



## Textual Subversion in Memes: A Semantic-Pragmatic-Sociopragmatic Triangulation of Digital Discourse

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### Abstract

This study employs a semantic-pragmatic-sociopragmatic framework to analyze five Indonesian memes, exploring their role as cultural artifacts that navigate modern societal tensions. Through qualitative multimodal discourse analysis, the research examines how memes blend linguistic creativity, humor, and visual symbolism to critique issues such as academic pressure, procrastination, and cultural apathy. Key findings reveal that memes rely on semantic contrasts (e.g., literal vs. figurative meanings) to generate irony, pragmatic strategies like hyperbole and satire to subvert institutional norms, and sociopragmatic resonance to reflect collective experiences. Examples include the juxtaposition of Javanese cultural values with universal symbols ("Raurus") and the use of dark humor to criticize educational systems ("Student in ICU"). The study highlights memes' dual function as tools for communal solidarity and platforms for subtle social critique, emphasizing their reliance on local dialects (e.g., "gini pak") and digital vernacular. Broader implications underscore memes' significance in democratizing discourse and shaping digital literacy. Academically, the tripartite framework offers a robust methodology for decoding digital communication, while technological applications call for culturally adaptive AI to address nuances in sarcasm and context. Societally, memes challenge rigid definitions of success and productivity, advocating for empathy in an era of digital fragmentation. This research positions memes as vital, dynamic reflections of contemporary identity and resistance, bridging individual expression with collective cultural narratives.

### 1. Introduction

The advent of digital technology has irrevocably transformed human communication, redefining how individuals interact, share information, and construct social identities. Platforms such as social media, instant messaging applications, and forums have not only accelerated the speed of communication but also introduced novel linguistic practices that challenge traditional frameworks of language analysis (Herring, 2013). While digital communication offers unprecedented accessibility and connectivity, its linguistic complexity—marked by evolving semantics, context-dependent pragmatics, and culturally

embedded sociopragmatic norms—demands a rigorous interdisciplinary examination. This article argues that a holistic integration of semantic, pragmatic, and sociopragmatic dimensions is essential to decode the nuanced dynamics of digital language use, particularly in an era where human and machine interactions increasingly intersect.

The proliferation of digital platforms has catalyzed a paradigm shift in linguistic expression. Unlike face-to-face interactions, digital exchanges are often characterized by brevity, multimodality (e.g., emojis, GIFs, memes), and hybridized language forms that blend written and spoken registers (Crystal, 2011). For instance, the truncation of phrases (“LOL” for “laugh out loud”) and the repurposing of punctuation (e.g., ellipses to signal hesitation or sarcasm) illustrate how digital environments reshape lexical and syntactic norms (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2008). These transformations are not merely superficial; they reflect deeper sociocultural adaptations to the constraints and affordances of digital mediums.

However, the fluidity of digital language complicates its interpretation. A single utterance may carry divergent meanings depending on contextual cues, relational dynamics, and cultural frameworks. Consider the Indonesian phrase “*nggak ada apa-apa*” (nothing’s wrong), which semantically asserts neutrality. Pragmatically, however, its interpretation hinges on contextual factors such as tone (e.g., passive-aggressive subtext) or prior discourse (e.g., following a conflict). Sociopragmatically, its reception further depends on interlocutors’ social hierarchies or familiarity—a close friend may recognize it as a veiled distress signal, whereas a colleague might interpret it literally (Rahardi, 2020). Such examples underscore the inadequacy of isolated linguistic analyses; instead, they necessitate a multidimensional approach that bridges semantics, pragmatics, and sociopragmatics.

