tolerant of other

⁶³ As investigated by Yeh (2009), there were 11,561 temples registered with the Ministry of the Interior in 2007, and thousands more unregistered. However, there were only 3,190 churches registered that year.

⁶⁴ According to Schak and Hsiao (2005) and Schak (2009), there are six socially engaged Buddhist groups in Taiwan, including 佛光山 Fo Guang Shan, 法鼓山 Fagushan, 中台禪寺 Chung Tai Chan Szu, 福智 Fu-Chih, 靈鷲山 Ling Jiou Shan and 慈濟 Tzu Chi. As these Buddhist groups believe that the “Pure Land” is the world in which we live, and that their mission is to purify it, they are socially engaged.

⁶⁵ Although religion is hardly used as a source for humor on television variety shows in Taiwan, hosts on political (call-in) talk shows might criticize or joke about certain socially engaged Buddhist groups (see Schak and Hsiao 2005; Schak 2009) if they “step over the boundary,” such as getting involved in politics or controversial social issues.

religions than Taiwanese. In her investigation of Poles' attitudes towards four religious minorities in Poland (i.e., Jews, Muslims, Russian Orthodox Christians and Protestants), Golebiowska (2004) has observed that Poles are highly tolerant of religious minorities, despite the fact that their degree of tolerance is influenced by their social circumstances (e.g., education, age and religiosity) and political and psychological characteristics. Instead of joking about religious minorities in Poland, Wojewódzki more frequently jokes about the Catholic Church, its affiliated institutions and religious figures in Poland. This is perhaps due to the Catholic Church's political influence and interference in public life. In addition, the social norms and values of Catholicism are perhaps contrary to Wojewódzki's ideology.

Indeed, many studies have been conducted to show that Poles, in general, do not favor the Catholic Church's influence in politics and social issues. While 90% of Poles describe themselves as Catholic, two-thirds of the population think that the Catholic Church's influence on politics is too strong (Enstad 2000). In addition, more Poles are observed to reject the Catholic Church's political influence than to endorse it (Kitschelt et al. 1999).⁶⁶ Their disapproval of the Catholic Church's direct participation in political activities reached its peak in 1996 (Eberts 1998). Additionally, an investigation conducted by Beyme (1996) also indicates that in the first half of 1990s, Poles' trust in the Catholic Church declined also because they thought that the Catholic Church had interfered too much in public life. Chan's (2000) study further supports this result. As he has observed, in 1997 the majority of Poles did not agree with the Catholic Church on certain social issues, such as premarital sex and euthanasia.

Compared with Buddhism and Taoism in Taiwan, the Catholic Church in Poland is more likely to be criticized by Poles for getting too involved in politics and public life. As most Poles do not favor the Catholic Church's interference, they are more likely to attack this religion, its affiliated institutions and people. It is therefore understandable why Wojewódzki frequently jokes about the Catholic Church. As an in-group member in the Polish society, as well as among those who are against the Catholic Church's influence in politics and public life, Wojewódzki can be regarded as expressing his dissatisfaction by joking. From a certain perspective, the Catholic Church in Poland and the six socially engaged Buddhist groups in Taiwan are quite similar in many ways, both of which are criticized for getting involved in political or controversial social issues.

⁶⁶ See Kitschelt et al. (1999: 319).

8.1.3 The LGBT Community and Humor

Although politics and religion are rarely used as two sources for humor on television variety shows in Taiwan, invited guests' sexual orientation is a popular topic for joking on television variety shows in both cultures. In other words, gay-related humor is frequently observed in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* and *Kuba Wojewódzki*. This type of humor, however, is used differently in both programs. In 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, the two hosts Cài and Xú tend to construct their male guests as gay to result in a humorous effect. Recall that in Extract (34), the hostess Xú used 潑辣 *pōlà* “shrewish” to refer to her invited guest Andy as a bad-tempered, nagging woman. Furthermore, in Extract (35), both Cài and Xú used innuendo to co-construct their invited guest Xǔ and Xǔ's male friends Jiāotáng and Guō as gay. The construction of their male guests as gay always elicits laughter from other speech participants as well as the victims of the humor. In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, on the other hand, humor is used by Wojewódzki as a device to build rapport with the LGBT community. Recall that in Extract (51), Wojewódzki directed other-deprecating humor at Poniedziałek by calling him *wy cioty* “you faggots.” As an in-group member of the LGBT community, Poniedziałek's laughter shows his appreciation of Wojewódzki's humor. This is also evidenced in Extract (42), in which Poniedziałek co-constructed a funny anecdote with Wojewódzki about a male homosexual friend. The hosts' frequent use of gay-related humor has reflected the fact that people in Taiwan and in Poland still have prejudices against the LGBT community, as the LGBT community is still the source of humor for certain people. Nevertheless, the hosts' attitudes towards the LGBT community are different, as manifested in their humor.

As observed by Chen and Wang (2010), the LGBT community in Taiwan faced prejudice, hostility and violence in the past. Due to the increasing attention to 同志 *tóngzhì* “queer or LGBT” in Taiwan, the LGBT community now faces new obstacles, such as homophobic hate speech, which is not legally regarded as violence in Taiwan. As Chen and Wang further explain, the production of such a hate speech results from most Taiwanese's being unaware of the concept of “discrimination” (p. 400).⁶⁷ In his investigation of the history of the male, homosexual equal rights movement in Taiwan, Wang (1999) has also observed that while most heterosexual men in Taiwan think that homosexual men tend to be more artistic and creative than themselves, most of these heterosexual men are still ignorant of

⁶⁷ Chen and Wang (2010) also argue that the Christian Church in Taiwan further contributes to the obstacles of the Taiwanese LGBT community. Instead of using the religious values of Christianity, the Christian Church stands against the LGBT community by using the traditional Han Chinese social values.

homosexuality. For example, “being sissy” is considered as an indicator of homosexuality in men. Although not all homosexual men are effeminate, such ignorance in the end contributes to the prejudice in Taiwanese society.

Based on this ignorant prejudice in Taiwan, constructing a man as gay means either highlighting the femininity of that man or creating the femininity for him, regardless of his sexual orientation. Living in the patriarchal society, however, most Taiwanese men have suffered, more or less, from the experience of being teased for being effeminate during childhood, and were once asked to prove their manhood (Wang 2003). As Wang further points out, the fear of being accused of lacking manliness is the source of heterosexual men's homophobia and homosexual men's sissyphobia. Such fear becomes manifest in Taiwanese men's self-construction of masculine images in their everyday practices, perhaps by choosing certain conversational topics. As pointed out by Chen (2009), “[h]eterosexuality is at the heart of dominant versions of masculinity” (p. 258), which can be projected by talking about marriage or romantic relations between a man and a woman. Although Chen's findings are based on small talks among Chinese friends, the result can be applied to many Asian cultures.

