

A Cross-linguistic Study of Types of Jokes

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▶ キーワード

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▼ 要 旨

本稿は Kadooka (2009, 2011b, 2012a, 2013)、角岡 (2011a, 2012b, 2014, 2015) に関連づけて、小咄の類を汎言語的に分類しようという試みである。基準としては、サゲ（オチ）が地口であるか否かとサゲが登場人物によって語られるか地語りによって語られるかという二つを組み合わせる。これら基準はどのような言語においても共通であろうと考えられるが、本稿では日本語と英語の小咄類によって検証する。

第二の基準については、上掲の先行研究でサゲが登場人物によるか地語りによるかで音韻・音響的な差は認められなかった。本稿では、この差を数の多寡という傾向で分析を行う。落語では登場人物による対話によって筋が進行していくという前提があるので、サゲは登場人物の発話であることが大前提である。地語りでさげるのは例外的に過ぎない。しかし英語の冗句集などでは、読み物という性質からであろうか、一行で完結するというごく短いものが多いという観察もなされた。これら条件を加味して分析の精度を上げることが、今後の課題である。

1. Introduction

In a series of the acoustic analyses of English jokes and Japanese Rakugo stories in Kadooka (2009, 2011a, b, 2012a, b, 2013, 2014, 2015), I suggested and defined the *punchline*

Paratone as the phonetic and phonological complex of a combination of the pause, tempo and intonation on the one hand and classified the jokes with the criteria of 1) puns or not and 2) punchline told by one of the characters or by the narration on the other. Before showing the classification according to these two criteria, we must look how these are defined. Henceforth, we will define 'story-like jokes' as non-puns. Here the term of the criterion 'story-like' is an expedient in the sense that jokes of non-puns of all sorts are included in this category. The first criterion whether the punchline is a pun or not is arbitrary in the sense that the semantic variations of punchlines can be unlimited. In Maeda (1966), which is a comprehensive study of Kamigara Rakugo stories (see the following sections for the details of Rakugo stories) with an index, for example, non-puns are classified into five categories of semantically related words, sophistry, distortion, quick wit and metaphor. Though it is possible, and meaningful to a certain extent as well, to further classify, the dichotomy of puns and story-like jokes will be the method adopted in the following sections for the sake of simplicity of the analysis.

As for the second criterion that punchline is told by one of the characters or by the narration, Kadooka (2009, 2011a, b, 2012 a, b, 2013, 2014, 2015) shows that there is no meaningful difference as manners of narration, in terms of the acoustic realizations of pitch (intonation), length of intonation units (duration), tempo, pause between intonation units, and intensity. The present paper is to fortify the bases for these arguments by augmenting the number of jokes in each category.

Below are the chart showing the four classes by these two criteria, the inner figures are from Kadooka (2011a: 52, Table 9), which show the numbers of these four types of Japanese shorter stories¹⁾:

(1)	punchline told by	one of the characters	narration
	puns	class 1 (16)	class 2 (2)
	story-like	class 3 (26)	class 4 (3)

Of these four categories, classes 1 and 3 are unmarked while 2 and 4 are marked in the sense that it is natural that the punchline is told by one of the characters, since in jokes at least two characters talk to each other and stories go on. By the quantitative analysis of these *Kobanashi* stories, this hypothesis can be verified, though the whole number of the stories is rather limited one, altogether 47 of them. Later in the following sections, the more holistic quantitative survey will be introduced with regard to the longer stories of *Rakugo*. Notice that the statistics in (1) are the result of an analysis of some of the Japanese *Kobanashi* stories, unlike (16) in section 3, which is a statistics of all of the Kamigata Rakugo stories. Hence the tendencies inferred from this table would be relative ones.

2. Four Types of Jokes

In this section, four types of jokes suggested in the last section are examined in turn.

2.1. Class 1: puns, punchline told by the character

We will look at three jokes of puns whose punchlines are told by one of the characters. One is told in English, the second one is cross-linguistic in a sense, and the last one is of Japanese origin. The first one is from Tsuchiya (1989: 6), a very short one.

(2) "I suppose your baby reigns as king in your family."

"No – Prince of Wails."

In the punchline 'wails' and 'Wales' are homophonous, hence being a pun: the former is a noun while the latter is a proper noun. In addition, a *king* and *the Prince of Wales* are kin words, fortifying the absoluteness of a newborn baby in the family. There are only two lines as a whole story, which would be the minimal structure as a dialogue between two people. In this structure, the first line is the preparation for the punchline, immediately followed.

