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Sarcasm in Digital Discourse: Representation of Public Distrust of Political Institutions on Patinews Facebook Account

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Abstract

Social media has evolved into a digital public space where people can express opinions, criticism, and dissatisfaction about various political issues. One widely used form of expression is sarcasm, namely the use of sharp, demeaning language to criticize individuals and institutions. This study aims to describe the forms of sarcasm and reveal the representation of public distrust of political institutions in netizen comments on the Patinews Facebook account. The study used a qualitative approach, employing digital discourse analysis and Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework. The research data consisted of netizen comments on the Patinews post entitled "The DPRD, Kemanakah Disaat Rakyat Membutuhanmu?" published on August 12, 2025. Of the 1,607 available comments, 16 that contained elements of sarcasm were selected using purposive sampling. The results showed that sarcasm was represented in four main forms: negative labeling, distrust, calls for rejection, and comparative satire. The most dominant form is negative labeling, characterized by expressions such as "dagelan," "mafia," "small change," and "party officials" used to describe political institutions. Research findings indicate that sarcasm not only functions as a linguistic strategy to convey criticism, but also represents disappointment, a legitimacy crisis, and declining public trust in political institutions. Furthermore, sarcasm has evolved into a form of symbolic resistance used by society to oppose political practices deemed unfavorable to the people. This research contributes to the study of digital linguistics and discourse by demonstrating that sarcasm is a discursive practice closely related to power relations and democratic dynamics in the digital public sphere.

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INTRODUCTION

The use of social media in Indonesia is no longer limited to obtaining entertainment and information (Syafi Nur Maulidia, 2022). Indirectly, this platform is also used as a space to build various social movements in the community. Language not only serves as a means of communication, but also as a means of conveying information (Faroh et al., 2020). Language is used as a means of communication that functions to convey messages to others (Salma Lailika, 2020), (Febri Haryani, 2020). Humans carry out communication activities by involving language as an intermediate medium (Salma Lailika, 2020). Communication has a very important role because it is a means to achieve understanding and agreement between the parties involved. In social life and when building relationships with others, humans cannot be separated from the process of communication (Eva Wulandari & Asep Purwo Yudi Utomo, 2021). In practice, communication is carried out for various purposes, such as conveying information, asking questions, or finding solutions to a problem (Firmansyah & Solihati, 2022). Facebook is one of the social media that allows its users to communicate and share information through photos, videos, writings, and personal opinions (Ramadhani et al., 2025). Through this platform, account owners can build a network of friends, find information about other users, and establish and expand social relationships with fellow users (Tri Agus Susanto, 2022).

On methodological and substantial considerations relevant to the focus of the study. Patinews is one of the local digital media outlets that consistently publishes political events, crime news, and issues related to the performance of the DPRD in the Pati area and its surroundings. Based on the researcher's preliminary observations of several political-themed uploads, the comment section on the account showed a relatively high level of public participation. Evaluative, critical, and expressive responses dominated it. From the comments analyzed in the initial stage, several met the criteria for research data because they contained elements of sarcasm aimed at institutions and the political realm. These preliminary findings indicate that the Patinews account not only functions as a medium for disseminating information but also as a discursive space where people can express their views, criticisms, and dissatisfaction with emerging political issues. Thus, the Patinews account is seen as aligning with the purpose of the research, as it provides sufficient linguistic data to examine forms of sarcasm and reveal the representation of public

distrust of the DPR institution in the context of digital discourse.

One form of technological development can be seen in social media, which is the most widely used means by the public (Mukaromah et al., 2022). Language in digital communication tends to be more expressive and emotionally charged. (Azzura et al., 2025). Social media encompasses various digital services, such as blogs and web journals, social networks, wikis, and discussion forums. The large use of social media has also given rise to various new phenomena in the life of the digital society. One of the impacts that often arises is the rise of hate speech that can be conveyed freely, as well as acts of verbal bullying in cyberspace. (Armanda, 2024). The use of social media in Indonesia is no longer limited to entertainment and information. Indirectly, digital platforms are also used as spaces to build various social movements. Through social media, users can invite the public to criticize government policies, express rejection of certain institutional decisions, and influence public opinion on public figures who are considered controversial, including through sarcastic or insulting comments (Gora et al., 2022).

