



“Humor in Da’wah”: Socio-linguistic Analytic of Kyai Ishaq Latif Da’wah from Pesantren Tebuireng Jombang

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to describe the anatomy of humor exercised consistently by one of Islamic preachers and teachers from Pesantren Tebuireng, Jombang. This article employs qualitative approach. Kyai Ishaq Latif humor in his sermon analyzed by socio-linguistic perspective. This article found that the Islamic teaching containing theology, family relationship, and social interaction was delivered by him with humor such as anecdotes, acronym., codes, limerick, and satire. Humor has been developed within certain social context. Preacher use humor to be more understood by broader audiences. This article thus suggests that the usage of humor in religious sermons will generate intimacy which enable audience accepted the message without being coerced or offended or intimidated. Humor in religious sermon shows social dialect (socilect) of the preacher that has integrated with his audiences. The usage of humor is an alternative instrument in delivering holy messages (act sequences) to be accepted effectively by the audiences.

Keywords: *Humor; kyai; da’wah; sociolinguistic.*

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui anatomi humor dalam dakwah yang dikembangkan oleh Kiai Ishaq Latif dari Pondok Pesantren Tebuireng Jombang. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif, paper ini dianalisis menggunakan perspektif sosiolinguistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat beberapa metode humor Kiai Latif antara lain anekdot, akronim, alih kode, pantun dan sindirian. Selain itu, metode humor merupakan “bahasa” yang lahir dari ruang dan konteks sosial tertentu. Bahasa lelucon yang diselipkan dalam dakwah merupakan bentuk *guyub tutur* yang jamak berlaku di masyarakat awam. Implikasi praksis penelitian ini adalah humor yang ditunjukkan oleh seorang pendakwah akan melahirkan keakraban (*intimate*) yang memungkinkan seseorang menerima ajaran Islam tanpa tekanan, paksaan dan intimidasi. Pada posisi tertentu, humor juga menunjukkan dialek sosial (*sosialek*) seorang pendakwah yang lebih menyatu dengan psikologi masa. Humor diadopsi sebagai *instrument* untuk membawa amanat suci (*act sequences*) ajaran agama Islam agar tersampaikan secara efektif bagi masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: *Humor; kiai; dakwah; sosiolinguistik.*

INTRODUCTION

The Islamic scholars (kyai) has been playing important role in the preaching of Islam in Indonesian archipelago. They spread the teaching of Islam to all people. In delivering the message of Islam, they always use local tradition to make their message more acceptable. Encouraged by the spirit to spread Islam, drive the kyai to deliver sermons for broader audience, not only their santri in their pesantren.

Joke makes religious sermon not rigid. Raskin (1994) and Freud (2002) said that humor is at second level after comic” and before wit. In this article, the author will analyzed the humor as articulated in Kyai Latif Ishaq religious sermons by employing sociolinguistic perspectives. Sociolinguistic perspective see that the speaker does not have certain pattern in his speech.

Many scholars have studied the humor as one of instrument of da’wah. Fahriansyah (2019) studied the relationship between the objective of da’wah and the frequency of humor instrumentalized by the preacher. This research argued that a preacher could not freely articulated humor. The values of Islamic doctrine and teachings and norm have limited them. Japarudin (2017) studied moral aspect in sermon’s humor. He emphasized the humor content which call to Islamic teachings. The usage of humor without calling audience to Islam make the preacher is not different with comedian.

In religious sermons, humor is only used to entertain audiences to make the content of sermons easier to be understood (Muniruddin, 2019: 95). In his research, Muniruddin categorize humor to two types; (1) Adaptive humor which consider social condition of audience and (2) Maladaptive humor which negatively affected to the audiences. Meanwhile, kyai position as the religious elit, ascetic person, and the heir of Prophet seen as authoritative to interpret Al Quran. Their position as the top leader of pesantren also play significant role as religious elite among the society. Al Quran says about kyai as an ulama in surah Fathir verse 28, ”Of all of Allah’s sevant, only the knowledgeable ‘of His might’ are truly in awe of Him.

Sigmund Freud (2002) categorize humor into three types (1) Unmotivated humor or comic, (2) Motivated humor-yet-less reasoned, (3) Motivated and well-reasoned humor or wit. Meanwhile, Victor Raskin (1944) differentiate humor into two types (1) Intended and (2) Unintended

humor. On the other hand, Brunvand divides humor based on the topics; (1) Humor about sex, (2) Humor about nationalities, and (3) Humor about religion.

The purpose of usage of humor is to entertain audience, while da'wah objective is to call audience to conduct goodness and to prevent badness (Chambers, 1978). Therefore, the duty of kyai is quite hard. They should invite their audience to conduct goodness, to prohibit what is forbidden, and at the same time they struggle to not make the audience bored by entertaining them with fresh humor. In the sense, humor is only the rhetoric strategic to deliver the message containing Islamic teachings.

