

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives an overview of the study. It explains the background and reasons for choosing the topic an analysis of verbal humor used in TikTok comments about *Merah Putih: One for All*. It also presents the research questions, objectives, and significance of the study. In addition, the scope and limitation of the thesis are outlined to provide a clear direction for the research.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is the primary tool for human use to communicate, convey thoughts and feelings, and build social interactions. According to Purnamasari (2015) Language is not only used for conveying messages but also reflects human social interaction. Language and communication have an inseparable relationship, because through language humans not only exchange information but also construct identities, norms, and cultural values. According to Jundiyaturrahman et al. (2025) language use is not limited to literal meaning, it also involves how speakers imply, how they flout or violate cooperative norms, and how indirect speech acts.

Humor is one form of language use. Humor will always necessarily happen as long as people use language to communicate. According to Umamah et al. (2023) Humor is a basic human need that serves as entertainment to relieve the mind from life's pressures and problems. Sofia (2022) states interacting with others can reduce the burden on our thoughts especially interactions that are accompanied by jokes that make us laugh and forget the freedom in our minds. Humor is usually accompanied by laughter, an emotional response triggered by verbal or non-verbal actions. Non-verbal is characterized by doing some acts which draws any topics or situations that make laughter. It is different from verbal humor which is characterized by some amusing utterances. According to Dynel (2009) Non-verbal humor refers to humor that emerges from visual elements, such as pictures or body language, whereas verbal humor is produced through the use of language or text. Verbal humor specifically refers to humor conveyed through words, spoken or

written. For example, Shade (1996) presents the joke, “What kinds of flowers like to be kissed?” “A tulip (two lips),” in which the humor is created through a play on words between *tulip* and *two lips*. Therefore, According to Dynel (2009) Verbal humor is understood as that produced by means of language or text.

In the digital era, humor is more commonly found in interactions on social media. According to Kasni & Budiarta (2025) In contemporary contexts, humor is not only embedded in everyday conversations but also widely disseminated across social media platforms. According to Ali & Husain (2024) Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have become virtual public spaces where users can participate in discussions, exchange ideas, and disseminate content on an unprecedented scale. One of the most popular platforms today is TikTok. TikTok provides an interactive environment where users respond directly and spontaneously to video content through the comment section. This interaction pattern allows verbal humor to appear in a contextual and concise form. Choosing TikTok is important because these characteristics make it possible to observe how verbal humor functions naturally in digital communication, especially as a means of expression beyond entertainment. TikTok is not only a source of entertainment, but also a public discussion forum in which people are free to express their opinions and criticisms. According to Muyassaroh (2025) In the digital age, social media has become the most popular platform for self-expression. TikTok comment sections are often filled with humorous expressions that mock or criticize certain content. According to Purnamasari (2025) On platforms such as TikTok, millions of interactions occur daily and fast-paced algorithms often lead users to comment impulsively. In this context, verbal humor becomes a dominant form of communication, appearing in the form of sarcasm, irony, and parody, which often carry implicit meanings that can be analyzed through pragmatic.

This phenomenon is also seen in the context of Indonesian cinema, particularly in the animated film *Merah Putih: One for All*. The film was produced to celebrate Indonesia's 80th Independence Day, carrying a spirit of unity and

nationalism. However, instead of receiving positive reviews, the film was met with harsh criticism from the public. Since the trailer was first shown, the film received a lot of criticism, particularly regarding its visual quality, which many viewers considered unfinished and below public expectations. According to *UB Academics Harshly Criticize the Film “Merah Putih: One for All,”* (2025) The film which was expected to foster a spirit of nationalism, failed to demonstrate the quality of a professional film and the film unfit for screening in theaters because its quality was far below standard. These criticisms quickly appeared in TikTok comment sections, where humorous expressions such as sarcasm and parody. For example, the comment “*When will this air? I’m afraid I won’t get a ticket*” shows how users creatively express disappointment and concern using humor. According to Umamah et al. (2023) Humor can also be used as criticism and in the form of implied satire, but contains nuances of laughter. This phenomenon shows that TikTok users frequently employ verbal humor such as sarcasm, irony, satire, parody, puns as a way to express their criticisms and evaluate the film, making verbal humor an important linguistic tool in shaping public responses within the digital space.