The next one is a longer one, a cross-linguistic pun: a play on the Japanese word 'arigato' (thank you) and the English 'alligator.' This time, these two words are not exactly homophonous, but close homophones (from Oshima 2009: 16, slightly modified).

(3) "How do you say 'thank you' in Japanese?"

"We say 'arigato.'"

"Oh, I see... ari, ga, to... it's difficult to pronounce."

"Then, you can remember it as *alligator*. It sounds like *arigato*."

"Hm... let's try. Arigato, alligator, arigato, alligator..."

Next day

"Here, I'll buy you a cup of coffee. It's on me."

"Wow, ah... crocodile!"

The punchline *crocodile* is a mistake of *alligator*, which is nearly homophonous with a Japanese word *arigato*. In this joke, *crocodile* and *alligator* are kin words: the former designates those living in Africa and South America, while the latter those living in North America. Unlike the other jokes attested in this paper, (3) is quite unique in that the word play is cross-linguistic between Japanese *arigato* and English *alligator*.

A Japanese *Kobanashi* counterpart of this class is as follows (from Kadooka 2013: 21):

(4) <Oil Merchant (*Abura-ya*)>

1. Abura-ya no yane ni yo na yo na bake-neko ga deru to-iu uwasa ga
oil-merchant GEN roof on night-every monster-cat NOM haunt QUOT-say rumor
tat-te...
appear
2. Kinjo no renchuu ga sore o iron-na koto ii-masu node abura-ya no shujin ga
neighbor people it ACC various thing say-POLITE since master
ki-ni-shimashi-te yonaka ni
worry midnight in
3. oki-dashite jibun-toko no yane o mi-masu to iu to ma-yonaka ni oo-yane no
wake-up self-place roof look-POLITE big-roof
teppen-e
top-toward
4. sugoi kono neko ga
terrible this
5. gira-gira -to me o hikarashi-nagara oni-gawara ni koo te o kake-te
dazzling eye shine-going-on demon-tile thus paw put
6. gya - to nai-teru
squall scream
7. "Koitsu kai,
This-guy PART
8. kora, omae-no okage de obake-abura ya to ka iron-na koto i-ware-n ne ya.
hey, you owing-to haunted-oil PART tell-PASSIVE PART PART
9. Nande uchi ni de-yaga-n ne ya, kono neko."
why our-house appear-DEROG
10. Ishi o tsukande abura-ya no shujin ga pa-t to nage-tsukeru to, neko ga
stone grab forcefully throw-aim
hyot-to tai kawashi-te,
nimbly body dodge
11. "Abura-ya no."

Narration: Once, there was a rumor that a ghost cat haunted the roof of an oil merchant's store. The master of the store made up his mind to probe whether the rumor was true or false. At midnight, when he was patrolling, he found the cat and said:

Master: Owing to you, our oil is dubbed as haunted, and we have a lot of trouble.

Narration: Then the master threw a stone at the cat. The cat dodged it and said:
"Dangerous!"

The punchline is a word play of *abunaya-no* (dangerous + particle) and *abura-ya no* (oil

merchant + particle), nearly homophonous, with the alteration of /n/ and /r/. The funniness of this episode may be partly the thrilling head with the appearance of a mysterious cat, and followed by the punchline. The cat's utterance *aburaya-no* is archaic, adding a nostalgic tone to this episode. A modern substitution would be something like *abunai-na*. Anyway, the word play in Japanese *abunaya-no* and its hidden counterpart *abunaya-no* can not be directly translated into other languages maintaining the funniness.

To summarize, puns whose punchlines are told by one of the characters are unmarked and abundant. Puns are easy for everyone, even if he or she is an amateur, to create, and jokes are basically dialogue between more than one persons. Except a cross-linguistic one such as (3), in which the Japanese word *arigato* is explained in English, the funniness of word plays is lost when translated in to other languages.

2.2. Class 2: puns, punchline told by the narration

This subsection deals with puns whose punchlines are told by the narration. As far as I looked for the English jokes of this type, I could not find any of them in Oshima (2009) and Tsuchiya (1989). This is because Oshima (2009) and Tsuchiya (1989) are collections of dialogue type jokes. In Japanese Kobanashi stories, as in section 1, punchlines told by the narration are exceptional from the quantitative observation. We will begin this section with the Japanese samples.

