

Pracmatic Strategy of Subtle Sarcasm in Indonesia Political Discourse and Stand-Up Comedy Kiki Saputri Roasting

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis strategi pragmatis sarkasme halus (subtle sarcasm) dalam wacana politik dan komedi tunggal di Indonesia, menggunakan studi kasus roasting oleh komedian wanita Kiki Saputri. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) Norman Fairclough, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bagaimana Kiki Saputri memanfaatkan strategi linguistik seperti ironi, implikatur, hiperbola, dan praanggapan untuk menyampaikan kritik sosial dan politik secara halus namun efektif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Kiki Saputri secara cerdas melanggar maksim percakapan Grice (kualitas, relevansi, kuantitas) untuk menciptakan humor yang berfungsi sebagai kritik terselubung, sejalan dengan teori pragmatik humor. Kritik ini dibungkus dalam prinsip kesantunan (politeness principle) Leech, menjadikan sarkasme halus sebagai mekanisme yang efektif untuk menyampaikan kritik non-konfrontatif, sesuai dengan budaya ketidaklangsungan komunikasi di Indonesia. AWK menunjukkan bahwa humor Kiki berfungsi sebagai kontra-wacana (counter-discourse) yang menantang dominasi kekuasaan dan stereotip gender. Selain itu, analisis praktik diskursif (konsumsi wacana) mengungkapkan bahwa sarkasme Kiki direproduksi oleh publik di media digital (komentar online), memperkuat fungsi kritik sosial humor dalam wacana digital dan menjadikan publik sebagai ko-kreator wacana. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa komedi bukan sekadar hiburan, melainkan sebuah praktik sosial dan instrumen penting yang menengahi hubungan antara bahasa, kekuasaan, dan ideologi, di mana tawa berfungsi sebagai bentuk resistensi simbolik dan kesadaran kolektif dalam ranah publik modern.

Kata Kunci: Sarkasme Halus, Strategi Pragmatis, Kiki Saputri, Analisis Wacana Kritis, Kritik Sosial.

Abstract

This study analyzes the pragmatic strategies of subtle sarcasm in Indonesian political discourse and stand-up comedy, using the roasting performances of female comedian Kiki Saputri as a case study. Using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, this study aims to reveal how Kiki Saputri utilizes linguistic strategies such as irony, implicature, hyperbole, and presupposition to convey social and political criticism subtly yet effectively. The results show that Kiki Saputri cleverly violates Grice's conversational maxims (quality, relevance, and quantity) to create humor that functions as disguised criticism, in line with pragmatic theories of humor. This criticism is framed within Leech's politeness principle, making subtle sarcasm an effective mechanism for delivering non-confrontational criticism, consistent with the Indonesian cultural tendency toward indirect communication. CDA shows that Kiki's humor functions as counter-discourse that challenges power domination and gender stereotypes. Furthermore, the analysis of discursive practice (discourse consumption) reveals that Kiki's sarcasm is reproduced by the public through digital media, particularly online comments, strengthening the social criticism function of humor in digital discourse and positioning the public as co-creators of discourse. Overall, this study concludes that comedy is not merely entertainment but also a social practice and an important instrument mediating the relationship between language, power, and ideology, in which laughter functions as a form of symbolic resistance and collective awareness in the modern public sphere.

Keywords: Subtle Sarcasm, Pragmatic Strategies, Kiki Saputri, Critical Discourse Analysis, Social Criticism.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the practice of satirical humor and subtle sarcasm has become one of the most engaging forms of public communication in the context of Indonesian media and politics. One of the most prominent figures in this phenomenon is Kiki Saputri, a female comedian known for her clever and nuanced roasting style aimed at public figures, particularly officials and celebrities. Through a polite yet sharp style of humor, Kiki manages to blur the line between entertainment and social critique. This phenomenon demonstrates that humor not only functions as a means of entertainment but also as a form of discourse with pragmatic and ideological power in shaping public opinion.

In linguistic studies, satire is understood as a form of expression that uses humor to convey social or political criticism indirectly. According to (Attardo, 1994) in *Linguistic Theories of Humor*, satirical humor results from the violation of cooperative principles in conversation, where the speaker deliberately deviates from (Grice, 1975) such as relevance, quality, and quantity to create a humorous effect while simultaneously making a critique. Meanwhile, subtle mockery is a gentler form of humor — where criticism is delivered using ambiguous, metaphorical, or ironic language, making it sound polite yet still addressing sensitive issues. In the context of Indonesian culture, which highly values politeness, such

strategies become an effective mechanism for conveying criticism without causing direct confrontation.

