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## Examining Political Satire in Indonesian TikTok Videos: An Analysis of Humor and Commentary

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### Abstract

This study delves into the use of satirical comments and political humor in TikTok videos in Indonesia, utilizing a critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework. The study aims to investigate how political issues and figures are depicted through satirical comments in society of the digital natives. The analysis focused on TikTok users' linguistic and discursive strategies to criticize and satirize political events, figures, and policies. The study used a collection of TikTok videos. It employed a multi-modal approach, analyzing the textual content and visual and audio elements contributing to humor and satire. A qualitative methodology combining content analysis with discourse analysis techniques was used to identify recurring themes, rhetorical devices, and humor patterns in the satirical comments. Specifically, the application of CDA facilitated the deconstruction of power dynamics embedded within the satirical discourse, revealing how TikTok users leverage humor to challenge dominant political narratives. The findings revealed that TikTok users used linguistic devices such as irony, sarcasm, parody, and wordplay to convey their satirical messages. The satirical comments often targeted political figures, policies, and events, focusing on corruption, governance, and social inequality issues. Through humor, TikTok users expressed their dissent and critique of the political system while also participating in creating an alternative public sphere for political discourse. However, the study noted that these satirical comments could be controversial, as they may perpetuate stereotypes or reinforce existing political biases.

**Keywords:** satirical comments, political humor of Indonesians, TikTok users, critical discourse analysis, linguistic devices

### INTRODUCTION

Political humor and satire have always played a vital role in critiquing and commenting on various sociopolitical issues across diverse cultures and societies (cf. Attardo, 2001; Feldman, 2000; Tsakona, 2009; Young, 2017). Humor, in its broadest sense, serve as a social lubricant, facilitating the communication of complex ideas through accessible and engaging formats. In the realm of political discourse, humor transforms into a

potent tool for challenging hegemonic narratives and fostering critical engagement. Satire, a more targeted form of humor, employs irony, exaggeration, and ridicule to expose and critique societal flaws, particularly within political structures. It operates on the premise of incongruity, highlighting the discrepancies between perceived ideals and actual realities. The rhetorical power of satire lies in its ability to simultaneously entertain and provoke reflection, thereby circumventing conventional modes of

political discourse. By employing humor, satirists can soften the blow of harsh critiques, making them more palatable to a wider audience, while simultaneously sharpening their impact. Furthermore, the emergence of digital platforms and the rise of social media has provided new avenues for political humor to be expressed and disseminated (cf. Dynel, 2013; Dynel & Chovanec, 2021). Among these platforms, TikTok has become a popular platform for creative content creation, including satirical comments on political figures and events (cf. Harun et al., 2015; Nugraha, 2020). The selection of TikTok as the primary platform for this analysis is predicated on its unique affordances within the contemporary media landscape. Unlike other social media platforms, TikTok's short-form video format fosters a distinctive mode of satirical expression, characterized by rapid dissemination and visual-centric communication. Its algorithmic architecture, which prioritizes engagement and virality, facilitates the swift propagation of political satire, potentially reaching a broad and diverse audience. This study examines the use of satirical comments and political humor in Indonesian TikTok videos using a critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework.

Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country and a vibrant democracy, provides an intriguing context to examine the intersection of satire, politics, and digital media. Indonesian society has a rich history of political satire and humor (e.g. Cohen, 2007; Nugraha, 2022, 2024; Pandin, 2020; Pranowo et al., 2022), often used to question authority, highlight societal issues, and engage in critical discourse. In recent years, TikTok has gained immense popularity among Indonesian users, offering a creative platform for expressing political opinions through satirical comments. This study explores the linguistic and discursive strategies used by TikTok users in Indonesia to convey their satirical messages and critique political events, figures, and

policies. Using a CDA framework, the study analyzes TikTok videos' textual, visual, and audio elements to understand how political humor is constructed and disseminated within the Indonesian context. This approach helps us understand the sociocultural implications of these satirical comments and their role in shaping public opinion and promoting critical thinking.

The methodology involves a qualitative analysis of a collection of TikTok videos, focusing on identifying recurring themes, rhetorical devices, and humor patterns in the satirical comments (for more details, please refer to *methodology* section). Additionally, a sociocultural analysis will contextualize the humor within Indonesia's broader political and social landscape, considering historical, ideological, and cultural factors that shape the production and reception of political humor. Preliminary findings from this study show that TikTok users use a range of linguistic devices, such as irony, sarcasm, parody, and wordplay, to convey their satirical messages. The satirical comments often target political figures, policies, and events, drawing attention to corruption, governance, and social inequality issues. Through the medium of humor, TikTok users express their dissent and critique of the political system while also engaging in the creation of an alternative public sphere for political discourse.