In this article, the sermons delivered by Kyai Ishaq Latif analyzed due to his social and intellectual role in javanese society, specially in Jombang, Sidoarjo, Surabaya, and Mojokerto. Beside being a preacher, Kyai Ishaq Latif was a teacher at one of oldest pesantren in Indonesia, Pesantren Tebuireng, Jombang, East Java. He passed away in 2015 with great legacy. He was one of earliest and senior teacher in Pesantren Jombang Tebuireng (Cholidi, 2015). This article employs qualitative approach to explore social phenomena by choosing the da'wah of Kyai Ishaq Latif as a case study. This article also describe the social life of Kyai Ishaq Latif and the context in which he used humor in his sermons. In qualitative research, a researcher will trace the trajectory of subject from sociolinguistic perspective (Woods, 2006: 2).

In this article, humor defined as an inserted funny statement or story in the middle of delivering sermons both in front of students (*santri*) in pesantren and general audience. This article will fill the research gap on sociolinguistic approaches toward humor content in religious sermons. Previous researchs has located humor in sermons as a part of instrument in communicating messages, not as a type of language developed within particular social contexts. This article will answer the question; how does the kyai develop humor in religious sermon through understandable and motivational statements for being a better Muslim?

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Humor and Da'wah: Communication and Interaction Ability

Humankind is a multidimensional creature. Unlike a robot, Gos has given humankind reason (cognitive) and heart (intuitive). These two instruments makes humankind as the unique creature which is different with animals.

The intuitive skills determine humankind to be comfortable with pleasure and entertainment.

In the sense, humor is one of instrument for humankind for being entertained and pleased. Humor is one of effective communication instrument to build a cohesive relation in social interaction (Warren, et.all, 2018). Warren argued that humor and comedy generate significant effect to customer behaviour. Therefore, the usage in communication is important in building a good social relations. Humor can be divided into four categorizes; (1) Humor to stimulate laugh and entertainment such as jokes, (2) Psychological condition enabling laugh and jokes, (3) Actions making something funny (funny story), (4) Different character in relating to funny and entertaining statement or story. In this article, the author defined humor which indicate facetious which has many form like comedy, anecdote, funny codes, slang statements, etc.

The ability to make humor is something that given or what called as “natural born funny”. Not every who has such ability. In the sense, there are several theory explaining why does people laugh at some story or statement and at the same time they do not laugh at the rest (Sudarmo, 2014); (1) Theory of Superiority explain humor as the manifestation of superiority over the others. It can explain why some people do not want to be laughed at; (2) Theory of Relief understand laugh as the way people release the stress in nervous system. Humor and jokes can refresh energy and nervous system from stress; (3) Theory of Incongruity see laugh activity as an actions that is not appropriate with normal mental pattern and social norm. This theory can explain the way stand up comedian deliver their jokes with certain systematic statement started from “set-up” and “punch-line”. It create certain expectation then the stand-up comedian close their statement with something which is not agree with that expectation.

(4) Play Theory describe humor as a games. It is the activity to refresh and entertain humankind soul. In the sense, people who do not like humor and jokes considered as againsts-rationality and prone to be wicked people. Humor makes people relax and see every event and condition with broader perspectives. Humor makes people mentality flexible and drive social cohesion. (5) Theory of Simulation provide a simulation of the future. It illustrated how the future will be achieved according to the aspiration. In order to shape the future, children will play a simulation (role play). For adult, humor is part of this role play game which every expectation will be followed by event that is not compatible with such expectation. This would

make the audience laughing. This theory also deals with any action that immitate other person such the gesture, sounds, dress code, etc. Mark Twain said that humor is a gift for humankind. Yoe in his many researchs wrote that the majority of people like humorist person. It is because humor can entertain people. It reflect energetic person, funny, and attractive. Humor will positively affected social interaction and resolved the stress. Humor makes phsycal and phsycological well-being (Yue et. All, 2014).

