

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of this research based on the three formulated research questions. In this study, the data consist of fourteen (14) signboards and fourteen (14) banners. The linguistic and non-linguistic forms of humor found in business signboards and banners are analyzed using the Linguistic Forms Theory proposed by Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2009), and supported by the Visual Semiotics Theory proposed by Kress and Leeuwen (2006). To reveal the sense of humor, the Humor Theory, especially the Semantic-Script Theory of Humor (SSTH) by Raskin (1984) is applied. The count of the number of linguistic and non-linguistic units containing humor in both types of platforms is not based on the number of banners or signboards, but on the quantity of data found within these platforms. This implies that a single signboard or banner may contain more than two or three types of linguistic and non-linguistic units.

Then, the owners' reasons for using Indonesian humor in their business signboards and banners, as well as their effect on customers' attitude regarding their purchasing motives, are analyzed using the Branding Theory proposed by Luna et al. (2018). The analysis is conducted descriptively by presenting the data through tables and visual illustrations, which are then elaborated through in-depth explanations. The analysis shows two kinds of humor, which are occasional (temporal or momentarily) humor and permanent (stable) humor. Of both types, occasional humor is manifested through elements such as slogans, traditional

Indonesian humorous rhymes (*pantun*), and announcement language. In contrast, permanent humor is embedded in business names, brand names, and business taglines. In addition, three (3) linguistic units are present in signboards and banners, namely words, phrases, and sentences.

Then, it is also obtained that signboards most often use black text on a white background, whereas banners use white text on a yellow background. Humor is typically placed at the bottom of signboards and the center of banners. Furthermore, this study finds that business owners frequently use humor in their business signboards and banners as a marketing strategy to attract customer attention and elicit a sense of joy in customers. Then, this study may also indicate that humor effectively influences customers' decisions to buy goods or services.

4.1. Linguistic and Non-Linguistic Analysis of Humor Found in Business Signboards and Banners

4.1.1. Linguistic Analysis of Humor on Business Signboards and Banners

As previously mentioned, three (3) linguistic units are found in business signboards and banners in Padang City, namely words, phrases, and sentences. Among these units, sentences are the most frequently used by business owners on their signboards and banners. This may occur because a sentence allows for the delivery of complete meaning when expressing thoughts and ideas. The findings show that sentences appear 14 times on signboards and 17 times on banners.

Phrases appear as the second most frequent linguistic units. They occur seven (7) times on signboards and ten (10) times on banners. In addition, humor in the form of single words is the least represented, occurring once (1) on both the

signboards and the banners. The table presenting these linguistic units is provided below.

Table 4.1 The Frequency of Linguistic Units in the Business Signboards and Banners

No.	Linguistic Unit	Frequency			
		Signboards	Percentage	Banners	Percentage
1.	Sentence	14	63.63%	17	60.71%
2.	Phrase	7	31.82%	10	35.71%
3.	Word	1	4.55%	1	3.58%
Total		22	100%	28	100%

Table 4.2 Types of Humor and Their Realization

No.	Types of Humor	Realization
1.	Occasional Humor	Slogans, <i>pantun</i> , and announcement language
2.	Permanent Humor	Business name, brand names, and business tagline

▪ Sentence-Based Humor on Business Signboards and Banners

Based on the analysis, three kinds of sentences are obtained from the signboards and banners, including simple, compound, and complex sentences. A simple sentence is a sentence that contains a single subject and one or more verbs with a complete meaning. A compound sentence is a sentence that is joined by a comma and coordinating conjunctions and contains more than just a subject and a verb. Meanwhile, a complex sentence is created by multiple independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses connected by a subordinating conjunction.

□ **Sentence-Based Humor on Business Signboards**

According to the findings, the sentence structures consist of eight (8) simple forms, four (4) compound types, and two (2) complex ones. Uniquely, each type of sentence is characterized by a specific pattern that tends to apply universally. In simple sentences, there is a common pattern in which incongruent meanings arise from various forms of figurative language, such as metaphor, satire, irony, and hyperbole. The following data illustrates how humor is conveyed through the use of simple sentence structures.



Datum 7: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Rasuna Said

The picture was taken in Jati, Padang Timur Sub-district, Padang City. Based on the data, there is one simple sentence that contains humor: *Di sini serba ada, kecuali jodohmu* (Everything is here except your soulmate). The sense of humor arises when the shop owner puts the adverbial phrase of *kecuali jodohmu*. It is incongruent if it is correlated with the previous statement *Di sini serba ada* (Everything is here), because they

contain an ambiguous meaning. The existence of the prepositional phrase is classified as satire. Peifer and Lee (2019) define satire as a way of speaking or writing that uses humor to question or criticize political or social systems in a fun and clever way.

The phenomenon depicted in the humor above is highly relevant when viewed in the context of current trends among the residents of Padang City, where the rate of unwillingness to marry has shown an increasing trend over the past three years (2022-2024). The number of unmarried people in the city of Padang was 36.97% in 2022. These figures increase to 42.69% in 2023 and are followed by a further increase to 42.87% in 2024. Upon closer examination, the increase appears to be quite significant (BPS Provinsi Sumatera Barat, n.d.).

Then, there are several reasons why many Indonesian people, especially the younger generations, do not want to get married. These reasons include the high cost of weddings, economic challenges, mental unpreparedness, life priorities that are still focused on career and education, as well as social factors such as trauma from negative social experiences like divorce and domestic violence (CNBC Indonesia, 2024).

The incongruent meaning portrayed by the adverbial phrase provokes humor for the customers who read/see it because it is absurd, odd, and strange, but amusing. In other words, the incongruent element in the sentence above is triggered by a clash between the what it is about (field) being discussed and the surrounding context. In this case, it is evident that

the context is commercial, and the intended participants (tenor) are customers. This suggests that the message is about business rather than emotional or romantic relationships.

Interestingly, the sentence begins with a standard promotional line that suggests a shop filled with a wide variety of items. Yet the sudden inclusion of the adverbial phrase *kecuali jodohmu* breaks the expectation and invites amusement. The humor emerges from the contrast between a straightforward business claim and a reference to love, which is typically private and emotional. Although this added phrase is out of place contextually, it plays a key role in producing the overall humorous tone.

This phenomenon is hand in hand with Raskin's SSTH Theory (1984), which states that a text is considered humorous if it contains absurdity, ambiguity, ridiculousness, or incongruous meaning. It creates laughter from those who hear/read it. Accordingly, the phenomenon qualifies as humor because it fulfills the parameters of humor: the presence of incongruity or absurdity, the use of figurative language (satire), and the ability to evoke amusement or laughter. Supporting Raskin's assertion, Freud (as cited in Cook, 2002) states that humor is a component of psychological mechanisms because laughter can reduce people's tension.

When people laugh, endorphin hormones are released into the brain. This hormone can promote a sense of well-being, comfort, and enhance energy levels. Otherwise, humor can also stimulate multiple physiological systems that decrease levels of stress hormones, such as cortisol and

epinephrine (Savage et al., 2017). In this case, the humor is classified as occasional humor because it changes frequently, is temporary in nature, and no longer exists at present. It appears that business owners treat it as a temporary slogan and plan to substitute it with another slogan shortly. Finally, this sentence will have a congruent meaning if it is written as *Di sini serba ada* (Everything is available here).

Next, the following data examines the employment of hyperbole as a persuasive figure in visual business signboards. According to the Oxford Dictionary (n.d.), hyperbole is defined as an exaggerated statement not meant to be taken literally, often used to produce emphasis, evoke strong feelings, or achieve a humorous or dramatic effect. Subsequently, the following picture will be examined to demonstrate how hyperbole is applied within a real-world business signboard.



Datum 11: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dobi

This picture was taken in Kampung Pondok, Padang Barat Sub-district, Padang City. This shop demonstrates photography services. The

sense of humor on the above signboard occurs because of the use of the simple sentence *Foto itu perlu sampai hari kiamat* (The Photo is needed until the Judgment Day). The sentence above contains an element of humor due to the inclusion of the adverb of time *sampai hari kiamat*. It becomes incongruent when it is linked to other elements within the sentence. It tends to evoke a religious nuance typically associated with humans' relationships with their God. The application of this adverb of time in this phenomenon sounds exaggerated. In terms of language play, this phenomenon qualifies as hyperbole. Throughout this hyperbolic language, the business owner is breaking the norms of standard language use in society. It is in line with Raskin SSTH's theory (1984) that joking is a form of non-bona fide speech in which aspects of the cooperative principle are mocked.

Raskin's notion of the cooperative principle concerns the harmony between what is said (text) and the situation in which it is said (context). In the case under discussion, the topic (field) involves commercial promotion, but the expression conveys a religious undertone. The targeted (tenor) is the consumers rather than the religious audiences. This language phenomenon evidently mocks the cooperative principle. Although the added adverbial phrase is off-context, but contributes to the humor of the expression as a whole. As a result, the phenomenon is recognized as a form of humor as it aligns with the parameters outlined in humor theory: containing incongruity or absurdity, applying figurative language (hyperbole), and evoking amusement or laughter.

Actually, this shop is near public buildings such as schools, banks, hotels, churches, and mosques. If examined more closely, people in these places are people who need the services of a photographer. Every student from elementary to junior high school typically has their photo taken by a professional photographer for administrative purposes, such as photographs required for certificates and school reports. These services offer significantly higher quality than personal cameras. Similar to students, some bank employees sometimes need high-quality photographs for office administrative purposes, for instance ID card photo.

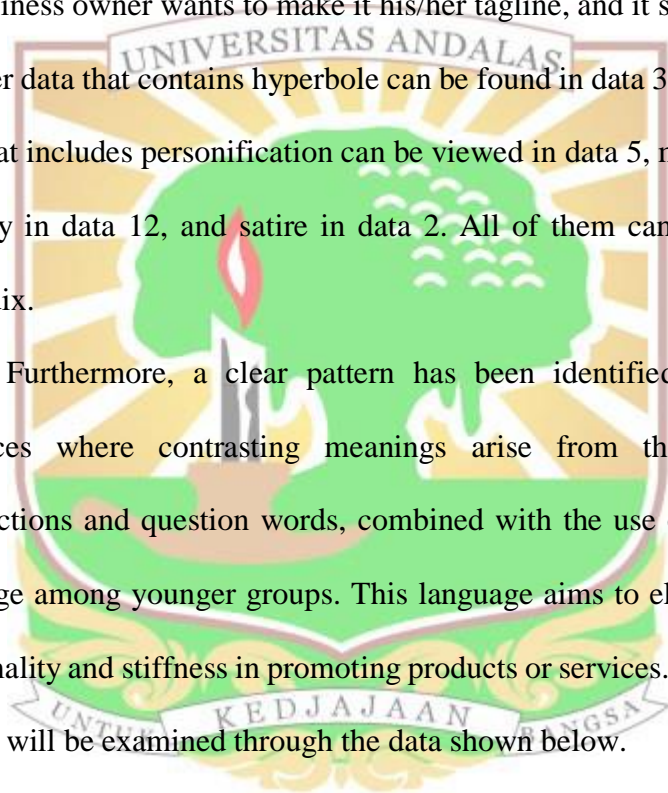
Besides, there are various reasons why people choose to stay at hotels, and one of them is to enjoy a vacation and visit nearby attractions. Hotels located near this photography studio are not far from some of the most popular tourist destinations in Padang, such as Padang Beach, the Siti Nurbaya Bridge, and Air Manis Beach (which is known for the legend of Malin Kundang). These tourists sometimes hire professional photographers to capture their memorable moments during their vacation. Besides, the humorous language of *sampai hari kiamat* is closely associated with churches and mosques, as both places of worship consistently convey religious messages to their congregations. One of the central messages is about the Day of Judgment.

