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THE PRAGMATIC OF HUMOR IN STAND-UP COMEDY: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PERFORMANCES

Nur Hidayati Isnaini, Lilik Purwaningsih, Endah Kurtianti
English Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Doktor Nugroho Magetan, Indonesia
isnainiyaa55@gmail.com

Abstrak

Dengan menggunakan Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK), penelitian ini mengkaji berbagai taktik pragmatik yang digunakan dalam stand-up comedy di Indonesia, khususnya pada materi pilihan Bintang Emon dan Kiky Saputri. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengidentifikasi teknik pragmatik dalam stand-up comedy, menelaah penggunaan implikatur oleh komika, dan menafsirkan pesan sosial di dalamnya melalui analisis wacana kritis. Pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif digunakan untuk menganalisis sistem pragmatik yang membangun narasi humor beserta implikasi ideologisnya. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa kedua komika dominan menggunakan implikatur konvensional dan nonkonvensional, tindak tutur ironis, dan teknik satire untuk mendekonstruksi dinamika sosial dan politik kontemporer. Bintang Emon membangun kedekatan dengan penonton melalui hiperbola dan cerita personal, sedangkan Kiky Saputri memilih pendekatan "roasting" yang blak-blakan dan langsung menyasar pengambil kebijakan sehingga menghasilkan kritik sosial yang lebih tajam. Konstruksi pragmatik ini terbukti membentuk perspektif penonton secara signifikan. Kiky Saputri unggul dalam menumbuhkan kesadaran akan korupsi dan kebijakan publik, sedangkan Bintang Emon unggul dalam membangun kedekatan emosional melalui refleksi pengalaman pribadi. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini memperkaya pemahaman tentang pergeseran peran stand-up comedy sebagai ruang publik baru bagi keterlibatan politik dan sarana perlawanan sosial di era digital Indonesia. Fenomena ini menunjukkan bahwa humor merupakan alat yang sangat persuasif untuk menumbuhkan pemikiran kritis, terutama pada generasi muda.

Kata Kunci : Pragmatik humor, Stand-up comedy, Implikatur humor

Abstract

Through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this study examines various pragmatic tactics employed in stand-up comedy in Indonesia, specifically in selected material by Bintang Emon and Kiky Saputri. This investigation aims to identify pragmatic techniques in stand-up comedy, explore comedians' use of implicatures, and interpret the social messages contained therein through the lens of critical discourse analysis. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to analyze the pragmatic system that constructs humorous narratives and the accompanying ideological implications. The results of the analysis show that both comedians predominantly employ conventional and unconventional implicatures, ironic speech acts, and satirical techniques to deconstruct contemporary social and political dynamics. Bintang Emon builds a sense of closeness with the

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audience through hyperbole and personal stories, while Kiky Saputri opts for a blunt "roasting" approach directed squarely at policymakers, thereby delivering a sharper social critique. This pragmatic construction has been shown to significantly shape the audience's perspective. Kiky Saputri excels at raising awareness of corruption and public policy issues, while Bintang Emon excels at fostering emotional connection through reflections on personal experiences. Theoretically, this study enriches our understanding of the shifting role of stand-up comedy as a new public sphere for political engagement and a platform for social resistance in Indonesia's digital age. This phenomenon demonstrates that humor is a highly persuasive tool for fostering critical thinking, especially among the younger generation.

Keywords : The pragmatic of humor, Stand-up comedy, Implicature of humor

INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only to convey factual information but also carries layers of meaning tied to sociocultural contexts. This is the domain of pragmatics, the branch of linguistics that examines the relationship between utterances, speakers, and context, through which implicit meanings such as implicatures, irony, and humor can be comprehensively analyzed (Yule, 2017; Cutting, 2020b). In Indonesia, pragmatic analysis has become increasingly urgent for dissecting modern communication, including entertainment discourse such as stand-up comedy (Rahardi, 2018).

Humor is a linguistic and social phenomenon that plays a central role in human interaction. Beyond recreation, it serves as an instrument of social criticism, a reflection of culture, and a subliminal medium for conveying ideas. Pragmatically, humor is often triggered by violations of Grice's maxims, ambiguity, and implicatures that demand deep contextual understanding (Attardo, 2020b; Bahasa, 2017; Dynel, 2018b), and recent studies reveal its ideological dimensions, particularly in public arenas such as the media and the stage (Tsakona, 2020).

Stand-up comedy has grown significantly in popularity over the past two decades. This monologue-based format relies on direct communication between comedian and audience and on witty, spontaneous language that adapts to the situation. Its material is not a collection of empty jokes but a narrative rich in social, political, and cultural commentary (Double, 2017; Mintz, 2016). In Indonesia, it has become a platform for addressing identity, inequality, and policy satire (Nugroho, 2020).

Because humor in stand-up is closely tied to the social discourse around it, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a highly relevant tool for dissecting how language constructs meaning, conveys ideological content, and reveals the hidden power hierarchies underlying a joke. CDA views discourse as a socially charged activity that influences the audience's perception of the world (Fairclough, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016); humor thus becomes a social representation imbued with ideological values.

This study focuses on selected performances by Bintang Emon and Kiky Saputri. It explores the implicatures comedians use to identify pragmatic strategies in stand-up comedy and interprets their social meanings through CDA, using a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the pragmatic mechanisms underlying humor and the ideological implications embedded in it. Integrating the pragmatic dimension with CDA constructs a comprehensive analytical framework: pragmatics identifies linguistic devices such as implicatures,

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presuppositions, and maxim violations, while CDA examines power dynamics and underlying ideologies (Machin & Mayr, 2019; Eriyanto, 2021). The analysis thus explores not only the construction of humor but also the motives for its use and its social impact.

Although much literature examines the relationship between humor and pragmatics, studies that integrate it with the CDA approach in stand-up comedy—particularly in selected stage performances—remain rare. This research is needed to fill that gap by revealing the pragmatic construction of humor and its function as a discourse reflecting social reality (Dynel, 2016; Tsakona, 2020). It is expected to enrich the body of knowledge in pragmatics and discourse analysis while contributing to a practical understanding of humor as an essential and meaningful medium of social communication.

Review of the Theory

1. Pragmatics in Linguistic Studies

Pragmatics explores the meaning of utterances through context, including speaker–interlocutor interaction and the surrounding communicative situation. Meaning goes beyond grammar and is shaped by the speaker's intent and social interpretation (Yule, 2017; Leech, 2016). In Indonesia, developments in pragmatics are particularly notable in speech acts, implicatures, and the principle of cooperation, in both everyday conversation and public discourse (Rahardi, 2018). Its relevance to the study of humor rests on humor's dependence on deviations from linguistic expectations and social norms: in stand-up comedy, the comic effect arises from implicatures and ambiguities that are not always semantically explicit (Attardo et al., 2020; Attardo, 2020a; Wijana, 2021b). This approach also allows in-depth analysis of how audiences construct and understand humor in specific settings (Cutting, 2020a).

2. Theories of Humor from a Pragmatic Perspective

Humor is analyzed through several major theories: incongruity, superiority, and relief. The incongruity theory posits that humor arises from the gap between expectation and reality in speech (Dynel, 2016; Attardo, 2020a), a gap that pragmatics highlights through violations of Grice's maxims such as relevance or quantity (Lepas, 2010). Grice's theory of implicature explains how speakers convey implied meanings behind literal words, based on the cooperative principle—an unwritten rule designed to ensure efficient communication through four maxims: quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. The General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) maps humor based on elements such as scripts, logical flow, and the target of the joke (Páginas, 2021; Attardo, 2020a). In Indonesia, stand-up often incorporates social criticism through sarcasm, irony, and satire (Wijana, 2021a; Raskin & Attardo, 2017), making humor both a vehicle for entertainment and a conduit for ideology.