Public trust in DPRD members. In a democratic system like Indonesia's, the House of Representatives does not function solely as a collection of rules that govern people's lives, but also represents the values of justice that are expected to be felt, to voice the people's voices in a real way. Through these actions, people express criticism and voice aspirations through comments on social media (Mukaromah et al., 2022), as well as providing an assessment of policies that are considered not able to represent or meet the interests of the wider community (Musdolifah et al., 2025). Sarcasm is a sharper and rougher form of expression than irony or cynicism. This style of language contains bitter sarcasm and painful expressions of reproach (High School, 2021) and (Trio et al., 2022). Language is used as a means of communication to express feelings (Rosyada, 2024). The comments submitted by netizens on the account were mostly negative. This is due to the type of content uploaded, which generally features individuals who are considered to violate societal norms, social values, and legal rules. In response to this, netizens often make negative comments in a sarcastic tone. Sarcasm is used as a means to indirectly satirize or demean other parties, so that the commentary writer can avoid the consequences that may arise if the criticism or insult is conveyed openly and frontally (Armanda, 2024).

Previous studies have examined the use of sarcastic language across various media, especially on social media, a space for public interaction. Some

research generally focuses on the form and function of sarcasm in online communication, such as in news comment columns, Twitter, and other digital platforms. However, the novelty of this research lies in the study of sarcasm not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a discursive practice that constructs a representation of public distrust of political institutions in digital local media. Through Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis, this study reveals how netizens' sarcastic comments reflect criticism, disappointment, and a crisis of public trust in the DPR, DPRD, political parties, and people's representatives, who are the subjects of Patinews news. (Anggraeni et al., 2022)

As a solution, this study offers a more in-depth analysis of the form, meaning, and function of sarcasm in Facebook user comments on the Patinews account, while linking it to the public's distrust of members of the House of Representatives. This research is important because it can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of language in digital discourse, particularly how people express criticism, dissatisfaction, and assessments of others' aspirations through sarcasm on social media. In addition, the results of this research are expected to be an academic contribution to the study of linguistics, especially pragmatics and discourse analysis, as well as provide an overview of public attitudes and perceptions of political institutions in the digital communication space (Nurhayati & Sukarno, 2022)

This study aims to examine the use of sarcastic language style in digital discourse in the comments section of the Patinews Facebook account related to political issues. In particular, this study aims to identify various forms of sarcasm in user comments on the account, especially in uploads discussing political events or societal issues. In addition, this research also aims to analyze the meaning and function of the use of sarcasm in netizens' interactions, so that it can be understood how sarcasm is used as a communication strategy to convey criticism, sarcasm, and dissatisfaction with an event, and how human beings always interact and contribute to social life (Ulfatun, 2021) Furthermore, this study also seeks to reveal how the use of sarcasm in netizens' comments can represent the attitude and level of public trust in legal institutions, so that, through this analysis, an overview can be seen of the public's views and responses to the performance of people's representatives that occur in the digital public space (Hilmawan, 2022)

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach and digital discourse analysis. This approach is used to understand how sarcasm is used. When compared to irony and cynicism, sarcasm has a higher level of rudeness (Cahyo et al., 2020) by social media users in response to legal issues. Qualitative research aims to understand the meaning of a social phenomenon through analysis of the text, language, and context surrounding it. In the context of social media, discourse analysis can be used to see how public opinions, criticisms, or attitudes towards an issue are expressed through the language used in comments or posts. Discourse research on social media, using Norman Fairclough's theory, which is often used because it covers three main aspects, namely the text dimension, the discourse dimension, and the social practice dimension (Sari et al., 2025) The focus of this research is the comments from Facebook users on Patinews' political issue posts. The Patinews account was chosen because it is a local news outlet that often covers legal and social events in the community. The comment column on the upload is a space for the public to express opinions, criticisms, or reactions to the news conveyed. In social media, user comments often reflect public opinion and can show people's attitudes towards certain institutions (Mudiawati et al., 2023)