The humor created by constructing a man as gay is therefore frequently used in Taiwan, as the funniness comes from the victim's embarrassment, expressed in his rejection to such humor or in his inability to reject it. Interestingly, the victim may be either heterosexual or homosexual. As observed by Wang, Bih and Brennan (2009), in Chinese culture, filial piety for a son means that he needs to produce a male heir to continue the paternal line of his family. As this viewpoint has greatly influenced many traditional Taiwanese families, admitting to be gay in Taiwan, then, means rejecting such a social norm, and very often results in a family conflict. As a result, the fear of being labeled as gay is found not only in Taiwanese male heterosexuals, but also in homosexuals. This perhaps has explained why lesbians and bisexuals are not used as sources for humor in Taiwan, as they are outside of the standard, male gender role.

In addition, as more and more Taiwanese show their concern for transgender rights, joking about transsexual men or women is regarded as improper. Choosing not to use certain Taiwanese minorities as sources for humor, including those ethnic minorities (e.g., indigenous people, foreign immigrants and foreign workers) perhaps indicates an increasing respect towards these people. On the other hand, the use of homosexual men as a source for humor shows that there still exists prejudice towards homosexual men in Taiwan, as the humor based on such prejudice is still entertaining to most people.

It is interesting to note that 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* is a well-known LGBT-friendly television variety show in Taiwan. The empowered femininity of the hostess Xú has attracted many homosexual men to become loyal viewers of the program, as her dramatic dress style has triggered the aestheticization of a gay male subculture, i.e., camp. In addition, Xú's co-host Cài already confessed to be gay years ago and can be said to represent homosexual celebrities in Taiwan. While the construction of their male guests as gay can be a source for humor, this type of humor is still based on a prejudice shared by many Taiwanese that homosexual men are effeminate. Cài's use of this type of humor, however, might not be perceived negatively by the LGBT community in Taiwan due to his in-group membership. As Ellithorpe, Esralew and Holbert (2014: 402) have argued, "[t]he perceived in-group membership of a humorist in a minority group will permit the acceptability of a message lampooning that group." In addition, the two hosts' use of this type of humor has brought the LGBT-related issues into the spotlight without taking the public prejudice seriously. Cài's use of it perhaps further shows his playful attitude towards his gay identity, as he is perhaps attempting to break the social norm established by the patriarchal Taiwanese society.

On the other hand, the status of the rights for the LGBT community after the collapse of communism in Poland has received much debate. Selinger (2008) has pointed out that while the Polish law grants gays and lesbians freedom of speech and protects them from being discriminated against, most Poles do not legitimize gays and lesbians as a social minority group which deserves equal rights. As Selinger further claims, Poles' attitudes towards gays and lesbians are greatly influenced by the Catholic Church's view on sexual ethics since communism:

Indigenous Polish values are represented by the church and historical memory. Indeed, one of the most important sources in the creation of public opinion on matters of ethics, rights, and sexuality is the Catholic Church. The relationship between the Catholic Church and Polish society has had a long history of close relations, particularly strengthened during communism, as it was one of the few places Poles were guaranteed freedom of speech and the right to pursue their conscience.

(Selinger 2008: 23)

While Poland might not be a favorable environment for gays and lesbians, Poles seem to be more sensitive to the concept of "discrimination" than Taiwanese thanks to Polish law. Selinger in the same study points out that the urban educated people and their political representation in Poland are also observed to hold a more open attitude towards the equal rights of gays and lesbians. Looking at Wojewódzki's background and his attitude towards the Catholic Church, there are grounds to believe that his other-deprecating humor targeted at

Poniedziałek and the Polish LGBT community is not verbalized hatred of them. Instead, he is perhaps attempting to build rapport with Poniedziałek and the LGBT community in Poland, but from a heterosexual man's perspective. His use of such humor has also reflected Wojewódzki's style, which is known for being direct, dramatic and impolite.

8.1.4 Taiwanese's 無厘頭 *Wúlítóu* “Nonsense” and Poles' Directness

In Chapter Six, I have analyzed various types of humor in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. Among them, 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is perhaps the most intriguing one, as the understanding of it very often requires the same cultural background. Even for those who are from within the same culture, it is not always easy and possible to fully understand 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” humor. Although 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” first appeared as a popular Cantonese saying, it later became popular in Taiwan thanks to Stephen Chow's farces being repeatedly broadcast on fourth channels. While 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” has become a prevalent humor type in Taiwan, not only on television variety shows, but also in everyday verbal interactions, it remains a mystery why this type of humor is so popular in Taiwan. In addition, it would be interesting to know whether its prevalence further reflects Taiwanese attitudes towards life.

In Chapter Seven, I have also observed similar types of humor. Interestingly, the same type of humor may be used differently on 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* and on *Kuba Wojewódzki*. For example, while the hosts on both programs are observed to employ other-deprecating humor directed at their guests, only Wojewódzki is observed to deprecate the audience as a means to create humor. Recall that in Extract (52), Wojewódzki not only directly addressed one of the studio audience as *grubaska* “fat woman,” but also used innuendo to attack her to result in a humorous effect. Wojewódzki's humor style perhaps reflects the direct nature of Poles in social interactions. In the following, I will discuss how the prevalence of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” in Taiwan reflects Taiwanese people's attitude towards life, as well as how Poles' direct nature is reflected in their humor styles.

As mentioned previously, 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is a humor type used in Taiwan, and only those who speak Mandarin and other Chinese languages or dialects (e.g., Cantonese) can understand it. It is because 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is used without a clear purpose, usually expressed with vulgar and arbitrary behaviors and words (Tan 2000). In addition, this

humor type can be constructed verbally or non-verbally. As 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is frequently observed in interactions among middle-class Taiwanese, it seems reasonable to presume that the life style of the middle-class in Taiwan has influenced their habit of using this type of humor and their taste for it. The attitude of middle-class Taiwanese can be seen in a newly popular word 小確幸 *xiǎoquèxìng* “the pleasure coming from trivial, but specific, exact daily things.” It is borrowed from the Japanese kanji 小確幸(しょうかつこう *shoukakkou*), created by the Japanese writer 村上春樹 *Murakami Haruki*.⁶⁸ The semantic molecules of it may include ordinary, trivial, healing, slow, unique and cherishable. In other words, 小確幸 *xiǎoquèxìng* can be the pleasure coming from a cup of coffee or from a jazz song if one feels it in his/her heart.

