Wordplay on *Malangan* T-shirt: A Linguistic Resource for Language Education

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Abstract

This study delves into the linguistic ingenuity of Malangan T-shirt wordplay, a unique form of cultural expression deeply intertwined with the local identity of Malang, Indonesia. Through a comprehensive analysis of 100 T-shirt designs which were obtained from local distros and a football event in Malang, we identified a rich tapestry of wordplay techniques, including malapropisms, ambiguity, slang, and visual manipulations such as logo modifications and artistic discourse. These linguistic devices playfully subvert language norms, crafting humorous and thought-provoking messages that resonate with local audiences and challenge conventional linguistic conventions. Our research underscores the pedagogical potential of Malangan T-shirt wordplay, demonstrating its ability to enhance language education, foster cultural understanding, and cultivate critical thinking skills of language class students. By incorporating these linguistic artifacts into language instruction, educators have mote inspiration to create engaging and culturally relevant learning experiences that transcend traditional classroom approaches and promote a deeper appreciation of language and culture.

Keywords: *Malangan* T-Shirt, Wordplay, Language Education, Linguistics, Pedagogy

1 INTRODUCTION

Malangan T-shirt wordplay, a unique linguistic phenomenon, offers a rich and untapped resource for language education. Despite the growing recognition of authentic materials in language teaching, the pedagogical potential of these designs remains largely unexplored. This study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the linguistic features of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay and exploring its implications for language pedagogy.

To achieve this goal, the research first establishes the significance of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay as a unique cultural resource. Subsequently, it delves into a comprehensive literature review to provide a theoretical framework for the study. The core of the research focuses on a linguistic analysis of *Malangan* T-shirt designs, identifying key wordplay techniques and patterns. Building on these findings, the study explores the pedagogical implications, suggesting potential teaching strategies and activities. Ultimately, the research seeks to contribute to the field of language education by demonstrating the value of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay as a novel and engaging resource for language learners.

1.1 Literature Review

Wordplay, a linguistic phenomenon characterized by the intentional manipulation of language for humorous or creative effect, has captivated human minds for centuries. Delabastita (1996) posits that wordplay encompasses a diverse range of linguistic techniques that juxtapose similar forms with distinct meanings, resulting in a communicative impact. This complex cognitive process requires a deep understanding of language structure, semantics, and pragmatics. As an integral component of human communication, language serves as both the medium and the subject of playful manipulation. This section will explore the intricate relationship between wordplay and language, examining its cognitive underpinnings and its role in language acquisition and development. Subsequently, the discussion will shift to the broader context of language education, focusing on the utilization of authentic materials and the significance of culture in language learning.

1.1.1. Wordplay and Language

Wordplay, a linguistic phenomenon characterized by the deliberate manipulation of language for humorous or creative effect, has captivated scholars across disciplines for centuries. Delabastita (1996) and Vandaele (2011) posit that wordplay encompasses a diverse range of textual maneuvers, exploiting language structures to create communicative impact. At its core, wordplay hinges on the juxtaposition of similar linguistic forms carrying distinct meanings. Scholars such as Delabastita (1996) have extensively explored the intricacies of wordplay, highlighting its significance as a complex cognitive process that demands a deep understanding of language's structure, semantics, and pragmatics.

Beyond its fundamental definition, wordplay encompasses a rich tapestry of linguistic devices, from puns and homonyms to metaphors and irony. Cognitive psychologists have delved into the underlying mental processes involved in wordplay, proposing theories such as divergent thinking, which allows individuals to explore multiple meanings and associations within a single linguistic unit (Reese *et al.*, 2001). Divergent thinking has been linked to various cognitive abilities, including word association, inductive reasoning, memory span, and vocabulary. Moreover, the ability to engage in wordplay is often associated with language proficiency and cognitive flexibility, as evidenced by studies suggesting that divergent-thinking groups excel in creative writing tasks (Baer, 1994).

