

A Pragmatic Analysis of Humour Strategies and Functions in “Mr Macaroni” and “Honourable Zaddy” Comedy Skits on YouTube

Anita Folasade Ajao & Opeola Olusayo Oladosu
Department of Language and Communication Studies
The Polytechnic, Ibadan

Abstract

Nigerian comedians have tapped into the use of social media apps such as Facebook, Google, Instagram, YouTube and so on, to pass across humours to people because of easy accessibility to the audience. There have been many research works on humour from the perspective of situation comedy, stand-up comedy and computer mediated communication. However, there is a paucity of scholarly enquiries on humour situation in comedy skits. Therefore, this paper investigates humour interactions of characters in some comedy skits of Adebowale Adegoke (Mr Macaroni) and Stanley Edirin Isoko (Honourable Zaddy) with a view to accounting for the manifestation of humour strategies deployed and the functions that they serve in the comedy skits. The work is situated in incongruity and impoliteness theories. Also, various comedy skits selected were subjected to pragmatic analysis. Amusing, castigation, inferences of meaning of words and expressions as discourse functions discovered in the data. Also, banter, prosody, ribald joke and putdown are humour techniques found in the comedy skits. Adebowale Adegoke (Mr Macaroni) is discovered to make use of lot of banters to amuse his audience while Stanley Edirin Isokoh (Honourable Zaddy) uses codes, inferential expressions, ribald jokes and putdowns to achieve humour. Thus, the study shows that comedy skits have contributed pragmatically to the use of some words in Nigeria and humour serves much more functions than creating amusement to people.

Introduction

Comedy skits are the most explosive way of passing across humour on social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram, Google, TikTok, YouTube to mention a few, in Nigeria. According to African Polling Institute Report (2021), comedy skits evolved from stand-up comedy. Historically, the entertainment industry started from Stage plays, Music, Television shows, Radio shows, Stand-up comedy and now Comedy skits. In fact, the comedy skits are gaining prominence than the traditional form of entertainment through the use of videos (memes) with the average of 1 to 10 minutes duration on apps. So, the watching of comedy skits has been enhanced because they are watched on handsets, which are owned by 99% of Nigerians (African Polling Institute Report, 2021). Therefore, many people are being entertained with these comedy skits through the use of pidgin language, British English and Nigerian English most times.

Invariably, there have been existence of great comedians in Nigeria. They include Baba Sala, Zebrudiah, John Chukwu and so forth, who had made people laugh. Furthermore, Opa William is the pioneer of modern comedy in Nigeria through stand-up comedy and later, Alli Baba came into limelight. Thus, comedy industry expanded

and flourished because of the comedy festival organized and titled “The night of a thousand Laughter”, which took place in 1995. More so, this was recorded and later sent to different apps on social media to reach the larger audience. Moreover, this initiative led Alli Baba, Kayode Peter, Bovi Ugboma and Ayo Makun and so on, to start making comedy skits. Since that time, there have been influx of Nigerian youths into the production of comedy skits in Nigeria.

According to Oji (2021), comedy skits are not made in a vacuum. In addition, they show the reality of the society where they are set or produced. Thus, the functions of comedy skits cannot be over-emphasized. They produce creative entrepreneurs, social and cultural influencers and international ambassadors. Thus, comedy skits are medium of information dissemination, correct social ills, providing job opportunities and showcasing talents. In addition, they enhances mental well-being by making people happy. Therefore, comedy skits are the most patronized form of comedy in the entertainment industry nowadays because people sit down in the comfort of their home or at times work place to enjoy them on various apps on the handset, with their data.

Actually, comedy skits took a new dimension during covid-19 lockdown serving as a source of relief to Nigerians. Thus, during this time, they play the role of wealth creation and solve the problem of the need for economic diversification. For instance, African Polling Institute Report (2021) states that in 2019, Arts, entertainment and leisure industry contributed 5.5 billion naira to the Nigerian economy. Thus, the projection is that by 2025 the industry will generate \$ 10.8 billion to the Nigerian economy. Also, some of these comedy skits producers are Frang Dongi, Lasisi Elenu, William Uchemba, MC Uchenba, MC lovely, Mr. Macaroni, Honourable Zaddy to mention a few. More so, comedy skits are ubiquitous phenomenon and they reduce depression and ensure relaxation. However, pragmatics is highly useful in the demystification of the content of these various comedy skits.