However, it is crucial to note that satire in political commentary is not without controversy. Satirical comments have the potential to perpetuate stereotypes or reinforce existing political biases. Therefore, this study acknowledges the need for a critical analysis that examines the potential implications and limitations of using humor as a tool for political critique. By examining the political humor and satirical comments found in Indonesian TikTok videos through the lens of critical discourse analysis, this study contributes to the growing field of discourse analysis. It deepens our understanding of the

role of digital platforms in political expression. The findings of this study have implications for media literacy, political engagement, and the democratization of public discourse in the Indonesian context.

Generally, this study aims to provide insights into how satire, politics, and digital media intersect in contemporary Indonesian society, shedding light on the dynamics of political humor and its potential to shape public opinion and foster critical engagement. Specifically, this study questions include: (1) How do TikTok users in Indonesia employ satirical comments and linguistic devices to critique and humorously portray political figures, events, and policies in their videos; (2) What are the recurring themes, rhetorical devices, and patterns of humor observed in the satirical comments found in Indonesian TikTok videos, and how do they contribute to the construction of political humor; and (3) How do the satirical comments on TikTok contribute to creating an alternative public sphere for political discourse in Indonesia, and what are the socio-cultural implications of this form of expression within the broader political landscape?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Political humor and satire, as identified in Table 1, are recognized as crucial forms of expression and criticism within societies. They allow for questioning authority, challenging prevailing narratives, and engaging in political discourse (Attardo, 1994; Balakrishnan et al., 2019; Boukes et al., 2015; Feldman, 1995). Digital media platforms like TikTok provide new avenues for disseminating political humor and satire (Daniels, 2007; Lent, 2014; Ostrom, 2007; Sen & Hill, 2007). This literature review explores existing political humor, satire, and digital media research, focusing specifically

on Indonesian political humor portrayed in TikTok videos, using a CDA framework.

Studies on political humor and satire in the digital realm have shown the power of social media platforms in shaping political discourse. In Indonesia, TikTok has gained immense popularity among users, particularly the younger generation, due to its short video format and creative tools (Lewis & Melendez-Torres, 2023; Wang & Feng, 2023). This popularity has led to a distinct genre of political humor on the platform.

One crucial aspect of political humor is its effects on public opinion and engagement. Previous research has shown that political humor can impact audiences' cognitive and affective effects. Cognitive effects include increased attention, comprehension, and information retention, while affective effects involve emotional responses and attitude change. For instance, several studies (e.g., Hasanah & Hidayat, 2020; Nugraha, 2022; Rahman, 2018) found that exposure to political satire increased political knowledge and engagement among viewers. Therefore, analyzing political humor in TikTok videos can provide insights into how these satirical comments shape public opinion and political awareness among Indonesian users.

CDA has been widely used to analyze political discourse and power relations in various contexts. It emphasizes the role of language and discourse in maintaining or challenging dominant ideologies and power structures. In the context of political humor, CDA allows researchers to uncover the underlying discursive strategies employed by TikTok users to convey their satirical messages. The other studies (e.g., Triputra & Sugita, 2016; Putri, 2018; Mahadian & Hashim, 2022) on political satire illustrates the effectiveness of CDA in analyzing the ideological implications and power dynamics embedded in humor.

**Table 1.** Differentiation Between Political and Non-Political Humor/Satire

Feature	Political Humor/Satire	Non-Political Humor/Satire
<b>Primary Focus</b>	Critique of authority, political figures, policies, and systems; Challenge to dominant ideologies and power structures; Commentary on socio-political issues.	General amusement and entertainment; Focus on everyday life, social interactions, or abstract concepts; Maybe observational, situational, or based on wordplay.
<b>Purpose</b>	Political critique and commentary; Influence public opinion and political awareness; Promote critical thinking and engagement with political discourse; Facilitate expressions of dissent.	Provide entertainment and amusement; Foster social connection and bonding; Relieve stress or tension; Simple enjoyment.
<b>Content</b>	Explicitly references political events; figures; and issues; Often uses irony, sarcasm, parody, and exaggeration to convey political messages; May contain elements of protest and resistance.	Focuses on non-political topics (e.g., family, relationships, work); relies on universal humor themes or inside jokes within a specific group; Generally, avoids explicit political references or critiques.
<b>Effects</b>	Potential for cognitive effects (increased political knowledge, attention) and affective effect (emotional responses, attitude change); May contribute to political engagement and awareness; Can shape public opinion and perception of political issues; Can perpetuate stereotypes or reinforce biases.	Primarily focused on eliciting laughter and positive emotions; May foster a sense of community and shared experience; Generally, does not impact political engagement.
<b>Context</b>	Heavily dependent on socio-political context and current events; Requires an understanding of political systems; actors; and issues; Subject to interpretation and potential controversy.	Less reliant on specific contexts, though cultural and social factors can influence its reception; Can be more universal or easily understood across different audiences.
<b>Examples</b>	Satirical news shows, political cartoons, political memes; viral TikTok videos satirizing political figures.	Stand-up comedy routines about everyday life; humorous anecdotes; sitcoms; funny animal videos.

