

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

Rapid developments in the fields of science and technology have had a significant impact on the way humans communicate (Subramanian, 2018). In the current era, many individuals rely on tools to communicate virtually. This virtual communication refers to the way humans interact, connect, access or receive information via the internet by utilizing digital platforms. This form of virtual communication is better known as *social media*. In this term, *social media* refers to digital platforms, services and apps built around the convergence of content sharing, public communication, and interpersonal connection (Burgess et al., 2018).

According to Angus, Thelwall and Stuart (2008), social media furnishes individuals with information in any sector of life. According to Lewis (2010), social media is an umbrella term for technologies that provides space for people to create and send content, link up, and connect with others. Currently, there are various social media platforms that can be accessed easily. Some examples include Facebook, Instagram, and X. Each social media platform has unique characteristics and special capabilities. For example, Facebook is used to share statuses, share experiences, communicate via messages, comment on photos or videos, and promote products. On the other hand, Instagram became one of the first social media platforms to allow users to share stories in the form of videos or images through the "story" feature. Overall, social media is unique. So is X, even

though it has features that are similar to other social media platforms, it has the advantage of having a *trending hashtags* feature which allows users to track topics that are popular throughout the world. This is the main advantage of X. On X, there is a *trending hashtag* feature which can keep us updated with issues that exist throughout the world. The issues brought up in X also vary, starting from entertainment arts, films, music and political cartoons.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the interest of many individuals in political issues. Politics refers to a range of actions related to decision-making processes within groups or power dynamics that exist between individuals. Political activities involve both governments and citizens as a whole. In essence, politics is how governments manage their populations. The government will formulate regulations or policies to address the various challenges faced by the country. Policies that are considered detrimental will be criticized and opposed. This criticism can be expressed in many forms, including mass protests in front of the government, the creation of viral topics on social media to voice concerns about the things they criticize, and the expression of criticism through cartoon art.

According to Herkman (2019), political cartoons serve as a form of expression that, while critical and humorous, doesn't pose a direct threat to those in political positions of power. In the context of politics, cartoons are often used to describe political situations that are often used as mockery and imply sharp criticism of the behavior and policies of political figures that are of concern to the public (Sani et al., 2012). The aim of political cartoons is to satirize and therefore

to criticize politics and politicians, meaning that most of the sample cartoons portrayed the politicians in a critical light.

Furthermore, the political cartoon always uses a great political figure or an influential figure to demonstrate the cartoon's strength. Vladimir Putin is a famous political figure on a global scale. Putin holds the position of President in the Russian Federation. Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin is the leader's full name. Putin assumed the presidency of Russia on May 7, 2012, and has been in charge ever since. In general, Vladimir Putin has power over the Russian government, monitoring his administration and shaping policies that have attracted global scrutiny. He encourages public participation by permitting the critique of policies and the sharing of opinions through media such as political cartoons.

Nowadays, satire can be found in many artistic forms of expression, literature, commentary, media such as lyric, comic, television show, and also cartoons. Cartoons as media communication have a big role in sharing information and entertainment. This research analyzes satire in political cartoons. As the political cartoon is a multimodal text with multiple modes, the researcher employs the multimodal discourse analysis proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) as a theory of analysis.

Satire is a kind of communication characterized by aggression, judgment, ridicule, playfulness, laughter, and references to social norms. The political application of humor has been analyzed within the framework of 'satire': a concept that conveys the notion of humor as a culturally significant political strategy (Holm, 2023). It offers social commentary and criticism, challenges power

structures, and contributes to controversial societal discussions. Satirists are frequently regarded as reliable authorities and can act as influential figures for the audience (Crittenden et al., 2011). Abrams classifies satire into two different types: formal satire, which is additionally divided into Horatian and Juvenalian satire. Then a type of satire that is informal and consists solely of Mennipean satire.

Several studies have examined satire. Hidayani and Mahanini's (2022) paper, uses Abrams & Harpham's (2014) framework to analyze the film's multiple satires. Zootopia's utopian depiction is also examined. Three varieties of satire were found, with Juvenalian satire dominating due to its harsh and critical language. In Andry and Syarif (2022) examined the political observer's different satire styles and approaches. In a descriptive study, inflation was the prevalent tactic 38.9% of the time and Juvenalian satire 57.3%. Next, Rahma, Lubis, and Perangin-angin (2023) study. The show Daily Show with Trevor Noah is known for its wit, analysis, and humor. It criticizes society using Horatian, juvenile, and Menippean satire. Comparing six episodes using a qualitative descriptive design, the study shows that satire remains effective at expressing criticism. This shows that satirists can express important messages through sacrificial conclusions regardless of their creative approach.

