

The rhetoric of comedy: exploring the language and humour styles of Filipino stand-up comedians

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Abstract - Stand-up comedy is an act in which a certain person performs to make people laugh with the intention of appealing to them. It illustrates various language and humour styles that are used by comedians in performing; these styles vary depending on the audience, place, and theme of the event and are unique to each performer. This study aims to provide information regarding the specific approach that Filipino stand-up comedians used during their performances and how effective it was for the delivery and reception of humour. This study employed a qualitative research design using interpretative phenomenological analysis as the specific approach with which it is concerned in exploring experiences in their terms (Smith et al, 2009). The study also uses thematic analysis approach as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) which two themes under language styles utilized by stand-up comedians (1) incorporating language based on the audience (2) use of colloquial words and phrases. Three themes under humour styles utilized by stand-up comedians are (1) audience-centric performance, (2) observational comedy, (3) improvisational comedy. Also, three themes underlie the effectiveness of using language and humour styles (1) importance of building connections, (2) extensive influences of endeavoring to be funny and, (3) enhancing audience satisfaction.

Keywords: stand-up comedy, comedic expression; phenomenological analysis; precise language style

I. INTRODUCTION

Stand-up comedy is a unique and dynamic style of humour performance that illustrates how humour is dealt by participants. The performer is referred to as a stand-up comedian, a comic, or a comedian (Zoglin, 2019, see Tan, 2022). One-liners, stories, remarks, or a shtick that uses props, music, magic, or ventriloquism are all parts of stand-up comedy. It can be done practically anyplace, including comedy clubs, comedy festivals, pubs, nightclubs, colleges, or theatres. Other aspects, such as body language, gestures, and voice intonation, support and enhance the humorous performances and language styles. This must always be considered (Dore, 2018). Comedy performances follow a largely conventional structure; however, they can dynamically adapt to suit the audience in front of them. Yet, comedy heavily relies on stereotypes related to race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religion, which some people may find offensive. Most significantly, stand-up comedy enables a form of free speech that is rare in other types of social interaction. As a fact, the comedian-audience engagement is an important factor of the comedic performance (Glen, 2021). Ethnic, racial, or cultural identity can play a large role in stand-up comedy performances, which are typically dependent on autobiographical content, embodied performance, and audience involvement. It is indeed important to comprehend broader theories on humour and comedy because these are the main stand-up tools. Stand-up is not just a profession for these comics; it is also an identity that they embody both on and off-stage. As a result, we cannot disagree that stand-up comedians have made individuals who have seen them perform happy.

There are only few studies that discuss stand-up comedy and how entertainers keep their audiences amused. Learn more about comedy and creativity in general could be done by studying stand-up comedians (Ogoanah & Ojo, 2018). Even though comedians may not be typical people, researching comedians can shed light on what makes people laugh and what doesn't as well as aid in a greater understanding of the creative process. Likewise, humour is more than just something to amuse you; comedy is more than just a fun way to pass the time on a night out. The fabric of our daily lives is woven with them. Humour is present everywhere, whether you are telling a funny story at the bar, cracking a joke about yourself after receiving a compliment, or giving a scathing one at a funeral (O'Hara, 2016).

Nonetheless, while bringing joy and laughter to their audiences, stand-up comedians have also had to deal with some connected challenges. In a recent published article of Mogul (2022), Indian comedian Nalin Yadav was detained for allegedly making jokes that were offensive to the Hindu faith, Yadav, a comedian who pled not guilty, is one of a rising number of journalists, activists, and entertainers who have been affected by the nation's crackdown on freedom of expression. In reference to the article, it is claimed by Nelson (2014) that Stanhope and Cease are assessed for how they combine rhetorical devices and contexts with dialectical methods and measures for actual circumstances. The use of normative pragmatics will aid in determining if the audience will accept important arguments as reasonable or dismiss them as jokes. It is clear on this article that not everyone will going to appreciate what a stand-up comedian is all about.

In many nations around the world, including the Philippines, stand-up comedy is popular. With the help of numerous well-known and rising artists, the Philippine comedy business is expanding day by day. Many gifted stand-up comedians in the Philippines have their own distinct wit and subject matter, just like other international comedy stars from around the world. The capacity to make others laugh also comes naturally to some Filipinos, who find it simple to chuckle (Rodriguez, 2020). Comedians have always dominated the spotlight from the start of the Philippine entertainment industry. Aspiring Filipino stand-ups are paving their road to comedic glory, much like renowned comic,

author, and producer Jo Koy (Insong, 2020). Everyone who has attended a Filipino gathering can attest to the fact that comedians are always lively and full of good talk, but Pinoys are gradually showcasing their outgoing personality and distinctive, irreverent sense of humour (Chua & Pimentel, 2014). As the Filipino comedians adopted the stage and ventured afterward comedy's restricted function as a source of laughs and jokes, one had to acknowledge comedy as an actual and genuine art form.

In recent years, the Philippines has built up a thriving stand-up comedy industry, yet extensive academic studies that analyze the language and humour styles of Filipino stand-up comedians are noticeably lacking. Despite the fact that stand-up comedy is becoming ever more common and has a significant impact on Philippine society, research on the topic of comedy across all disciplines is limited. This inefficiency of research regarding stand-up comedians' language and humour styles highlights the need for further investigation in the field of comedy. Thus, this present study aims to shed light on the specific approach that Filipino stand-up comedians employ to engage audiences and effectively convey their thoughts. The study's objectives were to examine the precise language style and humour styles used by comedians throughout their performances and to evaluate how well these languages and humour affect how comedy is delivered and received. In the Philippines, stand-up comedy is a well-liked form of entertainment. Exploring the humour and language of local comedians can reveal the distinctive rhetorical devices and cultural references they use to produce humour. Additionally, it can shed light on important issues such as gender, politics, and religion. The results of this study can expand our knowledge of how language and humour comedy are utilized in comedy live performance events. Furthermore, gaining a deeper understanding of Filipino culture and its unique contributions to comedy can be accomplished through familiarizing ourselves with the language and humour of Filipino stand-up comedians.