The first one to be cited here is titled “Eyes of a Statue of Buddha (Daibutsu no me).”

- (5) 1. Aru toki, Daibutsu-san no me ga ochi-ta koto ga at-ta no ya sou de.
 once statue of Buddha GEN eye NOM fall-PAST event exist-PAST hear-say
2. O-bou-san tachi ga “Donai shi-you kai na” to kangae-te masu to,
 priests how do-FUT Q PAR QUO think POLITE
3. oyako-dure ga ki-mashi-te, “Ware-ware ga naoshi-ma-shoo” to ii-masu.
 parent-and-child come we mend -POLITE-will say
4. “Sorede-wa” to iu no de tanomi-masu to, chichi-o ya ga saki ni kagi no tsui-ta
 then ask father tip hook attached
5. nawa wo, kake-ta me no tokoro ni hikkake-mashi-te, kodomo ga suru-suru to
 rope ACC fallen place hooked child easily
6. nawa-dutai ni nobot-te iki-masu.
 along climb go
7. Me kara garan-dou ni nat-te-ru Daibutsu-san no naka ni hait-te iki-masu to,
 from hollow be inside enter
8. shita de me wo mitsuke-te, moto no tokoro he modoshi-te, kanaduchi de
 below at find-PAST original toward return hammer with

9. me wo moto-doori ni naoshi-te shimou-ta.

way finish-PAST

10. "Saa, donai-shite orite-kuru no yara" to mina ga mite-masu to,

then how come-down PAR everyone watch

11. kodomo wa hana kara de-te ki-te, mata nawa-dutai ni ori-te ki-mashi-ta.

TOPIC nose from go-out again

12. "Me kara hana he nukeru you-na" to iu no wa, kore kara de-ta no ya sou de.

go-out like say this come-from hear-say

Once, an eye was fallen off from the Great Statue of Buddha (in Nara). When the priests wondered what to do to mend it, a father and his son came and said "We will do it." Then the priests decided to have the work to do them. Father threw a rope with a hook on the tip to the eye of the Buddha, and fixed it. The child went up along with the rope and reached up the eye of the Buddha. He went down the hollow of the statue and found the eye, fixed it to the original position. At that time, the watchers wondered how the child could get out of the statue. He sneaked out of the nostril, and came down again along the rope. From that time on, the idiom "*me kara hana ni nukeru*," literally 'to slip out of an eye to a nostril,' meaning to be tactful, came out to be popular among people.

In this Kobanashi, the Japanese cliché "*me kara hana he nukeru*," literally 'to slip out of an eye to a nostril' comes to mean *to be tactful*, told by the narration. This is an interpretation of the origin of the cliché on the one hand, and the punchline of the story on the other hand. The main characters are father, his son and the priests, but among them the son does not speak.

The next one is a Kobanashi to be titled something like <Bakemon no Enkai> 'A Feast of Monsters.' In the punchline, the sound mimesis "poppen, poppen, poppen," imitating the rattling sound of the plate of the water sprite is told by the narration, not by the monster (Kadooka 2013, 24-25):

(6) 1. Bakemon yara, yuurei yara ga atsumat-te

monsters and ghosts NOM gather

2. bounenkai yat-ta chuu-na hanashi ga omasu.

year-end party hold-PAST QUO story exist

3. Sake ga hodo-you mawat-te "Mina, gei wo nanka dase-ya," chuu-n de,

sake favorably drunk everyone entertainment ACC something perform

4. kou kasa-kozou, kara-kasa no bakemon ga kyokugei wo kou yat-te-mitari

well umbrella-kid umbrella acrobatics perform

5. ee ... well

6. hitotsu-me kozou ga

one-eyed

7. nanka kou odori wo odoru, oo-nyuudou ga chikara-waza wo miseru.
something dance dance big-tongued monster feat of strength show
8. Ironna koto wo yat-te-ru naka ni,
various things among
9. kappa ga nan ni mo sen to non-doru.
water sprite nothing do-NEG drink
10. "Omae mo nanka yare." "Washa nan ni mo gei nai ne ya."
you something do-IMP I anything don't have
11. "Nan ka yara-n kai, omae kate, non-den-ne ya nai kai."
something do-NEG PAR also drink
12. "Shaa-nai naa ...
no way
13. Dokka mugi-wara nai ka."
somewhere wheat-straw
14. Mugi-wara wo mot-te ko-sashi-te shiri-no-ana he gut-to tsukkon-de
bring come-CAUSA buttocks-GEN-hole toward firmly insert
15. "Dare ka, kore wo
someone VOC this
16. hui-tari suu-tari shite kure."
blow-and inhale do please
17. Suu, haa, suu, haa ... yaru-to, atama no sara ga "Poppen, poppen, poppen ..."
(sounds of blowing and inhaling) head plate rattle