Crystal (1987) opines that pragmatics is a field that studies the factors that govern the choice of language. Therefore, Pragmatics is an area of linguistics, which attempts to interpret verbal message in the context of its use. Thus, Pragmatics coverage include speech acts, rhetorical structure, conversation implication, management of reference discourse, co-operative principle, sequence of politeness principle etc. Furthermore, Pragmatics encompasses implicative, as well as non-verbal communication. All these elements/characteristics of pragmatics are applicable to the concept of humour. Humorous words, phrases, clauses and sentences are interpreted in relation to the context of use.

Therefore, humour is a universal concept that exist in every field of life. More so, humour is realized in comedy. Comedy makes people laugh while the laughter is the humour itself. Scholars have asserted that humour is present in everyday conversation and in different disciplines such as psychology (Lefcourt, 2001), Sociology (Davies, 2007), Philosophy (Morreall, 1987) and Medicine (Zieyler, 1992). Again, Bamigbose (2019) states that humour takes place between or among people and the participants are stratified based on their expected role when funny utterances are made to the audience and this is called stand-up comedy. There have been many

researches on humour e.g. Odebunmi and Ajiboye (2016) examine *Negotiation of wits in Facebook* and Azeez and Doghudje (2015) examine *Computer mediated interaction on societal issues by assessing Papa Ajasco comedy*. African Polling Institute (2021) also examines *Skits economy: an assessment of digital content creators*. Thus, it is very clear that Pragmatics of humour strategies and functions in ‘Mr Macaroni’ and ‘Honourable Zaddy’ have not been properly researched into. Thus, the examination of these two comedy skits under the ambit of pragmatics.

Debo Adebayo is known by his nickname Mr Macaroni. He was born in 1993 in Ogudu, Lagos state. Moreover, he is a Nigerian actor, content creator and an activist. His popularity grew from his comic skits on social media. He plays the role of “Daddy wa” or a sadistic lecturer called “Professor Hard life”. He loves using phrases like “Oin” “freaky freaky and “you are doing well”. He has been active since 2012 – till present. He is also known for his satirical works such as exposition of family life and lecture/students affairs. Stanley Edirin Isoko is popularly known as “Power to the people”. He is a renowned comedy skit creator. He was born on the 23 of September 1992 in Delta State, Nigeria He has featured in many comedy movies such as “Three wise men”. He is an actor, a comedian and a script writer. He acted as Oduma with Akpan on WAP Television programme.

Literature Review

There have been research on creation of humour, stand-up comedies, Computer mediated communication and comedy skits. On creation of comedy, Korostenikiene and Pakronsynte (2019) investigate *the challenge of audio-visual translation (AVT)* and comment on the problems inherent in the translation of humour. Data were collected from “Friends” (1994) to illustrate the different types of jokes, their translation and strategies used to do so. They discover that translation is based on compromising and that translators need to take into consideration what needs to be translated and adapt it to context in visual and conversational mode. Furthermore, Wiccrozek (2018) works on the *Pragmatics of humour* and emphasizes on the different types of recipient such as meta-recipient, fan recipient and regular recipient in tele-cinematic discourse. Thus, he submits that the production crew in tele-cinematic discourse devise dialogue in such a way to enable the audience to find funniness. In short, he contributes to humour research by establishing the participation framework in televised discourse.

