

Biases in a humorous talk show on religious conversion on youtube: Critical discourse analysis approach on “Pindah Arah” playlist

Mufti Labib Jalaluddin^{a1}, Zezen Zaenal Mutaqin^{a2}

^{ab} Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia, Jl. Raya Bogor, Kota Depok, Jawa Barat 16416, Indonesia

¹ mufti.jalaluddin@student.uiii.ac.id; ² zezen.zaenal@uiii.ac.id

SEJARAH ARTIKEL

Diterima: 16 Januari 2023
Direvisi: 29 Maret 2023
Disetujui: 5 April 2023
Diterbitkan: 8 April 2023

*Corresponding

syaebani@ui.ac.id



[10.22219/satwika.v7i1.24503](https://doi.org/10.22219/satwika.v7i1.24503)



jurnalsatwika@umm.ac.id

How to Cite: Jalaluddin, M. L., & Mutaqin, Z. Z. (2023). Biases in a humorous talk show on religious conversion on youtube: Critical discourse analysis approach on “Pindah Arah” playlist. *Satwika: Kajian Ilmu Budaya dan Perubahan Sosial*, 7(1), 42-54. <https://doi.org/10.22219/satwika.v7i1.24503>



ABSTRACT

Violations of religious freedom, including the right of religious conversion, often occur in Indonesia, although the state constitution guarantees the right. Several kinds of research indicate that news media has produced discursive violations through texts with certain language styles. Nonetheless, the violation can also happen through humorous language style in social media. This paper aims to discover the discourse behind a humorous talk show on religious conversion in the “Pindah Arah” playlist on the Comedy Sunday YouTube channel, whether it entirely promotes religious conversion as freedom of religion or carries bias. The playlist, as well as the channel, is chosen as the only one that gives the stage for religious converts, either those who converted to Islam or from Islam, to tell their religious conversion in a humorous program on YouTube. This qualitative research uses content analysis, applying Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis method. The results of this study show that the videos in the playlist, on the one hand, show religious freedom, but on the other hand, they still carry the hosts’ majority bias. The bias is shown through word and analogy choices which frame conversion to Islam as positive and conversion from Islam as unfavorable. The bias is related to the social context among the social relationship between adherents of religions. This article argues that the playlist “Pindah Arah” of the Comedy Sunday YouTube channel implicitly violates personal freedom of religious conversion through aggressive humor and shows a contradiction between their slogan and jokes.

Keywords: bias; conversion; converts; religious freedom

ABSTRAK

Pelanggaran terhadap kebebasan beragama, termasuk hak untuk berpindah agama, tidak jarang terjadi di Indonesia meskipun secara hukum hak tersebut dijamin oleh konstitusi. Banyak penelitian menunjukkan adanya pelanggaran tersebut, terlebih dari wacana yang dimuat dan diproduksi oleh media berita melalui teks dengan gaya bahasa tertentu. Meski demikian, pelanggaran itu dapat terjadi melalui gaya bahasa humor di media sosial. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menemukan wacana di balik talkshow lucu tentang konversi agama dalam playlist “Pindah Arah” di kanal YouTube Comedy Sunday, apakah itu sepenuhnya mempromosikan konversi agama sebagai kebebasan beragama atau membawa bias. Daftar putar beserta saluran tersebut dipilih sebagai satu-satunya yang memberikan panggung bagi para pelaku pindah agama, baik mereka yang masuk Islam atau keluar dari Islam, untuk menceritakan cerita pindah agama mereka dalam program humor di YouTube. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan menggunakan analisis isi dengan menerapkan metode analisis wacana kritis Norman Fairclough. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa video dalam playlist di

satu sisi menunjukkan kebebasan beragama, namun di sisi lain masih membawa bias mayoritas dari pembawa acara. Bias tersebut ditunjukkan melalui pilihan kata dan analogi yang membingkai konversi ke Islam sebagai positif dan konversi dari Islam sebagai negatif. Bias tersebut terkait dengan konteks sosial di antara hubungan sosial antara penganut agama. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa playlist “Pindah Arah” secara implisit melanggar hak personal untuk pindah agama melalui humor agresif dan menunjukkan kontradiksi antara slogan dan candaan mereka.

Kata kunci: bias; pindah agama; pelaku pindah agama; kebebasan beragama

© 2023; This is an Open Access Research distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original works are appropriately cited.