3. Stand-Up Comedy as a Form of Discourse

A stand-up show is an interactive spoken monologue in which the comedian delivers humor directly to the audience; linguistically, it is a complex discourse that combines rhetoric, figurative language, and contextual framing (Double, 2017; Mintz, 2016). In Indonesia, the genre has flourished as a channel for social expression, offering satirical commentary on cultural realities, political dynamics, and the routines of daily life. Comedians use casual language, regional dialects, and local references to create an emotional bond with the audience (Pramono, 2019; Nugroho, 2020), making it a discursive arena that reflects societal realities.

4. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA explores the close relationship between language, power, and ideology at work within a discourse. According to Fairclough (2015), discourse is not merely a mirror of social reality but a shaper and maintainer of power structures, and language possesses a social dimension that is inherently ideologically driven (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Applied to humor, CDA shows how jokes function as tools for social criticism or as reinforcers of stereotypes. In stand-up, sensitive topics such as politics, gender, and class stratification are frequently

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addressed, representing either resistance to or reinforcement of the social order (Machin & Mayr, 2019; Eriyanto, 2021).

5. Pragmatics and Humor in Stand-Up Comedy

Combining pragmatics and humor studies in stand-up comedy yields a holistic understanding of its social dynamics: jokes are constructed through pragmatic devices such as implicatures, presuppositions, and the violation of conversational maxims (Dynel, 2018a; Cutting, 2020a). Irony and satire add layers of implied meaning that require critical interpretation from the audience, and their success depends on shared knowledge between comedian and audience (Attardo, 2020a; Wijana, 2021c), making pragmatics key to unraveling hidden humor.

6. A Pragmatic and CDA Synthesis for the Analysis of Stand-Up Comedy

Integrating pragmatics with CDA provides a sharp lens for examining humor as discourse: pragmatics reveals the linguistic mechanisms of humor, while CDA highlights issues of ideology and power (Fairclough, 2015; Machin & Mayr, 2019). This study applies these methods to analyze the social criticism conveyed through comedians' humor and to explore the audience's responses. The analysis extends from the linguistic realm to the socio-cultural contexts that shape and interpret humor (Eriyanto, 2021; Nugroho, 2020).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach, focusing on the process of drawing comparative conclusions and analyzing the dynamics of the relationships among the observed phenomena using scientific logic and critical discourse analysis. The data consists of stand-up comedy videos selected through purposive sampling, which were then examined thoroughly and systematically. Data collection was conducted through observation and transcription. Data analysis involved identifying implicatures and maxim violations, as well as interpreting social meaning using a critical discourse analysis approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Biographical Description

This study focuses on two famous comedians in Indonesia, namely Kiky Saputri and Bintang Emon.

1. Biography of Kiky Saputri

Rizhkhy Nurasly Saputri, known by her stage name Kiky Saputri, has established herself as one of Indonesia's top female comedians through stand-up performances and participation in national entertainment events. Born in Garut, West Java, on October 22, 1993, she studied Indonesian language education and worked as a contract teacher before entering the entertainment industry; this academic and work background helped shape her articulate, coherent, and easily understood verbal communication style (Pratama, 2021; Putri, 2022).

Her comedy career began in a local stand-up community. She first drew public attention in the 2018 Stand Up Comedy Indonesia (SUCI) competition on Kompas TV, where her sharp, bold, and witty roasting captivated the judges and audience and carried her to the finals (TV, 2018; Nugroho, 2020). SUCI was a crucial milestone: her visibility rose across television programs, podcasts, and comedy stages, and she gained recognition as a skilled comedian who blends humor with subtle yet incisive social commentary (Hidayat, 2021; Pramono, 2019). She then diversified into hosting, acting, and digital content creation, appearing on national television as a host and talk-show moderator and creating content on YouTube and Instagram, which expanded her fan base (Putri, 2022; Rahmawati, 2023).

Kiky is known for roasting public figures, from officials to celebrities. Roasting without sparking major conflicts reflects superior pragmatic competence in managing implicatures and linguistic politeness (Wijana, 2021c; Attardo, 2020b), which positions her as the most influential

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female comedian in Indonesia today. Her roasting—witty jabs aimed at specific individuals—relies on irony, sarcasm, and strong implicatures to create both humor and social critique (Dynel, 2018b; Cutting, 2020b). She boldly addresses sensitive topics such as politics, gender, and social issues while keeping the criticism widely accepted, demonstrating expertise in navigating social and cultural norms; bold, expressive language and precise comedic timing are the key to her success (Tsakona, 2020; Nugroho, 2020). She also draws on personal stories, building an emotional connection that aligns with contemporary humor theory's emphasis on shared knowledge and context in triggering laughter (Attardo, 2020b; Double, 2017), so her comedy both entertains and reflects social reality.

As a female comedian, she plays a crucial role in enriching the representation of women in a stand-up scene previously dominated by men, bringing a fresh perspective on women's experiences and gender equality (Rahmawati, 2023; Hidayat, 2021). She has also made a significant contribution to popularizing roasting in Indonesia and become a central figure in the genre's evolution. In critical discourse analysis, her comedic practice can be viewed as a form of resistance against power structures, using humor as a vehicle for social critique (Fairclough, 2015; Eriyanto, 2021).

2. Biography of Bintang Emon

Gusti Muhammad Abdurrahman Bintang Mahaputra, known as Bintang Emon, is a young Indonesian stand-up comedian who has captured public attention through a blend of stand-up comedy and digital content rich in social commentary. Born in Jakarta on May 5, 1996, he is known as a critical and perceptive comedian—a persona that embodies the urban generation's keen sensitivity to contemporary sociopolitical dynamics, which shapes his communication style (Pratama, 2021; Rahmawati, 2023).

He entered the industry by joining the second season of Stand Up Comedy Academy (SUCA), organized by Indosiar in 2016; winning first place catapulted his reputation to the forefront of the Indonesian entertainment industry, and the consistency of his performances and solid material quickly established him as a promising comedian with a distinctive style (Indosiar, 2016; Nugroho, 2020). The victory opened doors to various stand-up stages and TV shows and integrated him into the national stand-up community, expanding his professional network; it demonstrates that stand-up comedy can serve as a pathway for social mobility and a platform for self-expression among young people (Hidayat, 2021; Pramono, 2019).

His career took off as he began intensively producing digital creative content on Instagram and Twitter. His reputation grew through the popular short-form video series "DPO (Dewan Perwakilan Omel-Omel)," which presents social commentary and political discourse in a humorous way; this viral content solidified his position as a comedian who is not merely funny but also a vocal representative of the public's voice (Rahmawati, 2023; Nugroho, 2020). Through social media he reaches a wider, particularly young, audience, using simple, lively, and context-appropriate language to convey complex ideas; pragmatically, this approach manages implicatures and context to create humor that resonates and is easily understood (Cutting, 2020b; Attardo, 2020b).

The most fundamental characteristic of his comedy is the conceptualization of humor as a tool for sharp social criticism that remains accessible to the general public. He regularly explores sensitive topics in the spotlight—law enforcement, the political landscape, social inequality, and trending digital phenomena—using incongruity and irony, where the discrepancy between expectations and reality triggers laughter (Dynel, 2018b; Tsakona, 2020). His relaxed, expressive style, as if chatting casually with peers, makes the message stick and pragmatically leverages shared knowledge between comedian and audience to maximize impact (Attardo, 2020b; Wijana, 2021c). He also simplifies complex issues into light-hearted yet sharp stories, demonstrating a high level of discursive skill in constructing humor that is both entertaining

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and educational; in critical discourse analysis, this is a form of resistance against power structures through humor (Fairclough, 2015; Eriyanto, 2021).

