

HUMOROUS TRANSLANGUAGING AND PLAYFUL DISCOURSE ON INDONESIAN TWITTER: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Dwi Indarti^{1,2*}; Luciana²

¹English Department, Bina Sarana Informatika University
Jakarta, Indonesia 10450

²Doctoral Program in Applied English Linguistics, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia
Jakarta, Indonesia 12930

¹dwi.diw@bsi.ac.id; ²luciana@atmajaya.ac.id

Received: 22nd May 2025/**Revised:** 13th August 2025/**Accepted:** 22nd August 2025

How to Cite: Indarti, D., & Luciana. (2025). Humorous translanguaging and playful discourse on Indonesian twitter: A critical discourse analysis. *Lingua Cultura*, 19(2), 121-129. <https://doi.org/10.21512/lc.v19i2.13616>

ABSTRACT

Humor and translanguaging are increasingly prominent in digital communication; however, limited research has explored their intersection in Indonesian social media discourse, where local and global languages creatively merge. This gap leaves unanswered questions about how humorous and multilingual practices operate in online spaces, especially in contexts of cultural hybridity and diverse language contact. This study examines linguistic creativity in humorous translanguaging on Indonesian social media, specifically on the X platform (formerly Twitter). Using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research analyzes three humorous tweets posted by the popular Indonesian account @handokotjung, focusing on spelling manipulation, wordplay, and puns. The findings reveal that users blend multiple languages, including Indonesian, English, Sundanese, and Arabic loanwords, to produce homophonic, homonymic, and semantically playful expressions that resonate with emotional, cultural, and relational themes. The playful discourse in these tweets evokes humor while also communicating messages of romantic longing, cultural belonging, and sociolinguistic negotiation. The study underscores five aspects of humorous translanguaging in digital discourse: fostering inclusivity, showcasing linguistic inventiveness, enabling emotional expression, enhancing virality, and transcending language boundaries. These insights contribute to understanding how digital users utilize hybrid linguistic resources to construct identities, critique social norms, and create shared meaning in online communities. By foregrounding intersections among humor, creativity, and multilingual expression, this research offers a nuanced lens on evolving dynamics of language use in the digital era and highlights the pedagogical and sociocultural relevance of humorous translanguaging practices.

Keywords: playful discourse, humor translanguaging, CDA

INTRODUCTION

In the present era of globalization and mobility, languages, dialects, and styles accompany their respective speakers around the globe. When more than one language comes into contact, they influence one another and borrow components or linguistic properties, inevitably leading to linguistic hybridity. Hybridity occurs when two languages in speech, spelling, and expressions encounter distinct linguistic consciousness, discerned differently across time,

social, and political spheres, but converge within the realm of spoken or written texts (Hopkyns et al., 2021; Hoon, 2021). English, as a global language, undergoes hybridization through its interactions with other languages and the creative language use of bilingual individuals (Dewan & Laksamba, 2020). This hybridity has emerged in various educational and social contexts through the practice of translanguaging. Duarte (2020) exemplifies the implementation of a translanguaging-based approach in two settings of mainstream education from Luxembourg and the Netherlands,

considering its functions in conveying instructional purposes. Umam et al. (2023) explored how EFL teachers and students in higher education constructed a translanguaging space during their interactions on a digital learning platform by employing various negotiation strategies and multimodal resources. The integration of verbal, semiotic, and multimodal elements as tools for negotiating meaning facilitated fluid, dynamic communication. Afriadi and Hamzah (2021) investigate how both teachers and students use their whole-language repertoires through translanguaging during classroom interactions and the roles these practices play in the learning process. The findings reveal that classroom talk used local, national, and English. The local language was primarily employed for non-instructional purposes, such as making jokes. In contrast, both the national language and English were used for instructional functions, including explaining concepts, offering clarification, and managing classroom activities. Meanwhile, as it penetrates the social realm, hybridity has also been captured dynamically in traditional markets. The multilingual community there has vibrantly shown a site of hybridity through word insertion, invented-word insertion, loan-word insertion, phrase insertion, reduplication, and regional-language particle insertion. The dynamic and functional emergence of a seamless mixture of different languages can serve as a process of knowledge construction when the concept of translanguaging is adopted (Munirah, Thaba, & Yusuf, 2021).

Such practice, when framed within translanguaging, can also be observed in social media discourses, where translanguaging serves as an online platform for people to establish social connections and, through humor, express their thoughts. Humor is a mundane human attribute referring to actions considered amusing, leading to laughter, and the processes involved in generating and understanding such actions, along with the resulting sense of humor (Sahayu et al., 2022). Not only is humor a means of entertainment to release psychological stress, but it is also an instrument for analyzing various forms of societal inequality and phenomena in the community (Damanik & Mulyadi, 2020).

