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THE LINGUISTIC MECHANISMS OF
KNOCK-KNOCK JOKES

by

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Presented to the Faculty of the Honors College of
The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

HONORS BACHELOR OF ARTS IN LINGUISTICS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

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After a messy semester of juggling multiple projects at once, I gave up on my original direction towards an investigation of general humor analysis and discovered my niche in knock-knock jokes. I want to thank my mom for supporting me emotionally when this project extended into another semester and became a longer endeavor than originally expected. It brings me great joy when I make her proud.

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November 14, 2014

ABSTRACT

THE LINGUISTICS MECHANISMS OF KNOCK-KNOCK JOKES

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The University of Texas at Arlington, 2014

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Humor analysts have not yet accounted for the longstanding popularity of knock-knock jokes, a common and recognizable joke format. A better understanding of the linguistic mechanisms behind these jokes can provide opportunities in fields such as education, technology, and, of course, entertainment. In order to analyze the processes involved, a corpus of jokes was compiled from seven online sources, with a total of 132 different knock-knock jokes collected. A taxonomy of the mechanisms that drive these jokes was created by identifying the linguistic features that generate humor in each. The study found that the pun or alternate meaning at the heart of these jokes almost always involves more than one type of linguistic mechanism, the most common being a form of phonological change, often overlapping with a structural reanalysis of the punch line.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

As a student of linguistics, I am interested in the underlying mechanisms of language. I have and will continue to dedicate many years of my life to understanding why we communicate the way that we do. But one aspect of language is often neglected by the linguistic community, humor.

One of the most enjoyable parts of our language and rhetoric is also one of the least understood. Humor is a rich and diverse topic that seems to almost always escape conformity. When someone conjugates a verb, linguists can make a fairly reliable bet on how they will form it and pronounce it based on their linguistic heritage, such as communities and locations that they are a part of. But when a humorist is about to finish a joke, the less predictable it is, the more likely he or she is to succeed in their job.

However, I have found a style of jokes that tends to be a little more conforming, knock-knock jokes. Unlike the wildly unpredictable method of sitcom comedy or even one-liners, knock-knock jokes almost always follow a particular delivery pattern which I will discuss in section 1.3.1. Although this might be why they can sometimes be seen as tired or childish, it also yields them perfect for scientific investigation and the development of a corpus.

A corpus is “a body of written texts, transcriptions, recorded data, etc. that is used as a basis for any sort of linguistic or language-related investigation” (Brown 2006). You can read more about how I compiled mine for this project in section 2.1.

1.2 Humor Research

In his 2001 book *The Mating Mind*, evolutionary psychologist Geoffrey Miller proposes the healthy brain theory that says that mental capacities, including humor, are fitness indicators which are a tool often used for sexual selection (much like the diverse feathers of a peacock). He opposes this to what he calls the runaway brain theory that the famous linguist Steven Pinker (2009) spoke about in his book *How the Mind Works* where he argues that artistic capacities are merely biological side-effects of other evolved abilities.

Although the reason that humor developed as a human capacity is uncertain, humor is a delightful thing that brings joy. Perhaps we use it so frequently that we take it for granted. Sigmund Freud proposed that a joke teller and the joke recipient are unconscious of the psychological processes entailed in a joke (1960:176).

In my search for linguistic explanations of humor, the most common theory that I found was the Incongruity Theory. This is the idea that humor arises from an incongruity between our expectations and reality.

Beattie (1971) coined the term incongruous in the realm of humor research in his 1776 quote, “Laughter arises from the view of two or more inconsistent, unsuitable, or incongruous parts or circumstances, considered as united in one complex object or assemblage, or as acquiring a sort of mutual relation from the peculiar manner in which the mind takes notice of them.”

1.3 What is a Knock-knock Joke?

Hetzron (1991) defines a joke as “a short humorous piece of literature in which the funniness culminates in the final sentence.” Knock-knock jokes are no exception (as we will see in section 1.3.1).

Knock-knock jokes are canned. Attardo defined canned jokes in 2001 as having three defining features. The first is that they are “typically told by a narrator who prefaces the joke with an announcement of the humorous nature of the forthcoming turn.” This is true of knock-knock jokes because of the utterance “knock-knock.” When a person says this complete utterance, it signals that the following “conversation” is going to be a joke (please note that this was the defining characteristic for knock-knock jokes during my project).

The reason that I put the word *conversation* into parentheses is the second defining feature of canned jokes: they are “rehearsed.” The joke teller already knows how the dialogue has to go in order for the joke to be successful, so it is not truly conversation. They are “detached from the context in which they are told” (which is Attardo’s third defining feature of canned jokes). “They differ from conversational jokes which (1) are told as a regular turn in conversation (without prefacing) and (2) are created by the teller “on the fly” and are strongly context-dependent” (Attardo 2001).

Knock-knock jokes can be seen as “a joke cycle, a set of jokes that are related” (Attardo 2001:69). “They are similar to novels and other works because they are produced for mass consumption. However, during their recirculation, trace of the original author is almost always lost, making them more like urban legends or folklore” (Attardo 2001:70). “Joke cycles can only come from canned jokes” (Attardo 2001:70).

1.3.1. Format of the Knock-knock Joke

Knock-knock jokes have a very simple format that they hardly ever deviate from.

Joke Teller:	Knock-knock.
Joke Recipient:	Who's there?
JT:	<Joke's set-up (often a name)>.
JR:	<Joke's set-up> who?
JT:	<Joke's punchline often a reanalysis of the joke's set-up>

Table 4.1: Format of the Knock-knock Joke

The narrative usually (with the exception of some unorthodox ones that will be discussed in section 4.7) begins with the joke teller indirectly announcing that they have a joke to tell by using the culturally understood term “*knock, knock.*” The joke recipient is then compliant by uttering “*Who's there?*” After which the joke is set-up with a name, then the repetition of the name by the joke recipient along with the word, *who?* Finally, the punchline is revealed.

Knock-knock jokes can be viewed in the light of Incongruity Theory via two manners. The first and most common is a pun. A pun is “a variety of a usually humorous play on words involving the multiple meanings of an expression, or two expressions that sound similar” (“What is a pun?” 2004). The second vehicle of incongruity is meta-linguistic: jokes that hinge on the joke recipient believing that they will hear a traditional knock-knock joke and then being surprised when they find that the dialogue differed (for a more thorough explanation, see section 4.4b).

1.3.2. Origin and Range of the Knock-knock Joke

Canned jokes can be found in any language. There are even ones that closely resemble the English knock-knock joke because of their reliance on the joke recipient to

participate, such as the French “Toc-toc,” the Afrikaans "Klop-klop," or the Spanish “¡Camarero, camarero!” However, studying something that diverse would be a huge undertaking that would require many trained academics, so I will not be investigating those.

The English knock-knock joke itself is the interest of this paper. These jokes are difficult to trace back through history due to their folkloric (often merely spoken) circulation. However, many speculate that the knock-knock joke can be traced as far back as Shakespeare’s porter scene in *Macbeth*. However, if I were to have come across this joke during my project, I would not have personally considered it a knock-knock joke because typically defining characteristics of a knock-knock joke are missing in it.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Creation of the Corpus

My corpus is a body of 132 knock-knock jokes, of which 10 were considered duplicates of another joke. If I came across an identical joke from the same source, I did not count it twice. This happened quite frequently on forum websites (where one can assume that users do not always check to see if their comment has already been posted). If I came across the same joke but on another source, I added the additional source to the joke in the corpus. This format made it easy to spot very well-circulated jokes. One joke (where the joke teller forces the joke recipient to sound like he or she is sneezing) was so popular that it showed up on every single one of the online sources.

