تداولية الفكاهة السياسية الرقمية: تحليل الاستلزام متعدد الوسائط لمنشورات الحملة الرئاسية لدونالد ترامب لعام 2024

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الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستلزام، الفكاهة، المبادئ، الانتهاك، نظرية الصلة.

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The Pragmatics of Digital Political Humour: A Multimodal Implicature Analysis of Donald Trump's 2024 Presidential Campaign Posts

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المستخلص

يتناول هذا البحث بالاستناد إلى مبدأ التعاون عند غرايس وتحليل الخطاب متعدد الوسائط ، دراسة التداوليات الكامنة في الفكاهة السياسية الرقمية كما تجلّت في منشورات دونالد ترامب على فيسبوك خلال حملته الرئاسية عام 2024. ويبحث في الكيفية التي تنتهك بها هذه المنشورات المبادئ الحوارية أو تتجاوزها لتوليد الاستلزام ساخر ومفارِقة في مواجهة الخصوم السياسيين. ويبيّن أيضًا ما تؤدّيه وظائف تداولية بعينها، ومنها التنافر بين النص والصورة، من أدوار في الفكاهة على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. وقد جرى تحليل بيانات قصدية تضم ستة منشورات فكاهية متعددة الوسائط عبر إطار من ثلاث خطوات: الوصف الدلالي المباشر للصورة والنص، ثم تحديد الآلية التداولية، ثم تأويل الوظيفة التواصلية السياسية. وتكشف نتائج الدراسة عن تدرّج واضح في الآليات؛ إذ يطغى تجاوز مبدأ النوع في أربع من المنشورات الست. وبموجب ذلك، تُطلق المبالغة والادعاءات الكاذبة المُصاغة بصيغة حرفية اتهامات عدوانية في ظل إمكانية التنصّل من المسؤولية بحجّة الفكاهة. فضلًا عن ذلك، يعمل الافتراض

المسبق متعدد الوسائط جنبًا إلى جنب مع الصورة والتعليق أو النص على تسريب محتوى نازع للشرعية عن الخصم بما يفلت من التكذيب والنفي، كما أن تجاوز مبدأ الطريقة، مقترنًا بالتنافر في نظرية الصلة ، يكافئ الجهد المعرفي الذي يبذله المتلقي في حلّ التصادم بين النص والصورة بما يخلّف آثارًا سياقية قوية. وتتمثّل الاستراتيجية المهيمنة في تجاوز مبدأ الجودة مقترنًا بالافتراض المسبق تسهيلًا لنزع الشرعية عن الخصم، معزَّزًا ببناء التضامن. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن التنافر بين النص والصورة يشكّل النقلة الأساسية في الفكاهة السياسية الرقمية، بتحويله الترفيه إلى هجوم سياسي وإقناع.

Abstract

Applying Grice's Cooperative Principle and multimodal discourse analysis, this research scrutinizes the pragmatics of digital political humour in Donald Trump's 2024 presidential campaign Facebook posts. It examines how such posts flout or violate Conversational Maxims to generate satirical and ironic implicatures against political opponents. It also shows what pragmatic functions like visual textual incongruities serve in social media humour. A purposive data of six humourous multimodal posts is analyzed through a three-step framework comprising denotative visual textual description, identification of the pragmatic mechanism, and interpretation of the political communicative function. The findings of the study reveal a clear hierarchy of mechanisms; flouting the Maxim of Quality predominates, occurring in four of the six posts. Whereby exaggeration and literalized falsehood voice aggressive accusations under the deniability of humour. Moreover, the multimodal presupposition operates jointly with image and caption or text to smuggle delegitimizing content past refutation and flouting the Maxims of Manner and Relevance, together with Relevance Theory incongruity, rewards the cognitive effort of resolving visual textual clashes with strong contextual effects. The dominant strategy is Quality-flouting joint with presupposition in the facility of delegitimising the opponent, added by solidarity building. The study concludes that visual textual incongruity constitutes the primary payload of digital political humour by converting entertainment into political attack and persuasion.

1. Introduction

Political humour can be defined as humour that addresses political topics serving multiple functions, including criticism, protest, and entertainment (Dynel, 2014). This form of humour uses various rhetorical strategies such as irony, satire, and parody, which enable people to comment on politicians, political events, and ideologies in a manner that is often engaging yet thought- provoking (Bucy, 2003). Because of its cultural and social relevance, political humour not only amuses audiences

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

but also provides an avenue for discussing power dynamics, social values, and political norms (Benoit, 2019). Whether it appears in the form of comedy, television satire, internet memes or political cartoons, political humour functions as both a medium for entertainment and a tool for critique. It influences public insights and political exchanges in substantial ways (Koeman, 2017).

Investigations suggest that humour has an exclusive way of breaking down barriers and making political discussions more accessible to the public (Bucy, 2003). Satirical programs like late-night comedy shows frequently attract viewers who might avoid traditional news sources. They allow them to engage with political concerns in a more relaxed and entertaining manner (Benoit, 2019).