To systematically analyze digital communication, this article adopts a tripartite framework grounded in three interrelated disciplines:

1. **Semantics:** This dimension focuses on the literal or lexical meaning of words, phrases, and symbols. In digital contexts, semantic ambiguity often arises due to the absence of prosodic cues (e.g., intonation, stress), leading to reliance on textual or visual substitutes. For example, emojis like 😊 or 😡 serve as semantic anchors, clarifying emotional intent in text-based exchanges (Danesi, 2016). However, their meanings are not universal; a “thumbs-up” emoji may signify approval in some cultures but offense in others (Miller et al., 2016).
2. **Pragmatics:** Pragmatics examines how meaning is constructed through context, implicature, and speaker intention (Grice, 1975). Digital platforms amplify pragmatic

complexity by enabling asynchronous communication, where delayed responses or message edits can alter interpretive trajectories. A meme, for instance, may pragmatically function as satire, critique, or solidarity depending on its deployment context—a phenomenon termed “context collapse” by Marwick and boyd (2011).

3. Sociopragmatics: This dimension integrates sociocultural norms, power dynamics, and community-specific conventions into linguistic analysis. For example, the use of internet slang (e.g., “stan,” “simp”) within niche online communities often signals in-group membership and reinforces shared identities (Zappavigna, 2012). Conversely, misapplying such terms outside their sociopragmatic boundaries may lead to exclusion or misinterpretation.

The interdependence of these dimensions is evident in meme culture. A meme’s semantic content (e.g., an image of a cat) gains pragmatic significance through captions or cultural references (e.g., “I Can Has Cheezburger?”), while its sociopragmatic resonance relies on collective knowledge of internet subcultures (Shifman, 2014). Disentangling these layers is critical to understanding how digital language both reflects and shapes social realities.

The absence of multimodal cues in digital communication heightens the risk of misinterpretation. For instance, sarcasm—a pragmatic device reliant on vocal tone—is often misconstrued in text, necessitating compensatory strategies like “/s” tags or exaggerated punctuation (e.g., “Sure, that’s great!!! 😏”). Such adaptations, however, are inconsistently adopted across demographics, exacerbating generational or cultural divides (Günthner, 2011).

Miscommunication in digital spaces can escalate into conflict or polarization. During the COVID-19 pandemic, hashtags like StayHome sparked semantic debates over their scope (e.g., applicability to essential workers), pragmatic disputes over their intent (e.g., public health advocacy vs. government overreach), and sociopragmatic clashes across ideological echo chambers (Papacharissi, 2020). These instances reveal how digital platforms amplify linguistic ambiguity, transforming language into a battleground for competing narratives.

Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing (NLP) have further complicated the linguistic landscape. While algorithms like GPT-4 demonstrate remarkable semantic proficiency, their ability to navigate pragmatic and sociopragmatic nuances remains limited. For example, AI chatbots may misinterpret idiomatic expressions (e.g., “break a leg”) or fail to recognize culturally specific politeness strategies (e.g., honorifics in Japanese) (Bender et al., 2021). Such shortcomings highlight the necessity of

integrating sociolinguistic frameworks into AI training datasets to mitigate biases and enhance contextual adaptability.

Moreover, algorithmic content moderation—designed to flag hate speech or misinformation—often struggles with pragmatic subtleties like irony or hyperbole, disproportionately censoring marginalized voices. This underscores the urgency of interdisciplinary collaboration between linguists and computer scientists to develop technologies attuned to the complexities of human communication.

This article advocates for a holistic methodology that synthesizes semantic, pragmatic, and sociopragmatic lenses. Prior studies have often siloed these dimensions, neglecting their synergistic interplay. For example, research on emoji semantics (Novak et al., 2015) rarely addresses how their pragmatic functions vary across platforms (e.g., Twitter vs. professional emails) or how sociopragmatic norms govern their acceptability in different cultures (Kelly & Watts, 2015).

An integrated approach is exemplified in studies of online political discourse. Analyzing a tweet’s semantic content (e.g., “Make America Great Again”), pragmatic intent (e.g., mobilizing supporters), and sociopragmatic impact (e.g., reinforcing partisan identities) provides a comprehensive understanding of its rhetorical power (Törnberg, 2018). Similarly, examining multilingual digital communities—where code-switching and translanguaging practices abound—requires sensitivity to how semantic choices index pragmatic goals (e.g., humor, solidarity) and sociopragmatic affiliations (e.g., ethnic identity) (Androutsopoulos, 2013).

