

EXPLORING SARCASM AMONG NETIZENS ON INSTAGRAM: A SOCIAL MEDIA PHENOMENON

Rini Damayanti^{1✉}, Kaswadi²

Universitas Wijaya Kusuma, Jl. Dukuh Kupang, Surabaya, Indonesia^{1,2}

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Abstract

This paper explores the prevalent use of sarcasm among Indonesian Instagram users, particularly on the @Insertlive account and its link to cyberbullying. This qualitative study, adopting Keraf's sarcasm function theory, identifies different types of sarcasm and how offensive language affects communication and social norms in social media. The study reveals different sarcasm functions like rejection, prohibition, information, and vulgarities, indicating that sarcasm is widely used in online communication. On the one hand, sarcasm is a means of laughter and togetherness; on the other hand, however, it is a hostile strategy to insult and criticize. This paper highlights the social benefits of constructive sarcasm compared to its potential harms that may lead to cyberbullying. It is suggested that social media should improve the moderation features and promote positive comments. Besides, future research could examine the effect of sarcasm on the psychological state of targets and observe cultural differences in the use of sarcasm across various platforms.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has experienced a fast growth in technology, especially in social networking, which has brought about changes in communication through easy access to information. One of the social media platforms that is currently very famous is Instagram, which has 85 million active users according to January 2021 data (Harjanti & Ardiansyah, 2024; Hootsuite, 2021). Although popular, it has also led to new forms of crimes, such as cyberbullying and the use of digital tools to threaten or terrorize other people (Henry & Powell, 2015).

Irony or mockery, generally termed sarcasm, is common in the comments section of Instagram. It has become a common feature of social interactions, which makes a significant contribution to the production of toxic interactions, including bullying. Earlier research has analyzed sarcasm in terms of humor and culture (Sukarto & Fauziah, 2022), sarcasm and social normalization (Banasik-Jemielniak & Kałowski, 2022), and misinterpretation in social media context (Ziegele & Jost, 2020). Yet, there is a lack of research on the utilization of sarcasm in the context of Instagram and in the context of cyberbullying in Indonesia. This study fills that gap by systematically analyzing sarcasm found in the @Insertlive account, an Instagram page known for its controversy and often politically incorrect commentary.

This current research addresses the following questions: What are the forms and functions of sarcasm used by Indonesian netizens on Instagram? In what way does sarcasm enhance cyberbullying and influence the interaction patterns on social networks?

In contrast with prior research, this study offers an analysis of how sarcasm affects constructive participation in online communities and instigates negative actions such as cyberbullying. The implications of the study are for the developers of social networks, teachers, and politicians who strive to build safer environments in online communities and teach users how to interact appropriately.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sarcasm is a figure of speech that uses irony to express hatred, scorn, or ridicule of another person or thing. Usually, it comprises the exact opposite of what the subject seeks to convey, which is usually done in a bitter way (Sukarto & Fauziah, 2022). Sarcasm combines opinion, expressed literally in the form of agreement or compliment, with the opposite meaning against the context in which it is used. The mentioned characteristic of sarcasm makes this communication highly sensitive and effective. Sarcasm comes from the Greek word *sarkazein*, which means tearing flesh (Sukarto & Fauziah, 2022). Sarcasm, therefore, goes higher than simple irony in that it involves elements of disdain or mockery.

Interpersonal communication and sarcasm have been researched extensively, e.g., sarcasm as a component of humor (Bitterly & Schweitzer, 2019) and sarcasm within the cultural aspect of communication (Banasik-Jemielniak & Kałowski, 2022). Sarcasm depends on the cultural aspect and the relation between the speaker and the audience: it can be a joke, criticism, or even an insult (Nababan, 2023).

For this reason, sarcasm has always been employed as a way of passing social comment in literature. Novelists like Jane Austen incorporated it in her novels, including *Pride and Prejudice*, where characters like Mr. Bennet use sarcasm to decry the vices of society. In an ever-changing world, sarcasm has made other dimensions through digital media, including Instagram social media. Such ephemeral and versatile platforms have been used to execute sarcastic performances and statements in a packed and memorable manner (Ziegele and Jost, 2020).

However, sarcasm is difficult to interpret when used in digital environments. Sarcasm often carries unintended consequences because it loses voice inflection, facial expression, and body language. Recent studies show that emojis, hashtags, and quotation marks help to determine the sarcasm of the interlocutor (Lee & Lee, 2022). For example, the emoji of ‘rolling eyes’ or the tag ‘#sarcasm’ is employed to convey second and third meanings in computer-mediated communication.