This study examines how political humour is pragmatically employed to attain specific communicative goals including uniting communities, subtly criticizing political authority and reshaping political narratives. Through the investigation of various humourous forms including satire, parody and irony, this study aims to expose how humour functions as a influential and powerful force in political communication (Attardo, 2001; Koeman, 2017). Therefore, the study tries to answer the following research questions:

1.How do Donald Trump's multimodal Facebook posts flout or violate Gricean Conversational Maxims to generate satirical and ironic implicatures against political opponents?

2.What pragmatic functions do visual textual incongruities serve in modern political digital humour on social media?

2. Types of Political Humour

Political humour is a multifaceted tool that structures power, simplifies complex issues, and fosters political engagement. The following is a discussion of the core types of political humour.

2.1Satire

Satire critically examines political posts and policies through exaggeration, offering both entertainment and reflection (Gray, Jones, & Thompson, 2009). Its unique strength lies in addressing taboo subjects indirectly, allowing for safer discussions in restrictive societies. For instance, satirical programs like the Daily Show critique political scandals without direct confrontation(Jones, 2010).Satire plays a vital role in offering social and political criticism, as it allows the public to express their views on political issues in an indirect and less confrontational way. This type of critique helps highlight corruption or political mistake in a

manner that is more accessible to the audience, especially in societies where freedom of expression may be controlled.

Consider this example,

1.*"Over the last years you people were so good over tax cuts , WMD intelligence , the effect of global warming .We American did not want to know , and you had the courtesy not to try to find out ."*

This extract as well as those cited below as examples taken from Stephen Colbert's remarks to President Bush at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner, held at the Hilton Washington hotel in Washington, D.C., on April 29, 2006. Colbert here sarcastically "praises" journalists for failing to challenge government narratives. This satirical occurrence reveals the media's lack of responsibility in covering critical problems.

2.2 Irony and Sarcasm

Irony and sarcasm expose conflicts in political rhetoric. They frequently act as indirect tools of resistance (Martin, 2007). Though irony subtly highlights inconsistencies, sarcasm offers sharper, emotionally charged critiques. These forms are mainly operative in situations where explicit criticism is suppressed. They offer a indirect, yet impactful way to question authority (Gray et al., 2009). They also provide a way for people to question authority without confrontation. They make it easier to express important concerns. The following examples make the point clear:

2.*"I believe the government that governs best is the government that governs least . And by these standards , we have set up a fabulous government in Iraq "*

This statement is ironic because Iraq was in chaos at the time, not a model of minimal government. By pretending to praise U.S. policies Colbert highlights their failures in a biting yet humourous way.

3.*"Folks , my point is that I don't believe this is a low point in this presidency . I believe it is just a lull before a comeback .I mean , it is like the movie "Rocky''. The president is Rocky , ……actually loses in the first movie ''.*

This is an example of sarcasm where the president is compared to Rocky as if governance were a boxing match rather than a complex political reality. The exaggerated comparison paints setbacks as heroic struggles. It ignores real world consequences. Ironically, the comparison falls apart as Rocky actually loses just like poorly planned political comebacks.

2.3 Parody

Parody mocks political posts and events by imitating their actions or speeches. It requires audience familiarity to full effect (Shifman, 2014). Outside entertainment, parody shortens complex ideologies. It transforms

abstract notions like nationalism into applicable critiques. For instance, exaggerated descriptions of a leader's loyalty may expose underlying performative aspects of their
governance. Parody also shortens political issues by making them more accessible and attractive for the public. The following example illustrates this idea:

4.*''the president makes decisions. He is the decider. The press secretary announces those decisions , and you people of the press type those decisions down . make, announce ,type.''*

Colbert here reproduces the exaggerated praise repeatedly given to Conservative leaders by right wing media. He mimics their language though slightly criticizing authoritarian tendencies.

2.4 Jokes and Memes

Memes and jokes as contemporary terms of humour, flourish on simplicity by offering quick commentary on political events (Shifman, 2014). Their capacity to evade traditional media barriers gives marginalized groups a voice. They enable popular political activism. Memes, during election cycles, regularly organize younger voters by framing civic contribution as relatable and urgent (Ott, 2017) . for example:

5.“ *I believe in pulling yourself up by your bootstraps . I believe it is possible ..... I saw a guy do it once in Cirque du Soleil . It was magical***”**

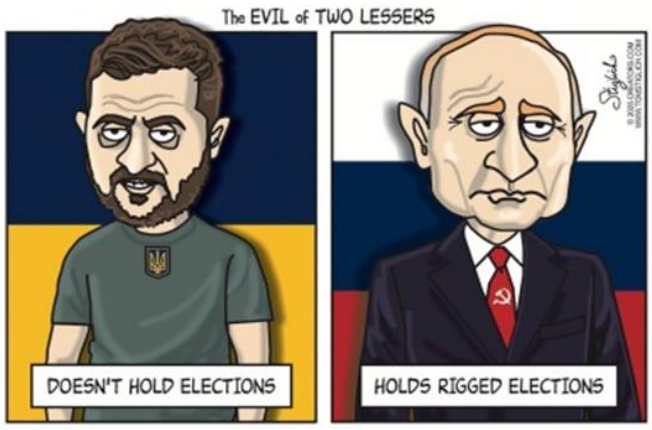
Though Colbert's comment appears as simple and humourous, it offers a clever criticism of the notion of self–reliance in American political discourse. by understanding the metaphor literally, he is using exaggeration and referencing Cirque du Soleil. Colbert shows the unrealistic nature of the idea of a complete success without peripheral support. This joke becomes relevant today as it reflects the style of modern memes that highlight inconsistencies in social and economic rhetoric .