Although this newly popular word comes from the Japanese language, it does not prevail in Japanese society. In other words, its unexpected rise and subsequent popularity in Taiwan perhaps reflects the importance of its social functions in contemporary society. According to Chao's (2014) observation, applying the concept of 小確幸 *xiǎoquèxìng* to life has a healing function, as it emphasizes the exact, approachable pleasure obtained at the present moment. In other words, the rise of 小確幸 *xiǎoquèxìng* in Taiwanese society has reflected not only the tough environment of contemporary Taiwan, but also its people's struggle to find happiness. This has further explained why 小確幸 *xiǎoquèxìng* is popular among the middle-class Taiwanese, in the sense that the middle-class in Taiwan are composed of better more educated people who want to be successful. As they are not able to achieve great success like the upper bourgeoisie (e.g., high-ranking government officials, owners of sizable companies, etc.), they turn to trivial, but exact daily things to find pursuable happiness.

Similarly, the social meaning of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is like that of 小確幸 *xiǎoquèxìng*. It agrees that the source of humor can be anything in life, and that it can be produced by anyone in his/her own way without considering whether it is entertaining to others. Recall that in Extract (40), the two hosts Càì and Xú co-constructed their female guests as demons spreading their skins on the bed and painting them at night. In Extract (41), moreover, one of their guests Xiè chose certain English words to play the role of a fashionable socialite. The two examples of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” have shown that humor can be produced by anyone, anywhere, at anytime. In addition, they have further shown that 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is mainly produced for self-entertainment, and that the funniness of it,

⁶⁸ More information about this Japanese writer can be found on Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haruki_Murakami).

like pleasure, can be obtained if one feels it in his/her heart. Obviously, the self-entertaining function of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is more salient than its other-entertaining function. Yue (2010: 407) has defined this type of humor as “[m]alicious, and self-entertaining humor shown via various verbal and non-verbal acts.” Although it is commonly agreed that humor is produced to improve a social interaction by entertaining others, 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense,” as a humor type, might not be easily understood, especially by those outside the Mandarin-speaking community. It is because it is mainly used to entertain its producer or those who understand. On the other hand, the frequent use of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” in Taiwan has also reflected the middle-class Taiwanese playful attitude towards life. Life for most of them might be tough. They, therefore, need to look on the bright side and should try to enjoy themselves despite the hardship, perhaps by finding pleasure in daily trivial, but exact things that are approachable. In the meantime, 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” further serves this function, as its funniness can be obtained anywhere, anytime.

It is also interesting to note that while many instances of humor in both programs are based on face-threatening acts, only Wojewódzki directs other-deprecating humor at his audience (see Extract (52)). Using the audience as a source of humor is uncommon on television programs in Taiwan. This is perhaps due to the fact that the commercial profit of Taiwanese television programs depends on their viewership. In addition, while other-deprecating humor may be framed as simply “play,” using the audience as a source of humor is risky for the two hosts of 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, as well as for the program itself. It is because the two hosts may be criticized for being rude, and that the program may lose many potential viewers. To avoid unnecessary conflicts, Taiwanese hosts hardly ever make fun of their audience.

Instead of being evasive, Wojewódzki tends to be more direct and confrontational. His humor is built on his stage-authority as the host of the show. As the name *Kuba Wojewódzki* suggests, the most important character of the show should be Wojewódzki himself, not his guests or the studio audience. That is, no matter how his guests or the studio audience do on his show, the stage-authority of Wojewódzki should not be threatened. Such a script is perhaps followed as a strategy to attract the attention of television viewers, in the sense that Wojewódzki first became famous for his controversial talking style as a judge on the reality talent show *Idol* (Polish television series). In other words, Wojewódzki's direct and confrontational humor style has perhaps contributed to his success in the media and entertainment industry in Poland.

Wierzbicka's (1994, 1999) psycho-cultural analyses have also shown that one of the core values of the Polish culture is sincerity and emotional frankness.⁶⁹ That is, Poles are willing to show their emotions. Wierzbicka's (1985b, 1991) cross-cultural studies have further provided a good account of Wojewódzki's verbal behavior. According to her observation, Poles' confrontational and direct behavior is more likely to be accepted within their culture. They are not discouraged from showing what they think and how they feel in strong terms, even if their words might hurt the other party. As a result, television viewers in Poland are more likely to accept Wojewódzki's talking style, despite the fact that their opinions towards Wojewódzki's sense of humor are polarized. While Poles welcome conflicts and are more willing to face them, Taiwanese seemingly like to avoid unnecessary conflicts to maintain social harmony. This is also reflected in the humor of Taiwanese security camera signs, as can be seen in all corners of Taiwan.⁷⁰

To conclude, while many instances of humor in both programs are based on face-threatening acts, the hosts' choice of the target of teasing has reflected the different personality traits of Taiwanese and Poles. Taiwanese avoid conflict, whereas Poles welcome it. In addition, the Taiwanese playful attitude towards their tough life is also reflected in their humor. For them, humor comes from trivial, but specific, exact things in life. On the other hand, Poles are more direct and emotionally frank.

8.2 Gender as a Constraint on Humor

In my analysis of the data from casual conversations, as well as from television variety shows, I have observed that gender serves as a constraint on humor. Although my analysis in the previous chapters did not show which discourse strategies or humor types are preferred by male or female speech participants, there are certain phenomena influenced by gender. In Chapter Four and Chapter Five, for example, many of the female speech participants' discourse strategies are found in their self-disclosure. For example, Taiwanese female speech participants are more likely to talk about their love life or others' affairs, or gossip about other woman. Polish female speech participants are found to frequently complain about someone

⁶⁹ Based on Wierzbicka's (1994, 1999) notion, Szarota, Cantarero and Matsumoto (2015) have further observed that Poles endorse more expression with close friends than with acquaintances and strangers.

⁷⁰ The content of a security camera sign is face-threatening by nature, as its function is to warn people away from doing something inappropriate within a certain area. To save the face of its potential viewers, a security camera sign in Taiwan is more likely to show its warnings in an indirect, but humorous way, so as to avoid unnecessary conflicts (See Appendix V).