Humor plays a crucial role in shaping social dynamics on social media platforms, often reflecting cultural nuances and serving as a tool for satire that critiques societal issues and romance. Romance is one of the intricate dynamics of human relationships, and humor creates a comfortable atmosphere that encourages truthfulness, as romance often involves a high level of emotional intimacy and vulnerability (Turliuc et al., 2021). Flirting and playfulness are integral to romantic relationships, and humor serves as a medium for expressing affection and excitement. Humor also contributes to a positive, enjoyable atmosphere that strengthens emotional connections between individuals (Lu et al., 2023). In the context of a romantic relationship, humor serves three crucial roles: it amplifies the pleasure derived from shared

experiences, establishes a common ground for the partners, and strengthens the alignment of values and perspectives between each individual (Turliuc et al., 2021)

Simon & Donian (2025) and Attardo (2023) argue that the concepts of humor, transaction, and audience undergo significant redefinition when a simple joke, initially shared between two individuals, can disseminate globally, embodying laughter in a digitally driven manner that mirrors its evolutionary nature. As humor flourishes on social media, it becomes a phenomenon that needs greater acknowledgment and examination from scholars (Bernad-Mecho & Giron-Garcia, 2023; Alkaraki et al., 2024). Al-Daher et al. (2022) Examine 197 COVID-19 jokes shared on Jordanian Facebook pages from March to October 2020. Using the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH), the jokes were analyzed thematically and linguistically through a mixed-methods approach. They were grouped into eight categories, including government policies, lockdown effects, and online learning. Findings show that the jokes align with GTVH's six Knowledge Resources and often employ lexical strategies such as synonymy, antonymy, and wordplay. Heiss and Matthes (2021) argue that citizens on Social Network Sites (SNS) often encounter political content embedded with humorous materials, such as comedic videos or images. Drawing on evidence from two experimental studies and a two-wave panel study, their research examines how exposure to politically relevant information within humorous contexts influences message elaboration and its subsequent impact on political knowledge and participation. Findings from experimental studies suggest that incidental exposure to politically framed humor can enhance individuals' cognitive processing of the message, thereby increasing political knowledge and engagement. Consistent with these results, the panel study showed that humorous content fostered message elaboration primarily among users who infrequently rely on SNS for news. Conversely, among frequent SNS news consumers, exposure to humor appeared to reduce message elaboration. Chavez et al. (2023) examined how gender-based humor on social media reflects various levels of discriminatory practices, including linguistic bias against women and LGBTQ individuals, and the use of stereotypes that undermine their identities. Employing discourse analysis, the authors analyzed online posts and comments from fourteen individual profiles, focusing on key narratives derived from gender-related humorous content to identify recurring message patterns. The findings revealed that gender-based humor online plays a significant role in shaping biased messages, often targeting women and LGBTQ communities. Such humor frequently carries both overt and subtle messages that portray these groups as inferior. The study argues that gender-based humor perpetuates social hierarchies and functions as a normalized form of marginalization within digital platforms. Meanwhile, to showcase the diverse forms

of humor on social media, Elayan et al., (2022) draw upon humorous expressions from Twitter as illustrative examples. Their analysis focuses on humor within the Arabic cultural context; automated humor detection could independently comprehend public reactions. In brief, humor conveys shared beliefs and values while efficiently nourishing participants in shaping their contextualized sense of social identity. (Wijana, 2023).

As the processes of bilingualism and multilingualism are evolving into a more dynamic state, translanguaging is now used to characterize the complex language practices of bi/multilingual speakers (Liu & Fang, 2020). In recent times, there has been a renewed emphasis on translanguaging, expanding its scope to include multimodality and multimodal semiotics, incorporating resources such as gestures, objects, visual cues, touch, tone, sounds, and words (Retnowaty, 2025). A study by Ghajarieh et al. (2023) examines the intersection of translanguaging, language education, and audiovisual media, with particular emphasis on wordplay in translation studies. Recognizing the crucial role of wordplay in producing humor in audiovisual content, the study highlights the challenges translators face in preserving both comedic elements and cultural context. Findings revealed that lexical-semantic wordplay and the use of 'no wordplay' strategies were the most frequently employed. Lin et al. (2024) examine how and why translanguaging functions in the creation of dad jokes on the Chinese microblogging platform Weibo. Grounded in translanguaging theory and employing a qualitative phenomenological method, the study identifies four types of boundary-crossing language play: interlingual, image-based, trans-semiotic, and intercultural translanguaging. Data collected through semi-structured online interviews with voluntary participants indicate that these inventive uses of language enhance the humorous effects of dad jokes and foster a playful translanguaging environment for online audiences. Meanwhile, a study by Peng et al. (2023) aimed to analyze the sociolinguistic evaluation of Chinese-English bilingual puns as a significant factor in creating literal humor and rhetorical jokes. The findings indicate that Chinese-English puns predominantly manifest at the word level, with bilingual homophones serving as the core of puns on commercial signage in Guangzhou. These bilingual puns demonstrate an emerging aspect of translanguaging in the public spaces. These studies contribute to our understanding of the dynamic and multifaceted nature of translanguaging in contemporary linguistic contexts.