The proposed framework holds significant implications for academia and industry. For researchers, it offers a robust toolkit to dissect emerging phenomena like deepfake-mediated disinformation or virtual reality (VR) avatars, where linguistic, contextual, and cultural layers intersect. For technology developers, it underscores the need to design AI systems that emulate human-like pragmatic reasoning—such as recognizing sarcasm in customer feedback—and adapting to sociopragmatic diversity (e.g., regional politeness norms).

Educational initiatives must also evolve to equip digital natives with “multidimensional literacy”—the ability to navigate semantic ambiguity, decode pragmatic subtexts, and respect sociopragmatic diversity in online interactions. This is particularly vital in mitigating intercultural conflicts in globalized digital spaces (Jenkins et al., 2009).

## **2. Theoretical Basis**

Pragmatics, the study of how context shapes linguistic interpretation, is foundational to understanding digital communication. Rooted in Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle—which posits that effective communication relies on adherence to maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner—pragmatics examines how speakers convey implicit meanings (implicatures) through strategic violations of these norms. In digital contexts, however, the absence of paralinguistic cues (e.g., tone, facial expressions) complicates adherence to Gricean maxims, necessitating compensatory strategies such as emojis, punctuation, or stylistic markers (Yus, 2011). For instance, the phrase “Great job...” paired with an ellipsis and an eye-roll emoji (🙄) pragmatically signals sarcasm, subverting its literal semantic meaning (Dresner & Herring, 2010).

Digital platforms further amplify pragmatic complexity through features like asynchronous communication and multimodal affordances. Herring (2013) argues that the fragmented nature of online discourse—characterized by hashtags, memes, and hyperlinks—requires users to infer meaning from fragmented or decontextualized inputs. Crystal's (2006) seminal work on “Netspeak” highlights how internet-specific speech acts, such as abbreviations (e.g., “LOL”) and lexical innovations (e.g., “selfie”), challenge traditional pragmatic frameworks. These phenomena underscore the need to adapt Gricean theory to account for digital-specific implicatures, such as the use of “/s” tags to denote sarcasm—a convention now widely recognized in online communities (Graham, 2020).

Sociopragmatics bridges pragmatics and sociolinguistics, examining how social norms, power dynamics, and cultural identities shape language use. As Holmes (2013) asserts, linguistic choices in digital environments are inherently performative, reflecting and reinforcing social hierarchies. For example, code-switching between formal and informal registers in professional emails versus social media posts illustrates how users navigate identity construction across platforms (Tagg, 2015). Similarly, gendered language norms persist online; women are often policed for using “excessive” emojis or hedging phrases (e.g., “just my opinion”), perpetuating offline power imbalances (Sergeant & Tagg, 2019).

The rise of algorithmically mediated platforms like TikTok and Instagram has intensified sociopragmatic negotiations. Zappavigna's (2012) research on “ambient affiliation” demonstrates how hashtags and memes foster in-group solidarity through shared linguistic practices. For instance, Gen Z's appropriation of slang like “stan” or “sus” on TikTok serves dual sociopragmatic functions: signaling membership in youth subcultures while excluding older generations (Thurlow, 2021). Conversely, linguistic

missteps—such as misusing niche slang—risk social ostracization, highlighting the high stakes of sociopragmatic competence in digital communities (Androutsopoulos, 2013).

Semantics, the study of literal and figurative meaning, faces unique challenges in digital communication. Denotative-connotative distinctions are frequently destabilized by polysemy (multiple related meanings) and ambiguity. For example, the word “viral” semantically denotes rapid spread, but in digital contexts, it connotes cultural resonance, whether for memes, trends, or misinformation (Shifman, 2014). Such semantic fluidity is exacerbated by the textual constraints of platforms like Twitter, where brevity prioritizes idiomatic expressions (e.g., “go down the rabbit hole”) over explicit explanations (Steen, 2011).