(e.g., father, boyfriend, etc.). On the other hand, male speech participants seem to be more interested in topics such as jobs, houses, money, computer games or politics. Indeed, as Coates (2004) has argued, compared with women, men are more likely to avoid self-disclosure and prefer to talk about impersonal topics.

In addition, I have also observed that in both same- and mixed-sex interactions female speech participants frequently show solidarity with other females in producing or receiving humor. Recall that in Extract (17), when Zhāng used back-handed remarks to criticize the gossip target humorously, Gāo immediately showed her support. In Extract (23), moreover, both Anna and Ewa used back-handed remarks to show their support of Tatiana in a humorous way when Tatiana complained about her father. On the other hand, male speech participants are found to demonstrate hierarchy in their interactions with other males. That is, there is always a male speech participant being teased by other males. Recall that in Extract (18), although Càì initiated the joking frame, he turned out to be the victim of Zhāng's and Sūn's teasing. In Extract (25), moreover, Paweł also turned out to be the victim of other male speech participants' teasing, as he was so focused on the computer game that others had to wait for him.

In light of the above, being cooperative seems to be a universal feature of female speech, which can be seen in the act of paying compliments. In her study of how male and female New Zealanders pay compliments, Holmes (1988) has observed that women are more likely to compliment other women, whereas compliments between men are relatively rare (51.2% vs. 9%). In his analysis of political debates in Taiwan, Chen (2008) has also observed a similar phenomenon. In a debate between two same-sex participants, the two female debaters, compared with their male counterparts, tend to be less belligerent, despite the fact that they are all well-known for their eloquence.

Although my analysis has revealed that male speech participants frequently tease other males, they rarely treat female speech participants as targets of humor. In analyzing teasing and self-directed joking, Lampert and Ervin-Tripp (2006) has observed that both European-American men and women adopt different interactional styles in mixed- and same-sex talks. Men are found to frequently joke about themselves while they at the same time are found to avoid teasing their female friends. Women, on the other hand, are found to tease more than their male friends. As Lampert and Ervin-Tripp suggest, it is because men do not want to sound hostile or put women in a subordinate position. Women, on the other hand, perhaps intend to use teasing as a linguistic device to assert their equal footing and solidarity

within the group. When being teased by women, men are found to respond with a supportive self-directed remark to encourage more teasing from women.

Furthermore, in Chapter Seven, the interactions between Wojewódzki and Szczuka are intriguing. In Extract (50), for example, although Szczuka uses a lot of hedges (i.e., *wiesz* “you know”), she uses them to show confidence in asserting herself. In response to Wojewódzki's other-deprecating humor, moreover, Szczuka immediately addresses Wojewódzki *dziadu* “old man” in return. Compared with Poniedziałek's reaction to Wojewódzki's other-deprecating humor (see Extract (51)), Szczuka seems to be adopting a more belligerent interactional style,⁷¹ which can also be seen in her competition with Wojewódzki through wordplay (see Extract (45)). Szczuka's interactional style can be best explained by her identity as a feminist. As a feminist, she seeks to reshape herself as a competitive woman, so as to make her voice heard by the public. It is because she may be challenged by the public for being a woman. In other words, Szczuka has to perform in a more masculine manner when she is speaking for other women, perhaps by “talking like a man.”

8.3 Humor or Vulgarly?

Both television variety shows have been criticized by the public. For example, some critics regard the high viewing rate of 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* as an indicator of the deterioration of the social values in Taiwan, or that of the brainlessness/low IQ of the Taiwanese society. The criticism as such, however, has reflected the arrogance of the intellectuals, as its continuous high viewership for nearly twelve years cannot be overlooked. Many of its critics have adopted a high moral standard and argue that this program not only lacks in creativity and education, but is also vulgar and full of discrimination, such as laughing at the body or face of a woman. For example, the two hosts of this program frequently asked their female guests to remove their makeup and then made a judgement on them, as some kind of humor to entertain their audience. The humor as such is criticized for being based on the visual culture to depict women in terms of men's attitudes. While seeing female idols suffering from the two hosts' poignant and sharp criticisms can be amusing to the regular audience of the program, the two hosts' behaviors are not accepted by many Taiwanese as humorous. As observed by Liao

⁷¹ Although I use “belligerent” to refer to Szczuka's interactional style, the way she reacts to Wojewódzki's humor pertains to the semantics of solidarity, not power, as it signals sameness and closeness.

(2001), some humorist-moralists in Taiwan are in favor of self-deprecating humor, and sarcasm and irony do not equal humor for many Taiwanese.

Despite its being politically incorrect, the continuous acceptance and appreciation of such humor from its audience still has social meaning, which has constructed the society of Taiwan. Firstly, the two hosts can be regarded as having removed the idol's burden. Their humor style has sent out a message that idols (including themselves and their guests) are ordinary people, who also fart in everyday life, think about sex and sometimes speak ill of others. All these characteristics of ordinary people are expressed in different types of humor, as illustrated and discussed in Chapter Six. In addition, while idols are treated in this program as ordinary people, this program also holds that each person is unique and deserves to be seen. This is evidenced by many Internet celebrities, who later became famous because of having attended the program.

On the other hand, Wojewódzki's humor is based on touching upon formerly tabooed issues in Poland and has successfully attracted many television viewers. As indicated by Little (2008), joking about taboo topics helps reduce tension regarding these topics. However, his humor style is also criticized as requiring less cognitive effort. That is, television viewers' appreciation of Wojewódzki's humor is very likely to be commented on by some critics as a sign of decreasing intellectual demands of the television audience. This is manifested in Grzegorzczuk's (2012) observation of the modern public television programs in Poland:

Nowadays, however, it seems that humor has found a new form of expression on television which manifests itself in openness to foreign influences (particularly American, as in comedy series), more liberal treatment of formerly tabooed issues (sex, religion, violence, coarse language), which to some critics is a sign of decreasing intellectual demands of the Polish television audience.