Furthermore, the literature review also highlights the need to critically examine political humor's potential implications and limitations in TikTok videos. While political humor has the potential to foster critical thinking and engagement, it can also perpetuate stereotypes, reinforce existing biases, or trivialize serious political issues (Surahmat et al., 2023; Droog & Burgers, 2023). Therefore, analyzing the socio-cultural and political context is crucial to understanding the broader implications of satirical comments on TikTok.

In assumption, the literature review emphasizes the significance of studying

political humor in TikTok videos through the lens of critical discourse analysis. By drawing on existing research on political humor, satire, and digital media, this study aims to contribute to understanding how political humor is portrayed and understood within the Indonesian context. Furthermore, by examining the linguistic and discursive strategies employed in TikTok videos, this study aims to shed light on the role of political humor in shaping public opinion, fostering critical engagement, and contributing to the democratization of public discourse in Indonesia.

## METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a qualitative methodology rooted in CDA (cf. Fairclough, 2013; Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Weiss & Wodak, 2007) to examine the political satire and humor found in TikTok videos from Indonesia. The methodology involved several essential steps and approaches to analyze the data collected.

First, we gathered a collection of TikTok videos using purposive sampling techniques. Videos must contain satirical comments about Indonesian politics, political figures, events, or policies to be included. We determined the sample size based on saturation, ensuring sufficient videos for in-depth analysis. Ethical considerations have been considered, including validating the consent from TikTok users whose videos are publicly accessible dated from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 until July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Second, we performed a multi-modal analysis of the collected TikTok videos, considering textual and non-textual elements. This analysis examined the linguistic devices used in the satirical comments, visual cues, audio elements, and other features contributing to the humorous effect. This approach acknowledged that humor and satire go beyond words, encompassing various modalities of expression.

Third, we employed a critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework to uncover the satirical comments' underlying discursive strategies and power dynamics. CDA allowed for examining the social, political, and cultural implications embedded in the humor. Through a systematic process, we identified recurring themes, rhetorical devices, patterns of humor, and any ideological dimensions in the satirical comments. Fourth, we situated the satirical comments within Indonesia's broader socio-cultural and political context. This analysis considered historical, ideological, and cultural factors that shape political

humor's production and reception. By examining the socio-cultural implications, we aimed to understand how the satirical comments contribute to creating an alternative public sphere for political discourse and the potential impact on public opinion and engagement.

Fifth, we maintained reflexivity throughout the research process by acknowledging our own biases and positions within the study. This self-awareness enhanced the validity and reliability of the analysis. We also engaged in discussions and peer debriefing to ensure the rigor and credibility of the findings. Sixth, we followed ethical guidelines and standards throughout the research process. These considerations included obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and anonymity for TikTok users, and adhering to data protection regulations. We prioritized cultural sensitivity and avoided perpetuating stereotypes or harm by analyzing and reporting the findings. Overall, this methodology provided a systematic and comprehensive approach to analyzing the satirical comments and political humor portrayed in Indonesian TikTok videos.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of satirical comments and political humor portrayed in Indonesian TikTok videos, based on CDA, revealed several key findings. These findings shed light on (1) the linguistic strategies, (2) recurring themes and patterns, and (3) the discourse implications of political satire in the Indonesian context. Specifically, the synergistic application of content analysis and discourse analysis facilitated an understanding of the satirical phenomena within digital communication channel. Content analysis, employed initially, allowed for the systematic identification and categorization of recurring thematic elements

and rhetorical devices within the collection of TikTok videos. Subsequently, discourse analysis, informed by the content analysis notes, enabled the exploration of how these thematic and rhetorical choices function within broader socio-political discourse.

### Linguistic Strategies

The analysis revealed that TikTok users utilized various linguistic devices in their satirical comments, such as irony, sarcasm, parody, wordplay, and exaggeration (see Table 2). These elements were effectively employed to deliver their satirical messages, which often targeted political figures, policies, and events. By skillfully using wordplay and rhetorical techniques, for instance see Figure 1, the satirical comments humorously critiqued and portrayed different facets of Indonesian politics.

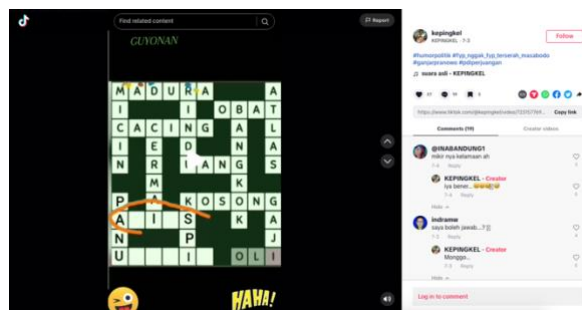


Figure 1. Political humor by TikTok user @kepingkel.