In the digital age, fostering creativity emerges as a crucial concern. Linguistic creativity has the potential to enhance inventiveness and resourcefulness, and humor is viewed as a valuable instrument for cultivating individual creativity (Aleksandrova, 2022). Language is constantly evolving, and people have been playing with words, sounds, and spellings. People intentionally change the spelling of words and use wordplay for creative purposes. Wordplay, commonly

recognized as a literary technique and a form of wit, has a long and rich history, dating back to the origins of language itself (Safina & Kosheleva, 2025). Brezolin & Medeiros (2021) define wordplay as, "Any clever and creative manipulation through the confrontation of meaning and forms of one or two words, or multi-word combinations, capable of causing in readers, listeners, viewers, a primary reaction of surprise; this, in turn, can lead to various effects such as amusement, comedy, critique, drama, satire and humor" (p. 17). Furthermore, Mihalic (2025) clarified that the use of wordplay technique is based on various aspects of rhetoric, encompassing elements such as spelling, phonetics (the sound and pronunciation of words), and semantics. Cook (2000) categories wordplay into three types: (1) involves purposeful manipulation of morphology, syntax, letters, repetition, and alliteration, (2) revolves around semantic play, where combinations of primary word meanings generate new meanings, and (3) involves play with the frame as it is described as "largely meta-linguistic and occurs on the level of understanding."

Pun as a form of wordplay is typically characterized as a deliberate communicative strategy, or the result thereof, used with a specific semantic or pragmatic effect in mind (Kholmatov et al., 2022). Puns highlight the arbitrary nature of language, demonstrating that identical sounds can convey drastically different meanings. According to Saadah et al. (2024) pun involves various features, such as phonological, graphological, orthographic, morphological, syntactic, or semantic. Furthermore, they outlined universal ways in which linguistic phenomena can exhibit similarities in which they share a common form: words can be identical in spelling and pronunciation (homonymy), identical in pronunciation but different in spelling (homophony), identical in spelling but different in pronunciation (homography), or different in spelling and pronunciation (paronymy). Based on the study conducted by Mohammed (2019), there are five functions of pun: (1) Linguistic functions – a pun has the power to not only inspire significant actions but also contribute to storytelling, and it can serve as the instrument of knowledge. (2) Poetic function – pun is essentially rooted in the poetic elements of language. In poetry, the text relies on verbal equations as a constructive principle. Various elements of the verbal code, such as syntactic and morphological categories, roots, affixes, phonemes, and distinctive features, are arranged in an interconnected manner based on the principles of similarity and contrast. This arrangement creates autonomous meanings, while the phonemic similarity is perceived as a form of semantic relationship. (3) Attention-grabbing device - pun serves to lighten the mood by leveraging linguistic surprise and clever wordplay to captivate the audience's attention. (4) Social function – puns function socially in humor by fostering connection, serving as icebreakers, and easing social tension. (5) Entertainment function – People play with language when they manipulate it as a source of enjoyment,

either for their own or for the entertainment of others.

Previous studies on humor have underscored its multifaceted role as a discourse strategy, highlighting the intricate ways it functions across diverse social contexts. Employing linguistic creativity, humor addresses societal issues and contributes to the construction of social identity. (Damanik & Mulyadi, 2020; Tavoli et al., 2022; Nganga, 2023; Mensah et al., 2023). Thus, this study offers a new lens to explore the subtleties of humor by examining its online presence in a multicultural context and its translanguaging properties. Given the scarcity of such studies, this study aims to enhance playful discourse to deepen understanding of humor enacted in a digital landscape. Departing from the gap, the objectives of the study are first, to explore forms of playful discourse within humorous translanguaging in social media, and second, to analyze how playful discourse within humorous translanguaging reflects and shapes social norms and cultural perceptions in the digital age.

METHODS

This study employed Fairclough's (2003) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which examines discourse through three interconnected stages: description (analyzing linguistic features in the text), interpretation (exploring the processes of text production and reception, and explanation (relating the discourse to its broader social context. This framework enables an integrated analysis of how humorous translanguaging reflects linguistic creativity and socio-cultural meaning. This study was guided by the following research questions: (1) What forms of playful discourse emerge within humorous translanguaging on Indonesian social media? (2) How do these humorous translanguaging practices reflect and shape social norms and cultural perceptions in the digital age?

Twitter, currently called X, is a social media platform that allows users to post short messages up to 280 characters long, namely tweets. The data source was an Indonesian Twitter account, namely @handokotjung, given his witty creativity and more than six hundred thousand followers. In line with ethical research practices for using publicly available social media content, only tweets that were already publicly accessible at the time of data collection were analyzed, and no private or identifying information beyond the username was disclosed. The analysis focused solely on linguistic and cultural aspects, without altering or misrepresenting the original context of the posts.