The business owner realizes that his/her shop is located very close to worship places. He believes that every customer who sees/reads this funny language will have the same cognitive semantics as he/she does. It is

due to the fact that the customers are also familiar with the landscape surrounding the shop. The use of this adverb of time makes the shop significantly more appealing.

On the other hand, this sentence will contain denotative meaning (congruent) if it is written *Foto itu perlu selamanya* (The photo is needed forever). This sentence is classified as permanent humor because it seems the business owner wants to make it his/her tagline, and it still exists today. Another data that contains hyperbole can be found in data 3, 4, and 8. Then, data that includes personification can be viewed in data 5, metaphor in data 1, irony in data 12, and satire in data 2. All of them can be seen in the appendix.

Furthermore, a clear pattern has been identified in compound sentences where contrasting meanings arise from the omission of conjunctions and question words, combined with the use of modern viral language among younger groups. This language aims to eliminate a sense of formality and stiffness in promoting products or services. As a result, this pattern will be examined through the data shown below.





Datum 3: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

A close examination reveals that the signboard above includes multiple linguistic units. However, the analysis focuses only on its compound sentence. Based on the picture above, the compound sentence is portrayed by *Pilihan presiden 2024 boleh labil pilihan di saat lapar coblos dadar ababil* (presidential choices in 2024 may be volatile, choice when starving vote Dadar Ababil). The null conjunction of the sentence that must appear to create a compound sentence is *but*. Thus, it is supposed to be written to become *Pilihan presiden 2024 boleh labil, tapi pilihan di saat lapar coblos dadar ababil* (Presidential choices in 2024 may be volatile, but choice when starving vote Dadar Ababil).

This compound sentence consists of two independent clauses, which are *pilihan presiden 2024 boleh labil* (presidential choices in 2024 may be volatile) and *pilihan di saat lapar coblos dadar ababil* (choice when starving vote for Dadar Ababil). This sentence is considered humorous because it sounds funny, ridiculous, and uncommon (Raskin, 1984). The

funniness mirrors in the rhyme play created by the business owner. Each dependent clause has the same rhyme at the end. Therefore, it sounds like a simple *pantun* (an Indonesian traditional poem).

On the other hand, this sentence also has an incongruent meaning. This incongruent meaning is represented by several choices of words that are not suitable for the sentence context. Firstly, in the second independent clause, the business owner uses the word *coblos* (vote). This word choice sounds strange when applied in the context of business. It is more appropriate if it is used in the political context, especially at the moment of the election. The normal (congruent) word that can be applied is the word *pilih* (choose).

Secondly, in the first independent clause, the business owner uses the word *labil* (volatile) in the political context. This word sounds informal because it is usually used in unofficial situations. Meanwhile, the presidential election is a very sacred event because it is the time for the Indonesian people to choose someone who will lead their country for 5 years. The word can be replaced by the normal (congruent) word *ragu* (doubt).

In conclusion, the humor in this linguistic phenomenon is triggered by a mismatch between the text and its context. While the topic (field) is related to commercial promotion, the tone unexpectedly adopts political nuances. The communication is directed at consumers (tenor) rather than election voters. Although the use of political terms is contextually

misplaced, it plays a significant role in producing the humor in the message. As a result, this phenomenon is classified as humorous since it fulfills several humor criteria, including play on words, incongruity or absurdity, the capacity to elicit laughter or delight, and cultural reference through viral language.

On the other side, the normal sentence (congruent) that can be used by the business owner to replace the humorous sentence above on the signboard is *Jika anda lapar, maka anda dapat membeli produk Dadar Ababil* (If you are hungry, then you can buy the Dadar Ababil product). There is no connotative meaning in this sentence. All of them are conveyed in the denotative meaning.

These two sentences are also classified as occasional humor because they only exist momentarily, especially in the 2024 presidential election event. It seems that the business owner only uses it as a temporary slogan. At present, it no longer exists. Meanwhile, another data set containing a compound sentence formed by the omission of a conjunction is found in data 10. Then, other data containing compound sentences that incorporate viral language can be found in Data 13 and Data 14. All of them can be found in the appendix.

The following analysis highlights that signboards employing humor in complex sentences follow a recognizable pattern similar to that found in compound sentences: interrogative components are omitted, conjunctions are dropped, and viral or trending expressions are inserted. Next, the data

below presents a concrete example illustrating these linguistic modifications in real business signboards.



Datum 6: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

The picture above was taken in Pasar Ambacang, Pauh Sub-district, Padang City. This shop demonstrates a culinary business that is an omelet. The sense of humor on the signboard above can be identified throughout the use of the sentence *Lapar menyambar dadar tak gentar* (Hunger strikes omelet in sight). To make it a full complex sentence, some conjunctions must be added. Firstly, the conjunction *if* must be put before the word *lapar* (hunger).

Secondly, the conjunction *then* (optional) should be placed after the word *menyambar* (strikes), and a comma must be put before the conjunction *then*. It becomes *Jika lapar menyambar, maka dadar tak gentar* (if the hunger strikes, then the omelet in sight). The clause *Jika lapar menyambar* (if the hunger strikes) acts as a dependent clause, and the clause *maka dadar tak gentar* (then the omelet in sight) plays as an independent clause.

This sentence is claimed as a humorous sentence because it features internal rhyme, as seen in the similar ending sounds of *lapar* (hunger), *menyambar* (strikes), *dadar* (omelet), and *gentar* (daunted). Besides, the tone of this sentence sounds quite odd for a business context. The word *menyambar* (strikes) is associated with thunder. Meanwhile, the word *gentar* (daunted) correlates with a war atmosphere.

In this case, the business owner uses a figurative language strategy called a metaphor to create humor to promote the business product. A metaphor is a figure of speech that draws an implicit comparison between two unlike things by substituting one for the other, without using comparative words such as *like* or *as* (Shorakhmetov, 2024). The business owner seeks to draw a comparison between the impact of hunger and the shock experienced when hearing a lightning strike towards a human's body. Both are capable of making their body tremble.

Matthen (2023), a professor of philosophy at Toronto University, states that God's creatures have a natural alarm system within their bodies when they encounter a dangerous condition. For instance, animals will sweat when they are too hot, and they shiver when they are too cold. The same goes for humans. They will shiver when experiencing extreme hunger. Scientifically, it is caused by the reduction of glucose concentration within the human body. Glucose is the essential source of energy for the brain and muscles. When glucose levels are low, the body begins to conserve energy,

which may result in symptoms such as weakness, tremors, and even shivering.

On the other hand, the loud sound of a lightning strike can make one shiver involuntarily. Lightning is a terrifying natural phenomenon. People may die if they are struck by lightning because it contains an electric charge. Human death can also occur as a consequence of starvation. To resolve this problem, the business owner offers a product called *dadar* (fully known as *telur dadar*) (omelet) and which will help customers to embattle their hunger. The deviation in meaning and tone presented by this phrase turns it into humor. It is in line with Raskin's statement (1984), who states that a text can be judged as a humorous text when it contains a congruent meaning. To conclude, this humorous phenomenon is triggered by the incongruity between the textual content and the contextual setting. It is recognized as humor due to its fulfillment of several defining features: the presence of absurdity and incongruity, the use of figurative language (metaphorical expressions), wordplays, and the ability to provoke laughter or amusement.

This funny sentence will reduce customers' depression when they see/read it (Freud as cited in Cook, 2002). Meanwhile, this sentence will include congruent (denotative) meaning if it is written as *jika rasa lapar datang, maka belilah telur dadar* (if the hunger comes, then buy an omelet). This sentence is classified as a permanent humor because it still exists today, and it seems the business owner wants to make it the business tagline. Then,

another data set that applies humor with the same compound sentence pattern as this one is data 13.

▫ **Sentence-Based Humor on Business Banners**

Based on the analysis of the business banners, the sentence structures consist of twelve (12) simple sentences, four (4) compound sentences, and one (1) complex sentence. Each sentence exhibits a unique pattern. Simple sentences are presented in the imperative form, either as encouragements or prohibitions, using declarative sentences, using viral language, using imperative forms in terms of encouragement and prohibition, and the omission of the subject. The data below demonstrates the use of humor by business owners in the form of simple sentences displayed on banners.



Datum 26: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Sisingamangaraja

This picture was taken in Ganting Parak Gadang Padang Timur Sub-district, Padang City, and demonstrates laundry services. In the image above, two simple sentences are shown in the form of persuasive prompts:

Nyuci itu berat! (Washing is tough!) and *Di laundry aja di sini!* (Let the laundry handle it here!). The location of the shop mentioned above is close to Military District Command 0312 Padang Sub-district 02, the official residence of its commander, Kesdam I/Bukit Barisan Nursing Academy, Dr. Reksodiwiryo Hospital (also known as the Military Hospital), and the Indonesian Army Dormitory in Gantiang. These sentences are claimed to be humorous because they seem like a joke aimed at people who do not want to do laundry. Due to its location near military personnel and academic institutions, the shop's primary consumer group comprises soldiers and college students.

It is well-known that soldiers are strong and trusted by the country. According to Article 7 of Law No. 34 of 2004 about the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), their main duties are to uphold the country's sovereignty, defend the nation's territory, and protect all citizens from threats. This shows how important and respected soldiers are. If they can handle attacks from enemies with weapons, surely washing clothes is not a big deal.

The sentence above might make it seem like soldiers are being underestimated, but this is what makes customers laugh when they read the information displayed on the banner. It appears that the business owner intends to suggest that soldiers should be preoccupied with critical and essential national affairs. In contrast, the matter of washing their clothes

does not require their attention, as they can delegate this task to the laundry services.

Moreover, these sentences appear to mock students who avoid doing laundry. It actually can be comprehended because students are frequently engaged with numerous assignments and may not have the time to launder their clothes. Consequently, the business owner offers a solution, assuring students that they do not need to worry, as his laundry service is available to assist them. Furthermore, washing clothes becomes a heavy and difficult task for families of patients undergoing medical treatment in a hospital because the hospital does not provide laundry facilities for both patients and their families. As a result, they require laundry services to solve this issue effectively.

In conclusion, the humor in this linguistic phenomenon is triggered by a mocking of the cooperative principle (Raskin, 1984). In real-world contexts (field), both soldiers and students (tenor) are figures held in high esteem. However, in this case, the business owner portrays them as losers. The expression actually also references a viral quote from the widely popular youth film “Dilan”: *Jangan rindu, berat. Kamu gak akan kuat. Biar aku saja.* (Don’t miss me, it’s heavy. You wouldn’t be able to handle it. Let me carry it instead). This sentence is modified and adapted by the business owner to fit the context of a laundry service. Therefore, the phenomenon can be classified as humor, as it exhibits core parameters of humor. They

are incongruity, wordplay, evocation of amusement, and cultural references expressed through viral language.

Both of these sentences will be normal sentences if they are revised to *Nyuci itu sebenarnya nggak berat! Namun, jika anda tidak punya waktu, maka serahkan saja pada kami di sini!* (Washing clothes is not hard! Therefore, if you are short on time, just leave it to us here!). This sentence is categorized as occasional humor because it was used as a temporary slogan by the owner and is no longer found today. Then, other simple sentences using the imperative form appear in data 15, 19, 22, and 27. Meanwhile, simple sentences that employ viral language in the declarative form are found in data 24, 25, and 26. In addition, data containing simple sentences with omitted subjects are present in data 15, 19, 22, 26, and 27. All of these examples can be found in the appendix.

On the other side, a similar pattern is consistently found in both compound and complex sentence structures. Both sentence types are predominantly constructed through the omission of conjunctions and subjects, and are typically framed as forms of invitation. The data presented below highlight the business owners' use of humor conveyed through compound and complex sentence structures on banners.

The upcoming data explores data that demonstrate the use of compound sentences characterized by omitted conjunctions. This phenomenon reflects a linguistic strategy known as *asyndeton*, the absence

of coordinating conjunctions between clauses. Next, the examples presented below illustrate how this pattern operates in actual business banners.