On situational comedy, Palmer (2019) investigates *Conversation structure and implication in Professor John Bull* and discovers how co-operative maxims are flouted in the conversational turns of characters in the story. Also, Fulani (2016) investigates *how cultural assumptions and representation are deployed by Nigerian stand-up comedian in their performances*. There have also been studies on humour from Pragmatic point of view. For instance, Inya (2016) works on *Pragmatics of humour in a Nigerian university’s departmental chatroom*. Using four types of humour in his analysis; such as canned jokes punning, word play, question and answer jokes as well as hyperbole or understatement, he discovers that pragmatic acts performed are satirizing eliciting, laughter, electioneering, teasing and understatement. This is in

accordance with Mey (2006) belief that theory of pragmatic acts pragmemes are represented in pragmatic act pragmemes. Grice (1981), on the other hand, states that what makes humour is violation of maxim such as incoherent information and giving more than required information. Moreover, Oji (2021) works on *Painting the state in the text: A pragmatic analysis of Remi Raji's "Harvest of laughter"*. The study finds out there is depiction of government as cruel and the citizenry as victims through practs of oppression, embezzlement and deception.

On comedy skits, Nurudeen (2023) examines the *Pragmatic acts of humour in series of Helen Paul's "Alhaja Donjasi" comedy skits*. She studies the pragmatic style of humour by examining the textual pragmeme and related contextual variation in Nigerian comedy skit discourse. Again, the report by Africa Polling Institute (2021) titled *Skit Economy. An assessment of digital content creators in Nigeria* asserts that Nigeria entertainment industry have contributed a lot to Nigeria economy in terms of job opportunity to unemployed and providing tool for economic diversification. Furthermore, it found out that 67% of Nigerian watch comedy skits.. 65% consider comedy skit funny and entertaining, 10% consider it informative and 25% belief that it creates awareness. In terms of amusement, it is discovered that 65% of people find comedy skit funny and entertaining, while 20% find it informative and 15% perceive it as an elixir to relax.

In addition, the Africa Polling institute (2021) in its research discovers that comedy skit producers complained of poor funding, high cost of production, lack of equipment, lack of electricity supply, excessive regulation of social media and need for government and private support. Again, Sunday and Bamigbose (2021) works on the *Pragmatic analysis of humour strategies and functions in Jenifa's Diary' and professor "Johnbull"* and discovers humorous strategies such as amusing and castigation are used while humour functions like distorting collected knowledge and distorting cultural beliefs are prevalent . Humour techniques discovered are allusion, parody, banter, report, parody and teasing. More so, Faleye (2016) identifies the use of embolophrasia to achieve humour. This is a speech disorder in which meaning of words or sounds are interjected into sentence for humorous effect or epiphony. Furthermore, Abella and Reye (2014) state that artistic creation by man has tendency to amuse and criticize political activity through different humours being created. Adetunji (2013) in his work titled *the interaction context of humour in Nigeria* establishes that practs and allopracts are mostly use to achieve humour through informing, affirming, advising and criticizing certain things.

Humour has been investigated from the angle of computer mediated interaction with attention to social issues on social media. For instance, Lamidi (2016) studies "Visual – verbal code pairing in selected comments on Facebook". Ogba (2021) examines "Humour as a sensational tool in Nigeria in comedy skits about covid-19" and discovers that some skits on Facebook app were used to achieve this during covid-19 lockdown. From the above research, it is very obvious that there is little work done on the comedy skits of 'Mr Macaroni' and "Honourable Zaddy" pragmatically. Hence, this study examines the two comedy skits from the ambit of pragmatics with the view of understanding humour strategies and functions in them.

Theoretical Framework

Two theories were adopted for this study. They are incongruity and impoliteness theory. Incongruity theory was based on Aristotle view about humour. Initially, it was compared to Aristotle notion of ugliness that brings about humour. Later, other scholars such as James Beatrice, George Campbell, Immanuel Kent and so on added more ideas to it. For instance, Immanuel Kent introduced the concept of absurdity, Frederic Hegel introduced appearance while Henri Beryson brought in the idea of mechanical rigidity, which is the relationship between habitual/ mechanical behaviour and human intelligence (Cundall & Michael, 2007). The incongruity theory states that for something to be funny, one needs to perceive something unexpected, absurd, out of ordinary, strange, bizarre etc. in them. Thus, in modern research, incongruity theory is used to explain humorous things, because it is believed in this theory knowledge based is used to process humour.

