Post-climax analysis in *toli*—the Ghanaian humorous tale

Yaw Sekyi-Baidoo
University of Education, Winneba, Ghana
ysekyibaidoo@gmail.com

Abstract

Aspects of contextual jokes include the relationship with the goal of the interaction, and the involvement of the audience in the overall manifestation of the joke and its response. Sacks' identification of the 'response' or the 'reaction' – the final of the three-phased organisation of joke narratives (Sacks, 1974: 337; Attardo, 1994: 307-311) points to an aspect of the manifestation of contextual jokes beyond the fabula or the narration of the tale 'proper' to include a part relating to the reaction of the audience. Such reactions may be the joke itself or to its telling. A study of the performance of humorous tales, called toli *in Ghana, reveals that the final phase, which we refer to as 'post-climax', involves the attention of all players, not to the telling of the tale, but to the incongruity and humour which underlie the very identity of the humorous tale. The post-climax discussion is, thus, an analytical reaction to various points of the tale, which has become an integral part of the performance of the tale as a conversational act, and which contributes extensively to the total manifestation of humour and laughter. Based on incongruity and comic-climax perspectives, the paper discusses the nature and strategies of post-climax, including the association of tale audience and setting, hypothetical extension of tale, incongruity and forced congruity discussions, dramatization and evaluations of realness, through which laughter, the main tenet of the genre, extensively manifests.*

Keywords: conversational jokes, incongruity, post-climax, humour, laughter.

1. Introduction

The conversational joke, as opposed to the canned joke, bears a close relationship with the context within which the joke is produced, according to Attardo (1994: 298-9), a conversational joke becomes 'charged with con-textual and co-textual links.' Similarly, Bauman (2004) acknowledges that beyond the 'hearing' role, the audience may evaluate the performance itself as well as the performers, among other things. Sacks (1974) and Attardo (1994) note the role of the audience in narrative jokes, including interruptions, especially for clarification, correction and response. The laughter response is often considered the greatest aspect of the role of the audience, as it often determines the acceptance of a joke, whose primary function is to cause

humour and laughter. A study of the Ghanaian humorous tale (HT), locally called *toli*, establishes, however, that the role of the audience transcends the laughter following the climax or the surprise (Cooke, 1978), and often results in another integral stage in the structure of the performance, referred to as the post-climax exchange.

This study focuses on the nature of the post-climax analysis in the narration of the Ghanaian humorous tale – the *toli*. It discusses the nature, patterns and methods in the post-climax and its place in the *toli* interaction as a whole, with a concentration on the realisation of humour. The study is guided by the following questions:

- What are post-climax exchanges and how do they manifest as an integral part of the Ghanaian humorous tale narration?
- In what ways are the incongruities in the preparation and the surprise exploited for the enactment of the post-climax discussions?
- In what ways does the post-punch contribute to the humour and the success of the humorous tale?

Toli is the Ghanaian local term for the humorous tale. It distinguishes short humorous narratives from other humorous forms, including the traditional folktale. The word *toli* is sometimes seen as a corruption of the English term 'story', with a somewhat deliberate misrepresentation of its phonetic form in order to make it refer specifically to the humorous narrative, rather than other stories which may primarily be philosophical or didactic. The *toli* is a short humorous narrative told basically for laughter. So crucial is laughter beyond other expressions of humour to the *toli* that it is often not deemed a good *toli* if the audience does not burst out in extensive laughter; and often, a short laughter is seen as a polite way of dismissing an unsuccessful *toli*. The *toli* is characterized as fictive, and even those from non-fictional sources are deemed in the context of the *toli* to be fictive. Apparently, this fictiveness contributes to the painlessness of toli and humour. The *toli* is based primarily on incongruity, and its ethos is on the effective presentation of the incongruity as to invoke amusement. Below is a short illustration of the *toli*:

> *There was a choral concert which was recorded and played back to a choir during its anniversary festivities. The performance involved presentations by diocesan choirs from all over the country. After a few performances, the diocese to which the celebrating choir belongs came to the stage. Their confidence and vigour was just fantabulous – note to note, sound to sound, voice to voice, step to step – ALL. But most scintillating and magnetic was the performance of the keyboardist – so confident and skilful and captivating. A lady stared at the organist, perhaps, with an imagination to join him on the screen - and exclaimed: 'Wow! My Lord, this guy is really an organizer!' Her friend added 'No, an **organeer**, no...**organer**!*

The *preparation* could be demarcated as from the beginning to the narrator's comment on the organist: '…so confident and skilful and captivating'; and the lady's exclamative 'Wow! My Lord, this guy is really an organizer!' is the *surprise*, which is extended by her friend's 'No, an organeer, no...organer!' The surprise is based on the malapropism in 'organizer' for 'organist'. The incongruity is established on the wrong selection of the 'person' or 'agentive' prefix – from the correct **'-ist'** to give 'organist' to the incongruous ones **'eer'** as in 'engineer' to give '**organeer**' and **'er'** as in 'planner'. Another incongruity here is in the contrast between the solid, sterling performance of the choir and the malapropism, pointing to a contrast between a near-perfect rendition of music and the use of a wrong manifestation of a concept to describe it.

Toli permeates almost all aspects of life in Ghana. Even at board meetings or religious sermons, a *toli* may be used to illustrate a point or to reawaken the attention of the audience. In

keeping with Sacks above, good performers adhere to the unspoken restrictions in the specific discourse community or to the specific context of situation.

The performance of *toli* is often not pre-organised, occurring once there is deemed enough time and enough permissibility. Organized *toli* sessions, however, occur in some social organizations. In my secondary school days, for instance, the first thirty minutes after supper was generally marked as *toli time.* It was basically a 'form five affair', though certain known '*toli* masters' in the lower forms could be invited to share a *toli* or two. In the barracks and in university halls, there are very highly organized *toli* sessions. The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, for instance, used to capture a *toli* session by the 3rd Battalion of Infantry in the 1980s. Some radio stations also currently run *toli* sessions made up of specially invited *toli* masters. In addition to the informal *toli* sessions in some rooms, floors and wings of university halls, there are also formally organised *Toli Nights.*

So far, the introduction section has set the stage, describing *toli* as a Ghanaian humorous tale genre. It has also identified the focus of the paper – the post-climax exchanges. The next section introduces the theoretical perspectives underpinning this research, which are the incongruity perspectives on humour. Again, the section reviews works on the narrative structure of tales and jokes in general, establishing the gap in existing studies and the need for the current study. The last section involves the analysis of the strategies employed in the post-climax exchanges from the point of view of incongruity and the nature of discoursal connection between the contribution in the post-climax and the tale itself.