According to those previous studies, multimodal discourse analysis rarely focused on Putin's political cartoons, especially satire. The researcher chose Putin for a political cartoon because he supported controversial ideas, unlike other foreign leaders. After that, the researcher chose X as a data source because on the

platform there were many cartoonists who shared their work, whether it was about simple funny cartoons or specific ones such as political cartoons. This analysis was conducted by examining the verbal and visual elements of multimodal discourse, as proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006).

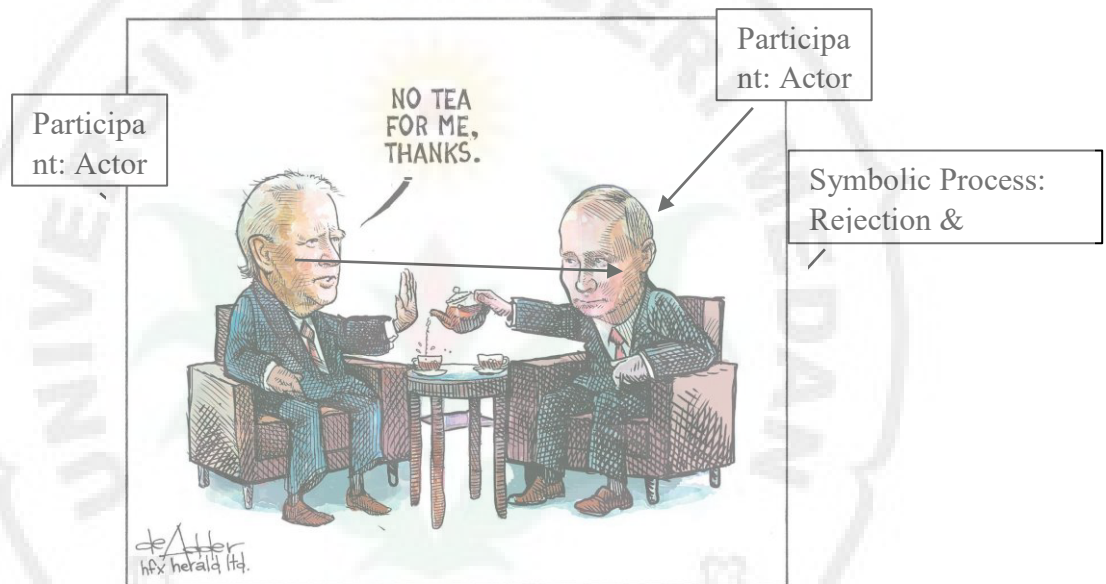


Figure 1. Preliminary Data

According to Abrams and Harpham, the political cartoon that features Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin is classified as Horatian satire. This kind of satire is distinguished by a kind, lighthearted criticism of human stupidity and foolishness. The cartoon makes fun of the tense diplomatic ties between the two leaders in order to make its point.

The satire is communicated through the interplay of verbal and visual aspects. The diplomatic context is emphasized by the formal setting (locative circumstance) and the symbolic use of the tea set (accompaniment circumstance). In combination with the speech bubble that says "No tea for me, thanks," Biden's refusal motion indicates that he has rejected Putin's proposal.

The visual components highlight the distance and lack of warmth in their connection by showing Putin's proactive offer and Biden's defensive posture. Together, these components form a story that subtly parodies the diplomatic trouble, highlighting the Horatian satire of the cartoon.

### **B. Problem of the Study**

The problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What are the verbal and visual elements found in the Vladimir Putin political cartoons?
2. How do political cartoons represent satire?

### **C. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are formulated into two as follows:

1. To find out what verbal and visual elements found in the Vladimir Putin political cartoons.
2. To explore satire represented in political cartoons featuring Vladimir Putin.

### **D. Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study only focused on the multimodal verbal and visual satire values in 8 selected political cartoons. This research was conducted to describe the satire representation of each multimodal verbal and visual element in the political cartoons using the multimodal discourse theory by Kress and Leeuwen (2006) and the categories of satire proposed by Abrams & Harpham (2015).

### **E. Significance of the Study**

Findings of this study are expected to give theoretical and practical significance.

Theoretically the findings of the study potentially:

1. Enrich theories of literature
2. Become a reference for further studies that will be discussing satire.

Practically the findings are useful for:

1. To provide deeper insight into the complexity of satire representation in cartoons artwork.
2. To provide a basis for a better understanding of how the concept of satire emerged and developed in the context of political cartoons.