Sarcasm is also often used on the Internet, and this phenomenon is also associated with the general tendencies in society. Sarcasm is often used to subvert hegemonic discourses or to challenge the established hierarchies (O’Reilly, Stellefson, Eaton, & Awad, 2014). Social media participants have learned how to employ sarcasm to ridicule political leaders' positions or express doubts about the authenticity of articles (Halttu & Oinas-Kukkonen, 2022).

However, social networking has contributed to increasing the aggressive use of irony and sarcastic comments due to the anonymity and impersonality of internet communication. This means that sarcastic comments are likely to increase hostility according to the interactive model due to the absence of an immediate impact on one’s behavior online (Ziegele and Jost, 2020). This dynamic asks for sociopolitical questions as to the status of sarcasm for online manners and elocution.

Furthermore, sarcastic content has the hazard of being misconstrued due to **the** globalization of the internet platform. New studies point to ensuring cultural intelligence **while analyzing** irony in intercultural communication (Banasik-Jemielniak & Kałowski, 2022). Misinterpretation leads to offense or social tension, **so someone must know** their audience and context.

Nevertheless, sarcasm, as a subset of argumentation, also encourages creativity and critical thinking. It enables people to solve multifaceted problems in a fun and familiar manner while keeping a critical perspective (Farley, 2021). However, sarcasm is also an agent of attack, so some issues concerning digital communication should be handled responsibly to avoid fueling conflicts.

This study extends this thinking by examining the various functions of sarcasm on Instagram, especially its link to cyberbullying in the @Insertlive account. Unlike previous works that consider sarcasm as a joke or a tool for cultural satire, this research aims at sarcasm's functions in constructing social interaction norms and the consequences of sarcasm for digital etiquette.

METHOD

This research applied qualitative and descriptive methods to systematically and accurately investigate phenomena in certain contexts (Sugiyono, 2012). The descriptive method was employed to identify sarcasm's dictions, forms, and functions on the @Insertlive account, which is linked to cyberbullying. The use of sarcasm was observed in this account by analyzing the posts and comments made between September and October 2022. Posts that contained verbal irony, humor, or sarcasm markers were intentionally selected.

The data collected were textual and included captions, comments, and visual data in the form of images and memes accompanying the posts. The main data collection tool was Keraf's content analysis framework, which guided the identification and categorization of sarcasm into five types: label, attribute, lexical, like-prefixed, and illocutionary sarcasm.

Data collection was done systematically for two months. Posts and comments were identified, categorized as relevant, and then reviewed for sarcasm; quotes were collected to provide examples. Some posts and comments were screenshots to ensure their content was not altered. The comments were coded thematically, categorized according to the type of sarcasm, and contextualized to determine the purpose and effect of the sarcasm. In order to determine more general patterns in the data, recurring themes and functions, including humor, criticism, and rejection, were defined.

In order to enhance the credibility of the study, the following strategies were adopted. Expert triangulation was employed, and two experts analyzed the data and the coding process. Furthermore, the analyses of sarcasm functions were supported by peer reviews conducted by linguistic experts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

This section of the study focuses on the analysis of sarcasm in the comments section of the @Insertlive Instagram account. The findings are presented in relation to the research objectives and questions based on the forms and functions of sarcasm identified in the analysis.

Sarcasm as a Form of Rejection

In the comment section, sarcasm is commonly used to deny or diminish other's ideas or actions. Examples include:

“Naudzubillah... jauhkan hamba dri sifat tamak. Hukum tabur tuai sih ini.”
 (“Naudzubillah... keep the servant away from greed. The law of sowing and reaping, indeed.”) [A1/31/06/S/FGBSa]

“Berita gak penting koq di up.”
 (“The news is not important; why is it being uploaded?”) [A1/32/21/S/FGBSa]

Sarcasm as a Form of Conveying Prohibition

Sarcastic comments also serve to prohibit or discourage behaviors deemed inappropriate:

“Laaah kalau masih mau jd playboy sampai metong jg gak papa kok... TAPI gk usah menikah laah... Menikah itu KOMITMEN...”
 (“Well, if you still want to be a playboy until you're old, that's fine... BUT don't get married... Marriage is a COMMITMENT...”) [A1/33/24/S/FGBSb]

“Mending artis ini jangan di sorot lagi bikin kacau Indonesia aja. Cari makan kok sampai bikin prank kepolisan mending di penjara aja.”
 (“It's better if this artist is not highlighted again, causing chaos... Making a prank on the police, just put them in jail.”) [A1/34/02/O/FGBSb]