Metaphors and idioms, central to semantic analysis, are reimaged in digital discourse. Visual metaphors in memes—such as the “Distracted Boyfriend” template—encode complex sociocultural critiques through juxtaposed images and text (Milner, 2016). Similarly, emojis like 🔥 or 💀 have evolved semantically: while denotatively representing fire and death, they pragmatically signify enthusiasm (“lit”) or humor (“dying of laughter”) in Gen Z parlance (Danesi, 2016). However, cross-cultural semantic mismatches persist; the “folded hands” emoji (🙏) signifies gratitude in some contexts but prayer in others, risking misinterpretation (Miller et al., 2016).

The interdependence of these dimensions is exemplified in phenomena like “cancel culture,” a term whose semantic meaning (public withdrawal of support) is inseparable from its pragmatic intent (social shaming) and sociopragmatic implications (power renegotiation). As Bouvier (2020) argues, cancel culture discourse operates through semantically charged hashtags (e.g., CancelX), pragmatically framed as moral imperatives, and sociopragmatically policed by networked audiences. Verschueren’s (1999) theory of linguistic adaptability further underscores the necessity of integrating these layers, positing that meaning dynamically adapts to contextual, social, and cultural variables.

Recent interdisciplinary studies advocate for frameworks like “digital discourse analysis” (Georgakopoulou, 2017), which combines semantic text analysis, pragmatic intent mapping, and sociopragmatic identity tracking. For example, Page et al. (2014) analyze Twitter threads to reveal how semantic choices (e.g., “fake news”) pragmatically frame narratives while sociopragmatically aligning users with political ideologies. Such approaches are critical for addressing challenges like AI-driven content moderation, which often fails to decode sarcasm or culturally specific metaphors (Sap et al., 2021).

### 3. Method

This study adopts a qualitative multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) framework to investigate the semantic, pragmatic, and sociopragmatic dimensions of internet memes. MDA is particularly suited for analyzing digital artifacts like memes, as it integrates textual, visual, and contextual elements into a unified analytical model (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). The tripartite approach—semantic, pragmatic, and sociopragmatic analysis—aligns with recent interdisciplinary methodologies in digital linguistics (Georgakopoulou, 2017) and builds on Shifman’s (2014) foundational work on meme culture.

The coded data underwent a rigorous qualitative descriptive analysis, structured to uncover layered meanings across semantic, pragmatic, and sociopragmatic dimensions. This approach aligns with Creswell and Miller’s (2000) framework for ensuring validity in qualitative inquiry, which emphasizes systematic coding, contextual interpretation, and reflexive engagement with data. The analysis proceeded as follows:

1. **Semantic analysis:** Semantic interpretation focused on denotative/connotative distinctions and figurative language. Drawing on Steen’s (2011) metaphor identification procedure, lexical elements (e.g., “dumpster fire”) were categorized as literal descriptions or metaphorical critiques. Polysemic phrases, such as “going viral,” were dissected to distinguish between their biological denotations (pathogens) and digital connotations (rapid information spread) (Shifman, 2014). Ambiguities arising from textual brevity (e.g., “Let’s go Brandon”) were mapped using Varis and Blommaert’s (2015) model of indexicality, which links linguistic forms to sociocultural contexts.
2. **Pragmatic analysis:** Grice’s (1975) Cooperative Principle guided the identification of maxim violations and implicatures. For instance, hyperbolic statements like “This meme cured my depression” were analyzed as flouting the maxim of quality to convey ironic humor (Yus, 2011). Platform-specific norms were also considered: TikTok’s preference for absurdist humor (e.g., “NPC memes”) was contrasted with Twitter’s tendency toward politically charged sarcasm, following Herring’s (2013) taxonomy of computer-mediated discourse.
3. **Sociopragmatic analysis:** Sociopragmatic coding employed Tagg and Seargeant’s (2016) framework for digital identity construction, examining how memes reinforce or subvert social hierarchies. For example, memes deploying AAVE (African American Vernacular English) slang (e.g., “sis”) were evaluated for cultural appropriation versus in-group solidarity (Brock, 2020). Power dynamics were further

explored through memes critiquing institutional authority (e.g., “Bernie Sanders’ Mittens” as a symbol of grassroots resistance) (Milner, 2016).