Once, there was a strange story: monsters and ghosts gathered to hold a year-end party. Everyone was drunk, and it was turn for some to perform entertainments. An umbrella goblin pulled off acrobatics, a one-eyed goblin danced, a monster with a huge bald head showed a feat of strength, and so on. Among them, a water sprite was only drinking without entertaining others. "Why don't you perform something?" "Sorry, I'm so talentless that I can't do anything particular." "Why are you so blunt? You're one of the members joining this party." "Well, I see ... Can I have a straw?" Then someone brought one, and the water sprite put it into his back passage and asked, "Please breathe through the straw." When someone did it, the plate on the head of the water sprite, rattled like a glass whistle.

The main character in this story is a water sprite; it is imagined as a plate on its head, and a shell like a tortoise on its back. The rattling sound in the punchline is the imagination that the back passage was linked to the plate of the head, so that the inhaling and blowing rattle the plate.

The third one in this subsection is from the main story of a *Rakugo*, as there is so few examples of the puns whose punchlines told by the narration. Below are the outline of a

Rakugo story *Hanaikada* and the punchline:

- (7) When a champion Sumo wrestler Hanaikada became ill, the impresario decided for a lantern-maker, who was alike the real champion but not good at Sumo at all, to play the role of Hanaikada on a provincial tour. On the last day of the tour, the fake champion had to be challenged by a local amateur champion. In the match, the fake champion won by hitting the amateur on the face. It is natural that the lantern maker was good at both hitting and sticking the paper on the lantern.

<punchline>

Haru no ga umai hazu-desu, moto ga chouchin-ya no shokunin desu.

Hit/stick N NOM good-at should-be original lantern craftsman COPULA

Here we must pay attention to the double meanings of the verb 'haru': one is to hit on one's face, and another one is to stick and paste paper on the lantern.

Instead of presenting oral-type jokes, let us look into written-type jokes in English. In Pickering (2006), which is an anthology of more than 1000 English jokes, we can find many one-line short jokes, both puns and story-like. Below are some of the pun-type jokes (p.70) under the heading of *Dictionary definitions*, with the number added for the reference:

- (8) 1. *Abundance* A dance in a bakery.
2. *Anarachnophobia* Fear of anoraks.
3. *Blazer* A jacket that is always on fire.
4. *Blood brother* A vampire's relative
5. *Bulldozer* A sleepy male cow.
6. *Carpet* A dog that lives in a car.
7. *Catastrophe* First prize in a cat show.
8. *Denial* A river in Egypt.
9. *Grammar* A female grandparent.

As these are one-line short jokes in which the definitions of the headwords are given humorously, there are no characters in dialogues. In 1, the headword *Abundance* is separated into *a+bun+dance*, hence the punchline is interpreted as a dance of a bun. In 2, *anorak* is made homophonous with *anarchy*: this time, the deviation of the meaning of a type of cloth to that of ideological principle is so great that the unexpectedness may invite laughing. *Blazer* in 3 is a type of jacket, but it is regarded as if it is derived from a noun *blaze*. *Blood brother* in 4 has semantic double meanings; one is a comrade or a companion, and another is a sibling of a bloodsucker. This is not a pun, but the semantic differences of the word *blood* changes the meaning of a comrade into a vampire. The fifth example is again a pun, as in the first one, the noun *Bulldozer* is separated into *bull+doze+r*, interpreted as 'a sleeping bull.' It may be a

fault that the construction machine and the living thing have nothing common, hence *bull+doze+r* is a simple word play, and nothing more. *Carpet* in 6 is similarly separated into *car+pet*. A dog is treated as the representative of companion animals. In 7, *Catastrophe* is separated into *cat+a+s+trophy*: in this separation, the indefinite article *a* is meaningless, thus damages the well-finishedness as a word play. *Denial* in 8 also lacks the completion of a word play when it is separated as *de+Nile*. As for the funniness of a pun, *Grammar* in 9, which is nearly homophonous with *grandma*, is much more excellent than 7 and 8.

These one-line jokes, in conclusion, should be defined as a subtype of Class 2 jokes, since others are longer and consist of more than one lines.