1.1 Stand-up Comedians in the Philippines

Jose Marie Borja Vical, famously known as Vice Ganda, is a renowned comedian in the Philippines who is known for his influential presence in the media. He first gained popularity for his stand-up routines in comedy bars in the Philippines and abroad, where he used observational comedy, situational irony, and sarcasm to poke fun at Filipino culture and human sexuality. He became successful and has since gained the respect and attention of many Filipinos. A study entitled "The Pragmatics of Irony in Humour: Emerging Drifts in Philippine

Witticism was conducted by Rillo and Buslon (2019), which analyzed the use of irony in Vice Ganda's jokes that has identified as a growing trend in Filipino humour. This study provided evidence that Vice Ganda's brand of comedy, characterized by conversational witticisms and irony as its driving force, is an effective means to achieve humour. It is evident that such trends may have been influenced by the widespread popularity of Vice Ganda across different media platforms in today's modern Philippine society.

Ancheta (2011), examines the use of observational humour by Filipino-American stand-up comedians in the United States which appears to create a representation of historically marginalized ethnic groups in the country, with a focus on how they discuss topics related to the Filipino-American community, such as about the Philippines, Filipino migration to the US, and Filipino-American hybrid practice including the relationship between two countries it paves way in recognizing Filipino Americans as a potent American ethnic group considering the data facts that it envelopes the second largest Asian group in the United States. This paper aims to explore how these comedians construct and deconstruct ideas of the Philippines and Filipino-ness in a transnational context through their performances and how does they apply or employ this during their plays. The study focuses on using Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection which is backed up by John Limon's critique of this concept in relation to stand-up comedy and humour. The

paper specifically analyzes the comedic act of Jo Koy, which is a well-known Filipino-American stand-up comedian and how does she showcases and deliver her performance, reflecting on how does she apply the idea of Filipino-ness in her acts.

Javier (2013), it examines how indie komiks creators in the Philippines are crossing over in the mainstream and taking over in which it led to adapting and re-appropriating the Godzilla and Kaiju genre in order to create unique and culturally relevant narratives in the form of Philippine Komiks, wherein they apply new ideas from the movies and in return create such good and innovative results. The film highlights the impact of Godzilla in international popular culture specially in the Philippines wherein it also examines how Filipino artists infuse their work with local elements, societal issues, and personal experiences and how does they apply it unto their craft. This paper also includes the influence of such movies in the Philippines and how does they take inspiration in showcasing the innovative spirit of these creators, "Paro" which demonstrates the growth and evolution of Philippine art and the diverse storytelling possibilities within the medium of komiks and embrace ideas and crafts from other countries which in this case they get ideas from Godzilla and Kaiju

"Laugh trip" is a 20-minute documentary that examines the state of stand-up comedy in the Philippines, focusing on the differences between the vaudeville era and contemporary comedy bar acts. The film follows Sashi Giggle, a struggling stand-up comedian, and incorporates the insights of Dolphy Quizon, the King of Philippine comedy. It explores the historical context of stand-up comedy, the challenges faced by comedians, and the socio-cultural significance of the art form. Through interviews, archival footage, and personal narratives, "Laughtrip" provides a comprehensive understanding of the evolution and current state of stand-up comedy in the Philippines (Sherlock, 2016)

1.2 Language and Humour Styles in Stand-up Comedy

Filani (2015) stand-up comedians create humour and engage their audience, through focusing on the linguistic features of joke telling, performance style and it also involves stage persona. The research uses transcriptions of performances by Jerry Seinfeld and Steven Wright to provide real and factual material for analysis. The study finds that successful humour in stand-up comedy does not depend on a specific performance style, but it is dependent on the comedian's use of linguistic techniques, particularly the incongruity revealed by punch lines. Also, the research contributes to the fields in relation to linguistics and discourse analysis.

According to Cann and Kuiper (2014) how humour is connected to social boundaries, drawing from cultural sociology and humour scholarship and supported by specific examples in which the discussion is organized around provable examples. His paper identifies five mechanisms that explain the emergence of humour styles, which are shaped by cultural, linguistic, and social factors such as: implicit and culture-specific knowledge, linguistic aptitude, sensitivity to taboo issues, emotional responses, and stylistic criteria and standards in which it often creates symbolic boundaries, as described by sociologists. It also states that literary humour reflects and contributes to the humour style of a particular group, time, and location, often by adapting or breaking away from current humour styles and plays an important role in shaping humour styles that can serve as a catalyst for their evolution. Overall, understanding the mechanisms of humour styles can help us appreciate the role of humour in our lives and its reflection of our social identities.

The use of subversive humour in Spanish stand-up comedy was observed by studying the performances of two prominent female comedians which is Eva Hache and Patricia Sornosa. A collection of 25 monologues from the two comedians was examined and evaluated including their humourous sequences were categorized and analyzed. The

focus was on subversive humour, and the results showed that only 22.38% of Eva Hache's sequences were centred around subverting the status quo, while Patricia Sornosa challenged heteronormative discourse in the majority of her sequences (87.93%). The study also analyzed the linguistic techniques used by the comedians to generate a subversive effect, including topics, targets, strategies used in discourse and linguistic cues. The study revealed that both comedians used subversive humour, but in different ways in a way that Patricia Sornosa openly criticized heteronormative standards while Eva Hache used a subtler approach to tease and undermine male power (Gurillo & Bernabéu, 2019).

Meanwhile, language styles must have evolved within a community, regardless of its structure. Human societies, similar to those in recorded history, could only exist among individuals who share a common language and have a mutual understanding of its use. The ability to use intonation and voice qualities in spoken language is crucial for achieving various communicative functions and requires advanced phonetic analysis skills. Along with grammar and vocabulary, these factors play a key role in conveying subtle meanings. Language styles can vary greatly depending on culture and social group, so it's important to understand linguistic conventions and expectations to communicate effectively. People may also adapt their language use to different social contexts through code-switching (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.). This difference in style in language explains the concept of *stylics*. According to Widdowson (2014), *stylistics* is concerned with analyzing language use at the level of grammar, morphology, syntax, and meaning in order to understand how speakers and writers use language to convey their intended meaning. Additionally, it examines how listeners and readers interpret that meaning and analyzes the phenomena of language style at the sentence level. In other words, the way speakers or writers use language is essential to how readers or listeners interpret it. The goal of stylistic analysis is to explore how language choices contribute to the overall meaning and effect of a piece of writing or speech, rather than simply identifying differences in style.