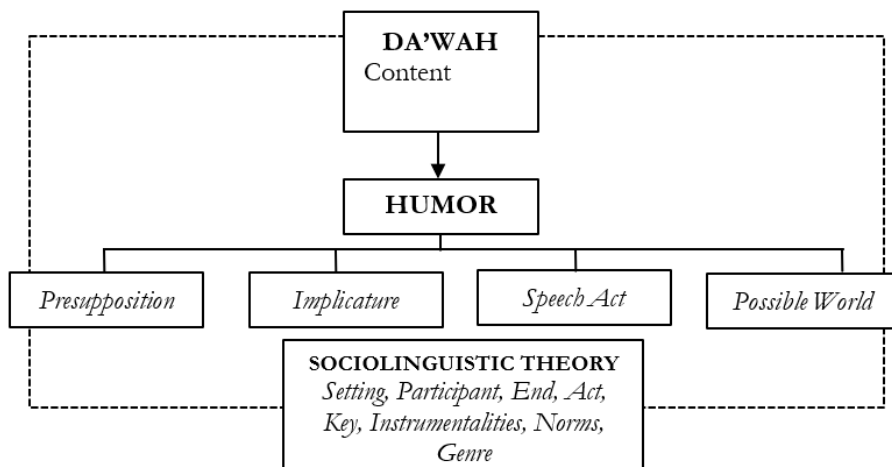
Furthermore, humor plays significant value to assess the quality of human life. In many cases, humor can encourage psychological well-beings such as optimism, self-esteem, and depression healing. Humor has multidimensional construction which is supportive to the quality of human life (Thorson, et. All, 1997). The very nature of humankind as sociable creature uses humor as part of social interaction. Therefore, comedy can persuade human interest to maintain good relationship. To some extent, positive comedy can influence and shape someone ability in maintaining good relationship, social cohesion, and cultural identity, and harmonious relationship in family (Warren, et. all, 2018).

There are four functions of humor as follows. (1) Humor helps to build togetherness and intimacy within group, (2) Funny story entertains the others. When someone has sense of humor, he would be an intimate person, (3) Jokes maintains social cohesion and strengthening multicultural identity, (4) Jokes as an alternative way to avoid tensions and violence (Syafitri & Islam, 2018). In this article, the function of jokes is based on social setting and audience. Social setting is certain context in which people use humor. In this sense, social setting for Kyai Ishaq Latif is da'wah. In social activities, humor will make the speaker more attractive (Hay, 2000). Raskin defined humor as funny statement or story which built on four elements: presupposition, implicature, speech act, and possible world (Raskin, 1944). This is the following explanation.

1) Presupposition is a statement containing more than one meaning. Presupposition is an speaker's asumption which think that the audience understand speaker's statement due to codes, contexts, and refferences shared by both sides. Presupposition says that there is same assumption between the speaker and the audience. 2) Implicature is the intention which is not delivered directly. This implicit statement contains more meaning than explicit statement. 3) Speech Act is explicit meaning in any statements in certain context. Speech Act is the manifestation of speech statement. Speech statement is any statements spoken in accordance with actions and

reactions. 4) Possible World is any possibility of events and conditions which humor imagine it both in verbal actions and non-verbal actions.

With these four elements, humor in religious sermon analyzed by sociolinguistic perspective. Sociolinguistic theory is an interdisciplinary approach studying linguistic problems with social, situational, and cultural aspects (Abdurrahman, 2011). Sociolinguistic approach has many elements which abbreviated with SPEAKING. “Setting” is context, place, and the atmosphere. “Participant” is the recipient or audience. “End” is purpose and goal. “Act” is events or moment. “Key” is tone or spirit of act, intonation, and accent. “Instrumentalities” is the tools used to deliver speech. “Norms” is rules, value, moral, limits. “Genre” is shape of statement, style of speech (Suwito, 1983).



Picture 1. Theoretical framework for analyzing humor in da’wah from sociolinguistic perspective

In this picture, I analyzed humor within the framework with component SPEAKING. These components employed to explore the significance of humor in delivering da’wah content. This analysis also considers four aspects: presupposition, implicature, speech act, and possible world. This approach focuses on process of delivering da’wah messages from Kyai Ishaq Latif. This refers to Kyai Ishaq Latif sermons which oftenly uses humor to make the audiences understand his speech easily.

Historically speaking, the usage of humor in delivering religious sermon (tabligh) can be traced back to the life of Prophet Muhammad. He made humor in certain condition and with particular person such as the Companion dan his wives which contain ethics and moral values. Humor of Prophet Muhammad is an educational, motivational, and informative humor. [Ridwan \(2010\)](#) studied the phenomena of humor in da'wah activity, particularly in religious sermons. He tried to find the background underlying the usage of humor in delivering the Islamic teachings. Humankind are homo narrans (creature that tells story).

Generally speaking, religious sermons are delivered with one-way communication. Al Quran says in surah an Najm verse 53 that the duty of a da'i is to tell the good news (basyiiran) to his audience. Humor of Prophet Muhammad, his Companion, and the follower of Companion (tabi'in) is the classical legacy and historical fact indicating that humor in da'wah is allowable.