#### 4. Discussion

##### 4.1. Analysis of the First Data Meme - Life is Like This, if You're Not Confused, You're Daydreaming



1. Semantic Analysis: Literally, the phrase “hidup gini amat” expresses dissatisfaction with one’s current life conditions (“gini” being slang for “begini” or “like this”). The word “amat” (meaning “extremely”) emphasizes hyperbole or exaggerated complaint. Meanwhile, “kalo ga bingung ya bengong” implies a dichotomy of responses to the situation: if one is not “bingung” (mentally confused), they can only be “bengong” (spacing out, inactive). This structure creates a contrast between confusion and paralysis of action, depicting life circumstances that are ambiguous or offer no clear solutions.
2. Pragmatic Analysis: The speaker’s intent in this meme is to convey frustration or irony through humor. The sentence functions as a subtle satire toward confusing or unfair situations, whether personal or societal. The use of informal language (“gini,” “kalo,” “bengong”) and concise phrasing reflects the goal of delivering a quick, relatable message. The speaker likely aims to make the audience laugh while prompting reflection on the absurdity of their shared struggles.
3. Sociopragmatic Analysis:
  - Socio-Cultural Context: This meme reflects a common phenomenon among Indonesian youth, who often use humor as a coping mechanism against life pressures, such as economic uncertainty, social demands, or existential confusion.

The slang used indicates a target audience familiar with digital culture and informal communication.

- **Social Function:** The meme serves as a tool to build solidarity among those facing similar challenges. By mocking life's ambiguities, it alleviates emotional burdens by normalizing the feeling of "not knowing what to do."
  - **Veiled Criticism:** The phrase "kalo ga bingung ya bengong" can also be interpreted as a critique of systems or environments that fail to provide individuals with rational avenues for action, leaving only passive or confused responses.
4. **Conclusion:** This meme employs simple language and humor to critique the complexities of modern life while reflecting Indonesian culture's tendency to use jokes as a means of confronting adversity. The analysis demonstrates how informal language, hyperbole, and dichotomous responses work together to convey profound messages in a lighthearted, digestible manner. It underscores the power of humor as both a social critique and a unifying force in navigating shared struggles.

#### 4.2. Analysis of the Second Data Meme - Lecturer: 'Students must be critical'. Student: 'Like this, sir?' (In ICU room)

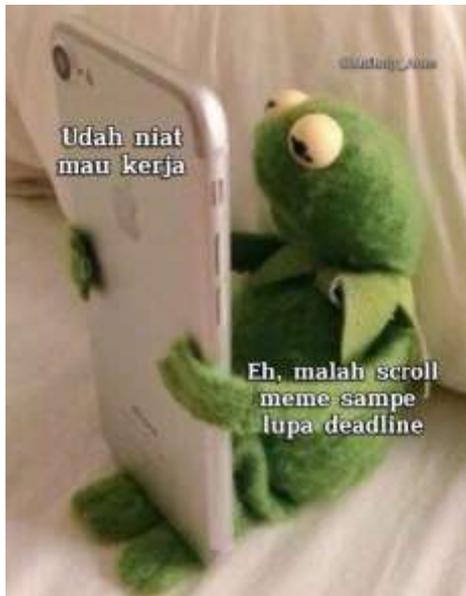
dosen : "mahasiswa itu harus kritis"



1. **Semantic Analysis:** Literally, the lecturer emphasizes the importance of analytical thinking, evaluative skills, and intellectual independence. "Gini Pak?", this phrase is slang for "Seperti ini, Pak?" (Like this, Sir?), spoken by a student depicted in an ICU (Emergency Room). ICU is symbol of emergency, extreme exhaustion, or severe physical/mental strain. Contrast in meaning, the word "kritis" (intellectual criticality) is contrasted with ICU (medical critical condition), creating a pun between academic