Language style also serves the purpose of attracting listeners, and it is utilized in various aspects. In the field of comedy, comedians use different language styles to deliver different types of jokes, and their language style becomes one of their defining characteristics. The creation of humour in comedy heavily relies on the linguistic aspects, particularly the use of language style. Comedians who are skilled in using language style can create a funny effect on their audience through their oral or written performances. Each comedian has their own unique language style, and there are no set rules for choosing a particular style to use (Rullyanti & Nurdianto, 2019).

According to Mintz (1985), stand-up comedy is arguably the most traditional, widely applicable, fundamental, and profoundly significant form of humorous expression. It is the purest form of cultural expression for the general public, serving essentially the same social and cultural functions in virtually every known society, both past and present. A tight, limiting definition of standup comedy would be an encounter between a single, standing actor acting comedic and/or uttering comedic things to an audience, without much in the way of costume, prop, scene, or dramatic vehicle. Yet, as described, the origins of stand-up comedy are tied to richer, more complicated rites, rituals, and dramatic experiences than this straightforward definition can encompass. Comedic activities are significant in human life as they serve various purposes, including criticizing societal conditions within the comedian's community. To provide constructive criticism without being aggressive, comedians establish a close connection with their audience to effectively deliver their message. This involves utilizing informal language styles with ambiguous meanings that may confuse the audience. However, the aim is to elicit laughter and smiles from the audience (Wijana, 2020).

Therefore, this present study sought to answer the following research questions. (1). What specific language styles are commonly utilized by stand-up comedians during their comedic performance? (2). What specific humour styles are commonly employed by these comedians during their performance? (3). How effective do these language and humour styles contribute to the delivery and reception of humour?

II. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

The present study employed a qualitative research design using interpretative phenomenological analysis as the specific approach. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a qualitative research approach committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences. IPA is phenomenological in that it is concerned with exploring experience in its own terms (Smith et al, 2009). This methodological approach examined the language and humour styles of stand-up comedians in the Philippines. On this study, the researchers was able to explore the experiences of stand-up comedians during their comedic performances.

2.2 Settings and Participants

The respondents of our research study were 8-12 comedians. They were interviewed for this study to gather data regarding their use of language styles during their humour to the audiences. Individual interviews was conducted through face to face at their specific workplace and online approach such as video chatting the participants through Messenger app, where the participants can be interviewed only during their preferred time. In this study, purposive-convenience sampling was applied, for the researchers will intentionally select respondents that are available, easy to access and convenient to locate, in which it may include online and social media surveys, asking acquaintances, surveying people in the mall or in the streets and in other crowded places to find participants. Furthermore the target participants we have selected follows certain criteria as follows; (1) They must be all from Eastern Visayas; and (2) Their ages must be 18 years old and up; and (3) They willingly participated in the conduct of our study. In addition to that, ethical considerations were also observed when the data were collected, wherein research participants have full anonymity and their identity was protected, research participants were not forced and were voluntarily willing to participate, and the study was conducted with respect to the participants time.

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The respondents provided their explicit consent by signing a consent form in order to make clear that their participation is voluntary. They were informed about the objective of the study, the data collection procedures to be employed, and it was assured that there would be no potential risks or costs associated with their participation. Furthermore, it is assured that any data collected would be treated with the utmost discretion and confidentiality. After they agree, they were requested to provide their preferred time for scheduling either an online or face-to-face interview. Although the interview was semi-structured, the participants was given six (6) pre-set open-ended questions to allow the participants to further elaborate on their insights regarding the study. Moreover, the interview was conducted in the dialect that the respondents are most comfortable speaking. The duration of the interview is expected to be 5-10 minutes. Lastly, after the completion of data collection, the data obtained from the interviews were transcribed carefully and reviewed multiple times. Subsequently, using a thematic analysis approach as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), the interview transcripts was identified by codes for the participants, for example, C1 (Comedian 1) and C2 (Comedian 2), to preserved anonymity it was condensed and categorized into themes and subthemes based on their content. In addition to that we've used Saldaña's (2016) manual coding for qualitative data

analysis. It then provides definitions and examples of codes and categories and their roles in qualitative data analysis. The procedures and mechanics of coding follow, along with discussions of analytic software and team collaboration. This method concludes with reflections on necessary researcher attributes and the role of method in coding (Saldaña, 2016).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study around the research questions: the specific language styles and humour styles that stand-up comedians commonly utilize during their comedic performances, and their effectiveness in contributing to the delivery and reception of humour.

3.1 Language Styles Utilized by Stand-up Comedians

The language styles commonly utilized by stand-up comedians in their comedic performance can be categorized into two major themes: (1) Incorporating language based on the audiences, and (2) Use of colloquial words/phrases.

Incorporating language based on the audiences

The research findings indicate that the language used during performances is influenced by various factors, including the location, client preferences, and the audience. The study focused on a performance group and explored their language choices in different contexts. This view is evident in the following statement.

“Okay, ma depende po kung saan po kami na location, saang lugar kung sa for example pag Tacloban syempre magta-tagalog po kami kasi hindi ako marunong mag Waray. At tsaka pag sa ibang lugar naman kung Cebuano eh di nagce-Cebuano kami ganun lang. Depende rin sa client namin pag English ang client nage-English din kami. Depende sa audience, depende rin. Kasi pag kunyare yung mga customer kadalasan, karamihan audience mga bata syempre hindi ka naman gagamit mga words na maano yung mga bata ma depende. Pag adult naman yung customer naming dun kami bumabanat tsaka depende din sa status ng buhay ng customer, mga formalities ang ginagamit namin. [Translation: It will depend on where we are performing. For example, in Tacloban, of course, we will speak Tagalog because I don't know how to speak Waray. And in other places, if it's Cebuano, then we speak Cebuano. It's as simple as that. It also depends on our client. If our client speaks English, then we speak English as well. It depends on the audience, it really does. Because if, for example, most of the customers are children, you wouldn't use certain words that might not be appropriate for them. It depends. If the customers are adults, that's where we unleash our jokes, and it also depends on the status of their lives. We adjust our language accordingly, considering formalities as well. (C5)]”

It also highlights the adaptability and flexibility of the comedic performer in adjusting their language based on various factors. Their ability to cater to the linguistic preferences of different locations, clients, and audiences demonstrates their professionalism and commitment to delivering engaging and appropriate performances. Comedic performers possess a unique talent for tailoring their language to specific situations. Whether they are performing in different countries, regions, or even specific venues, these individuals have the ability to adapt their linguistic style to resonate with the local audience. By incorporating local dialects, cultural references, and humour, they can connect with audiences on a deeper level, making their performances more relatable and enjoyable. Moreover, comedians understand the importance of customizing their language to meet the requirements and expectations of different clients. This level of adaptability demonstrates their professionalism and willingness to go the extra mile to ensure a successful and memorable performance.