Wordplay's intricate relationship with language acquisition and development is a subject of growing interest. Engaging in wordplay is believed to foster cognitive flexibility, enhance problem-solving skills, and expand vocabulary. For children, wordplay is often a playful exploration of language, contributing to the development of phonological awareness, semantic understanding, and syntactic competence. Kunshchikova (2021) found that wordplay in classroom bilingual dialogues reveals the creator's metalanguage consciousness and speech strategies, demonstrating the metalanguage logic of constructing a speech act. Additionally, wordplay, including puns, homophony, and semantic collisions, is an essential aspect of language learning. It creates a humorous and comic effect, builds vivid images, and combines frequent meanings with deeper meanings, making language more expressive and engaging, which can enhance vocabulary retention and understanding (Qizi & Botirovna, 2022).

1.1.2 Authentic Materials in Language Education

While wordplay offers valuable insights into language structure and cognitive processes, its integration into classroom settings necessitates a broader pedagogical perspective. Authentic materials, defined as language samples produced by native speakers for native speakers in real-world contexts, have gained prominence in language education (Fithriyah, 2015). These materials bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life language use, fostering cultural understanding and enhancing language acquisition (Isra, 2014; Mestari & Malabar, 2016; Parmawati & Yugafiati, 2017). By exposing learners to authentic language in its natural form, educators can create immersive learning environments that promote communicative competence.

Authentic materials offer a plethora of advantages for language learners. By exposing students to real-world language in context, these materials bridge the gap between classroom instruction and everyday communication (Mestari & Malabar, 2016; Azizah, 2016; Mohammed & Ibrahim, 2019). This exposure to authentic language input enhances learners' receptive skills (Azizah, 2016; Parmawati & Yugafiati, 2017), vocabulary acquisition (Hidayati, 2019), and cultural understanding (Kabátek, 2015). Furthermore, authentic materials foster motivation and engagement by providing relevant and up-to-date content (Azizah, 2016; Parmawati & Yugafiati, 2017; Mohammed & Ibrahim, 2019). Unlike contrived textbook examples, authentic materials present language in its natural form, enabling learners to develop strategies for comprehending and interpreting real-world texts.

1.1.3 Culture and Language Learning

Language and culture are interconnected, influencing each other (Imai et al., 2016; Ejaz, 2016). Language transmits cultural values and shapes worldview, while culture influences language development (Chater & Christiansen, 2010). Culture plays a crucial role in vocabulary acquisition (Bush, 2007), providing context for understanding new words. Integrating culture into language classrooms fosters holistic development (Lavrenteva & Orland-Barak, 2015), enhancing motivation, cultural awareness, and intercultural competence. Strategies include incorporating authentic materials and engaging in cultural comparisons and discussions (Kennedy, 2020; Yankina, 2021). By creating a culturally rich environment, teachers empower students to become proficient language users and informed global citizens.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

This section delves into the theoretical underpinnings of the study, drawing on theories of wordplay, language acquisition, and pedagogy. By examining these theoretical frameworks, this

research aims to establish a robust foundation for understanding the complex interplay between language, cognition, and learning as it relates to wordplay. This theoretical exploration will serve as a lens through which to analyze the linguistic features of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay and to inform the development of pedagogical strategies.

1.2.1 Wordplay and Cognitive Theory

Wordplay, a complex cognitive phenomenon (Zirker & Winter-Froemel, 2015), intersects with various linguistic theories. Cognitive linguistics, focusing on language as a tool for conceptualization (Hu, 2023), offers valuable insights into wordplay (Evans, 2012). The theory of conceptual blending posits that wordplay involves merging mental spaces, creating unexpected meanings (Renner, 2015). For example, the pun "I'm not arguing, I'm explaining why I'm right" blends the concepts of arguing and explaining. Pragmatic theories, emphasizing context-dependent meaning (Yule, 1996), further contribute to our understanding of wordplay. The effectiveness of wordplay depends heavily on context (Knospe, 2016). For example, the pun "I'm so tired I could sleep for a week" relies on shared knowledge about sleep and tiredness. These examples illustrate the interplay of cognitive and pragmatic factors in creating and interpreting wordplay.