2. Theoretical framework

The study is guided by incongruity perspectives on humour and Cooke's comic-climax perspective on the structure of humorous narratives. While the incongruity perspectives help to identify the strategies employed in the post-climax as revealing and heightening the 'matchlessness' and 'absurdity' which are the primary cause of humour, the comic-climax perspective helps to situate the exchanges as occurring after the delivery of the climax, and as responding to laughable aspects in the build-up of the humorous tale – both in the *preparation* and the *surprise,* (Cooke, 1978). Additionally, the comic-climax approach to the structuring of humour in the narrative helps also in discussing the functions of the post-climax discussion in the overall manifestation of humour, which is the central objective of the *toli*.

2.1. Incongruity Theories and Humour

Though Incongruity is sometimes seen to have arisen as a challenge to the Superiority Theory (Raskin, 1985), aspects of it actually started with Aristotle and Cicero who are of the idea that laughter (humour) emanates from the mismatch that arises from the violation of an expectation established in the course of an oration. Later, Schultz (1976) was to apply this violation to humour in jokes and identify incongruity 'as a conflict between what is expected and what actually occurs in the joke. (p.12) But the term 'incongruous' was first used by Beattie (1779) to explain the occurrence of humour. To Beattie, humour occurs when "two or more inconsistent, unsuitable, or incongruous parts or circumstances, considered as united in one complex object or assemblage, as acquiring a sort of mutual relation from the peculiar manner in which the mind takes notice of them". According to McGhee (1979: 6-7):

> The notion of congruity and incongruity refers to the relationships between components of an object, event, idea, social expectation, and so forth. When the arrangement of the constituent elements of an event is incompatible with the normal or expected pattern, the event is perceived as incongruous.

Incongruous forms identified include similarity, deception, the impossible, the possible and inconsequential, the unexpected, the unconnected and the incoherent (Janko, 1987: 44-46).

Whilst the perception of incongruity is generally acknowledged as central to humour, it cannot be said that all incongruity would cause humour. Surely, 'a drunk driver skidding off the motorway and crushing into a house and knocking down an old couple' is a deviation from the expected behaviour of drivers, the expected movement of the vehicle, and the expected positioning and health of the couple, but this scenario would not be said to be amusing! And this brings us to Aristotle's idea of the 'painlessness' of humour, that the ugliness or incongruity may not involve pain as to invoke our pity, rather than amusement. Thus, beyond the generally ontological nature of incongruity, which often produces only a humour potential, is the perception of it, which then produces the amusement which yields humour, which may manifest as laughter. It is necessary here to distinguish between humorous laughter (laughter coming out of the perception of incongruity (Morreall, 1983), and non-incongruity laughter, which may even come out of the joyful perception of the expected or the best, rather than the violation of congruity.

Whilst admitting that absurdity is not a necessary aspect of incongruity and humour (Kant & Guyer, 2000), it is useful to remark here that the absurd is a fundamental aspect of the humour of the *toli*, in the same way as laughter, rather than other manifestations of humour responses is considered a typical aspect of the *toli*. Often, the best *tolis* are those with the most effectively narrated absurdities, and the laughter is often seen as a reaction to the absurdity.

Post-climax exchanges heighten the incongruity in the climax and sometimes in the preparation in order to sustain and heighten the humour of the tale.

2.3 The comic-climax perspective

The concept of the *climax* of the tale, from which the idea of the post-climax exchanges is derived, is credited to Cooke's perspective of the structure of narrative humour. In his study of Old French and Chaucerian fabliaux, Cooke identifies a narrative structure made simply of the build-up or preparation and the climax or the surprise. The climax is the raison d'être of the humorous narrative, and all that comes before it is basically in preparation for this surprise at the climax, where the central humour is placed:

> …the climax is all important. It is their most distinctive characteristic, the raison d'etre that governs, controls and directs all that happens in the tale. Other intermediate factors may arrest our attention, such as the characterization and the dialogue, but …those things do not become an end in themselves, but rather help pave the way toward the climax.

2.4   Relevant studies into the structure of the tale

Studies into the tale in general have often been text-based or structural, looking more at the structure or the actual sequential make-up of the story or fabula, with only some attention to its performance – narrator-audience behaviour and interaction and the totality of the context of performance. For instance, Propp (1968) and Lévi-Strauss (1955, 1964), concentrate on the

composition of the plot or the underlying patterns of events that characterize narrative units or plot categories. Again, Labov's narrative syntax (1972), identifies six narrative categories: *Abstract* - How does it begin?; *Orientation* - Who/what does it involve, and when/where?; *Complicating Action* - Then what happened?; *Resolution* - What finally happened?; *Evaluation* - So what?; *Coda*, which are all aspects of the internal structure of the tale itself.

On the other hand, whilst the canned joke may end with the joke text, the conversational joke would be appropriately positioned in the context in which the joke is told, with attention to activities beyond the joke verbiage, including the activities leading to, during, and in response to the joke text. Thus, Sacks (1974) draws attention to the pre-narration as well as post-narration (response) in addition to the telling or the joke text itself, and he identifies laughter – its presence, delay or absence – as a most important manifestation of the response. Attardo (1994: 310) draws attention to other forms of response, including evaluative comments and other jokes. Subsequently, several studies, including Kotthoff (1999), Norrick (2000), Attardo (2001), and Archakis & Tsakona (2012), have looked at the pragmatics of the joke narrative with varied attention to the organisation of its internal structure and its integration within its conversational context, and the discoursal strategies adopted in the narrative and their pragmatic functions.

An observation of the performance of the Ghanaian *toli* sessions and the focus group discussions with tellers and audiences of conversational *toli* confirm the need and indispensability of the realisation of post-narration discourse. Post-narration discourse can be on several subjects, including the considerations of reportability, credibility and effectiveness of narration; but beyond these is the kind of post-narration discourse which does not assess the *toli* and its delivery, but contributes to its humour by tugging on the incongruities in the tale, and extending the manifestation of humour. Thus, looked at from the point of view of the joke as a conversational event, there would be the need to extend Cooke's structure of the joke or fabliaux to include a *post-surprise* or *post-climax* aspect, which is the focus of this paper.