2.5 Political Cartoons

Political cartoons combine art and symbolism to assess power structures. They shorten complex issues into impactful visuals, directly resonating with audiences (Medhurst & DeSousa, 1981). Further than their humour, cartoons function as
historical records. They document social attitudes toward political actions. For instance, caricatures of global leaders during crises reveal public sentiment more effectively than textual critiques.Practically, cartoon satire conveys deep political messages through contradictions and symbols, serving as an indirect yet impactful tool for criticism. This is evident in

how the cartoon satirizes leader who manipulate democracy for their own benefit-either by postponing elections under various pretexts or by controlling their outcomes to ensure their dominance. as a result, public distrust and democracy itself becomes nothing more than an illusion.

These cartoons and memes do not really represent the people being talked about They are made in such a way to make fun of them. Below is an example illustrating this.



The cartoon above is divided into two sections, each featuring a different political leader. On the left, there is a caricature of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in casual military-style clothing, with the Ukrainian flag in the background. On the right, there is a caricature of Russian President Vladimir Putin in a formal suit, with the Russian flag in the background. The title of the cartoon, "The EVIL of TWO LESSERS," is a play on the phrase "The lesser of two evils. "The text under Zelenskyy reads: "DOESN'T HOLD ELECTIONS. "The text under Putin reads: "HOLDS RIGGED ELECTIONS."

The cartoon criticizes both leaders regarding democratic elections. Zelenskyy is portrayed as undemocratic for not holding elections, referencing his decision to postpone Ukraine's 2024 presidential elections due to martial law during the war with Russia. Putin is portrayed as rigging elections, reproducing allegations of election influence and lack of political opposition in Russia. The cartoon proposes that both leaders have challenging approaches to democracy. They present a false choice between two defective options. The phrase "The EVIL of TWO LESSERS" infers that neither option is truly good. This challenging the idea that one is definitively better than the other.

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

3. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is one of the central branches of linguistics. It focuses on how meanings are built and understood within particular contexts. Pragmatics also emphasizes the dynamic interaction between language, context, and speakers' intentions. This makes pragmatics crucial for understanding the effective use of language and its non-literal meanings (Yule, 1996). Consequently, pragmatics plays an important part in understanding how social and cultural values influence language use. For example, the way politeness is expressed or requests are made can vary greatly depending on the context and culture. This indicates that pragmatics is not only about personal goals of the speaker but also about the societal controls that affect communication.

3.1 Core Concepts in Pragmatics

3.1.1 Meaning in Context

Pragmatics focuses on the significance of context in interpreting language. The context includes physical settings, cultural norms, social relations and shared information between speakers (Grundy, 2008). For example, the statement "It's cold here" can be a simple remark, a complaint or a request to close the window. This depends on the context and the connection between the speaker and the listener.

3.1.2 Speaker's Intentions

Pragmatics looks for understanding the intentions behind utterances. For example, the question "Can you pass the salt?" is naturally understood as a polite request rather than an inquiry about capacity (Yule, 1996). This adds complexity to linguistic studies by focusing on the intention of the utterance rather than its content alone.

4. Pragmatic Theories and Their Relation to Humour

4.1 Grice's Cooperative Principle

Paul Grice introduced implicature to refers to meanings implied rather than explicitly stated. These meanings are derived from context and the speaker's adherence to conversational norms (Grice, 1975). For instance:

Explicit meaning: "She has a beautiful voice".

Implicature: She might be a good candidate for a singing competition.

Implicature relies on the listener's ability to infer meaning based on shared knowledge and contextual cues .

Grice (1975) proposed that successful communication relies on implicit cooperation between speakers and listeners, governed by four conversational maxims: quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. Humour often arises from intentional violations of these maxims (Attardo, 1994). For example:

Violation of the Quantity Maxim"How many programmers does it take to change a light bulb? None, that's a hardware problem".

Humour emerges from providing less information than expected, prompting the listener to infer the punch line.

4.2 Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory

This theory suggests that communication aims to achieve a balance between the cognitive effort required to understand a message and the contextual effect it produces (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). Humour often exploits relevance to create surprise or incongruity. For instance:

"Why don't scientists trust atoms? Because they make up everything".

The humour lies in the double meaning of "make up".

5. Pragmatics and Humour

Humour is a complex pragmatic phenomenon, relying on the interplay between speaker intentions, implicature, and violations of conversational norms (Attardo, 1994). Humour relies on breaking conversational norms and using implicature , where the speaker's intention is often hidden . It highlights how we interpret meaning beyond the literal, relying on context and shared understanding to find humour in unexpected ways . Examples include:

Wordplay: "I'm reading a book on anti-gravity. It's impossible to put down.