2.1.1 Selection of the Sources

I created my corpus by compiling data from multiple websites, such as forums and joke webpages. They vary from very child-friendly ones such as Funology.com to ones that can have some very adult themes such as Jokes4us.com. I made sure to include forums such as Reddit.com because they allow the general public to contribute.

I compiled every joke that was featured on six different online sources (nine different URL's in total due to page breaks) into a large corpus that was then split into two different ones (a corpus for orthodox jokes and a corpus for unorthodox jokes). Finally, I embolden the term in the joke that I felt most characterized it and alphabetized them accordingly. If a joke is used as an example in my prose, the name will be included

next to the example number, and a person may look it up in the appended corpora by its emboldened title.

2.1.2 Creation of the Categories

I created the first proposed set of categories by simply reviewing my corpus. I made hypotheses about what might be happening within the joke, then tested them for evidence that this was indeed what was happening. With help from my advising professor Dr. Stvan, a published linguist working here at the University of Texas in Arlington, I was able to further identify processes that were occurring in my jokes. The steps that I took to perfect my categories are discussed further throughout chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3

EXPECTATIONS

I began this project because I was expecting to find a taxonomy of knock-knock jokes. However, I was not expecting the lay-out that ultimately happened. I was really only expecting two to five different categories, but the research revealed seven major categories with subcategories within some of them.

I expected to find a large number of knock-knock jokes that were reliant on a phonological mechanism. Now that the project is over, I have changed my belief from phonological to phonetic because it is not a permanent speech decision. However, there were indeed quite a few of them, so my prediction was not too far off.

I also expected to find a category of reanalysis, which I did find (I will discuss it in section 4.3).

CHAPTER 4

THE CATEGORIES

The categories are the heart and soul of this project. Their ultimate definitions are the conclusions of this project. I have created a set of tags to help categorize the jokes that I have collected for examination. Some have been redefined or split into subcategories throughout the project. Each tag is marked with a hashtag, a convention popularized by websites such as Twitter, to make them readily identifiable in prose.

4.1 #phonetics

Phonetics studies “the characteristics of human sound-making, especially those sounds used in speech” (Crystal 1985:229). In order to properly record what is spoken, linguists use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The IPA is “the symbol system for transcribing vowels, consonants, diacritics, and supra-segmentals devised by the International Phonetic Association to allow the accurate transcription of any spoken language” (Brown 2006). However, the entire IPA is much too comprehensive to cover entirely in this paper. Thus, I created Table 4.2 below to define some of the sounds that will be mentioned in this paper.

Letter	English word with pronunciation
[d]	<u>d</u> og
[j]	y <u>y</u> ou
[dʒ]	j <u>u</u> mp
[eɪ]	<u>a</u> person
[aɪ]	<u>e</u> ye

Table 4.2: Examples of the IPA

In jokes tagged with #phonetics, there is some sort of sound change. This category is one of the most popular in my knock-knock joke corpus (second only to #reanalysis) and it varies greatly between jokes. There are four major variations between these tags: assimilation, substitution, elision, and intrusion.

4.1a #phonetics-assimilation

Assimilation is “any of various phonetic or phonological processes in which one segment becomes more similar to another segment in the same word or phrase” (Trask 1996:36). Only six percent of the jokes that were marked with a phonetics tag ended up being assimilation.

1) Example: Juwanna - (R6)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who’s there?

A: Juwanna.

B: Juwanna who?

A: Juwanna give me your burrito?

In example 1 above, the name *Juwanna* is a reanalysis of *do you wanna*. The /d/ sound in *do* is alveolar, which means that this consonant “is produced by constricting the

blade or tip of the tongue against the alveolar ridge” (Carr 2013:4) (see Figure 4.1 below). However, the [j] sound in *you* is palatal (meaning that this consonant is produced by placing the middle of the tongue against the hard palate, see Figure 4.1 below).

In the Juwana example, [j] in *you* is replaced by the sound, [dʒ], during the joke’s execution. This consonant is post alveolar (meaning that it is pronounced by placing the tip of the tongue behind the alveolar ridge, see Figure 4.1 below). Because the tongue is now placed more closely to its original position (the alveolar ridge during the pronunciation of [d] in *do*), the consonant can be said to have assimilated (i.e. [j] became [dʒ]). Not to mention, the speaker no longer has to flex their tongue (i.e. alveolar and post alveolar consonants both use the tip of the tongue, while palatal consonants require the middle of the tongue). This particular example is called palatalization. It is “an articulation that consists of a movement of the tongue toward the hard palate during the articulation of a sound” (Brown 2006). Though there may be different forms of assimilation, such as palatalization or nasalization, found in different knock-knock jokes, I found no reason to believe that the specific process involved affected the humor, so it was not accounted for in my taxonomy of categories.

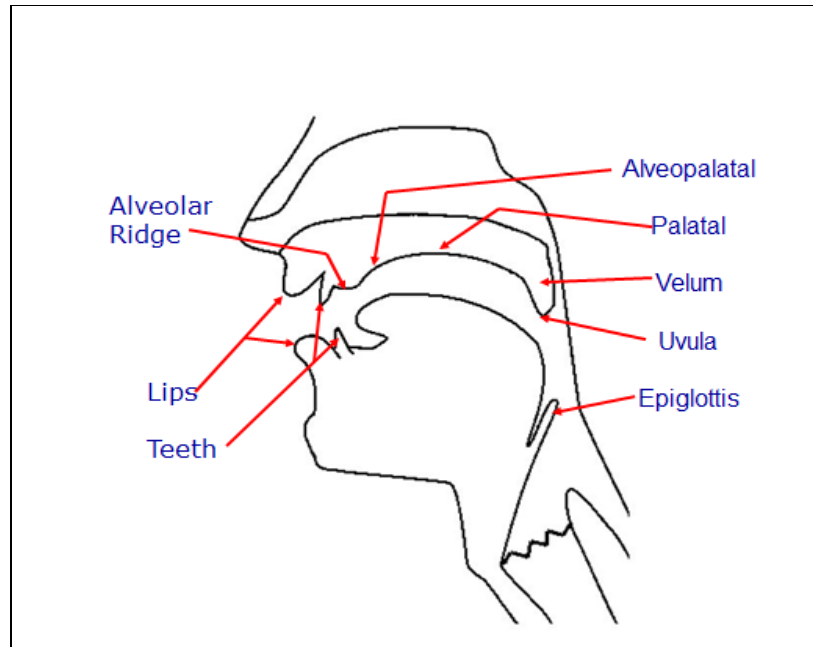


Figure 4.1: The Organs of Speech (Image found at phoneticanato.blogspot.com)

4.1b #phonetics-substitution

Fifty-four of the seventy-five knock-knock jokes marked with #phonetics were of the subcategory #phonetics-substitution. That means they account for sixty-eight percent of #phonetics jokes and are the most common subcategory of #phonetics. These knock-knock jokes rely on the act of replacing a sound with another one for comedic effect.

- 2) Example: A herd - (FU)
 A: Knock-knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: A herd.
 B: A herd who?
 A: A herd you were home!