The determination of comments containing sarcasm in this study was carried out based on linguistic indicators that refer to the concept of sarcasm as the harshest, sharpest, and most likely form of sarcasm and tend to contain elements of ridicule, insults, or reproach against individuals and institutions (Keraf, 2019; High School, 2021; Trio et al., 2022). Operationally, a comment is categorized as sarcasm if it meets at least one of the following criteria: (1) contains negative labeling or derogatory expressions of a particular party; (2) show distrust explicitly through the choice of words that are cynical or disparaging; (3) contain an invitation to reject, condemn, or delegitimize individuals or institutions; and (4) using satirical comparisons to highlight the weaknesses or failures of the party who is the target of comments. The identification process was carried out by repeatedly reading all collected comments, and comments that met the indicators were selected as research data. To improve the validity of the analysis, the classification results are discussed with linguists or colleagues with expertise in linguistics to reach agreement on the sarcasm category used in the research.

The data in this study is in the form of comment text that contains elements of sarcasm on Patinews Facebook uploads Sarcasm in this study is

understood as a form of language that contains sarcasm, irony, or criticism that is conveyed indirectly (Istanbul, 2025) Sarcasm is often used by social media users to express dissatisfaction or distrust of a party or institution Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation methods. Researchers collected comments on Patinews' Facebook posts related to legal issues over a certain period. The selected comments are those that show the use of sarcastic language, irony, or sarcasm against legal institutions (Widiyanto et al., 2025). The data collection process involves reading all comments on relevant uploads and documenting those that align with the research focus. The selected data is then grouped based on the form of sarcasm that appears, for example, sarcasm in the form of sarcasm against law enforcement, sarcasm in the form of humor or irony, and sarcasm that shows distrust of the law enforcement process through social media, which presents a new space for the development of digital democracy (Ismail, 2023).

The next stage is data analysis using a discourse analysis approach. Discourse is a form of social practice that occurs in people's lives (Anjayani1, 2024) The analysis was carried out by examining the meaning of the language used in the comment and the context of the news that provided the background for the comment's appearance. The research data were obtained from netizens' comments on the Patinews Facebook account, which featured news on political institutions, such as the DPR, DPRD, political parties, and people's representatives, as well as money-politics practices. Data collection was carried out on uploads published during the August-September 2025 period. Of all uploads that met the research criteria, 1,607 comments were collected for the dataset. Based on the data filtering process using the purposive sampling technique, 16 comments were selected that met the research criteria, namely, containing elements of sarcasm that explicitly represent criticism, satirism, or distrust of political institutions.

The purposive sampling technique is used because this study does not aim to obtain statistical representation but rather selects data most relevant to the research focus. The data selection criteria include: (1) comments related to political institution issues reported by Patinews; (2) the comments contain elements of sarcasm in the form of sharp innuendo, ridicule, irony, or negative expressions; (3) the comments are written in Indonesian or Javanese that can be interpreted as meaningful; and (4) comments show attitudes, assessments, or responses to political institutions that are the object of the news. With these criteria,

the analyzed data is considered capable of representing the phenomenon of sarcasm that is the focus of the research.

The unit of analysis in this study is a complete comment that contains sarcasm. However, in the process of interpretation, the researcher also analyzed linguistic elements at the levels of words, phrases, and sentences that contributed to the sarcastic meaning of the comment. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using the Norman Fairclough Critical Discourse Analysis approach, which comprises three dimensions: text analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. The analysis was carried out to reveal the form of sarcasm, the constructed meaning, and the representation of public distrust of political institutions in the digital communication space. In discourse analysis, language is understood not only as a means of communication, but also as a way to convey ideas, criticisms, and views on a social phenomenon