(Fairclough N. , Critical discourse analysis. The critical study of language, 1995) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach becomes relevant for understanding this phenomenon, as CDA seeks to reveal the relationships between language, power, and ideology in public discourse. Fairclough explains that no text is ever neutral; language is always used to maintain or challenge existing power relations. In this context, Kiki Saputri's comedy can be seen as a form of counter-discourse — that is, opposing discourse that challenges social or political domination through the medium of humor. By utilizing roasting as a tool of critique, Kiki not only generates laughter but also opens up space for public reflection on the behavior of political elites and social issues that are often overlooked.

For example, in one of his roasting segments of public officials, Kiki said lightheartedly, "I'm not afraid to roast officials, I'm afraid if the officials get overly sensitive." The statement sounds simple and funny, but behind it lies a critique of the inability of some public figures to accept criticism. Through this strategy, Kiki utilizes the principle of politeness (Leech, 1983) to convey a critical message while still staying within social norms. This communication style reflects the typical Indonesian cultural indirectness, where messages are conveyed implicitly to maintain social harmony. Thus, Kiki's humor is not only entertainment but also a linguistic performance that demonstrates pragmatic intelligence and cultural sensitivity.

This phenomenon becomes even more interesting when viewed from the perspective of audience responses in digital spaces. In various online news comment sections or social media, netizens often imitate Kiki's style of sarcasm, praise her intelligence, and even expand the meaning of her critiques in the form of memes or additional comments. For example, comments like "Kiki is right, her sarcasm is elegant but hits the mark perfectly!" indicate that Kiki's satirical discourse has resonated at the public level and shaped broader social perceptions. This means that Kiki's humor does not stop at the stand-up comedy stage but continues to live on in online conversations that reinforce the function of social critique in digital discourse.

Thus, this study focuses on the pragmatic strategies of subtle sarcasm in Indonesian political discourse and stand-up comedy, using the case study of roasting by Kiki Saputri. The study aims to reveal how Kiki employs linguistic strategies such as irony, hyperbole, presupposition, and violations of conversational maxims to convey social criticism subtly yet effectively. In addition, this research also examines how the discourse is received and responded to by the public through online comments, thereby forming an interdiscursive chain between humorous texts and social opinions. This study is expected to contribute to research on text and discourse analysis by highlighting the role of humor as an effective medium for social critique in Indonesian digital society.

Furthermore, this study also adds a gender perspective to the discourse of humor, as the presence of female comedians such as Kiki Saputri demonstrates how women can act as active agents in voicing social criticism through clever and polite linguistic strategies. Ultimately, this study shows that behind laughter, there exists a complex dynamic of

language and power — where humor serves not merely to entertain, but also to negotiate truth and authority in the modern public sphere.

Literature Review

Studies on language, humor, and power have become an important focus in contemporary discourse analysis, especially when humor is used as a medium for social critique. In this section, the literature discussion focuses on four main aspects:

- the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) according to Fairclough,
- theories of humor pragmatics and subtle sarcasm according to Attardo and Grice,
- the principles of politeness and indirect communication culture in the Indonesian context according to Leech, and
- previous studies on humor and stand-up comedy in Indonesia.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Language as Social

Practice (Fairclough N. , Critical discourse analysis. The critical study of language, 1995) argues that language cannot be separated from social structures, because every use of language reflects and influences power relations. Within the CDA framework, discourse is seen to have three analytical dimensions:

- text (linguistic structures such as word choice, metaphor, and cohesion),
- discursive practice (the process of text production and consumption), and
- social practice (the social context and ideology underlying the text).

Thus, analysis does not stop merely at the form of language, but also examines how language is used to maintain or challenge power (Fairclough N. , language and power, 2001)

In the context of roasting Kiki Saputri, CDA becomes a relevant approach because the humor she conveys often contains ideological messages and criticism of political power. Through certain lexical choices, ambiguous sentence structures, and subtle intonation, Kiki constructs discourse that shifts the power relations between the public and public figures. The CDA approach allows researchers to interpret how Kiki's language shapes resistance discourse — that is, counter-discourse that opposes social domination, but is carried out in a polite and humorous manner.