Bintang Emon has had a significant impact on the advancement of stand-up comedy in Indonesia by blending humor and social criticism in the digital realm, transforming social media into a creative forum for expressing the aspirations of the people (Rahmawati, 2023; Hidayat, 2021). His courage to address sensitive issues has made him a powerful influencer in shaping public opinion, particularly among young people; from a CDA perspective, his comedy illustrates how humor challenges the dominance of discourse and opens up spaces for social conversation (Machin & Mayr, 2019; Tsakona, 2020).

Intellectual Study

Today, stand-up comedy has evolved into an alternative intellectual space where comedians articulate incisive perspectives on the dynamics of social reality. In line with the thesis put forward by Attardo, humor functions as a reflection of reality that is rich in values, satire, and ideological manifestations; it enables performers to navigate the boundaries of social norms without facing serious personal consequences or risks. In Indonesia, Kiky Saputri and Bintang Emon are young comedians who incorporate these elements: Kiky uses scathing roasting of public figures to highlight feminist ideology and gender equality, while Bintang Emon, through his "DPO" series, delivers criticism of neoliberal policies in politics and the legal system.

Kiky consistently voices feminist ideas that intersect with roasting male figures in positions of authority, whether bureaucrats or celebrities. Her satirical take on gender stereotypes is captured in the verbal premise: "Men often accuse women of being too demanding, when in reality it is they who complicate everything with their unreasonable expectations." This sentence contains a critical implicature that directly deconstructs and challenges the hegemony of the patriarchal structure. Her roasting embodies pragmatic politeness (Wijana, 2021a): gentle sarcasm masks sharp criticism of corruption and injustice, as in her SUCI 2018 performance, where she roasted officials with the irony "These gentlemen promise heaven, but give us hell first," which illustrates the anti-corruption ideology characteristic of critical thinking in the post-reform era. More than making people laugh, this humor is an intellectual form that teaches the audience about power imbalances (Tsakona, 2020).

Bintang Emon depicts neoliberal reality in "DPO," critiquing legal and political issues in urban slang. Phrases like "This politician is a DPO: Wanted, but missing when the people need him" use incongruity to satirize the rotten capitalist ideology (Dynel, 2018a); his ideas reflect a modern Marxist perspective, highlighting the alienation of workers in the digital age (Eriyanto, 2021). His laid-back approach uses young people's shared knowledge to foster solidarity against hegemony: in a viral tweet he mocked mainstream policies—"The law here is like a flirtatious girlfriend: promises loyalty, but keeps cheating"—reflecting an egalitarian ideology that challenges the political elite (Attardo, 2020a). This has made him a digital intellectual who embodies Generation Z's hopes for openness (Machin & Mayr, 2019).

Both comedians share an ideology of resistance but differ in approach: Kiky prioritizes gender issues through layered roasting (intersectional feminism), while Bintang Emon highlights class politics through digital satire (left-wing populism). Both depict a social reality imbued with values of justice, aligning with CDA's view that humor is a tool to dismantle power (Fairclough, 2015). Kiky employs pragmatic tactics that tend to be adaptive and nuanced in order to engage a more heterogeneous audience, while Bintang Emon opts for a more confrontational narrative style that maximizes the potential for digital virality; this dichotomy illustrates how ideological content is dynamically constructed to align with the characteristics of the media used. Their shows are thus an intellectual case study of humor's ability to reflect

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social reality through sharp criticism of conventional values and progressive perspectives: Kiky's portrayal of feminism and Bintang's anti-capitalist values directly challenge the hegemony of established ideologies, demonstrating that comedy can serve as a substantive scholarly discourse and opening the door to further research on humor as an instrument for accelerating social change in Indonesia.

Stand-up Comedy Performances

1. Kiky Saputri – Roasting Ministers

[00:00:00] Don't go right away then. Kiki Yankee also has a message and her thoughts on the ministers. Kiki [Applause] All night long on FTV. Assalamualaikum, KompasTV. Just answer "Wawe,wawe"it's wrong. Hello, Oh God, I'm so happy to be here meeting —amazing people, Ms. Rosi. I've been a huge fan of Ms. Rosi since I was little. I used to watch her on TV during motorcycle races, hahaha. Seriously, right? Yeah, right? Valentino Rosi Silalahi [Laughs] [Applause] Oh my, I'm so nervous right now because I get to meet face-to-face with **[00:00:59]** The ministers, Bank Indonesia, and my —hello, there's Ms. Susi Pudjiastuti, Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries; there's Mr. Rudiantara, Minister of Communication and Information Technology; Ms. Retno, my twin—hehehe—Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Mr. Pragmatism—in principle, he's not joking, is he? Or is it comedy? It's also seen as really over-the-top, hahaha. I know Mr. Hanif Dhakiri very well, right? He's not on the right, sir. Look at this—it's so cool because he's the Minister of Manpower and is also currently serving as the Acting Minister of Youth and Sports **[00:01:59]** Hey, sir, no, no, I don't want to add one more, sir, so that his term as Minister of Youth and Sports is over. Who was that celebrating with a phone earlier? Maybe you all know—Mr. Hanif Dhakiri has been appointed as the interim Minister of Youth and Sports, replacing Mr. Imam Nahrawi, who got caught up in a corruption case. It turns out the saying is true: sometimes happiness is created because of the suffering of those close to us. Hahaha [Applause] But earlier, everyone saw that Mr. Hanif, my buddy, was dancing to Didi Kempot. Ask him, sir—do you want some refreshing cendol dawet? **[00:02:42]** Cendol cendol cendol cendol, ladies and cats. Okay, guys, next up is Mr. Rudiantara, an expert in communication and information technology whose small tasks might include managing provider signals and internet data. So, if you've been feeling like your internet quota runs out too fast—hah, or your internet is slow—just blame this guy, right? Hahaha, Rudi's hijab is so comfortable; he can manage internet data, so it feels like Mr. Rudi is the -the only Indonesian whose data runs out completely. Hah **[00:03:35]** Why do I just have to believe that guy never uses WhatsApp GB or Touch 18 anymore? Well, Mr. Rudi has never used Marudin to watch YouTube—he's never done that. Is that free? Hah, he's the one who owns it. Hahaha. But there's also one task for the Minister of Communication and Information Technology: how to block adult websites -adult sites. I'm using a VPN here, hah, broken. Mr. Rudi's job is to block adult sites so we can't watch them, but sir, please excuse me first, I'll just say it straight—hehehe **[00:04:20]** Hahaha, way -far. If they aren't watched, how do you know they're blocked? Hah. Yeah, that's why I want to ask this: Mr. Rudi, how many videos have you watched this month? Hah, character assassination. But he's one of the most millennial-minded ministers because he's into playing Legend of Legends in Yogyakarta. Yeah, that's why every morning while waiting, he needs a lot of motivation because he gets to the office between… Hah, it's not like he's not working—it's okay to play together Ms. Susi: Okay, next we'll go to Ms. Retno Marsudi. Let's give her a round of applause because **[00:05:21]** She was the first woman—the very first woman—to hold the position of Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and I'll be the second, hehehe, hahaha. If there's an insider, hurry up, hahaha. But you're not, are you? I once read an article that really surprised me—number 3 made me shake —shaking my head a few times, hahaha—that Mrs. Retno Marsudi has a hobby of collecting bandanas, just like a cute kindergarten kid, hahaha. Yeah, ma'am, it's true in that article; they said Mrs. Retno likes to collect **[00:06:19]** bandanas because her hair gets messy easily. Sorry, ma'am, is that about her hair or a celebrity's messy household? Hah, an example of being messy, hahaha, hahaha, hahaha. But, but speaking of households, mine is most like—what is it?—modeling after Mrs. Retno's household because she and her husband are both both officials, but they're just like God's eyes, you know, because Mrs. Ratu serves as foreign minister and her husband serves as RW chairman [Laughs]—amazing. It's really balanced. Okay, guys, our final royal family, hahaha. Mrs. Susi Pudjiastuti **[00:07:25]** Amazing—a cool minister. I didn't clap for her at first, but here's the first sweet fact: Mrs. Susi was chosen by Mr. Jokowi as a minister for a reason that's totally out-of-the-box. Incredible, hehehe. Just to be cool, let's help Susi. She really is a powerhouse—she speaks 10 languages. Doc, here's a fresh take: she read an article where President Jokowi said he specifically chose her as a minister because he needed a crazy person to make breakthroughs. Hahaha, seriously [Applause]—what does this signify? Does this mean that **[00:08:14]** In this country there are many people who can't work, hahaha, so come on, be a crazy person, hehehe, and a cool one—and Ibu Susi has dedicated herself for decades -decades to advance marine products, especially from her hometown in Pangandaran, and everyone in Pangandaran calls her the Sea Princess. Okay, the Sea Princess. Hi from