1.2.2 Wordplay and Language Acquisition

Wordplay, while often associated with advanced language proficiency (Kabatek, 2015), plays a vital role in language acquisition (Figgins & Johnson, 2007). Young children naturally experiment with wordplay, enhancing phonological awareness, semantic understanding, and syntactic competence. For language learners, wordplay fosters cognitive flexibility, problem-solving skills, and vocabulary expansion (Sailor, 2013; Arter, 2019). By engaging with wordplay, learners develop a deeper understanding of language structure and meaning (Alqadumi, 2019; Loads, 2019; Zirker, & Winter-Froemel, 2015). Wordplay challenges learners to differentiate between similar-sounding words, enhances phonological awareness (Yopp & Yopp, 2009), and facilitates vocabulary expansion (Sailor, 2013; Arter, 2019). Exploring cultural nuances embedded in wordplay fosters intercultural competence. When incorporating wordplay into second language instruction, it's crucial to consider learners' proficiency levels, gradually introducing more complex forms as their skills progress. Juffs and DeKeyser (2006) emphasize the importance of wordplay in second language acquisition, highlighting its contribution to language development and understanding.

1.2.3 Pedagogy

Pedagogy, the art and science of teaching, provides a framework for understanding learning and its facilitation (Loughran, 2013; Dornan & Kelly, 2021; Friesen & Su, 2023). Constructivism, emphasizing active knowledge construction (Garbett, 2011; Yadav & Yadav, 2021; Suhendi, Purwarno, & Chairani, 2021), aligns well with the interactive nature of wordplay. By engaging in wordplay, learners actively construct meaning and develop a deeper understanding of language (Peterson, 2012). Collaborative wordplay activities foster peer interaction and knowledge sharing. Additionally, learners can experiment with different wordplay techniques, discovering new linguistic patterns. Constructivism offers a valuable framework for teaching wordplay, encouraging learners to actively explore and experiment with language (Yilmaz, 2008). This approach fosters a deeper understanding of wordplay's linguistic and cultural dimensions. Collaborative wordplay activities promote knowledge sharing and co-construction of meaning, while analysis and deconstruction of wordplay examples enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

II METHOD

Having established the theoretical framework and explored the linguistic landscape of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay, this section outlines the methodological approach employed in this study. The following subsections will elucidate the research design, data collection strategies, and analysis techniques utilized to investigate the research questions.

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to comprehensively investigate the linguistic phenomenon of wordplay as embedded within *Malangan* T-shirt designs. This research paradigm allowed for an in-depth exploration of the complex interplay between language, culture, and visual representation as manifested in these textual artifacts. By adopting a qualitative approach, the study aimed to uncover the rich nuances and underlying meanings embedded within the wordplay instances.

2.2 Data Collection

This study centers on analyzing the linguistic phenomenon of wordplay as it manifests on *Malangan* T-shirts produced by local distro clothing outlets in Malang. To gather a comprehensive dataset, a multifaceted approach was employed. Online platforms were utilized to access T-shirt designs, while direct photography of designs from local distro stores supplemented the data collection process. Additionally, to capture the authentic context of T-shirt usage, researchers attended a football match in Malang, where *Malangan* T-shirts are prominently displayed and worn as identity markers by the majority of the event's attendants. Through these combined methods, a total of 100 T-shirt designs meeting the study's criteria were assembled for in-depth analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis

A content analysis framework was employed to systematically analyze the linguistic intricacies of Malangan T-shirt wordplay. Wordplay instances were categorized based on their linguistic features, using a developed coding scheme to ensure reliability. Challenges arose in categorizing instances with multiple linguistic features and interpreting artistic elements. To address these, multiple coders were involved in the analysis process, with discussions and consensus-building employed to resolve coding discrepancies.

III FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following section delves into the core findings derived from the analysis of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. By examining the frequency, distribution, and characteristics of various wordplay techniques, this section aims to uncover the linguistic and cultural nuances embedded within these textual artifacts. Furthermore, the discussion will explore the implications of these findings for language education and cultural understanding.

3.1 Findings

The analysis of *Malangan* T-shirt designs unveiled a rich tapestry of wordplay strategies employed to create engaging and culturally resonant messages. The most prevalent wordplay

types identified include malapropism, ambiguity and polysemy, slang, jargon, and obscenity, abbreviation and acronym, numbers, brand logo modification, artistic discourse, tongue twisters, and translation and text. These linguistic devices were strategically deployed to convey humor, social commentary, and cultural identity. The followings are wordplays appear on the design of *Malangan* T-shirt designs gathered by the researchers.