3. Data

25 instances of *toli* in conversations were observed mostly through participant observation. These involved interactions among students, university staff and choristers of the Methodist Church of Ghana among whom I serve as a major functionary. I also listened to nine (9) radio *toli* sessions. Only four (4) were selected for analysis in order to ensure depth and consistency within the limited space of the paper. These were purposively selected because they were mostly in English, needing little or no translation. In addition to the tales, interviews and discussions were held with participants of *toli* interactions, to seek their views on the nature and importance of the post-punch analysis.

4. Analysis

4.1 The post-climax and the performance of 'toli'

As discussed above, the post-climax belongs not to the tale (with respect to its fabula) but to its enactment in a specific context, and, thus, the same tale may be told with different post-punches. The post-climax and the humour it evokes are associated with the following characteristics of the humorous tale itself as well as with its performance. First, the *toli*, unlike jokes and some other punch-oriented humour realizations, occurs generally as an assemblage or compaction of humour, which is not restricted to the end-punch. Pre-final punches occur all along the stretch of the tale, and each of them may require some comment in the post-punch discussions.

Again, the HT occurring as part of a conversational interaction then, conversational elements such as question-and-answer exchanges, interruptions, back-cues and the linkages that characterise conversations would be incorporated into the narrative experience. Some of these run parallel to the narration (interruptions, enquiries etc.) or come as post-climax exchanges.

The study establishes that apart from instances of the illustrative use of HTs in monologues, such as lectures, speeches and sermons, it is normally expected that there would be some post-climax interaction for narrator and audience to respond to tales. There were situations in this study where follow-up *tolis* were stopped in order to make way for the post-climax. In one instance, not having the post-climax was compared to 'killing a snake and not cutting off its head', meaning the narration was not really complete. The excitement of the post-punch lies partly in the keenness of the participation—from a single narrator several participants, the exploitation of a variety of conversational turns—regular turns, interruptions, and overlapping turns, and in the variety of discoursal functions exploited in the turns—question, response, repetition, reiteration, addition and contrast.

4.2 The nature of the post-punch

The activities involved in the post-punch include the following, and we discuss these with references to the tales in the appendix:

- Character or setting associations
- Tale extension
- Pro-incongruity submissions
- Expansion or elaboration of incongruity
- Dramatic display of punch
- Evaluations of 'Realness'

4.2.1 Character or Setting Association

This strategy typically reflects Attardo's idea of con-textual and co-textual links to conversational jokes, (1994: 298-9). In this strategy, the narrator, or any of the players, attempts to associate the whole story and its humour, or parts of it, with a known person or community. Often, the person is a part of the *toli* performance or associated with a player. The incongruity here involves the opposition of the setting and characters in the tale, on the one side, and setting or characters outside of the tale, as though to say 'Why bring in this? This is a different issue'. But the incongruity and the amusement are heightened if the imported situation itself involves incongruity. Thus, incongruity comes from the opposition of contexts and is complicated by the invocation of additional incongruities. In HT 2, for instance, the incongruity of character association is exploited thus:

> **(1)** I suggest that the copier is Afful and the Copier-
> Heartbroken –Swindler is Phil…sure… no mistake.

It calls up the known experience involving one Afful, who cheats during examinations, which is incongruous to expectations about examinations, and the incongruity of losing one's girlfriend, which is very laughable among high school and university students. The incongruity is further heightened if Afful and Phil are themselves in the *toli* performance, introducing what we may refer to as *butt shifting*, as the butt of the laughter changes momentarily from the cheat in the tale to players in the performance. When the expressions 'sure' and 'no mistake' are added, they complicate the incongruity further by affirming as true the matching of characters in the tale and persons in the known experience, which is known to be fictional.

In setting association, one associates the laughable event with a known setting:

(2) *As for this it must have happened in the B.Ed 2 classroom*

or

(3) *This happened in Asokwa.*

Here, the incongruity and humour is in the attempt to connect incongruities associated with known events in Asokwa and the B.Ed 2 class in what might be called *setting matching.* As explained above, in such instances, the incongruities of the experiences associated with Asokwa and B.Ed 2 complicate the incongruity and heighten the humour.

In another attempt to connect the incongruity in a tale to the performance of the *toli*, the post-climax comment rendered the name as *Josephathat,* when the player being connected to the incongruity was *Joseph.* This could be seen as an instance of onomastic incongruity, for the fact that the wrong name is used, or one of referential incongruity, as a different person, other than the Joseph among the players, appears to be the one being referred to. Furthermore, the correct or known name is *Jehoshaphat*, so that another onomastic deviation from *Jehoshaphat* and *Josephaphat* has been introduced, which could be seen as an attempt to both maintain *Joseph* and to depart from it. The rendition of the name *Joseph* as *Josephaphat* introduces yet another incongruity, which is based on the opposition between the directness, in referring to the player-mate, and the indirectness, in deviating from the actual rendition of the name. The rendition of *Joseph* as *Josephathat* is deemed as a laughable, cowardly act, and the other players chant (in Akan) *'Otwea', 'Otwea, adaan no'* (Coward, coward, you have diverted.). Interestingly, the comment itself also recalls another tale in which the chanted phrase—'*Otwea, adaan no'* is the surprise or climax.

Character and setting association, as has been seen, gives the opportunity to associate the incongruity and humour in the *toli* with other participants, other persons and situations, which also introduces incongruity and laughter. Narrator-directed associations often come out among the most laughable, since the narrator, who introduces the incongruity, ironically becomes the butt of the incongruity in the post-climax exchange.

4.2.2 Tale Extension

Tales or plots in general do not always end where one may generally consider naturally final. In some plays, finality is accounted for in post-final words which sum up the events following the resolution e.g. *Gina and Senyo married and are living together happily in Ho*. HTs are generally *surprise or punch oriented*, with the main focus on the point of high incongruity and humour, rather than the completion of the experience in a natural plot structure.

Humour in HTs could be categorised as *retrospective* and *progressive*, in respect of their direction (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2013). Whereas the retrospective HTs accrue their humour from a recall and re-examination of actions leading to the climax, the progressive ones base their humour on the expected action after the punch, which may include the addition of laughable finalities. Others are also seen to be *bi-perspective*, and have humour from both directions. Tale extension is a common strategy in bi-perspective post-punches. Here, from the incongruities of the earlier parts of the tale, one offers most grotesque or humorous possibilities to prompt more or higher incongruity and more intense laughter. In HT 3, the following comes as the tale extension:

(4)
B. *So what did the invigilator do?*
C. *Maybe he would advise: Don't worry about him? That's his own trouble.*

A*. And the boy would reply: 'Sir I am worried; he is my friend, and I love him'*

C*. Love him, eh! Let him love himself ooo!*

D*. Each man for himself…no God for us all….*

A*. Sure how could God be for a copier? God is not a Moshi person ooo… to give birth to a son, and love him enough as to strip his face with blade.*

Here, the extension is pursued from the point of what the invigilator would do upon being confronted with such strange behaviour from a candidate who weeps and complains - not because s/he has failed to see some questions or has been cheated of time, but because another person has cancelled his own answers; that is a most unexpected and absurd reaction. Tale extension operates on the principle that *the absurd produces further absurdities*. Thus, in the extension, any picture that failed to further the incongruities and absurdities is considered ineffective.