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Pangandaran, the southern coast of West Java, hehehe. Excuse me, ma'am. Are you the reincarnation of Nyi Roro Kidul? [Music] No wonder she dares to sink ships—she has a palace **[00:09:20]** Thank you

2. Bintang Emon – I Have a Lot of Instagram Followers, I Feel Intimidated

[00:00:00] Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh. Hi, my name is Bintang. Yesterday, when I was told about the shoot, I was told we'd be filming at UBL tomorrow. I didn't know that before; I thought UBL stood for Universitas Bagus Loh. At first I thought... **[00:00:26]** I thought that was it, but when I got there, it turned out I was wrong—it's actually a really great university. My name is Bintang, and I really feel the difference. Back then, my Instagram only had three-digit followers. Now, my follower count is pretty decent. **[00:00:55]** Four digits. Yeah, it's still growing and it's different now. And with all those followers, the DMs on my Instagram have gotten way more random. Seriously. Back then, only a few people DM'd me, and it was always the same people. Now, so many people DM me, and it's totally random. Totally unpredictable. I once got a DM from Naruto. Oh my gosh, you guys, Naruto. Seriously, on... **[00:01:24]** Oh, the account name was naruto_ril. Ril, ril. It has "ril" in it. I was so scared they'd think it was Sasuke. Naruto Ril, like that. The DM was weird. He DM'd me, and when I opened it, there were no letters. It was all emojis. Like a wind emoji. Oh, I'm under attack. **[00:01:50]** And I don't know if any of you guys here have experienced this. Honestly, I feel intimidated by the smiley face emoji on WhatsApp. You know, when the context suggests she should be angry, but she sends a smiley face instead. Usually, when you're dating, the guy will text, "Honey, I can't pick you up after all—it's pouring rain." **[00:02:22]** Oh, it's okay. A smiley face. Is he really smiling? No way. Is he really okay with it? No. No one writes "it's okay" but uses "GPP." No one does. What's "GPP"? "Gembel Parung Panjang." **[00:02:47]** What? What's "GPP" supposed to mean? I'm confused. Because in my opinion, when someone's supposed to be angry but sends a smiley face, it ends up being even scarier. It's like when you walk into class. You walk in late. The professor should be yelling at you, right? "You've done this three times already. Don't do it again." That's how it should be. But then you walk in and say, "Sir, sorry I'm late." "Oh, it's okay." **[00:03:19]** Don't get too happy, because 98% of the time, when grades come out, your grade will be a zero. They'll just put a smiley face on your grade. **[00:03:33]** That's really it, honestly. And to be honest, I've never dated anyone until now. Oh really, I'm 22 years old, and I've never even tried to get close to a girl. So I've never really… never experienced anything romantic like that. I've never been heartbroken. So when I see my friends who are heartbroken, I'm like, "What's wrong with you? You're so dramatic." **[00:03:59]** I have a friend from the east—he's got a really scary build. He's dark as night, like a ghost. He's scary, man, he's scary. But when he's stressed out, oh my God, he turns pale, so pale. He just goes limp, oh my God. Until finally, two months ago, I went through it myself. **[00:04:26]** No, it wasn't because of a girl. I didn't approach her; I just messaged her. She didn't reply for five days. Well, since I'm still the type to think positively, I just assumed… Maybe her thumb fell off. I don't know, right? Whatever. But three days later, she posted a photo with a guy. **[00:04:55]** Just the two of them, posing too. The pose was like this. But the guy... He was like this too. So that's it. That's all from me, I'm Bintang.

1. Discussion of Kiky Saputri's Stand-Up Comedy Performance

Subverting Expectations Through Shared Knowledge

Kiky crafts her material by blending self-deprecating humor, adaptations of pop-culture trends, and incongruity or semantic mismatch. This is evident when she jokes about "Rosi," whom she has admired since childhood because she loves watching motorcycle races: the audience's initial assumption that "Rosi" is Rosiana Silalahi—the show's host—is instantly subverted by the punchline referring to MotoGP rider Valentino Rossi. Pragmatically, this works because of a solid foundation of shared knowledge between Kiky and her audience; when they realize the intentional twist, the humor clicks. The stand-up often relies on deliberately violating the Cooperative Principle to elicit laughter, and recent studies confirm that exploiting pragmatic context and violating conversational maxims are the main foundations in designing comedy (Muflihani et al., 2022). Through humor theory, her material leans most heavily toward Incongruity Theory: expectations are steered toward a safe conclusion before being jolted by a completely different punchline, as in the clash of two vastly different worlds when Rosiana Silalahi is juxtaposed with Valentino Rossi. It also incorporates superiority humor, where the audience is amused by the carelessness or absurdity deliberately displayed by the comedian; recent studies find that the main appeal of stand-up lies in the comedian's ability to build cognitive tension and then suddenly release it through a surprising punchline (Cela et al., 2024).

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Implicatures: Deliberate Mistakes and Absurd Claims

Kiky is adept at manipulating conversational implicatures. When she distorts a minister's name into "the father of pragmatism in principle," the explicit meaning seems a careless slip of the tongue due to nervousness, but implicitly she is building her brand as a relaxed, unpretentious comedian who blends in with the audience. Hyperbolic implicature also emerges when she calls Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi "my twin": the far-fetched claim is not meant literally but intentionally exaggerated to elicit humor through its illogicality, and the humor arises because the audience can read the true intent behind a literally incorrect statement. Research on the pragmatics of comedy concludes that the audience's ability to infer implied meaning is the key factor in whether a joke succeeds or fails (Mohammed & Abbas, 2023).

Political Satire, Irony, and Veiled Criticism

Kiky combines political satire, irony, hyperbole, and a keen reading of social situations, particularly when she satirizes the appointment of Hanif Dhakiri as interim Minister of Youth and Sports to replace Imam Nahrawi: "Sometimes happiness is born from the suffering of those close to us." This is situational irony, since the promotion was triggered by a corruption case involving the previous official. Pragmatically, the comedian dissects a social-political reality the audience already shares, so the material becomes social commentary on the dynamics of power, affirming that stand-up's primary capital is social context and shared knowledge (Ahmed & Abbas, 2023; Murugova & Verbovataya, 2023). The statement carries an indirect conversational implicature: literally, she quotes a proverb about finding happiness in others' misfortune; implicitly, she satirizes a political reality in which the turnover of offices often results from scandals and the failures of predecessors. The audience grasps this because they know the Imam Nahrawi case; in Grice's terms, the joke intentionally violates the maxims of relevance and manner, leaving the original message to be inferred from context (Muflihani et al., 2022).