3.1.1 Malapropism

Malapropism, the unintentional substitution of words for similar-sounding ones, emerges as a prominent feature in the linguistic landscape of *Malangan* T-shirt designs. As defined by Apte (1985) and cited by Wijana (2003), this linguistic phenomenon involves the erroneous replacement of words within a familiar phrase, resulting in humorous or unexpected outcomes. The followings are the samples which fulfills this type of wordplay.

> (1) Let's "tewur" with our "bird"
> (2) Say "NO" to Drums
> (3) But Man, LADUB INGEB HELOM ESUK
> (4) Che Gue"bird"vara
> (5) Die Hard Edition KOMA
> (6) DAMN I LOVE AREMA
> (7) FROM MALANG WITH LOVE
> (8) Malu Bertanya Sesat di Malang
> (9) Made in Malang Gak 'Pessi Ho!' Never lie

The analysis of *Malangan* T-shirts revealed a variety of malapropism strategies. Phonological manipulation, as evidenced in Examples (1) to (5), constitutes a primary technique. For instance, the substitution of "*tewur*" for "twitter" in Example (1) exemplifies the appropriation of global brands for local contexts. Moreover, the adaptation of existing phrases and brand names, as illustrated in examples (6) to (9), demonstrates the versatility of malapropism in constructing local identity and meaning. For instance, Example (9) creatively amalgamates elements of global and local culture. Inspired by the Pizza Hut brand, the design incorporates the English phrase "Made in Malang" and the Javanese expression "Gak Pessi Ho" (meaning "not a lie"). This fusion of languages effectively conveys the authenticity and local origin of the T-shirt product.

These findings highlight the creative and playful nature of *Malangan* T-shirt culture. By subverting linguistic conventions, designers effectively challenge norms and generate humorous and thought-provoking messages.

3.1.2 Ambiguity and Polysemy

Ambiguity and polysemy, characterized by the coexistence of multiple meanings within a single linguistic unit, constitute prevalent features of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. This study identified numerous instances where the deliberate exploitation of multiple interpretations enhanced the creative and communicative potential of the designs. The followings are samples fit this type of wordplay.

> (10) Kami berani karena benar, bukan berani karena nekat
> (11) Apel iki? Opo apel iku?

Examples (10) and (11) illustrate the complex interplay between language and meaning in *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. In example (10), the phrase "*Kami berani karena benar, bukan berani karena nekat*" (We are brave because we are right, not brave because we are reckless)

exhibits both literal and metaphorical interpretations. The dual meaning, influenced by the local context of football rivalry, creates a layered message that resonates with the target audience.

Similarly, example (11) "*Apel iki? Opo apel iku*?" (This apple? Or that apple?) demonstrates the use of homonymy to generate ambiguity. The repetition of the word "*apel*" (apple) while employing different grammatical markers introduces multiple potential interpretations, inviting audience engagement and participation in meaning-making.

These examples underscore the sophisticated use of language in *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. By manipulating linguistic structures and exploiting multiple meanings, designers create opportunities for audience interaction and cultural commentary.

3.1.3 Slang, Jargon, and Obscenity

Slang and jargon, as informal and specialized language varieties, respectively, constitute significant components of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. These linguistic features serve as markers of social identity, group affiliation, and cultural belonging. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines slang as a non-standard vocabulary characterized by its informal and often ephemeral nature.

        (12) NENDES KOMBET + ipok & oker = kane ilakes
        (13) Woles
        (14) Ileb Ngadheg
        (15) Salam Satu Jiwa AREMA
        (16) Together for Glory

Malang boasts a unique slang lexicon known as "*Osob Kiwalan*," characterized by its distinctive backward-read language. Examples (12) and (13) illustrate this linguistic phenomenon. While "*Osob Kiwalan*" shares similarities with "*Boso Walikan*" of Yogyakarta it exhibits distinct features and cultural nuances. The creation of new words and phrases through word reversal offers a playful and creative outlet for language experimentation. In Example (12), the words are in Javanese and simply read from the back. It simply means in Javanese as '*senden tembok + kopi & rokok (irregular form) = enak sekali*' which when it is translated into English would be 'leaning against the wall + coffee & cigarette = so nice'. Meanwhile, Example (13) is Malangese version of the English word 'slow' which then became '*selow*' and then transformed into *Osob Walikan* '*Woles*'. Their meanings are similar, be calm.