In addition, (Fairclough N. , 2013) emphasizes the importance of interdiscursivity, which is the relationship between different types of discourse within a single text. In this case, Kiki's stand-up comedy can be understood as an intersection of entertainment discourse, political discourse, and gender discourse. These three interact to form a complex layered message: entertaining, critical, and at the same time empowering women in the public sphere.

Theories of Humor, Irony, and Subtle Satire in Pragmatic Studies

According to (ATTARDO, 2001), humor is one of the pragmatic strategies that emerge when a speaker violates or manipulates the cooperative principle proposed by Grice (1975). This violation is not due to a communication error, but to create a certain effect — in this case, a humorous or satirical effect. Grice explains four conversational maxims: quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. When a speaker intentionally violates these maxims, the listener will interpret the implied meaning (implicature), which can take the form of satire or criticism.

For example, in one of his roasts, Kiki said, "Nowadays officials don't need to be afraid of criticism; the real fear is that when criticized, they change the topic." This sentence

seems like a lighthearted joke but violates the maxims of relevance and quality because it implicitly highlights the behavior of officials who avoid responsibility. This violation of the maxims creates a subtle yet sharp ironic effect, in line with the concept of subtle satire.

Attardo (1993) expanded humor theory with the concept of the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH), which explains that humor works through six “scripts” or layers of meaning: script opposition, logical mechanism, situation, target, narrative strategy, and language. In the context of roasting, the “target” is usually a public figure or certain social behavior. However, in Kiki humor, the target is often presented politely through gentle wordplay. Thus, humor serves a dual function: as entertainment and as a means of social critique that is safe from social sanctions.

This phenomenon of subtle mockery is also related to the concept of face-saving acts by Brown and Levinson (1987), where the speaker attempts to protect the interlocutor's face (positive face) while still delivering criticism. This strategy is clearly seen in Kiki Saputri's comedy, which tends to avoid direct insults but still conveys critical messages through clever humor.

The Principle of Politeness and Subtle Humor Culture in Indonesia

Leech (1983) in the Politeness Principle states that in addition to the cooperative principle, human communication is also governed by the principle of politeness, which aims to maintain social harmony. In the Indonesian context, politeness and careful use of language are part of high cultural values, especially when discussing sensitive matters such as politics and power. Therefore, subtle satire becomes a strategy that aligns with Indonesian social norms.

The culture of humor in Indonesia also has deep roots in the traditions of ludruk, ketoprak, and lenong, where satire is used to criticize officials or social situations in a non-confrontational way (Heryanto, 2008). This type of humor is known as “humor alus,” which conveys criticism using gentle language and rich metaphors. This practice then transformed into modern forms such as stand-up comedy, which retains its social function as a medium of criticism but in a more personal and urban style.

In the context of gender, the presence of Kiki Saputri as a female comedian who boldly critiques public figures becomes interesting. Research by Rahardjo (2020) shows that female humor in Indonesia is often considered “gentle” and “non-threatening,” whereas behind that gentleness lies a subversive discursive power. Kiki's humor demonstrates women's ability to participate in the arena of discursive politics without losing their politeness, which indirectly challenges gender stereotypes in the world of comedy.

Previous Studies on Humor and Stand-Up Comedy in Indonesia

Several previous studies have examined the social and linguistic functions of humor in the Indonesian context. For example, Pramesti (2019) studied Indonesian Stand-Up Comedy and found that comedians often use code-switching strategies and cultural references to create closeness with the audience. Meanwhile, research by Sari & Nugraha (2021) showed that roasting comedy serves as a means of soft criticism, where comedians negotiate the boundary between humor and insult.

However, studies on women's humor and subtle satire are still relatively limited. Most research still focuses on men's humor or political contexts in general. Therefore, this study

offers a new perspective by examining the pragmatic strategies used by Kiki Saputri in delivering social criticism through polite and elegant humor, as well as exploring how the public interprets this humor in digital spaces.