Sarcasm as a Form of Conveying Information

Some sarcastic remarks subtly deliver information or insights:

“Aprilio gak operasi pria ke wanita atau sebaliknya ya tapi dia punya ‘kelainan hipospadia.’ Jadi bukan transgender.”
 (“Aprilio did not undergo gender reassignment surgery but has ‘hypospadias.’ So, not transgender.”) [A1/35/08/S/FGBSc]

“Ajang sekelas Idol Indonesia pasti sudah menempa anak didiknya dengan baik... netizen gak permasalahan... yg jadi masalah ketika di kritik justru gak terima...”
 (“Idol competitions in Indonesia must have nurtured their contestants well... netizens don't mind... but the problem is when criticized, they don't accept it...”) [A1/36/17/S/FGBSc]

Sarcasm as a Form of Emphasizing a Statement

Sarcasm can highlight the significance or absurdity of a situation:

“Ingat apa yg ditabur itu yg di tuai, harus terima, itulah karma... yg berjalan.”

(“Remember that what you sow is what you reap; you must accept it; that’s karma.”) [A1/37/01/O/FGBSd]

“Bukan ikhlas bu tp emang udah seharusnyaaaaaa!!! Malah seharusnya dr pas anda ditetapkan sbg tersangka. Heleeehhhhhhh...”

(“It’s not sincere; it should have happened long ago! It should have started when you were declared a suspect. Exaggerated...”) [A1/38/01/O/FGBSd]

Sarcasm as a Form of Expressing Opinions

Sarcasm allows individuals to subtly share their personal opinions:

“Ikut kesel ketika dia cabut laporan. Tapi yaweslah ya. Hidup-hidup dia, rumah tangga dia hanya dia yg berhak mau dibawa kemana...”

(“It’s annoying when she withdraws the report. But well, it’s her life, her marriage; she alone decides where it goes...”) [A1/39/23/O/FGBSe]

“BUAT LESLAR, BIARKAN ANJING ANJING MENGONGOOONG... PRINSIP MREKA ‘TANGAN BEKERJA LEBIH CEPAT DR PDA OTAK.’”

(“FOR LESLAR, LET THE DOGS BARK... THEIR PRINCIPLE IS ‘HANDS WORK FASTER THAN BRAINS.’”) [A1/40/23/O/FGBSe]

Sarcasm as a Form of Giving Orders

Sarcastic remarks are sometimes used to give instructions:

“Otak dipake om,... konten lu malah bikin orang-orang marah.”

(“Use your brain, uncle... your content only makes people angry.”)

[A1/41/02/O/FGBSf]

“Kawal Baim pake baju Oren, gila sih ni orang.”

(“Escort Baim in orange attire; this person is insane.”) [A1/42/02/O/FGBSf]

Sarcasm as a Form of Posing Questions

Questions with sarcasm are used to challenge or provoke thought:

“Kok dibikin lelucon... sarafnya putus tuh orang... apa pingin diaminin orang se-Indonesia raya?”

(“Why make a joke... that person’s nerves are severed... do they want all Indonesians to agree?”) [A1/43/02/O/FGBSg]

“Ngerti ya sekarang!!! Masak gak ngerti!!! Udah gede masih GOBLOK.”

(“Do you understand now!!! How could you not understand!!! You’ve grown up and are still STUPID.”) [A1/44/03/O/FGBSg]

Sarcasm as a Form of Making Comparisons

Sarcastic comparisons emphasize absurdity or contrast:

“*Kurus banget badannya, kaya orang susah aja.*”
 (“So skinny, like someone in distress.”) [A1/45/23/O/FGBSh]

“*Iyaa dulu cantik, skg pletat pletot tuh muka si ngenez.*”
 (“Yeah, used to be pretty; now the face is bloated.”) [A1/48/03/O/FGBSi]

Sarcasm as a Form of Address

Sarcasm is also used for playful or mocking interactions:

“*Real Nenek Gayung.*”
 (“The Real Granny Broomstick.”) [A1/49/06/S/FGBSj]

“*Orgil.*”
 (“Obstinate.”) [A1/50/02/O/FGBSj]

The results can be summarized in the following table.