(Grzegorzczuk 2012: 283)

Wojewódzki is a distinctive role on television. There are two sides of him, both of which have constructed the image of Wojewódzki on the screen in Poland. As Godzic (2013) has observed, Wojewódzki is like a two-part wardrobe. When you open one sliding door, you find feces, croak and obscene topics; When you open the other, maybe there is no paradise, but there is always a nice landscape full of glittering witticism for thinking.⁷² Godzic further argues that due to these two sides of Wojewódzki, television viewers in Poland perceive him in a dichotomous way. While some appreciate his humor, others hold a completely opposite

⁷² See Godzic's (2013) description of Wojewódzki in its original Polish version: "Natomiast Kuba nadawał się idealnie do tego pomysłu – był jak dwudzielna szafa. Otworzysz jedno skrzydło: a tam fekalia, rechot i obsceniczne tematy. Otworzysz drugą połowę, a tam – może nie raj, ale zawsze jakiś miły (a nawet dający do myślenia) landszafeik skrzący się dowiecipem" (p. 14).

attitude towards him. This is due to the fact that instead of attempting to get new information from the television, television viewers are more likely to watch television programs that match their ideas, beliefs or viewpoints. In other words, while Wojewódzki's humor might irritate certain Polish television viewers, he at the same time entertains those who share his same ideas, beliefs or viewpoints. In fact, *Kuba Wojewódzki* has its distinctive viewers. That is, it aims at entertaining a certain group of Polish television viewers. In other words, Wojewódzki's joking about political figures (e.g., Renata Beger) or religious figures (e.g., Father Tadeusz Rydzyk) can be regarded as showing rapport with those who hold the same attitudes. In light of this, *Kuba Wojewódzki* can be seen as serving the function of both television variety show and political talk show in Taiwan. It is produced not only to entertain its viewers, but is also in an attempt to convey certain ideology to them.

8.4 Characteristics of Taiwanese and Polish Humor

So far I have analyzed how humor is produced, perceived and used in casual conversations and on television variety shows in Taiwan and in Poland. Several issues concerning humor in both cultures have also been discussed. However, I have not defined so-called Taiwanese and Polish humor. To give a rough definition to Taiwanese and Polish humor, as well as to find out their characteristics, relevant findings of the present study are summarized below.

Firstly, Taiwan's maritime geography has made this small island a fusion of a number of cultures, as evidenced in its multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. Thanks to the prevalence of Stephen Chow's farces and the import of Japanese culture, modern Taiwanese humor has further absorbed the elements and spirits of these types of humor. While modern Taiwanese humor is like a big melting pot of Chinese, Hong Kongnese and Japanese humor, it is localized to be best adapted to its diversified environment. Such diversity and adaptation can be regarded as being shaped by the dynamic formed by the tensions between globalization and localization. For example, the prevalence of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* "nonsense" in contemporary Taiwan has not only reflected the Taiwanese society, but is also shaped by it. Like 小確幸 *xiǎoquèxìng* "the pleasure coming from trivial, but specific, exact daily things," the sources of humor can be any trivial thing in life.

However, the unique take middle-class Taiwanese have on this type of humor may seem baffling at first. It is because its original structure, as a type of Hong Kongnese humor, is

culturally shaped, and that its use in Taiwan has further been localized. Such localization can be seen in humor expressed in the local languages, such as in Taiwan Southern Min or in Mandarin with Taiwanese or Austronesian accents. Sometimes unique expressions from these local languages are used to result in a dramatic effect to construct humor. Like Japan, Taiwan is also a high-context society. The function of Japanese humor is to solidify the in-group membership, instead of sending messages to the outsiders (see Oshima 2011, 2013). Modern Taiwanese humor also has the same function. As the constructed humor is based on the shared in-group knowledge about Taiwanese society, such humor may thus evoke a hearty laugh or smile from the in-group members from this society.⁷³ In brief, while modern Taiwanese humor has absorbed elements from other cultures, localization of these foreign cultural elements also started at the same time. The prevalence of 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” in contemporary Taiwan has further reflected middle-class Taiwanese's playful attitude towards life. That is, humor can be everywhere if one feels it in the heart.

Polish humor is also shaped by Polish society, but in a different way. This can be seen in Poles' preferred topics for humor, such as politics or religion. Poles' dissatisfaction with both the current and past political situation can be seen in their humor (Dynel 2012b). In other words, Poles use humor to mock what they do not like or the absurdity of everyday life. This is in particular evidenced in Wojewódzki's humor. Recall that Wojewódzki used humor to ridicule Father Tadeusz Rydzyk and his conservative Radio Maryja station in a sarcastic way.

While Polish humor is characterized by sarcasm, it is still different from British humor, which is characterized by constant deadpan delivery and understated sarcasm. More specifically, Polish humor is frequently accompanied by vivid facial expressions despite its sarcastic nature. It is sometimes created by using punning wordplay, as we can see in Wojewódzki's interaction with other guests, especially with Szczuka. In brief, whereas Polish humor may serve to show Poles' dissatisfaction towards society in a sarcastic way, it is also expressed dramatically, which has further reflected Poles' direct and down-to-earth nature.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed several social issues concerning humor, including politics, religion and the LGBT community. As 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” is a preferred humor type in

⁷³ See Appendix III.

Taiwan, this chapter has also discussed the social meaning of this humor type in the society of Taiwan. In addition, I have also discussed Poles' directness expressed in their humor. The second part of this chapter has discussed several gender issues concerning humor, based on my qualitative analysis of the data from casual conversations and from television variety shows. The third part of this chapter focuses on television viewers' perception of the two controversial television variety shows. This chapter has discussed the humor styles of the hosts, as well as television viewers' perception of their humor. Finally, this chapter has shown the characteristics of Taiwanese and Polish humor, in an attempt to give a definition to the humor in both cultures.

Chapter Nine

CONCLUSION

9.1 Summary of Major Findings

The present study is based on naturally occurring spoken data from casual conversations among friends, as well as from television variety shows (i.e., 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile* and *Kuba Wojewódzki*). It is inspired by CA, multimodality and interactional linguistics. Adopting these three analytic approaches, I have illustrated and discussed how humor is produced, used and comprehended by Taiwanese and Polish speech participants, respectively.

I have first analyzed the pragmatic/interpersonal functions of laughter and smiling (see Chapter Three). Results have suggested that both laughter and smiling can be employed by speech participants to regulate a talk-in-interaction. To illustrate, laughter can be used to show one's appreciation of humor/teasing, as an invitation to laugh or to show disagreement. On the other hand, smiling can be used to reject humor/teasing, to show sarcasm or to provoke conflict in a dramatic way.