On then-Minister of Communication and Information Technology Rudiantara, Kiky quips that the public has a legal right to blame the minister whenever the internet slows or data runs out quickly, capped with the absurd hyperbole that he is the only person in Indonesia whose data will never run out because "he owns it." Explicitly this highlights Rudiantara's authority over the national digital landscape; implicitly it is a witty jab at long-standing public complaints about internet quality. Laughter erupts when the audience realizes the gap between ground reality and the exaggerated claim, in line with the Theory of Incongruity (Cela et al., 2024). Her satire sharpens on the ministry's policy of blocking adult websites: Kiky admits casually that she often surfs with a VPN, asks mockingly whether the blocking is effective, and asks the minister, "How many videos have you watched this month?" On the surface the remark concerns internet-blocking regulation; implicitly it criticizes such rules as fragile and easily circumvented through technological loopholes, implying a wide gap between the strictness of government regulation and the public's digital behavior. The question is not a serious interrogation but a reversal of logic that highlights a role conflict between the official as rule enforcer and potential content consumer. It carries a satirical implicature—the authorities filtering websites must surely know what they are blocking—and exploits violations of the maxims of quality and relevance: the audience knows Kiky is not seeking information but using the question as a shield for indirect criticism (Muflihani et al., 2022). Such subtle sarcasm lets a comedian deliver sharp criticism without causing tension, keeping the message digestible in a relaxed, laughter-filled atmosphere (Ahmed & Abbas, 2023).

Incongruity, Wordplay, and Status Contrast

Kiky dubs Rudiantara a "very millennial" minister because he plays Mobile Legends, then imagines him arriving late to work because he was engrossed in playing with the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries. This is driven by Incongruity Theory, deliberately clashing the formal prototype of a government official with the casual hobbies of young gamers. Explicitly

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she merely recounts a game; implicitly she constructs a more humanistic bureaucrat grounded in the public's daily life, and the comic effect emerges from the incongruity between the image of a stiff minister and the casual behavior attributed to him (Cela et al., 2024).

On Retno Marsudi, Kiky combines self-enhancement with absurd humor: she praises Retno as Indonesia's first female foreign minister, then claims she herself will become the second. Literally this sounds like a dream for the future, but pragmatically the audience knows it is hyperbole meant to lighten the mood; implicitly it reinforces that the position of Foreign Minister is an elite role extremely difficult to attain, making Kiky's boast unrealistic and funny. Comedians commonly use this to build an ambitious yet absurd stage persona that feels relatable (Murugova & Verbovataya, 2023). Clever wordplay follows when she mentions Retno's penchant for collecting bandanas because her hair is easily disheveled and quips, "Is that her hair or a celebrity's household?" This capitalizes on lexical ambiguity and popular cultural stereotypes: "messy" explicitly refers to the hair but is implicitly redirected to celebrity domestic dramas marked by media conflict. In pragmatic humor theory, polysemy and contextual association generate two interpretations simultaneously, and the audience laughs at the sudden shift in meaning (Ahmed & Abbas, 2023). Kiky then contrasts Retno's international position as Foreign Minister with her husband's profession as a neighborhood association chairman: explicitly the couple's domestic circumstances, implicitly an extreme contrast between a global-scale position and the lowest-level local bureaucratic post. According to Superiority Theory, the audience laughs because of the unusual disparity between expectations about a minister's spouse and the reality presented by the comedian (Cela et al., 2024).

Stage Context, Irony, Register Contrast, and Implied Meaning

This material comes from Kiky's 2019 performance, in which she roasted two female ministers in President Jokowi's cabinet: Retno Marsudi (Foreign Affairs) and Susi Pudjiastuti (Marine Affairs and Fisheries). A standout feature is the contrast of meanings that clashes formal, elite bureaucratic positions with the mundane realities of grassroots life, such as local offices or domestic issues. Kiky opened the segment with a bandana riddle that she immediately twisted into the jab "an artist's household or a messy living situation," combining call-back and misdirection (shifting the audience's focus from hair style to domestic affairs). This is not merely meant to elicit laughter but carries a political message that pokes fun at society's skewed perspective, which often labels the domestic affairs of female officials as always "messy" (Dr. Dr. Mery Balango, 2026).

Her first strategy is subtly packaged irony and sarcasm: "But when it comes to my own household, I guess I mostly look up to Mrs. Retno's family, because she and her husband are both officials, yet they're so humble." On the surface this is a warm compliment; implicitly it is a subtle jab at the common perception that the households of high-ranking officials are chaotic, and "God's eyes are upon them" is sarcasm highlighting how harmonious their relationship is amid public demands. The jab sharpens: "...she and her husband are both officials, but it's as if only God knows because Mrs. Retno serves as the foreign minister and her husband serves as the neighborhood head." Mentioning "neighborhood head" is extreme sarcasm that creates a chasm between a world-class diplomatic position and a local community leadership role; the absurd exaggeration deliberately violates Grice's maxims of politeness to provoke laughter (Frimawan, 2025).

Susi Pudjiastuti is described as a "trendy minister," followed by: "Sweet Susi was chosen by President Jokowi as a minister for a reason that's totally out-of-the-box and incredible—hehehe, just to be cool, let's help Susi," where the excessive use of "out-of-the-box" and "incredible" serves purely humorous effect. Kiky adds that "President Jokowi said that he specifically chose her as a minister because he needed a 'crazy person' to make breakthroughs": "crazy person" becomes an absurd metaphor for a bold innovator who loves radical moves, cleverly exploiting the negative connotation of "crazy" as a source of laughter

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(Muhammad Husen, A. Ahriani, 2025). The third strategy combines roasting with a clash of formal and casual registers: "In this country, there are so many people who can't work, hahaha, so let's just go crazy, hehehe." This is a direct critique of the bureaucracy's unproductive performance, and the combination of stiff terms (minister, Jokowi, breakthrough) with casual vocabulary (crazy people, can't work) creates comedy through the mismatch in language levels. Kiky also uses a call-back with the nickname "The Sea Princess from Pangandaran," followed by: "Hi from Pangandaran on the southern coast of West Java, hehehe. Excuse me, ma'am, are you the reincarnation of Nyi Roro Kidul?" This links the myth of the southern sea's ruler to Susi's background as a tough former Minister of Marine Affairs; manipulating such contrasts in language level is a creative asset in public communication.

Pragmatically, explicit and implicit meanings are constructed as follows. Directive implicature: the call to "let's go crazy" implicitly encourages the audience to dare to become innovative agents of change—a subtle instruction and recommendation (Gustia Haryati, Fatmawati, 2022). Expressive implicature: the phrases "Mermaid of Pangandaran" and "Descendant of Nyi Roro Kidul" conceal a sincere compliment behind silly-sounding sentences, blending local myth with appreciation for the minister's tangible contributions to the maritime sector (Gustia Haryati, Fatmawati, 2022). Table 1 summarizes the literal and implied meanings.

Table 1. Literal and implied meanings in Kiky Saputri's material

Literal meaning	Implied meaning (original intention)
"Mrs. Retno serves as foreign minister and her husband serves as neighborhood association chairman"	Depicts a portrait of Retno's family life as deeply harmonious and down-to-earth despite their high-ranking official status.
"President Jokowi needs a maverick to make breakthroughs"	The government needs a leader who dares to take risks and drive radical innovation.
"The Sea Princess of Pangandaran, South Coast of West Java"	Emphasizes Susi Pudjiastuti's character as a strong, decisive, and powerful female figure in maritime affairs.

This bridge between the written text and the essence of its meaning is the heart of pragmatic humor: a humorous message cannot be fully understood without considering the context behind it (Lepas, 2010).

Egalitarian Communication and Power Relations (CDA)

As a discursive product, Kiky's performance goes beyond stress-relieving entertainment to become an active space for social communication. On stage she positions herself as a voice for the general public, standing face-to-face with the ruling cabinet ministers, which symbolically breaks down the rigid walls of social hierarchy and creates a more egalitarian interaction between the people and those in power. The performance is interactive and dialogic: ministers, normally shrouded in formality and rigid authority, are brought closer and made objects of humor to be laughed at together; humor here negotiates social identity, dissolves power, and celebrates the collective experience of the audience (Murugova & Verbovataya, 2023). The constructed stage persona is a highly effective medium for subtly weaving in criticism, satire, or cultural reflection without seeming patronizing (Weaver & Lockyer, 2025), and ministers are portrayed no longer as rigid figures distant from the people but as ordinary people with hobbies, habits, and domestic aspects that can be turned into jokes, creating symbolic closeness between the public and the political elite (Murugova & Verbovataya, 2023).