INTRODUCTION

The development of new media has influenced and transformed the political process in Indonesia, either to direct to be more democratic or otherwise. The development of the media factor in Indonesia has enabled the citizens to participate in the civil political process by directly creating content and thus reclaiming the civic public sphere, which was controlled by the state previously. The significantly-growing civil society organizations influence the political processes and effort to seed bottom-up democracy, which needs “a healthy civil society, where social movements and civic engagements are nurtured” (Nugroho & Syarif, 2012, p. 97). Even though the democratization process through new media was not as easy as that. It could run only among civil society. Otherwise, the internet can be used for uncivil purposes.

One of the uncivil purposes is restricting religious freedom. Although Indonesia, as a modern legal state, guarantees freedom of religion as part of human rights as written in the constitution (Muhshi, 2015), violations of religious freedom are still commonly found. Reports from Komisi Untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan (KontraS, Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence) (2021) state three patterns of how the state violates religious freedom; neglection, patrons as a form of legitimacy, and inadequate recovery of problems. In fact, victims of religious freedom experience various forms of discrimination, such as administrative discrimination, social discrimination, to cases of violence.

Many researchers have studied explicit violations of religious freedom on social media. The explicit violation of religious freedom, both online and offline, is undergone by an Islamist movement studied by Ahyar (2017), which uses the commodification of religious identity to attempt to enforce its Islamist view through various narratives of issues concerned. Muslim conservatives, as studied by Muwahidah (2020), also

spread propaganda using the strategy of analogy and boundary. The strategy uses explicit sentences to violate the religious freedom of the intrareligious minority they consider heretics. In this regard, instead of expressing the freedom of speech, social media can silence others whose opinions differ and flourish racist and sectarian narratives (Lim, 2017).

These cases show how the violations of religious freedom took place on the ground. Some were posted explicitly on social media, making the narratives easy to understand. Thus they led to active violations of religious freedom. Sometimes, someone can guess the narrative by looking at the actor. However, that will not be easy if the actor shows the paradox between his agenda and his tendency. However, the findings are still limited to conservative or radical groups.

The principle of religious freedom guarantees religious conversion. However, the media in Indonesia often do not neutrally represent this feature as they hold political-economic motives. For instance, news on celebrities converting to Islam gets broader coverage on digital media and television channels, while news on converting from Islam is less so. The last one even got condemned and controversies, as seen from the comments on the internet. Both news is framed with bias, where the first one is framed positively and the second is the opposite (Prakoso, 2021; Putri & Hasfi, 2021). For that reason, news of conversion from Islam is commonly circulated on social media such as YouTube rather than the mainstream one. It even gets attention from those who affiliate or are indicated to be from a religious minority to celebrate the conversion, especially to Christianity (Budiawan, 2020). In addition, religious freedom violations are also found in the regulation and its practice (Agustina & Adek, 2020). In this kind of framing, violation of religious freedom occurs through written discrimination explicitly and implicitly. Framing can represent a particular discourse and be presented through spectacles such as movies and pictures. For

example, the Japanese movie *Kuime* represents a ghost woman paradoxically as a manifest of men's fear as well as women's empowerment (Sakina & Purba, 2022), and women's pictures behind trucks are represented closely tied to money, love, and sex negatively (Andalas & Prihatini, 2018).

Interestingly, as we found in our research, it is possible to implicitly violate religious freedom on the right of conversion through humorous jokes. On the one hand, humor can enhance friendship and intimacy when used correctly (Gordon, 2014). On the other hand, it also represents the power and superiority of the humor-teller (Herlianto, 2019; Dunbar, Banas, Rodriguez, Liu, & Abra, 2012) since it, to some point, needs to violate "subjective moral principles" to make something perceived as funny (Veatch, 1998, pp. 163–164). This paradoxical feature makes humor unifier or a divider with its risk if not used correctly (Bitterly, 2022; Meyer, 2000). In this regard, one's jokes on religious matters can, to some extent, show superiority over another religion. However, there is still a lack of exploring risky and tendentious violations of the right of conversion through humor with its paradoxical feature since much research focuses on the issue in media framing.

This paper will analyze hostile discursive humor to fill this gap, representing an implicit and paradoxical violation of religious freedom on social media. We take the playlist "Pindah Arah" of the Comedy Sunday YouTube channel as an object to study. Comedy Sunday is one of the humorous YouTube channels with 244 thousand subscribers (as of January 1, 2023), which raises many social themes. The "Pindah Arah" playlist contains talk shows or casual talks with the theme of conversion. In the playlist, there are 12 informal Javanese talk show videos with Suroboyoan accent and Indonesian, with seven speakers converting to Islam and five speakers converting from Islam. The talk show was hosted by two young men and raised the tagline "*ronorene golek sing paling genah*" (coming here and there looking for the most correct). Though they often promote conversion as personal religious freedom, their jokes often show bias against minorities in the representation of conversion.