- criticality and medical criticality. The student's raised hand in the ICU can be interpreted as a protest or sarcastic remark: "Is this what you mean by 'critical'?"
2. **Pragmatic Analysis:** The meme critiques the excessive pressure on students to remain "critical" without regard for their mental or physical well-being. While the lecturer demands intellectual rigor, the student is in a condition (ICU) that directly undermines their ability to meet such expectations. Uses an extreme scenario (ICU) to highlight the absurdity of unrealistic academic demands. Entertains while prompting reflection on educational systems that may sacrifice student welfare. Exposes the imbalance between institutional expectations and the realities of student life.
  3. **Sociopragmatic Analysis:**
    - **Socio-Cultural Context:** The pressure to embody the "ideal student" (critical, active, high achieving) often lacks adequate mental health support. **Burnout Phenomenon:** Students frequently endure physical/mental exhaustion due to academic workloads, thesis pressures, or competitive environments. The ICU serves as a metaphor for this crisis.
    - **Social Function:** The meme becomes a medium for voicing collective grievances and fostering empathy among those facing similar pressures. Challenges institutions that prioritize academic standards over student well-being.
    - **Language and Digital Culture:** The use of informal language ("gini pak") and meme formats reflects how younger generations adapt to deliver sharp critiques through accessible, humorous mediums. The ICU, as a universal symbol of "emergency," ensures broad relatability across audiences.
  4. **Conclusion:** This meme employs wordplay (kritis vs. ICU) and situational contrast to critique dehumanizing academic demands. Semantic analysis reveals the duality of meaning, while pragmatic and sociopragmatic analyses uncover the satire's intent and its broader social context. Through dark humor, the meme not only entertains but also highlights systemic issues in higher education, reflecting how Indonesian students use digital media as a tool for protest and self-expression. It underscores the tension between intellectual ideals and the often-overlooked human costs of academic rigor, resonating deeply with a generation navigating both educational and existential pressures.

#### **4.3. Analysis of the Third Data Meme - I Intended to Work, but Instead I Scrolled Through Memes Until I Forgot the Deadline**



### 1. Semantic Analysis:

- **Literal Meaning:** “Udah niat mau kerja” (I intended to work): The subject expresses a plan or desire to begin productive tasks. “Eh, malah scroll meme sampe lupa deadline” (Ended up scrolling memes and forgot the deadline): A distraction (using a phone to browse memes) leads to neglect of urgent responsibilities. A frog plushie with a blank or relaxed expression symbolizes nonchalance or naivety, contrasting with the urgency of a “deadline.”
- **Contrast in Meaning:** The juxtaposition of “niat kerja” (productive intent) and “scroll meme” (unproductive activity) creates situational irony. The phrase “sampe lupa deadline” (until forgetting the deadline) underscores the negative consequences of distraction, amplifying the contrast between intention and reality.

### 2. Pragmatic Analysis:

- **Speaker’s Intent:** The meme critiques the digital generation’s tendency to prioritize instant gratification (memes) over responsibilities. Uses relatable, everyday scenarios to humorously critique oneself or others trapped in cycles of procrastination. While framed humorously, it carries an underlying message about time management and focus.
- **Communicative Effect:** Entertains audiences who recognize themselves in the scenario, fostering a sense of shared guilt. Raise awareness about how digital distractions can lead to serious consequences (e.g., missed deadlines).

### 3. Sociopragmatic Analysis:

- **Socio-Cultural Context:** Reflects the clash between modern societal demands for productivity and the lure of instant entertainment in the social media era. Targets

Gen Z and millennials, who are familiar with short-form content consumption, making the message instantly relatable.

- **Social Function:** Normalizes procrastination as a collective experience while acknowledging its pitfalls. Subtly mocks societal pressures to constantly be productive, even as digital distractions serve as escapism.
  - **Symbolism:** Frog often associated with sluggishness or calmness. Its blank expression emphasizes indifference to deadlines, reinforcing the disconnect between intent and action. Smartphone represents the primary source of digital distraction and symbolizes modern dependency on technology.
4. **Conclusion:** This meme employs irony, contrasts between intention and reality, and self-aware humor to address digital-age procrastination. Semantic analysis reveals wordplay and contrasts of meaning, while pragmatics reveals satire on procrastination. Sociopragmatically, it mirrors the struggles of younger generations balancing productivity demands with tech-driven distractions. The relaxed frog imagery and smartphone symbolism work synergistically to deliver a lighthearted yet introspective message, inviting audiences to laugh and reflect on this universal human flaw. Ultimately, the meme serves as both a mirror and a catalyst, fostering communal humor and subtle calls for self-improvement in an era of endless digital temptations.