Datum 20: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

This picture was taken in Pasar Baru, Pauh Sub-district, Padang City. This banner demonstrates a culinary business, and the main ingredient is a banana. In the image above, the compound sentence is represented by the sentence: *Pisangnya asli, lumpurnya enggak* (The banana is authentic, the mud is not). The data reveal that the business owner intentionally omits the conjunction *but* in the sentence. It is supposed to be *Pisangnya asli, tapi lumpurnya enggak* (The banana is authentic, but the mud is not). This sentence is claimed as a humorous sentence because there is a deviation in meaning between the expectation and the reality depicted throughout the sentence (Raskin, 1984). A meaning deviation arises due to the mismatch between the text and the context. The customers (tenor) understand that it is

highly unlikely for the business owners to use mud as an ingredient in the product (field). However, the emphasis placed on the absence of mud evokes laughter, as it is perceived as absurd.

From a linguistic point of view, this sentence is called a truism. Based on Oxford Dictionary (n.d.), truism means a statement that is clearly true and does not therefore add anything interesting or important to a discussion. This implies that consumers will receive the intended message without the business owner having to explicitly state it on the banner. Logically, real bananas are a natural ingredient used in this business, and the use of actual mud is very unlikely because it will be dangerous if consumed. The mud may be contaminated with chemicals, heavy metals, or even waste like feces and urine from living beings. This kind of language strategy is seen as silly by customers who read it. Therefore, this phenomenon qualifies as humor because it meets key criteria: incongruity, wordplay, and the evocation of laughter.

However, this silliness (incongruent) makes the sentence humorous and brings laughter to the customers. This sentence will contain congruent meaning if it is written as *pisangnya asli dan coklatnya juga asli* (The banana is real and so is the chocolate). Then, the data in entries 23 and 27 also present compound sentences where conjunctions are intentionally left out. Besides, a compound sentence in the form of an invitation is presented in data 27. They can see in the appendix section.

The subsequent example highlights one complex humorous sentence found on a business banner, structured as an invitation. It follows an imperative pattern aimed at engaging the audience. The following figure illustrates how this pattern is employed on a real banner.



Datum 18: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

This picture was taken in Pasar Baru, Pauh Sub-district, Padang City. This banner demonstrates laundry services. Based on the data above, a complex sentence is portrayed by the sentence *Budayakan malas mencuci karena mencuci adalah tugas kami* (Encourage the mindset of avoiding laundry because laundry is our responsibility). This sentence is claimed as humorous because it contains a deviation in meaning. In the socio-cultural context of Indonesian society, the word *budayakan* (encourage) is linked to the promotion of positive values. For instance, *Mari budayakan membaca sebelum bertanya* (Let us cultivate the habit of reading before asking) or

Mari budayakan makan dengan tangan kanan (Let us cultivate the habit of eating with the right hand).

Therefore, in this phenomenon, it is associated with a negative value, which is *kemalasan* (laziness), and it is specifically the laziness to do laundry. The deviation in meaning between expectation and reality causes this sentence to be humorous. It is in line with Raskin's (1984) statement that a text will contain a sense of humor when both expectation and reality overlap. In other words, this utterance is considered humorous because it shocks the customers (tenor). The business owner adopts a non-mainstream approach (field). This method is perceived as unique, and the business owner is viewed as bold for adopting an unconventional strategy. For these reasons, the phenomenon fulfills core parameters of humor, including incongruity, wordplay, and the provocation of laughter.

This overlapping will provoke laughter from the customers who read the sentence, and it will unconsciously reduce their tension and depression because of some problem that they face in their lives (Freud as cited in Cook, 2002). Besides, this sentence will include a normal (congruent) meaning if it is written as *Jika anda tidak punya waktu untuk mencuci, maka serahkan kepada kami* (If you do not have time to do your laundry, then entrust it to us). This humor is considered occasional, as it was a short-lived slogan that no longer exists.

▪ **Phrase-Based Humor on Business Signboards and Banners**

According to the findings, seven (7) humorous phrases appear on signboards and ten (10) are found on banners. They all belong to the category of noun phrases. A phrase is a set of words that serve as a unit of a sentence. A noun phrase (NP) is the structure of the head and its modifier. NP consists of a determiner, which functions as the modifier, and a noun acts as the head group.

▫ **Phrase-Based Humor on Business Signboards**

Based on the analysis, the patterns found in humorous phrases on signboards are phonological play and personification. Phonological play is found in the data 3, 9, and 10. The language play of personification is discovered by the data 4 and 5. Humorous phrases in the form of phonological play can be viewed in the following data.



Datum 9: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Andalas

This picture was taken in Jalan Andalas, Padang Timur Sub-district, Padang City. The humorous phrase is displayed by the phrase *Cemilan*

Cepuluh. The humorous nuance in this phrase arises from a phonetic pun made by the business owner in the name of the business. This pun can be observed through the following formula.

- sembilan [səmbilan] → cemilan [cəmilan]: s → c, b → Ø, and ɪ → Ø
- sepuluh [səpuluh] → cepuluh [cəpuluh]: s → c

The words *cemilan* (snack) and *cepuluh* (ten) sound amusing because they are typically pronounced by toddlers who are in the process of language acquisition. The cuteness factor of these words arises when they are pronounced by young children in the early stages of speech development. In terms of meaning, nine and ten fall under the same category because both of them are numbers. However, when the word *cepuluh* (ten) is paired with the word *cemilan* (snack), it is clear that they occupy distinct positions.

Based on Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI) (n.d.), the correct form of the word *cemilan* is *camilan*. The *camilan* is a small snack typically consumed between main meals, such as cakes, chips, nuts, or other light foods. Therefore, this word has been generalized within the context of modern nutrition. In this case, snacks are not always limited to solid foods, and the key factors are their function and the timing of consumption.

In this context, *camilan* (snack) is defined as a light food or beverage consumed between main meals. This can include solid foods (chips, fruits, bread, etc.) or high-calorie liquids (juice, protein shakes, smoothies, and so on) (Hess et al., 2016). This appears to be the rationale behind business

owners using the word *camilan* in his/her business name. Essentially, she/he aim to promote the idea that a snack is not only related to light foods but can also be associated with high-calorie items.

Hence, it can be concluded that *cemilan* (snack) and *cepuluh* (ten) fundamentally differ in meaning. However, the play on sounds and meanings makes this phrase humorous and invites laughter from customers who read or see it. This phenomenon is in line with Raskin's (1984) statement that a text is considered humorous if it contains absurdity, ambiguity, ridiculousness, or incongruous meaning, and it should provoke laughter from those who hear/read it, which potentially alleviates psychological distress, such as stress or depression, among consumers (Freud as cited in Cook, 2002).

In conclusion, the humor in this language phenomenon is triggered by the mismatch between the textual content and the contextual framework. The subject matter (field) concerns a business aimed at adults (tenor), but the atmosphere created is that of a toddlers' setting. Although the use of the word *cepuluh* appears out of context, its presence significantly contributes to the humorous effect of the entire phrase. As a result, this phenomenon is considered humorous since it satisfies three essential requirements for humor: incongruity, wordplay, and the capacity to generate laughter. Then, this phrase will be a common (congruent) phrase if it is written as *sembilan sepuluh* (nine and ten) or *cemilan sepuluh* (snack and ten). This humor is

claimed as a permanent humor because it is used as a business name by the business owner, and it still exists today.

On the other hand, the following examples demonstrate how personification is employed in humorous phrase construction. Personification is one example of figurative language that attributes humanlike characteristics, motivations, intentions, and emotions to nonhuman agents by absorbing their imagined or real behaviors (Fielden-Burns & Piquer-Piriz, 2022). The personification of a humorous phrase in the picture below conveys an academic and religious atmosphere.



Datum 4: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

The picture was taken in Pasar Baru, Pauh Sub-district, Padang City. This signboard demonstrates a culinary business in which the main ingredient is the egg. Based on the image above, there are multiple linguistic units present, but the analysis focuses solely on phrase components. Three

instances of noun phrases emerge from the data. They are *Dr. Telur Gulung, S.Tg* (Dr. Rolled Egg, S.Tg), *Spesialis Penyakit Lapar* (Specialist in Hunger Disease), and *Jadwal praktek: Jam 15:00 WIB/Selesai* (Practice schedule: 3 p.m./until finished).

The phrases *Dr. Telur Gulung Lapar, S.Tg* (Dr. Rolled Egg, S.Tg) and *Spesialis Penyakit Lapar* (Specialist in Hunger Disease) are examples of language plays used by business owners to attract customers to pay attention to the product. It is purely a fictional name created by the author, and it is a personification. Based on the context, the acronym S.Tg can be interpreted as *Sarjana Telur Gulung* (S.Tg). Based on Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (n.d), *sarjana* (bachelor) is awarded after completing a study program at a university or college. It is often the first level of higher education. Meanwhile, according to the Oxford Dictionary (n.d.), a doctor (Dr.) is a person who has received the highest university degree. That is a formal title used to signify that an individual has reached the highest level of education in their field.

The meaning based on the dictionary definition is referred to as the congruent meaning. This phenomenon is claimed as a language play because the title of *Sarjana Telur Gulung* (S.Tg)/Bachelor of Rolled Egg (BRE) and specialist doctor in rolled eggs has never existed in the realm of education at all. Those degrees have never existed in the Practical Culinary study program. In this case, the meaning of these dictions consists of incongruent (connotative) meaning. However, naming a product is the

prerogative of its business owner. It will be alright as long as it does not contain elements of hatred towards certain ethnicities, religions, races, and cultures.

The phrases *Dr. Telur Gulung*, *S.Tg*, and *Spesialis Penyakit Lapar* show that the business owner wants to convey to the customers that his/her product is the best. Using the titles on the signboard symbolizes a quality guarantee to customers because it has achieved the highest level in the academic field. This is further strengthened by the phrase *spesialis penyakit lapar*. This also serves as a form of guarantee that the product will satisfy customers if they are feeling hungry, because this product is very experienced in hunger issues.

The business owner conducts this language strategy because most of the target market is students in higher education. The academic atmosphere is given to them because it is their daily environment. Thus, they will be familiar with and feel closer to those terms. On the other hand, it seems that the business owner also uses these two phrases to message the students, encouraging them to complete their education and obtain their academic degrees at the university. They should not give up halfway if they are not outdone by the 'Rolled Egg' with its doctoral title.

On the other hand, the researcher thinks that the business owner may forget to put the title of dr. after the word Dr. It may also be possible that the business owner cannot distinguish the usage of dr. (d with a small letter)

and Dr. (d with a capital letter) title in terms of Indonesian culture. The business owner may assume that both of these titles are the same.

In English, the title of doctor (Dr.) can be used in both: a person who has been trained in medical science, whose job is to treat people who are ill or injured, or someone who has received the highest university degree (Oxford Dictionary, n.d.). In Indonesia, the title of dr. is used for a medical doctor who has completed a bachelor's degree in medicine and is allowed to practice as a doctor. This professional title is granted after completing the medical education program at the undergraduate level (S-1) in Indonesia.

A doctor with this title has not yet obtained specialist education or a doctoral program (S-3). Contrastively, the title of Dr. is used for someone who has completed doctoral education (S-3) in any field, whether in medicine, social sciences, natural sciences, or other disciplines. Based on the context of the signboard above, two ways can be conducted by the business owner to fix the signboard: adding the title of dr. after Dr. or replacing the title Dr. becomes dr. Thus, it becomes *Dr. dr. Telur Gulung, S.Tg*.

It is the most common mistake made by people in Indonesia. They think that the meaning of dr. and Dr. is the same. In fact, they are very different. Overall, the sense of humor in these two phrases comes from the diction of *Dr.*, *S.Tg* and the phrase of *Spesialis Penyakit Lapar* on the signboard. The placement of all these choices of words on the signboard above is far from their denotative meaning. Commonly, the business owner

only needs to write *Telur Gulung* (Rolled Egg). That is a very regular style (congruent) used by most business owners.