In addition to slang, jargon, or specialized language, is also evident in *Malangan* T-shirt designs. Examples (15) and (16) demonstrate the use of in-group language to foster a sense of belonging and identity among the target audience. These examples showcase the appropriation of existing phrases and slogans for localized purposes, highlighting the adaptive nature of language.

Furthermore, the inclusion of obscenities, while less prevalent, cannot be overlooked. The strategic use of taboo language in T-shirt designs often serves to challenge social norms and provoke reactions. Example (14) exemplifies the creative manipulation of obscenities through visual and textual elements. Example (14), "Ileb Ngadheg," exemplifies the use of double entendre, where the word "ngadheg" can be interpreted both literally as "standing" and euphemistically as a reference to male genitalia. This deliberate ambiguity creates a provocative and transgressive effect. Such linguistic strategies highlight the complex relationship between

language, culture, and social norms. By challenging linguistic boundaries, these designs provoke audience reactions and contribute to the subversive nature of *Malangan* T-shirt culture.

Obscenity, characterized by the use of explicit and taboo language, is another prominent feature of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. While often considered offensive or inappropriate, the incorporation of obscenities in these designs challenges social norms and generates attention. The use of words such as "*jancok*" /dʒantʃok/, "*jaran*" /dʒaran/, and "*dokar*" /dokar/ in example (14) exemplifies the transgressive nature of this wordplay.

To mitigate the offensive impact of these obscenities, designers often employ visual strategies. The arrangement of letters in different font sizes and configurations, akin to a Snellen chart, obscures the immediate legibility of the profane words, thereby reducing their impact. This approach demonstrates a conscious effort to balance provocation with aesthetic appeal.

These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of slang and jargon in *Malangan* T-shirt culture. By employing informal and often unconventional language, designers effectively communicate with target audiences and reinforce a sense of group identity.

3.1.4 Abbreviation and Acronym

Abbreviation, a linguistic process involving the shortening of words or phrases, is another prevalent feature of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. As defined in Merriam-Webster Dictionary, an abbreviation is a condensed form of a word or phrase, representing the full expression in a concise manner. While commonly associated with formal or technical language, abbreviations are also employed in informal contexts, such as the ubiquitous use of acronyms in digital communication (e.g., IDK, BRB, AFK).

(17) UN, UNITED NGALAM
(18) PING!! BBM Bakso Bakar Malang, oskab ngalam asli
(19) NJA: National Jamu Association

Malangan T-shirt designs exhibit creative and strategic use of abbreviations. Example (17) demonstrates the appropriation of a globally recognized acronym, "UN," and its adaptation to represent "United Ngalam," a local identity marker. Similarly, Example (18) repurposes the acronym "BBM" from its original digital context to signify a local culinary product. In Example (19), the acronym "NJA" is a playful subversion of the well-known "NBA," highlighting the designers' ability to manipulate existing linguistic forms for humorous and culturally relevant purposes. These examples underscore the versatility of abbreviation as a wordplay technique in *Malangan* T-shirt culture. By condensing information and creating novel expressions, abbreviations contribute to the concise and impactful nature of the T-shirt messages.

3.1.5 Numbers

Numbers, traditionally employed as quantitative symbols, are creatively repurposed as linguistic devices in *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. As Crystal (1998) suggests, numbers can serve as a foundation for humorous and creative expression.

(20) GAK OLEH UBLEM NEK GAK N 1 AM
(21) SATE 02

Examples (20) and (21) demonstrate the multifaceted role of numbers in *Malangan* T-shirt designs. Example (20), "GAK OLEH UBLEM NEK GAK N 1 AM," exemplifies the interplay between numbers and language in conveying complex meanings. On a surface level, the phrase

translates to "Do not enter if you are not playing." However, within the context of Aremania, the number "1" signifies a deeper level of loyalty and commitment to the football club. This dual interpretation highlights the strategic use of numbers to create multiple layers of meaning within the T-shirt design.