Table 1. Summary of Results

No.	Sarcasm Function	Example (Indonesian)	Example (English)
1	Rejection	<i>Berita gak penting koq di up.</i>	The news is not important; why is it being uploaded?
2	Prohibition	<i>Mending artis ini jangan di sorot lagi.</i>	It's better if this artist is not highlighted again.
3	Conveying Information	<i>Aprilio... punya 'kelainan hipospadia.' Jadi bukan transgender.</i>	Aprilio has 'hypospadias.' So, not transgender.
4	Emphasizing a Statement	<i>Ingat apa yg ditabur itu yg di tuai, harus terima.</i>	What you sow is what you reap; you must accept it.
5	Expressing Opinions	<i>Ikut kesal ketika dia cabut laporan.</i>	It's annoying when she withdraws the report.
6	Giving Orders	<i>Otak dipake om,... konten lu malah bikin orang marah.</i>	Use your brain, uncle, ... your content angers people.
7	Posing Questions	<i>Kok dibikin lelucon... apa pingin diaminin se-Indonesia?</i>	Why make a joke ... want all Indonesians to agree?
8	Making Comparisons	<i>Kurus banget badannya, kaya orang susah aja.</i>	So skinny, like someone in distress.
9	Addressing Others	<i>Real Nenek Gayung.</i>	The Real Granny Broomstick.

Discussion

From a psychological viewpoint, using sarcasm as a rejection can be analyzed through some theories. First, the Social Identity Theory provides an understanding of how people use sarcasm to ensure their primary position in the group and support a group narrative (Scott, 2016). When opinions are paradoxically ridiculed, the disinhibited group member reaffirms their group affiliation while, at the same time, demeaning the out-group. In the examples, the cases of irony are connected with negating somebody's actions or opinions. Therefore, irony helps the speaker to underline his/her authority within the specific social circle.

Secondly, studies on relational aggression define sarcasm as a passive mode of aggression aimed at deprecating others in the most socially degrading way possible (Krahé,

2020). Through sarcastic comments, people try to make other people's opinions and feelings less valuable to gain better control over social relationships. The data communicate insult or contempt for the criticized ideas or actions and act as a way of negating them.

Furthermore, sarcasm can be explained as an interactional strategy (Homans, 1958). When people use sarcastic comments to spurn or deny others' ideas, they use transactional communication to proclaim their preferences. Here, the purpose of disagreement is communicated while, at the same time, a relation of power is asserted.

Furthermore, literature on self-presentation shows that sarcasm is often used to influence people's perceptions or impressions (Guerrero et al., 2017). Sarcasm can be used to demean other people's suggestions, and by doing this, one can appear smart, aggressive, or socially superior. In the data, sarcasm signals mastery in a specific area. Hence, the tone affects how people view the speaker's social position.

Finally, sarcasm as rejection is associated with several psychological phenomena like social identity, relational aggression, social exchange, and impression management. Sarcasm is often used to demean others' suggestions or comments, establish power, disagree, bargain, and manage impressions.

The reaction to sarcasm as prohibition is a cognitive-motivational process tied to social norms, moral emotions, and self-regulation, as in, "Well, if you still want to be a playboy until you're old, that's fine. It's your choice, BUT don't get married." Similarly, the sentence "One could rather be in jail than making pranks on the police" illustrates a way of disapproving or limiting certain actions or behaviors.

The first theory related to this type of behavior is the Social Norms Theory, which postulates that perceived norms guide behavior (Chung & Rimal, 2016). Based on the context of social communication, this paper found that sarcasm is also used to discourage people from engaging in unusual behaviors in a given society. In the first example, the speaker uses irony to subdue the intention of the future playboy and refuse to accept the institution of marriage.

Also, the Moral Judgment theory is relevant to how sarcasm expresses disapproval (Ziegele & Jost, 2020). People unconsciously appeal to morality when they use irony to describe people's behavior, meaning that the criticized behavior is somehow wrong and immoral. In the second example, the comment is even mocking and contains a moral condemnation of the artist's actions.

Furthermore, additional analysis on Persuasion and Compliance states that social influence tactics generally comprise attracting disapproval or proclaiming unwelcome

repercussions to quit specific actions (Pandey, 2022). Sarcasm, as a form of anti-social cumulative pressure, discourages certain behaviors by presenting a potentially negative consequence or social backlash. In both instances, sarcasm is used to deter people from undertaking certain activities due to pointing out the perceived harm or stigma of performing those activities.

From a psychological point of view, the mechanism of using sarcasm to convey information indirectly can be explained from cognitive and linguistic perspectives. Sarcasm, as a type of irony impersonating the opposite of words, is an attempt at indirect communication where the senders of the message expect the receiver to understand the difference.