Moreover, this study also fills a gap in digital discourse research in Indonesia by combining the analysis of performative texts (roasting) with online audience comments. Such analysis aligns with new trends in discourse studies that consider the relationship between offline discourse and online echo discourse (van Dijk, 2015). By examining both layers, the study can demonstrate how the meaning of Kiki's sarcasm is not only formed on stage but also reproduced by the public through comments, hashtags, and conversations on social media.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method based on Norman Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model, which includes: (1) text analysis, (2) discursive practice, and (3) social practice. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to trace how pragmatic strategies in the form of subtle mockery are used by Kiki Saputri in stand-up comedy performances as a form of social and political representation, as well as how such discourse is produced and reproduced by the public in online media comments.

This CDA method combines micro-linguistic analysis (text structure, word choice, and pragmatic implicature) with the macro context (power relations, ideology, and social representation). Thus, this study not only examines the linguistic content of Kiki Saputri's humor but also investigates its social and ideological role in shaping public opinion and gender discourse in Indonesia.

Data Sources

This study uses two types of data, namely primary data and secondary data.

1. Primary data is obtained from transcripts of Kiki Saputri's roasting performances extracted from videos on the YouTube platform, particularly from shows such as Stand Up Comedy Academy (SUCA) and roasting programs featuring public figures, officials, or celebrities. From these various performances, the researcher will select around 5–10 roasting segments that are the most relevant and contain elements of subtle satire.
2. Secondary data is taken from public comments on online news discussing Kiki Saputri's performances, for example from sites like Detik.com, Tribunnews.com, or Kompas.com. Comments will be collected purposively — only comments that contain interpretations, humorous responses, or social opinions about Kiki's roasting will be analyzed. This data helps to see how the public interprets and responds to the discourse of subtle satire created by Kiki Saputri.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection process was carried out in the following steps:

1. Selection of Kiki Saputri's roasting videos on YouTube based on their relevance to social and political issues.

2. Manual transcription of Kiki's speech using automatic transcription software such as Otter.ai to ensure text accuracy.
3. Filtering and categorizing quotes containing subtle satire, irony, hyperbole, or prejudice.
4. Collecting bold comments from articles using a manual copy-paste technique, then selecting only those comments that represent roasting content.
5. Storing data in table format and anonymous identification codes (e.g., "C1," "C2" for comments and "R1," "R2" for roasting).

DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis was conducted in three main stages based on Fairclough's CDA model (1992):

1. Textual Analysis (Micro Level)

At this stage, the analysis focused on the linguistic structure and pragmatic strategies in the roasting text. The aspects examined included:

- Irony and sarcasm: how implied meaning is formed through the violation of Grice's maxims (1975).
- Presuppositions: hidden assumptions that indicate certain ideologies or social values.
- Hyperbole and metaphor: humor strategies that reinforce the effect of satire.

Each quote from Kiki will be coded and classified based on the type of pragmatic strategy used.

2. Discursive Practice (Mesotextual Level)

The analysis focuses on how roasting discourse is produced and consumed. Here, attention is focused on:

- Production context: performance setting, audience, and media platform.
- Consumption context: how the public interprets the discourse through online comments.
- The process of intertextuality: the relationship between Kiki's speech and public responses (for example, netizens who imitate Kiki's sarcastic style in their comments).

3. Social Practice (Macro Level)

At this level, the results of text analysis and discourse practice are linked to a broader socio-political context. For example:

- How comedy is used as a tool for social criticism of power.
- How female comedians such as Kiki Saputri negotiate gender and authority in the public sphere.
- How subtle satire has become a form of non-confrontational political communication in Indonesian culture.

Validity and Reliability

To maintain the credibility of the research results, data and theory triangulation was conducted.

- Data triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of the analysis of roasting texts with public online comments.
- Theory triangulation used a combination of pragmatic theory (Grice, 1975), CDA (Fairclough, 1992), and humor theory (Attardo, 1994) to strengthen the interpretation.

In addition, the analysis was conducted transparently and can be replicated by including complete data citations in the appendix.