In da'wah activity, humor strengthens social relations and intimacy between subject and object of da'wah. In this sense, humor has historical roots and normative basis from the life of Prophet Muhammad. However, in our contemporary era, the usage of humor should be limited by the value of Islamic ethics. In other words, humor is allowable if it does not cover the majority content of sermons so the audience still could get the substantial message from the sermons ([Wandi, 2019: 15](#)).

Humor in da'wah activity can be an alternative instrument to attract the audience. However, it depends on the ability of the preacher to use it properly. Therefore, humor become a space of creativity for the preacher to deliver Islamic teachings. Humor can benefits da'wah activity partly in strengthening mental health when humor used by considering ethics and morality. Humor strengthens social cohesion within family. The quality of family determine positive broader social community ([Hilmi, 2018: 100-103](#)).

Therefore, the usage of humor in da'wah is aimed to build social cohesion in the society. Humor in da'wah becomes a spaces of communication directed to build intimacy between subject and object of da'wah. Humor in da'wah will benefit da'wah activity when it is used by considering Islamic ethic, so it does not dominate the whole content of da'wah.

Humor in Kyai Ishaq Latif Da'wah

In the context of da'wah activity of kyai, humor contains anatomy, systematics, and typology. Humor is a common habits yet it is a branch of skill whics is not simple. However, the existing research in Indonesian scholarship about the theory of humor as field of study has been still rarely found, even though Indonesian people, specially people of pesantren, has been very familiar with humor and substantial jokes.

As religious leader, kyai oftenly exhibit humor quotient. Their sense of humor is relatively higher that the averages. They understand the advantages of humor as one of communication tools to spread the Islamic teachings and value. This article tries to see the relationship between the kyai's humor as one of da'wah strategy in delivering the Islamic values to be more acceptable by the audiences.

The examples of humor or jokes delivered by Kyai Ishaq Latif will be examined in this past. I observed Kyai Ishaq Latif's sermons directly in when I was living at Pesantren Tebuireng Jombang as a student. I also got first-hand source of the life of Kyai Ishaq Latif titled *Hidup untuk Pengabdian: in Memoriam KH M. Ishaq Latif Catatan Santrinya* [Live for Serving: KH. Ishaq Latif from His Student's Story].

There 7 types of humor in Kyai Ishaq Latif's da'wah as follows: *Firstly*, Plesetan. *Plesetan* is used by Kyai Ishaq Latif when he explains the coming of dajjal in which he says that in the end of time, there are many person who claim themselves as the mahdi or the savior or prohet. It causes confussion and deviation among the society. This kind of people, who claims as prophet, might be dajjal who will mislead the people to be their companion in hell. In this context, Kyai Ishaq Latif said.

“Tahu apa **shahibul hikayat** itu. Dia cuma tahu **ngibulin hikayat!** Itu bukan jalan ke surga. Itu jalan untuk langsung terjun ke neraka dengan tulang lehermu patah.”

“Do you know the story teller. In fact, they are the liar! It is not the pathway to heaven. It is way to directly jum to hell with your broken neck.”

In this statement, Kyai Ishaq Latif makes a jokes by restating the word “*shahibul hikayat*” (story teller) with “*ngibulin hikayat*” (a liar which use story). The pronunciation of these two words is same yet the meaning is extremely not. “*Shahibul hikayat*” is a story teller, someone who deliver the

messages or story, while “*ngibulin hikayat*” means “person who use story to befool people. This statement has made the audience laughing by coupling two word which has same pronunciation yet the opposite meaning.

Secondly, Pantun. *Pantun* is traditional poetry consist of four line with a-b-a-b sound; each line consists of four words. The first two lines called as *sampiran* or “prelude”, the second two lines containing the meaning sense of *sampiran*. There is also *pantun* consisting of six or eight couplet which is called as *talibun*. *Pantun* has many types, such as children *pantun*, traditional *pantun*, religious *pantun*, etc.

Kyai Ishaq Latif used *pantun* as follows.

“Maka berpeganglah pada sunnati, sunnah ingsun dan sunnatu khulafaurisidin Abu Bakar, Umar, Usman, dan Ali.

Nyakoto (menggigit), ya nyakoto lambene (ya menggigit bibirnya),
piye dipraktekne tah (bagaimana dipraktekan),

Dasar orang gak pernah puas, diberi satu ingin dua, diberi dua minta tiga, kau ta tawari Kopi apa jahe? Apa jawabe”

“Please keep the pathway of mine [Prophet Muhammad], mu pathway and the pathway of Abu Bakar, Umar, Usman, and Ali

“Just bite, bite the lips, how to practice it

“O humankind who will not be satisfied, they will want more and more, if you are offered coffee and ginger, which one you choose?”