According to Grice's Cooperative Principle, communication is cooperative, and people follow certain rules to make communication effective (Syafitri et al., 2019). Sarcasm can be associated with the maxim of quality in the broader sense since speakers give false instructions or information or are not to be taken seriously. Therefore, those targeted by sarcastic comments must rely on pragmatic inferences to draw the intended meaning.

Additionally, in line with the Theory of Mind, a person must align with the speaker's intentions and beliefs to interpret sarcasm. (O'Reilly et al., 2014). When evaluating sarcastic speech, the listener recognizes the speaker's intent to convey a message, showing awareness of the speaker's intended message and the text. In the data above, the recipients are supposed to understand the intended message despite the sarcastic tone.

Moreover, analysis of irony and sarcasm confirmed that people use contextual information, certain words, and pragmatic knowledge to understand sarcastic comments (Banasik-Jemielniak & Kałowski, 2022). In exaggeration, there are normal cues such as tone, facial expressions, hand gestures, and words that contradict the intended meaning as a way of being sarcastic. In the given examples, the interlocutors would never actually agree with the proposed plan. Their word choices imply disagreement or skepticism, with the elements of disapproval masked by sarcasm.

Psychologically, sarcasm reflects cognitive processes, emotional responses, and interactional dynamics. With its extremely amplified tones and ironic expressions, sarcasm can be a strong positive influence to highlight significant issues and elicit reactions.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Shahab et al., 2021) suggests that individuals engage in two distinct routes of information processing: central and peripheral. Sarcasm is a peripheral cue that augments a message's perceived importance and memorability by engaging emotions. The provided data points embrace sarcastic tones, 'Oh great idea, just

fantastic' and 'Yeah because that is what we need.' The implication of sarcasm makes the recipient dissect the actual message being passed.

Moreover, studies on emotional display and information (Farley, 2021) indicate that humor equality can create significant frustration due to the information incongruence of sarcasm. Sarcasm certainly uses exaggerated claims and ironic tones to increase emotional arousal and grab attention. Words like "just fantastic" and "totally what we need" carry ironic meanings aimed at the mockery of the speakers' claims, producing an emotional reaction from the audience.

However, from the social interaction point of view, sarcasm can be a way of impression management to make other people change their attitudes (Bitterly & Schweitzer, 2019). Sarcasm controls the opponent's arguments and formatively introduces information to a discussion. In these instances, sarcasm refers to the importance or reverses the perceived importance of ideas, aligning the speaker's perspective with—or against—the audience's views.

From a psychological standpoint, sarcasm as a way to convey opinions involves the aspects of social cognition, including emotion regulation and interpersonal communication. Sarcasm, as an ironic and mocking language, allows people to express their concerns directly and freely. Attribution Theory (Snead et al., 2015) postulates that a person's thinking tendency regarding another person's behavior depends on whether they attribute it to situational factors or personality traits. Sarcasm can be described as an instrument for explaining one's opinions or beliefs and attributing them to external conditions, other individuals, or even fantasized situations. For example, sarcastic remarks like 'Oh, brilliant, just what we needed' and 'Oh, that's genius, really' enable people to state their observations without being harsh but by making them sound like an over-exaggerated remark.

In addition, a study by Sheppes et al. (2015) argues that sarcasm enables someone to express bitterness in an acceptable way. Using sarcasm helps people express their feelings without directly revealing them. In the given examples, tones with sarcastic expressions like "brilliant" and "genius" help mask anger or frustration, acting as a self-regulation mechanism in social interactions.

From the social influence approach, sarcasm can be defined as employing a tactic of attempting to shape the attitudes or behaviors of others (Clyne et al., 2020). Using irony and mockery to express personal or societal opinions, people may attempt to influence the audience. In the given data, sarcastic remarks encourage the audience to reassess the ideas being criticized since they are absurdities or impractical.

From a psychological point of view, sarcasm as a way of giving orders is connected with the language's pragmatic aspects, social relationships, and power processors. Using sarcastic language to order or to instruct in a playful or mocking way, people seek to control behavior and communication in a specific manner.

The Speech Act Theory (Oishi, 2016) looks into the broader aspect of how language performs a speech act, and in this case, sarcasm goes beyond mere conveying of meaning but also works to convey outer performative concepts like eliciting emotions, commanding or asserting power. Phrases like “Use your brain, uncle...” and “Escort Baim in orange attire, this person is insane” signal a performative act as it impacts behavior and attitudes.