"Actually it's a mix kasi it depends on your audience. Kasi for example in barangay, I usually do my hosting kasi on barangay level. Very formal. Kasi through jokes or punchlines, depending kasi gihapon ito ha imo audience. Kasi hin'o talaga nim tatagaan hin jokes. Like barangay level like birthday hit kabataan, siyempre pambata gud liwat it imo tun kuan. Then kung debut ahh...or debut pwede gihapon. So nadepende it akon punchline ngan jokes hit level of intellectual capacity iton hit akon audience. Nagagamitan ko man gihap hiya hin mga jokes ha mga formal na event. Pa-hype up, love back. Pero usually English or waray Tagalog, it's mix na lang para waray problema. [Translation: *Actually it's a mix but it depends on your audience. Because for example in barangay, I usually do my hosting on barangay level. Very formal, but through jokes or punchlines, depending on the audience. Because it depends on who they are that you are going to give jokes to, Like barangay level like children's birthday, of course if it's for children then you act as the same. Then if it is a debut ahh...or debut it is applicable. So it depends on my punchline and the jokes on the level of intellectual capacity of my audience. I still use these jokes in formal events. Hype up, love back. But usually English or waray, Tagalog, it's just a mix to have no problems. (C7)]"*

Indeed, utilizing various and appropriate humour and language styles may really be of great help on the delivery of humour and the overall comedic performance, especially on the linguistic features, performance style, and stage persona of stand-up comedians. It finds that successful humour in stand-up comedy relies on the comedian's use of linguistic techniques (Schwarz, 2009). However, it is observed that some comedians commonly employ the national language, Tagalog, as their main language style. This choice can be attributed to the fact that Tagalog is widely understood by a majority of the population in the Philippines.

"Usual na ginagamit namon tagalog... kay tungod tagalog pan ano man hiya pan kalahatan man. Ma waray ka, Bisaya ka, Ilokano ka, or ano na basta tagalog makaintindi hira so ginagamit na usual an tagalog ginagamit namon. [Translation: *Usually, the language we use is Tagalog, it is because it is understood by everyone. Even when you are a Waray, Bisaya, or Ilokano speaker, you can really understand Tagalog that's why we commonly use Tagalog as our language style. (C1)]"*

C1's view was supported by another comedian who revealed.

"So most of the time is like you know I, I use tagalog...tagalog language, Filipino language kasi itong yung pinaka the best way nga magbato ng joke in a way na yung punch line kasi minsan di ba pag sa dialect natin na waray minsan nagiging awkward yung dating, yung impact. And then para sa akin mas komportable ako using Filipino language...Filipino language rather than English kasi mas abot ng masa, alam mo yung parang mas maintindihan ng lahat, ayon. [Translation: *So most of the time is like you know I, I use tagalog...tagalog language, The Filipino language, because it's the best way to deliver jokes because sometimes, when using our local dialect like Waray, the punchline can become awkward and lose its impact. For me, I feel more comfortable using the Filipino language instead of English because it reaches a wider Filipino audience, you know, it's like everyone can understand it. (C6)]"*

To summarize, when performing in different regions or cities, comedians commonly use the national language to connect better with the audience. For example, if the audience is composed of speakers of various languages, the comedian would adapt and perform in national language. This demonstrates the performers' awareness of linguistic diversity and their effort to establish a connection through shared language. Additionally, the choice of language is influenced by the nature of the event and the audience's characteristics. Comedians take into consideration the age group of the audience, ensuring that their jokes and language are appropriate for the intended listeners. Moreover, the status and formality of the event also play a role in language selection, with performers adapting their language to fit the context appropriately.

3.2 Use of colloquial words/phrases

The research findings indicates that the use of colloquial phrases and words adds authenticity and relatability to the comedic routines. Comedians employ colloquial language to establish a connection with their audience, as it reflects the way people naturally speak in their everyday lives. The performers also create a sense of familiarity and make their humour more accessible to the audience. Example of this is the gay lingo (Filipino gay language) which is commonly used by comedians in their performances. This view is evident to the following statements.

"More on, gay language talaga. [Translation: Yes it's more on gay language. But... but not everyone in the audience understands gay language or lingo. So, you really have to use Tagalog, Waray, or English. (C2)]"

"Oo, mga sarcastics nga kuan pero minimal, dre ka puyde kay ahh.. amo la gihapon gumamit ka ngani, that's what I'm telling you earlier nga dapat kun gumamit ngani hin sarcasm ngani or sarcastic nga dating dapat dre hiya hurtful ha...ha... tawo dre hurtful ha feelings ba hit usa ka tawo nga imo gin-aaa... tawag hine gintothrow mo tun ha iya na joke or na mga punchline dapat dre .. dre.. an dating ba is dre sarcastic ha ira though malain ahh... kay diba taklesa mga kabayutan pero ginsisiring man namon tam audience na "mga bayot" kami gin-iinform na urentrimes la ine , joke joke la, goodvibes la kay para atleast pag-uli niyo ha iyo balay matatak tun ha iyo na inen na nalipay kamo in a sense, so oo nagamit kami ghap, nagamit hito na mga gay lingo natanan na aadi dide gingagamit namon ito (sarcasm and etc.). [Translation: Yes, there are sarcastics, but they are minimal, you can't because ahh...it's still the same if you use them, that's what I'm telling you earlier, if you use sarcasm or sarcastic ways, you should not be hurtful...ha..ha..to the people...it should not be hurtful to the people feelings that you...call this, throwing the joke on his/her or punchline should not...not...not...the outcome is not sarcastic though it is bad ahh...because the gay people are known to be "taklesa", right, but we inform our audiences that we are "gay people", we are informing them that it is a joke time only, joke joke, good vibes to you, so that at least when you come back to your home, it will be remembered that you became happy in a sense, so yes we used them, used this gay lingos, all that are in here, we are using them (sarcasm and etc.). (C4)]"

The findings also indicates that other comedians utilize "below the belt" language, which refers to the use of vulgar or offensive language, such as cursing, to engage with audiences. By integrating "below the belt" language into their comedy acts, certain performers purposefully push societal boundaries and challenge taboos. This deliberate choice can evoke varied audience reactions, spanning from laughter and amusement to shock or unease. It is important to acknowledge that comedians who employ vulgar or offensive language do so intentionally to make a specific impact and elicit particular emotions from their viewers. This finding also shows that this approach might only resonate with a particular audience and how cursing could serve as an alternative means of communication.