In example 2 above, we understand that the words *A herd* in the punchline are supposed to mean *I heard*. This joke is successful because the [eɪ] sound in *I heard* is replaced with the [aɪ] sound in *A herd* (see Table 4.2 above for a phonetic explanation).

Another noticeable aspect of this particular example is that the words *heard* and *herd* are phonetically identical, making them homophones. This means that this example is also classified under the category #homophony, which is discussed in section 4.2.

One knock-knock joke with substitution had an unusual aspect. In example 3 below, the phonetic change is present, but not just in the name from the set-up; it was even in the rest of the punchline.

3) Example: Dwayne - (R6 / RF / FU / 4U)
A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Dwayne.
B: Dwayne who?
A: Dwayne the tub. I'm dwowning!

This appears to be a phonological change during the delivery of the punchline. Phonology is the “branch of linguistics dealing with the relations among speech sounds in languages” (Trask 1996:275). The phonology applies to the entire response because the *[dr]* sound is being replaced with *[dw]* (not just in the person's name, but also in the word *drowning*). This was the only knock-knock joke in my corpus where this happened, but I categorized it as #phonetics-phonology-substitution.

4.1c #phonetics-elision

Elision is “the omission of sounds in connected speech” (Crystal 1985: 107). This category accounted for thirteen percent of all #phonetics jokes.

4) Example: Felix - (R6)
A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Felix.
B: Felix who?
A: Felix my ice cream again, I'll slap him!

In example 4 above, the words *If he licks* are replaced with one quick word *Felix*. If we look at it through the IPA though, we see it is merely a reduction of sounds [*ɪf hi lɪks*] becomes [*fɪlɪks*]. The first thing we notice is the loss of the spaces, which makes it fall under the category of #reanalysis, which I will discuss in a later chapter. The second loss we notice is the first [*ɪ*] and the [*h*]. This makes it fall under the category of elision because the sounds are deleted.

4.1d #phonetics-intrusion

Intrusion is “the addition of sounds in connected speech which have no basis in the pronunciation of the syllables or words heard in isolation” (Crystal 1985:163). This category accounted for eleven percent of #phonetics jokes.

5) Example: Gorilla - (R6 / 4U)
A: Knock-knock.
B: Who’s there?
A: Gorilla.
B: Gorilla who?
A: Gorilla me a burger, I’m hungry!

In example 5 above, the common noun, *Gorilla*, is replaced by the imperative verb, *Grill*. When you compare the original word [gɔɪl] to the new form used for the joke [gəɪlə], we see a perfect example of intrusion because the only thing that has changed was the addition (or intrusion) of two schwas (the vowel that is represented by the upside down e in the IPA).

4.2 #homophony

Homophones are “words that have different meanings but identical pronunciations (though they may or may not be spelled differently)” (Trask 1996:172). These types of jokes rely on the fact that you are expecting another word. They account

for twenty-seven percent of all jokes in my corpus (thirty-one percent if you include jokes that only might contain homophony – see section 5.2.3).

6) Example: Mary - (FU)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: Mary.

B: Mary who?

A: Merry Christmas!

The example above relies on the joke's recipient understanding the word *Mary* as a name and not as *Merry*, an adjective. This is simply a pun. This one in particular is easy because it is one word to one word. However, there are many pun examples across all of the categories, which will be illustrated in the further categories.

A very specific type of homophony is polysemy, “the association of two or more related senses with a single linguistic form” (Taylor 1995:99). Sense is the meaning of a word; therefore, in the example above with *Mary*, this is not polysemous. In fact, it would be safe to assume that polysemy is very rare in knock-knock jokes because the first sense of the word is almost always a name. Because the similar senses of the words involved in the joke do not change the humor mechanism, they do not constitute a separate category of knock-knock jokes in my taxonomy.

4.3 #reanalysis

Reanalysis is the largest category in my corpus, accounting for fifty-nine percent of all the jokes. These jokes try to fool the joke's recipient into believing that their utterance in the set-up of the joke is a different series of words than they are actually hearing. Thus, the hearer has to reanalyze the material.

7) Example: Isabell - (FU)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: Isabell.

B: Isabell who?

A: Isabell working? I had to knock.

Example 7 above is a joke that tricks you into thinking that the series of sounds is only one word, the name *Isabell*, but then the response reveals that it was actually three different words, *is a bell*. This was a particularly keen example because the orthography (the way that a language is written) is exactly on par with both occurrences. This is not usually the case, however. In fact, only three of the reanalysis marked tags were completely in sync with their orthography. For example, in example 8 below, *Alex* is spelt completely different than *I'll ask*.

8) Example: Alex - (4U, similar one seen at FU)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: Alex.

B: Alex who?

A: Alex the questions around here!

The reanalysis tag cannot occur on its own. Even if the two sounds are exactly the same, they would be an example of homophony as well (just like in example 7 above). The most common pairing was with a phonetic change. Of my corpus' seventy-eight reanalysis jokes, fifty-one had at least one type of phonetic change, such as elision or assimilation, as well. That constitutes a whole sixty-five percent of the reanalysis jokes. One such joke is in the example 8 above where the parsing of *Alex* becomes *Al ex* which is actually a phonetic deviation from *I'll ask*.

4.4 #turn-taking

When a person makes a contribution to a conversation, this is called a turn (Brown 2006). There are five turns that are taken in an orthodox knock-knock joke. As you may recall from section 1.3.1 about the format of the knock-knock joke, three turns are spoken by the joke teller and two are spoken by the joke recipient.

The term *turn-taking* was coined in the realm of linguistics by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson in 1974, who were looking for patterns or descriptive rules in conversational turn-taking. Despite the difficulty in studying the practice of turn-taking due to the fact that conversation is usually 'situated' (meaning that every conversation could potentially be radically different due to context), they found fourteen 'grossly apparent facts' about it (see Table 4.3 below).

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Speaker change recurs, or at least occurs2. Overwhelmingly, one party talks at a time3. Occurrences of more than one speaker at a time are common, but brief4. Transitions (from one turn to a next) with no gap and no overlap are common. Together with transitions characterized by slight gap or slight overlap, they make up the vast majority of transitions5. Turn order is not fixed, but varies6. Turn size is not fixed, but varies7. Length of conversation is not specified in advance8. What parties say is not specified in advance9. Relative distribution of turns is not specified in advance10. Number of parties can vary11. Talk can be continuous or discontinuous12. Turn-allocation techniques are obviously used. A current speaker may select a next speaker (as when he addresses a question to another party) or parties may self-select in starting to talk13. Various 'turn-constructive units' are employed; e.g. turns can be projected 'one word long', or they can be sentential in length14. Repair mechanisms exist for dealing with turn-taking errors and violations; e.g. if two parties find themselves talking at the same time, one of them will stop prematurely, this repairing the trouble |
|--|

Table 4.3: Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson's 'grossly apparent facts'

These rules are widely respected as seminal in linguistics; however, knock-knock jokes don't follow many of them. For example, rule number five (“*Turn order is not fixed*”) is untrue in knock-knock jokes. According to orthodox knock-knock joke format (which was discussed in section 1.3.1), the joke recipient will have their first turn after the joke teller says ‘knock, knock.’ and their second one after the joke teller says the joke’s name. The reason that these rules can be so easily violated is because knock-knock jokes are canned. They are not regular conversation.

The thirty-one knock-knock jokes in the category of #turn-taking relish this violation of “linguistic law” and poke fun of the joke recipient’s obligation to reply.