#### 4.4. Analysis of the Fourth Data Meme - Doctor vs. Power Ranger



##### 1. Semantic Analysis

- **Literal Meaning:** Doctor refers to a medical profession perceived as serious, realistic, and socially prestigious. Power Ranger is a fictional superhero character

from a TV series, representing fantasy, imagination, and unconventional aspirations. Power Ranger thumbs-up image is a symbol of approval or validation for the child's "Power Ranger" response.

- Contrast in Meaning: The dichotomy between a real-world profession (Doctor) and childhood fantasy (Power Ranger) highlights the clash between adult expectations (pragmatism) and a child's imaginative worldview (idealism). The choice of "Power Ranger" symbolizes a child's uninhibited creativity, free from societal norms about "acceptable" career aspirations.

## 2. Pragmatic Analysis

- Speaker's Intent: Contrasts the teacher's (as an authority figure) expectation of a conventional answer with the child's imaginative expression. The juxtaposition of "Doctor" (serious) and "Power Ranger" (fantastical) creates comedic tension, critiquing societal pressure to conform to rigid expectations. The Power Ranger's thumbs-up reinforces the value of children's imagination and joy, even if deemed unrealistic.
- Communicative Effect: Invites reflect on the rigidity of educational systems or adult norms in judging children's aspirations. Entertains by illustrating the mismatch between a child's world and adult expectations.

## 3. Sociopragmatic Analysis

- Socio-Cultural Context: Society often equates success with prestigious careers (e.g., doctor), while non-traditional interests (e.g., arts, fantasy) are dismissed as frivolous. The "Power Ranger" choice reflects how entertainment media (TV, films) shape children's imaginations and desires.
- Social Function: Satirizes schools' emphasis on "practical" careers over nurturing children's unique interests. By validating the "Power Ranger" answer, the meme advocates accepting diverse aspirations, even unconventional ones.
- Visual Symbolism: Irony arises from depicting a young child in a graduation robe (typically associated with higher education), hyperbolizing societal pressure to plan futures prematurely. Red symbolizes courage and enthusiasm, framing imagination as a form of bravery in children.

## 4. Conclusion:

This meme critiques societal norms that restrict children's imagination by contrasting "Doctor" (realistic) and "Power Ranger" (fantastical) aspirations. Semantic analysis reveals the dichotomy of meanings, while pragmatic analysis underscores the humor and subtle satire of adult expectations. Sociopragmatically, it reflects systemic pressures on

children to conform to conventional paths, while advocating for appreciation of creativity and free thinking. The Power Ranger's thumbs-up transcends mere humor—it serves as a reminder that children's happiness and imagination deserve validation. Ultimately, the meme challenges audiences to reconsider rigid definitions of success and embrace the diverse, often whimsical, dreams of the younger generation.

#### 4.5. Analysis of the Fifth Data Meme - Raurus, the Javanese Dino Who Doesn't Meddle in Other Dinos' Business



##### 1. Semantic Analysis

- Literal Meaning: "Raurus" is a portmanteau of the Javanese phrase "ra urus" (meaning "doesn't care") and "saurus" (dinosaur). This creates a personified dinosaur characterized by indifference. "Dino from Java" is the juxtaposition of a universal concept (dinosaurs) with a specific geographic reference (Java) generates humorous absurdity. "Doesn't like meddling in other dinos' business" means emphasizes an individualistic attitude or social detachment.
- Contrast in Meaning: The irony lies in pairing "dinosaur" (a prehistoric creature often associated with power or extinction) with "indifference" (a passive trait). The mention of "Java" as Raurus' origin ties the character to local cultural values, such as "ewuh pekewuh" (a Javanese term for reluctance to interfere in others' affairs).