In his last couplet, Kyai Ishaq Latif was not offering drinks to his student. The audience already understood the what Kyai Ishaq Latif means, so they spontaneously laugh at him. By delivering such *pantun*, Kyai Ishaq Latif wanted to emphasize that the general people will not be satisfied with the God’s gift, so they are prone to not be grateful to God.

Thirdly, Acronym. Acronym is the composition of some character which each character implies one word or statements. Kyai Ishaq Latif uses acronym to attract his audience. He made acronym from Javanese language combined with Bahasa whose sounds like an Arabic statements. This is the example.

“Merangkul sapa men? Boleh gak ketemu setahun pisan nek gelek ketemu maklum merangkul la piye nang kamar gelek ketemu

dirangkul [Javanese language]. (Jika sering ketemu ya bagaimana, di kamar sering ketemu dirangkul). Saya pesan kepada bapak-bapak dan ibu-ibu, ketika mau berhubungan suami istri selain baca do'a dan sebelumnya wudhu, juga ingat jurus kullu mutsu”.

“If you meet your wife frequently in bedroom you hug her. I tell you Ladies and Gentlemen, when you want to get sexual activity, do not forget to perform wudhu, pray, and kullu mutsu.”

The phrase **kullu mutsu** stated by Kyai Ishaq Latif in the sense of sexual activities between husband and wife at the first time. This phrase is following the previous phrase *ngrangkul gulu* (huddling wife's neck up) and the word *mutsu* means *ngemut susu* (playing wife's breast). The audience consider it as funny statement due to the way Kyai Ishaq Latif articulated this narrative by integrating religious instruction for sexual activities and trick to get pleasure with funny sounds. This statement seems to be vulgar, yet it is still appropriate when delivered in wedding event or to adult audiences. With this humor, Kyai Ishaq Latif want to say that harmonious relation in family can be maintain through a proper sexual activity.

Fourthly, Code Exchange. The arrangement of statements which emphasize on the background of speaker and audience. In this case study, the background of speaker means that Kyai Ishaq Latif as a kyai in Pesantren Tebuireng, Jombang, East Java and the relations between him and his audience is “teacher-student” relationship in which Kyai Ishaq Latif occupies upper-class as religious leader.

Kyai Ishaq Latif says in one of his sermons,

“Dan membuat kesombongan, jadi pasang tarif, dipasang di depan gerbang. Membuat mulia kullu munaafiqun. Pasang tarif ya kalau tidak dijemput ya tidak berangkat mengajak yad'u.”

“Orang munafiq membuat ilmunya dagangan.”

“Dia (munafiq) tidak pernah melakukan perintah Allah.”

“Yang dikenal masyarakat dia tidak pernah melakukan, mengingkari jadi tingkahnya tidak cocok dengan adat istiadat masyarakat. Mengapa kenal? Karena ketemu ben dina.”

“He is an arrogant person, putting the price at the gate, respecting the hypocrite. He is putting the price, if he was not picked up, he then will not come to preach. This is how the hypocrite practice his transactional deals. The hypocrite does not obey the instruction of

Allah. People know him as unfamiliar and weird person. But why do people know him? Simply because they meet him every day.”

In this sermon, Kyai Ishaq Latif exchange his statement from Bahasa to Javanese language to make the audience not boring. Furthermore, the usage of Javanese language shows intimacy between Kyai Ishaq Latif and his audience as his audience uses Javanese language in their daily live. In the sense, Kyai Ishaq Latif has made no distance between him and his student by using Javanese language, so his sermons will be more understandable.

Fifthly, Satire. Satire is used by Kyai Ishaq Latif when see one of his audience acting improperly such as leaving the forum in the middle of event or not paying good attention to his speech.

Kyai Ishaq Latif once said when he was delivering lecture,

“Alal birri berbuat baik. Golekono nok (cari di) ilmu biologi. Wattaqwa makluma, bapak mengkurep (tengkurap) kerjasama gawe (membuat) anak, punya jiwa sosial, gak sosial jo jegidek ae (jangan santai-santai saja), tolong menolong. Siro kabeh (kamu semua), al birri, dalam berbuat baik. Wattaqwa, nek (kalau) ditolong munio mantur suwun (bilang terimakasih). Muni ngunue gak entos (bilang gitu saja gak bisa). Munio (bilang).”

“Do a good deeds. Find in biologi science. Worshiping God. Raising children. Be a helpful person. All people, be a good people. Worshiping God. If you are helped by someone, say “thanks”. Saying “thanks” is not difficult. Just say it!