"Dre man nakakatawa it...it...kun baga dre nakakatawa kun formal ka na performer...boring...kay takay ada man ito nagkukuan it audience lab-i na kun for example ahhm.. forgive for my word nga masiring ka nga magbubuyayaw ba, nga kuan ka....sugad hineee, ok la igyakan? Masiring "boleh ka tim eroy, lurong lurong tim ulo, nag-kinanhi' on ka ano? Makaturog ka la? O mag-iinom ka?mga sugad ba hito " tim kalurong-lurong angay nga ipatigok, mga sugad ba hitoo.. mga kuan...ano la ito ha iya pero dire, bagan it's just only a part of..of..joke, dire mo dapat seryosohon. [Translation: Because it is on the audience that depends, for example ahhm...forgive me for my word for we said like curses, like you are...that's it is, is it okay to say it? Like saying "F*ck you ass mother, you are a psycho, what are you doing? You are only going to sleep? Or will you drink? Like that " you crazy psycho, you are necessary to be dead" ... like all of that ...that are...they are only for them but it is not, like it's just only a part of...of... joke, you should not take it seriously. (C4)]"

The study also underlines the importance informal language styles are for eliciting laughter and delivering messages effectively. Stand-up comedy serves a variety of social and cultural purposes and is a fundamental and important form of humorous expression. In order to establish connection with their audience and criticize society norms, comedians use a variety of linguistic styles (Mintz, 1985). It is evidently stated by comedians who revealed.

"Pag alam ko na medyo pamilyar sila sa ganitong way of entertainment ina-apply natin yung ganyang ano ah...yung joke na medyo below the belt, alam mo yung medyo may malaswang content...ganun. Pero not to the extent na magiging bayolente tayo kasi hindi, hindi siya stand-up comedy, maliban na lang meron akong kasamang host dalawa kami nangyayari diyan kaming dalawa ang magkakaroon ng batuhan na medyo may pagka bayolente, may pagka sarcastic alam mo yun. [Translation: When I know that they're somewhat familiar with this kind of entertainment, we apply those kinds of... jokes that are somewhat below the belt, you know, with slightly explicit content... like that. But not to the extent that we become violent because it's not stand-up comedy, unless I have a co-host. When there are two of us, that's when we engage in a banter that's somewhat violent, somewhat sarcastic, you know. (C6)]"

In summary, the research findings highlight the use of colloquial words and phrases in comedic routines to enhance authenticity and relatability. Comedians employ colloquial language, such as gay lingo, to establish a connection with their audience and use natural everyday speech. This approach creates a sense of familiarity and accessibility, making the humour more enjoyable for the audience. Ultimately, the findings demonstrate the diverse strategies employed by comedians to connect with their audience with sensitivity and understanding of audience preferences in comedic performances.

3.3 Humour Styles Utilized by Stand-up Comedians

The humour styles commonly utilized by stand-up comedians in their comedic performance can be categorized into three major themes: (1) Audience-centric performance, (2) Observational comedy, and (3) Improvisational comedy.

Audience-centric performance

The findings highlights that most humour styles utilized depends on the audiences. It is revealed that comedians are highly aware of the diverse composition of their audience and the need to tailor their jokes or punchlines accordingly. This is evident to the following statement.

"Yes, oo dapat kasi hindi pwede mag joke ng sabihin natin yung kasama mo medyo teenager hindi siya applicable kung magjo-joke ka ng parang medyong malalaswang content di ba...depende. So naka depende yan lag isa audience yung ganyan, yung ganung pamamaraan ng pagbato ng joke or punch line...or yung ah comedy yung tinatawag naka depende lagi sa audience. Lalo na halimbawa kasi sa mga ganyang ano...may parents na sasabihin sayo "Uy may mga bata ha", so paalalahanan ka may mga bata ha medyo limit lang tayo. May ganung mga sensitive na mga audience so extra careful. [Translation: Yes, that's right. You can't make jokes with explicit content if, for example, there are teenagers present. It's not applicable... it depends. So, it all depends on the audience, the way jokes or punchlines are delivered... or the comedy, as they call it, always depends on the audience. Especially in situations where there are parents who would say, "Hey, there are kids here," they remind you that there are children around, so we have to set limits. There are sensitive audiences, so we have to be extra careful. (C6)]"

The findings revealed that stand-up comedians are also mindful of the relationship between humour and social boundaries. Researchers have identified five mechanisms that explain the development of humour styles, including implicit and culture-specific knowledge, linguistic ability, sensitivity to taboo subjects, emotional responses, and stylistic criteria and standards. These mechanisms shed light on how literary humour influences and reflects humour styles, thus aiding our comprehension of its limitations

Cann and Kuiper (2014). Other comedians also do crowd interviews as a part of their performances. This is also significant in establishing connection towards their audience and improving the overall delivery of comedy.