9) Example: Remember me - (R6 / FU / BF)

A: Will you remember me this afternoon?

B: Yes.

A: Will you remember me tomorrow?

B: Sure.

A: Knock knock!

B: Who's there?

A: See, you forgot me already!

The humor of #turn-taking knock-knock jokes usually hinges on the turn where the joke recipient answers with the joke’s name and “who?” (see example 10 below). The only example of an exception to this was example 9 above where the humor hinged on the turn where the joke recipient says “*Who’s there?*” This joke is using the joke recipient’s obligation from this particular turn to “make a claim” that the recipient has forgotten who the joke teller is. This is also an example of #format-exposition which I will discuss in section 4.7a.

10) Example: Little old lady - (CC / R6 / FU / 4U / BF)
A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Little old lady.
B: Little old lady who?
A: I didn't know you could yodel!

As #turn-taking jokes often come at the expense of the recipient, they might be considered face-threatening, a term illustrated by Brown and Levinson's work about Politeness Theory (1978; 1987). However, knock-knock jokes shouldn't be taken seriously, therefore, it's almost as if you are simply "pretending" to threaten face, making it innocent fun. Face is "an attitude to language interaction" (Brown 2006). There is positive face ("the intention that one's views, etc. should be pleasing") and negative face ("the intention that one should not be imposed upon by others") (Brown 2006).

The use of the word "who" determines which subcategory of #turn-taking the joke will fall under. There are two different subcategories.

4.4a #turn-taking-shift

Example 10 above is an example of a #turn-taking-shift joke because this joke's recipient originally believes that he or she is hearing the words *Little old lady who*, but it is in fact a yodel, an onomatopoeia. There is incongruity in the semantics (or definition) of the word, *who*. The word is no longer an interrogative (such as *what* or *when*), it is the tail end of a yodel.

Any of the twenty-one jokes in this subcategory need an incongruity in semantics (see section 1.2 for an explanation), so they need to be accompanied by another tag (with the exception of #culture or #format) in order to explain how it has shifted.

4.4b #turn-taking-interrogative

There are also ten instances of #turn-taking jokes where the word *who* is still an interrogative and the meaning hasn't changed. In the example 11 below, the interrogative meaning of *who* is retained, therefore it is part of the subcategory #turn-taking-interrogative.

11) Example: George Washington - (CC)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: George Washington.

B: George Washington who?

A: George Washington WHO?! Didn't you learn anything in school?!

Jokes in this subcategory do not rely on incongruous semantic meanings, so they don't need to be accompanied by another tag like their #turn-taking-shift counterparts. They simply poke fun at the joke recipient's obligation to say "*who?*" (or in the unusual case of example 9 from earlier, "*Who's there?*").

The incongruity in these jokes is pragmatic (pragmatics is the study of language in context). The joke recipient understands the dialogue to be part of a knock-knock joke, but the words involved suggest it was not.

4.5 #morphology

Morphology is the study of how the smallest units of meaning (called morphemes) combine to form words. Jokes that are marked as morphological depend on altering rules in morphology. For example, *does* is a free morpheme (a morpheme that can be used independently) used only in the third person singular.

12) Example: Katmandu - (CC)
A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Katmandu.
B: Katmandu who?
A: Katmandu what Catwoman say!

In example 12 above, the recipient reanalyzes the word *Katmandu* as *Catman do*, which still seems incorrect because the morpheme *do* cannot appear after the third person singular. The joke takes the liberty to use an unorthodox morphological system wherein the singular version of a morpheme is replaced by the plural version (notice that *says* is also replaced with *say*). The joke is changing the inflection of these morphemes. Inflection is “a change made in the form of a word in order to indicate variations in the grammatical relations between words in a sentence without changing the class to which they belong” (Brown 2006).

This category only accounted for two percent of the jokes in my corpus. I believe that this is because English is not very complex morphologically. Perhaps in languages where the morphology isn't so simple there would be more examples from this category.

4.6 #culture

Jokes marked with the #culture tag rely on a reference to culture in order to operate. This can come in the form of expressions (such as clichés), media (such as song lyrics and movie quotes), or just about anything else that may come off as esoteric. They account for twenty-one percent of the jokes in my corpus.

In example 13 below, we see a reference to a Kool-Aid commercial where a mascot is known for crashing through walls. Anyone who is unfamiliar with that cultural reference would get no comedic value from this joke. This joke has also been told with Godzilla, a movie character famous for tearing down buildings.

13) Example: The Kool-Aid Man – (R6)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who’s there?

A: The Kool-Aid Man.

B: The Kool-Aid Man who?

A: Just kidding. The Kool-Aid Man wouldn’t knock. He’d just bust down the wall.

As illustrated above, one subcategory of #culture might be #culture-advertising (however, I haven’t marked my own jokes from this category this tediously). This is rather self-explanatory; however, there is one subcategory of culture called #taboo which I will explain in section 4.6a.

4.6a #culture-taboo

The thirteen jokes marked with this tag derive some of their comedic value simply from their shock value. They are a subcategory of culture because each culture has their own set of norms, part of which would include proper conversational topics. There are two separate types of jokes within this subcategory: #culture-taboo-obscene and #culture-taboo-dark.

14) Example: Buster - (CC)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who’s there?

A: Buster.

B: Buster who?

A: Buster Cherry. Is your daughter home?

Example 14 above is of the subcategory #culture-taboo-obscene because it uses the term “*bust her cherry*” (a phonetic deviation which also categorizes it into #phonetics), which is slang for taking one’s virginity. The joke relies on the joke recipient believing that the name is dirty.

I found no orthodox knock-knock jokes within the subcategory of #culture-taboo-dark. They were all also part of the category #format, which I explain in the next section. In the example 15 below, we see a joke that fits into #culture-taboo-dark because it makes fun of the fact that this individual has lost her arms. This is usually considered tragic culturally.

15) Example: Sally - (RF / 4U)
A: Why did Sally fall off the swings?
A: Because she had no arms.
A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Certainly not Sally!

4.7 #format

A joke that relies on the #format tag might not technically be a knock-knock joke because it does not follow the format that characterizes them (Please see Section 1.2.1 for an example of the format of a knock-knock joke). A joke can disrupt the structure in multiple ways, sometimes so much so that the joke recipient understands that he or she does not even need to finish the knock-knock joke format. For example, compare the explanation of the knock-knock format from Table 4.1 in Section 1.2.1 to example 16 in Section 4.7a below where the joke recipient does not utter the “*who*”-line.

The thirteen #format jokes come in three different varieties: exposition (see Section 4.7a), continuation (see Section 4.7b), and interruption (see Section 4.7c).

4.7a #format-exposition

Twenty-three percent of jokes marked with a #format tag were of the subcategory, #exposition. An #exposition joke does not follow the traditional format of a knock-knock joke because it needs exposition in order for the punch line to be humorous.

16) Example: Sally - (RF / 4U)
A: Why did Sally fall off of the swing?
B: I don't know, why?
A: Because she had no arms. Knock, knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Certainly not Sally!

4.7b #format-continuation

The three jokes that fall into the category of #format-continuation continue past the expected punchline (see example 17 below). One might argue that they are technically a subcategory of #format-exposition; however, these jokes repeat the phrase “*Knock, knock.*” which seems to mock the process of telling canned knock-knock jokes.

17) Example: Orange - (CC / FU)
A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Banana.
B: Banana who?