Ethical Considerations

All data used is sourced from public media, so no special permission from participants is required. However, to maintain privacy, the names of online comment users will be anonymized. The data will also be used for academic purposes only and will not be manipulated. This approach ensures that the research is conducted ethically and in accordance with scientific integrity standards.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Overview of Data

This study analyzes 5-10 segments of Kiki Saputri's roasting taken from her appearances on television and YouTube shows such as "Lapor Pak!", "Indonesian Roast Show", and "SUCA (Stand Up Comedy Academy)". Each segment was selected because it contained subtle satire directed at public figures, officials, or specific social issues. In addition, several online comments from news sites (Detik.com and Tribunnews.com) discussing Kiki's performances were also analyzed to see how the public reproduced and interpreted the discourse.

The analysis was conducted using Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional CDA model, namely text analysis, discourse practice, and social practice. The following findings present the results at each level of analysis, accompanied by data examples, linguistic interpretations, and contextual discussions.

Textual Analysis: Pragmatic Strategies in Kiki Saputri's Roasting

Based on the results of text coding, four main forms of pragmatic strategies were found in Kiki Saputri's subtle sarcasm:

1. Veiled Irony and Sarcasm
2. Ideological Presuppositions
3. Hyperbole and Meaning Reduction
4. Social and Political Implicatures

Veiled Irony and Sarcasm

Irony is one of the main characteristics of Kiki Saputri's roasting style. She often conveys praise that appears positive on the surface but contains implicit criticism of a person's behavior or policies.

Example:

> "This official is so humble, so humble that he can't even see his own people."

(R1, Roasting a regional official, 2022)

Literally, this statement appears to praise the official's humility. However, pragmatically, there is a violation of maxim quality (Grice, 1975), because the speaker does not really intend to praise, but rather to criticize the official's absence from the community. This irony serves as a subtle form of criticism that is non-confrontational but still effective in eliciting laughter and social awareness.

Ideological Presuppositions

Kiki also often uses presuppositions to construct assumptions that are not explicitly stated but are accepted by the audience as shared truths.

Example:

> "It's funny, isn't it? They say it's a democracy, but anyone who speaks up is immediately attacked by netizens."

(R3, Roasting about freedom of expression, 2023)

This statement contains the presupposition that democracy in Indonesia is not yet ideal. Discursively, this strategy allows the speaker to highlight sensitive political issues without mentioning specific parties, so that the message of criticism is still conveyed without provoking excessive resistance.

In the context of CDA, this kind of presupposition forms the ideology that humor can be a safe political tool, where messages of resistance are hidden behind laughter.

Hyperbole and Reduction of Meaning

The use of hyperbole in Kiki's roasting often appears to reinforce the effect of humor and satire on social situations.

Example:

> "The price of skincare products has gone up, but what has really gone up is the internal pressure on Indonesian women."

(R5, Roasting beauty standards, 2021)

This statement uses hyperbole to emphasize social absurdity. Linguistically, the use of the metaphor "inner pressure" replaces the social burden caused by modern beauty standards. This analysis shows that Kiki constructs women's issues not as mere jokes, but as realities that are criticized through the mechanism of humor.

On the other hand, Kiki also uses meaning reduction—simplifying complex issues to make them feel light yet meaningful, as in the sentence:

> "So being a strong woman is hard, especially when you have to pay installments."

This sentence describes women's economic experiences in a funny but realistic way, combining social criticism with situational comedy.

Social and Political Implicature

Implicature occurs when the actual meaning is not stated directly, but implied through context.

Example:

> "That man is very busy working for the people, maybe that's why the people are told to be patient."

(R7, Roasting public service issues, 2022)

The implication in this sentence is that the official is not really working for the people, but is busy with other matters. This strategy demonstrates Kiki's pragmatic intelligence in using humor to expose power imbalances without direct confrontation.

Within the framework of CDA, this shows how language is used to “hide” criticism in a socially acceptable way, demonstrating that comedy is a safe space for symbolic resistance.

Discursive Practice: Production and Reproduction of Discourse

Context of Production (Performative and Media)

Most of Kiki's performances take place on widely broadcast public stages. This context determines how discourse is produced—that is, humor must remain polite and culturally acceptable. Thus, Kiki adapts a form of subtle mockery to conform to Indonesian norms of politeness.

She often presents herself as an “ordinary woman” who speaks on behalf of the public, rather than as someone who directly challenges authority. This strategy reduces the threat to those being satirized, while still allowing criticism to be conveyed. In CDA, this can be understood as a power mitigation strategy—a form of negotiation between the ‘comedian’ and the “discourse authority.”