"Okay. So first, yung... yun na nga you relate yourself with other people. For example, "Sino dito yung mga broken hearted? You deserve it!" (laughter). "Actually, ako din naging broken hearted din ako, nagpakatanga din ako." You... you like emp... uhm you give empathy and at the same time na minsan kapag nag cocome... nagsstand up comedy ako, yung nangyayari is napapatagal yung ganun ko kase nga madaldal akong tao. Like I go beat around the bush but I still go back and prove my point. So yung inaano ko kase sa kanila kung may mga problema sila, imbis na nagiging comedy minsan nagkakaroon kami ng advice-advice tapos bigla akong sisigaw "Amen!" (laughter) tapos nagaganon na sila, tas biglang "Amen!" parang alam mo yun, you hit the people where it hurts the most, but at the same time, you make sure that they are happy because if you don't know the reason why they are here, everyone...everyone wants an outlet, needs actually needs an outlet where they can, where they can uh let go, let it go, you know. [Translation: Okay. So first, just like I said earlier that you relate yourself with other people. For example, "Who is broken hearted here? You deserve it!" (laughter). "Actually, I also experiences heartbreaks, I was a fool for love once" You... you like emp... uhm you give empathy and at the same time and sometimes when I do my...stand-up comedy, that's happening is it's being delayed because I am a talkative person like I go beat around the bush, but I still go back and prove my point. So what I do is when they have problems, instead of having a comedy show, we give them advice and then suddenly I would shout "Amen!" (laughter) and they would do the same. It's like hitting them where it hurts the most, but at the same time, making sure that they are happy. You see, everyone needs an outlet, a place where they can let go, let it go, you know (C3)]"

This only reveals that most comedians know how to filter their humour and understand that explicit or offensive content may not be suitable or appropriate in certain contexts, such as when teenagers or children are present. This level of awareness and consideration for the audience's composition reflects their professionalism and respect towards their viewers. They acknowledge that their responsibility extends beyond entertainment and encompasses creating a pleasant and enjoyable experience for all present. Through the careful filtering of their humour and the adaptation of their content to suit the specific context, comedians showcase their dedication to fostering a positive and inclusive comedic environment. Through this, the comedians develop a specific stage persona and create their own style of performing (Schwarz, 2009).

3.4 Observational Comedy

The research findings also observed that comedians often incorporate their own personal experiences or stories from others into their comedic routines. This is evident to the following statement.

"I was a part of BPO industry so I always share my, I always share my uh experiences in regards with call centred like when my callers asking "Oh where is... who are you? where are you from?" "I'm from the Philippines" "Where is Philippines?" "You know Japan?" "Yes I know Japan" "Turn left." (laughter). Right? So it's like own work experiences I share with them. Yun na nga you relate yourself with other people. [Translation: I was a part of BPO industry, so I always share my I always share my uh experiences in regards with call centred like when my callers asking "Oh where is... who are you? where are you from?" "I'm from the Philippines" "Where is Philippines?" "You know Japan?" "Yes, I know Japan" "Turn left." (laughter). Right? So it's like own work experiences I share with them. Just like I said earlier that you relate yourself with other people. (C3)]"

C3's view about using observational comedy was supported by other comedians who revealed.

"Dire tun hiya sinisiring na scripted, actually dire ako scripted kasi very natural ako. Kun ano, what you see is what you get. Amo talaga ito it akon kuan. I think this involves my telling jokes about things that everyone might find funny. So that's my main, my...my goal is to use my humour noh to bring people together to find my humour ahh...my humour funny. So more on affiliative and then I think diri ako makakasaring na aggressive kay Diri kasi ako tawag hinen nan-iinsulto ba. [Translation: They say it's scripted, actually I'm not scripted because I'm very natural. Anyway, what you see is what you get. This is I really do. I think more on affiliative humour. I think this involves my telling jokes about things that everyone might find funny. So that's my main, my...my goal is to use my humour to bring people together to find my humour ahh...my humour funny. (C7)]"

In summary, comedians who usually use observational comedy to draw humour from everyday life situations and personal experiences. It allows the audience to connect with the comedian's story on a personal level, fostering a sense of shared experience and creating a comedic bond. The power of observational comedy lies in its ability to tap into universally recognized moments or behaviours. When comedians share personal anecdotes or anecdotes drawn from everyday life, they offer a window into relatable situations that many individuals have experienced themselves. This relatability allows the audience to connect with the comedian's story on a personal level, as they see reflections of their own lives in the comedic narrative. This style of comedy not only entertains but also offers social commentary and invites critical thinking. Through the power of laughter and recognition, observational comedy becomes a unifying force that brings people together in shared amusement (Abrahams, 2020).

3.5 Improvisational Comedy

The research findings highlight that comedians usually do improvised comedy. Unlike scripted comedy, where jokes and punchlines are pre-planned, improvisational comedy allows comedians to spontaneously create humorous content on the spot. This is evident to the following statement.

"Yung humour style ko is improvise. Wala akong, walang akong script-script kase this is a copy-paste industry. If you think na yung punchline nagwork sa kanya, how about try and copy it? But have your own twist to it parang have your own spices and add some other flavors to it. Pero uhm, I believe na lahat na mga comedy, come...comedians are very unique ano sa kanilang...sa kanilang craft. [Translation: My humour style is totally improvised. I don't...i don't a script with me because this is a copy-paste industry. If you think that a punchline was effective for someone, how about try and copy it? But have your own twist to it parang have your own spices and add some other flavors to it. But uhm, I believe that all comedians are unique to their own crafts. (C3)]"

C3's view was supported by other comedians who stated as follows.

"Um, usually mayda amo man gud inaano la namon na бага. Ah, бага depende la kun kun ano ang ginbubuhat namon nga stage amo la, kun бага dre hiya nasisiring na scripted, on the spot nahihitabo. [Translation: Um, we usually just do our thing. It depends on where our performance can go. But we can say that it is never scripted, it always happens on the spot. (C1)]"

This process of quickly coming up with humorous content encourages them to think faster and sharpen their mental agility. It also helps them generate content that is relevant and timely, enhancing the comedic experience for the audience.

"Kaya from time-to-time na level up gihapon it akon kuan. Akon tawag hinen, akon joke noh, nadadara ko man, na-depends kasi ito ha situation. Basta I assess myself being quick-witted. Madali ako mag-response. Mayroon ako mga partners, makakasiring gud man ako nga somewhat harani na ako kan Vice-Ganda, in terms of spontaneous noh...talking and throwing

punchlines. *[Translation: That's why I still level it up from time to time. It's my call, it's my joke, even if I carry it, it depends on the situation. As long as I assess myself being quick-witted. I respond easily. I have partners, even though I can be good, I am somewhat close to Vice-Ganda, in terms of spontaneous talking and throwing punchlines. (C7)]"*

To summarize, the research findings highlight that improvisational comedy is widely practiced by comedians. It emphasizes their focus on spontaneously creating humour and the importance they place on thinking quickly and being responsive to deliver successful comedic performances. This approach requires the comedian to think quickly, as they must come up with jokes, punchlines, and witty remarks in real-time, often in response to audience interactions or unexpected situations that arise during the performance. Additionally, the improvisational style underscores the significance of comedians being attentive and responsive to their audience. They actively engage in a dynamic interaction with viewers, incorporating their reactions, feedback, and active participation into their act. This level of responsiveness fosters a distinct and interactive experience, as the audience feels directly involved and contributes to the overall comedic flow of the performance.