A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Banana.
B: Banana who?

A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Banana.
B: Banana who?

A: Knock-knock.
B: Who's there?
A: Orange.
B: Orange who?
A: Orange you glad I didn't say banana?

4.7c #format-interruption

The largest subcategory of #format jokes was #format-interruption, whose six jokes accounted for forty-six percent of the category. They are jokes that interrupt the

knock-knock joke telling process, most often during the joke recipient's "*who?*"-line.

(see example 18 below).

18) Example: Interrupting cow – (CC / R6 / FU)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: Interrupting cow.

B: Interrupting cow wh... A: MOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

As I come to the end of my discussion about my research, I would like to present my conclusions in an orderly fashion. In section 5.1, I am going to re-discuss the number of occurrences of each category and analyze their relationships (all numbers will be written in numerical form for ease of reading). In section 5.2, I will review some interesting findings that I found throughout the course of this project. And finally, in section 5.3, I will bring up some of the potential future applications for the results of this research.

5.1 The Total Numbers of Occurrences

My corpus consisted of 132 different knock-knock jokes from 6 different online sources. The Funology source contained many page breaks, so there were a total of 9 different URL's. 10 of the jokes were considered duplicates of another knock-knock joke, so they weren't counted in the corpus. However, sometimes their categories differed slightly, so the numbers below are calculated out of the 132, not 122.

There were 7 major categories (each marked with a hashtag for ease of recognition): #culture (see section 4.6), #homophony (see section 4.2), #morphology (see section 4.5), #phonetics (see section 4.1), #reanalysis (see section 4.3), #turn-taking (see section 4.4), and #format (see section 4.7). There were various subcategories as well, which will be displayed below in the total counts.

Category	Number of Occurrences	Percentage
#culture (<i>total</i>)	28	21%
#culture (<i>no subcategory</i>)	15	11% of all 54% of #culture
#culture-taboo (<i>total</i>)	13	10% of all 46% of #culture
#culture-taboo-dark	2	2% of all 7% of #culture 15% of #culture-taboo
#culture-taboo-obscene	11	8% of all 39% of #culture 85% of #culture-taboo
#homophony	41	31%
#morphology	3	2%
#phonetics (<i>total</i>)	79	60%
#phonetics-assimilation	5	4% of all 6% of #phonetics
#phonetics-elision	10	8% of all 13% of #phonetics
#phonetics-intrusion	9	7% of all 11% of #phonetics
#phonetics-substitution	54	41% of all 68% of #phonetics
#phonetics-phonology- substitution	1	1% of all 1% of #phonetics
#reanalysis	78	59%
#turn-taking (<i>total</i>)	31	23%
#turn-taking-interrogative	10	8% of all 32% of #turn-taking
#turn-taking-shift	21	16% of all 68% of #turn-taking
#format (<i>total</i>)	13	10%
#format (<i>no subcategory</i>)	1	1% of all 8% of #format
#format-continuation	3	2% of all 23% of #format
#format-exposition	3	2% of all 23% of #format
#format-interruption	6	5% of all 46% of #format

Table 4.4: Number of Occurrences for Each Category

In Table 4.4 above, I have placed the number of occurrences of each category of knock-knock jokes along with percentages relating to the entire corpus and also to their respective super-categories (the major category of which they are a subcategory to).

In Table 4.5 below, we have a representation of the total contributions of each online source to the project.

Sources	Number of Jokes	Percentages
4U	26	20%
BF	16	12%
CC	29	22%
FU	57	43%
R6	24	18%
RF	18	14%

Table 4.5: Number of Contributions from Each Online Source

In Table 4.6 below, I have provided a means to investigate the number of categories that each joke has. As you can see, the majority of jokes have more than one category, but few have more than four.

Total number of categories	Number of Jokes	Percentages
1	29	22%
2	78	59%
3	21	16%
4	4	3%

Table 4.6: Number of Categories for Each Joke

5.2 Findings

Throughout the course of my project, there were some rather interesting facts that I discovered. Among those were that the incongruity of a knock-knock joke doesn't have to be the name originally mentioned in the set-up (see section 5.2.1), that names usually occurred punchline-initially (see section 5.2.2), and that the humor mechanism that a knock-knock joke relies on can vary depending on the dialect spoken (see section 5.2.3).

5.2.1 The Incongruity Doesn't Have To Be the Name

Before this study, I thought that any orthodox knock-knock joke would hinge its incongruous humor (see section 1.2 for an explanation) on the name given originally by the joke teller in the set-up. However, examples like 19 below defy this belief.

19) Example: A broken pencil - (RF / BF)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: A broken pencil.

B: A broken pencil who?

A: Never mind, it's pointless.

This joke's humor hinges on the incongruous semantic meanings of the word *pointless*, "void of meaning" versus "void of a tip." This is not the name mentioned in the set-up by the joke teller, *A broken pencil*. Proving that not all orthodox knock-knock jokes hinge their humor on the original name. However, this joke may also be told outside of the knock-knock joke format, see example 19.1 below.

19.1) Example – A broken pencil – Non-knock-knock

Have you heard the joke about a broken pencil? Never mind, it's pointless.

Example 20 below was another joke that didn't repeat the name from the set-up in the punchline. It is interesting because it plays at the canned format of using the words "*Knock-knock.*"

20) Example: Opportunity - (4U)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: Opportunity.

B: Opportunity who?

A: I won't knock twice.

With the exception of examples 19 and 20 above and the unorthodox, #format jokes, only #turn-taking jokes were able to have a punchline that excluded the name from the joke's set-up. In fact, all #turn-taking jokes practiced this exclusion except example 11 from section 4.4b (which I will discuss later) and example 21 below.

21) Example: Blow - (CC)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: Blow.

B: Blow who?

A: Blow me.

This joke relies on being taboo which makes it fall into the category of #culture-taboo. However, it is also #turn-taking-interrogative, because it relies on the canned structure of knock-knock jokes in order to create the allusion that the joke recipient was seeking repair (clarification for something discussed earlier) through echoing (repeating what was spoken) for an imperative (i.e. the joke recipient "did not know who they needed to blow, so he or she asked"). The name from the set-up could potentially be excluded. However, the allusion might not be sufficiently obvious to have a successfully humorous delivery.

Now, as for example 11 from section 4.4b, this joke also seems to only repeat the name from the set-up because it needs to make the allusion blatantly obvious. If the joke teller only said “*Didn’t you learn anything in history class?*”, then the connection to “*George Washington who?*” might not be made. Compare that to the very similar example 22 below about a police officer who became culturally recognizable in 2013 for shooting a young African-American man, starting a heated national discussion about racial relations.

The George Zimmerman joke doesn’t need the linguistic repair that the George Washington joke did but still makes fun of a historical figure (which makes it part of #culture too) through turn-taking (which means that these two jokes share the exact same categories). These jokes are arguably exactly the same according to humor mechanism, but only example 11 needs to restate the name from the set-up.

22) Example: George Zimmerman - (RF)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who’s there?

A: George Zimmerman.

B: George Zimmerman who?

A: Congratulations, you’re on the jury.

5.2.2 The Name Usually Occurs Punchline-Initially

I found that if the name from the set-up of a knock-knock joke occurred in the punchline, it almost always appeared initially in said punchline. There were only three jokes where the name in the set-up was neither initial nor absent. The first was example 13 from section 4.6 where The Kool-Aid Man wasn’t mentioned until after the utterance “Just kidding.” This example might be dismissed from this conversation because it could easily be replaced with a pronoun (i.e. “Just kidding. He wouldn’t knock.”). The second

was example 23 below where there is a series of three names in the set-up that are dispersed throughout the punchline as imperatives.