2.3. Class 3: Story-like, punchlines told by the character

The type of the jokes in this subsection is the story-like ones with the punchline told by one of the characters. Together with the Class 1 puns whose punchlines are also told by one of the characters, this category of story-like jokes is unmarked in the sense that more than one line consist of a story.

The first one to be introduced is a dialogue between a mother and a daughter with a narration (from Kadooka (2011b)):

(9) *Piggy Bank* (30.11 seconds)

- 1 Mother decided that her daughter Judy, a nine-year old, was old enough to have her own bank account.
- 2 So she took Judy to the local bank.
- 3 Judy liked this idea very much.
- 4 "This is to be your account.
- 5 You must fill out the application yourself."
- 6 Judy did well until she came to the space marked, "Name of your former bank."
- 7 She thought for a while and wrote down,
- 8 "Piggy."

To be strict, the punchline is not 'told,' but written on the application form of the bank. But the recording shows us as if this were 'told' by Judy (see Kadooka (2011b)), hence this is included in Class 3. The funniness of this story would be the innocence or naivete of Judy that she believes a savings bank to be a kind of financial institution.

The next one can be defined as the *subtype* of Class 3, since the punchline is shown by the gesture of the monkey. As well as that the punchline is shown not by the utterance but by the gesture, it is marked that the main character is not a human but an animal (from Oshima 2009: 76-77, the sounds of the monkey has been changed into English):

(10)

There was a car accident in the mountains, and the family in the car was sent to the hospital. Their pet, a monkey, was standing by the car. He was with a policeman.

Policeman: Oh, that was a bad accident. I wonder what happened. I wish this monkey could talk.

Monkey: Chatter, chatter. (I know, I know.)

Policeman: Hey, Monkey, do you understand what I am saying?

Monkey: Chatter, chatter. (I know, I know)

Policeman: Wow, good! OK, so what were the children doing when the accident happened?

Monkey: Chatter, chatter. (playing)

Policeman: I see. They were playing around in the car. Maybe they were bothering the driver. Well, what was the mother doing when the accident happened?

Monkey: Chatter, chatter. (sleeping)

Policeman: I see. She was sleeping. Maybe she was sleeping and driving. What about the father? What was the father doing when the accident happened?

Monkey: Chatter, chatter. (drinking)

Policeman: I see. He was drinking. Maybe he was drinking and driving. Well, Monkey, what about you? What were you doing when the accident happened?

Monkey: Chatter, chatter. (driving)

In this story, the monkey is imagined as so smart that it can understand human language though it can not speak, and even drive a car. Instead of speaking, the gestures tell the police officer how children, the mother, and the father behaved in the car before the accident. In the sense that the punchline is shown by the gesture of an animal, not a human being, this episode may be different from (9) and (11).

The third one is a Japanese original, from Kadooka (2013: 20-21):

(11) <Duck and Scallion (*Kamo to Negi*)>

1. Kamo ga koo kawa oyoide-tan-desu naa
duck NOM thus river swim-PAST-POLITE PARTICLE
2. hona kamo no oyo-deru ushiro-kara negi ga koo nagarete-kite
then GEN PROG back-from scallion flow-come
3. ushiro he poon-to atat-ta
toward suddenly-QUOT hit-PAST
4. Kamo ga hyot-to furimui-te,
swiftly turn
5. "Oo, kowa..."
oh horrible

When a duck is swimming in the river, a piece of scallion flows from the upper stream

and strikes the duck. The duck said, "How horrible..."

It would be difficult to understand the funniness of the punchline without the background knowledge that 'the duck with a scallion' in Japanese is equivalent to 'the goose with his golden egg' in English. This would be easier to imagine that meals cooked in a pot at the table which is a popular Japanese meal, especially during winter, is a suitable material of the dish. So, when a scallion hits a duck, it would be a horrible situation. In this story, we need the cultural understanding that scallion is a specialty with the Japanese meal cooked in a pot at the table.

It is unique to this episode from the viewpoint of narrative that there is only one character, a duck, personified to talk "Oo, kowa ...". To simplify, this story can be classified as a monologue.

The summary of this subsection would be that story-like jokes are more complicated than puns in the sense that while puns are simple word plays, depending on the language specific situations, those stories examined in this subsection are cross-linguistic or language-universal. From the reverse perspective, too culture specific jokes like *Duck and Scallion*, need much explanation.