First, it is about the irony and sarcasm concerning the government's policies (see Excerpt 1). Political humor often utilizes irony and sarcasm to draw attention to the flaws and contradictions of policies. Irony involves conveying a meaning opposite to words' literal or expected meaning. In political humor, this technique highlights the discrepancy between a policy's intended outcomes and its actual effects. For example, if a policy claims to prioritize the welfare of citizens but ends up benefiting only a select few, an ironic comment may be used to sarcastically praise the policy's success in

achieving its stated goals, thus exposing the gap between its objectives and reality.

Sarcasm, on the other hand, is a form of language that uses irony with a mocking or satirical tone. In political humor, this technique is frequently used to criticize a policy's flaws, failures, or inconsistencies. Sarcasm involves using exaggerated or biting remarks to make a point. For instance, if a policy claims to address a pressing social issue but is seen as ineffective, a sarcastic comment may express exaggerated enthusiasm for the policy's remarkable ability to solve all problems, thus highlighting the policy's shortcomings through ridicule.

#### Excerpt 1

X: *Jahat, bukan?*

Y: *Bukan.*

X: *Menginjak-injak hak rakyat, bukan?*

X: *Bukan. Hahahahahaha*

Z: *Jangan ketawa! Sini kamu!*

Translation:

X: Evil, isn't it?

Y: No, it's not.

X: Trampling on people's rights, isn't it?

X: No, it's not. Hahahahahaha

Z: Don't laugh! Here you are!

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, a video of Excerpt 1 featuring civilian actors (Y), the President (X), and the Minister (Z) was published by a TikTok user. The video utilized irony and sarcasm in two instances, with the President questioning the civilians about government policies and the Minister becoming enraged at the laughter of the people. On the one hand, the political humor cues are embedded in the textual elements of the video, as we can read in its original or translation version of Excerpt 1. On the other hand, the humor also was conveyed through non-textual elements such as tone and gesture, with Excerpt 1 featuring a lighthearted tone and cutaways to the actual President and Minister. At the end of the video, the civilians were shown as surprised, running around in a frenzy.



Second, it is about the parody and wordplay of events of politics (*see* Excerpt 2). A parody is a satirical imitation of a particular event, person, or situation. In political humor, parody is often used to mock significant happenings or personalities in politics. Satirists mimic political figures' mannerisms, speech patterns, or iconic characteristics to create exaggerated and humorous imitations. This form of parody highlights the perceived absurdities or contradictions in the events or the behavior of political figures, shedding light on their actions or positions in a satirical and entertaining way.

Wordplay involves the clever manipulation of language to create humorous effects. In political humor, wordplay is employed to add a layer of wit and amusement to the commentary. Political events or slogans may be subverted through clever wordplay, altering or twisting the wording of slogans, speeches, or event titles to create humorous or satirical variations. This wording can involve substituting words, playing with similar-sounding terms, or employing double meanings to generate comedic effects. Through wordplay, political humorists can draw attention to the incongruities, contradictions, or inherent humor in the language used in political events.

#### Excerpt 2

X: Mbah Amin. Kalau mau full power, sana ke Jakarta. Lagi banyak moncong putih di sana.

Y: Hahahahahahaha

Translation

X: Mbah Amin. If you want "full power", go to Jakarta. There are many white muzzles there.

Y: Hahahahahahaha

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, a controversial politician who consistently blames the government for its shortcomings was discussed in a TikTok video featuring Excerpt 2. Attending a political event hosted by the rival party, called *moncong putih* in Jakarta, was suggested to achieve the politician's ambitions. The video used political humor

through wordplay from Excerpt 2, along with non-textual elements such as background music with a humorous tone and motion pictures, including photos of the politician and the crowd at *moncong putih*. The publisher parodied the politician's expressions to emphasize the humor even further.

Third, it is about an exaggeration of political figures (*see* Excerpt 3). Exaggeration is a common technique used in political humor to satirize and aim at political figures. By magnifying certain traits, behaviors, or characteristics of these figures, their flaws are highlighted, contradictions are exposed, and a comedic effect is created.

#### Excerpt 3

X: Bernyanyi dengan suara yang tidak jelas.

Y: Sudah, sudah, sepedanya diambil.

Z: Hahahahahahaha

Translation

X: Singing in an unclear voice.

Y: Enough, already, please, take the bicycle.

Z: Hahahahahahaha

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, a user on TikTok shared a video featuring an excerpt highlighting the exaggerated behavior of two Indonesian presidents. In the video, the first president (X) sings a song, while the second president (Y) comments on a specific occasion. People (Z) can be heard laughing at the end of the edited video. The video cleverly combines the utterances of X, Y, and Z (people laughing) to create humor through wordplay. It also features music with a comedic tone and a compilation of footage featuring both presidents.