Next, the phrase *Jadwal praktek: Jam 15:00 WIB/Selesai* (Practice schedule: 3 p.m./until finished) contains a sense of humor because it is very odd to be put on the signboard. It still correlates with the previous phrase, which is *Dr. Telur Gulung, S.Tg*, and the *phrase Spesialis Penyakit Lapar*. This phrase is used by the business owner because she/he act as if she/he is a doctor and the customers are the patients.

As is known, in doing their duties, doctors have a schedule to be met by their patients. It also happens to this shop. It also has a schedule for opening and closing times. In this case, it is open at 3 p.m. and will be closed when the business owner feels it is time to close the store. Denotatively, the phrase *Jadwal praktek* does not fit if it is used in the business context. It will create an incongruent meaning because this phrase is commonly used in a clinical atmosphere. Commonly, the business owner uses the phrase *jam buka* (opening hours) to show when the shop is open (congruent). All of the noun phrase is claimed as permanent humor because they are used as business names and taglines.

To conclude, all of the aforementioned phrases are regarded as humorous due to the incongruity between the text and its context. In this case, the subject (field) being discussed is business, yet the language choices are related to hospitals and religion, which are obviously at odds with commercial contexts. Furthermore, the intended audience (tenor) is

customers, not patients or religious adherents. Although the expressions may seem out of context, their presence contributes to the overall humorous effect. As a result, this phenomenon is classified as humorous since it fits the criteria for humor: incongruity, wordplay, and the evocation of amusement.

▫ **Phrase-Based Humor on Business Banners**

There are some patterns found in humorous phrases on banners, including the use of various figurative languages (metaphor, personification, satire, and hyperbole), presentation in the form of *pantun* (Indonesian traditional poem) lines, and the use of viral language. The use of figurative language appears in data 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 27, and 28. Meanwhile, humorous phrases structured in the form of a *pantun* line and viral language are found in data 24. The use of figurative language for humorous purposes is identified in the following data.



Datum 28: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Prof. Dr. Hamka

This picture was taken in Parupuk Tabing, Koto Tengah Sub-district, Padang City, and the shop features *Pecel Lele* as its main culinary offering. Based on the picture above, two linguistic units contain humor, which are the phrase *Sambal Thor* (Thor Sambal) and the phrase *Dewanya sambal pethir* (The God of lightning sambal). This phrase is considered humorous due to its use of incongruent meaning through a metaphor (Raskin, 1984) and the effect of such humor is laughter, which, according to Freud (as cited in Cook, 2002) has the potential to reduce stress and depression among customers

Throughout the phrase *Sambal Thor*, the business owner wants to convey to customers that the spiciness of their sambal is as intense as the power of Thor, the Norse god of thunder, capable of generating lightning in his anger. Thor is a character in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, a series of movies created by Marvel Studios that tell stories about superheroes. He is known as the God of Thunder and is considered one of the strongest characters because he can live for a very long time. Thor is renowned for his legendary weapon, *Mjölmir*, a colossal hammer possessing extraordinary power. When Thor drives his hammer into a stone, the heavens are filled with the booming sound of thunder. In the context of Greek mythology, thunder is believed to be a manifestation of God's formidable power and anger (Rahman et.al, 2021).

Additionally, in this phenomenon, the business owner aims to express that the chili condiment is extraordinarily spicy, producing a sharp,

electrifying sensation similar to a lightning strike when consumed. This phrase would become a common expression (congruent) if replaced with the phrase *sambal pedas* (spicy sambal). However, this strategy is frequently employed by other business owners, leading to a neutral emotional response from customers, in contrast to the more engaging effect of the humorous phrase discussed earlier.

On the other hand, the phrase *Dewanya sambal pethir* is judged as a humorous phrase due to its use of hyperbole, a figure of speech that exaggerates elements beyond their literal sense, and its explanation remains connected to the previously discussed phrase. This phrase also appears quite absurd, as Thor is not a God associated with chili sauce, but rather only with thunder. A deeper analysis reveals that the business owner employs this phrase to emphasize that the sambal used in the product is exceptionally spicy. This level of spiciness is portrayed as unequaled by any competitor, reaching a 'God' level. Such an expression is hyperbolic and not grounded in reality, as no such God exists for spicy sambal, particularly not for sambal petir.

As a result, both phrases are perceived as humorous due to the clash between the textual content and its surrounding context. In this case, the topic (field) revolves around business, yet the atmosphere is shaped by references to the film world, specifically *Thor*. The intended audience (tenor) is clearly customers, not moviegoers. Although the expressions seem contextually inconsistent, their presence significantly shapes the overall

humorous effect. Therefore, this phenomenon is classified as humor because it aligns with humor parameters such as incongruity, play on words, and the use of figurative language (hyperbole and metaphor), along with the ability to evoke amusement.

This phrase will be considered conventional (denotative meaning) if substituted with *terkenal dengan sambal pedasnya* (Famous for its spicy sambal). All of these phrases are considered permanent humor because they function as product names and taglines.

Furthermore, the data below demonstrates how humorous phrases on banners adopt the *pantun* structure while combining features of viral language styles. *Pantun* is an old type of poetry from Indonesian literature. It is used to connect, give guidance, or share gentle social observations. It is open for anyone to use, and it adds a charming touch to any gathering (Medani & Sakti, 2022).



Datum 24: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

This picture was taken in Pauh Sub-district, Padang City. This banner demonstrates a culinary business. Referring to the banner above, a humorous language is employed by adopting language trends prevalent in Indonesian society, particularly among the young generation. The language shown on the banner is commonly known as a simple *pantun* (an Indonesian traditional poem): *Ubur-ubur ikan lele, di sini ada angkringan, Le* (Ubur-ubur ikan lele, here is the angkringan, Le). This *pantun* has become widely popular among individuals of all ages, from children to the elderly, and is also embraced by people from diverse occupational backgrounds.

The structure of humor in this expression relies on the playful phrase *Ubur-ubur ikan lele* (jellyfish, catfish), found in the first line. The analysis of this phrase cannot be separated from the sentence that follows it, as they operate together as one coherent structure. Raskin (1984) characterizes this phrase as humorous due to its incongruous absurdity, which elicits amusement, which leads to a reduction in psychological stress experienced by customers (Freud as cited in Cook, 2002)

The formula in creating this *pantun* relies on two key elements: the phrase *Ubur-ubur ikan lele* and the word *le*, which is placed at the end of the second line. Thus, another *pantun* can be generated using these two core components, for example: *Ubur-ubur ikan lele, akhir bulan belum gajian, Le* (*Ubur-ubur ikan lele*, the end of the month has not been paid yet, *Le*). In this *pantun*, the word *le* refers to the Javanese term *tole*. It is a sweet and familiar form of address for little boys, commonly used in everyday

conversations. It is regarded as occasional humor due to its use as a transient slogan that is no longer visible in the present context.

To conclude, the phrase above is identified as humorous due to a contradiction between textual elements and contextual expectations. In this case, the topic (field) involves business-related content, yet the tone resembles that of stand-up comedy performances. Then, the message targets customers (tenor), not comedy show audiences. Although the phrase appears out of context, its presence contributes to the overall humorous effect. Thus, this phenomenon is considered humorous because it aligns with key humor parameters: incongruity, wordplay, the evocation of amusement, and the use of cultural references through viral language.

- **Word-Based Humor on Business Signboards and Banners**

Among the linguistic units identified on signboards and banners, the word occurs the least. The data show that only one (1) humorous expression takes the form of a word in each signboard and banner. A word is a single group of letters used together with a particular meaning. Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams (2009) have classified words into two kinds of words: content words (open class) and function words (closed class).

The content words represent concepts such as objects, actions, attributes, and ideas we can think about. The content word includes nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Function words are words that do not have precise lexical meanings or prominent concepts associated with them. Conjunctions, prepositions, articles, and pronouns are elements of function

words. The humorous lexical items found on both platforms fall under the category of content words. The following data presents humor in the form of a single word found on a signboard.



Datum 14: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Perintis Kemerdekaan

This picture was taken in Jati, Padang Timur Sub-district, Padang City and this shop demonstrates various cosmetic products. Humor arises in the sentence above as a result of the inclusion of the word *slebew*. In this case, the word *slebew* must be separated from the previous sentence because it functions as a distinct emotive expression that enriches the stylistic quality of the sentence and this word must be ended with an exclamation mark. Thus, it is supposed to be written as: *Duit bisa dicari, tapi kesempatan glowing cuma sekali. Slebew!* (Money can always be earned, but the chance to truly shine comes only once).

Slebew is considered humorous because it is not commonly used to promote cosmetic products in a business context. From its etymological roots, the word was first popularized by an individual named Jeje from the

SCBD (Sudirman, Citayam, Bojong, and Depok) community. It has subsequently become a trend during Citayam Fashion Week and spread across social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, etc. The term carries a negative connotation due to its association with pornographic or sexual content (Tya, 2022). The word *slebew* originates from a phonetic imitation associated with sexual intercourse, where the term is used to reflect a sound effect emerging from that context (onomatopoeia).

Therefore, only a small portion of the public is aware of the original meaning of this word, and many of them imitate its usage based on its comedic tone. As a result, the dominant social paradigm regards the term as phonetically attractive and enjoyable in casual speech. In conclusion, this word is perceived as humorous due to its pronounced incongruity, especially in contexts where it is utilized to advertise cosmetic items.

On the other hand, because of the disconnect between the text and its context, this word is also interpreted as humor. In this instance, the topic (field) is business, but the tone conveys a lack of seriousness, implying that the cosmetics industry is only a playful venture. The intended audience (tenor) consists of customers who are genuinely interested in shopping and in taking care of their appearance. Despite sounding out of context, this phenomenon is regarded as humor as it fulfills key parameters of humor: incongruity, wordplay, evocation of amusement, and cultural reference through viral expressions.

Beside, this word will be a normal (congruent) word if it is replaced with the sentence *Selamat berbelanja!* (Happy shopping!). Based on the phenomenon above, a humorous atmosphere occurs because of the incongruity between linguistic units' placement and reality, and it leads to a logical conflict (Raskin, 1984). Freud (as cited in Cook, 2002) believes that this strategy will reduce customers' tension when they read or see it. Then, the humorous word above is considered a form of occasional humor because it functions as a short-term slogan that eventually ceases to appear.

Next, the following data reveals how business owners incorporate humor into their banners throughout the word form. They implement a strategy that involves abbreviations with meanings commonly understood by their customers. To illustrate these findings visually, a corresponding picture is presented below, which will be discussed in the subsequent analysis.



Datum 22: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

This picture was taken in Pasar Baru, Pauh Sub-district, Padang City. This banner demonstrates a laundry service. The shop is located near the Universitas Andalas, and is surrounded by various rental houses. The word *Promag* in the above data functions as the main source of humor. In Indonesia, *Promag* is commonly known as a pharmaceutical brand formulated to reduce clinical manifestations, such as hyperacidity, gastritis, and peptic ulcer disease. Hence, logically speaking, the use of this word is highly incongruent when associated with a laundry business.