Situational Irony: "I told my therapist I'm afraid of elevators, and he said I should take steps to avoid them".

Humour in political campaigns functions double purposes. It humanizes candidates and decline opponents. It is a strategic tool in political campaigns. It also helps candidates attach to the public on a more personal level by making them seem approachable and practical. Simultaneously, humour allows for clever criticism of rivals by presenting attacks in a more acceptable and less aggressive way that resonates with voters.

6. The Importance of Humour in Pragmatics

6.1 Constructive Critique

Humour functions as an effective tool for criticism without direct conflict particularly in political discourse. It focuses on contradictions between promises and reality by raising public awareness (Holmes, 2006).

6.2 Influence on Public Opinion

Humour shortens complex issues by making them more accessible and inspiring public argument on important topics (Kuipers, 2008). Humour also highlights social and moral values by exposing behaviours that

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

contradict them. It is also an influential tool for refining future generations in an appealing way (Davies, 2011).

7. Methodology

7.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative, descriptive frequencies and interpretive design. The descriptive frequencies of the coded mechanisms for transparency are illustrative rather than inferential. The study tries to uncover how political humour generates meaning in digital campaign communication. The study investigates humourous posts as multimodal texts in which image and text produce implicatures. Because the emphasis is on meaning rather than numbers, the study therefore does not use statistical analysis. It, instead, applies a pragmatic framework grounded on Grice (1975), Sperber and Wilson (1995), and Attardo (1994). It also is combined with a visual grammar for images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). The design consequently links pragmatics with multimodal discourse analysis. This fits the nature of social media posts as combined verbal and visual texts.

7.2 The Data

The data of the study consist of six humourous posts published by Donald Trump during his 2024 presidential campaign. The boundaries of the data are defined clearly as follows:

a.**Time frame:** posts are published during the 2024 campaign window covering the pre-election and election periods.

b.**Platforms:** posts are selected from Trump's accounts on Faceboot. The two platforms where his campaign communication was most active.

c.**Selection criteria:** each selected post is intended to be as humour either by the author or by its clear response as humour. The post covers both an image and complementary text. The post also relates directly to campaign subjects such as the opponent, the election or policy issues.

d.**Exclusions:** the study excludes purely textual posts, fundraising or logistical announcements, posts without humourous intent and posts reposted from other users without added commentary. The posts are numerated from Post 1 to 6 and treated as six case studies. Because the data is small and purposive, the findings are illustrative rather than generalizable.

7.3 Data Collection

The posts are selected through manual browsing of the official accounts during the campaign. Each one is saved as a screenshot with its caption, date, platform, and engagement posts. Each item is logged in a data sheet recording the post number, date, platform, type of humour and

engagement metrics. This procedure follows the understanding of memes and jokes as viral, quick forms of political commentary (Shifman, 2014; Ott, 2017).

7.4 The Analytical Framework

Each post is analyzed through a systematic three-step framework. The same steps are applied to every post to ensure consistency. Step one including Visual and Textual Description (Denotative Level). The post is first described objectively. This step records what is literally shown like the image content, the wording, the layout and the relationship between image and text. The description follows the "grammar of visual design," which treats images as structured texts

with their own meaning-making resources (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). No interpretation is made at this stage. The goal is a neutral record of the data.

Step two shows Pragmatic Mechanism. This step explains how the humour works pragmatically. Directed by Grice's Cooperative Principle. The analysis identifies which maxim is flouted: quantity, quality, relevance, or manner (Grice, 1975). It also states the target implicature. That is, the implied meaning recovered by the audience (Yule, 1996). Where relevant, the step also weighs cognitive effort against contextual effect following Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). The working assumption are drawn from Attardo (1994) is that humour arises from deliberate violations of conversational norms. Consequently, the flouted maxim is treated as the trigger of the joke.

Step three includes Political Communicative Function. This step interprets the political purpose of the post. Based on the functions established in the literature review, the analysis categorizes the function of the post as, for example, delegitimizing the opponent, building solidarity with supporters, humanizing the candidate or simplifying a complex issue. This step links the pragmatic mechanism to campaign strategy.

7.5 Validity and Reliability

Three measures support the reliability of the analysis. First, the same three-step framework is applied to all six posts to ensures consistency. Second, the analysis is attached to explicit theory; every claim about implicature is tied to a named maxim. Thus, interpretations can be checked against the data. Third, descriptions in step one are preserved distinct from interpretations in steps two and three which lessens researcher bias.

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

7.6 Ethical Considerations

All analyzed posts are public statements by a public political post. They are made openly on official accounts for wide circulation. The posts are quoted for the purpose of academic criticism and commentary with full credit to the source

platform and account. No private individuals appear in the corpus, and no private data are collected.

8. Data Analysis

This section includes the analysis of the six image posts selected as the data of the current study. Each post is observed as a multimodal text in which image and text cooperate to generate implicatures. The analysis follows the three-step framework established in the methodology including description of the visual and verbal content, identification of the pragmatic mechanism and interpretation of the political communicative function.

Post 1: "Copy-Paste"



A. Denotative Description

The image shows Joe Biden's face being peeled back like a printed layer to disclose Kamala Harris underneath with the caption "Copy-Paste" attached.