The data for this study consist of three *pantun* or humorous rhyming translanguaging tweets with relationship themes, posted by @handokotjung between 2022-2023. A *pantun*, a traditional poetic form in Malay culture, is categorized as a folklore genre. Its structure deviates from the typical conventions of English poetry, emphasizing rhyme, rhythm, and concise expression. Typically composed of four-line

stanzas, a *pantun* often follows an A-A-B-B or A-B-A-B rhyme scheme. Relationship-themed tweets can be an interesting topic for analysis, as they offer insight into the complex dynamics of human relationships, an essential aspect of people's lives.

The analytical steps were as follows: (1) Description: examining diction, structure, and linguistic devices, such as spelling manipulation, wordplay, and puns, in each tweet. (2) Interpretation: identifying how translanguaging and creative relationship-themed messages. (3) Explanation: relating the humorous discourse to broader social and cultural norms surrounding relationships in Indonesian society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS



Figure 1 The first tweet by @handokotjung

The texts from the first tweet (Figure 1) were established by a semiotic assemblage of a shark (*ikan hiu*) and a packet of chocolate sprinkles (*meses*) conveying a rhyme: “*Ikan hiu makan meses*” (A shark is eating a packet of chocolate sprinkles) and “I miss you but you’re someone else.” The text analysis of the first tweet showed that the humor in this translanguaging is established by a stark contrast between two sets of ideas in the words: *hiu* (shark) and ‘you’, as well as *meses* (chocolate sprinkles) and ‘else’, which closely correspond in pronunciation. Wittily focusing on the incongruity of those pronunciations as a logical mechanism, the tweet conveys a romantic but sad feeling of falling in love with the wrong person. The punchline, “I miss you but you’re someone else’s,” evokes emotions of a relationship but in a humorous feeling.

At the micro-linguistic level (description), the tweet “*Ikan hiu makan meses*, I miss you but you’re someone else’s” strategically combines Indonesian and English lexical items sharing phonological

similarities (*hiu/you; meses/else's*). The code-switching is deliberate, relying on phonetic parallelism to construct humor and acting as a linguistic bridge between local and global language codes. The Indonesian segment follows standard orthography, while the English segment retains its conventional spelling. Syntactically, the first clause adopts a simple Indonesian subject–verb–object structure, whereas the second clause follows standard English syntax, reinforcing the bilingual construction of meaning.

At the interpretive level, the absurd image of a shark eating chocolate sprinkles is humorously contrasted with an emotionally charged confession in English. This humor emerges from a playful violation of expectations, transitioning from nonsensical imagery to romantic sentiment. The bilingual pun engages readers proficient in both languages, inviting them to co-construct meaning and reinforcing in-group solidarity among Indonesia's urban multilingual youth.

At the explanatory level (social practice), the tweet reflects Indonesia's urban multilingual culture, where English often indexes prestige, cosmopolitanism, and emotional expression, while Indonesian serves as the cultural anchor. By placing both codes side by side in a humorous frame, the tweet both reproduces and subverts existing language hierarchies. It affirms English's symbolic capital while demonstrating Indonesian's equal capacity for wit, intimacy, and emotional nuance. It challenges rigid linguistic boundaries and contributes to the normalization of playful, egalitarian code integration in Indonesia's digital discourse. The tweet was interpreted as a seamless blending of a limerick or funny rhymes of translanguaging practice in Indonesian and English. This limerick establishes poetic, identical sounds with unexpected connections at the end of the words, injecting a sense of bitter humor. Such contrast appears as homophony between these pronunciations.

Ikan hiu [hi- ũ] (A shark) *makan meses* [me-sez] (Eats chocolate sprinkles).
I miss you [ju:] but you're someone else's [elsez].

The wordplay lay in the unexpected and humorous contrast between the two parts of the texts, which encompasses the elements of sound and pronunciation (Giorgadze, 2014). The first text about 'a shark' and 'chocolate sprinkles' set up an amusing atmosphere, and the sudden shift into missing someone successfully jolts a playful twist. Such a wordplay was leveraged by purposeful manipulation of morphology and homophony (Cook, 2000) where an Indonesian word, *ikan hiu* [hi- ũ] (shark), corresponds identically with the English word you, and *meses* [me-sez] (chocolate sprinkles) with a sound like 'else's' [elsez]. The twist was also heightened by the wordplay "*ikan hiu makan meses*" (A shark eats chocolate sprinkles), which semantically injects the sheer irrationality of

such a predatory creature eating such sweet food. This initial sense of humor, instilled into the setting, is further escalated by an abrupt shift into a sentimental romantic pun —“missing someone who is not the life partner” —that closes the tweet with a surprise twist of humor.

In terms of the social practice, the humorous translanguaging in the first tweet was demonstrated by the punchline. The text “I miss you, but you're someone else's” is a bittersweet expression of longing and failure to have the person. The first part expresses a lingering emotional connection, while the latter confronts a reality to face. There is evidence of sadness, but it is accompanied by a sense of realization.