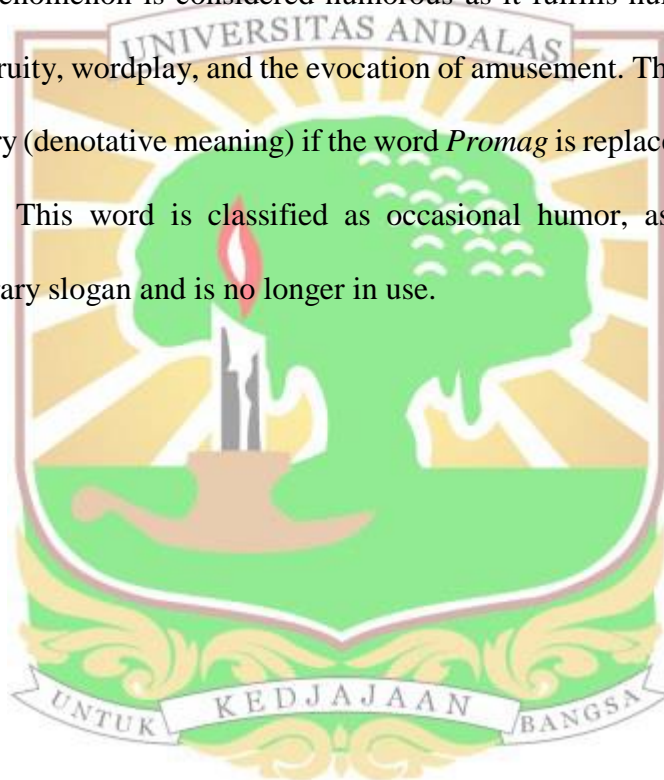
However, this becomes reasonable when viewed in the context of student life. As previously mentioned, the shop is located near the campus, where students are often overwhelmed by academic responsibilities. This condition leads them to skip meals and eventually suffer from the aforementioned health issues.

Then, customers' expectations about the word are changed when they see the meaning that the business owner intended. The business owner does not aim to use this word to promote medication, but rather to advertise their laundry services. This can be observed from the phrase below the word *Promag*, namely *promo mahasiswa Mager* (Lazy student promo).

In conclusion, this word is identified as humorous due to the gap between the text and its context. In this case, the field revolves around a laundry business, but the tone presents a health-related theme, specifically a reference to a medicine brand, *Promag* (Field). The intended audience (tenor) is clearly the customers, not individuals seeking medical treatment.

Despite appearing out of context, the statement adds to the banner's humorous tone. This supports Raskin's (1984) assertion that humor develops when the cooperative principle is mocked, leading to an ambiguous interpretation.

Freud (as cited in Cook, 2002) also believes that such a strategy provokes laughter and helps customers relieve stress or depression. Hence, this phenomenon is considered humorous as it fulfills humor parameters: incongruity, wordplay, and the evocation of amusement. The word becomes ordinary (denotative meaning) if the word *Promag* is replaced with the word *promo*. This word is classified as occasional humor, as it serves as a temporary slogan and is no longer in use.



▪ **The Humor Patterns Found on Business Signboards and Banners**

Table 4.3 The Humor Patterns Found on Business Signboards and Banners

No.	Linguistic Unit	Pattern of Humor	
		Signboard	Banner
1.	Sentence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using declarative sentences that employ various figurative languages such as metaphor, satire, irony, and hyperbole, and using a viral language (simple sentence); -The omission of conjunctions and question words, and using viral or trendy language (compound and complex sentences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using declarative sentences, using viral language, using imperative forms in terms of encouragement and prohibition, and the omission of the subject (simple sentence); - The omission of subject and conjunction, and presented in the form of encouragement (compound sentence); - The omission of the subject and presented in the form of encouragement (complex sentence)
2.	Phrase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using phonological play and personification; - Using academic and professional choice of words - Presented in the form of a noun phrase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Using various figurative languages such as metaphor, personification, and hyperbole; -Presented in the form of <i>pantun</i> lines, and presented in the form of a noun phrase; -Using viral language
3.	Word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presented in the form of a content word - Using viral language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Presented in the form of a content word -Using an abbreviation

4.1.2. Non-Linguistic Analysis of Humor on Business Signboards and Banners

- **Color Choices and Their Role in Conveying Humor**

All elements displayed on signboards and banners convey intended meanings, including the colors selected for textual content and background design. Based on the analysis, business owners use the four text colors on signboards: black, white, yellow, and red, and five background colors for those texts: white, brown, yellow, red, and green. It is obtained that black is the most frequently used color for text, while white is predominantly chosen as the background color. Meanwhile, they apply six text colors on banners: black, white, red, pink, blue, and yellow, and six background colors: black, white, red, green, blue, and yellow.

Besides, business owners tend to use white as the primary color for the text on banners, with yellow being the most commonly applied color for the background. As in the previous analysis, the number of colors on signboards and banners is not calculated based on the number of the two platforms, but rather on the total number of colors used on them. In addition, a single signboard and banner may apply more than one color. The details are shown in the table below.

Table 4.4 Color Choices on Signboards and Their Frequency

No.	Color Choices on Signboards					
	Text	Frequency	Percentage	Background	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Black	13	65%	White	10	55.55%
2.	White	3	15%	Yellow	4	22.22%
3.	Yellow	2	10%	Brown	1	5.55%
4.	Red	2	10%	Red	1	5.56%
5.	-	-	-	Green	1	5.56%
6.	-	-	-	Pink	1	5.56%
Total		20	100%		18	100%

Table 4.5 Color Choices on Banners and Their Frequency

No.	Color Choices on Banners					
	Text	Frequency	Percentage	Background	Frequency	Percentage
1.	White	9	40.91%	Yellow	4	25%
2.	Red	5	22.73%	White	3	18.75%
3.	Black	4	18.18%	Red	3	18.75%
4.	Yellow	2	9.10%	Blue	3	18.75%
5.	Blue	1	4.54%	Black	2	12.5%
6.	Pink	1	4.54%	Green	1	6.25%
Total		22	100%		16	100%

Referring to the color psychology framework introduced by Adir (as cited in Suriadi et al., 2022), black symbolizes power, sophistication, mystery, and death. White displays hope, simplicity, cleanliness, goodness, and purity. Red means love, passion, romance, danger, interest, and energy. Yellow symbolizes intellect, friendliness, warmth, caution, and cowardice. Green color symbolizes life, growth, nature, money, and freshness. Brown is a color formed by combining red, blue, and yellow. This color is often associated with the color of the earth, symbolizing simplicity, safety, comfort, and stability. Blue depicts peace, sincerity, confidence, integrity, and tranquility. Meanwhile, pink tends to evoke expressions of joy and playfulness within the framework of femininity (Fuady, 2017). From a

psychological perspective, the use of specific colors by business owners affects consumers' emotional responses and shopping experience.

Black is predominantly selected as a text color due to its neutrality and versatility in combination with other colors. Consequently, black-colored text enhances legibility and visual clarity for customers. Similar to black, white is perceived as a neutral color that complements any color it is paired with. In other words, the use of black and white as both the text color and the background reflects the business owners' intention to deliver their messages clearly to customers, thus strengthening the effectiveness of influencing customers' shopping decisions.

In the following figure, the practical application of these colour choices is showcased. As can be seen in the picture below, the combination of black and white on the signboard creates a visually pleasant display and ensures a high level of text readability. As a result, it allows customers to engage with the content more easily and comfortably.



Datum 13: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Raya Indarung

Meanwhile, red and yellow are utilized in both textual and background elements to stimulate customer interest in humorous content delivered through various linguistic forms. In public settings, yellow typically signals caution or danger, as seen in signs like “Caution: Roadwork Ahead” or “Caution: Slippery Surface”. Similarly, red indicates restriction or commands to stop, as with traffic lights. These colors carry meanings that are widely recognized and absorbed into the cognitive semantics of everyday observers.

Therefore, when customers see red or yellow, they intuitively recognize the importance of the message. This psychological response becomes a strategic tool for business owners to attract attention and trigger curiosity about their offered products or services. Having established the purpose behind the colour selections, data 15 is presented below to exemplify these design decisions in real-world business settings.



Datum 15: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

In the phenomenon above, yellow contributes to strengthening the humor conveyed by the business owner through written language. As shown, the promotion of the product and shop is presented in an oddly amusingly. The text is then wrapped in a striking color that is commonly associated with warning signs. This instantly captures the customer's attention and directs their focus to the information displayed, both in its linguistic and non-linguistic elements.

Meanwhile, the data obtained from the analysis of signboards and banners shows that brown, pink, and green are the three least applied colors in the visual design elements. The brown color appears only once (1) and is used to represent a product with strong traditional values. This is evident in data 11, which presents a food product called *angkringan*. This finding aligns with Adir's statement (as cited in Suriadi et al., 2022), suggesting that brown symbolizes the earth and is closely associated with simplicity. Similarly, the business owner uses this color to convey that *angkringan* is a people-oriented and budget-friendly culinary option.

Besides, Pink is used only once in banner text and once as a background color on a signboard, which can be observed in data 14 and 18. Psychologically, pink is interpreted as a symbol of femininity, often culturally linked to women due to prevailing stereotypes. Pink is typically employed to advertise feminine-related products, such as cosmetics, and is also present in laundry service promotions. Nonetheless, its application is minimal, as most business owners target a broader audience, inclusive of

both genders. The concern is that overuse may result in ambiguity, suggesting to potential buyers that the products are gender-specific. This phenomenon highlights the importance of carefully selecting text and background colors in business signboards and banners.

Then, findings show that green is minimally used by business owners, mainly because their products are processed and not fresh items taken directly from nature. The table indicates that green appears only once in the background of a signboard and a banner, specifically in data 5 and 17. These promote items like sugarcane juice and *jasuke* (which consist mostly of corn) in data 5, clearly associated with nature. Therefore, employing green in contexts unrelated to natural products may reduce the clarity or effectiveness of the humorous intent behind the message.

- **Text Positions and Their Role in Conveying Humor**

To see how the business owners present humor on the signboards and banners, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) suggest visual semiotics by looking at the position of the humorous text. This study finds that the majority of business owners place humorous text at the bottom of their business signboards. Meanwhile, it is also observed that the central area is the second most preferred location for business owners to place humorous. In contrast, the majority of business owners position textual humor in the central area of their banners.

On the other side, they identify the bottom area as the second most frequently selected space for placing humorous elements. Overall, the

bottom and central areas are the most frequently used spaces by business owners for placing textual humor on their signboards and banners. On these two platforms, the position of the text sometimes does not stand alone. Several positions may be used at once. Therefore, the number of humor positions differs from the total number of data points, since a single data point can involve more than one humor placement. Details and analysis of humor positions are provided in the following table.

Table 4.6 Text Positions on Signboards and Their Frequency

No.	Text Position on Signboards	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Bottom	10	47.62%
2.	Center	5	23.81%
3.	Top	3	14.29%
4.	Left	2	9.52%
5.	Right	1	4.76%
Total		21	100%

Table 4.7 Text Positions on Banners and Their Frequency

No.	Text Position on Banners	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Center	8	32%
2.	Bottom	7	28%
3.	Top	5	20%
4.	Left	3	12%
5.	Right	2	8%
Total		25	100%

Based on the analysis, textual humor appears in the bottom area 10 times (47.62%) on signboards and 7 times (28%) on banners. As proposed by Kress and Leeuwen (2006), the bottom area signifies factual and detailed information. Business owners appear to use humor in this section as a brief and efficient alternative to traditional promotional texts, which often require

extensive space for elaboration. This spatial efficiency not only optimizes layout design on signboards and banners but also minimizes production expenses.

Therefore, humor positioned in the bottom area functions as a practical approach to conveying clear and detailed information at a lower cost. One noticeable pattern appears on signboards and banners when textual humor is located in the bottom section: most of the data show that the top area is commonly used for visual imagery. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) declare that when this pattern appears, it indicates that the business owner aims to deliver a doctrine through the text, while the image functions to strengthen and support the conveyed meaning. The following data clearly illustrate this phenomenon.