Sixthly, Religion-based Jokes. Kyai Ishaq Latif once said in his sermons,

“Belajar ngaji dulu, jangan langsung jadi haji, ojo ngawur mencari ilmu. **Haji atau gelar haji jangan dijadikan kedok**, kemudian juga jangan jadi santri yang sok tahu. Teliti dalam memilih jalan kebenaran. Tanya gurunya siapa. Mondoknya dimana. Untuk mengetahui identitas. Kan di kampung-kampung banyak yang ngawur. Yukadzdzibu. Membohongi.

“Learn religious science, do not simply become a Hajj, be careful when you learn. **Do not abuse the title of Hajj**, also do not be an arrogant student. Be careful in finding the truth and the teacher. Where the teacher got his knowledge. To find his identity. There are

many deviated people in villages. They are a liar.

In this statement, Kyai Ishaq Latif warned his audience to be careful when choosing the teacher, even though that teacher has “Hajj” title in his name. He suggest to look at his knowledge, intellectuality, and credibility, because there are much people who use “Hajj” title for personal interest or to get money. Kyai Ishaq Latif use religion-based jokes to make the audience relax yet still get the point.

Seventhly, Anecdote. Anecdote is a short story containing funny or weird person. The purpose of anecdote is to re-tell this person in our contemporary time. In this sense, Kyai Ishaq Latif said,

“Dikisahkan tentang sepasang pengantin, ketika memasuki malam pertama, pengantin laki-laki kebingungan ketika mau melakukan kewajiban terhadap pasangannya. Oleh karena kewajiban tersebut adalah kewajiban yang sangat dinanti-nantikan, maka pengantin laki-laki kehilangan akal sehatnya dalam memahami pesan yang diberikan oleh penghulu. Adapun pesan tersebut berbunyi “Datangilah istrimu dari atas, yaitu dari atas posisi istri tersebut berbaring terlentang.” Sedangkan di kamar itu pengantin laki-laki hanya melihat sebuah ranjang yang sudah ditutupi kelambu, dengan di dalamnya terdapat penganti perempuan sedang terlentang. Maka yang terjadi adalah pengantin laki-laki tersebut naik ke atas ranjang lalu menjatuhkan dirinya persis di atas tubuh pengantin perempuan. Oleh karena kaget dan sakit ditimpa tubuh pengantin laki-laki, pengantin perempuan pingsan semalaman dan baru sadar ketika pagi setelah waktu shalat shubuh datang.”

“There was one couple who already married. At the night, the husband confused what to do with her wife and how to do it. It is the most awaited night in his life, so he remembered the statement’s delivered by one of Islamic preacher (ustadz) in the akad nikah (marriage settlement) which he said, “Please do it (sexual intercourse) when your wife is in a supine position.” When the couple already in the bedroom and the new husband see the nuptial-bed covered by transparent cloth where his wife already laid down in supine position. The husband immediately jumps on his wife’s body. His wife then was shocked, in pain, and unconscious overnight until the time of prayer comes.

This story is funny by showing the funny character of this couple. They do not know how to do sexual activities properly and do not know talk it each other. Such situation could be caused by nervous or over-happy at the first night of marriage.

These seven types of Kyai Ishaq Latif humor were articulated to make his speech motivational, entertaining, and educative. He delivered his speech with unique style. This unique style can be seen from funny phrase he uses, so the audience can easily understand what he says. This kind of strategic ethics contain the educational and critical values which is not racist or exhibiting pornography. In [Ridwan's](#) concept, these four standards can be used to measure the significance of humor in da'wah activity ([2010](#)).

Kyai Ishaq Latif background as one of leader of Pesantren Tebuireng Jombang was a strong strategic social capital in delivering humor in da'wah. Cultural values in humor as part of tradition of Pesantren made Kyai Ishaq Latif speech attractive. In this sense, Kyai Ishaq Latif exhibits a funny speech which is easier to be comprehended by the student. The relation between humor and da'wah is social and cultural context which facilitates the audience to understand the message of Islamic teaching. In this context, humor impacted positively to body and soul healthiness. Humor build and maintain social relation intimacy and release people catharsis or psychological burden such as stresses, depression, and other mental illness ([Istiningtyas, 2014: 12](#)). As such, humor in da'wah strengthens the motivation and happiness of the audiences and encourage the developemtn of Muslim society ([Munirudin, 2018: 106](#)).

Humor and Da'wah: A Socio-linguistic Perspective

The instrumentalization of humor in Kyai Ishaq Latif's da'wah emerged in particular socio-cultural context. From the socio-linguistic perspective, it is the manifestation of speech community (*guyub tutur*) which is a common practical norm within pesantren ([Suhardi, 2009: 15](#)). Humor indicates intimacy between Kyai Ishaq Latif as a teacher and the santri as audience. However, humor is not the ultimate objective of the relationship between the two. It is only part of instrument to deliver the messages of Islam. The use of humor requires not only verbal skills but also sense of humor in articulating the messages to the audience ([Ford, 2010: 376](#)).