Furthermore, when using specific language strategies, it is important to consider them in the appropriate context. This discussion will explore the theoretical foundation and previous studies related to this topic. Firstly, TikTok users have displayed a remarkable ability to use irony and sarcasm in their satirical comments. By employing these linguistic devices, they can cleverly critique political figures, events, and policies

humorously and indirectly (Nugraha, 2022; Witek, 2022). For example, they sometimes exaggerate positive statements about a politician's achievements to highlight the difference between rhetoric and reality.

**Table 2.** Linguistic strategies

Type	Explanation
1. Irony	Irony is a rhetorical device in which words (or utterances of TikTok users) convey a meaning opposite to their literal meaning, often for comedic or dramatic emphasis.
2. Sarcasm	The use of irony in TikTok videos is often employed as a means of mocking or expressing contempt.
3. Parody	This is when TikTok user intentionally exaggerates and mimics a particular politician or genre to create a comedic effect.
4. Wordplay	Puns in TikTok video cleverly manipulate words' various meanings and potential misconceptions, making them a unique form of humor.
5. Exaggeration	Making claims that exceed the actual level of quality or negativity of political matter is an inaccurate statement in TikTok videos.

Secondly, users on TikTok often use parody and mockery to ridicule politicians, imitating their speech patterns, gestures, or mannerisms (Weydmann & Großmann, 2020). This impersonation allows TikTok users to draw attention to perceived absurdities or contradictions in political figures' behavior, effectively critiquing their credibility or integrity.

Thirdly, TikTok users frequently use wordplay and puns to add humor to their satirical comments. This usage adds a layer of humor to their critiques, making them more memorable and engaging (Nugraha, 2024; Piata, 2016). Using wordplay and puns allows

them to criticize political figures, events, and policies while maintaining an entertaining and lighthearted tone.

Fourthly, exaggeration and hyperbole are common in satirical comments found on TikTok. Users often magnify certain aspects of political figures, events, or policies to emphasize their flaws or highlight the absurdity of certain situations. This exaggerated approach creates a heightened comedic effect, capturing viewers' attention and facilitating the critique of political issues engagingly (Sonay, 2023).

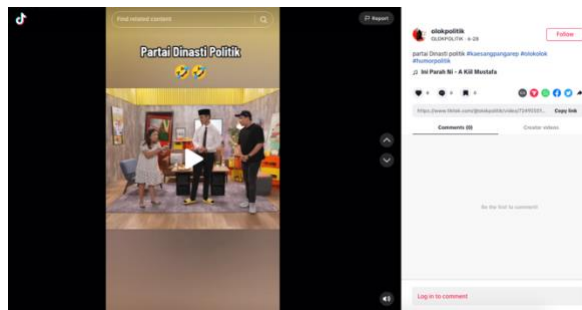
Lastly, users on TikTok incorporate visual and auditory elements to enhance the humor and impact of their satirical comments. These elements include editing techniques, sound effects, music, and visual graphics that complement and reinforce the satirical message. The combination of linguistic and multimodal elements creates a cohesive and immersive satirical experience for viewers, amplifying the effectiveness of the critique and humor (Stewart, 2015).

Overall, TikTok users in Indonesia have demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of satirical commentary and employed various linguistic devices to critique and humorously portray political figures, events, and policies. Their use of irony, sarcasm, parody, wordplay, exaggeration, and multimodal elements enables them to engage audiences, provoke critical thinking, and challenge prevailing narratives in a lighthearted and entertaining manner. This analysis highlights TikTok's creative and subversive potential as a platform for political humor and its role in shaping public discourse in Indonesia.

### Recurring Themes and Patterns

After analyzing several comments, we noticed recurring themes and patterns (*see* Table 3). Corruption was a prominent issue that was often satirized, with comments pointing out instances of political corruption and criticizing the lack of accountability.

Governance and policy problems were frequently satirized, focusing on inefficiencies, bureaucratic red tape, and social inequality (see Figure 2). Satirical comments also expressed concerns about democratic processes and political polarization in the country.



**Figure 2.** Political humor by TikTok user @olokpolitik.

First, political corruption (see Excerpt 4). The issue of corruption is a topic that remains in the spotlight of public attention. TikTok users have made use of political humor to highlight this theme. In addition to corrupt practices, those who engage in corrupt behavior are also popular political humor subjects.

#### Excerpt 4

X: Hanya ada permasalahan. Saya melihat sendiri memang. Ada rumput-rumput yang botak. Itulah yang terjadi, rumput botak-botak.

Y: Hahahahahaha

Translation

X: I have noticed some significant issues with the grass. Specifically, there are extensive bald patches throughout.