Hopefully, this paper can contribute to the enrichment of the implicit violation of religious freedom. The article will explore the hidden feature of power and superiority in a humorous talk show of conversion to examine what discourse and discourse practices are carried out by the hosts, whether they are consistent with their tagline or vice versa. Thus, all

parties can be aware of hostile humor regarding the issue of religious freedom.

METHOD

This article uses a qualitative research method, using library research and collecting data from videos on social media, especially YouTube. The locus of the study is the "Pindah Arah" playlist of the Comedy Sunday YouTube channel, where two videos of converts to Islam and two videos of converts from Islam are chosen since they meet the criteria: (1) the hosts express harmful humorous jokes on conversion from Islam, (2) the jokes are indicated to violate the right of conversion, (3) the jokes tend to stand on the religion of the majority. The playlist is chosen as it is the only social media platform that serves as a stage for both converts to Islam and converts from Islam to tell their spiritual journey of conversion, while it is rarely found because many social media usually provide a stage for converts to one religion only (table 1).

This paper is limited to the analysis of disorder shown by the host, both through words and other expressions, within the framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and will ignore the humorous side as something intimate and mood-melting. All aspects of humor in the video are critically analyzed because humor has a particular meaning, represents a specific discourse, and contains the superiority of humor speakers (Herlianto, 2019). The selection of the host as the subject in this article is based on the difference in the relationship between the host and the source, where the host, as the channel owner or media owner, is considered to have power in the talk show.

The data analysis technique applied here is first to watch videos in the playlist. Second, taking note of data from utterances uttered by the hosts which fit specific criteria of aggressive humor. The features of this kind of humor are expressing feelings of enmity, enhancing feelings of superiority over others, and sending "corrective" messages to those violating communal norms (Miczo & Welter, 2006, p. 63). Next, the obtained data will be analyzed using CDA according to Norman Fairclough's theory to discover what is going wrong and the steps to resolve that disorder. The critical discourse analysis employed here is to understand and explain injustice and biased utterances stated by the hosts toward the minority, in this case, converts explicitly from Islam to other religions.

First, the data will be analyzed using Fairclough's theory by describing the text's formal properties. The second interpretation focuses on the relationship between text and interaction, as mentioned briefly above. Next, an explanation that analyses the relationship between interaction and socio-cultural context (Fairclough, 1989, pp. 24–27).

Fairclough lays out the four stages of operating CDA. The first stage focuses on a social wrong or disorder in its semiotic aspect. The second stage is identifying obstacles to addressing disorder in society. There are three steps in this stage: the first step, analyze dialectical relations between semiosis and other elements; the second step, select texts, focuses, and categories for analysis; the third step, carry out analyses of texts, both interdiscursive and linguistic analysis. The third stage is considering whether the social order needs social wrong. The fourth stage identifies possible solutions to the obstacles (Fairclough, 2010, p. 235).

Another concept applied in this paper is the theory of aggressive humor. It refers to an attempt to obtain amusement through the defamation, derogation, or belittlement of a targeted object (Ferguson & Ford, 2008, p. 283) which its features have been mentioned earlier. This concept measures to what extent the discursive humor violates the right of religious freedom in the case of conversion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This paper indicates that the hosts' jokes carry out the power and bias of the religious majority in Indonesia, at least in Java, over and towards religions of the minority in the issue of religious conversion. To some extent, the hosts show their religious identity as part of the majority by supporting conversion to Islam and preventing and regretting conversion to other religions through humorous expression though they deny that later.

Even though the hosts' humor can lighten the discussion mood, some of their jokes can be regarded as aggressive. The talk show, somehow, hits the sensitive issue of religious conversion, notably conversion from Islam, by using negative words and analogies. It goes the same way as how online media positively frames celebrities' conversion to Islam and negatively those who

converted from Islam to other religions (Prakoso, 2021). The feeling of majoritarianism affected the hosts when they threw jokes which posit other religions as inferior to Islam. To some extent, jokes in this talk show insult religious freedom, especially the right to choose a religion, whereas it cannot be restricted, and no religion prescribes the order to violate anything around it (Tampubolon & Aziz, 2021, p. 246).

The Playlist "Pindah Arah" of the Comedy Sunday channel contains 12 conversion talk show videos peppered with humor hosted by Agustian Pratama (Tian) and Karim Sujatmiko (Karjo), two Muslim youths. In a few videos, Agustian Pratama is replaced by Ahmad Ubaidillah or Ubed. Seven of the interviewees were those who converted to Islam, while the other five converted from Islam. It is not explained how the host mechanism invites speakers with such an unbalanced composition.