First, the word *shabibulhikayat* (storyteller) which followed by *ngibulinhikayat* (a liar using story) shows Kyai Ishaq Latif sociolect which was coming from pesantren milieu. *Shabibulhikayat* as an Arabic word can

only be understood by audience who has pesantren background. The familiarity of both speaker and audience with Arabic makes it easy to follow the word *shahibulhikayat* with *ngibulinhikayat* whose sound is the same yet the meaning is extremely different. It indicates Kyai Ishaq Latif's mastery to Islamic teaching to deliver such topics with humor (Suhardi, 2009: 19). It is difficult for the speaker who do not master the teaching of Islam delivering such topics with humor, also it is difficult for the audience to listen and understand it.

It shows that the usage of humor as an instrument of da'wah containing pedagogical values. Humor makes da'wah fresh, build intimacy between audience and the speaker and the topics which is articulated through local languages and tradition (Huss and Eastep, 2016: 39).

Second, in this statement *Dasar orang gak pernah puas, diberi satu ingin dua, diberi dua minta tiga, kau ta tawari Kopi apa jahe? Apa jawabe* ("O humankind who will not be satisfied, they will want more and more, if you are offered coffee and ginger, which one you choose?) Kyai Ishaq Latif tried to exchange the codes to make his statement funny (Suwito, 1985: 72). In monolingual society, this exchange codes done with changing the sounds, diction, or certain words arrangement as articulated by Kyai Ishaq Latif in his speech. Meanwhile, in multilingual society which mix the 'official' language and daily language, this exchange codes done by using more than one language as also articulated with Kyai Ishaq Latif when he shifted from Arabic to Javanese which is closed with *pantun*. The important thing is that exchanging the codes will be based on Islamic values. This *pantun* warned the audience to be carefull in making a decision for Muslim community or ummah. Because when the Muslim mistakenly made a wrong choice, the rest of Muslim community will be impacted.

On the other hand, *kullu mutsu* (*ngrangkul gulu, ngemut susu* (huddling neck up and playing with wife's breast)) *merangkul leher, menghisap payudara*) should be seen with all it is context. In socio-linguistic perspective, this phrase used by Kyai Ishaq Latif as person who is teaching classical book of Islam dealing with sexual activities within marriage.

The term *kullu mutsu* as a mixed language code could be found in multi-lingual society. Kyai Ishaq Latif used mixing codes by moving from one language to another language with various terms or style or idioms (Hay, 2000). It seems that *kullu mutsu* is an Arabic term yet actually it is Javanese acronym which means *ngrangkul gulu* and *ngemut susu* (huddling up wife's neck and playing with her breast). This kind of switching code

was enabled by Kyai Ishaq Latif position as religious leader and preacher (Abdurahman, 2011).

Even though the term *keullu mutsu* seems to be vulgar, it could no be detached from socio-cultural context and socio-cultural background of the audience. The term was delivered specially for a couple who just married and adult audience which need such explanation within religious context. Sexual topics is not a taboo when it discussed properly to keep harmonious relationship of married couple (Rokhman, 2013: 3).

From socio-linguistic perspective, humor as articulated by Kyai Ishaq Latif shows the entanglement between language and social context. Language develops within certain social context. It also indicates the language function within the society. The way Kyai Ishaq Latif articulated humor properly in different occasion indicates his mastery and understanding. From socio-linguistic perspective, Kyai Ishaq Latif considered as *idiolect* various term of personal speaker. Kyai Ishaq Latif’s idiolect deals with his unique tones, diction, contextual-substantial, idioms, sentence, etc. Kyai Ishaq Latif’s tones and sounds are his uniqueness that make him familiar to his audience (Malabar, 2015: 33).

This is the example of Kyai Ishaq Latif’s codes and satire. He was saying,

“Yang dikenal masyarakat dia tidak pernah melakukan, mengingkari jadi tingkahnya tidak cocok dengan adat istiadat masyarakat. Mengapa kenal? Karena ketemu ben dina.”

“The hypocrite does not obey the instruction of Allah. People know him as unfamiliar and weird person. But why do people know him? Simply because they meet him every day.”

This satire shows that Kyai Ishaq Latif know well the behavior, character, and habits person he speak about which is known as hypocrite. This person was disliked by the society. Why does Kyai Ishaq Latif know well this person, simply because Kyai Ishaq Latif meet him every day. In this satire, there are three language components (Abdul Chaer, 1995). First, cognitive component relating with Kyai Ishaq Latif perception to someone who has many indicators as hypocrite person. This perception was influenced by daily interaction between Kyai Ishaq Latif and that person which found in his statement *ketemu ben dina* which mean that Kyai Ishaq Latif meet the person every day.