Y: Hahahahahaha

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a TikTok user shared a video of Excerpt 4 featuring civilians discussing suspicions of political corruption. The video employed both textual and non-textual elements to convey its theme. The textual element included statements from a journalist who uncovered project misconduct. In front of a stadium full of people, the journalist highlighted the poor quality of the

grass and insinuated that illegal procedures may have been used to develop the yard due to political scandals. The non-textual elements included a combination of photos and a humorous background sound. One photo showcased the suspected actor of the stadium project, while the other depicted the current state of the stadium.

Second, governance and policy issues (see Excerpt 5). There are concerns around governance and policy, which have been highlighted through satirical videos created by TikTok users.

#### Excerpt 5

X: Pekerjaan tenaga asing di IKN, Luhut: bangsa kita enggak bisa.

Y: Aaa,,eee,,ini parah ini.

Translation

X: Foreign labor jobs at IKN, Luhut: Our nation cannot.

Y: Aaa,,eee,,this is not good.

On June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a TikTok user uploaded a video featuring Excerpt 5 that delves into governance and policy matters. The video specifically addresses the recruitment policy for workers in the new Indonesian capital, highlighting two elements. The first element is the textual aspect of Excerpt 5, which centers on the initial discussion about hiring foreign workers for the new capital. The second element is the non-textual aspect, which includes moving images and a light-hearted tone.

Third, democratic processes and political polarization in the country (see Excerpt 6). There are other themes related to the process of democracy and political polarization. Democracy often involves how civilians respond to government actions, while political polarization relates to the parties and their positions in power.

#### Excerpt 6

X: Saya kerjanya adalah adalah asistennya Mbacot.

Y: Ooo, yayayaya.

X: *Saya hanya nurut sama Mbacot. Saya nggak ngerti apa ini Depok-1.*

Y: *Ya udah ayo dipanggil saja! Mbacot!*

Z: *Opo tho, Pak? Udah mulai syutingnya? Selamat dating di PDP. Partai Dinasti Politik.*

Translation

X: I work as Mbacot's assistant.

Y: Ooo, yayayaya.

X: I just obey Mbacot. I don't understand what this is, Depok-1.

Y: Let's just call it! Mbacot!

Z: What is going on, sir? Has the filming started yet? Welcome to PDP. The Political Dynasty Party.

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a TikTok user posted a video titled “Partai Dinasti Politik” centered around the president's son. The video employed satire to address the democratic process and political polarization. The video included a conversation between actors, as seen in Excerpt 6, where they humorously discussed managing the party using a sibling or relative approach. Additionally, the video incorporated non-textual elements, such as gestures, parodic movements, and a humorous soundtrack. The three actors shared jokes and laughter regarding the topic of party management.

Recurring themes in the structure of language organize this section. The previous subsection discussed thematic structure, and the following subsection will cover information content. The first recurrent theme is corruption. Satirical comments on TikTok criticized political figures and institutions for alleged involvement in corrupt practices. They used satire to expose bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism, reflecting the Indonesian public's widespread concern about corruption in the political system.

The second recurrent theme is governance and policy issues. TikTok users humorously portrayed inefficiencies, bureaucratic red tape, and the failure of policies to address societal needs. Satirical comments highlighted instances where political decisions or actions were seen as disconnected from the interests and well-

being of the general public, contributing to a sense of disillusionment and frustration.

Table 3. Recurring themes

Types	Explanation
1. Political corruption	Political corruption is an intolerable act where those in positions of power or their associates exploit their authority for personal advantage that is illegitimate.
2. Governance and policy issues	Creating policies is a crucial aspect of political governance involving decision-making. The process of creating policies is a crucial aspect of political governance. The process of creating policies is a crucial aspect of political governance.
3. Democratic processes and political polarization	It is about the citizens who play an active role in the government's decision-making process through the democratic process of the diverse political situation.

Lastly, democratic processes and political polarization emerged as recurrent themes in satirical comments. TikTok users criticized the perceived erosion of democratic values and the increasing polarization within the political landscape. They used humor to comment satirically on the state of political discourse, the influence of vested interests, and the challenges marginalized voices face.

Furthermore, in the analysis conducted, it was discovered that satirical comments on TikTok were effective due to the use of humor. TikTok users often employed self-deprecating humor to poke fun at their frustrations or experiences related to politics. This approach made the humor more relatable and helped viewers connect with it personally (Echeverria & Rodelo, 2023; Nugraha, 2023a). Humor is utilized to shed light on societal issues and challenge prevailing

norms. Satirical comments often expose the contradictions or hypocrisy in political discourse to provoke critical reflection and encourage viewers to question the status quo (Feldman, 2023; Nugraha, 2023b). Additionally, situational humor was utilized by TikTok users to capitalize on current events or trending topics, making their satirical comments timely and relevant to the audience.