(5) *He would wipe the copier's tears.*

continues the incongruity, as invigilators do not wipe candidates' tears, let alone those who behave this stupidly. But more importantly, the incongruity here is that such a loving gesture from the invigilator is incongruous to the needs and frustrations of the candidate. The more natural line of the tale extension, which has the invigilator admonishing

(6) *Don't worry about him? That's his own trouble.*

is a deviation from the reality, since we know he really needed to be worried and would be highly worried. Perhaps, the congruous reaction to the teacher's admonishment would be for the candidate to confess, saying:

(7) *No, it's my trouble too; I was copying from him,*
and now I know that I copied wrong answers.

But this raises incongruity between the truthful and the wise. Would the candidate go the way of truth and face the academic disciplinary response of, perhaps, being sacked? Surely, he might decide to go by the advice of the invigilator and stopped worrying; but this would invoke the opposition of the real to the unreal, and the pretence thereof would make him even more laughable. The suggested response

(8) *Sir I am worried; he is my friend, and I love him.*

also shows incongruity borne out of pretence, and the humour is based on his attempt to pretend sympathy for another when in actual fact he is feeling pain, frustration and fear for HIMSELF.

The tale extension to HT 1 introduces another means of extension. Whereas the example above presents a basically *improbable* situation, the one below draws attention to a clear probability in the context of the joke and the context of situation, which increases the absurdity and misery of the behaviour and predicament of the erring pastors, especially the one who slept with the wife of his catechist. In the tale, the response to the humiliating confessions of the pastors and the threat of one of them divulging these secrets of confession was prayer; but this is the response in the post-climax:

(9)

A*. But maybe the instant, ardent prayer 'for him' wasn't necessary after all*

C*. Why?*

A*. Who knows what the man might have done? In this time and age, he was, perhaps, sending soundbites of the confession per WhatsApp or Twitter or Viber or*

> *Tango.*

> C. *So let's tell them to stop the prayer then… Things fall apart ooo … the centre cannot hold even with prayer. The die is cast.*

The submission by Player A draws attention to reality: divulging of secrets has gone past simple word of the mouth to the use of modern electronic platforms with more speed and reach. The piling of the social media (W*hatsApp or Twitter or Viber or Tango)* emphasises the speed and spread of the release of their secrets as well as the uselessness of the efforts to pray. This has implications for incongruity and humour. The humiliating activities of the pastors deviate from the honour and reverence normally associated with them. Thus, the probable adoption of electronic platforms increases their humiliation and deepens the incongruity. Again, the surprise that comes with the shift from word of mouth to the electronic resources for the transmission of the humiliation enhances the humour.

4.2.3 Pro-incongruity

Pro-incongruity strategies attempt ironically to justify their support of the incongruity; but in reality, they reveal the deepest absurdities, employing weak argumentation among others, which themselves exhibit incongruity in reasoning. By this, attention is drawn to the absurdity of the victim as further incongruities may be introduced, thereby enhancing the humour of the tale. In the HT1, the following is an ironic, pro-incongruity comment attempting to justify the lechery of the pastor, claiming that he is expected, as God's representative on earth, to observe and report to God:

> **(10)** *This na (is) pastoral look oo… by God's representative… supposed to give comments to God about life on earth... you see!*

Here are some of the incongruities brought to the fore by this pro-incongruity submission:

- 'Pastoral look' – Is there any such thing as a 'pastoral look'? Even if it existed it should surely not be tied to a lady's breasts. There is an incongruous relationship between the + *holiness* of pastoral work and the + *lechery* of staring at a lady's breasts, especially during holy sacrament.

- 'God's representative' – This follows from the incongruity identified above, as pastors represent God in spirituality and holiness, not in the carnality of girl-watching, let alone breast-staring, especially in the context of presenting Christ's body and blood during communion.

The absurdity is enhanced by this seemingly matter-of-fact, uncompromising support, which itself shows incongruity in its irony:

> **(11)** *Nonsense… this is an entirely PASTOR-CHRIST affair.*

In HT 3, we have two forms of the pro-incongruity submissions – the *realis* and the *irealis*. Irealis pro-incongruities create additional, laughable options, as noted above, with forced, ironic justifications, and by so doing, they draw attention to the absurdity. Thus, by submitting

> **(12)** *Maybe he is an assistant invigilator or exam counsellor.*

attention is drawn to the fact that the congruous situation for the complaint from the cheating candidate is if he were assistant invigilator, or an exam counsellor, which he actually is not,

drawing further attention to the incongruity of his complaint; and in fact, there is no such position as 'exam counsellor', which also creates an incongruity between the reality of examination officials and the proposed. The second pro-incongruity submission,

> **(13)** *But the answer is for the two of them, per the agreement!*

on the other hand, is ostensibly true, as the answers were planned originally to be shared by the two candidates – and this draws attention to an incongruity, since answers in examination, except in cases of group work, are for individual candidates. The effect of the pretended support is enhanced by its exclamatory nature and the ironic seriousness of the face of the player.

4.2.4 Incongruity expansion

With this, players make submissions which seek to explain the incongruities from which the humour emanates, which is an appreciation of the basis of the humour. Whereas some of the explications simply state the incongruity, others exaggerate and expand on it from different standpoints, connecting one incongruity explication to another. The post-climax of HT 2 is basically made up of incongruity expansion. The categorisations below are based on the relationship between the contribution and the actual text of the narrative. Implications are reinterpretations of some aspect of the tale to capture the repercussions of the humorous behaviour, and by this, they deepen the incongruity.