Through CDA, Kiky's humor is a tactic for negotiating power relations: ministers, laden with symbols of formal state authority, are drawn into the fluid space of comedy, blurring the social distance between the ruling elite and ordinary citizens. Her jabs—at corruption, poor internet service, web-blocking policy, cabinet positions, and even ministers' personal affairs—are not intended to attack the personal sphere but to peel away the rigidity of the formalities of power, showing that comedy can be an independent tool for social critique of state

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institutions. From a CDA perspective, this is an elegant form of symbolic resistance and language-based power negotiation, a subtle attempt to reposition structures of political domination; the stand-up stage often serves as an alternative space that is safer for the public to comment on, negotiate, or critique social and political policies than direct confrontation (Heidari-Shahreza, 2024).

Effects on the Audience

Kiky's humor has at least three simultaneous effects: an **entertainment (affective) effect**, hearty laughter from hyperbole and incongruities in meaning; a **cognitive effect**, encouraging the audience to process complex political and social issues through a lighthearted, easy-to-understand perspective; and a **critical (reflective) effect**, stimulating reflection on corruption, the quality of public services, and the effectiveness of government policies, and re-evaluation of the image of public officials and the social constructs around them. Recent research confirms that stand-up comedy elicits not only laughter but also social awareness and critical engagement with public issues, because critical messages wrapped in humor are far easier to accept and internalize than rigid, conventional criticism (Cela et al., 2024; Weaver & Lockyer, 2025). The immediate impact is a sense of engagement leading to hearty laughter, followed by the gentle delivery of critical messages; complex and rigid political issues (such as bureaucracy and meritocracy) are simplified into digestible narratives. Audience decoding is not uniform: some show a "dominant decoding" attitude (agreeing with and accepting the criticism), others an "opposition decoding" stance (feeling offended or rejecting the material), which often triggers heckling and tests the comedian's improvisation to secure the punchline. Kiky also engages the audience directly ("Excuse me, ma'am," "Okay, guys"), strengthening the emotional bond and making the critical content feel more reflective (fsb.ung.ac). Through the stand-up stage, groups whose voices are rarely heard can express their concerns, and the sarcasm elicits laughter while prompting reflection on social realities (Tegar Gigih Yudhanataru, 2020).

Theoretical Analysis and Conclusion: Micro-Pragmatics and Macro-CDA

Kiky's performance can be analyzed through four frameworks. (1) *Pragmatics*: how implicit meaning is constructed on stage through Grice's implicature concepts (directive and expressive) and patterns of conversational maxim violations, particularly manner and quality (Frimawan, 2025). (2) *Humor theory*: why contrasting phrases like "RW chairman" or "crazy person" trigger humor—as a direct result of maxim violations and deliberate sarcasm and irony (Dr. Dr. Mery Balango, 2026). (3) *Stand-up comedy as a discursive space*: a hybrid discourse bridging pure entertainment and social criticism, relying on set-up and punchline patterns to challenge the audience's initial assumptions. (4) *CDA*: how humorous texts challenge the bad habits of bureaucracy and the meritocracy system while highlighting the innovative performance of female officials—all relying on rhetoric and a deft choice of language to captivate the audience (Muhammad Husen, A. Ahriani, 2025).

The synthesis of pragmatics and CDA shows that Kiky's humor operates on two levels simultaneously. At the **micro level (pragmatics)**, jokes are linguistically constructed through conversational implicatures, hyperbole, irony, ambiguity, clashes of meaning, and deliberate maxim violations. At the **macro level (CDA)**, comedy functions as a reflection of the real-world relationship between common people and the political elite, a tool for representation and criticism of political institutions and policies, and a space for negotiating power relations. Thus pragmatics dissects the linguistic mechanisms that trigger laughter, while CDA unpacks how this humor both reproduces and negotiates power relations, confirming that stand-up comedy is not merely a platform for frivolity but a form of public discourse rich in ideological content and sharp cultural criticism that captures and responds to the social, cultural, and political dynamics of a nation (Heidari-Shahreza, 2024; Murugova & Verbovataya, 2023). The interplay of implicature, sarcasm, and wordplay shows that humor is deliberately constructed to target

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specific social issues: vocabulary such as “crazy” and “RW chairman” are not merely comic devices but social critiques aimed at the bureaucratic system (Frimawan, 2025). Kiky’s comedy does not stop at entertainment; combining micro-linguistic implicature analysis with macro-discursive critique reveals comedy’s function as a tool for social control and a medium for democratic education. She uses the stage as a safe alternative space, critiquing the sluggishness of bureaucracy while paying respect to female innovators in government. In the modern era, comedians are recognized as powerful alternative communicators who boost public political literacy, while their sarcastic style strengthens emotional closeness with the audience (Dr. Dr. Mery Balango, 2026).

2. Discussion of Bintang Emon’s Stand-Up Comedy Performance

Pragmatic Analysis of Humor

Stand-up comedy is not merely an entertainment stage but a space for humorous communication that uses language as its primary tool to convey social criticism and build a connection with the audience. In Bintang’s routine, humor is woven from personal narratives: the misunderstanding of the UBL campus name, Instagram follower counts, the madness of the direct messages he receives, the ambiguity of the smiley emoji on WhatsApp, and the struggles of a comedian who has never been in a romantic relationship. Pragmatically, this humor stems not from the denotative meaning of the vocabulary but from implied messages the audience grasps thanks to shared social context, digital cultural trends, and shared knowledge (Yus, 2023). Dissecting it therefore requires a multidisciplinary study combining pragmatic theory, the structure of verbal humor, and CDA (Dynel, 2022).

Pragmatics focuses on how context influences the way people interact and understand meaning; Yule (2020) notes that it examines interpretation based on the speaker’s intent, the situation of the utterance, and how the listener draws conclusions. In stand-up, humor often arises from the gap between what is said literally and what the comedian intends: take “I thought UBL stood for Universitas Bagus Loh.” Semantically this is a straightforward statement, but pragmatically the audience understands that Bintang is setting up a comedic premise by exploiting the ambiguity of the acronym; this would be impossible to grasp without the social context that UBL is a well-known higher education institution. Humor works through pragmatic inference, connecting the comedian’s utterance to existing social reality (Yule, 2020). His material draws on snippets of daily experience very close to the audience’s reality—social media, WhatsApp messaging, the ups and downs of romantic life. When he recounts a direct message from an account named “Naruto_ril,” the audience understands that the appeal lies not in factual accuracy but in the peculiarity of a netizen daring to use a fictional character’s identity in the real world—a collective understanding achievable only through a pragmatic lens that connects spoken text with its social context (Dynel, 2022).

Humor Theory and Humor Strategies

From a pragmatic perspective, humor arises when there is an incongruity between what the mind expects and the reality presented. Attardo (2020b) formulates this as “script opposition,” a clash between two opposing frames of knowledge that can be understood simultaneously. In Bintang’s material, the script “university as a formal and rigid educational institution” collides with the script “university as a hyperbolic pun.” When he says, “I thought UBL stood for ‘Universitas Bagus Loh’… turns out it’s ‘Universitas Bagus Banget Loh,’” the audience, steered toward the official acronym, receives an even more illogical one; this sudden shift from formal expectations to a ridiculous reality forces them from serious to humorous thinking within seconds (Attardo, 2020a). This is non-bona fide communication, which deliberately does not pursue factual truth but aims to produce a humorous effect (Dynel, 2022).