3.6 Effectivity of using language and humour styles

The effects of using various language and humour styles which contributes to the delivery and reception of humour can be categorized into three themes: (1) Importance in building connections, (2) Extensive influences of endeavouring to comedy, (3) Enhancing audience satisfaction.

Importance in building connections

The research findings indicates that the use of different language and humour styles by stand-up comedians helps them in building connections to the audiences or the people, wherein most of them were able to create rapport to their customers and connect to them more. This is evident to the following statements.

"Oo, mas kuan hito kay syempre nga tanan hira ma...magakaka ada kamo hin kuan ahm...koneksyon lagi kumbaga it imo gagamiton na mga lenggwahe it...kuan liwat hira mas madali it koneksyon. [Translation: Yes, because it's more effective because everyone can... connect with you when you use the language they understand, so building connections is much easier. (C2)]"

This highlights the idea that by incorporating language and humour styles they were able to display connection to more people and build relationships towards them much more conveniently, this will help them communicate and relay their humour effectively towards the audience and in return the audience can grasp their ideas easily by the portrayals of various styles used by the comedians in which it makes their performances more impactful and in which it serves as a bridge to adjust to their customers and fill in gaps to create a comfortable and friendly environment.

C3 shares the same view during his interview through his statement.

"Actually, oo kase marami akong naging kaibigan dahil sa style na yan. Like they feel connected, like after that they, like after the show some of them, no, most of them became my drinking buddies, became my friends and became my regulars. [Translation: Actually yes because I have made many friends because of that style. Like they feel connected, like after the show some of them, no, most of them became my drinking buddies, became my friends, and became my regulars...]"

According to surveys by numerous executive leaders which was conducted by Robert Half, a lot of people prefer to be in the presence to employees with a sense of humour which was 98 percent based on the findings rather than working or interacting with people who doesn't. Humour greatly affects how others perceived us that's why by

showcasing humour towards other people, it likely would help us to attribute higher status in the society (Aaker & Bagdonas, 2021).

This summarizes the idea that during their performances wherein they apply humour and language styles that varies depending to contributing factors such as the audience, their preference or style. They were able to build connections and set as a foundation for them to have better relationships to one another.

3.7 Extensive Influences of Endeavoring to Comedy

The research findings highlights the idea that by using various language and humour styles in the performances of stand-up comedians they were able to gain more recognition, able to boosts their comedic skills, become effective communicators, able to experience self-enhancing experiences through growth and personal development and able to feel empowered as a comedian upon delving into years and years as a performer while implementing language and humour styles , and wherein they feel that comedy is an outlet to let out stress and helps them get through everything. This is evident to the following statements.

“Oo. Ano na ak dinhi ahh...I think 9 years na ako sa industriya, and dako na gad an nabulig hini nga comedy kay tungod nga damo nak nakilala. Ahh... mga friends as in damo, tapos nai-invite ako bisan diin nga mga lugar nagpe-perform. [Translation: I think I've been in the industry for 9 years now, and this comedy has helped me a lot because I've gained a lot of recognition. I have a several lot of friends, and I get invited to perform in various places. (C1)]”

Sharing the same perception of C1 was the statement of C4 and C3 in which they stated.

“That's give me the courage to boost myself, to entertain people more and more, kay an akon hosting skills mas nadagdagan pa hiya. [Translation: That's give me the courage to boost myself, to entertain people more and more, because my hosting skills have increased even more. (C4)]”

“Parang ganun, yun lang parang... styles, different styles, either way. Making people happy despite of your inner battles is actually something much, you know, much bigger. And the style, languages, and all, it may, may not affect but the most thing in comedy is once again; feelings, empathy, heart, emotion, and of course, most of all, connection, empowerment. [Translation: That's it, different styles, either way. Making people happy despite of your inner battles is actually something much, you know, much bigger. And the style, languages, and all, it may, may not affect but the most thing in comedy is once again; feelings, empathy, heart, emotion, and of course, most of all, connection, empowerment. (C3)]”

This gives us an insight on how the use of various language and humour styles helps them in a lot of ways as a performer and as person themselves. They were able to hone their skills more as a comedian and performer. They were able to gain more trust and confidence in themselves which builds them in becoming better than they already are and implementing various language and humour styles in their comedic performances was a steppingstone for them to learn more and to grow better as a performer.

“Kasi nag-start gud talaga ako at the community. Sangguniang kabataan man gud ako, chairman, kagawad anay tapos nag'chairman then involved na ako ng mga organization,simbahan. Bisan hain na pambaranggay nga mga contest na pwede ako ig-insert ngadto as a host. Na-intra ako, kay payag man na waray bayad kay it akon kasi gin'aafter is the experience itself. Kung baga, through han akon pagpinatawa ha mga tao. Bagan Na-assess ko or na-evaluate ko tak self nga. Uy, mayda ko ngay'an sugad hine na talent. [Translation: I started really well at the community. I was also a member of the youth council, chairman, kagawad, then I became chairman, then I was involved in organizations, churches. Any of the barangay contests that I can be inserted into as a host. I got in, because I agreed that there was no

charge for it because it was done after the experience itself. As it is, I make people laugh through me. Like, I assessed or evaluated myself that "Hey, I have such a talent...(C7)]"

This further tells us that stand-up comedians specially for those working in this field for how many years, it helps them feel acknowledged themselves and gain more recognition for their creativity and implementation of various language and humour styles and it also helps them developed over the years and improved their comedic craft more, by experience and constantly applying these various styles, they were able to create an impression to the audiences as a effective stand-up comedian which possessed flexibility in showcasing their talents in terms of portraying acts and plays for their audiences.

Statements of other comedians further solidified this claim.