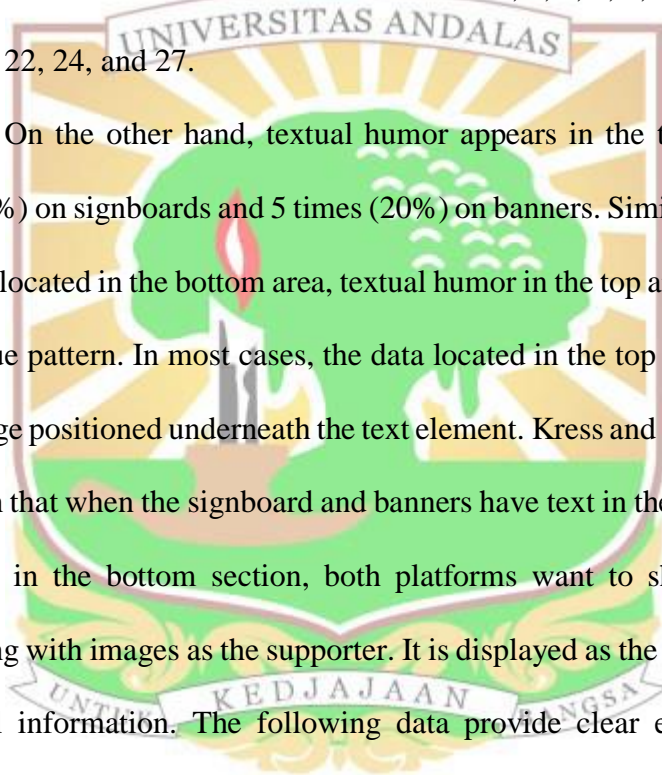


Datum 5: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

In the image above, the phrase *pemadam keroncongan* (rumbling stomach extinguisher) that is placed in the bottom section contains a

metaphorical meaning. In this context, it appears that the business owner is strategically communicating a doctrine to the customers. The business owner metaphorically adopts the role of a firefighter, an occupation widely recognized as critical to public welfare. Through this comparison, the business attempts to convey to consumers that its product holds comparable significance and plays a life-saving role. Another example that places humor in the bottom section can be observed in data 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 20, 22, 24, and 27.

On the other hand, textual humor appears in the top area 3 times (14.29%) on signboards and 5 times (20%) on banners. Similar to the textual humor located in the bottom area, textual humor in the top area also presents a unique pattern. In most cases, the data located in the top section includes an image positioned underneath the text element. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) explain that when the signboard and banners have text in the top section and images in the bottom section, both platforms want to show ideological meaning with images as the supporter. It is displayed as the most salient and general information. The following data provide clear evidence of this phenomenon.





Datum 25: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Raya Lubuk Begalung

In the case above, the humorous sentence *Iketan berdiri sejak kepepet Kepepet* (Iketan has been run out of necessity), that positioned in the top section, carries a silly meaning. It occurs due to the use of the word *kepepet* (under pressure) in that sentence. According to the Indonesian Dictionary (n.d.), *terpepet* refers to being in a chaotic, difficult, or pressured situation. In this situation, the business owner aims to inform customers that the establishment starts without full preparation. Should any flaws arise in the service or product, customers are encouraged to show understanding and communicate them directly. Implicitly, the owner embeds an ideology of apology for any unwanted outcomes. An additional case of humor placement in the top section is evident in data 3,4, 10, 19, 22, 26, and 27.

Besides, textual humor appears in the left area 2 times (9.52%) on signboards and 3 times (12%) on banners. Referring to the Krees and

Leeuwen's statement (2006), verbal-visual elements that are positioned in the left area, convey information that is already familiar or known to the readers. The data reveals that business owners perceive the humor found on signboards and banners as content that is already widely recognized by the public. This is because the expressions used on both media are strongly connected to their daily routines and social interactions. Frequently, such language gains popularity through influencers and public figures on social media. Thus, business owners assume that the humor they deliver is comprehensible to customers, as they both possess similar cognitive semantic understanding. The evidence of this phenomenon is reflected in the data presented below.



Datum 16: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

As shown in the image above, the business owner organizes the banner into two segments: the left section for textual elements and the right section for visual components. The humorous phrase *sambal mulut tetangga* (neighbor's mouth), which is placed on the left side, represents a familiar

idiomatic expression frequently heard by the community. In Indonesian culture, this phrase is closely related to gossip.

In Indonesia, gossip is attached to society (Heppiyani, et al., 2021). It can be conducted by men or women as long as they discuss negative or untrue stories about someone or something. Usually, when the gossip mongers start gossiping about someone, they tend to reveal the victim's shame in detail. Their language is often harsh, offensive, hurtful, and unpleasant.

In the context of metaphor, the business owner wants to compare the quality of the sambal used in the product with the quality of the language produced by the gossip monger. The nature of these two things is equal. In other words, the business owner wants to declare that the spiciness of his/her sambal is as intense as the gossiping of a neighbor. Humor appearing in the left part of the layout can also be found in data 3, 16, 26, and 27.

Besides, textual humor shows up in the right area once (4.76%) on signboards and 2 times (8%) on banners. This area is the least utilized by business owners to place humor. Krees and Leeuwen (2006) mention that if the verbal-visual arrangement is positioned on the right, it indicates a new piece of information that must be noticed by the readers (new). This phenomenon becomes evident through the data shown below.



Datum 15: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

In the above data, the textual humor located on the right side is the sentence *Awas Ketagihan* (Watch out, it's addictive). The sentence is considered new information by the business owner because the store has just opened. In this case, the business owner intends to highlight that, despite the store being recently launched, the products offered are highly attractive and likely to encourage repeated purchases. Humor placement in the lower section is also demonstrated in data 4 and 27.

Then, textual humor appears in the center area 5 times (23.81%) on signboards and 8 times (32%) on banners. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) assert that the center area is the crucial area because it is the spotlight domain that must be noticed more by the readers. The data presented below clearly illustrates this phenomenon.



Datum 21: LL in the Business Area on Jalan Dr. Moh. Hatta

Based on the picture above, the textual humor located on the right side is the phrase *perisai hausmu*. This is considered as a spotlight information by the business owner because he/she intends to emphasize to the customers that the product serves a vital function in their lives. As commonly understood, a shield plays a strategic role in warfare. Similarly, the business owner aims to draw an analogy between his product and a shield, implying that his product is equally essential in the context of everyday life. Another data set that places humor in the central area is evident in data 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, 15, 22, 24, 27, and 28.

4.2. Business Owners' Reasons for Using Humor in Business Signboards and Banners

This current study explores this step by looking at the results of survey responses provided to the business owners. The result finds that there are 45 responses from the business owners. The answers come from various businesses, such as beauty shops, cafes, laundries, convenience shops, food trucks, and other local shops. A total of twelve (12) questions are included in the questionnaire, covering both owner identification and business practices. The questionnaire is designed to reveal the business owners' reasons for choosing to use humor on their business signboards and banners.

This stage addresses the production, distribution, and consumption of the text. These three aspects will be connected to the Branding Theory proposed by Luna et al. (2018), which introduces five stages that must be followed to achieve a successful marketing strategy aimed at encouraging customer interest and driving product or service purchases. These stages are attention, brand awareness, brand association, brand attitude, and consumer-brand relationships. The first, second, and third questions were related to business owner identification.

Then, the fourth, fifth, and sixth questions were linked to the attention step (production). The seventh and eighth questions were associated with the brand awareness step (production). The ninth and tenth questions were related to the brand association step (distribution). In addition, the eleventh questions were correlated with the brand attitude step (consumption), and the twelfth question was associated with the customer-brand relationship (consumption).

Next, this analysis will be linked to the view of marketing expert Lazer (2009), who stated that several factors must be considered when identifying a target market. These factors include age, geographic location, educational background, income, and occupation. It is believed in marketing demographics that creating products based on customer characteristics helps make marketing more effective, as customers get the information they need. This research examines business owners in Padang by focusing on the age segment as a marketing demographic in promoting their products or services.

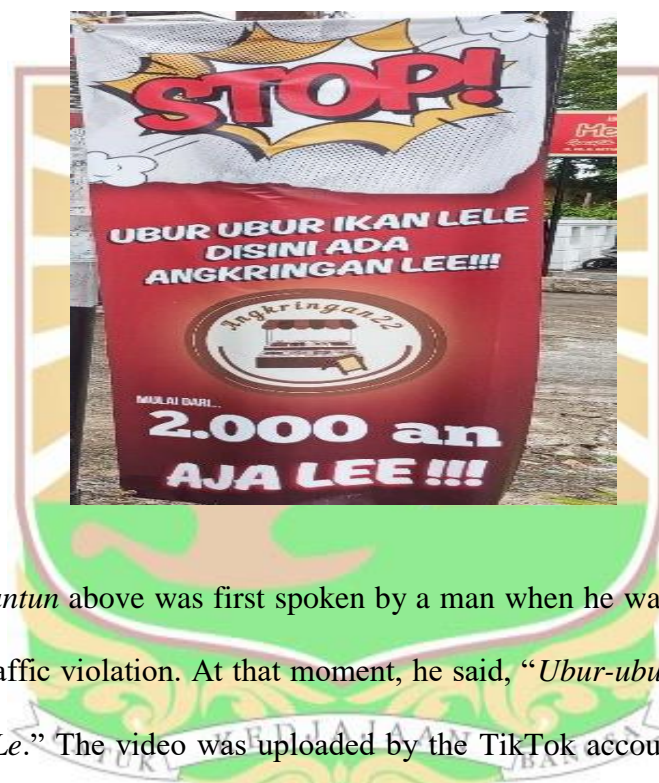
In order to promote the products and services, the business owners created their business signboards and banners. Based on the survey results, 98% of the business owners in Padang set all ages as the target market. Only 2% of them focus on young people as their main market. The business owners in Padang created their business to obtain all the attention from people who passed by the shops. Business owners did this because they believed that people from all groups could understand the humor shown in their signboards and banners. This happened because they had taken the time to know the culture of their customers. Meanwhile, 2% of them disagreed with this statement due to the fact that they did not fully understand the cultural background of their customers. The table below features questions aimed at investigating the motivations behind business owners using humor in their signboards or banners.

Table 4.8 Business Owners' Motivations for Using Humor on Signboards and Banners

Questions	Answers	
	Yes	No
Do you believe that the use of Indonesian-language humor on business signboards or banners reflects current language trends?	38 (84%)	7 (16%)
Is the design of your business signboard or banner based on your own initiative?	43 (96%)	2 (4%)
(If you answered "No" to the previous Question) Was the design of your business signboard or banner approved by you before it was finalized? (Please skip this question if you designed the signboard or banner yourself.)	45 (100%)	0 (0%)
In your opinion, is the use of Indonesian-language humor important in business signboards or banners?	40 (89%)	5 (11%)
Do you think that using Indonesian-language humor on business signboards or banners has a different impact compared to not using it?	42 (93%)	3 (7%)
Are you proud to use Indonesian-language humor in your business signboards or banners?	40 (89%)	5 (11%)
	Answers	
What motivates you to use Indonesian-language humor on your business signboards or banners?	To appear cool and attractive	17 (37.78%)
	To entertain customers	11 (24.44%)
	To achieve target market penetration	6 (13.33%)
	To follow current language trends	4 (8.89%)
	Others	7 (15.56%)

Based on the findings displayed on the table above, the data showed that 84% of business owners said they paid attention to language trends when creating humor on their business signboards and banners. They did this to avoid using the wrong strategy in promoting their products and services to customers. In addition, they also noticed that Padang, as the capital city of West Sumatra Province, was

inhabited by people who were highly dependent on their mobile phones and very active on various social media platforms. They observed that the growth and creativity of the Indonesian language mostly happened on social media and frequently went viral. As a result, they could adopt and modify those viral language trends to create a humorous tone on their business signboards and banners. One of the pieces of evidence could be seen in the data 24.