Incongruity. The most prominent pattern is incongruity: the comedian builds an expectation and shatters it with unexpected information, as with the UBL acronym, where the expected official name gives way to “Universitas Bagus Banget Loh” (University That’s Really

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Great, You Know); laughter arises when the audience realizes the full form is an exaggerated fabrication, in line with incongruity theory (Attardo, 2020a). The same occurs in "His account name is Naruto underscore ril. Ril, ril. There's a 'ril' in it. He's really afraid people will mistake him for Sasuke": a major clash between the real world and a fictional universe, since Naruto, an anime character, could never have a verified Instagram account, yet Bintang treats him as real and adds the word "ril" (real) to convince the public (Attardo, 2020a). **Self-deprecating humor.** "Back then, my followers were still in the three-digit range; now it's decent… four digits." The timing before "four digits" builds tension, making the audience think his followers have skyrocketed to hundreds of thousands or millions; when the number has only risen one level, they burst into laughter. The tactic positions the comedian as down-to-earth, unpretentious, and close to the audience's everyday reality (Tsakona, 2020). **Absurd humor.** "I once got a DM from Naruto" is impossible, since Naruto is a fictional anime character; the humor stems from the clash between real life and fantasy, and Attardo (2020a) views absurd humor as a radical form of script opposition that brings two completely incompatible entities into the same conversational space. The same applies when the message turns out to be just a wind emoticon and he feels "attacked": an ordinary keyboard graphic is dramatized as a visual attack akin to an anime finishing move, and the audience laughs as they catch the pop-culture references and the illogic of the situation (Tsakona, 2020). **Misdirection.** The audience is lulled into an assumption before the narrative is abruptly redirected: when he discusses his follower growth, the audience expects a massive surge, but the blunt reply "four digits" shatters it; in modern stand-up, misdirection has become the most powerful go-to tool for spontaneous laughter through surprise (Dynel, 2022). It also appears in his analysis of the smiley emoji, "Oh, it's okay": a sentence adorned with emojis literally conveys resignation, acceptance, or calm, but Bintang leads the audience to the opposite conclusion—that in certain contexts a smiley signals tightly suppressed anger (Dynel, 2022). **Observational comedy.** Drawing on everyday social phenomena, he highlights how the smiley emoji shifts in meaning among messaging users; because this is so familiar, it creates a strong emotional connection and social identification, and this style has become a mainstay of modern stand-up because it draws on society's collective experiences (Sari & Wibowo, 2023).

Implicatures: Grice and Yule

Through Grice's theory, stand-up humor is often generated by deliberately violating the cooperative principle, giving rise to conversational implicatures that the audience must actively decode (Dynel, 2022). **Particularized conversational implicature:** when Bintang says, "My followers are pretty decent now—four digits," he literally states a number, but implicitly conveys that he cannot yet be considered a highly popular public figure; the audience grasps this because popularity on social media is generally measured in millions (Lepas, 2010). Likewise, "Oh, it's okay" seems to imply that all is fine, but the comedian shows that in romantic or interpersonal communication the phrase is often the antonym of its literal meaning—hidden disappointment or irritation—graspable only through shared social context (Yule, 2020). **Violation of the maxim of quality:** the claim of a message from Naruto is known to be factually impossible; by deliberately violating the maxim of quality, Bintang provokes the audience to seek alternative interpretations, and converting the impossibility into a joke generates laughter (Dynel, 2022). In "It's okay if no one writes anything, but GPP," he twists the common abbreviation into "GPP? Gembel Parung Panjang": wordplay that creates a humorous implicature, since the audience knows the acronym is a random pun, and which Attardo (2020a) describes as activating an alternative script deliberately pitted against the normative linguistic script. **Violation of the maxim of quantity:** the phrase "not bad" is intentional information withholding designed to pique curiosity; when the details are revealed, the surprise triggers laughter, as the comedian provides less information than the listener needs at the beginning of the story (Yule, 2020), as with the withheld follower count. The maxim of relevance is also violated when the acronym of the formal institution UBL becomes a hyperbolic

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phrase unrelated to the campus's identity. **Hyperbolic implicature:** in "98%—when the grades come out, your grades will be gone," it is logically impossible for most friendly, smiling professors to erase grades; implicitly, Bintang points out that a calm demeanor or a smile from someone in authority can be far more intimidating than an explosive outburst, an implicature arising from the simultaneous collision of the maxims of quality and quantity (Dynel, 2022).

From Grice's perspective, then, the humor stems from deliberately flouting the normative rules of communication. Yet this subversion does not cause the interaction to break down, because the audience is aware that it is part of a comedy performance contract and automatically seeks the implicit meaning behind every maxim violation (Dynel, 2022). Yule (2020) focuses on the audience's contextual inference: for the humor to land, the audience draws on collective memories of campus life, the social media ecosystem, and pop culture. When "Naruto sends a DM" is thrown out, they do not take it at face value but conclude that Bintang is satirizing or dramatizing the proliferation of fake accounts (alter egos) with anime avatars that behave strangely on social media; the humor functions optimally only if pragmatic inference occurs, built upon a shared knowledge base between comedian and audience (Yule, 2020).

Literal and Implied Meanings

On the surface, Bintang's material explores three topics: the phenomenon of strange Instagram accounts, the mystery of the smiling emoji on WhatsApp, and the personal struggles of a comedian who has never been in a relationship. Beneath that lie implied meanings reflecting the interpersonal realities of digital society. In the emoji section, he critiques the bias and ambiguity of meaning in digital communication: an emoji originally designed to convey happiness can mutate into a symbol of anger, sarcasm, or disappointment depending on who sends it and in what context, showing that digital messages are highly pragmatic and cannot be interpreted rigidly from the visual form of the symbol (Yus, 2023). In his candid admission that he has never been in a relationship, Bintang uses his innocence as a charm to build a connection with the audience; implicitly, he shows that one's perspective on emotional turmoil changes drastically once experienced firsthand—before, he viewed heartbreak as over-the-top drama, but after experiencing it himself his perspective shifted, and this shift is the foundation of both the humor and the space for social reflection in his work.

The Ghosting Segment

In the final segment, Bintang weaves humor through a personal narrative about the frustrating experience of a text message ignored by a woman, deliberately combining self-deprecating and observational humor. He is both the victim of the joke and the voice of a social trend that resonates deeply with the audience: being left without a word—"ghosting"—in the digital communication ecosystem. According to Attardo, laughter is triggered by script opposition. Early in the story, the comedian leads the audience to believe he still has a chance by forcing himself to think positively even though his messages have been ignored for five days; those expectations are shattered when the woman posts an intimate photo with another man. The clash between "there's still hope" and "turns out she's already taken" is the central source of humor (Attardo, 2020a). The hyperbole "who knows, maybe his thumb fell off" is literally impossible, but pragmatically the audience perceives sarcastic satire of the clichéd excuses concocted to justify laziness in replying.

The sequence contains a particularized conversational implicature, as outlined by Grice and developed by Yule. Explicitly, Bintang merely states that his message was ignored for five days and that he is trying to be understanding; implicitly, he is aware he has been rejected but his heart refuses to accept the bitter reality. "Maybe his thumb will fall off" clearly violates the maxim of quality, as the information is logically false, and this violation triggers the audience's inference toward a satire of his overly confident attitude. When the photo with another man surfaces, the audience concludes that the main motive behind the ignored

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message was the woman's lack of interest; humor is generated through pragmatic inference that unpacks meaning rather than reading the text at face value (Lepas, 2010; Yule, 2020). On the surface the material is a story of misfortune due to failed communication; underneath, it is a sharp critique of digital communication culture marked by uncertainty about responses (ghosting) and a satire of the human tendency to seek logical justifications for an already obvious rejection. As Dynel notes, stand-up often exploits the mismatch between literal and intended meaning, so a joke's success depends on the audience's ability to pick up the contextual cues presented on stage (Dynel, 2021). Ultimately the humor lands not merely because of the story's content but because the audience knows the comedian is laughing at his own inability to read social situations.