The theory of impoliteness is propounded by Culpeper (2011). This theory states that impolite utterances bring about humour through interactions. This theory starts from the study of communication behaviours in interaction and it is very useful in analysing the character's intention. Again, impoliteness engages in aggressive face work in a particular context to cause social disruption. For instance, when the speaker attacks face, the audience will perceive a face attack. This is always achieved with the degree of intentionality. Also, impoliteness is not rudeness and it is approached from different fields such as Psychology, Sociology, Conflict studies, Media studies, History and Literary Studies. Culpeper (2011) divides impoliteness into inherent impoliteness and mock impoliteness. Inherent impoliteness occurs before a threatened face is achieved while mock impoliteness is an insult. Below are the impoliteness strategies.

- i. Bald on record – The threatened face is actually seen by the audience.
- ii. Positive impoliteness – This damaged the addressee's identity. It is manifested through criticism, insult, disagreement etc.
- iii. Negative impoliteness – It damages the negative face through the use of command order and threats.
- iv. Off-record (indirect) – This uses indirect way to achieve threatened face such as sarcasm and banter. It is also called mock politeness
- v. Withhold – This means failure to be polite when one is expected to do so. For instance, failing to thank someone who has done someone good.

In short, both incongruity and impoliteness theory are very useful to the study because they are used to account for various utterances exchange in the different comedy skits.

Methodology

Data used were derived from two content skit creators, who are purposively selected. They are Mr Macaroni and Honourable Zaddy comedy skits. Furthermore, they were chosen because they provide robust data for analysis which align with the aim of the study. Also, both of them produce comedy skits on family life and male and female

affairs. Four comedy skits of Mr Macaroni and four comedy skits of Honourable Zaddy are analysed pragmatically to locate humour strategies and functions. Purposive random technique was used to select the episodes in the skits and content analysis of the skits were done pragmatically.

Analysis of Mr Macaroni skits

Excerpt 1

Title: Show me your cook and I will tell you

Cook: I leave the curry and put powder in it to make belle fine. Then, I grind a Rolex watch so that the food is rich.

(Mr. Macaroni faints because it is his expensive Rolex watch he forgot in the kitchen that the cook grinded and added to the soup).

Cook: Ha, Oga fainted. It must be the black oil I saw in the kitchen and added to the soup.

In this Excerpt 1, Mrs Macaroni employs a new cook to relieve her of the stress of cooking. Initially, the husband thinks it is the lady with large breasts and big buttock that has been employed as cook. So, he declares that the food is sweet without tasting it. Eventually, he discover that she is his daughter's friend. Then, the real cook comes in with boyish features and Mr Macaroni finds out that the food is bad after tasting it and the cook had confessed to putting her face powder to make it fine and ground his Rolex watch into the soup to make it rich. Both husband and wife fainted. Thus, there is the realization of incongruity theory in the situation of the person that Mr Macaroni had thought was the cook was not actually the cook. The real cook looks unattractive as against the expected cook with large breast and big bottom. Again, amusement is achieved with the declaration of the content of the soup which shows the element of absurdity, as a humour technique, due to the fact that the soup had been cooked with "Rolex watch" "face powder" and "black oil". Black oil" in the context is the rat poison added, which results in the threatened face of Mr and Mrs Macaroni to convey impoliteness theory before they fainted. The humour function is a moral that a wife should cook for her husband and not rely on a cook to do so.

Excerpt 2

Title: Turn of event (Sat with new girlfriend in the restaurant).

Waiter: Sir, the last time you came you broke many cups and now that you are here you must pay for them. That was when you came with a slim girl.

Mr Macaroni: You cannot understand. Nkan nse mi.

Mr Macaroni: (Sings) "ma pa mi iyawo olele".

Mr Macaroni: Stop that you fucking bastard!. Bobo, alaya vulgarizer. Why madam are you with this man in the restaurant.

Mrs Macaroni: Why are you also with a freaky freaky in the restaurant?