Figure 2 The second tweet by @handokotjung

Jodoh [dʒodoh] (soulmate) is a noun [naun].
Kalo kita gak jodoh [dʒodoh] (if we are not soulmate), *itu teh ku noun* [naun] (what can I do)

The second tweet (Figure 2.) displayed playful rhymes of two mixed texts, English and Sundanese (one of the regional languages in Indonesia), and utilized two contrasting texts: *noun* (one part of speech in English) and '*teh ku noun*' (what can I do?), a Sundanese language expression spoken in West Java, Indonesia. The tweet focused on the lexis's lack of relevance as a logical mechanism. Crafted in the midst of waiting for a soulmate, the tweet was directed at individuals who are still single. The punchline "*Kalo kita gak jodoh itu teh ku noun*" (If we are not soulmates, what can I do?) built a tickling, funny yet surrendered feeling.

The translanguaging practice in the tweet was demonstrated by the blending of Indonesian, Sundanese (a regional language in Indonesia), and English. Identical spelling and pronunciation (homonym) underpin the humor. The word '*jodoh*' (soulmate) is defined unexpectedly by the linguistic word class, a noun. The choice was intended to initiate a corresponding pronunciation with Sundanese, the regional language with a similar spelling, 'noun'. The tweet then sparked a sense of humor by a hypothetical text, "*kalo kita gak jodoh*" (If we are not soulmates) directly linked to the Sundanese expression *teh* and 'noun', the English word. The play on words inevitably prompted the mind to contrast the noun as a linguistic

term with the Sundanese expression, while discerning wittily the meaning enacted by the pun, building up the humorous sense of this translanguaging. The Sundanese phrase ‘*itu teh ku noun*’ (What can I do?) flashes a glimpse of light-heartedness flavoured by a sense of despair.

The use of Sundanese, the regional language in Indonesia, reflected a belief in the local culture. The use of *jodoh* (soulmate) was not only creatively linked to an English word but also carried the weight of a sociocultural belief about interpreting a true relationship between two individuals within God’s divine will. Therefore, the punchline “*kalo kita gak jodoh itu teh ku noun*” (if we are not soulmates, what can I do?) portrayed a feeling of vulnerability of not being soulmates since the final world is not in his or her hands. The third tweet (Figure 3) delivered a witty rhyme by translanguaging with a loanword from an Arabic expression (*silaturahmi*), Indonesian, and English texts: “*Agar silaturahmi tidak terputus* (so that a relationship is not broken), *let’s make you and mi (me) into us.*”



Figure 3 The third tweet by @handokotjung

The third tweet created a pun from two opposing texts —*tidak terputus* (not broken) and the merging of ‘you and me into us’ interwoven by the conjunction *agar* (so that). The use of the lexis *terputus* (broken) was confronted by the preposition *into* and the object pronoun *us*, creating a humorous effect. The specific situation framed an attempt to captivate someone to be the soulmate. Crafted with humor, the tweet is targeted at someone one likes. The punchline “let us make you and me into us” expressed a desire for unity or a closer relationship with the other person.

The third tweet was a playful *pantun*, with four stanzas following the A-B-A-B pattern, using identical word spellings but different pronunciations. This homograph consists of similar spellings (*mi, us*) but different pronunciations. The tweet appeared to convey a message about the importance of maintaining a deep relationship, as demonstrated by ‘*silaturahmi*’, a loanword from Arabic that means a good relationship. The text, “*Agar silaturahmi tidak terputus*” (So that our relationship is not broken) was enacted by the word play ‘you and mi into us.’ The use of *mi*

instead of the correct English ‘me’ created a poetic effect of a relationship and the ending pronunciation of ‘*silaturahmi*’. This wordplay revolved around semantic play, where combinations of primary word meanings generate new meanings (Cook, 2000). A new meaning also emerged as a result of phonemic similarity being perceived as a type of semantic relationship (Mohammed, 2019).

Agar silaturahmi [mê]
Tidak terputus [ʊs]
 Let’s make you and *mi [mê]*
 Into us [əs]

The third tweet intensely depicted a good relationship, which was anchored in an Arabic loanword, *silaturahmi*, that refers to good relationships. As such, it encompassed relationships as social matters per se, but it also encapsulated hospitality and warmth in a relationship. The punchline ‘let’s make you and me into us’ implied a desire for a closer relationship by tying a knot. The adoption of this Arabic loanword into a serious relationship reflected the social practice in Indonesian culture, which tended to view a marriage knot as one of the best ways to maintain a good relationship.

The analysis of humorous translanguaging reveals certain categorized linguistic composition in form of spelling manipulation, wordplay and puns, such as homographs – words that share the same written form as another but have different meanings, for example ‘noun’ (word class) and ‘*teh ku noun*’ (what can I do) and homophones – words pronounced the same as others but with different meanings, for example ‘*meses*’ (chocolate sprinkle) and ‘someone else’s’. One of the primary sources of humor arises from using a word with a similar pronunciation but an incorrect meaning. In essence, the joke’s lexical humor underlies the touch of similar words or homonyms and paronyms (Romadlani, 2021).