Critical Discourse Analysis: Fairclough and van Dijk

Through CDA, stand-up comedy is a social practice that both captures and reflects realities unfolding in society. Bintang highlights modern digital culture, which measures social standing by follower counts; by comparing his past and present numbers, he satirically critiques society's addiction to digital validation, a subtle yet powerful way to dissect shifting social values without sounding preachy or patronizing (Nugraha, 2021). Stand-up is a form of public communication that constructs or reconstructs social reality through humor, framing meaning around social phenomena (Tsakona, 2020); terms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and emojis, and the ins and outs of dating, are elevated to social symbols that map the lifestyle of today's youth.

Fairclough (2022) holds that discourse analysis must address three dimensions: text, discursive practices, and social practices. At the *textual* level, Bintang uses informal language, slang, and a casual conversational style to break down the barrier with the audience. At the level of *discursive practice*, his material is drawn from personal experiences and generic memories shared by social media users, deeply relatable to his generation. At the level of *social practice*, the humor reflects a digital society increasingly obsessed with account statistics and the worship of follower counts, and increasingly reliant on virtual symbols such as emojis and abbreviations to convey intentions (Fairclough, 2022). Indirectly, the comedian offers a subtle critique of an increasingly biased and confusing modern communication reality: emojis, created to clarify the tone of text, have become a root cause of ambiguity, and this critique is wrapped in fresh humor so that the audience takes it lightheartedly without feeling lectured. In the ghosting segment, discourse also shapes and perpetuates social practices: the monological style relies on the construction of self-identity and social relations, Bintang portrays a man left behind in modern dating who turns his pain into shared laughter, and Instagram becomes a new vehicle for "social truth" that replaces face-to-face confirmation, so that humor is both a source of laughter and a reflection of shifting patterns of human interaction in the digital age (Fairclough, 2022).

Van Dijk (2023) requires discourse to be examined through a framework connecting textual structure, social cognition, and macro-level social structure. At the *micro* level, terms such as "Instagram," "followers," "DM," "WhatsApp," and "emoticon" underscore the theme of the digital communication ecosystem; in the ghosting segment, word choices such as "his thumb fell off" and the detailed depiction of the couple's body language in the photo trigger laughter. At the level of *social cognition*, the audience is already equipped with collective knowledge about social media features and internet culture, and about who Naruto is, so they can connect immediately with every reference; the comedian and audience share a common cognitive and social framework, which makes the humor particularly powerful. At the *macro* level, the material touches sensitive issues of social identity construction in the modern era—popularity, once achieved through a track record of achievements, is now often reduced to statistics on an account profile—and captures the transformation of human interaction, in which emotional outbursts are represented by virtual symbols whose meanings are open to multiple

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interpretations; the ghosting segment likewise explores romantic dynamics, the pressure of social expectations, and the cultural realities of the internet. Bintang's humor elicits laughter because he converts the audience's collective social knowledge into a fresh joke (van Dijk, 2023). Van Dijk (2021) also emphasizes that understanding discourse is tied to the mental models stored in each participant's mind: the audience can laugh heartily because they share similar memories of the pain of being ignored by text and the complexities of romance and communication in the virtual world.

Social Impact and Synthesis

Socially, Bintang's jokes have tangible functions. They provide psychological catharsis, releasing pent-up stress through laughter (Tsakona, 2020); they foster solidarity, as the audience feels less alone in sharing the same anxieties about life in the digital world; and they spark critical thinking about the true meaning of popularity and validation on social media—with a laid-back style, the comedian shows that more followers do not automatically change one's identity or social status in the real world, thereby injecting critical awareness into the lifestyle of contemporary digital society (Fairclough, 2022). The ghosting segment likewise offers psychological relief, solidarity (the tragic fate depicted feels highly representative of the audience's own lives), and social reflection on how people interact in digital spaces. The effectiveness of a joke is measured by how keenly the audience picks up the comedian's implications; the closer the social background of comedian and audience, the greater the comedy's chance of success. The roar of laughter is thus not merely a reflexive response to funny moments but a testament to the success of the process of pragmatic inference building since the beginning of the performance, and a validation and spontaneous reaction to the real social experiences the audience encounters daily (Fairclough, 2022; van Dijk, 2023).

Pragmatically, whether laughter erupts depends heavily on the audience's ability to infer messages the comedian deliberately conceals. Most of Bintang's punchlines are created through implicature, hyperbole, irony, and the deliberate violation of conversational maxims—evidence that stand-up is a non-literal communication model requiring active engagement from the audience's mind (Dynel, 2022). Following Attardo (2020), his humor is dominated by script oppositions such as anger vs. joy, reality vs. fiction, and serious situations vs. absurd ones, while from Grice and Yule's perspective it works because the audience detects violations of the maxims of communication and converts them into amusing implicatures. In the ghosting segment, humor arises from the interplay between the violation of Grice's cooperative principle and Attardo's incongruity mechanism: the comedian presents an absurd premise ("his thumb fell off") and guides the audience toward a logical conclusion through the unfolding of the story, creating cognitive tension that is resolved when they realize the actual situation; the incongruity–resolution cycle is the most dominant formula in stand-up because it forces the audience to actively construct the meaning of a joke (Attardo, 2020a; Dynel, 2021).

Synthesis of pragmatics and CDA. Humor in Bintang's material operates on two mutually reinforcing levels. At the *micro* level (pragmatics), it is produced through implicatures and maxim violations (Grice), contextual inference (Yule), and script opposition and incongruity (Attardo), together with Dynel's framework—the play of implicatures, the audience's inferential processes, and the clash of knowledge scripts. At the *macro* level (CDA), it represents social practices (Fairclough) and social cognition and identity issues (van Dijk), dissecting popular culture, the falseness of digital popularity, and how modern society constructs its identities—a technology-driven social transformation in which communication increasingly relies on virtual symbols, emojis, and social media platforms. Stand-up comedy cannot be dismissed as mere light entertainment: it is a critical social discourse rich in reflection, critique, and the negotiation of meaning amid the chaos of modern life (Dynel, 2022; Fairclough, 2022). Bintang's performances are a discursive practice that captures and reflects the social realities of our time; humor becomes a critical tool for challenging, dissecting, and

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renegotiating the meaning of digital communication patterns in daily life (Fairclough, 2022; van Dijk, 2023). While pragmatics dissects how humor is constructed through implicatures, maxim violations, and contextual inference, CDA uncovers how humor both reflects and challenges broader social realities: stand-up comedy is a form of public communication that employs linguistic strategies to entertain while subtly and elegantly conveying social criticism.

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that both comedians primarily rely on conventional and non-conventional implicature, ironic speech acts, and satirical strategies to critique contemporary social and political issues. Bintang Emon uses personal narratives and exaggeration to create strong audience relatability, while Kiky Saputri employs direct roasting targeted at government officials, demonstrating a more powerful social critique approach. These pragmatic mechanisms significantly influence audience perception, with Kiky showing greater social critique impact in terms of policy criticism and corruption awareness, while Bintang achieves higher relatability through personal experience narratives.

This pragmatic construction has been shown to significantly shape the audience's perspective. Kiky Saputri excels at raising awareness of corruption and public policy issues, while Bintang Emon excels at fostering emotional connection through reflections on personal experiences. Theoretically, this study enriches our understanding of the shifting role of stand-up comedy as a new public sphere for political engagement and a platform for social resistance in Indonesia's digital age. This phenomenon demonstrates that humor is a highly persuasive tool for fostering critical thinking, especially among the younger generation.

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