The analysis process is carried out through several steps. First, the researcher reads all the comment data repeatedly to understand the context and meaning it contains. Second, the researcher identifies words, phrases, or sentences that indicate sarcasm. Third, the researcher interprets the comment's meaning by linking it to the legal issue discussed in the upload. Through this process, researchers can determine how sarcasm is used and how it reflects the public's attitude towards legal institutions. To maintain the validity of the data, this study employs contextual analysis, focusing on the relationships among comments, news content, and the social context behind their emergence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzes the verbal aspects of Patinews Facebook users' comments. Therefore, multimodal elements that are also present in digital interactions, such as emoticons, stickers, reactions (likes, loves, angry), images, and conversation structures in reply threads, are not yet part of the object of analysis. In fact, in the context of digital communication, these elements can strengthen, alter, or even obscure the meaning of sarcasm conveyed by users. Thus, the results of this study are more representative of sarcasm use at the level of verbal linguistics and do not encompass a broader multimodal dimension.

The data for this research were obtained from the Patinews account on Facebook, through an upload titled "The DPRD, Where Are the People Needing You?" published on August 12, 2025. They received a fairly high number of responses from Facebook users, with as many as 1,607 comments. Based on these comments, the researcher used

purposive sampling to select data aligned with the research objectives. Based on the criteria that have been set, 16 comments were selected that contained elements of sarcasm and were relevant to the focus of research on the representation of public distrust of political institutions. The upload can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1211809054296745&set=pb.100064029850892>.

Table 3.1 Nitizen Comment Data

No.	Account Name	Description/Commentary on Pati News
1	Sulis Penta	Criticizing the Pati DPRD because it is considered to be just a "dagelan" and not serious in carrying out the duties of the special committee. The writer feels that the DPRD gives the residents false hope.
2	Cipto Blora	Calling the DPRD acting carelessly or "gedabrus". This comment expresses dissatisfaction with the DPRD's behavior.
3	Sinoka	Said that the House of Representatives is not able to represent the people. This comment shows a loss of trust in the DPR institution.
4	Ora Ndue Jeneng Ben	Inviting the public not to vote for the House of Representatives anymore because they are considered unable to represent the people.
5	Pak E Danang	Insinuating the Pati DPRD as "party officers" and judging them against the Advanced Indonesia Coalition. This comment reflects the assumption that the DPRD is more on the party's side than on the people's side.
6	Jony van Ginkel	Criticizing the voting system, which is considered like the election of the head of the elementary school class, and is not transparent. The author assessed that other members were afraid to express different opinions.
7	Rusdi	Calling Sudewo arrogant and questioning why this behavior was allowed.

8	Squirt	Calling council members have bad speech or "cocot lejek". This is a form of criticism of the way the council speaks.
9	Mrs. Wito	Remembering the incident when residents once threw the Regent of Pati's sandals. This comment is used to show that the public is already very disappointed.
10	Yulius Hendra	Accusing the DPRD of having been "paid" and no longer being a representative of the people, but only a representative of the party.
11	Vishnu	Suggested that the House of Representatives be dissolved first before carrying out other actions or demonstrations.
12	Yusuf Azzakir	Calling the House of Representatives a "mafia" and asking the public to no longer believe in the promises of the House of Representatives.
13	Zeni Denian	Considering that the House of Representatives does not need to be elected again. He even invited the public to receive political money, but still did not vote for the DPR.
14	New Djeandro Boston	Stating that the House of Representatives is not a representative of the people and only acts "triflingly" or not seriously.
15	Ginger Drink	Briefly commented that only Nepal managed to hold a demonstration. This comment can be interpreted as a satire on the weak action in Indonesia.
16	Erwan Setyawan	Proposing that the DPRD be dissolved because it only spends the budget of the people of Pati without clear benefits.

Based on an analysis of netizens' comments on the Patinews Facebook account, sarcasm is used as a linguistic strategy to express dissatisfaction, disappointment, and distrust of legal and political institutions. These comments are not only emotional expressions but also represent social criticism of how public institutions operate and are considered not to be on the side of the community. In general, the forms of sarcasm that appear can be grouped into four categories, namely:

1. sarcasm in the form of insults or negative labeling,
 2. sarcasm in the form of satire on the performance of the institution,
 3. sarcasm in the form of an invitation to rejection or resistance,
 4. sarcasm that displays a loss of public trust.
- These findings show that sarcastic language is not only used to attack individuals but has evolved into a tool of political communication in the digital space.