Implication

(14)

> *NA: Now it's no longer the body of Christ o o, it's somebody else's body ooo…. You see the transmogrification - from body of Christ to human being to body of a woman, the breasts and the areas there - around presented as a living sacrifice to Christ!!! Christ and Christendom are in trouble ooo.*

(15) *NA: So now he is inviting the Lord himself to partake in his sins.*

Extension

(16)

> *B: But me my own is the behaviour of the pastor. Why didn't he invite the other men to pay their dues in this viewing oo.*

Extension contributions introduce elements which are not a part of the original tale. 'Inviting the congregation' is certainly new, and its incongruity here is, thus, not connected to the surprise or the climax in the *toli*, but is the player's own contribution to the incongruity into the tale - for how would one ever expect the pastor to invite the congregation to participate in the immoral staring at a woman's breasts?

Exposition or Explication

(17)

> *B. Ok. Then but at least, we learn one lesson ooo. We learn in Geography about 'earth tremors'. What name do you give to the pastor's lips as they trembled when he was feeding his eyes - - MOUTH-TREMORS*
>
> *A. No lip-tremors*

*B. See maybe also tongue tremors…. O oo nobody can tell what the lips where doing
        inside the mouth ooo… perhaps trembling like ….*

Expositions post-climax, unlike the *implication* and the *extension*, do not explain or extend the experience in the tale. Rather, they explain aspects original to the tale to deepen their incongruities, absurdity and laughability. In doing this, they may repeat the specific incongruity marker, and give it synonyms, paronyms, antonyms or names, or recall its associations in similar or contrasting experiences. The use of 'lip-tremors' and 'tongue-tremors' is a humorous paronym of the existing word 'earth-tremor'. Again, this explication post-climax comment:

(18)   *NA: For a moment he forgot about his congregation … and stared…*

involves basically recalling or repeating the experience in the *toli* itself. The retelling is suggested by the ellipsis after 'stared', which is the beginning of the actual incongruous behaviour of the pastor. Such recalling has the function of refreshing the incongruous behaviour of the pastor, which constitutes the climax of the tale. On the other hand, in

(19)   *A: But why not… if you were him? Don't you remember 'Nearer, my God. . . sun,
        moon and stars forgot… upwards I fly?*

connection is made to a hymn, *Nearer, my God, to Thee*, as a way of explaining the way in which the priest was carried away entranced. But the deeper incongruity here lies in the fact that in reality, the pastor was retreating from the holiness of God rather than flying to heaven.

4.2.5 Punch Display

Repetition and acting give narration a great deal of vividness and realism. In punch displays, players re-present the climax and other areas of incongruity in the tale in order to recall incongruity and laughter. Heightening of emotions, exaggeration and distortion are commonly employed in this strategy. In repetition, a player may recall an aspect of incongruity in the tale, employing voice techniques, gestures, movements and other histrionics to enhance the incongruity and provoke further laughter. In the following, the player employs stuttering, which is itself a speech incongruity. But additionally, the employment of disfluency or unclarity features in presenting a speech is a way of pointing to the absurdity associated with the speech:

(20)   *Sir, s-s-omebb-ody has c-c-cancelled…cancelled…all…ALL… his
        answers at this l-l-l-ast moment. Ah!!!! (sobs) Why? Why? Why???
        (sobs and snaps his fingers to show deep pain). (HT3)*

Constructed dialogues, according to Tannen (1989), help to emphasise the liveliness of dialogues, and they are used here to transform even existing dialogues to reflect the humour intended in the post-climax. The constructed dialogue above focuses on the pain and frustrations of the character who is the butt of the humour, as a way of refreshing or heightening the humour. To achieve this, he re-presents the punch, emphasising the pain through disfluency features: stuttering, gaps, the repetition of salient words such as 'cancelled' and 'all' with an emphasis on 'ALL'; through the use of interjections and sobs; and the repetition of the rhetoric 'why' as a mark of deep frustration and pain, reflected in the sobbing and the snapping of fingers – all this is to heighten the initial absurdity of the character. Here, the response to the painful display was a call to the victim to cry further, itself a social incongruity, since in normal life, one is comforted rather than encouraged to cry more.

When another player taps the one doing the display, saying:

(21)   *(Ɛnnyɛ hwee wai, mɛma wo me marks no bi wae).*
        Stop crying, this is nothing. I will give you some of my marks.)

he introduces two new aspects of incongruity: the mismatch between the words and the spirit of the 'consolation' and the mismatch between the nature of ownership of examination scores and the 'promise' to share marks, for surely, there is no way a student could give away part of his marks. What we see is sometimes a mixed drama in which the dramatization partly becomes a new incident, which then calls for other dramatic reactions based on the nature of incongruity as well as the knowledge of the situation outside the discourse of the tale. In the above, the display of the victim's pain produces the situation of another player attempting to console him, all of which is outside of the event captured in the tale. There is, therefore, a close link between displaying (and indeed other aspects of post-climax analysis) and tale extension.

4.2.6 Evaluations of realism

Humour is often based on the principle of suspension of disbelief. With suspension of disbelief, one drops the critical considerations of probability or truth in order that something improbable could be taken as real for the sake of the enjoyment of literature. In *tolis*, suspension of disbelief is based on the fact that the incident captured is often fictive i.e. did not ever occur in real life, or that some changes have been effected on the real incident in order that incongruities could result. In other words, underlying HT is the idea of fiction: that the incident reported is, in whole or in part, fictional. Thus, the improbable or implausible is probable or plausible in the fictive world of humour or the comic. Though fictiveness and implausibility are defining aspects of the *toli*, there are attempts in the post-climax to confirm the fictiveness or implausibility of the content of tales, which is itself a source of incongruity and laughter.

Post-punch exchanges sometimes involve negotiations about the realism, and the suspension or activation of disbelief:

(22)

- *As for this you are lying!*
- *This guy died, I guess!*
- *This one would have fallen into a coma!*

are directed towards the contestation of the authenticity and of the events of the tale. It is interesting that the issue of authenticity would be raised as in

(23) - *As for this you are lying*

in a genre that is by nature pervasively fictive. The idea of the death of the victim in an HT is used to signify the fact that the story is fictive. Since it is customary to point to the fictiveness of a tale by the death of the victim/protagonist, the idea of a 'coma' comes up as a humorous substitution for the monotony of using the idea of death. Some more innovative variation could be the following:

> *No, he didn't die, but he was in hospital for about four years, his legs hanging from the bruises he obtained through the clash…He has since been discharged, but he sits in a wheelbarrow.*

Contrary to comments of *contestation* are the *confirmatory* ones, which seek to affirm or testify to authenticity. Their incongruity and humour lie in the fact that they are clearly untrue – a situation of using untruth to confirm what is known to be untrue. Confirmatory remarks include

(24)

- *I bet you*
- *It's true*

- *I was there*
- *Kofi, I didn't know you were also there ooo. I was there and saw everything* ***yaagani….fiilifiili***[1].