According to research on linguistic politeness (Watts, 2019), it is believed that social dynamics or power relations influence language selection in communication. Sarcasm is giving orders to express authority while lessening the chance of conflict with a humorous or mocking tone. Directive force is blended with humor in sarcastic tones (“Use your brain, uncle...”), and directives can also combine authority assertion without causing outright offense (“This person is insane”).

From a social interaction perspective, sarcasm signals social norms or expectations (Banasik-Jemielniak & Kałowski, 2022). However, sarcastic language in directing actions implicitly conveys what is expected of action-based social dynamics. In the examples, sarcastic commands question norms of what makes a good content creator and of acceptable clothing choices, rounding reflections on the way we broadly consider "normal."

Sarcasm has been studied from the psychological viewpoint, focusing on complex cognitive processes associated with the use of language, perspective-taking, and social cognition. It encourages people to think, question, and consider crazily without succumbing to them and without argument.

Another related concept is the Theory of Mind (Sodian, 2014), which involves the understanding and awareness of one's and others' mental states. Sarcasm depends on identifying the other person's viewpoint and confirming no spiteful intent. The strategies of sarcastic questions in the examples (“Why make a joke...” and “Do you understand now!!!”) have a negative impact because they force recipients to think critically about themselves to question their reasoning.

Linguistic pragmatics studies conducted by Lee and Lee (2022) entail that understanding sarcasm depends on context knowledge. Sarcasm, therefore, uses over-exaggerated sentences to make receivers change their thinking patterns. In the examples, the speaker uses irony or disbelief, leading to further debate.

In the context of the social-interaction approach, posing sarcastic questions refers to social norms or values. Speakers convey information about what is acceptable or not acceptable when trying to alter statements or beliefs. The examples question society's expectations of entertaining humor, considerate understanding, and the communal ethic to be upheld.

From a psychological point of view, comparative sarcasm employs principles related to social perception, humor evaluation, and perspective-taking. It underlines discriminations or differences between concepts, aggravating either laughter or skepticism.

Social perspective must be considered when using comparisons, which is why the theory of mind (Sodian, 2014) must be invoked. Sarcastic statements often articulate the reverse of their intended meaning, expecting the audience to comprehend the principal message. The examples ("like someone in distress," "so filthy," "supposedly owned house," and "now the face is all puffy and bloated") work in a different way, forcing one to see things from different perspectives.

From the social cognition point of view, sarcasm in comparisons points to social norms or values (Banasik-Jemielniak & Kałowski, 2022). In this case, speakers compare different aspects using sarcasm, which innately conveys biases on what is acceptable. The following examples are deviations from the norms set in society and consequently encourage the public to consider how society's values are portrayed.

From a psychological viewpoint, senses of humor, specifically sarcasm, are cognitive procedures associated with social behavior, emotions, and interpersonal communication. In particular, sarcasm, as specified by ironic and exaggerated content, is used as a spirited and positive way of communicating or interacting with people and maintaining relationship tone and balance.

The Social Identity Theory introduced by Hogg (2016) explains that the major element of people's identity is the forms of social memberships. This is particularly true because sarcasm is a communication tool that may help express belonging to the group and, hence, conformity to the required language policies and practices. The sarcastic expressions like "Real Nenek Gayung" (The Real Granny Broomstick") and "Orgil" (Obstinate) promote solidarity and trust because they tease the recipient affectionately.

From the social interaction perspective, sarcasm should be seen as one of the interactional turns (Park et al., 2021). It means that speakers rely on language to indicate that they are about to take or continue a conversational turn. In this manner, the use of sarcastic language as an address empowers the persons manifesting such language to signify those

humorous remarks in the social talk and make further contributions to social affiliations with warmth and solidarity. The examples in the data demonstrate that sarcastic comments stimulate playful or mocking responses from recipients, augmenting interaction and social bonds.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the prevalent use of sarcasm by Instagram users concerning its reason for use and its negative impact in the case of cyberbullying. The findings show that sarcasm is utilized in different ways: to reject, criticize, state opinions, order, ask questions, and compare. It has both comedic and antagonistic functions in computer-mediated communication. While it can be used lightly, it may also be an insult or cyberbullying, emphasizing the need for mindfulness and responsible use to avert conflict. Overall, sarcasm on Instagram has both benefits and harms. Therefore, it should be used with caution to reduce the negative impact on the Internet.

Although the study contributes to the digital communication literature, it only focuses on one Instagram account. Further research should consider sarcasm in various platforms, with varied users, and consider multiple languages to have a wide view of the issue.

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