The use of playful discourse in humorous translanguaging on social media contributes to the dynamics and nuances of language expression. This phenomenon reflects the evolving nature of language in the digital age and showcases how users creatively engage with language to convey humor, identity, and cultural nuances. Playful discourse in humorous translanguaging on social media, such as spelling manipulation, wordplay, and puns, generates some themes and key aspects, as follows: First, playful discourse often involves the integration of multiple languages, dialects, or cultural references. This provides users to express their cultural identity and create a sense of inclusivity within a community of speakers who share similar linguistic backgrounds (Vidiadari, 2020). (2) Second, humorous translanguaging frequently employ wordplay, where users manipulate spellings, create neologisms, or adapt words from different languages. This showcases linguistic creativity and willingness to play with language conventions (Aleksandrova, 2022). (3) Third, playful discourse, particularly humor, is a

powerful tool for expressing emotion and affection and can be used to diffuse tension, express joy, and flirt. The creative use of language adds depth to emotional expression, allowing users to communicate sentiments, emotional intimacy, and vulnerability in nuanced ways (Elayan et al., 2022). (4) Fourth, playful discourse often contributes to the virality of content on social media. Memetic language, including translanguaging humorous phrases, puns, spelling manipulation, and wordplay, can spread rapidly, becoming part of internet culture and influencing broader linguistic trends (Mukhtar et al., 2024). (5) Fifth, by combining elements from multiple languages, individuals may facilitate cross-cultural communication in a funny and accessible manner (Ahtif & Gandhi, 2022).

Playful discourse embraces informality, encourages linguistic experiment, and reflects the evolving nature of language in digital spaces. This aligns with the study conducted by Arshad et al. (2025) that emphasize how digital interactions transform language use and enable fluid representation of cultural, social, and personal identities. Playful use of language on social media through translanguaging, spelling manipulation, wordplay, and puns contributes to creative communication and reflects the dynamic nature of language in the digital era. It serves as a dynamic expression of cultural identity, creativity and shared experiences within online communities. Playful discourse and humor can make learning more enjoyable and engaging, since humor can capture and maintain students' interests, as has been proven by Onowugbeda et al.'s (2024) study.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of humorous tweets using Fairclough's three-dimensional framework of critical discourse analysis offers insights into the intricate dynamics of language and culture on social media. The tweets, examined through the lenses of description, interpretation and social practice, reveal not only linguistic creativity but also the cultural, emotional and social contexts embedded in the humorous translanguaging. The placement of contrasting elements such as shark and chocolate sprinkles in tweet number 1, or the playful manipulation of the term '*jodoh*' (soulmate) in the second tweet, highlights the brilliant use of language to create unexpected and amusing connections. The social practice analysis delves into the emotional and cultural dimensions of tweets, revealing themes of longing and resignation in the first tweet, a cultural connection to the Sundanese language in the second, and an emphasis on relationship maintenance in the third. Furthermore, the study highlights the broader implications of humor on social media, emphasizing its role in shaping social dynamics, providing emotional relief, and contributing to positive atmospheres in relationships. The use of translanguaging, spelling manipulation, wordplay, and puns emerges as a creative and dynamic

form of communication that reflects cultural identity, linguistic creativity, and shared experiences within the digital world. This phenomenon not only breaks down language barriers but also facilitates cross-cultural communication in an accessible, humorous way.

In essence, playful use of language on social media, as observed in these humorous translanguaging tweets, serves as a testament to the evolving nature of language in the digital era. It not only breaks language barriers but also contributes to content virality, influences linguistic trends, and fosters a sense of inclusivity and shared cultural experiences in online spaces. This creativity extends to educational settings, where the pedagogical implications of incorporating humor and playful discourse can enhance learning experiences and more engaging for students. The playful use of language in humorous translanguaging contributes to creative communication, cultural expressions, and the evolving landscape of language in the digital era.

However, this study has limitations. The analysis is based on only three tweets from a single Indonesian Twitter account, which may not represent the full spectrum of humorous translanguaging practices in diverse online communities. The focus on specific language combinations, Indonesian, English, Sundanese, and Arabic loanwords, also narrows the generalizability of the findings. Future research could expand the dataset to include multiple accounts, platforms, and types of humor, and examine different linguistic pairings and sociocultural contexts. Comparative studies across countries or cultural groups could further illuminate how humor and translanguaging intersect in varied digital landscapes.

Author Contributions: Conceived and designed the analysis, D. I., and L.; Collected the data, D. I.; Contributed data or analysis tools, D. I., and L.; Performed the analysis, D. I., and L.; Wrote the paper, D. I., and L.