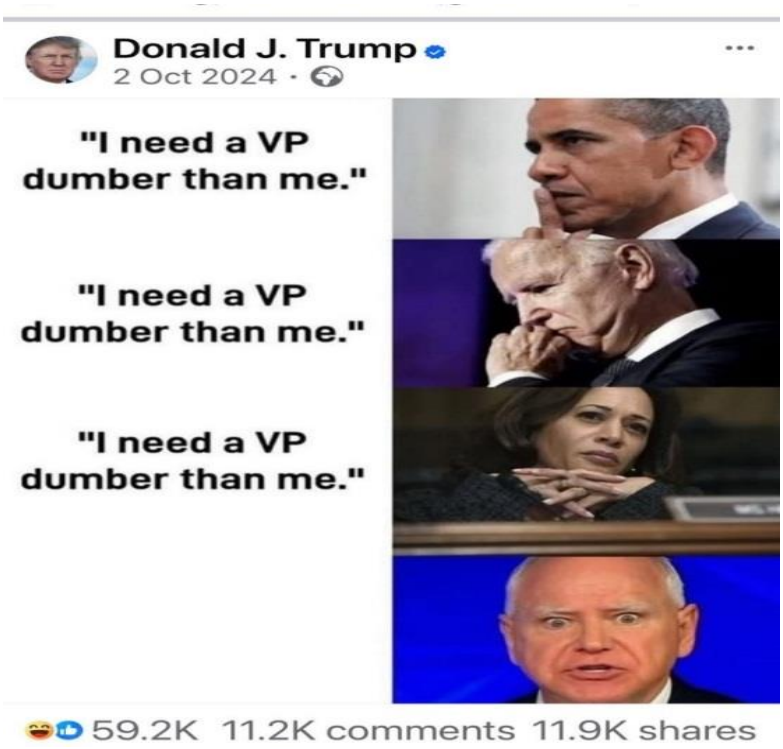
B.Pragmatic Mechanism

The post works as a multimodal presupposition. The visual metaphor presupposes without asserting or arguing that Harris has no independent political identity. The caption flouts the Maxim of Quality. That is to say, the two politicians are not literally copies. The Maxim of Manner is also flouted, the terse computer metaphor is deliberately non-literal and obscure. Determining this flouting forces the readers to infer the target implicature. Hence, Harris is an absence of agency; a duplicate executing Biden's policies rather than a leader with her own perspective.

C.Political Communicative Function

The post delegitimises the rival by removing her individuality, which is less refutable than an explicit claim because a presupposition presents its content as an already settled fact.

Post 2: "Dumber than me"



A.Denotative Description

The post arranges a timeline of U.S. leaders; Obama selects Biden, Biden selects Harris and Harris selects Walz. Each step labelled with declining intelligence.

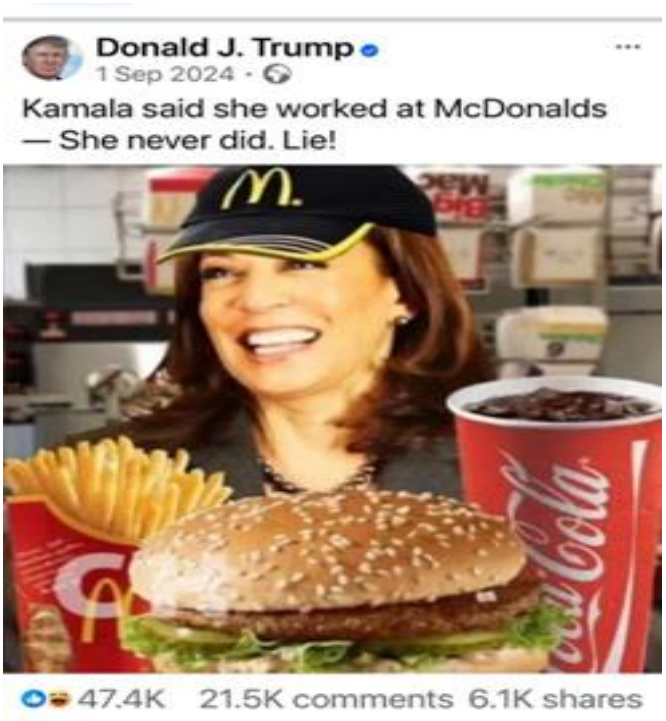
B.Pragmatic Mechanism

The post triggers a scalar implicature that is built on an invented scale of competence. That is, if each leader is "dumber" than the one before, then the listeners or readers infer a degraded hierarchy in which each administration is less competent than its antecedent. The scale is an exaggeration that intentionally violates the Maxim of Quality. Since intelligence cannot be ranked in this way, the humour arises exactly in the gap between the false precision of the scale and the impossibility of confirming it.

C.Political Communicative Function

The post attacks the competence of the opposing party as an institution. It extends the attack from one candidate to a whole lineage of Democratic leadership and, thus, frames the 2024 choice as a maintenance of decline.

Post 3: "McDonald's"



A. Denotative Description

The post depicts Kamala Harris in a McDonald's uniform alongside a branded meal, referencing her recalled era job.