Table 3.2 Classification of Forms of Sarcasm in Netizens' Comments

No.	Account Name	Forms of Sarcasm	Key Quotes	Represented Meanings
1	Sulis Penta	Pelabelan negative	"The DPRD is just a shambles"	The DPRD is considered not serious and only plays a symbolic role
2	Cipto Blora	Surviving the Land	"Gedabrus"	The DPRD is considered to be acting carelessly
3	Sinoka	Distrust	"The House of Representatives cannot represent the people"	Loss of institutional legitimacy
4	Ora Ndue Jeneng Ben	Invitation to decline	"Do not vote for the House of Representatives again"	Calls for political resistance
5	Pak E Danang	Ideological innuendo	"Party officer"	The DPRD is considered to defend the party more than the people
6	Jony van Ginkel	Comparative sarcasm	"Like the election of the elementary class president"	The system is considered unprofessional
7	Rusdi	Personal Pelabelan	"Arrogant"	Criticism of the character of officials
8	Squirt	Verbal sarcasm	"Cocot funnel"	Criticism of the council's way of speaking
9	Mrs. Wito	Sarkasme historis	Remembering the throwing of slippers	A symbol of long-standing public disillusionment
10	Yulius Hendra	Tuduhan blue	"Already paid"	The House of Representatives is considered not independent
11	Vishnu	Extreme solicitation	"The House of Representatives is dissolved"	Rejection of the existence of the institution
12	Yusuf Azzakir	Criminal labeling	"Mafia"	The House of Representatives is associated with illegal practices
13	Zeni Denian	Money politics innuendo	"Accept the money, do not choose"	Criticism of transactional democracy
14	New Djeandro Boston	Degrading labeling	"Receh"	The House of Representatives is seen as undignified
15	Ginger Drink	Sarcasm comparative	"Only Nepal has successfully demonstrated"	Criticism of weak public action
16	Erwan Setyawan	Invitation to dissolution	"DPRD dissolved"	Disappointment with budget use

The most prevalent form of sarcasm in netizens' comments is the negative labeling of the DPRD and other political institutions. Words such as "dagelan", "gedabrus", "dime", "mafia", and "party officer" indicate that the public no longer sees the institution as authoritative. On the contrary, the DPRD is portrayed as an institution that fails to fulfill its representational function.

Sulis Penta's comment calling the DPRD a "dgalan" shows the use of sarcasm in the form of symbolic insults. The word "dagelan" is usually used to refer to a comedy show or something lighthearted. In this context, the DPRD is not seen as a formal institution that works for the benefit of the people, but rather as a political actor. This sarcasm carries a strong meaning because it shifts

the image of the DPRD from a state institution to a subject of jokes.

Cipto Blora's use of the word "gedabrus" also illustrates a typical form of local sarcasm. The term contains the meaning of acting haphazardly, rudely, and without judgment. The use of local terms suggests that digital sarcasm does not always appear in formal language but often arises through regional vocabulary that is closer to the community's experience. These findings show that people use harsh language because they feel that formal communication channels can no longer accommodate their aspirations. Sarcasm then became an alternative channel to express criticism. The greater the disappointment with the institution, the sharper the language used, such as insinuating Majas, which are expressed with the sharpest and most crude meaning. (Istanbul, 2025)

Sarcasm as a Representation of Public Distrust

In addition to insults, sarcasm also appears as a sign of a loss of trust in legal and political institutions. The comments of Sinoka, Yulius Hendra, and Yusuf Azzakir show that the public no longer believes that the House of Representatives truly represents the people. Sinoka's comment that "the House of Representatives is incapable of representing the people" shows a crisis of legitimacy. In a democratic system, the House of Representatives is formed to be the representative of the people. However, when the public feels that the House of Representatives sides only with certain parties or groups, its function of representation collapses. These comments show that netizens are not only disappointed with certain individuals but with the institutional system as a whole.