In the Excerpt 2, Mrs Macaroni and Mr. Macaroni arrive to the restaurant with different partners. Mr Macaroni is accompanied by his girlfriend while Mrs. Macaroni enters with her boyfriend. The husband, Mr. Macaroni is not happy with the situation and both of them are seen accusing each other of adultery. Humour function in this skit is violation of cultural maxim. In the Nigerian culture, a married woman is not expected to have a boyfriend that Mrs Macaroni has in the skit. The term “alaya vulganizer” used to describe Mrs Macaroni’s boyfriend, brings amusement as well as castigation, which is a humour strategy. The word “freaky freaky” in the story is used to mean an illicit partner. In addition, there is the use of code switching in “You cannot understand nnkan nse mi”. Also, there is the use of Yoruba musical allusion strategy in the song sang by Mr Macaroni to his wife “Mapa mi o, iyawo olele.....” to achieve humour. Incongruity theory is achieved when Mr Macaroni sees his wife with another man in the restaurant while he is also with another lady in the same restaurant.

Excerpt 3

Title: The beautiful ones are usually scariest

Mr Macaroni: Fantabulous (looking at a woman’s exposed cleavage). I will help you. What is the problem?

Mr Macaroni: The way you look oo, I will help you with my life. Enter into the car.

Mr Macaroni: I see nobody. If I see any girl let snake bite me.

Guys: Thank u. Na so this girl run away from aro oo. Anybody she bites, na die the person go die (Guys leave)

Girl: (from the back seat) Hello freaky freaky.
(bites Mr Macaroni’s hand)

In the above Excerpt 3, Mr Macaroni helps a lady by hiding her in his jeep, whom he does not know is a mad lady because she is well dressed and has large breasts and a large bottom, as he likes his woman to be. Eventually, he discovers that he has a mad girl inside his jeep and the girl starts biting him. The humour is achieved through sudden information given by those looking for the girl that anyone she bites will go mad. However, it is rather late for Mr Macaroni to protect himself from the mad girl, due to the fact that he hid the girl directly at the back seat of his jeep. With this event, the incongruity theory is achieved. Mr Macaroni’s act of looking at the girl’s cleavage depicts how girls are seen as sexual objects to achieve humour in this skit because it is the major reason why Mr Macaroni allows her to hide in his jeep. Furthermore, humour strategies used in the skit are parody and surprise. The humour function exemplified is a moral that it is not every beautiful girl that is sane. Incongruity theory is achieved in the story when Mr Macaroni discovers that the beautiful girl he has helped is a mad lady and impoliteness theory manifests when the mad girl attempts to bite Mr Macaroni and he is seen with a frown and a worried face.

Excerpt 4

Title – Macaroni no yet single joy or sympathy for his worker

Mr Macaroni: (Sings into the phone: fall for you like a thief, when I see you, I feel to steal a kiss from you. He notices his worker in front of him)

Mr Macaroni: (Points to a huge pile of document on his table). Carry everything and go and type. Then convert them to pdf file. When you finish this, wash my car because I want to be seeing my teeth in the body of the car. Then you will drive me home. After this you go and buy food not on the highland but Sango-Ota.

Worker: Ha.

Mr Macaroni: O ha o le lenu

Worker: I am sorry sir, the person that ask for road will not get lost. What is my job in this office *gangan*

Worker: E ya were gan. Ki lo sie
(Slaps Mr Macaroni on the face)

In Excerpt 4, Mr Macaroni is seen giving his worker duties that he could not accomplish in a day. At the end, the worker becomes very furious and gives his employer (Mr Macaroni) a dirty slap because he is being paid ₦28,500 monthly which does not adequately compensate for the task given to him by his employer. In this skit, the humour function that is passed across to the audience is satirical in nature because it reveals an employee being over-utilized and under-paid by his worker. Incongruity is achieved when the worker slaps the employer in the face and impoliteness is shown in the threatened face of the employer. Again, there is the use of eccentric simile when Mr Macaroni is discussing with his girlfriend on phone, e.g., “fall for you like a thief.... feel to steal a kiss” This shows how Mr Macaroni has sexually objectified his girlfriend. More so, there is the use of codemixing in “... in this office *gangan*”, use of code-switching from English to Yoruba “*Ha, ki lo ha e lenu*” and at the same time it shows effective use of jocular retort in the use of banter and these are some of the humour strategies used in this comedy skit.