23) Example: Butch, Jimmy, & Joe - (4U)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: Butch, Jimmy, & Joe.

B: Butch, Jimmy, & Joe who?

A: Butch your arms around me, Jimmy a kiss, and let's Joe!

In this example, two of the given names were used as the beginning of an utterance (i.e. "*Put your...*" and "*gimme a...*") (these probably don't deviate from the theory that the name needs to appear initially each time). However, the word *Joe* doesn't appear initially in its utterance ("*let's*" is first, not "*go*" which is what the name has become). This is very similar to example 24 below because they are both verb phrases that do not appear utterance-initially in the punchline (i.e. "*let's go*" and "*to see these*"). It would be fairly difficult to successfully deliver the joke in example 24 if it were initial because the *to* from the infinitive "*to see*" is rarely seen utterance-initially in English due to its subject-verb-object structure.

24) Example: 2 CD'S - (RF)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: 2 CD's.

B: 2 CD's who?

A: You want 2 CD's nuts?!

These findings represent future research opportunities in English word order in regards to the delivery of knock-knock jokes.

5.2.3 Humor Mechanisms May Differ By Dialect

Another surprising fact that I found was that some jokes can change their humor mechanism based on dialect. In example 25 below, the name *Ben* should be pronounced as [ben] according to a standard English accent, but as a Texan, I naturally practice the pin/pen merger. This is a phonemic merger (meaning that two cognitively different sounds are becoming almost indistinguishable from each other phonetically) where the contrast between the high and mid front lax vowels is neutralized before nasal consonants. Because of this merger, I have a perceptual bias that causes me to pronounce the name *Ben* as [bɪn].

The pronunciation of the word *been*, the past imperfect tense of *to be*, also varies across different dialects. Some might pronounce it as [bɪn], while others might pronounce it as [ben].

If you tell this joke with the two words (*Ben* and *been*) sounding differently, it is a perfect example of #phonetic-substitution. However, if you tell this joke with the two words sounding exactly alike, it is a perfect example of #homophony.

25) Example: Ben - (FU)

A: Knock-knock.

B: Who's there?

A: Ben.

B: Ben who?

A: Been knocking for ten minutes now!

5.3 Possible Future Applications

This taxonomy of knock-knock jokes could be used for teaching linguistics because it covers many of the topics that are involved in its subtopics such as phonetics. This could also be quite useful with natural language processing because we could teach

our programs how to better identify what the meaning of a pun is if they know how to parse the joke, which my taxonomy would provide a list of possible functions for.

This research could be great for artificial intelligence because, sometimes, important parts of human conversation include puns. At this time, natural language processing software such as Siri or Google Voice struggle with the types of humor mechanisms that were discovered in this project.

Educators may find the humor mechanisms discovered in this project useful as well, particularly if software was developed that could systematically create knock-knock jokes for mnemonic purposes such as memorizing important dates that could fit into a knock-knock joke. They might also find it useful for teaching students of English as a Second Language because the linguistic features of English might be made more obvious through the use of knock-knock jokes, but the concurrent topic of study in their course might not be available already in a knock-knock joke.

This could be used for entertainment purposes because comedians could systematically create knock-knock jokes or puns to meet their needs, such as a dull point in their routine where they would like to add wordplay. This systematic creation could be used by authors who want to create a mnemonic for their readers so that their characters' names will be more memorable.

APPENDIX A
CORPUS SOURCES

- 4U Jokes4us.com. Web. August 27, 2014.
<<http://www.jokes4us.com/knockknockjokes/>>
- BF Legget, T. BuzzFeed. Web. September 12, 2014.
<<http://www.buzzfeed.com/tabathaleggett/knock-knock-jokes-that-are-so-bad-theyre-good>>
- CC CC: Jokes (Keyword: knock knock). Comedy Central. Web. August 23, 2014.
<<http://jokes.cc.com/search?keywords=knock+knock>>.
- FU Knock Knock Jokes: Funology Jokes and Riddles. Funology. Web. August 26, 2014.
<<http://www.funology.com/knock-knock-jokes/>>
<<http://www.funology.com/knock-knock-jokes-page-2/>>
<<http://www.funology.com/knock-knock-jokes-page-3/>>
<<http://www.funology.com/knock-knock-jokes-page-4/>>
- R6 Shy 6 year old needs your knock knock jokes!. Reddit (Jokes). Web. August 23, 2014.
<http://www.reddit.com/r/Jokes/comments/13vmeq/shy_6_year_old_needs_your_knock_knock_jokes/>
- RF Reddit, are there any Knock-Knock jokes that are ACTUALLY funny?. Reddit (AskReddit). Web. August 23, 2014.
<http://www.reddit.com/r/AskReddit/comments/11ys41/reddit_are_there_any_knockknock_jokes_that_are/>

APPENDIX B
CORPUS OF KNOCK-KNOCK JOKES

1. Knock, knock. Who's there? **2 CD's**. 2 CD's who?
 You want 2 CD's nuts?!
 #phonetics-substitution #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *RF*
 Knock, knock. Who's there? **CD**. CD who?
 CD guy run by earlier?
 #phonetics-substitution #reanalysis
 Source: *FU*
2. Knock, knock. Who's there? **A broken pencil**. A broken pencil who?
 Nevermind, it's pointless.
 #homophony
 Source: *RF / BF*
3. Knock, knock. Who's there? **A herd**. A herd who?
 A herd you were home!
 #phonetics-substitution #homophony
 Source: *FU*
4. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Abbot**. Abbot who?
 Abbot you don't know who I am
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
5. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Abby**. Abby who?
 Abby birthday!
 #phonetics-substitution #phonetics-elision
 Source: *FU*
6. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Abe**. Abe who?
 Abe C D E F G...
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *R6*
7. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Ach**. Ach who?
 Bless you!
 #turn-taking-shift
 Source: *CC / 4U*
 Knock, knock. Who's there? **Hatch**. Hatch who?
 Bless you!
 #turn-taking-shift
 Source: *CC*
 Knock, knock. Who's there? **Etch**. Etch who?
 Bless you!
 #turn-taking-shift
 Source: *RF / FU / BF*

- Knock, knock. Who's there? **Kirch**. Kirch who?
 Bless you!
 #turn-taking-shift
 Source: *FU*
8. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Adore**. Adore who?
 Adore is between us!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *FU*
9. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Aida**. Aida who?
 Aida sandwich for lunch.
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
10. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Al**. Al who?
 Al give you a kiss if you open the door
 #phonetics-substitution #reanalysis
 Source: *BF*
11. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Alex**. Alex who?
 Alexplain later! (AND) Alex the questions around here!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU (AND) 4U*
12. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Althea**. Althea who?
 Althea later alligator!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
13. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Amaryllis**. Amaryllis who?
 Amaryllis tate agent, wanna buy a house?
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *CC*
14. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Amish**. Amish who?
 Aww, so sweet. I miss you too!
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *4U*
15. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Amos**. Amos who?
 A mosquito
 #reanalysis
 Source: *BF*
16. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Annie**. Annie who?
 Annie one you like!
 #reanalysis
 Source: *FU*

17. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Arfur**. Arfur who?
 Arfur got!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
18. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Arthur**. Arthur who?
 Arthur any better jokes?
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *CC*
19. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Avenue**. Avenue who?
 Avenue knocked on this door before?
 #reanalysis #phonetics-elision
 Source: *FU*
20. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Ben**. Ben who?
 Ben knocking for 10 minutes now!
 #homophony OR #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
21. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Ben Hur**. Ben Hur who?
 Ben hur over an hour, come to the door.
 #phonetics-substitution (#homophony)
 Source: *4U*
22. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Blow**. Blow who?
 Blow me.
 #turn-taking-interrogative #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *CC*
23. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Boo**. Boo who?
 Don't cry!
 #turn-taking-shift #homophony
 Source: *CC / FU*
24. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Buster**. Buster who?
 Buster cherry... Is your daughter home?
 #reanalysis #culture-taboo-obscene #phonetics-elision
 Source: *4U*
25. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Butch, Jimmy, & Joe**. Butch, Jimmy, & Joe who?
 Butch your arms around me, Jimmy a kiss, and let's Joe!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution #phonetics-assimilation
 Source: *4U*
26. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Canoe**. Canoe who?
 Canoe put lotion on my back?
 #reanalysis #phonetics-elision
 Source: *CC / FU*

27. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Cargo**. Cargo who?
 Cargo beep beep!
 #reanalysis #morphology
 Source: *CC*
28. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Cash**. Cash who?
 No thanks, I'm allergic to nuts.
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *R6*
29. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Claire**. Claire who?
 Claire the door, I'm coming through!
 #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
30. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Cows go**. Cows go who?
 No they don't!
 #turn-taking-shift #homophony
 Source: *CC / FU / BF*
- Knock, knock. Who's there? **Owls**. Owls who?
 Yes, that's true!
 #turn-taking-shift #homophony
 Source: *R6*
- Knock, knock. Who's there? **Cuck**. Cuck who?
 Are you a chicken now?
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis
 Source: *FU*
31. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Daisy**. Daisy who?
 Daisy me rollin', dey hatin'!
 #reanalysis #culture #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *R6 / RF / 4U*
32. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Dewey**. Dewey who?
 Dewey have to use a condom?
 #reanalysis #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *4U*
33. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Dishes**. Dishes who?
 Dishes the police! Come out with your hands up!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *CC / FU*
34. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Doctor**. Doctor who?
 That's a great show, huh?
 #turn-taking-shift #culture #homophony
 Source: *4U*

35. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Doris**. Doris who?
 Doris locked, open up!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *4U*
36. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Dozen**. Dozen who?
 Dozen anyone wanna let me in?
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
37. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Dumbbell**. Dumbbell who?
 Dumbbell doesn't work, so I knocked.
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *4U*
38. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Dwayne**. Dwayne who?
 Dwayne the tub. I'm dwooning.
 #phonetics-phonology-substitution
 Source: *R6 / RF / FU / 4U*
39. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Eiffel**. Eiffel who?
 Eiffel down and scrapped my knee
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *RF*
40. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Euripides**. Euripides who?
 Euripides pants, you a-buy these pants!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution #phonetics-intrusion
 Source: *RF / BF*
41. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Felix**. Felix who?
 Felix my ice cream again, I'll slap him.
 #reanalysis #phonetics-elision
 Source: *R6*
42. Knock, knock. Who's there? **George Washington**. George Washington who?
 George Washington WHO?! Didn't you learn anything in history class?
 #turn-taking-interrogative #culture
 Source: *CC*
43. Knock, knock. Who's there? **George Zimmerman**. George Zimmerman who?
 Congratulations, you're on the jury.
 #turn-taking-interrogative #culture
 Source: *RF*
44. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Godzilla**. Godzilla who?
 Just kidding, the Godzilla wouldn't knock.
 #culture
 Source: *R6*

- Knock, knock. Who's there? **The Kool-aid Man**. The Kool-aid man who?
 Just kidding, the Kool-aid man wouldn't knock.
 #culture
 Source: *R6*
45. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Goliath**. Goliath who?
 Goliath down, you looketh tired.
 #reanalysis #morphology
 Source: *CC*
46. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Gorilla**. Gorilla who?
 Gorilla me a burger, I'm hungry!
 #phonetics-intrusion
 Source: *R6 / 4U*
47. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Hanna**. Hanna who?
 Hanna partridge in a pair tree!
 #phonetics-intrusion #phonetics-substitution #reanalysis
 Source: *BF*
48. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Harry**. Harry who?
 Harry up! It's cold out here!
 #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
49. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Henrietta**. Henrietta who?
 Henrietta worm that was in his apple.
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
50. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Highway**. Highway who?
 Highway 95lbs!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-intrusion
 Source: *CC*
51. Knock, knock. Who's there? **I am**. I am who?
 You don't know who you are?!?!
 #turn-taking-interrogative
 Source: *FU*
52. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Ice cream**. Ice cream who?
 Ice cream if you don't let me in!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *4U*
53. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Imma**. Imma who?
 Imma getting old, hurry up!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-intrusion
 Source: *FU*

54. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Imma fuck**. Imma fuck who?
 Fuck whoever you want, whore.
 #turn-taking-interrogative #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *RF*
55. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Iona**. Iona who?
 Iona new car!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *FU*
56. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Iowa**. Iowa who?
 Iowa big apology to the owner of that car over there.
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *FU*
57. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Iran**. Iran who?
 Iran over here to see you!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *4U*
58. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Isabell**. Isabell who?
 Isabell working? I had to knock.
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *FU*
59. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Iva**. Iva who?
 Iva sore hand from knocking!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-elision
 Source: *FU*
60. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Ivor**. Ivor who?
 Ivor you let me in, or I come through the window!
 #homophony #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
61. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Juno**. Juno who?
 Juno who it is!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-assimilation
 Source: *R6*
62. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Justin**. Justin who?
 Justin time for dinner!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *FU*
63. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Juwanna**. Juwanna who?
 Juwanna give me the rest of your burrito?
 #reanalysis #phonetics-assimilation
 Source: *R6*

64. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Kanga**. Kanga who?
 No! KangaROO!
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *R6*
65. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Katmandu**. Katmandu who?
 Katmandu what Catwoman say!
 #reanalysis #morphology #culture
 Source: *CC*
66. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Ketchup**. Ketchup who?
 Ketchup with me and I'll tell you!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *R6 / FU*
67. Knock, knock. Who's there? **King Tut**. King Tut who?
 King Tut-key fried chicken!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution #phonetic-intrusion
 Source: *FU*
68. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Lettuce**. Lettuce who?
 Lettuce in!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *RF / FU*
69. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Little old lady**. Little old lady who?
 I didn't know you could yodel!
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis
 Source: *CC / R6 / FU / 4U / BF*
70. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Luke**. Luke who?
 Luke through the peephole and you'll see!
 #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
71. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Madam**. Madam who?
 Madam shoe is caught in the door!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *CC*
72. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Mary**. Mary who?
 Mary Christmas!
 #homophony
 Source: *FU*
73. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Matthew**. Matthew who?
 Matthews are wet, can I come in?
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *CC*

74. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Mikey**. Mikey who?
 Mikey doesn't fit in the door.
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *BF*
75. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Nana**. Nana who?
 Nana your business!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU / BF*
76. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Needle**. Needle who?
 Needle lil money for the movies.
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
77. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Noah**. Noah who?
 Noah good place to eat around here?
 #reanalysis [#phonetic-substitution OR #homophony]
 Source: *FU*
78. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Nobel**. Nobel who?
 Nobel, so I knocked.
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *CC*
79. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Norma Lee**. Norma Lee who?
 Norma Lee I don't knock, I ring the doorbell.
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *FU*
80. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Olive**. Olive who?
 Olive you with all my heart!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *CC / FU / BF*
81. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Opportunity**. Opportunity who?
 I won't knock twice...
 #culture
 Source: *4U*
82. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Otto**. Otto who?
 Otto know, I have amnesia!
 #phonetics-substitution #reanalysis
 Source: *FU*
83. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Phyllis**. Phyllis who?
 Phyllis a glass of water!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *CC*

84. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Polar**. Polar who?
 Polar pants down!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *CC*
85. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Police**. Police who?
 Police open the door!
 #phonetics-intrusion #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU / BF*
86. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Queen**. Queen who?
 Queen my dishes please!
 #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *RF*
87. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Roach**. Roach who?
 Roach you a letter, didja get it?
 #reanalysis #phonetics-assimilation
 Source: *FU*
88. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Robin**. Robin who?
 Robin the piggy bank again!
 #homophony #phonetics-elision
 Source: *FU*
89. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Sadie**. Sadie who?
 Sadie magic word and I'll let you in!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
90. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Scold**. Scold who?
 Scold out here, lemme in!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-elision
 Source: *FU*
91. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Sham**. Sham who?
 No, not yo' mama!
 #turn-taking-shift #phonetics-intrusion #culture
 Source: *CC*
92. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Smell mop**. Smell mop who?
 I will not!
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *R6*
- Knock, knock. Who's there? **I eat mop**. I eat mop who?
 That's really gross.
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *R6*

- Knock, knock. Who's there? **Europe**. Europe who?
 No, you're a poo!
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis #culture-taboo-obscene #phonetics-elision
 Source: *RF / BF*
- Knock, knock. Who's there? **A pile-up**. A pile-up who?
 Ewww...
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis #phonetics-elision #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *4U*
93. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Some**. Some who?
 Some jerk telling you knock, knock jokes!
 #turn-taking-interrogative
 Source: *CC*
94. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Spell**. Spell who?
 W-H-O
 #turn-taking-interrogative
 Source: *FU*
95. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Tank**. Tank who?
 You're welcome!
 #turn-taking-shift #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
96. Knock, knock. Who's there? **The guy who finished second**. The guy who finished second who?
 Exactly!
 #turn-taking-interrogative #culture
 Source: *4U*
97. Knock, knock. Who's there? **The little boy blue**. The little boy blue who?
 The little boy blue Michael Jackson.
 #homophony #culture #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *RF*
98. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Theodore**. Theodore who?
 Theodore was locked, so I knocked.
 #reanalysis #phonetics-intrusion
 Source: *BF*
99. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Thistle**. Thistle who?
 Thistle make you laugh!
 #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *CC*
100. Knock, knock. Who's there? **To**. To who?
 To WHOM?
 #turn-taking-interrogative
 Source: *R6 / BF*

101. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Two knee**. Two knee who?
 Two knee fish!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
102. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Urine**. Urine who?
 Urine secure, don't know what for...
 #reanalysis #culture #homophony
 Source: *4U*
103. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Viper**. Viper who?
 Viper nose, it's running!
 #reanalysis #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *FU*
104. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Waiter**. Waiter who?
 Waiter I get my hands on you!!!
 #reanalysis [#phonetics-substitution OR #homophony]
 Source: *4U*
105. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Watson**. Watson who?
 Watson tv?
 #reanalysis [#homophony OR #phonetics-substitution]
 Source: *FU*
106. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Wayne**. Wayne who?
 Wayne drops keep falling on my head...
 #phonetics-substitution #culture
 Source: *CC*
107. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Who**. Who who?
 You sound like an owl! (AND) Defense!!!
 #turn-taking-shift #homophony
 Source: *R6 (AND) FU*
108. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Wooden shoe**. Wooden shoe who?
 Wooden shoe like to know!
 #phonetics-assimilation
 Source: *CC*
109. Knock, knock. Who's there? **Ya**. Ya who?
 Wow, you're excited to see me!
 #turn-taking-shift #reanalysis #homophony
 Source: *FU / 4U*

APPENDIX C

CORPUS OF UNORTHODOX KNOCK-KNOCK JOKES

1. A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: **Banana.**
 B: Banana who?

 A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: Banana.
 B: Banana who?

 A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: Orange.
 B: Orange who?
 A: Orange you glad I didn't say banana?
 #format-continuation #phonetics-substitution
 Source: *CC / FU*

2. A: Knock, knock
 B: Who's there?
 A: **Britney Spears.**
 B: Britney Spears who?

 A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: Oops, I did it again!
 #format-continuation #culture
 Source: *CC*

3. A: Knock, knock.
 B: **Come in.**
 #format-interruption
 Source: *R6*

4. A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: **Grandpa.** A: Shit, stop the funeral!
 #format-interruption
 Source: *RF*

5. A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: **Interrupting cow.**
 A: Interrupting cow wh... B: MOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!
 #format-interruption
 Source: *CC / R6 / FU*
6. A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: **Interrupting Doctor.**
 B: Interrupting Doctor wh... B: You have cancer.
 #format-interruption #culture-taboo-dark
 Source: *R6*
7. A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: **Interrupting sloth.**
 B: Interrupting sloth who?
 (15 seconds later) A: SLOOOTTTTHHHHH!
 #format-interruption
 Source: *RF*
8. A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: Jesus.
 B: Jesus who?
- A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: Jesus.
 B: Jesus who?
- A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: Jesus.
 B: Jesus who?
 A: **Jesus being denied three times** in the form of a knock, knock joke.
 #format-continuation #culture
 Source: *RF*

9. A: Why did Sally fall off the swing? A: She had **no arms**.
 A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: Not Sally.
 #format-exposition #culture-taboo-dark
 Source: *RF / 4U*
10. A: Knock, knock.
 B: Who's there?
 A: **Open the fucking door!**
 #format-interruption #culture-taboo-obscene
 Source: *RF*
11. A: Will you **remember me** this afternoon?
 B: Yes.
- A: Will you remember me tomorrow?
 B: Sure.
- A: Knock knock!
 B: Who's there?
 A: See, you forgot me already!
 #format-exposition #turn-taking-interrogative
 Source: *R6 / FU / BF*
12. A: Why did **the chicken** cross the road? A: To get to your house.
 A: Knock, knock!
 B: Who's there?
 A: THE CHICKEN!
 #format-exposition
 Source: *R6 / 4U*
13. A: I've got a great knock, knock joke, but **you have to start it**.
 B: Alright... Knock, knock.
 A: Who's there?
 #format
 Source: *R6*

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Jared Weide was very fortunate to know what he wanted to major in after just his freshman year. He passionately pursued a degree in linguistics at the University of Texas in Arlington with help from extracurricular requirements set forth by the Honors College (including this project).

He is now interested in earning his master's degree in linguistics online because he wants the freedom to travel. Jared wants to sojourn in Spanish or French speaking countries for the next couple of years because he wants to specialize in romance languages. After completing his master's degree, he wants to be able to settle into a town where he can earn his doctorate in linguistics and find work in romance languages (perhaps as a language coordinator or professor).