The same thing can be seen in Mr. E Danang's comment that the DPRD is a "party officer". This phrase is very sarcastic because it changes the DPRD's identity from a people's representative to a political party's subordinate. The sarcasm shows that the public views DPRD members as more loyal to the party than to their constituents. Yulius Hendra's comment that the House of Representatives "has been paid" reflects suspicion about the institution's integrity. The accusation indicates that the public considers political decisions no longer based on the interests of the people but influenced by certain transactions and interests. Meanwhile, Yusuf Azzakir even used the term "mafia" to refer to the House of Representatives. The word "mafia" is usually associated with organized criminal networks. When this term is used to describe the House of Representatives, it indicates a very high level of

public distrust. Based on 16 data, the verifiable percentages are as follows:

Forms of Sarcasm	Amount of Data (f)
Pelabelan negative	6
Distrust	5
Invitation to decline	3
Digesting comparative	2
Total	16

Kecenderungan Bentuk Sarkasme

Distribusi 16 data komentar berdasarkan kategori sarkasme.



Based on an analysis of 16 sarcastic comments on the Patinews Facebook account, it was found that negative labeling was the most dominant form of sarcasm, with 6 data, followed by distrust with 5 data, invitation to rejection with 3 data, and comparative satire with 2 data. These findings show that netizens often express distrust of political institutions through derogatory labels or designations, rather than through other forms of sarcasm. This tendency indicates that sarcasm not only serves as a means of criticism but also as a representation of disillusionment and declining public trust in political institutions in the digital discussion space.

Sarcasm as a Form of Resistance and Resistance

Some of the comments contained not only sarcasm but also invitations to engage in political resistance. The comments from Ora Ndue Nama Ben, Wisnu, Zeni Denian, and Erwan Setyawan show that sarcasm can serve as a form of resistance. The sarcasm in the comments of Ora Ndue Jeneng Ben, Wisnu, Zeni Denian, and Erwan Setyawan shows that language on social media no longer serves only expressive functions but has become a means of political resistance. Netizens not only expressed their disappointment but also tried to build collective awareness and influence the political actions of other communities. Thus, sarcasm serves as a form of resistance against institutions considered to have failed to carry out the people's mandate.

Ora Ndue Jeneng Ben's comment, which reads "do not vote for the House of Representatives again," is a form of resistance directed at the mechanisms of electoral democracy. The sentence

seems simple, but it contains a strong political message. Netizens not only criticized the DPR's behavior but also urged the public to punish the institution through elections. In this context, elections are positioned as a space for people's resistance to representatives who are considered no longer on the side of the public. The call to "do not vote again" shows that the public views the change of political choice as the only way to stop the domination and injustice that the institution perpetrates.

This form of sarcasm also shows a shift from individual criticism to institutional rejection. If, in other comments, the public still highlights the behavior or words of certain members of the House of Representatives, then in this comment, the institution as a whole is rejected. In other words, netizens no longer see the problem as lying with individuals but with a political system that is considered to produce unqualified representatives of the people. Therefore, the comment can be understood as a form of delegitimization of the House of Representatives as a representative institution.

The comments by Wisnu and Erwan Setyawan, who proposed dissolving the DPRD, showed a more radical form of resistance. Sentences such as "the DPR should be dissolved" or "the DPRD only spends the people's budget" contain sarcasm that is destructive to the institution. If the previous comments were still oriented towards change through elections, then this comment actually rejects the institution's existence entirely. From the perspective of critical discourse analysis, the demand to dissolve institutions is a form of public distrust that has reached an extreme level. Netizens no longer believe the institution can be improved through internal reforms, so the proposed solution is to remove it from the system.

The sarcasm in the comment stemmed from the community's repeated social experiences. The public feels that the DPRD does not produce real change and is seen only as a burden on the budget and an arena for political interests. Therefore, the "just disbanded" comment cannot be understood solely as an outpouring of emotion, but rather as a symbol of collective frustration. Sarcasm is used to emphasize that the DPRD is considered to no longer benefit the community. In this case, extreme language is chosen to produce a strong emotional effect and attract the attention of other readers. On the other hand, Zeni Denian's comment, "accept the money, do not choose the person," shows a subtler form of resistance, but it carries a complex meaning. This comment is a satire on the practice of money politics that often occurs in elections.