Example (21), "SATE 02," showcases the creative use of numbers to evoke imagery and cultural references. The numeral "02" is visually manipulated to resemble a snail, a popular culinary delicacy associated with Malang's football culture. These examples highlight the potential of numbers to transcend their quantitative function and contribute to the rich tapestry of meaning in *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. By combining numerical elements with visual and linguistic creativity, designers effectively engage audiences and foster a deeper connection with local culture.

3.1.6 Brand Logo Modification

Malangan T-shirt designs frequently incorporate modified versions of well-known logos, demonstrating a creative appropriation of visual culture. As defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a logo is an identifying symbol. The process of modification involves altering existing designs to create new meanings and visual associations.

> (22) Visit Malang
> (23) iMalang
> (24) Warung Ipok
> 25) Oyimessenger

Examples (22) to (25) illustrate various logo modification techniques employed in *Malangan* T-shirts. The adaptation of "Visit Indonesia" to "Visit Malang" in Example (22) exemplifies the strategy of localizing global brands. Similarly, the fusion of Apple's iconic logo with a lion's head in Example (23) creates a unique visual identity for Malang. The transformation of the Starbucks logo into "*Waroeng Ipok*" in example (24) demonstrates the playful appropriation of corporate branding for local commercial purposes. Finally, the manipulation of the Yahoo Messenger logo in Example (25) highlights the creative potential of logo modification.

These examples underscore the ability of *Malangan* T-shirt designers to leverage existing visual symbols for innovative and culturally relevant purposes. By combining textual and visual elements, these designs effectively communicate messages while engaging the audience on multiple levels.

3.1.7 Artistic Discourse

Malangan T-shirt designs often incorporate elements of *cangkriman*, a Javanese poetic form characterized by its rhyming structure. Examples (26) to (29) exemplify this poetic approach, where the arrangement of words and phrases creates a rhythmic and aesthetically pleasing effect. However, beyond the aesthetic appeal, these designs also convey meaningful messages.

> (26) Jare Kuat Kok Sambat
>
> (27) Becik setitik ala ketara, njengking setitik apa seng ketara?
> Masio setitik isa nggarai nelangsa, nelangsa merga mung setitik sing ketara
>
> (28) LOP AREMA LOP
>
> (29) Ana tekek dulinan plembungan, ana mrutu kok numpak gethek

Wong wis tuwek kok pethakilan, bareng ngguyu ketok untune entek

Unlike traditional *cangkriman*, which primarily focus on riddles or puzzles, *Malangan* T-shirt designs incorporate a dual purpose: aesthetic pleasure and communicative intent. The T-shirt designers skillfully blend poetic form with content, creating works that are both visually engaging and intellectually stimulating.

Examples (27) and (29) particularly demonstrate the ability of *cangkriman*-inspired designs to deliver complex messages through poetic expression. These designs explore philosophical themes and social commentary, showcasing the versatility of the *cangkriman* form in contemporary communication.

3.1.8 Tongue Twisters

Tongue twisters, characterized by their rapid-fire repetition of similar sounds, constitute another form of wordplay evident in *Malangan* T-shirt designs. As defined by Wijana (2003), tongue twisters involve the manipulation of linguistic elements to create playful and challenging utterances.

(30) BIKE FOR RIDE. BIKE TO WORK. BAIK BAIK SAJA
(31) MALANG TEMPE DELE
(32) MALANGKUCEKWARAS

Examples (30) to (32) illustrate the use of tongue twisters in *Malangan* T-shirt culture. Example (30) employs phonetic similarity (/baɪk/) to create a humorous and catchy phrase. Example (31) leverages the repetition of sounds to evoke a sense of local identity and pride. Finally, Example (32) demonstrates the playful manipulation of language through a seemingly nonsensical phrase that nonetheless carries cultural significance.

These examples highlight the ability of tongue twisters to engage audiences through their sonic qualities and playful nature. By challenging articulation and perception, these designs offer a unique form of linguistic entertainment.