2.4. Class 4: Story-like, punchline told by the narration

The last class of the four categories is the stories whose punchlines are told by the narration, not by the characters. As well as Class 2, punchlines told by the narration, Class 4 is similarly marked in the sense that the punchlines are not told by the characters. Because of this, the number of the jokes of this class is relatively smaller than that of Class 3.

The first one, the whole story is told by narration, including the punchline written on a piece of paper; it is NOT told by a character. In this regard, the style itself is exceptional in the sense that neither of the two characters, a Frenchman nor the police officer, talks to each other, because they have no common language.

(12) *One-way Street* (36.11 seconds)

- 1 A Frenchman was visiting New York for the first time in his life.
- 2 He could not speak English at all.
- 3 One day he decided to go for a walk.
- 4 He was afraid of getting lost,
- 5 so he carefully looked at the street sign in front of his hotel
- 6 and wrote it down on a piece of paper.
- 7 He walked around for quite a long time.
- 8 Then he realized he was lost.
- 9 He saw a policeman

10 and showed the piece of paper.

11 It said

12 "ONE-WAY STREET."

In this story, the punchline "ONE-WAY STREET" is not told, like *Piggy Bank* (9), but written on a piece of paper, which is unique to this story. In the sense that the two people can not talk to each other, this episode is of linguistic nature, which is in contrast with the cross-linguistic (3).

As in section 2, there are some subclass types of jokes as for this category: those of one-line, short ones. The following examples are also from Pickering (2006):

(13) Clothing: I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day but I couldn't find any.

Death: 'I want to die like my father, peacefully in his sleep, not screaming and terrified, like his passengers.' (*Bob Monkhouse*)

It is characteristic with these two that both the preparation and the punchline are told in one line. The first episode *Clothing* tells that a pair of camouflage trousers could not be found by the customer because it was difficult to distinguish due to the dazzle painting. In the second one *Death*, it is suggested that Bob's father was either a driver, captain of a ship or an aircraft, since it was implied that the passengers of some public transportation system were left in the terrible situation that the driver or the captain had suddenly died and the control had been lost. The first half of this line goes rather normal, seems to tell us nothing unusual, but the last three words suddenly changes such impression and implies that his father was in charge of operating some transportation. The excellence of this episode may be that it is not told manifestly that the performer's father was a driver or a captain, but the last three words implies that fact.

Another citation from Pickering (2006) are also one-line type, modifying the famous words ascribed to General MacArthur "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away.":

(14) Accountant (p.7) Old accountants never die, they just lose their balances.

Acting (p.7) Old actors never die, they just drop apart.

Astronauts (p.20) Old astronauts never die, they just go to another world.

Burglars (p.35) Old burglars never die, they just steal away.

Dentists (p.70) Old dentists never die, they just lose their pull.

Doctors (p.78) Old doctors never die, they just lose their patience.

Judges (p.155) Old judges never die, they just cease to try.

Instead of *soldiers* in the original words, other occupations take place as the grammatical

subject, and verbs appear in place of *fade away* in these modifications. Theoretically, any occupation can replace *soldiers*. In a sense, these jokes are immediately understood as the modification of the original, hence consist of only one line.

The last two examples in this section are from Maruyama (2002: 6), similarly one-line short jokes:

- (15) I would like to open a joint bank account with someone who has lots of money.
I'm so thirsty, I'd have to staple on a postage stamp.

In the first one, there is a hidden speaker's intention that he or she would like to share the money with a rich someone. The second one has a funniness in that the speaker is so thirsty that he or she has to staple the postage on the letter, unable to lick the stamp.

It seems likely that these one-line jokes are suitable for the situations like stand-up comedy, in which one performer tells many many jokes one after another. As there is only one performer in stand-up comedies, one-line jokes would be preferable to dialogue-type counterparts.

3. The Markedness of the Punchline Told by the Narration

By the illustration in the previous sections, the examples of the four classes of jokes in Japanese and English have been shown. The numbers of each type, however, were intentionally made roughly even. The subject of the analyses in this section is to show the markedness of the jokes with the punchlines told by the narrations.

Below is a table of the analysis of the 433 Rakugo stories in Kadooka (2011a: 52, Table 9).³⁾ It will be meaningful from the quantitative perspective that Kadooka (2011a) is a comprehensive analysis of the whole Rakugo stories developed and inherited in the Kamigata region (mainly Osaka and Kyoto), hence the stories are called Kamigata Rakugo vis-à-vis Edo Rakugo. Classes 1 through 4 are the same as in the previous sections, and the inner figures are the number of Rakugo stories of the type together with the proportion among 433 stories.