##### 2. Pragmatic Analysis

- Speaker's Intent: The meme critiques societal tendencies toward indifference regarding social issues, framed through humor. The absurd combination of dinosaurs and Javanese language creates comedy via contextual mismatch. Using

Javanese ("ra urus") reflects efforts to preserve or popularize regional terms in modern media.

- Communicative Effect: Entertains through visual absurdity and wordplay. Prompt self-reflection: "Are we, like Raurus, overly indifferent?"

### 3. Sociopragmatic Analysis

- Socio-Cultural Context: Raurus embodies the Javanese value of conflict avoidance and social harmony yet also critiques excessive passivity. Reflects urban trends of self-focus, particularly in the digital age.
  - Social Function: Highlights the negative impacts of apathy, such as eroded empathy and social disengagement. Integrating local terms into digital memes helps introduce younger generations to regional language.
  - Visual Symbolism: Green dinosaur symbolizes calmness or neutrality, aligning with Raurus' non-interference. A whimsical aesthetic softens the critical message, making it more digestible.
4. Conclusion: The "Raurus" meme employs absurdity, wordplay, and cultural references to critique social apathy. Semantically, it contrasts dinosaurs with Javanese values, while pragmatically, it balances humor with veiled criticism. Sociopragmatically, it mirrors tensions between traditional harmony and modern individualism. By blending local language, playful visuals, and irony, the meme entertains while urging audiences to reflect on their social engagement. Ultimately, Raurus serves as both a cultural mirror and a call to action, challenging viewers to reconsider passivity in an interconnected world.

## 5. Conclusion

The analysis of digital memes through a semantic-pragmatic-sociopragmatic framework reveals their multifaceted role as vehicles of cultural expression, social critique, and communal solidarity in contemporary digital discourse. By dissecting five Indonesian memes, this study demonstrates how humor, absurdity, and linguistic creativity intersect to address complex societal issues while resonating with diverse audiences. Key findings from the triangulated analysis are synthesized as follows:

1. Memes thrive on semantic contrasts, juxtaposing literal and figurative meanings to generate irony or absurdity. For instance, the meme "Raurus, the Javanese Dino" combines the Javanese phrase "ra urus" (indifference) with the universal concept of dinosaurs, creating a humorous yet critical commentary on apathy. Similarly, the "Doctor vs. Power Ranger" meme contrasts realistic career aspirations with

childhood fantasies, subverting societal expectations through lexical dichotomies. These semantic layers highlight how memes destabilize conventional meanings to provoke reflection.

2. Memes operate as pragmatic tools, leveraging context-dependent humor to convey implicit messages. The "I Intended to Work" meme critiques procrastination through situational irony, while the "Lecturer vs. Student in ICU" meme uses hyperbole to satirize academic pressures. Such memes often flout Gricean maxims (e.g., quality, relevance) to amplify their rhetorical impact, relying on shared cultural knowledge to decode sarcasm or satire.
3. Memes reflect and shape sociocultural norms, acting as mirrors of collective experiences. The "Hidup Gini Amat" meme, for example, fosters solidarity among Indonesian youth navigating economic uncertainty, while "Raurus" critiques Javanese "ewuh pekewuh" (reluctance to interfere) as both a cultural value and a social flaw. Visual symbolism—such as the green dinosaur's neutrality or the smartphone's role in distraction—further anchors memes in specific sociopragmatic contexts, bridging local and universal themes.
4. Memes serve as adaptive responses to digital-age challenges. They mediate tensions between productivity culture and digital distraction, institutional rigidity and individual well-being, or traditional norms and modern individualism. Their reliance on informal language, regional dialects (e.g., Javanese "gini pak"), and internet slang underscores the role of digital platforms in preserving linguistic diversity while fostering new communicative norms.

In conclusion, memes are not mere ephemeral humor but vital artifacts of digital culture. They encapsulate the struggles, aspirations, and contradictions of modern life, bridging individual expression and collective identity. By decoding their semantic-pragmatic-sociopragmatic layers, we gain deeper insights into how language evolves in—and shapes—the digital sphere.

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