Netizens seem to accept that distributing money ahead of the election has become a common practice. However, behind this sentence lies an attempt to counter the practice by reversing the logic. Money is received, but political choices are not given to the giver. Thus, society still gains material benefits, but is not subject to the political power built through transactions.

The comment contains two layers of meaning. First, there is a criticism of the transactional political culture. Money politics is seen as proof that candidates or parties are unable to gain support through quality, programs, and integrity, so they use money to buy people's votes. Second, the comment is a form of symbolic resistance from small communities. Netizens sought to show that people were not completely passive and could resist in creative ways. In this case, sarcasm serves to build awareness that people do not always have to be victims of political manipulation. When compared, the three forms of comments show different levels of resistance. The "do not vote for the House of Representatives again" comment reflects resistance through an electoral boycott. The comment "the House of Representatives is dissolved" reflects radical resistance that rejects the institution's existence. Meanwhile, the "accept the money, do not pick the person" comment shows symbolic resistance to the practice of money politics. Although different, the three have something in common: both stem from disappointment and loss of trust in political institutions.

These findings show that sarcasm on social media does not serve only as an expression of emotion or an insult. Sarcasm can also be an instrument of social mobilization. Through sharp, concise, and easy-to-understand language, netizens seek to influence public opinion and build solidarity among fellow social media users. In this context, social media has become a new arena for people to resist power. Sarcasm has become an alternative political language used when people feel that the formal channels are no longer able to represent their voices.

Table 3.3 The Function of Sarcasm in Netizens' Comments

The Function of Sarcasm	Comment Form	Purpose
Insulting	"dagelan", "receh", "cocot lejek"	Lowering the image of the institution
Insinuation	"party officer", "elementary class leader"	Showing dissatisfaction

Accusing	"already paid", "mafia"	Illustrating distrust
Invite	"Do not choose again, "dissolved	Encouraging social resistance
Compare	"Only Nepal has successfully demonstrated"	Showing the weaknesses of society

Based on the table, it can be understood that sarcasm in netizens' comments has various functions. Sarcasm is used not only to attack or mock but also to shape public opinion and encourage others to adopt the same attitude.

Analysis Based on Norman Fairclough's Perspective

If analyzed using Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis theory, these comments can be understood in three dimensions: text, discursive practice, and social practice (Haslina, 2023). At the text level, netizens' comments show a predominance of negative vocabulary. Words such as "mafia", "dgalan", "party officer", and "dime" serve to build a bad image of the DPR. The choice of words is deliberately used to produce a strong emotional effect. At the level of discursive practice, these comments appeared in response to Patinews' reporting on political conflicts and legal issues. Netizens read the news, then interpreted the event based on their social experiences. After that, they conveyed their opinions in a sarcastic tone. Thus, digital commentary does not stand alone, but is the result of an interaction between news texts, people's experiences, and perceptions of institutions.

At the level of social practice, the use of sarcasm indicates a crisis of trust in public institutions. Sarcasm arises because people feel that they no longer have room to be heard. When formal channels are considered ineffective, social media becomes an alternative arena to convey resistance. Therefore, the sarcasm in Patinews' comments can be understood as a social symptom that shows the strained relationship between the people and state institutions.

Research Novelty

This research has several elements of novelty that distinguish it from previous studies. The first novelty lies in the analysis's focus, which does not stop at identifying forms of sarcasm but also links the use of such language to the representation of public distrust of legal and political institutions. So far, most research on sarcasm on social media has focused more on the types of sarcasm, diction choices, or pragmatic functions in online

communication. Previous research has generally only explained that sarcasm is used to satirize, mock, or express negative emotions. However, this study goes further by showing that sarcasm is a social phenomenon reflecting a crisis of institutional legitimacy. The sarcastic language used by netizens does not appear randomly. However, it arises from the collective experience of people who no longer trust the institutions that are supposed to represent and protect them. Thus, this study places sarcasm not just as a linguistic phenomenon, but as an indicator of declining public trust in state institutions (Sosebi, 2025).