(16)

punchline told by	one of the characters	narration
puns	class 1 (139, 32.1%)	class 2 (5, 1.2%)
story-like	class 3 (241, 55.7%)	class 4 (8, 1.8%)

As is evident at a glance, those with the punchlines by the narrations are exceptional, where classes 2 and 4 occupy only 3% of the whole. This is because jokes or the longer Rakugo main stories consist of dialogues among the characters, hence it is natural for the punchlines to be told by one of the characters. The late Rakugo Master Katsura Beicho pointed out that the performer must speak as if the performer himself is the character, e.g. a master of a big store,

a teenage apprentice, or a maidservant. In other words, Rakugo stories are the art of conversations. In a series of travel stories, for example, two close friends, Kiroku and Seihachi always talk to each other and meet funny happenings.

The above tendency that dialogue-type jokes are unmarked is similar in Oshima (2009) and Tsuchiya (1989): punchlines told by the narration are exceptional. It is not the case, however, with Pickering (2006), where monologue-type, and/or one-line shorter jokes are mainstream while the dialogue-types are rather rare. This kind of contrast between (16) and Pickering (2006) can be ascribed to the difference of media: that is to say, Rakugo stories are oral while Pickering (2006) is an anthology of written jokes. When we define the Rakugo-type stories a “conversation or dialogue” type, those listed in Pickering (2006) would be defined as a “written” type. One-line jokes such as in (8), (13), (14) and (15) would belong to the latter type.

4. Conclusion

This section should summarize the discussion up to this point. On the one hand, the markedness of the punchlines told by the narrations has been emphasized based on the quantitative analysis such as (16) in section 3. On the other hand, Pickering (2006) shows the literal side of the perspective that one-line jokes are nothing from marked; rather they are quite universal on the basis of an anthology of English jokes. As a conclusion, together with the two-dimensional matrix criteria in (1) and (16), other considerations such as spoken or written media, monologue-type or dialogue-type, and short or long could be crucial. It is probable that story-like ones are more varied than puns; hence there would be many subclasses if the finer criteria are applied. However, when such complicated criteria were to be added, the analysis would be much more intricate than the present one. Another subject in the future would be a quantitative analysis of the types of English jokes, like the one on the Japanese Rakugo stories (16).

Now we would like to evaluate puns as a form of word plays from the linguistic perspective. Puns are language-specific in the sense that they are basically not translatable to other languages keeping the funniness in the original language. On the other hand, they are universal in the sense that they can be found in every language and/or in every culture. In addition, puns are regarded as the most fundamental style of linguistic humor. When we look at the quantitative analysis of the Rakugo stories in (16), the number of the story-like ones versus that of the puns is about 1.73 times (249 versus 144). This proportion can be thought as a kind of “superiority” of stories to puns; in other words, puns may be considered as rather too simple. As for this perspective, Blake (2007: 68) evaluates puns as follows citing various studies:

(17) Bergson, the much-quoted author of *Le Rire* [*Laughter*] considered puns the least

reputable form of humour. Freud wrote that they 'are generally counted as the lowest form of wit, perhaps because they are "cheapest" and can be formed with the least effort.' Oliver Wendell Holmes called punning 'verbicide'. Walter Redfern, on the other hand, devoted a whole book to the topic and wrote that 'it [the pun] can make an individual, like Hemingway's fortunate heroine, feel the ground move beneath. It can ruin lazy expectations, subvert the nature of language and thought.'

These citations would be too much as evaluations of puns against story-like jokes, but these would hit the mark. These criticisms toward puns seems from philosophical perspectives; in other words, they are from aesthetic viewpoints. Story-like jokes, on the other hand, can be described as 'worked out' or sophisticated. Further consideration of puns as a form of laughter would be in other occasions.

Notes

- 1) In Kadooka (2011a), a similar classification was done, but there were eight classes. This is because the four-type classification was done for short stories (*Kobanashi*) and long stories (*Rakugo* main stories). The two criteria were the same as in this paper: the puns and story-like, and the punchline told by one of the characters or by the narration.
- 2) Among the 433 Rakugos testified in Kadooka (2011a), 40 were without punchlines (9.2%). In those stories, the performer has to deliver a farewell greeting or declare that it is the end of the story.

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