Like the others, the humour of the evaluation comments lies in the incongruities they raise, and the exchanges generated from their use. The incongruity distance lies in the contrast between the lexical expression of 'truth' and the level of confirmation it carries, on the one hand, and the reality of the experience carried in the tale, on the other; and this also often influences the depth of humour and the heaps of comments and exchanges resulting from the confirmatory comment, as in the tale below:

(25)

*Clinton dies, and the Pope dies around the same time and hour, and by some computer error Clinton goes to Heaven while the Pope goes to hell. In heaven, Clinton's ways were found to be more hot than expected. He often was found girlwatching during prayer sessions. Angel Gabriel summoned the computer experts, and they went into the allocations for the day of Clinton's death and found that there has been a mix up. Clinton's **00011100116** had been mistaken for the Pope's **00111100116**. This error having been discovered, they had to get each where he really belonged, and this was done same time. A shaft was lifting up Pope from Heaven whilst another was lowering Clinton to hell. They met midpoint:*

- *How is it, Mr Clinton?*
- *Hi Old Pope. I'm cool.*
- *How is Heaven?*
- *Errrmm… ok good…at least peaceful.*
- *God, the Father?*
- *Good, kind, gentle old man. He's doing good.*
- *And Jesus?*
- *Good, nice young man, but he complains about everything. No wonder they crucified him.*
- *And the Virgin Mary?*
- *(Clinton is crestfallen at once). You ask for VIRGIN Mary? You are really late. That was a fortnight ago, day after my arrival! – PUNCH*

A **confirmatory evaluative response** from the audience was

(26)   Sure, I was there!!!

and the booing thereof and the ensuing comments about the credibility of the testimony:

(27)

- *Where were you?*
- *Maybe with Clinton in the lowering shaft.*
- *How could you be there? You bearer of false witness. Have you died before?*
-

all provoked post-climax laughter. The response, 'Sure, I was there!!!' is surely an incongruity, since the person, humanly speaking, couldn't have been part of a post-death experience. This

---

[1] *Yaagani* and *fiili-fiili* are Hausa terminologies for direct or eye-witness experience.

incongruity is heightened with the response that the person would have been in the shaft with Clinton - a humorous indication that the person would also go to Hell, which is itself followed by a contestation of truth in '*How could you be there? You bearer of false witness*'. When the player continues with 'Have you died before', it becomes evident that he is humorously seeking reality and truth in a genre which relies on untruth, as Clinton and the Pope (if they refer to President Bill Clinton and the current Pope) are themselves alive, and could not have been committed to heaven or hell.

5. Conclusion

The study set out to investigate the place of the post-climax exchanges in the Ghanaian humorous tale experience, the strategies employed in the post-climax discussions and the contribution of the post-climax to the success of the tale narration. Information was obtained from the texts of the tales (some of which are provided in the appendix) as well as the observation of the *toli* performances and the interviews and focus group discussions.

The study made an initial distinction between the canned tale and the conversational tale. Whereas the canned tale relies basically on the fabula, the conversational tale recognises, in addition to the fabula, the performance aspects of the tale, including the pre-narration and post-narration. Cooke's *preparation-climax* structure, with a focus on the fabula, easily captures the humorous tale outside of the context of performance. But the performance of the humorous tale, being conversational, needs to account for pre-narration and, in our case, the post-narration or post-climax. The post-climax captures the way in which a tale is received, and how the players respond to the incongruity of the tale and contribute to the humour of the performance, which is a very crucial aspect of the Ghanaian humorous tale as a social experience. So important is this interactive or communal part of the experience of the tale that it is often considered unacceptable if it is skipped or curtailed in a performance. With this consideration of the post-narration discussions, the Ghanaian humorous tale could, thus, be described as having a *preparation–climax–post-climax* narrative experience.

The study reveals a number of techniques employed to draw further attention to the incongruity in tales. These range from the reiterative ones, which recall instances of incongruity in the tale through simple repetition, blemished and dramatized re-presentations; those that connect incongruities to the context by drawing in incongruities from shared experiences; and those which work on the fabula and dialogues in the tale, extending, adding to or elaborating the story and its incongruities. Other techniques emphasise the fictiveness of the tale, which is a central characteristic. Thus, the techniques draw on different aspects of the spirit of the *toli*— its context of performance and situation, its fabula, its dialogues, the semantic or cognitive aspects underlying the incongruities, and the disconnect between the tales and the world of truth or reality. In this complexity, the post-climax discussions are able to position the tale towards its most basic nature—laughter over painless incongruity and absurdity.

The role of the post-climax in the achievement of humour makes it not just an allowable aspect of the HT, but rather an integral, crucial aspect of the *toli* performance. Thus, some players may become known in some *toli* circles, not so much as good narrators, but rather as effective post-climax contributors; and performances are deemed to have lost some of their best elements when such effective post-climax commentators are absent. Laughter is not always indicative of humour, but in humour circles, as in the *toli,* and the situation presented in Sacks (1974), laughter is often used to index the success of a humorous tale. Thus, if the post-climax often yields the best of laughter, then that gives us reason to affirm its crucial place in the *toli* performance, the ethos of which is humorous laughter.

APPENDIX – TRANSCRIPTS OF -HUMOROUS TALES (TOLI)

HT 1

Hmm… these ministers… or pastors… or reverends…hmmm… some of whom have little reverence! Another one o o o. You know that the ministers often meet and pray and think about themselves…and don't ask me the agenda! It may include prayers, make of cars which are current, preaching fees, but at the early part of the year, it included CONFESSION and PRAYERS. In my church, we have what we call The Living Saints, where all these prospective members of the 144,000 raptured once every year.

This year at the conversion of saints, the saints went through several items on the agenda, and it came to confession and prayer, for the sins and iniquities of the previous year. And the leader of the session moved from saint to saint for public confession.

One of them confessed, 'Err… the year gone…in August/September, by God's grace, one child of mine gained admission to the university, and the second one to the Senior High. It was good news, and I thank Jehovah. Hmm… but God failed to make money available. Brothers in Christ, it was just terrible – paying for SHS fees, kit… and university – the high fees, accommodation etc! It was wahala!

Just at that same time, the church was going to buy new car. So I worked on the price. I arranged that the prie was quoted as GHS 15,200.00 instead of the GHS 12,200.00…. I just had to juggle the figures…and I got some Ghs300.00 for the people to shut them up. I was able to see the children to school.