Second, Affective component which explains emotional condition.

This component explain why Kyai Ishaq Latif consider that person as hypocrite. Third, Conative component which explain the way Kyai Ishaq Latif suggest the audience how to deal with person who was disliked by the society due to his behavior and character.

In this sense, Kyai Ishaq Latif said, "*Kalau mau keluar, keluar.... gak apa-apa yang lain masih banyak. Gak mau mulih*". [If you want to leave, just leave. There are still many audiences. You do not want to leave]. In this statements, Kyai Ishaq Latif speak about student or audience who does not listen to his speech carefully by looking to watch frequently. Therefore, Kyai Ishaq Latif says that if that person wants to leave, just leave, because there still many audiences who want to listen to Kyai Ishaq Latif' speech. For him, learning religious subject should not be coerced.

In this article, I analyzed Kyai Ishaq Latif's da'wah with five aspects introduced by Parera (1996: 79): Contextual, Contemporary, Concrete, Conceptual, and Conservation. "Contextual" means humor delivered by Kyai Ishaq Latif always articulated within certain context. A good humor should consider the audience's social and cultural background. It makes humor is very conditional and situational and "cultural-bound". However, it might be duplicated in other places with different context, speaker, and audiences. The phrase *kullu mutsu* and *ben dina* as cited by Kyai Ishaq Latif might not be funny if it is delivered by other speaker and listened by other audience. Therefore, humor should have relevancy and engagement with the speaker and audience. A speaker should formulate his or her speech objectives before delivering humor, because humor then will be contextualized within such objectives or topic.

From socio-linguistic perspectives, Kyai Ishaq Latif da'wah has successfully located himself within socio-cultural context in which he delivers speech according to his audience. He delivered speech differently to santri audience and general audience. "Ngibulin rakyat" and "Kopi jahe" show his ability to master the socio-cultural context of the audience (Gunawan, 2012). However, his humor does not cover the substantial content of his da'wah to deliver the Islamic teachings such as how to deal with hypocrite person, how to maintain positive relationship within family, or how to avoid the abuse of religion for personal interest (Senjaya and Solihat, 2019).

Kyai Ishaq Latif's humor is relevant with contemporary issue and topics. He always cites current development and news in his da'wah. What is delivered by him is factual based on real events. For example, when he

discusses "Hajj title selling" for certain interest which is practiced in the society or hypocrisy. These two topics can be articulated through humor. Flexibility in da'wah makes da'wah is not merely a judgment toward certain groups.

In general, Kyai Ishaq Latif's da'wah indicates inter-connectivity between communication skill, understanding toward the society, and mastery of Islamic teachings and doctrines. Therefore, the instrumentalization of humor in da'wah exercised by Kyai Ishaq Latif is not merely coming from language creativity (*olah tutur*), but also social and cultural consideration. In other word, this fact also implies that da'wah as religious activity has social and cultural dimensions partly in conserving societal and communicative traditions (Sari, 2015).

Humor in da'wah indicates that kyai understand the heterogeneity of audience which drive him to use popular statement which is easier to be understood. Kyai Ishaq Latif delivered the topics of da'wah with conscience and clear statement. Humor is a way to conserve tradition (speech community), so the Islamic teachings also can be conserved.

CONCLUSION

Islam is the religion of da'wah. It means that Islam should be preached to all humankind. It is important to preach Islam creatively to be accepted easily by the heterogeny and complex audience. This article found that the Islamic teaching dealing with the topic of theology, family and societal interactions can be delivered through humor, comedy, acronym, codes, pantun, and satire. This article also found that humor is one of instrument of communication which is developed within certain social and cultural context. All types of humor instrumentalized in religious sermons is part of pesantren tradition as a communal communication (*guyub tutur* or speech community). The case of Kyai Ishaq Latif's da'wah shows that humor can build and maintain intimacy as part of pesantren tradition. In many cases, the usage of humor indicates social dialect (sociolect) of kyai which was studying at pesantren as santri. This article also revealed that humor is used in da'wah as an instrument to deliver holy messages of Islamic teachings.

This research provides contribution to the theory of da'wah which is unseparated part from Muslim civilization. As the religion of da'wah, should be preached by considering the social and cultural aspect of the society. Research about humor in da'wah implies the polite and wise da'wah. It gives alternative way for the contemporary practice of da'wah

which is politically driven, sectarian, and intolerant toward different groups. Humor in da'wah can encourage social consolidation and at the same time prevent communal and primordial fragmentation which might cause intra-religious conflict within Muslim and/or extra-religious conflict between Muslim and other religious community.

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