The second novelty lies in the data source used. This research used data from the Patinews Facebook account, a local media outlet closely connected to the lives of people in the region. Most previous research has relied on data from platforms such as Twitter and Instagram, as well as national media, which tend to feature large-scale, public political issues. In fact, the dynamics of public criticism of institutions are often more visible in the local media. Through Patinews, the community not only responds to national problems, but also responds to the policies, conflicts, and behaviors of political actors in their own environment. Therefore, the use of local media as a research object offers a new perspective on how local communities construct critical discourse through digital language.

The local context is also important because the form of sarcasm used has its own characteristics. Netizens on the Patinews account often use regional terms, everyday expressions, and vocabulary that reflect the local community's culture, such as "gedabrus", "dagelan", "cocot lejek", or "party officer". These expressions not only serve as mocking words but also reflect social and cultural values shared by the local community. Thus, this study shows that sarcasm on social media is not always universal but is influenced by users' cultural backgrounds and social experiences. This is a new finding because it shows that the language of criticism in local digital media differs from that in national media.

The third novelty is the finding that sarcasm serves not only as an overflow of emotion but also as a strategy of social and political resistance. This study found that netizens' comments did not stop at insults or sarcasm but evolved into invitations to take specific actions. For example, comments such as "do not vote for the House of Representatives again", "The House of Representatives should be dissolved", or "accept the money, do not vote for the person" suggest that sarcasm has been used to influence other readers and build collective awareness. In this context, sarcasm serves as a tool

of social mobilization. Netizens use sharp, provocative language to urge the public to reject political practices deemed detrimental to the people.

These findings show that social media is no longer just a space to vent emotions or make spontaneous comments, but has become an arena of symbolic resistance. Sarcastic language is used to build solidarity among fellow social media users. When one person writes a sarcastic comment, it often gains support from other users in the form of replies, likes, or repetitions of the same phrase. Thus, sarcasm becomes a mechanism to strengthen the collective identity of people who feel disadvantaged by political and legal institutions. In these conditions, social media serves as an alternative public space where the public can express criticism when formal channels are deemed ineffective.

In addition, this study shows a close relationship between language choice and political action. Seemingly simple comments have broader implications for the formation of public opinion. The call to "do not vote again" can affect people's political attitudes in the next election. The invitation to "just disband" can reinforce negative sentiments towards institutions. Even insinuations against money politics can encourage people to be more critical of transactional democratic practices. In other words, language in social media has a performative power, that is, the ability to not only describe reality, but also shape social and political reality.

Overall, the results of this study show that sarcastic comments on Patinews' Facebook account are not merely spontaneous anger or momentary outbursts. These comments represent a deep distrust of legal and political institutions. Sarcasm is a medium for people to express criticism, build solidarity, voice disappointment, and resist social conditions they consider unfair. Therefore, this study makes a new contribution to the study of linguistics and the analysis of digital discourse by showing that sarcasm is not only a matter of language style but also closely related to power relations, legitimacy crises, and democratic dynamics in society.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the use of sarcastic language in netizens' comments on the Patinews Facebook account serves as a means of expressing dissatisfaction and social criticism, and of representing public distrust of legal and political institutions. Sarcasm appears in various forms, such as negative labeling, innuendo about the institution's performance, invitations to resistance,

and expressions of a loss of legitimacy. These findings confirm that sarcasm is not only linguistic, but also reflects social conditions, namely the crisis of public trust in public institutions. In addition, sarcasm is evolving into a tool of political communication and a form of symbolic resistance in the digital space, which shows that social media has become an alternative arena for people to voice their aspirations when formal channels are considered ineffective.

Based on the results of this study, it is suggested that future research expand its scope to other social media platforms to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the use of sarcasm in digital discourse. In addition, legal and political institutions are expected to use these findings as a reflection material to understand public perception and improve transparency and performance so that public trust can be restored. For education and linguistics practitioners, the results of this research can serve as learning materials on the use of language in digital social contexts, especially for understanding the relationship between language, power, and social criticism.

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