I have also illustrated and discussed how different discourse strategies are used by Taiwanese and Polish friends to negotiate previously established friendships and intimate relationships in a humorous way (see Chapter Four and Chapter Five). Results have revealed that Taiwanese friends use quite a few discourse strategies to construct humor in their conversations. These discourse strategies may include the use of quotation, rhetorical question, theatrical performance, back-handed remark, fictional episode and choice of dramatic expression/code. Polish friends, on the other hand, also use some of the same discourse strategies to construct humor, but in a different way. These discourse strategies may include the use of quotation, back-handed remark, fictional episode, choice of dramatic expression and highlighting contradiction.

After exploring the above mentioned discourse strategies used in interactions among friends, I have further analyzed how different types of humor are used on television variety shows to attract the attention of the audience (see Chapter Six and Chapter Seven). Results have shown that there are eight types of humor employed in 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*, which

may include the use of personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense.” In *Kuba Wojewódzki*, I have also observed similar types of humor, including personal narrative, wordplay, sarcasm, innuendo, other-deprecating humor, self-deprecating humor, self-bragging humor and teasing. Although I have observed similar types of humor on both television variety shows, my qualitative analysis of the data has further revealed that humor is culture-specific. In other words, the same type of humor may be used differently by different cultures.

Having analyzed the mechanism and functions of humor by examining its discourse strategies in conversations among friends, as well as its types on television variety shows, I have further discussed the results of my findings (see Chapter Eight). For example, I have discussed how the choice of humorous topics (i.e., politics, religion and the LGBT community) has reflected the difference between Taiwanese and Polish societies. I have also discussed why 無厘頭 *wúlítóu* “nonsense” prevails among those middle-class Taiwanese, as well as how Wojewódzki's sense of humor, being direct and confrontational, has reflected Poles' sincere and emotionally frank nature (also see Wierzbicka 1994, 1999). In addition, I have also discussed how the gender difference serves as a constraint in influencing speech participants' use of humor, including the topics which their humorous talks are built on. I have also discussed whether the hosts' talking styles in both programs are indeed humorous, or simply vulgar verbal barbs. Finally, based on the findings of the present study, as well as the relevant literature, I have further summarized the characteristics of Taiwanese and Polish humor, in an attempt to give a rough definition of humor in Taiwanese and Polish cultures.

The results of the findings and discussion have suggested that humor is culture-specific, context-sensitive and gender-bound. That is, many socio-cultural and contextual factors, as well as a speech participant's gender role, may influence his/her production and perception of humor. In addition, humor can be expressed not only verbally, but also non-verbally. When one studies humor but simply focuses on its verbal expression, s/he might miss some of the very important features of humor. As a result, studying humor in a certain context or culture requires a comprehensive examination of all the relevant aspects associated with it, of which the mechanism is complicated, but intriguing.

9.2 Contributions of the Present Study

Although humor can be observed in every dimension of human social interactions, the study of its uses and functions in the contexts of Taiwan and Poland has been much overlooked until recently, not to mention the comparison of the two cultures. This study, by analyzing the discourse strategies used to construct humor in conversations among friends, as well as different humor types employed on television variety shows, have illustrated and discussed how Taiwanese and Polish speech participants use humor to achieve different communicative goals. By focusing on both genres (i.e., casual conversations and television variety shows) and on both cultures (i.e., Taiwan and Poland), this study has set up a more complete model of analyzing humor in Taiwanese and Polish interactions.

Results of my findings have further shed light on what are perceived as humorous topics by Taiwanese and Poles to initiate a conversation. As the choice of conversational topics is influenced by many social factors, I have also discussed the implications of the study, particularly focusing on different social aspects associated with humor, such as politics, religion and the LGBT community. In addition, I have also touched upon certain gender issues related to my study. In other words, I have not only analyzed humor in the two genres within both cultures, but I have also done a comprehensive examination of the relevant aspects associated with Taiwanese and Polish humor. Furthermore, by summarizing the characteristics of Taiwanese and Polish humor, I have given a rough definition of humor in both cultures.

The present study has also contributed to theoretical issues in linguistics. I have adopted the methodological approaches informed by CA, multimodality and interactional linguistics to analyze the data from social interactions in Taiwan and in Poland. In other words, while my findings further the understanding of how the CA and multimodality approaches serve as linguistic-analytic tools for micro-analysis of humor in both cultures, my analysis has further shown how humor is shaped by interaction. In addition, my findings have further contributed to the current literature on these fields in Mandarin, Southern Min and Polish.

Finally, my research findings and discussion have provided invaluable insights for TCSL (Teaching Chinese as a Second Language) in Poland and TPFL (Teaching Polish as a Foreign Language) in Taiwan. Whereas it is not debatable that humor may serve as a pedagogical tool to help increase students' motivation, proficiency and success in learning a second language (Schmitz 2002; Aboudan 2009; Olajoke 2013), it is the cultural environment that determines students' comprehension of their teacher's humor (Olajoke 2013). In other

words, TCSL teachers in Poland and TPFL teachers in Taiwan should know not only the target language they are teaching, but also what is perceived as humorous within each culture, so as to avoid wrongly applying humor in their teaching. In addition, learners of Mandarin and Polish also need to develop “humor competence” to facilitate cross-cultural communication. To sum up, this study furthers the understanding of how humor has reflected the cultural difference between Taiwan and Poland by discussing various aspects of it within the two cultures.

9.3 Future Research Directions

As a native speaker of Mandarin and Taiwanese Southern Min, as well as an in-group member of the Taiwanese society, I did not have any problems understanding my data from casual conversations among Taiwanese friends and those from 康熙來了 *Kāng Xī Láile*. However, it was very likely for me to overlook some of the most important features in Taiwanese verbal interactions, as I might take them for granted. Analyzing the Polish data, meanwhile, helped me notice these features as being exclusive to Taiwanese verbal interactions, as they were highlighted when compared with the Polish data. It is therefore suggested that one should examine the verbal interactions of a different culture in order to find out the unique features of the interactions within one's own culture.