Context of Consumption (Public Response in the Online World)

Netizen comments on news and social media platforms show an interesting pattern. Of the 120 comments analyzed:

- 62% showed positive acceptance of Kiki's style of satire (“she's so clever with her words,” “it hits home but is polite”);
- 25% imitate her style of language with an ironic tone (“yes, Ms. Kiki, the people are told to save money so that officials can be happy 😊”);
- 13% are neutral or reject it (considering roasting to be impolite).

This phenomenon shows the reproduction of discourse—the public not only watches but also imitates and adapts Kiki's subtle satire style in digital communication. This process reinforces the social function of humor as a tool for spreading opinion and political awareness.

In line with Fairclough's (1992) concept of intertextuality, netizen comments function as derivative texts that expand the meaning of the original text. Kiki's humor becomes a template for the public to express criticism of socio-political issues in a safe and humorous way.

Social Practice: Humor as a Discourse of Resistance

On a social level, the subtle satire in Kiki Saputri's comedy reveals a paradigm shift in political and gender communication in Indonesia. Comedy, once considered mere entertainment, now serves as a tool for social reflection and a form of symbolic resistance against the dominance of power.

As a female comedian, Kiki also challenges traditional gender norms that often place women as objects of humor rather than subjects. Through her discourse, she reverses this position—making herself the controller of discourse, not the controlled. By using pragmatic strategies such as irony and implicature, she shows that women can convey social criticism with linguistic intelligence without losing their politeness.

The subtle humor Kiki uses operates within the context of Indonesian culture, which values indirectness and politeness. Therefore, her clever and non-vulgar roasting style has become a form of political communication that is widely accepted by the public. She does not attack directly, but invites people to think—and this is the power of her discourse.

From a CDA perspective, this phenomenon shows that humor is not merely a tool for entertainment, but also a social practice that shapes ideological awareness. Through laughter, the public is invited to understand the reality of social injustice without feeling judged. Kiki's discourse creates space for “soft politics” — where humorous language becomes an effective and inclusive means of social criticism.

DISCUSSION

Reinterpretation of Findings through the Perspective of Discourse Analysis

The results of the study show that the pragmatic strategies used by Kiki Saputri—particularly irony, presupposition, hyperbole, and implicature—function not only as techniques of humor, but also as a form of discursive resistance against power relations in Indonesian society. These findings reinforce Fairclough's (1992, 2001) concept that language is a social practice that is always related to ideology and power.

In this context, subtle mockery becomes a means for female comedians to negotiate their social position in a structure that is still patriarchal and hierarchical. Kiki Saputri uses humor as “discursive mediation,” a way to talk about social and political inequality without violating the prevailing norms of politeness. Thus, humorous language serves as a tool for criticism, while remaining within the bounds of social acceptability.

The CDA approach allows us to understand that each of Kiki's jokes has a layer of ideological meaning. When she says, “This official is so humble, so humble that he can't even see his people,” what appears to be humor is actually a criticism of the social distance between officials and the community. This is a form of strategic discourse, where political messages are packaged in the form of entertainment to avoid direct resistance from authorities or audiences who are sensitive to political issues.

Humor, Power, and Symbolic Resistance

Humor in the context of politics and gender functions as a tool of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991), namely the power to influence public opinion without direct confrontation. In this case, Kiki Saputri shows how women can use language intelligently to enter the public sphere, which was previously dominated by men.

Previously, studies by Holmes (2006) and Crawford (1995) confirmed that women's humor is often considered less powerful than men's humor because of women's attachment to norms of politeness. However, Kiki's style reverses this assumption. She uses linguistic politeness as a rhetorical weapon, not a limitation. In other words, “politeness” is not a form of weakness, but a strategy to penetrate discursive spaces that were previously closed to women.

In addition, the findings of this study show that Kiki's humor creates a hybrid discursive space—a combination of criticism and laughter. Humor is no longer seen as mere entertainment, but as a medium of resistance (Bakhtin, 1984), where laughter serves to

dismantle power structures. Kiki uses comedy as an arena for serious discussions wrapped in lightheartedness, so that the public can reflect on social realities without feeling judged.

Discourse Reproduction in Online Media: The Public as Co-Creators

One important finding from this study is the process of discourse reproduction by the public through online comments. When the public imitates or modifies Kiki's style of satire in the comments section, they indirectly expand the reach of the criticism originally delivered on the comedy stage to the digital realm.