"So amo itun, didto tun nagtikang han mga 2015, 2015 an mga teenage days nga an imo household was very chaotic and you were very depressed teenager and you are alone and all and then, nareresort mo ngadto ha comedy. [Translation: So that's how it started around 2015, during my teenage years when my household was very chaotic, and I was a depressed teenager and felt alone. Comedy became my outlet. (C3)]"

"Makuri kun bagat dire ako effective nga comedian kun dire ak nakakag-perform, kay gin-iisip ko man na kun hin-o tak kuan ngadto, ginbibiling ko man it pagperform, pagkanta bisan man dire kami mga singers, mga professional singers. Keme nala so that's the life of being a comedian and were so beautiful in and out. [Translation: It is difficult if I'm not an effective comedian if I'm not able to perform, because I'm thinking that if I'm not good enough, I always seek performing, singing even though we're not singers, professional singers. So that's the life of being a comedian and were so beautiful in and out. (C4)]"

"It nagagain ko iton, in nalilipay it akon kasing-kasing, nalilipay it akon...it akon usa kaadlaw, iton ngani na bagat may sense it akon life, kay ano na nalilipay it tawo? siguro para ha akon kasi nabubulig ito ha akon, inen nagiging bata ako tingnan, hindi ako haggard...hindi ako ganun.. kasi nagsisiring ha akon mahusay it imo awra yana, kay nasiring ako na you have to smile and have a goodvibes everyday, dre nimo kailangan hin dull moment. [Translation: The thing that I gain on that, it makes me happy as much, it makes me happy....in my everyday life like it is the reason why my life has meaning, why does it make people happy? Maybe it's for me because it helps me, it makes me look young, I'm not haggard...I'm not like that... because they are saying that my aura today is good, because I'm saying that you have to smile and have a good vibes every day, you do not need a dull moment. (C4)]"

According to O'hara (2016), Stand-up comedy is more than just something that revolves around just laughing or having fun, there's something more to portrayal of comedy that are interwoven into the fabric of our everyday lives. It also expresses empathy to other people and a way to connect to them and build relationships which makes comedian more fulfilled in doing their jobs.

This summarizes the idea that as a stand-up comedians applying various language and humour styles, it really help them in becoming better performers and develop more in their field of work. Stand-up comedians claims that they were able to feel recognized, acknowledged and it help them boosts their confidence in portraying their skills, the effects of performing to people and by being creative in using their own styles to apply in their performances helps them stand out more and be unique, making them more successful and effective comedians.

3.8 Enhancing Audience Satisfaction

The research findings highlight the idea that by using various language and humour styles, they were able to portray their performances well for it helps in satisfying their audiences and helps them grabs more attention to the viewers. This is evident in the following statements.

“Ah..Actually, kun бага kun paanhon naton, dako gud talaga it iya gamit Because it develop your humour style. In terms of, in terms of ahh.. throwing your jokes. At the same time, first impression last man gud, makikita mo nga nakakatawa hira, pagkita pala ha imo. Kay tawag hinen ahh..it pag’ayad mo hin humour style. It will create man gud different impressions noh and different impact on others. [Translation: Actually, if we’re like doing, it really helps a lot because it develops your humour style. In terms of, in terms of ahh... throwing your jokes. At the same time, first impression last, you’ll see he’s funny when you meet him. It’s called like ahh...it’s how you create your humour style. It will create different impressions and different impact on others...(C7)]”

Using various language styles, it attracts listeners or audiences for it is utilized in various aspects. Comedians use different language styles in executing their performances in which their style becomes one of their defining characteristics. It heavily relies on the use of linguistic aspects, comedians who are skilled in using these tend to create more funny effect and good impression from the audiences (Rullyanti & Nurdianto, 2019).

This statement gives an idea that by implementing styles that are unique to each stand-up comedians they were able to catch the attention of the viewers and creates more impact in doing their performances. Furthermore, it also contributes in making an impression towards your audiences. This statement is supported by the claim of C6 in which he stated.

“So makakaapekto siya in a way that for us, for me to...to be able to entertain all the people so parang siniskap ko na ma entertain kahit na yung mga ibang lahi di ba so minsan nakakaapekto yun lalo kung halimbawa sa mga tulad kahapon, di bas a event ko kahapon sa pa games tapos sabi nung, nag request yung may-ari. Ay nag request si client na magpa games ng “hep-hep horray”, and then may sumaling bata nasa siguro 7 years old siya and he don’t know how to speak waray. So English yung medium of instruction na ginawa ko para maka join, lalo na kasi anak ng may-ari o anak ng client. Tapos yung isa pa dun bisita ng client, lagi kong piniplease parang sa kanila lagi yung focus, yung attention para lang ma please mo. [Translation: It can have an impact in a way that, for me, I try to entertain all the people, even those of different nationalities, you know. Sometimes it can affect the dynamics, especially in situations like yesterday, in my event during the games, when the owner made a request to have a “hep-hep horray” game, and then there was a child, around 7 years old, who couldn’t speak Waray. So I used English as the medium of instruction for them to join, especially because they were the child of the owner or the client. And then there was another guest of the client, whom I always tried to please, like focusing on them, giving them attention just to please them...]”

In summary, it tells us that the use of various language and humour styles contributes to the performances and delivery of humour of stand-up comedians, in a way that they were able to grab the attention of the audiences and create more greater impact to them leaving an impression of a good and effective performer.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the collective views drawn from the findings of the study, language and humour styles are great help for stand-up comedians in their comedic performances. They have learned how to adjust their language styles based on their audiences and the environment of their performance. They always make sure that all of the audience's request would be satisfied. Also, they would ensure that no one will be offended by the jokes that they will throw to their audiences. Since not all the time their audience could relate to their jokes, so to please their audiences, the stand-up comedians need to learn the audience's preferred language and humour styles.

The findings of this study also showed impacts of stand-up comedy to the comedians. Through the years of experience on stand-up comedy they've improved a lot.

It gave them recognition and gave them connections to their audiences, that resulted for them to have future works/ invitations to perform in different places. In this line of work it became a channel for them to let out their stress and gave meaning to their lives. As they shared their talents in making other people happy it also made them feel grateful for what they have. Since this kind of study about stand-up comedians are only few, this will bring insights about how stand-up comedians keep their audiences amused. Furthermore, since the study found that the various language and humour styles are great help to stand-up comedians in their comedic performances, it becomes worth for future researchers and other researchers who are interested in this study. This study can give data to investigate more deeper about the specific language and humour styles that stand-up comedians utilized during their comedic performances and how it could contribute to the deliverance and reception of humour.

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