Overall, the recurring themes, rhetorical devices, and patterns of humor observed in Indonesian TikTok videos contribute to the creation of political humor. Satirical comments provide a platform for critical engagement, challenge power dynamics, and foster alternative narratives (Morgan, 2010). Through humor, TikTok users bring attention to pressing political issues, create a space for dissent, and encourage public discourse. This analysis highlights the role of satirical comments in shaping public opinion, challenging dominant narratives, and contributing to the broader discourse on Indonesian politics.

### Political Satire Implications

Through analysis, it was discovered that satirical comments on TikTok have played a crucial role in creating an alternative public sphere for political discourse in Indonesia (see Figure 3). The platform has allowed individuals to express their dissent freely, criticize the political system, and discuss socio-political issues (see Table 4). These satirical comments have served as political commentary, encouraging critical thinking and public engagement with political affairs. Accordingly, the implications of this political satire are multifaceted, extending beyond mere expressions of discontent. Firstly, the use of humor as a vehicle for political commentary can demystify complex political issues, making them more accessible and engaging for a wider audience, particularly the youth demographic prevalent on TikTok.

Secondly, the rapid dissemination of satirical content through TikTok's algorithmic architecture can amplify marginalized voices, fostering a sense of collective agency and potentially influencing public opinion. Moreover, the performative nature of TikTok satire, often incorporating visual and auditory elements, can contribute to the formation of a shared cultural lexicon, facilitating the articulation of political grievances in a manner that resonates with contemporary digital natives.



Figure 3. Political humor by TikTok user @gurukocakbanget.

First, the creation of an alternative public sphere for political discourse in Indonesia (see Excerpt 7). This idea highlights how political humor on TikTok can increase public awareness. As it is easily accessible, political humor can encourage people to think critically about political events, leading to a shared understanding of the issues. In this way, political humor plays a valuable role in public discourse.

#### Excerpt 7

X: Lah...kok Golkar jadi iklan Rokok Dji Sam Soe. Mentang-mentang bungkus rokoknya kuning.

Y: Tetap berjuang mencari uang meski sakit pinggang.

Z: Aduh aduh.

Translation

X: How come Golkar became an advert for Dji Sam Soe cigarettes? Just because the cigarette packet is yellow.

Y: Still struggling to make money despite my back pain.

Z: Ouch ouch.

On June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Excerpt 7, a short video shared by a TikTok user, focuses on the head of a political party, including textual and non-textual elements. The creator of the video provides commentary labeled as X. At the same time, and another actor adds satirical commentary labeled as Y. Non-textual elements such as motion pictures are used to emphasize the political figure, adding humor. The video's purpose is to satirize the political figure, and a funny tone and laughter emphasize this, serving as a cue for political discourse implications, specifically the creation of a public political sphere.

Second, express their dissent, critique the political system (see Excerpt 8). Using humor to discuss politics on TikTok has resulted in establishing a rigorous digital social monitoring system. Through video posts, users observe and assess the political system in Indonesia, offering both praise and criticism as a means of social evaluation.

#### Excerpt 8

X: *Kenapa tidak memilih pesawat yang sudah dipakai sebelumnya, Pak? Mungkin dengan pertimbangan lebih murah, seperti F-16.*

Y: *Karena tidak ada yang mau jual, sayang. Saya sudah coba kemana-mana. Tidak ada yang mau jual ke kita. Karena sedang perang Ukraine.*

Translation

X: Why not choose an aircraft that has been used before, sir? On the basis that it is cheaper, like the F-16.

Y: Because no one wants to sell it, dear. I have tried everywhere. No one wants to sell it to us because of the Ukraine war.

A TikTok user boldly criticized the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Indonesia on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The video exposes the Minister's questionable decision to purchase a new fighter jet. This video comprises written and visual components, including a conversation between the Minister and a journalist discussing why the Minister chose not to buy a fighter from another market

source, as shown in Excerpt 8. The visual component is a humorous motion picture that complements and emphasizes the meaning of the spoken words.

Third, satirical comments served as a form of political commentary, fostering critical thinking and encouraging public engagement with political affairs (see Excerpt 9). Acknowledging that political humor on social media platforms such as TikTok catalyzes enhancing public awareness of politics is crucial. As TikTok users engage in this discourse, they actively participate in national political conversations, contributing to a more politically aware and sensitive community.

#### Excerpt 9

X: *Pak, mendukung Kaesang maju di Depok? Bapak memberi restu?*

Y: *Tugasnya orang tua itu merestui dan mendoakan.*

Z: *hahahahahahaha*

Translation

X: Sir, do you support Kaesang running in Depok? Did you give your blessing?

Y: A parent's job is to approve and pray.

Z: *hahahahahahaha*

A TikTok user shared a June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, video featuring Excerpt 9. The video showcases a brief interview with the President regarding his son's interest in joining a regional election. The video comprises both textual and non-textual elements. The primary textual component is the conversation between the journalist and the President, similar to Excerpt 9. The non-textual elements of the video include a mocking and humorous tone, with laughter at the end of the video, satirizing the discussion.