Data Availability Statement: Data derived from public domain resources. The data that support the findings of the research are available in X (Formerly TWITTER). These data were derived from the following resources available in the public domain: https://x.com/handokotjung?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

REFERENCES

- Afriadi, R., & Hamzah, H. (2021). Exploring translanguaging practice in EFL classroom talk. *English Language and Literature International Conference (ELLiC) Proceedings*, 4, 99-107. <https://jurnal.unimus.ac.id/index.php/ELLiC/article/view/7393/5515>
- Ahtif, M. H., & Gandhi, N. (2022). The role of language in cross-cultural bonds. *Journal of Asian Multicultural Research for Social Sciences Study*, 3(4), 7-16. <https://doi.org/10.47616/jamrsss.v3i4.321>

- Al-Daher, Z., Al-Dala'ien, O., Al-Shboul, Y., Al-Rousan, M., Sahawneh, M. B. (2022). COVID-19 humor on Jordanian social media: A diagnosis of written jokes on Facebook. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(1), 162-175. <http://dx.doi.org/10.32601/ejal.911527>
- Aleksandrova, E. (2022). Pun-based jokes and linguistic creativity: Designing 3R-module. *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 10(1), 88-107. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7592/EJHR2022.10.1.622>
- Alkaraki, S. M. S., Alias, N. B., & Maros, M. (2024). Exploring the impact of social media humor related to the Covid-19 pandemic: A systematic literature review on themes, coping mechanisms, critiques, and linguistic devices. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 11(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2322227>
- Arshad, S., Shabir, Z., Aslam, S., & Farid, S. (2025). The impact of social media on language use and identity: A sociolinguistic analysis. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL*, 8(2), 871-883.
- Attardo, S. (2023). *Humor 2.0: How the internet changed humor*. Anthem Press.
- Bernad-Mecho, E., & Giron-Garcia, C. (2023). A multimodal analysis of humour as an engagement strategy in YouTube research dissemination videos. *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 11(1), 46-66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7592/EJHR2023.11.1.760>
- Brezolin, A., & Medeiros, F. D. S. (2021). Bad words in the good place: Analyzing the euphemistic function of wordplays in subtitling and dubbing: A case of English and Portuguese language pair. *European Journal of Literature, Language and Linguistics Studies*, 5(1), 14-31. <http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejll.v5i1.250>
- Chavez, J. V., Lamorinas, D. D., & Ceneciro, C. C. (2023). Message patterns of online gender-based humor discriminatory practices biases stereotyping and disempowering tools through discourse analysis. *Forum For Linguistic Studies*, 5(2), 1535-1545. <https://doi.org/10.59400/fls.v5i2.1535>
- Cook, G. (2000). *Language play, language learning*. Oxford University Press.
- Damanik, S. F., & Mulyadi, M. (2020). Indonesian humorous status in social media: An application of script-based semantic theory of humour. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 7(2), 657-671. <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v7i2.17237>
- Dewan, S., & Laksamba, C. K. (2020). Hybridity in Nepalese English. *Journal of World Englishes and Educational Practices*, 2(6), 13-22. <https://doi.org/10.32996/jweep.2020.2.6.2>
- Duarte, J. (2020). Translanguaging in the context of mainstream multilingual education. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 17(2), 232-247. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2018.1512607>
- Elayan, S., Sykora, M., Jackson, T. W., & Onojeharho, E. (2022). "Are you having a laugh?": Detecting humorous expressions on social media: An exploration of theory, current approaches and future work. *International Journal of Information Technology and Management*, 21(1), 115-137. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJITM.2022.121332>
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analyzing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. Routledge.
- Ghajarieh, A. B. B., Ghaziyani, Z. A., & Mozaheb, M. A. (2023). Playing with words across visual humor: Exploring translanguaging practices in a bilingual university context. *Iranian Journal of Translation Studies*, 21(83), 34-51.
- Giorgadze, M. (2014). Linguistic features of pun, its typology and classification. *European Scientific Journal*, 2, 271-275.
- Heiss, R., & Matthes, J. (2021). Funny cats and politics: Do humorous context posts impede or foster the elaboration of new posts on social media? *Communication Research*, 48(1), 100-124. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650219826006>
- Hoon, C. Y. (2021). Between hybridity and identity: Chineseness as a cultural resource in Indonesia. *Contesting Chineseness: Ethnicity, identity, and nation in China and Southeast Asia*, 167-182.
- Hopkyns, S., Zoghbor, W., & Hassal, P. J. (2021). The use of English and linguistic hybridity among Emirati millennials. *World Englishes*, 40(2), 176-190. <https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12506>
- Kholmatov, S. Z. O., & Mushtariybegim, Y. M. Q. (2022). Importance of wordplay in English language (in the example of pun). *Academic Research in Educational Sciences*, 3(6), 869-873.
- Lankiewicz, H. A. (2021). Linguistic hybridity and learner identity: Translingual practice among plurilinguals in the education setting. *Neofilolog*, 56(1), 55-70. <https://doi.org/10.14746/n.2021.56.1.5>
- Lin, Z., Wang, F., Mao, Y., & Wang, F. (2024). Understanding micro-blogging users' translanguaging in Chinese language play: A qualitative phenomenological approach. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 15(6), 2493-2514. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2023-0024>
- Liu, Y., & Fang, F. (2020). Translanguaging theory and practice: How stakeholders perceive translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *RELC Journal*, 53(2), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220939222>
- Lu, M. C., Tsai, C. F., & Chang, C. P. (2023). A study on the relationship among optimistic attitude, humor styles, and creativity of school children. *Creative Education*, 14(7), 1509-1525. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2023.147096>
- Mensah, E. O., Inyabri, I. T., & Aboh, R. (2023). Sexual jokes in Nigerian stand-up comedy: A multifaceted analytic approach. *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 11(3), 54-71. <https://doi.org/10.7592/EJHR.2023.11.3.791>
- Mihalic, M. (2025). Linguistic analysis of wordplay in Friends. University of Zagreb.
- Mohammed, E. A. A. (2019). Comparing and analyzing puns and metonymies based on functions, structures and working mechanism. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT)*, 2(5), 261-275. <http://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt.2019.2.5.31>
- Mpofu, S. (2021). Ridicule and humour in the global south: Theorizing politics of laughter in the social media