B. Pragmatic Mechanism

The post is a direct attack on speaker attitude. By resurfacing a disputed biographical claim, the post flouts the Maxim of Quality. It presents a literalized scene, Harris at McDonald's, that is presented not as a fact but as a mock representation of her own account. The implicature is one of deception and unreliability. If her story is false, then her self-presented character is false too and her campaign collapses. The humour certificates the accusation since satire makes the claim deniable as just a joke.

C. Political Communicative Function

The post weakens the opponent's integrity, a function more destructive than policy incongruity because attitude, once suspected, contaminates all her preceding statements.

Post 4: "Kamala's Project 2025"



A. Denotative Description

The image lists assumed outcomes of a Harris presidency including defunding the police, open borders, and gun confiscation, presented as her project.

B. Pragmatic Mechanism

The post combines ironic framing with pragmatic presupposition. It presupposes that these contested setups are settled facts of her agenda. While the attribution to "her project" builds a weak character, an exaggerated version of the opponent's position that is easier to attack. The fear appeal is carried presuppositionally. The readers must accept the threats as real before recognizing the irony. Therefore, the dangerous content is managed twice, one as fear and the other as critique.

C. Political Communicative Function

The post seetriesks to delegitimize the opponent through threat construction, changing humour into a vehicle for political fear and extending in-group/out-group division.

Post 5: "It's All an Act"



A. Denotative Description

The image shows Democratic leaders as actors on an Oscar red carpet with the caption "It's just acting."

B. Pragmatic Mechanism

This post is best described through Relevance Theory. The image forces a conceptual mapping of Hollywood Acting onto Political Speech. This is an incompatible combination that raises cognitive effort. The observer must reconcile two distant domains before processing succeeds. The rewarded contextual effect is strong. The whole domain of politics is re-categorized as performance. Therefore, every account by these leaders is retroactively interpreted as scripted and insincere.

The humour is balanced to the effort-effect stability that Sperber and Wilson described.

C. Political Communicative Function

The post erodes the authenticity of the entire opposing camp. A global distrust strategy that does not require specific accusation and is, therefore, hard to rebut.

Post 6: "Inauguration"



Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

A. Denotative Description

The image compares a smiling Trump at his inauguration with a visibly serious Obama. It is captioned with the claim that the media, Obama, Clinton and experts said he would never be president again.

B. Pragmatic Mechanism

The caption functions as an assertive speech act, stating what "they" said. While the image carries sarcastic feeling of pleasure or satisfaction. The post flouts the Maxim

of Relevance. that is, Obama's facial expression is not inherently relevant to the claim; and flouts the Maxim of Manner, since the contrast between past expectation and present certainty is left implicit rather than stated. The recovered implicature is that Trump's triumph has been attained at the literal expense of those who anticipated otherwise. They must now hand him power and their expressions record the cost of being wrong.

C.Political Communicative Function

The post achieves solidarity building and self-vindication by rewarding loyal supporters with a vindication narrative while embarrassing the skeptics named in the post.

9. Discussion of Findings

A. Frequency of Maxim Flouting

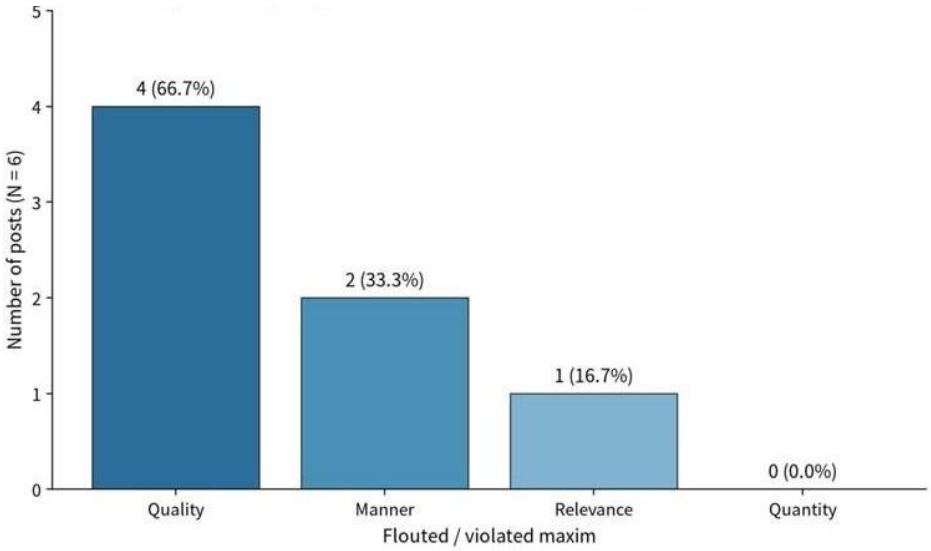
Table 1

Flouting/Violation of Conversational Maxims across the Six Posts

Maxim	Posts	Frequency	Percentage
Quality	Posts 1, 2, 3, 4	4	66.7%
Manner	Posts 1, 6	2	33.3%
Relevance	Post 6	1	16.7%
Quantity	—	0	0.0%