I know I have stolen, and it isn't good! The Bible speaks against stealing. Please join me to pray for forgiveness. But please tell Him never to put me in such financial mess. If he expects me to keep His money well and safe'!

The leader responded, 'Pastor, we will pray with you! The Lord is always ready to forgive.

The next one confessed: 'Mine is not about theft. It is about keeping my flock asunder! Exactly a year last September, I was posted to my current station. Ah, my church leaders were too united. They would kick against anything I proposed which would benefit me and the Pastor's wife in any small way. So I began to spread rumours … dividing their ranks! Then if I proposed something I would pass it through like the Red Sea.

The Bible enjoins all to live together in peace, and I think I didn't do right! But they also should be careful dealing with the Lord's anointed! Please pray for God's forgiveness for me.'

'We would pray with you, and the merciful Father will surely forgive you'.

Another confessed, 'Me it is my catechist's wife! Hmm! The lady is something else, too beautiful. I tried to resist her with prayers, but I failed. For 7 or 8 times - I have confused the count - I missed my way into the catechist's manse, and had her, when my catechist was on outstation duty. This is adultery… not good! Please kindly ask the Lord to forgive me, and to transfer the catechist to save me and my calling.

'Brother, it happens to us all. We're with you in prayer'.

Pastors confessed and confessed… till it came to the turn of the last one who had been quiet through the session. He confessed.

'Mine is a serious sin… has been with me for years… since I joined the ministry…and I have tried everything possible to stop it. Now I don't know whether God is able to forgive me anymore!'

'Oh Brother, God forgives you, even though your sins be like scarlet!

'Thanks, ma brothers', he continued. 'The problem is that me, my head isn't like a warehouse or even a wholesale shop. It is like a supermarket… mall, people coming to and fro, buying and going. So whatever I hear, in no time I have to spread…and everybody who must know gets to know. I have been trying to stop as I said, but to no avail. So even the confessions you have made today, hmmm… if you don't pray in earnest, but the time you get out, everything is out there!'

POST-PUNCH

Player A: But he is wicked…if he knows he has okro-mouth, why didn't he stay out during the confession? ***LAUGHTER***

All Players: Yes, yes!!

Player B: How? But why should he? If his mouth is okro to say things, so are his ears, also okro to hear things. Okro feeds okro! Doesn't he need information to broadcast? I agree with him! ***LAUGHTER***

Player A: Ok, so why did he decide to sit at the corner, and deliver his confession last? ***LAUGHTER***

Player C: Ho! And you call it confession… or WARNING? If he sat at the beginning, how would he hear the confessions to feed his Okro Ministry? ***LAUGHTER LAUGHTER***

Player B: But, let's not underestimate his statement o o.

Player A: Which statement?

Player C: That by the time they go out everything is out already! ***LAUGHTER***

Player A: How do you mean?

Narrator: I think the expert could be sending to the congregations! ***LAUGHTER LAUGHTER***

Player C: You say congregants? To newspapers …and media houses!!

Player A: He could even be recording the bytes… to be played on air… or at least for onward transmission to the Catechist's wife… ***LAUGHTER***

Narrator: … and the Bishop! ***LAUGHTER***

Player B: Yes… it serves the minister right! If you have missed your way, how come up to eight times. ***LAUGHTER LAUGHTER***

Player A: So maybe this pastor actually found a way down the catechist's wife's body…. He never missed that way! ***LAUGHTER***

Player B: Yes… and he talks about '7 or 8… I have confused the count!' Eh.

Player A: So it could be 30… or even seventy-seven times seven! ***LAUGHTER …LAUGHTER***

Player B: I think this pastor was a Methodist pastor. ***LAUGHTER***

Player C: Yes…Yes… and the girl was a student of UCC. ***LAUGHTER***

Narrator: Sure… living between Accra and Sekondi. ***LAUGHTER… LAUGHTER***

Player C: But maybe the instant, ardent prayer 'for him' wasn't necessary after all

Player A: Why?

Narrator: Who knows what the man might have done? In this time and age, he was perhaps sending soundbites of the confession per WhatsApp or Twitter or Viber or Tango. ***LAUGHTER… LAUGHTER***

Player B: Let's tell them to stop the prayer then. Things fall apart already… the centre cannot hold even with prayer. The die is cast! ***LAUGHTER LAUGHTER***

HT 2

But ….don't blame the pastors o o … the women too are bad …and 'temptatious'. These days the things they wear. Why won't the pastors do this? You see this incident at Tema… in a charismatic church. I was there myself. It was communion, and this pastor had a special way of giving communion. He went from person to person, pew to pew, and would go 'Brother, this is the body of Christ… and His blood! Take it and be blessed'. Then he would move to the next: 'Auntie, Christ died to save you sinful soul. Take His body and blood and take your place in His kingdom'. 'Papa, this is the body of God…take it and receive everlasting life'. So he reached a 19 to 22-year-old damsel… beautiful in body, colour and face. She had pumped up her bobs, and the dress had been cut very low at the neck …with the Akwapim Ridge to the left and the Kwahu mountains to the right … with the Huni Valley in between the ridges, and the Afram Plains just on top of the ridges….all showing.

The pastor got to the girl... spotted the ridges and the plains and valley… looked right into the beautiful scenery…and gazed… and fixed his eyes …and was transfixed. And for a few minutes he just fed his eyes…and 'the body of Christ' and the blessings had given in to silence. The whole congregation was surprised at the minister's fixation. Then after minutes, he regains his consciousness, and exclaims "O Christ, what a body!