- age. *The Politics of Laughter in the Social Media Age: Perspectives from the Global South*, 1-19.
- Mukhtar, S., Ayyaz, Q. U. A., Khan, S., Bhopali, A. M. N., Sajid, M. K. M., & Babbar, A. W. (2024). Memes in the digital age: A sociolinguistic examination of cultural expressions and communicative practices across border. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(6), 1443-1455. <https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v30i6.5520>
- Munirah, Thaba, A., & Yusuf, A. B. (2021). Translanguaging in the communicative practice of buyers and sellers in traditional market. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11(2), 407-417. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v11i2.36029>
- Nganga, S. (2023). Creative uses of language to invoke sex-related taboos in Churchill Raw comedy shows. *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 11(2), 88-105. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7592/EJHR2023.11.2.821>
- Onowugbeda, F. U., Ajose, O. O., Ige, A. M., Odekeye, O. T., Fasinro, K. S., & Agbanimu, D. O. (2024). Laughing and learning: Exploring the impact of humour in enhancing biology learning outcomes. *Ilorin Journal of Education*, 44(1), 105-118.
- Peng, J., Mansor, N. S., Kasim, Z., & Ang, L. H. (2023). A sociolinguistic analysis of bilingual puns in the linguistic landscapes of Guangzhou, China. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review*, 23(1), 91-104. <https://doi.org/10.59588/2350-8329.1488>
- Retnowaty, R. (2025). Leveraging students' prewriting: Translanguaging in Indonesian higher education context. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 12(1), 136-153. <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v12i1.36552>
- Romadlani, M. M. I. (2021). A manipulation of semantic meanings as a humor construction strategy. *Language Circle: Journal of Language and Literature*, 15(2), 293-304. <https://doi.org/10.15294/lc.v15i2.28637>
- Saadah, D. K., Kustanti, D., & Ruminda, R. (2024). The use of puns to generate humor in dad jokes: A script-based semantic theory of humor analysis. *Elite: English and Literature Journal*, 11(2), 174-187. <https://doi.org/10.24252/elite.v11i2.52513>
- Safina, M. R., & Kosheleva, A. S. (2025). Extended wordplay in fictional narrative texts: Cross-disciplinary perspective. *Journal of Siberian Federal University*, 18(1), 106-118.
- Sahayu, W., Triyono, S., Kurniawan, R., Baginda, P., & Tema, N. H. G. (2022). Children's humor development: A case of Indonesian children. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11(3), 729-736. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v11i3.43707>
- Simon, J. C., & Donian, J. (2025). *Understanding laughter and humor: Why we laugh, why we don't and why it matters*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tavoli, V., Khiabani, S. M., Modarresi, B., & Hanji, F. M. (2022). Humor during crisis: An examination over humor related to COVID-19 disease based on General Theory of Verbal Humor. *Language Science*, 8, 31-56. <https://doi.org/10.22054/l.s.2020.53580.1354>
- Turliuc, M. N., Candel, O. S., & Antonovici, L. (2021). *Humour in romantic relationships*. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Humour Research* (pp. 325-340). https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1007/978-3-030-78280-1_17
- Umam, A. H., Sugiharto, S., Manara, C. (2023). Translingual practice in remote EFL tertiary education: How multilingual speakers create translanguaging spaces. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 13(2), 258-269. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v13i2.63065>
- Vidiadari, I. S. (2020). Identity on private universities' billboards in Yogyakarta. *Mediator: Jurnal Komunikasi*, 13(2), 233-248.
- Wijana, I. D. P. (2023). Humorous aspects of truck container signs in Indonesia. *LiNGUA*, 18(2), 119-130. <https://doi.org/10.18860/ling.v18i2.24168>