Figure 1

Frequency of Conversational Maxims Flouting Across the Six posts



As Table 1 and Figure 1 show, the Maxim of Quality is flouted in two-thirds of the data (66.7%, 4 of 6 posts), making it the dominant trigger of humour. This distribution is intentional. Exaggeration and literalized falsehood like the "Copy-Paste" metaphor, the invented intelligence scale, the mock McDonald's scene, and the ironic fear list are exactly the devices that permit an accusation to be stated while remaining deniable as "just a joke." The Maxim of Manner ranks second (33.3%). It co-occurs with Quality flouting, notably in Post 1, where both maxims are flouted at the same time. The Maxim of Relevance is flouted on one occasion (16.7%), and the Maxim of Quantity is not flouted (0.0%). The nil value for Quantity is itself a finding. This shows that Trump's campaign humour does not operate through under or over informativeness, but through deceptiveness and obscurity. The data, therefore, suggests a strategy of distortion rather than omission. The posts display too much deceptiveness, not too little truth.

B. Distribution of Pragmatic Mechanisms

Table 2

Distribution of Pragmatic Mechanisms among All Coded Instances

Pragmatic mechanism	Frequency	Percentage
Quality flouting	4	33.3%

Pragmatic mechanism	Frequency	Percentage
Multimodal/pragmatic presupposition	2	16.7%
Manner flouting	2	16.7%
Scalar implicature	1	8.3%
Relevance flouting	1	8.3%
Relevance-Theory conceptual incongruity	1	8.3%
Assertive speech act	1	8.3%

Figure 2

Distribution of Pragmatic Mechanisms among All Coded Instances

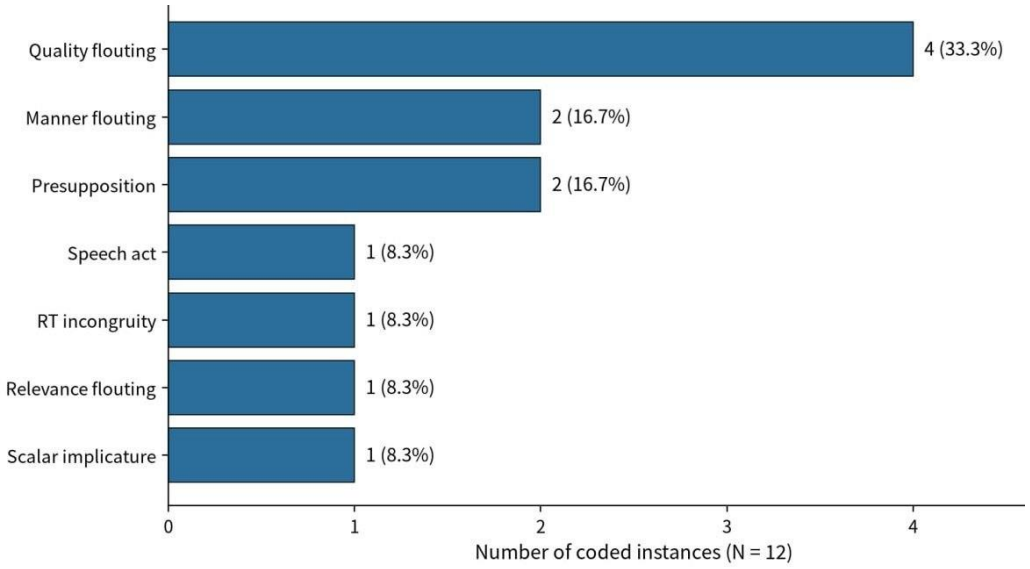


Table 2 and Figure 2 show that Quality flouting alone accounts for one-third of all coded mechanisms (33.3%). Correspondingly significant is the co-occurrence pattern; in 33.3% of posts (Posts 1 and 4), presupposition functions together with Quality flouting and these two posts account for 50% of all Quality flouting instances. This coupling is the most strategically consequential in the data since the flouted maxim carries the humour whereas the presupposition smuggles the

delegitimizing content into the reader's background knowledge as settled fact by being presupposed rather than asserted. The remaining mechanisms like scalar implicature, Relevance flouting, conceptual incongruity and the assertive speech act, each occur once (8.3% each). They function as specialized devices in single posts rather than as general campaign strategies.

C. Political Communicative Functions

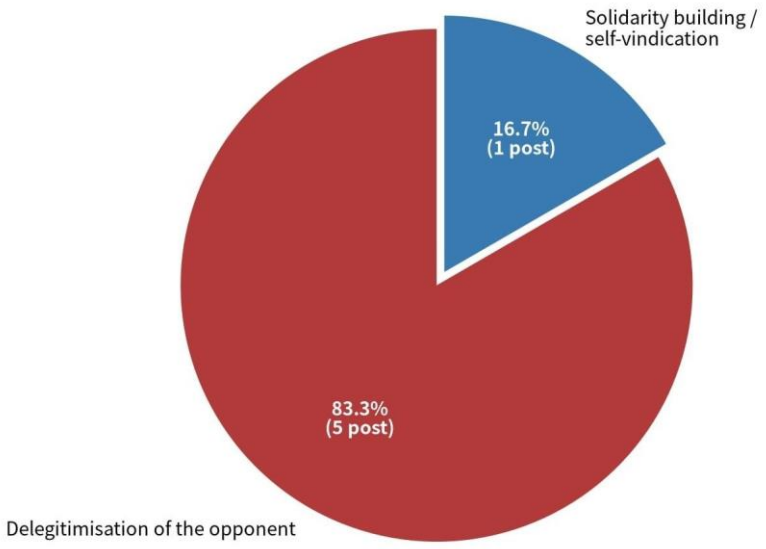
Table 3

Distribution of Political Communicative Functions

Communicative function	Posts	Frequency	Percentage
Delegitimisation of the opponent	Posts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	5	83.3%
Solidarity building / self-vindication	Post 6	1	16.7%