3.1.9 Translation and Text

Malangan T-shirt designs frequently incorporate elements of translation and textual manipulation, demonstrating the creative and playful use of language. As categorized by Longrace (1968) and Wedhawati & Laginem (1979), texts can be classified based on their functions, including narrative, procedural, expository, and hortatory types. While the primary focus of *Malangan* T-shirt designs lies in the realm of narrative and expressive language, elements of other text types can be observed.

(31) Malang Love Story
Ojok kakean Ngamuk-ngamuk Nggarai cepet KEWUT.
Mendingan KOLEM Ayas UKLAM-UKLAM
Sopo ngerti ketemu KODEW SINAM Sing osi diajak LANEKAN
Sukur-sukur gelem didadekno OJOB
Gak kesuwen, langsung diajak IBAR

(32) JURAGAN KEWAN
(33) UMIAR – YOUR FACE
(34) SONGREB – RAMBUT NGISOR IRUNG

Example (31) exemplifies the use of narrative elements, employing *Malangan* slang to construct a humorous and relatable story. The text combines narrative and poetic elements, engaging the audience through a playful exploration of language. Examples (32) and (33) demonstrate the strategic use of translation and adaptation. By transforming the title of a popular film into "JURAGAN KEWAN" (Animal Boss) in example (32), the designers create a humorous and culturally relevant message. Similarly, the coinage of "UMIAR" as a playful equivalent of "your face" in example (33) highlights the creative potential of language manipulation.

These examples underscore the versatility of language in *Malangan* T-shirt culture. By blending different text types and engaging in creative translation, designers produce designs that are both entertaining and thought-provoking.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the potential of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay as a valuable resource for language education. By exposing learners to authentic and culturally relevant language use, T-shirt wordplay can enhance vocabulary development, grammatical awareness, and cultural understanding.

The creative and playful nature of wordplay can also foster motivation and engagement in language learning (Azizah, 2016; Parmawati & Yugafiati, 2017; Mohammed & Ibrahim, 2019). By encouraging learners to analyze and interpret wordplay, educators can develop critical thinking (Kennedy, 2020; Yankina, 2021) and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, the incorporation of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay into language classrooms can provide opportunities for intercultural learning and appreciation (Kabátek, 2015). To maximize the pedagogical potential of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay, teachers can develop activities and tasks that focus on different aspects of language learning. For example, wordplay can be used to teach vocabulary (Bush, 2007; Chater & Christiansen, 2010), grammar, and cultural nuances through games, puzzles, and creative writing exercises.

While *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay offers a rich resource for language education, several challenges and limitations must be considered. One key challenge lies in the appropriateness of certain wordplay types for different age groups and learning contexts. For instance, the use of obscenity or slang might be inappropriate for younger learners. Additionally, the cultural specificity of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay may require careful adaptation for learners from different cultural backgrounds.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of using *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay as a teaching tool depends on the teacher's ability to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences. Teachers need to possess a deep understanding of both the language and cultural context to facilitate effective instruction.

VI CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This concluding section synthesizes the key findings of the study on the linguistic analysis of *Malangan* T-shirt wordplay. By examining the prevalence and characteristics of various wordplay techniques, this research has shed light on the creative and innovative nature of *Malangan* T-shirt culture. Building upon these findings, the section will explore the implications for language education and offer suggestions for future research.

4.1 Conclusions

This study explored the diverse linguistic strategies employed in Malangan T-shirt wordplay, including malapropisms, ambiguity, slang, and more. These techniques were creatively used to convey humor, social commentary, and cultural identity. By examining these linguistic features, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and visual communication. The findings highlight the potential of T-shirt designs as a valuable resource for language education and cultural studies.

4.2 Suggestions

Future research should delve deeper into the sociolinguistic factors influencing Malangan T-shirt wordplay, comparing it with other regional T-shirt cultures. Additionally, exploring the effectiveness of incorporating Malangan T-shirt wordplay into language teaching materials and curricula is recommended. Experimental studies examining the impact of wordplay-based activities on learner outcomes could provide valuable insights. Finally, investigating the potential of Malangan T-shirt wordplay for developing digital literacy skills and media literacy is another promising direction for future research.

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