Analysis of the comedy skits of Honourable Zaddy

Excerpt 5

Title Women Empowerment

(Zaddy was in bed with a girlfriend at the hotel. He was about to remove his dress when his phone rang).

Zaddy: I am at the middle of the Parliamentary debate on Women Empowerment I discussed with you. I want it to pass to first round and enact it into law.

Wife: Please make sure it passes to 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th round. You have my full support.

Zaddy: My feet are already on the bill

Zaddy: Power to the women

In Excerpt 5, Zaddy is seen telling lies to his wife on the phone that he is at the parliament passing a bill on women empowerment while he is in the hotel with a woman in his bed. The humour is amusing when the wife encourages Zaddy to do first, second, third and fourth round of passing the women empowerment act. Another amusement is achieved when Zaddy says “my feet are already on the bill” while his feet were on the bosom of another woman in a hotel room. Zaddy uses a lot of coded expressions to achieve humour such as “middle of parliament” which contextually means about to have sex. Also, “woman empowerment” means a man have sexual relationship with a woman. His wife does not understand this because she is unable to decode correctly the words and expressions. Thus, Zaddy sees women as sexual objects. There is also the use of incongruity to bring out laughter because of the unexpected context that Zaddy is at that time. Thus, his wife emphasizing the passing of bill from 1st round to 4th round also brings amusement because she is unable to decode what her husband is communicating with his girlfriend. This portrays a woman as an object that is deceived by a man. So, the function of humour is that it reveals the evil that men do to their wives.

Excerpt 6

Title: INEC TEST

(Zaddy engages in a telephone conversation in his wife's presence)

Zaddy: The masses are in tandem with parliament

Zaddy: There is a reason why people above the age of 18 years are not allowed to vote. Am I to teach you that while casting your vote you are supposed to protect your vote?

Zaddy: You are supposed to stop the voting process now, visit the nearest INEC office to confirm the situation of the vote.

Zaddy: These are difficult political thugs. Power to the people!

In this Excerpt 6, Zaddy introduces a girl to one of his friends who infests the girl with staphylococcus and syphilis. Thus, the girl calls Zaddy to explain the situation of things to him. Humour strategies used are coded words, coded expressions and ribald jokes. For instance, “Voting” refers to sexual act, “Masses are in tandem with parliament” means his wife is with him and “Stopping voting process” means stopping the sexual act. In short all these words and expressions bring about humour. Again, incongruity theory is achieved in the situation of the girl being introduced to Zaddy's friend and contacting sexual disease after intercourse with the man. There is the use amusement when the sexual disease called staphylococcus and syphilis are described as stubborn “political thugs”. The humour function is the moral that women or ladies should use condom during sexual escapades with strange men.

Excerpt 7

Title: After the match

(Phone rings)

Zaddy: Your team is not called to win in a friendly match; only play to impress home-base fans. Was it during the first or second half that you sustained injury?

Honourable Bassey: I never enter the 1st half when I saw white. I thought I was in heaven but discovered myself in the hospital. I thought she was a small girl as she jump up, come down giving me order like a military person.

Zaddy: The team should understand the field. Most footballers cannot play free kick. Players must be careful in taking instruction.

Honourable Bassey: Hee. The medicine I took make my heart to be doing yigitigi ghrum rumu oo.

Zaddy: To avoid falling and collapsing on the field, players must always do exercise

Zaddy: Tell your home-based fans that your team needs medical attention which is bed rest.

Zaddy: Power to the people.

In Excerpt 7 above, Zaddy is seen advising his friend on his sexual escapades with a young girl with inferential expressions such as “friendly match” which means sexual act; “most footballers cannot play free kicks” means elderly people should be very careful in bed; *yigitigigbrum rumu* – means makes him dizzy and “Players” means those involved in the sexual escapades. The use of these inferential words are humorous. Invariably, they depict the use of coded words, expressions and ribald jokes as humour strategies to achieve humour in the excerpt. However, the fact still remains that in this skit women and girls are perceived as sexual objects from which humour is derived from. Also, there is the use bantering in “she jumps up, down, come down, giving me military order.” Thus incongruity theory is achieved in the story when Honourable Bassey nearly collapses after having sexual intercourse with a young girl and would have to lie to his wife at home that he needed medical attention. Also, there is the use of parody in the way Honourable Bassey speaks throughout the comedy skit to achieve humour. The humour function achieved in this excerpt 7 is in form of a moral to elderly men that sexual intercourse with young girls can be very detrimental to their health. It should also be noted that this skit borders on ribald jokes. Although, it brings humour, it has implication for Nigeria’s socio-cultural context. Women and girls are portrayed as sexual objects and this is a sort of violence against the female gender in Nigerian society.