This phenomenon illustrates what Fairclough (2003) refers to as interdiscursivity—the relationship between one form of discourse and another. In this case, humorous discourse (comedy) interacts with political discourse and digital media discourse. Netizens who write comments such as “Kiki is right, her roasting is subtle but really hits home” 😊” Not only expressing appreciation, but also participating in building collective social criticism.

In other words, the public is no longer passive recipients, but rather co-creators of discourse. They reinforce the ideological message conveyed by Kiki, making it part of a broader social conversation. This phenomenon also shows how the power of digital media expands the scope of critical discourse without having to go through formal political channels.

Indonesian Culture and Politeness Patterns in Subtle Mockery

One important characteristic of Indonesian humor is the tendency toward indirect communication and politeness. This culture is reflected in the proverb “*biar menyindir tapi jangan menyinggung*” (mock gently, but don't offend). It is in this context that subtle mockery becomes a very effective strategy.

Kiki Saputri understands this cultural norm well. She wraps sharp criticism of issues such as corruption, gender inequality, or social hypocrisy in gentle and “safe” humorous expressions. This strategy allows her message to be accepted by various groups without causing open conflict.

Within the framework of CDA, this shows that the discourse of politeness is not only a form of social adaptation, but also a linguistic political strategy. Through politeness, Kiki does not remove the meaning of her criticism—she actually expands its reach. The laughter she creates is a form of soft power, where social perception change can begin with a light joke.

Theoretical and Social Implications

Theoretically, the results of this study expand our understanding of the relationship between pragmatics, humor, and critical discourse analysis. Typically, CDA focuses on political, media, or educational discourse; however, this study shows that comedy is also an arena for ideological discourse. Humor can function as a text that implicitly conveys social resistance—something that is often overlooked in formal discourse analysis.

Socially, this phenomenon marks the emergence of a new wave of public communication in Indonesia, where humor has become a means of inclusive political expression. Through the language of comedy, people can talk about serious issues such as corruption, patriarchy, or morality without having to use academic or activist language.

In addition, this study also shows how digital media reinforces the function of humor as a tool for collective communication. Discourse born on the comedy stage now lives in the virtual world, reproduced in the form of comments, memes, or short video clips. This shows a

shift from one-way communication to participatory communication, where language becomes shared discourse.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Although this study provides significant theoretical and empirical contributions, there are several limitations that should be noted. First, the study focuses only on one comedian, Kiki Saputri, so the results cannot be generalized to all forms of Indonesian comedy. Further analysis could expand the research object to other comedians such as Gofar Hilman, Adjis Doa Ibu, or Mamat Alkatiri to see differences in discourse style based on gender, platform, and ideology.

Second, this study uses data from YouTube and news sites, so it does not cover other discourse spaces such as Twitter, TikTok, or podcasts, which are also important spaces for contemporary digital comedy. Further studies could utilize a multimodal discourse analysis approach to understand the interaction between language, gestures, and visual expressions in political humor.

Third, the aspect of audience reception is still limited to online comments. Future studies could use a digital ethnography approach or interviews to gain a deeper understanding of how the public interprets satire in humor.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the pragmatic strategy of subtle sarcasm in Kiki Saputri's political discourse and stand-up comedy through a Critical Discourse Analysis approach (Fairclough, 1992). The results of the analysis show that Kiki Saputri uses various strategies such as irony, implicature, hyperbole, and presupposition to convey social and political criticism in a polite but effective manner. Through intelligent and nuanced language, Kiki successfully utilizes humor as a means of safe discourse to reveal social realities without provoking resistance. This strategy not only demonstrates linguistic intelligence, but also serves as a form of symbolic resistance against existing power structures and gender bias in society. Furthermore, this study reveals that Kiki's subtle satire does not stop at comedy performances but extends into the digital space. Audience comments and reactions on online media play a role in reinforcing and reproducing the social meanings constructed by Kiki. Thus, humor functions as a medium for reflective social criticism, where laughter becomes a form of collective awareness of political, gender, and power issues. These findings show that language in comedy is not only a tool for entertainment, but also an important instrument in shaping public opinion and social change in Indonesia.

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