Furthermore, as a non-native speaker of Polish, as well as an out-group member in Poland, it was natural for me to notice the important features exclusive to Polish verbal interactions, as they did not appear in my Mandarin and Taiwanese Southern Min data. However, I did have difficulties analyzing the Polish data, especially the casual conversations among Polish friends, as they were full of slang expressions. In order not to misinterpret the data, I interviewed my data providers and took the background of each speech participant into consideration. In addition, while the data from *Kuba Wojewódzki* seemed to be easier to understand compared with talks among young people in Poland,⁷⁴ the host Wojewódzki's talking style was controversial. In other words, while there might be a cultural gap preventing me from correctly understanding his sense of humor, Wojewódzki's words were not always considered as humorous by his fellow countrymen. In order to find out the most probable

⁷⁴ In my analysis of the data from casual conversations among Polish friends, I have found that many sequences served to reinforce the in-group solidarity of the speech participants. That is, these sequences could not be understood or fully understood by the so-called “outsiders,” including both native and non-native speakers of Polish, who did not participate in the conversations.

reading of his words to see whether there was encoded humor, a few informal interviews were conducted with Polish native speakers. It is therefore suggested that in analyzing a language that one is not familiar with, one should conduct an interview with the native speakers of that language for a more objective account of the data.

In addition to the above, this study can also be elaborated on in several ways, as several other possible fields of research on humor have occurred to me throughout its conduction. First of all, a relatively large portion of my findings is based on my qualitative analysis of the spoken data concerning humor. I, however, did not quantify my data, as it was difficult and perhaps meaningless to quantify humor. Kendon (2004) has proposed the units of gestural action when he looked at how gesturing and speaking are used together for communication. Adopting the criteria in Crystal and Davy's (1969) investigation of the English language, Kendon suggested that human speech can be identified by prosodic features and analyzed into tone units. Similarly, the units of gestural action can also be identified by bodily features, like "a pointing, a depiction, a pantomime or the enactment of a conventionalized gesture" (p. 108).

Quantifying human speech and gestural action, however, is different from quantifying verbal and non-verbal humor. Firstly, while each conversational humor form may possess a discrete definition, there is still no clear distinction between them, as they frequently fade into each other in conversation (Norrick 1993, 2003). In my data, moreover, I have observed that the unit of humor can be as small as a sigh used to show fake emotion (see Extract (14)), and as big as a narrative that continues across many speaking turns (see Extract (31)). As I have further illustrated and discussed in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven, a humor type is more likely to be constructed by using more than one discourse strategy. More specifically, while a humor type may be regarded as a unit of humor, this unit is often composed of even smaller units that can be considered as humorous.

In addition, a speech participant may simply use a unique hand or facial gesture or body movement to express humor, such as the use of theatrical performance as a discourse strategy.⁷⁵ Although my findings have shown that the funniness more frequently comes from a speech participant's simultaneous verbal and non-verbal behaviors, if we further deconstruct his/her non-verbal performance, we may find that his/her hand or facial gesture or a body movement may consist of smaller units that are entertaining to some people. Recall that in Extract (14), Sūn's sighing is accompanied by non-verbal performance as shaking her head,

⁷⁵ See Section 4.3.

closing her eyes and covering her face with a hand, each of which can be used alone as a booster to reinforce the dramatic effect of her theatrical performance. It is therefore difficult and perhaps meaningless to define the unit of humor, as the internal structure of humor is multimodal and complicated.

However, it may be rewarding to quantify the speech acts that a speech participant performs in using a discourse strategy to create humor, or in creating a certain type of humor. In Extract (14), for example, Sūn's sighing accompanied by other non-verbal features can be simply regarded as an *expressive*, which is used "to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content" (Searle 1976: 12). In addition, more speech acts may be observed when a speech participant narrates a funny personal anecdote. I did not choose the speech act theory to analyze the data, as it was not the main concern of the present study. However, those who are interested in applying the speech act theory to the study of humor may find it possible and meaningful to quantify humor in this way. The result probably will be as surprising as it is interesting.

Another extension of the present study is to study children's humor. I have touched upon how humor is used in both non-institutional and institutional settings (i.e., casual conversations vs. television variety shows), as well as gender and social issues concerning humor. However, it may be interesting to investigate how Taiwanese and Polish children perceive and use humor in their interactions. Banasik's (2013) study has shown that Polish children as young as four years old seem to have been able to comprehend verbal irony (if the grammatical and lexical complexity and the length of the presented materials are in control). In comprehending irony, moreover, children may detect the speaker's actual intention by drawing from his/her "intonation, mimic expression, context and others" (p. 9). As Banasik further argues, children may understand the communicative meaning of an utterance earlier than its semantic meaning. In this light, children probably also develop the competence to comprehend humor at a very early age, as the mechanism of understanding humor is quite similar.

Kielar-Turska and Białecka-Pikul (2009) have investigated how five- and nine-year-old Polish children generate and understand jokes. They have observed that by the time children have cultivated the basic knowledge about the world, they are already able to present the world in their drawings in a humorous way, mainly by transforming the image of the world (e.g., changes in shape, size or color). These five- and nine-year-old Polish children, however, hardly introduce verbal statements to invite laughter. As Kielar-Turska and

Bialecka-Pikul further argue, children's low linguistic awareness will improve as they receive a formal education in their native language. Additionally, the peer group is an influential factor regarding their acquisition of a sense of humor, especially to those nine-year-old school children. It is therefore possible and interesting to investigate how school children create humor in interactions with peers. It is because school children should have increased their linguistic awareness towards humor, and that humor perhaps also plays an important part in their socialization with other children (cf. Ogiermann 2015).⁷⁶

In addition, gender might also be influential in children's use of humor in their interactions. According Ruble, Martin and Berenbaum (2006), children have already understood the attributes and activities considered by others as appropriate for their gender role by the time they enter kindergarten. They have further pointed out the fact that there are in-group evaluative biases among preschool children. That is, a preschool child is more likely to view his/her own sex more favorably than the other. It is therefore interesting to study whether gender also influences children's use of humor when they interact with their peers.

Last but not least, as there are an increasing number of interactions between Taiwan and Poland, and that humor plays an important part in social interactions, it is hoped that future studies on humor will focus more on how humor regulates a talk-in-interaction between Taiwanese and Polish speech participants.

⁷⁶ In analyzing how Polish children use in/direct requests during family mealtimes, Ogiermann (2015) has argued that children are competent in communication and socialization, as evidenced in their polite manners in asking for food.