Excerpt 8

Title: Crime of love

Rubby: Relax Zaddy, there are 720 women in prison but 350 women originally. 520 later charged with man-slaughter are added.

Zaddy: You are supposed to use emotional intelligence or what is called emotional quotient and walk out of the marriage with positive stress.

Girl: I was ashamed to walk out because of what my parents will say. I know you can use your influence to reduce my sentence. I need your help for my sentence to be reduced to seven years.

Zaddy: If you get that, who will bring the dead man to life for seven years? Power to the people.

In Excerpt 8, Zaddy is seen discussing with a woman who has been accused of killing her husband and wants him to assist her in reducing her prison sentence. Humour is manifested in the way the woman relates the number of women in prison who have killed some 'zaddies'. This shows the extent of violence of women against men in the society and this has made women prison inmates to explode. Also, there is the use of rhetorical question, as humour strategy, to show the gravity of what the woman had done as stated in "...who will bring the dead man to life for seven years?" In this skit, the humour function is to deconstruct the societal belief about divorce. If Ruby had divorced the man, maybe she would not have killed him. So, Zaddy calls it "emotional quotient", which is a potential addition to Nigerian English corpus.

Conclusion

The paper accounts for the strategies and functions of humour in the comedy skits of "Mr Macaroni" and "Honourable Zaddy". Thus, "Mr Macaroni" makes use of humour strategies such as mock impoliteness, funny songs, amused expressions, ribald jokes and unexpected actions to make humour, banter, jocular retort, and jocular simile, to mention a few. Some humour functions discovered are moralistic and satiric in nature. However, Honourable Zaddy makes use of a lot of inferential expressions, ribald jokes and jocular codes to pass across meaning to his audience. There is also the use of castigation and amusement too with prosody. Humour functions realized include deconstruction of societal beliefs about divorce, revealing the evils men and women do and the use of inferential words to bring about peace in the home, in stressful situations. Although, the two comedy skits are based on family issues and affairs between men and women, Debo Adebawale in "Mr Macaroni" uses direct and indirect expressions to achieve humour while Stanley Isoko in "Honourable Zaddy" uses inferential words, ribald jokes and jocular codes to achieve humour.

Furthermore, these two skit makers have contributed a lot to vocabulary development and various new expressions in Yoruba, pidgin and Nigerian English. Again, it should be noted that these comedy skits have used sexual objectification of women or girls. There are a lot of sexual expressions such as: male gaze at girls or women to achieve humour, sex appeal from male to female, to mention but a few. All these reveal the stark realities of what is happening in Nigerian society which has a negative implication for women and girls in Nigerian socio-cultural context. The new image of females as sexual object in the two skits needs overhauling and it is essential to improve on the portrayal of female gender to bring about humour.

Therefore, it is recommended that there is the need to create humour from the improved image of women and girls as assertive, wonderful creature of God, society builders and so on and not as sexual objects. Furthermore, Government should make available special loans for the upcoming skit makers to enhance the production of more skits in order to encourage youth empowerment and more entertainment for the populace. There is also the need for humour strategies and functions to be taught at every level of Nigerian education system because many people find comfort in humour due to the prevailing economic condition in Nigeria. Again, there is the need to increase the time allotted to comedy skits to fifteen minute because it will enable the comedy skit makers to conclude their stories in the comedy instead of stopping it abruptly. If all these are actualized, women and girls will be portrayed in a better light, the comedy skits produced will improve and Nigerian comedy skits will have a pride of place nationally and internationally.

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