The *pantun* above was first spoken by a man when he was stopped by the police for a traffic violation. At that moment, he said, “*Ubur-ubur ikan lele, kena tilang polisi, Le.*” The video was uploaded by the TikTok account @wtf.daily11 and received 4.7 million views. Later, this *pantun* went viral among Indonesian people, including in Padang, both online and offline. Eventually, business owners modified it to promote their businesses. Business owners realized that when they used language commonly seen by customers and connected to their daily lives, customers paid more attention and became more interested in exploring the products and services offered. Meanwhile, 16% of business owners did not agree with this statement. It might happen since they did not follow the language trend.

Thus, the humorous language found on their business signboards and banners might have come from their own creativity without relying on any specific references.

According to the surveys, 96% of business owners in Padang asserted that they created their own business signboard and banners based on their will. If someone else helped with the design, it was still done with the owner's permission. This was proven by survey results showing that 100% of business owners stated the design of their business signboards or banners had been approved by them before being finalized as their official signboards or banners. This indicated that business owners were fully aware of every detail shown on their signboards and banners. Therefore, 4% (2 business owners) of them let digital printing conduct it.

Even though the business owners used Indonesian humor on their signboards and banners, not all of them thought that Indonesian humor was essential on the business signboards and banners. The survey showed that there were 89% or 40 Business owners believed that Indonesian humor was pivotal on the business signboards and banners, while 11% or 5 people did not. It might happen due to the business owners realizing that the use of humor has brought many positive impacts. For instance, it helps reduce stress and depression in their customers.

This was also supported by the well-known psychologist, Sigmund Freud. Freud (as cited in Cook, 2002) stated that humor could influence the psychological mechanisms within the human body. When customers laughed, they were releasing endorphins. This hormone helps relax the nerves that cause tension in the human body. In other words, they were doing something good that was spiritually rewarding.

As commonly known, the majority of people living in Padang City were from the Minangkabau ethnic group and followers of Islam. They even believed that being Minangkabau and being Muslim were inseparable. They often said that one could not be considered Minangkabau without being a Muslim. In Islam, people were taught to always do well for others. When someone did well for others, they were actually doing well for themselves. In addition, God promised rewards for those who were willing to perform good deeds.

Meanwhile, 11% or 5 people disagreed with this statement. This might have occurred because they lacked knowledge about the positive impact of humor itself. Another reason was that their orientation was purely focused on gaining profit. On the other hand, when business owners decided to design Indonesian humor on their signboards and banners based on their own willingness and realized the importance of this strategy's effect on their business continuity, they were actually building brand awareness among their consumers.

Then, the survey results showed that 93% of business owners in Padang believed there was a difference in the impact they received when they used Indonesian humor on their business signboards or banners compared to those who did not. It might happen because Indonesian humor caught people's attention and gave information through the diction. Once customers were interested, they would decide to buy the product. After the purchase, business owners would gain profit. The more customers were attracted to the products and services, the greater the profit the business owners received, and their income increased. However, 7% of

the business owners disagreed with the different effects caused by the usage of humor.

According to their belief, the presence or absence of humor on the banners or signboards did not affect sales. People made purchases based on their interest and necessity, not because of the humor used in the two platforms mentioned previously. In addition, when business owners understood the impact of this strategy, they believed it would create a long-term memory effect for customers toward the products and services they offered. They believed this would lead to brand association.

According to the survey, 89% of business owners felt proud to use Indonesian humor on their business signboards and banners. It portrayed that they looked updated and adapted to changes in language trends. This sense of pride also possibly appeared because they understood what they were doing and knew the impact of the marketing strategy they used. They thought there was no disadvantage in using humor to promote their business. Instead, they felt it made them more noticeable and different from competitors who avoided using that strategy.

Therefore, 11 % of business owners did not agree with this perspective. It might happen because they felt more comfortable using the common marketing strategies usually used by other business owners. They believed that humor on their business signboards or banners did not affect anything. People still bought products because they needed them and trusted the quality provided. Besides, business owners' pride in using Indonesian humor on their business signboards and banners was a reflection of their brand attitude in building their business.

On the other hand, the survey revealed that business owners had various reasons for using Indonesian humor on their signboards and banners.

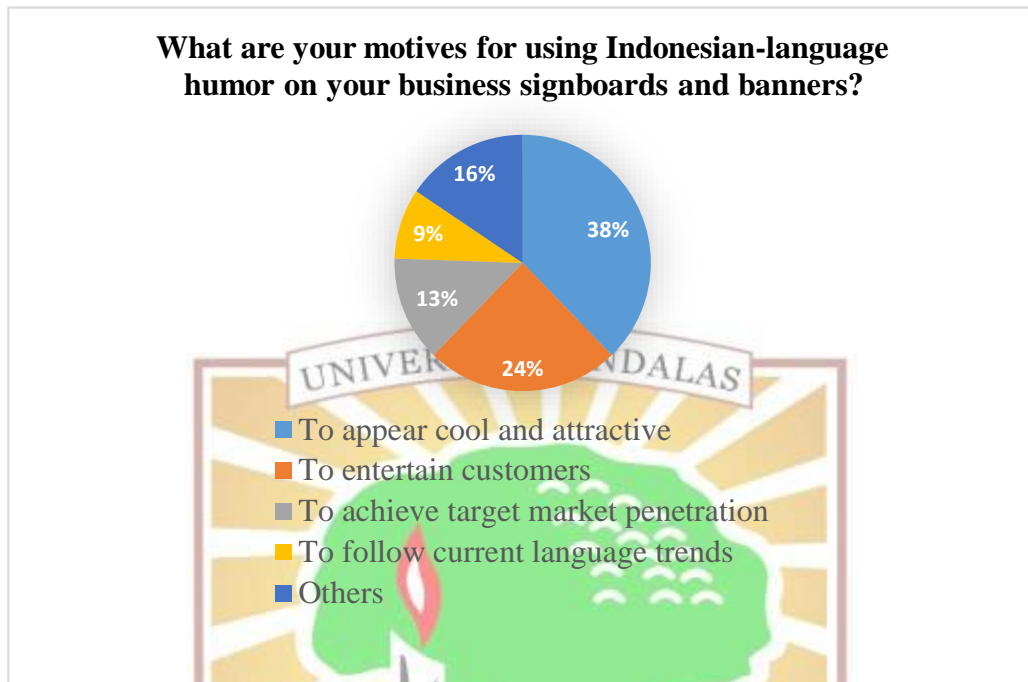


Figure 4.1 Business Owners' Motivations for Using Indonesian-Language Humor on Signboards and Banners

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the business owners used Indonesian humor on their two previously mentioned platforms to make their products and services fascinating and engage the customers' attention. It occurred because they believed Indonesian humor could influence customers' decisions to purchase the products and services they offered. The platforms seemed more interesting when Indonesian humor was used because local people already thought it was cool. Thus, the use of Indonesian humor at least encouraged customers to visit the shops and explore the products and services offered.

Then, the survey said that 24% of business owners used Indonesian humor on their business platforms in order to entertain their customers. As is commonly known, humor refers to the ability of an individual to use language creatively in

order to generate laughter from the audience through punchlines. Once the customers started laughing, they experienced a sense of enjoyment. That enjoyment often acted as a reason for them to buy the products offered by the business owner.

Besides, 13% of business owners utilized Indonesian humor on their signboards and banners to adjust the target market. The business owners believed that all of their customers preferred looking at the signboards and banners that had Indonesian humor on them. It occurred due to the business owners thinking that their customers had a similar sense of humor with them. Besides, the business owners also believed that the customers had a high level of humor literacy, allowing them to grasp the intended meanings, as this type of humor was already part of their daily experience.

Based on the surveys, 9% of the business owners used Indonesian humor because they wanted to keep up with contemporary language trends. When they applied it, they believed that customers would see them as very trendy and up-to-date with the current language trends in the community. It also created a positive impression for them since customers thought they were flexible business owners who did not rely on outdated promotion systems. Meanwhile, the data revealed that 16% of business owners applied for them for other reasons that were personal and only known to the owners themselves.

When business owners realized the reasons behind their use of Indonesian humor on signboards and banners, they were moving toward building a brand-customer relationship. According to microeconomic theory (Putri et al., 2021), the main goal of producers in offering their products to customers is still to gain the

highest possible profit. However, the long-term goal was to keep customers coming back.

In conclusion, most business owners created the Indonesian humor texts on their signboards and banners by themselves. Although some asked designers to do it, they still reviewed the results before the signs and banners were printed. Besides, most business owners target people of all ages. They used Indonesian humor on their signboards and banners so that everyone, regardless of age, would notice them. They believed this type of humor made their signboards and banners look more interesting and cool. They also used it to entertain their customers. Other reasons included adapting to their target market, following current language trends, and personal motivations.

4.3. Customers' Attitudes and Purchasing Motives towards Humorous Business Signboards and Banners

This ongoing research also discusses this step by looking at the results of survey responses. It was analyzed based on the questionnaire provided to the customers. The result found that there were 63 responses from the customers. The respondents' ages ranged from 18 to 59 years old. However, the majority of responses came from individuals aged 25 to 31, totaling 39 participants. This was followed by the 18 to 24 age group with 18 respondents. In addition, two respondents were from the 32-38 range, another two from 39-45, and the final two were aged 53-59. In this study, the questionnaire was completed by 39 male and 24 female respondents.

A total of 10 questions were included in the questionnaire, covering both customers' identification and customers' attitudes. The questionnaire was designed to reveal the correlation between the use of Indonesian humor in the business-scape (signboards and banners) and customers' attitudes in Padang City. The questionnaire items were also connected to the 5 steps of branding theory proposed by Lune et al. (2018), which are attention, brand awareness, brand association, brand attitude, and consumer-brand relationships.

The first and second questions were related to customer identification. The third, fourth, and fifth questions were linked to the attention step. The sixth and seventh questions were associated with the brand awareness step. Moreover, the eighth questions were related to the brand association step. In addition, the ninth question was correlated with the brand attitude step, and the tenth question was associated with the customer-brand relationship. The following table contains inquiries designed to explore how customers' attitudes in terms of Purchasing Motives toward the use of humor in Business Signboards and Banners.

Table 4.9 Customers' Attitudes and Purchasing Motives for Humorous Business Signboards and Banners

Questions	Answers	
	Yes	No
Do you like the use of Indonesian-language humor on business signboards and banners?	56 (89%)	7 (11%)
Are you more interested in viewing business signboards and banners that employ Indonesian-language humor compared to those that do not?	58 (92%)	5 (8%)
In your opinion, is the use of Indonesian-language humor on business signboards and banners following current language trends?	58 (92%)	5 (8%)
Do you understand the intention behind the use of Indonesian-language humor on business signboards and banners?	60 (95%)	3 (5%)

Does the Indonesian-language humor used on business signboards and banners convey information to you?	50 (79%)	13 (21%)
In your view, does Indonesian-language humor on business signboards and banners bring you joy or entertainment when you read or see it?	60 (95%)	3 (5%)
Does the use of Indonesian-language humor on business signboards and banners influence your decision to purchase or use the business's services?	35 (56%)	28 (44%)
Do you consider Indonesian-language humor on business signboards and banners to be important?	49 (78%)	14 (22%)

Although the customers come from different age groups, 89% of them expressed that they enjoyed the use of Indonesian humor on business signboards and banners. They all agreed with this statement, as they grew up in an environment where humor was a common part of daily life. The types of humor used by business owners on their signboards and banners were familiar language (whether performed on a word, phrase, clause, and sentence) that often goes viral on social media. Additionally, the humor used was closely related to their daily lives, meaning they were accustomed to hearing or using it in real life. As a result, the humorous messages intended by the business owners are easily understood by the customers.

Furthermore, they also believed that humor was an effective way to express thoughts and feelings in a unique and engaging manner. As previously stated in the introduction part of this study, the city of Padang is predominantly inhabited by the Minangkabau ethnic group. Culturally, the Minangkabau people are known for their tendency to avoid direct expression, often communicating through figurative language. This habit was cultivated from childhood and persisted into old age. They perceived this form of expression as an art form because it reflected a high level of intellectual engagement.