The urgency of this research is due to the need to further understand the dynamics of public communication in the digital space. Pragmatic analysis allows us to see not only the content of comments, but also how they are constructed, the hidden meanings behind them, and their impact on public discourse. According to Malik & Zahra (2022) pragmatics not only comprehends the meanings of words but also recognizes what is meant by speakers in their utterances. This study is also important because research on verbal humor in the context of TikTok comments on national films is still relatively limited, thus offering a new contribution to the fields of pragmatic linguistics and humor studies. In addition, this study can provide practical implications for Indonesian filmmakers and the film industry in understanding how audiences express their criticism, thereby providing valuable input for improving the quality of future productions.

Several previous studies have examined verbal humor and its use across various digital platforms, particularly within social media interactions. These studies generally focus on identifying the types of verbal humor used by online users and analyzing the pragmatic functions that humor performs in digital communication. However, existing research has not specifically explored the types and functions of verbal humor in TikTok comments responding to content related to the animated film *Merah Putih: One for All*. Moreover, previous studies often examine either humor types or humor functions separately, without combining both aspects in a single analysis. Therefore, this study was conducted to fill this gap by analyzing both the types of verbal humor, based on Shade's (1996) classification, and their pragmatic functions, as described by Wijana's (2014), within TikTok comments discussing the film.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the above background, the following research questions are formulated:

1. What are the types of verbal humor used in TikTok comments responding to the film *Merah Putih: One for All*?
2. What are the functions of verbal humor used in TikTok comments responding to the film *Merah Putih: One for All*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In accordance with the problems taken, the objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the types of verbal humor used in TikTok comments responding to the film *Merah Putih: One for All*.
2. To analyze the functions of verbal humor used in TikTok comments responding to the film *Merah Putih: One for Al*

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the study of language and communication, particularly in the field of pragmatics and humor.

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the understanding of verbal humor from a pragmatic perspective, especially in the context of online communication. By applying Shade's (1996) theory for identifying types of verbal humor and Wijana's (2014) framework for analyzing their social and interactional functions which can be interpreted from a pragmatic perspective this research contributes to the development of linguistic studies by examining how humorous expressions in TikTok comments function not only as entertainment but also as a medium for social commentary and criticism. Furthermore, it may serve as a reference for future researchers who wish to explore the types and functions of verbal humor in different online platforms or social phenomena.

2. Practical Significance

This study is expected to provide benefits for readers, particularly students of the English Study Program, by helping them understand how verbal humor is constructed and used in digital communication. Through the analysis of the types and functions of verbal humor found in TikTok comments, readers can learn how humorous expressions convey meanings, opinions, criticism, and social responses in online interactions. It also raises awareness that humor on social media is not merely for entertainment but can function as a creative medium for communication. Furthermore, this study may serve as a reference for future research related to verbal humor and language use on social media.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is pragmatics and focuses on the analysis of verbal humor in digital communication. Specifically, this study examines the types and functions of verbal humor found in TikTok comments responding to the animated film *Merah Putih: One for All*. The types of verbal humor are analyzed using Shade's (1996) classification, while the functions of verbal humor are analyzed based on Wijana's (2014) theory.

This study is limited to the analysis of verbal, text-based humor and does not include non-verbal, visual, or multimodal elements such as emojis, sounds, or video content. The data are restricted to a specific set of TikTok posts related to the animated film *Merah Putih: One for All*, focusing only on comments that clearly exhibit humorous intent. The comments were collected from a TikTok video uploaded on August 9, 2025, and include comments posted between August 9, 2025, and February 1, 2026, when the data analysis began. The analysis is confined to the linguistic and social-interactional dimensions of humor, emphasizing how the types and functions of verbal humor reflect users' ways of expressing opinions, criticism, and social commentary through language. Furthermore, this research does not evaluate the film itself but rather focuses on how TikTok users employ verbal humor as a form of social and pragmatic interaction within the online community.