Moreover, let us discuss the impact of political discourse in Indonesia based on our analysis of linguistic strategies and thematic patterns. We will focus on three major implications. Firstly, they create an alternative public sphere through satirical comments on TikTok. This platform allows individuals to

engage in political discourse outside traditional media channels (Lalancette & Small, 2020; Mateos, 2021). TikTok's participatory nature allows users to actively create and share content, shaping the narrative and agenda of political discussions. By using humor and satire, TikTok users capture the attention of a wide audience and encourage engagement with political issues that may not be easily accessible through mainstream media.

**Table 4.** Possible implications

Types	Explanation
1. Creation of an alternative public sphere	TikTok users can freely express their political thoughts on the platform without worrying about strict terms and conditions like those in formal institutions' forums.
2. Critique the political system	TikTok users can share their opinions on various political issues independently. As a common practice in their daily activities, they can express their criticisms to a wider audience on social media.
3. Political commentary, fostering critical thinking and encouraging public engagement	As a community, TikTok users can increase their awareness of political issues and improve their understanding of how to monitor government actions. This implication can lead to a more informed and engaged population.

Secondly, TikTok's algorithmic nature prioritizes content based on user preferences, forming personalized and niche communities. These communities become alternative public spheres where users with shared interests and perspectives can interact, exchange ideas, and collectively critique political figures, events, and policies (Mpofu, Asak, & Salawu, 2022). Through satirical comments, TikTok users contribute to developing a decentralized and

grassroots-driven political discourse that challenges dominant narratives and amplifies diverse voices.

The socio-cultural implications of satirical comments on TikTok are vast and can be analyzed from various angles. It empowers individuals to participate and express their opinions on political discussions. The platform's accessibility and user-friendliness lower the barriers to entry, enabling a broader range of people to engage in political discourse (Fuchs, 2010). This inclusivity increases political awareness, civic engagement, and the mobilization of individuals who may have previously felt marginalized or voiceless. Satirical comments allow individuals to voice dissent, challenge authority, and shape public opinion.

Additionally, satirical comments can act as a form of subversion and resistance against oppressive or authoritarian systems. Using humor, users can subtly criticize political figures or policies without directly confronting or risking reprisals. Satire allows for expressing dissent in a relatively safe and non-confrontational manner. This form of resistance challenges the dominant power structures and can contribute to the erosion of political legitimacy.

Thirdly, the rise of TikTok as a platform for political humor requires a critical examination of media literacy. Satirical comments can influence public opinion, shaping perceptions and interpretations of political events (Hill, 2013). However, viewers must engage critically with the underlying messages and discern between satire and factual information (Holbert et al., 2011). Media literacy skills become essential in navigating this form of expression, ensuring that viewers know the satirical intent and can contextualize the commentary within the broader political landscape.

Lastly, satirical comments on TikTok reflect and amplify societal cultural and social concerns. By highlighting corruption,

governance issues, and policy shortcomings, these comments draw attention to systemic problems and contribute to societal reflection and critique. Satirical commentary can catalyze social change by exposing societal injustices and provoking discussions on political reform (Landreville, 2015). Additionally, humor allows for a collective release of tension and frustration (Meibauer, 2019), fostering a sense of community and shared experiences among viewers.

In supposition, satirical comments on TikTok create an alternative public sphere for political discourse in Indonesia. This form of expression empowers individuals, challenges dominant narratives, and fosters engagement with political issues. The socio-cultural implications encompass empowerment, political engagement, subversion and resistance, media literacy, and cultural reflection. Understanding the impact of satirical comments on TikTok is crucial in examining the evolving dynamics of political participation, media consumption, and societal change within the broader political landscape of Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

Through our analysis of TikTok videos in Indonesia, this study has provided valuable insights into using satirical comments in political humor. We have identified recurring themes and rhetorical techniques users employ to criticize and mock political figures, events, and policies. Furthermore, we have examined how these satirical comments facilitate a new public space for political discourse and analyze the cultural and societal influences of this on the broader political arena.

However, it is important to recognize some limitations of this study. Firstly, the analysis only looked at TikTok videos, so it may only represent some political humor on other social media platforms or offline

contexts. Future study could explore how satirical comments are used in other digital spaces and how they connect with traditional forms of political humor. Secondly, while CDA provides valuable insights into the linguistic and discursive aspects of satirical comments, a more comprehensive analysis could integrate other theoretical frameworks, such as cultural studies or political communication, to provide a deeper understanding of the sociopolitical context and the broader impact of political humor on public opinion and political participation. Additionally, the research primarily focused on the linguistic and textual analysis of satirical comments, neglecting the audience's reception and interpretation. Examining how viewers engage with and interpret satirical comments would give us a complete understanding of the effects and influence of political humor in shaping public discourse.

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