In addition, this use of figurative language was commonly used to soften potentially offensive meanings and to introduce humor to create a social bond between speakers and hearers. In informal social contexts, where individuals of the same age group interacted with each other (they usually gather in a place called *lapau*), humorous or mocking utterances were used to establish a sense of closeness. An example of such language is the expression *mukonyo saroman baruak lapeh* (His facial expression is like a monkey recently let out into the wild). In relaxed contexts, this kind of speech tended to elicit laughter and enjoyment. This cultural tendency might also contribute to the general positive response among customers toward the use of humorous language on business signboards and banners, as they found it relatable and reflective of their social experience.

However, 11% of the customers did not like it. It might happen due to they are not seeing the significance of using humor on the business signboards and banners. Moreover, the use of humor was not liked by the customers because this strategy might not resonate with individuals who favor more conventional and formal advertising styles, viewing this approach as too jocular or lacking seriousness. No matter whether they liked or disliked the use of humor, what mattered most was that they all noticed and gave attention to it. The data had also shown that the majority of people in Padang loved the use of Indonesian humor on business signboards and banners. This was the starting point for moving toward brand awareness.

After that, the survey results said that 92% of customers agreed that they were more interested in business signboards and banners containing Indonesian

humor compared to those that did not. It might happen due to them recognizing that the humor displayed on those two platforms had a positive impact on them. They viewed humor presented in business-scape as a means of learning and as beneficial for their mental well-being because it could reduce some stress and depression in their bodies. Meanwhile, 8% of customers expressed disagreement with the statement. It might occur because they did not see the good impact of it. Put simply, it could be stated that when consumers felt a sense of joy and attraction toward a product or service, it created brand association. They tended to perceive a strong connection with the observed product and viewed it as having a positive image.

In addition, the data showed that 92 % of customers agreed that the use of humor in the Indonesian language on business signs and banners reflects current language trends. It might happen because the majority of respondents who completed the questionnaire were between 18 and 31 years old. According to Law Number 40 of 2009, individuals within this age range are classified as youth. As is commonly recognized, young people were more engaged than older generations in tracking and adopting evolving language trends. They tended to follow not only linguistic changes occurring in the real world but also those emerging in the digital sphere, particularly on social media.

Conversely, 8% of them disagreed with this statement. It might occur since they had not been closely following recent language trends. As a result, they were unable to provide accurate responses to this question. Then, when customers are drawn to, interested in, and aware of the evolving trends in humorous language,

they are essentially engaging in the initial phase of the branding process established by the business owner, namely attention.

Furthermore, 95% of the respondents stated that they understood the purpose behind the use of humor on business signboards and banners. This understanding was likely because the Indonesian language is considered a second language that must be learned by the people of Indonesia, including those in Padang, after their mother language. This is seen as a necessity because Bahasa Indonesia is the national language of the Republic of Indonesia and is regarded as a lingua franca. This is outlined in the 1945 Constitution, Article 36, which states that “The Indonesian language is set as the official language of Indonesia”. Therefore, despite the diverse backgrounds of the Indonesian people in terms of ethnicity, culture, and language, they are still able to communicate using the unifying language, Bahasa Indonesia.

Additionally, the Minangkabau language, one of the most widely spoken languages in Padang, has many similarities with the Indonesian language. From a historical perspective, both the Indonesian and Minangkabau languages belong to the same language family, namely the Austronesian language family. Moreover, both languages are part of the Malay-Polynesian subgroup, which is a branch of the Austronesian family. Therefore, it was not challenging for customers to understand and interpret the humor expressed in Indonesian on the business signboards and banners. This meant that when customers were able to comprehend the humor, the cognitive semantics of the business owner aligned with those of the customers.



Evidence that supported the explanation above could be observed in data 4. If each linguistic unit component on the signboard was translated into the Minangkabau language, the result would be as follows: *Telur Gulung (Talua Guluang)*, *spesialis penyakit lapa (ahli panyakik lapa)*, *jadwal praktek (jadwal paraktek)*, *jam 15.00 wib/selesai (pukua 3 patang sampai salasai)*, *buka setiap hari kecuali hari kiamat (bukak satiok ari kecuali hari kiamek)*. Upon closer examination, the small difference lay primarily in the modification or addition of specific sounds, such as the change from the word *buka* [buka] to *bukak* [bukak]. This indicated the addition of the velar sound /k/ in the Minangkabau language to the Indonesian word *buka*. Another example could be seen in the word *selesai* [sələsai], which became *salasai* [salasai], where there was a shift from the vowel sound /ə/ to /a/.

However, 5% of the customers did not understand it. This may have happened because some business signboards and banners in Padang used uncommon humorous terms. Additionally, those who answered this might be

respondents who were not accustomed to using humorous language or who were not usually associated with it. As a result, they did not comprehend its meaning. The participants who were part of this group may also include those who did not like the use of Indonesian humorous language on the business signboards and banners.

In line with the data mentioned earlier, 79% of respondents believed that the use of Indonesian humor on business signboards and banners provided them with information. On the other hand, 21% of the respondents did not agree with this statement. This survey result indicated that the people of Padang considered that the use of humor in public spaces, especially in the business-scape, could improve their humor skills. As stated earlier, one must possess a high level of intellectual ability to create and understand humorous language, as they need to grasp the true meaning behind the humor displayed. If individuals frequently see humorous language in public spaces, they are likely to remember it over time.

Furthermore, their humor vocabulary would expand, allowing them to create various new humor from the words they obtained in the business-scape. Ultimately, they could use this language in daily life, whether in formal or informal settings, and it aimed to lighten the stiff and tense atmosphere. In other words, humorous language in public spaces could serve as a learning tool for customers. As previously mentioned, 21% of the respondents agree that the humorous language on the business signboards and banners did not provide any information to them.

This group might include respondents who stated that they did not understand the meaning of the humor conveyed by the business owner. When they

failed to comprehend the humor, it was likely that they would consider it to provide no meaningful information. In simple words, when customers understand the meaning of humor and consider the use of that humor on business signboards and banners as conveying significant information, they would develop brand awareness. This brand awareness was crucial as it served as the gateway to establishing associations between the brand and the customers.

On the other hand, this study found that 95% of customers agreed that the use of Indonesian humor on the business signboards and banners was able to bring them joy when they read or saw it, and only 2 out of 63 respondents did not agree with it. It could happen as the ultimate goal of humor was to provoke laughter from its audience. This laughter would lead to feelings of comfort and happiness for the customers. The positive effects of humor have been widely studied by scholars for centuries.

Plato (427-347 BC) believed that the laughter evoked by humor results from a combination of pain and pleasure depicted within the humor (Piddington in Attardo, 1994). Meanwhile, Aristotle (384-322 BC) believed that humor can bring someone to a good mood (Attardo, 1994). Additionally, Emmanuel Kant (1790) also argued that the absurdity of meaning within humor leads to laughter from those who hear or see it. In alignment with Kant, Freud (1960) agreed that humor has a positive impact on mental health, as it helps reduce stress and depression in the human body (Cook, 2002). Lastly, Raskin (1984) also agreed with the views of these earlier thinkers. He stated that the absurdity of meaning displayed in humor results in laughter from its audience.

The two (5%) respondents who disagreed with the statement might fall into the group that did not understand the intended meaning of the humor on the business signboards and banners, and they considered the humor presented as providing no information. When individuals did not understand something and perceived it as unimportant, it would not affect them, including feelings of happiness and entertainment. As a result, there was no emotional bond formed between the customers and the products or services offered, resulting in an absence of brand association between the consumer and the brand.

On the other hand, this study revealed that 55% of the respondents agreed that the use of humor in the Indonesian language on business signboards and banners could influence customers' decisions to purchase products or use services offered by the business owner. It might happen due to the strong relationship established between the customers and the brand being offered. In this case, the most influential factor was the emotional connection felt by the customers. When customers felt comfortable and happy, these emotions typically drove their decision to purchase and utilize the services.

Surprisingly, the survey result showed that 44% of customers disagreed with this statement. The difference was quite apparent, and there was just a 6% difference left to make them exactly fifty-fifty. This could occur because customers might perceive that the use of humor did not reflect the quality of the product or service being offered. They continued to believe and thought rationally that the product's value lay in its inherent quality, not in the promotional approach that

employed humor. Both of these customers' attitudes could be seen in the picture below.



Figure 4.2 Customers' Attitudes and Purchasing Motives towards the Indonesian Humor Usage on the Business Signboards and Banners

Meanwhile, after being asked some questions, 78% of customers in Padang agreed that humor usage was substantial on the business signboards and banners. It might happen because customers have given much attention to the products and services that were promoted by the strategy that was mentioned before. This attention encouraged individuals towards brand awareness and brand association. Both of these elements influenced their attitudes toward the products and services offered. As a result, the ultimate goal of this process was the customer-brand relationship. The figure of 78% indicated that the group of individuals who believed that the use of humor did not impact their decision-making could potentially belong to this group. This implied that it was only a matter of time before they either stuck to their original beliefs or changed their minds and aligned with the other group.

Meanwhile, 22% of customers disagreed with this statement. It could occur because of the absence of attention, brand awareness, and brand association between the customer and the brand itself. According to previous data findings, even when these three components were presented, they did not necessarily influence customers' decisions to purchase products or use services being offered (brand attitude). These factors ultimately prevented the development of a strong relationship between the customer and the brand (customer-brand relationship), leading customers to perceive this marketing strategy as insignificant.

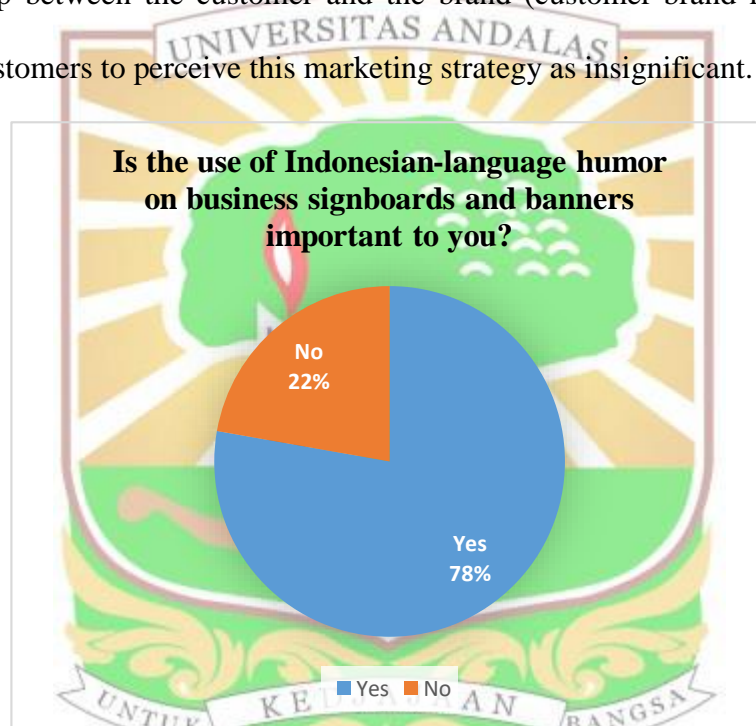


Figure 4.3 Customers-Brand Relationship towards the Indonesian Humor Usage on the Business Signboards and Banners

In conclusion, there was a clear correlation between the use of Indonesian humor on business signboards and banners in Padang City and customer attitudes. The data revealed that this strategy might be quite effective in influencing customers to purchase products or utilize services offered by business owners. Furthermore, customers believed that this approach had a positive impact on them, as it helped reduce the stress and pressure they faced in daily life. Additionally, this

strategy could serve as a learning tool, enabling customers to improve and refine their sense of humor.