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APPENDIX I

Transcription Conventions

(L)	Upper case “L” in parentheses indicates laughter from the audience or all speech participants.
(L: X)	Upper case “L” in parentheses indicates laughter from X
(l: X)	Lower case “l” in parentheses indicates a smile on X’s face
bold	Bold type is used for important words.
<u>underline</u>	Underline indicates speech participants.
→	Arrow indicates the line to be analyzed.
[...]	Words in brackets show the simultaneous action of the speech participant
...	Three dots indicate trailing off of words in dialogue.
#fig	The number sign followed by “fig” indicates the exact point where a screenshot has been taken.
(*)	Asterisk in parentheses indicates deleted or bleeped voice
(V)	Upper case “V” in parentheses indicates increased volume
(S)	Upper case “S” in parentheses indicates silence
(p)	Lower case “p” in parentheses indicates a short pause
(c)	Lower case “c” in parentheses indicates clapping
(h)	Lower case “h” in parentheses indicates sighing
...	Words between asterisks indicate code-switching to Taiwan Southern Min

APPENDIX II

Photos of Ken Shimura's and Taiwanese Celebrities' Popular Shticks

<p>Japanese comedian 志村けん <i>Shimura Ken</i>'s popular shtick 変なおじさん <i>Henna Ojisan</i> “Obnoxious Uncle”⁷⁷</p>	<p>Taiwanese comedian 陽帆 <i>Yáng Fān</i> and his popular shtick 陽婆婆 <i>Yángpǎpó</i> “Grandma Yang”⁷⁸</p>
	
<p>Taiwanese comedian 董至成 <i>Dǒng Zhì-Chéng</i> and his popular shtick 董月花 <i>Dǒng Yuè-Huā</i> “Hakka Lady Dong Yue-Hua”⁷⁹</p>	<p>Taiwanese comedian 許效舜 <i>Xǔ Xiào-Shùn</i> and his popular shtick 福州伯 <i>Fúzhōubó</i> “Uncle from Fuzhou”⁸⁰</p>
	

⁷⁷ <http://matome.naver.jp/odai/2141640300540967201/2141640540146866503>.

⁷⁸ <http://www.nownews.com/p/2013/11/30/1037181>.

⁷⁹ <http://atimeagent.pixnet.net/blog/post/37397280-經典人物董月花-再度重出江湖>.

⁸⁰ <http://www.nownews.com/n/2014/07/28/1341667>.

APPENDIX III

An Extract from a Facebook Post⁸¹





	<p>邢黃滿金 1月16日 · 6</p> <p>投完總統選票， 拿到孫子的五千， 你奶奶來市場讓經濟起飛。 先來買樟腦丸家裡一堆蟑螂， 這小子王八蛋， 每天都把房子弄得亂七八糟， 你奶奶的朋友都以為我不愛乾淨。</p> <p>讚 留言 分享</p> <p>12,429 個人都說讚。</p> <p>102個分享 434則留言</p> <p>顯示先前的留言 434則中的6則</p> <p>張鎮邦 讓經濟起飛 啊 哈哈哈哈哈 讚 · 回覆 · 3小時</p> <p>黃柏翰 蔡宛珊笑死好可愛的阿嬤 讚 · 回覆 · 3小時</p> <p>蔡宛珊已回覆 · 2則回覆 · 3小時</p> <p>李可田 陳家興 何妹你們看這個阿嬤好可愛 讚 · 回覆 · 1 · 2小時 · 已編輯</p> <p>楊子萱 劉鈞 跟你好像 讚 · 回覆 · 2小時</p> <p>Pei Jou Ko Yang Bee Gee你一定要追蹤她，奶 奶她超可愛 Zou Lu Naomi Zhao 蔡隆中</p> <p>留言……</p>
<p>01. 投完總統選票， tóu wán zǒngtǒng xuǎnpào, 02. 拿到孫子的五千， ná dào sūnzide wǔqiān, 03. → 你奶奶來市場讓經濟起飛。 nǐ nǎinai lái shìchǎng ràng jīngjì qǐfēi. 04. 先來買樟腦丸家裡一堆蟑螂， xiān lái mǎi zhāngnǎowán jiālǐ yìduī zhāngláng, 05. 這小子王八蛋， zhè xiǎozǐ wángbādàn, 06. 每天都把房子弄得亂七八糟， měitiān dōu bǎ fángzi nòng de luànqībāzāo, 07. 你奶奶的朋友都以為我不愛乾淨。 nǐ nǎinaide péngyǒu dōu yǐwéi wǒ hěn bú ài gānjìng.</p>	<p>Translation</p> <p>01. I just finished voting for president, 02. and have got NTD5,000 from my grandson. 03. → Now I am here in the supermarket to let the economy take off. 04. I need to buy camphor balls, because there are many roaches at home. 05. My grandson is a bastard. 06. He puts the house in disorder everyday, 07. and thus all my friends think that I am not a neat person.</p>

The above extract is from a Facebook post by a Taiwanese grandmother, who is famous for her humorous posting style. As the content shows, the dramatic expression 讓經濟起飛 *ràng jīngjì qǐfēi* “to let the economy take off” is used to refer to the action of doing shopping (line 3). While this Facebook post has attracted many of her fans to comment on it as extremely humorous, the used dramatic expression is based on the shared knowledge of all Taiwanese that the economy in Taiwan has declined in recent years. The conveyed sarcasm, regardless of the grandmother's intention, may evoke a laugh or smile from her Taiwanese fans.

⁸¹ https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=155687564804095&set=a.133654130340772.1073741828.100010885568143&type=3&__mref=message_bubble.

APPENDIX IV

Extracts from Four Versions of the Japanese Comic *GTO* Vol. 1

 <p>Japanese</p>	 <p>Mandarin</p>
 <p>Polish</p>	 <p>English</p>

In the original Japanese version, the woman's nostrils are described as ドライヤー *doraiyā* “dryer.” The same metaphor remains in the Polish translation, as evidenced in the translator's use of *suszarka* “dryer.” The English translation “the pig like nose” suggests that the translator focuses more on the understanding of the readers. Interestingly, in the Mandarin translation the woman's nostrils are described as those of 澎恰恰 *Péng, Qià-Qià's*, a Taiwanese celebrity who is famous for his extremely big nostrils, despite the fact that a character of the name is replaced with an X to avoid direct reference. Using the celebrity's name in the Mandarin translation suggests that the Mandarin translator not only focuses on the understanding of the readers, but also intends to reinforce the humor in the original text by using the referent that most Taiwanese are familiar with.

APPENDIX V

A Security Camera Sign from the Taipei Metro System in Taiwan⁸²



錄影中 請微笑
lùyǐng zhōng qǐng wéixiào

Translation
You are being monitored. Please smile.

⁸² http://sirocco007.blogspot.com/2013/06/blog-post_115.html.