POST-PUNCH

Narrator*: Now it's no longer the body of Christ o o, it's somebody else's ooo…. You see the transmogrification - from body of Christ to human being to body of a woman, the breasts and the areas there-around presented as a living sacrifice to Christ!!! Christ and Christendom are in trouble ooo!* **LAUGHTER**

Narrator*: So now he is inviting the Lord himself to partake in his sins.* **LAUGHTER**

Player A*: But he didn't touch oo. He only looked. Maybe the commandment about looking at woman (OR A MAN) with lust has been suspended.* **LAUGHTER**

Narrator*: This na pastoral look o o.. by God's representative… supposed to give comments to God about life on earth here.. you see.* **LAUGHTER**

Player B*: But me my own is why didn't he invite the other men to pay their dues in this viewing?*

Narrator*: Nonsense… this is an entirely PASTOR-CHRIST affair,* **LAUGHTER LAUGHTER**

Player B: *Ok. Then but at least, we learn one lesson ooo. We learn in Geography about 'earthtremors'. What name do you give to the pastor's lips as they trembled when he was feeding his eyes - - MOUTHTREMORS!* **LAUGHTER**

Player A: *No lip-tremors,* **LAUGHTER**

Player B: *See maybe also tongue-tremors. None can tell what the tongue was doing inside the mouth … trembling like ....*

Narrator: *For a moment he forgot about his congregation .. and stared…*

Player A: *But why not… if you were him? Don't you remember Nearer, my God . . sun, moon and stars forgot.. upwards I fly?* **LAUGHTER**

Narrator*: So what was his UPWARDS?*

Player A: *His Heaven, the inter-rock experience,* **LAUGHTER**

Narrator: *And I think somebody coughed or creaked, or something must have fallen, to wake him up from his trance. Otherwise he was just falling and falling…*
     LAUGHTER, LAUGHTER.

HT 3

There was this boy in a school, SHS, who was always chilling out with the finest girls, drinking and eating big things. He wouldn't study for the exam. He would often bribe those who sat near him at exams so he could copy from them. He had done this for a long time, reaching Form 2 third term where he needed a major promotion to final year. With the seating arrangement he was sitting just behind a brilliant but poor guy, a shark, whose girlfriend this guy had taken earlier. He saw the guy and they negotiated, and a bribe was given and taken, and the agreement was crowned.

The day came. They sat in the hall, the copier behind the copied. The boy wrote, and he copied. But this boy was bad, He had opened some other page where he was writing correct answers, and another with wrong answers, which he made freely available to the master copyist!

Things went on smoothly as the invigilator was inattentive. Then five minutes before the close of exam, the copied boy, opened the pages from where the guy had been copying, and ran his pen through… waa.. waa… cancelling everything! Aww… the copyist looked, red with anger and cold with shock; and he lifted his hand, and called

'Sir, Sir'

'What is the matter? How may I help you?'

(Sobbing) 'Sir, somebody has cancelled his answer last minute! Why ? Why ?Why?'

POST–PUNCH

Player A: *Ah! But is that his matter, if somebody cancels his own answers?* **LAUGHTER**
Player B: *May be he is an assistant invigilator/counsellor.* **LAUGHTER LAUGHTER**
Narrator: *No!! But the answers was for the two of them, per the agreement!*
Player A: *Yes, but everybody has his answer book! If the other one has cancelled, let him keep his! That's all??* **LAUGHTER LAUGHTER**

Player B: *Sir, s-s-omebb-ody has c-c-cancelled all his answers at this l-l-l-ast moment. Ah!!!! (sobs) Why? Why? Why??? (Snaps fingers to show deep pain)* **LAUGHTER LAUGHTER**
Narrator: *Su kakra ka ho (You need to cry a bit more!)* **LAUGHTER**
Player A: *(Ɛnnyɛ hwee wai, mƐma wo me marks no bi wae)*
    Stop crying, this is nothing. I will dash you some of my marks.)
        LAUGHTER… LAUGHTER
Narrator: *You snatch my girl, and want to pass …per my help! So bold o o!* **LAUGHTER**
Player C: *But that was the agreement. And it was fulfilled. Didn't he allow him to copy?*
        LAUGHTER
Player A: *I think the copier is Afful and the heartbroken –swindler is Phil…sure… no mistake!*
        LAUGHTER
Player B: *So what did the invigilator do?*
Player C: *May be he would advise: 'Don't worry about him? That's his own trouble'*
        LAUGHTER
Player A: *And the boy would reply: 'Sir I am worried; he is my friend, and I love him'*
        LAUGHTER… LAUGHTER
Player C: *Love him, eh! Let him love himself ooo.* **LAUGHTER.**
Player C: *Each man for himself…no God for us all.* **LAUGHTER… LAUGHTER**

References

Aristotle (1927). *Poetics*. (trans.) Fyfe, H. London: Heinemann.

Attardo, S. (2001). *Humorous Texts: A Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis.* Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Attardo, S. (1994). *Linguistic Theories of Humor*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Bauman, R. (1986). *Story, Performance, and Event: Contextual Studies of Oral Narratives.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Beattie, J. (1779). 'Essay on laughter and ludicrous composition', in *Essays*, (3rd ed). London: E. & C. Dilly.

Cooke, T. D. (1978). *The Old French and Chaucerian Fabliaux: A Study of their Comic Climax.* Columbia MO: University of Missouri Press.

Janko, R., ed. (1987). *Aristotle: Poetics I*, with the *Tractatus Coislinianus*, a hypothetical reconstruction of *Poetics II*, and the fragments of the *On Poets.* Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.

Kant, I., & Guyer, P. (2000). *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Kotthoff, H. (1999). 'Coherent keying in conversational humour: Contextualising joint Fictionalisation'. In Bublitz, W., Lenk U. & Ventola E. (eds.), *Coherence in Spoken and Written Discourse.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 125-150.

Labov, W. (1972). 'The transformation of reality in narrative syntax'. *Language in the Inner City*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 354-396.

Levi-Strauss, C. (1964 [1955]). 'The structural study of myth;. *The Journal of American Folklore* 78 (270). pp 428-44. Reprinted in *Structural Anthropology* (1964), pp. 206 – 31.

McGhee, P. E. (1979). *Humor: Its Origins and Development*. San Francisco- Reading: Freeman.

Morreall, J. (1983). *Taking Laughter Seriously*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Norrick (2000). *Conversational Narrative. Storytelling in Everyday Talk.* Amsterdam & Philadelfia: John Benjamins.

Propp, V. (1968 [1928]). *Morphology of the Folktale* (2nd ed.) (trans. L.A. Wagner). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Raskin, V. (1985). *Semantic Mechanisms of Humour*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel.

Sacks, H. (1974). 'An analysis of the course of a joke's telling in conversation', in Bauman, R. and Sherzer, J. (eds.) *Explanations in the Ethnography of Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.

Schultz, T, R. (1976). 'A cognitive-developmental analysis of humour', in *Humour and Laughter: Theory, Research and Applications*, Chapman and Foot (eds.) London: John Wiley and Sons, pp. 11-36.

Sekyi-Baidoo, Y. (2013). 'Directionality in humour experience: A study of the 'toli'. Unpublished Seminar paper, University of Education, Winneba.

Tannen, D. (1989). *Talking Voices: Repetition, Dialogue and Imagery in Conversational Discourse*. Cambridge: University Press