Figure 3

Distribution of Political Communicative Functions



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Table 3 and Figure 3 show that delegitimisation dominates the corpus at 83.3% (5 of 6 posts) against 16.7% (1 post) for solidarity building. Within the delegitimizing set, an additional distribution is be observed, 80% of the delegitimizing posts (4 of 5- Posts 1–4) target Kamala Harris individually. Whereas 20% (1 of 5; Post 5) target the opposing camp as a whole and Post 2 also extends the attack to the Democratic Party as an institution. In other words, 66.7% of the entire data is dedicated to criticize one individual's agency (Post 1), competence (Post 2), ethos (Post 3) and agenda (Post 4). This shows a systematic, multi-angle erosion of a single target rather than scattered criticism.

Together, the three distributions shows that the humour rested on a core mechanism (Quality flouting, 66.7% of posts), reinforced by presupposition and Manner flouting, and channeled almost exclusively into a single function (delegitimisation, 83.3%). The irregularity between attack (83.3%) and unity (16.7%) displays that humour in this data was principally a weapon rather than a bond. The single solidarity post (Post 6) achieves its in-group reward through mockery of the doubters. Therefore, the attack is present in 100% of the corpus in some form. The near-absence of Quantity flouting and the predominance of Quality flouting additionally indicate that the persuasive force of these posts lies in what they deceptively show rather than in what they withhold. The multimodal image supplies the deceitful or odd content that the caption alone could never assert refutably. These quantitative patterns confirm, at the level of frequency, the dominant strategy in this data is Quality-flouting combined with multimodal presupposition in the service of delegitimising the opponent.

10. Conclusion

The analysis of the six posts shows a clear hierarchy of pragmatic mechanisms in Trump's 2024 campaign humour. The findings can be brought together in direct answer to the two research questions of the study. With respect to the first research question, *How do Donald Trump's multimodal Facebook posts flout or violate Gricean Conversational Maxims to generate satirical and ironic implicatures against political opponents?* The analysis shows that flouting the Maxim of Quality was the most predominant strategy. It appeared in four of the six posts (Posts 1, 2, 3, and 4). Exaggeration and literalized falsehood like the "Copy-Paste" metaphor, the invented intelligence scale, the mock McDonald's scene and the ironic fear list. They allow the campaign to voice aggressive claims while retaining the

deniability of humour. Each Quality flouting resolves into a satirical implicature; absence of agency, lessening competence, unreliability and danger respectively. The flouting of Manner Maxim (posts 1 and 6) functioned alongside Quality violations by keeping the offensive meaning implicit through metaphor, brevity and unexplained visual contrast. While flouting the Maxim of Relevance (post 6) certified the sarcastic combination of Obama's expression with Trump's vindication. Significantly, the multimodal dimension is constitutive rather than decorative. In every post the maxim is flouted jointly by image and caption or text. Therefore, the implicature occurs only in the visual verbal combination; Biden's peeled face, the red-carpet setting or the smiling inauguration photo carries part of the false content that the text alone would have to assert, and assert refutably.

In respect to the second research question , *What pragmatic functions do visual textual incongruities serve in modern political digital humour on social media?* The findings detect two dominant functions. The first is delegitimisation of the opponent, the most frequent function (posts 1–5) and the one most powerfully enabled by incongruity; the images force conceptual mappings (Hollywood onto politics, a computer command onto a candidate, a fast-food uniform onto a vice president) whose determined implicatures remove the opponent's agency, authenticity and attitude. Within this function, presupposition verified the most strategically valuable mechanism (posts 1 and 4), because presupposed content is smuggled into the reader's shared knowledge without being asserted. Thus,it escapes direct refutation.
The second function is in-group solidarity building and self-vindication (post 6), where incongruity rewards loyal groups with a shared victory narrative at the expense of the doubters. Relevance Theory explains why these incongruities succeed rhetorically. The raised cognitive effort of reconciling distant domains is repaid by a strong contextual effect; making the implied attack memorable and shareable, the defining condition of social media humour.

Overall, the study concludes that the dominant pattern in Trump's 2024 campaign humour was Quality flouting combined with multimodal presupposition in the service of delegitimising the opponent with solidarity building as the corresponding function. The visual textual incongruity is not a side effect of the joke, but its primary payload. The pragmatic machinery of flouted maxims and resolved implicatures is precisely what adapts entertainment into political attack and persuasion on social media.

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