Although the host explained that this does not represent a win-loss in conversion, as Agus said in video 1, an unbalanced composition without adequate explanation implies a representation of domination of conversion to Islam or domination of Muslims themselves. This is made possible by the Muslim host's power relations and religious subjectivity as the program's owner.

Of the 12 videos (table 2), five videos (3 videos are conversion from Islam and two videos are conversion to Islam), as explained before, are chosen as playlist samples (table 3). The length of each video varies but is generally between 18 and 27 minutes. As the duration of every video is so long, here, only some of the hosts' dialogue or humorous utterances, which indicate a bias of religious partiality, are chosen. Every video has a background lamp that lights blue or red. The blue light indicates the invited informant is a convert to Islam, and the red one signs the opposite. The hosts raised multiple-answer questions in every video according to the informant's previous and recent religions. In the case of the converts from Islam, the hosts always asked about "what would someone obtain if he/she worships other than Allah," the right question is "big sin." The hosts would blame every convert from Islam who answered right for doing something sinful while knowing the consequence.

Table 1. Videos Analyzed

Video	Title	Conversion	Informant	Link
12	<i>Sekeluarga Pindah Islam Karena Pernikahan</i>	Convert from Hindu to Islam	Yuanita Arifiani	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qsdr8-

	(The whole family converts to Islam because of marriage)			tDu6s&list=PLxHPUw4xwM9ZHjJnhwSAz7JNZY8DP lu_5&index=12
6	<i>Dulu Pengen Ngaji, Tapi Diusir</i> (Previously, he wanted to read the Qur'an but was kicked out)	Convert from Catholicism to Islam	Permana Dewa Indarto/ Pepe	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cxnygmvLXQ4
11	<i>Pindah Agama Tapi Keluarga Ga Ada yang Tahu</i> (She converted, but none of her family knows)	Convert from Islam to Catholicism	(Gartrudis) Farah Aulia Salsabila	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEKKNsNam_4&list=PLxHPUw4xwM9ZHjJnhwSAz7JNZY8DP lu_5&index=11
5	<i>Sekeluarga Diajak Pindah Agama</i> (The whole family is pursued to convert)	Convert from Islam to Catholicism	(Rafael Antonius) Aditia Tri Pamungkas	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBTpYFPTR9g&list=PLxHPUw4xwM9ZHjJnhwSAz7JNZY8DP lu_5&index=5

Stage 1: Focusing on the social problem in the semiotical aspect *conversion to Islam*

Table 2. Selected Transcription of Video 12

Host	Minute	Utterance	English Translation	Context
Tian	1:58	kalau agama lain pindah ke agama lain, sesat. Maksudnya, "bingung rumah ibadahku yang mana ya," takutnya tersesat	If another religion converts to another religion, it is heretical. Meaning "being confused about which house of my worship was," afraid of getting lost.	Laughing when saying "sesat" (deviate)
Karjo	2:10	iku ku ibarat koen lek misale arep mudik, teko bis elek pindah becak. Mestine kan sing luwih apik ngono loh	It is like you, for example, who wants to go home. From the ugly bus moving to a pedicab. It should be a better one.	Responding to Agus' utterance above
Karjo	6:41	berarti kamu selain meningkat sekolahnya, agamanya meningkat juga, upgrade	means that in addition to improving the school, your religion is increasing as well, upgrading	The informant tells about she converted to Islam when she entered junior high school
Tian	14:54	mimpi iku. mimpi... Dah yang paling bener yang ini kok... (laughing for a while) Konten ini maksudnya. Maksudmu opo?	That is a dream. A dream... The truest is this (religion), really... (laughing for a while) This content is. What do you mean?	The informant tells the dream of doing Hinduism worship; Agus bows as if begging, but he rejects "the truth" to be connected to Islam but to the content.

Table 3. Selected Transcription of Video 6

Host	Minute	Utterance	English Translation	Context
Ubed	1:08	Ya, Allah! Astaghfirullah!	Oh my God! Astaghfirullah!	Karjo said that until that episode, three individuals converted from Islam to other religions.
Ubed	1:35	Untuk temen-temen yang masih Kristen, masih Katolik, masih Budha, monggo! Tempat duduk ini untuk anda dengan background biru. Silakan!	For friends who are still Christian, Catholic, and Buddhist, go ahead! This seat is for you with a blue background. Please!	"Blue background" refers to conversion to Islam.

Karjo	6:32	Lek aku yo, aku luweh mending sinau arab timbang minggu tangi isuk. Soale akeh kartun iku, Bro	If me, I am better off studying Arabic than waking up on Sunday morning. You see, there are many cartoons, Bro	The conversation when the informant was still Catholic.
Ubed	6:45	Berarti sampean menentang programe bu Risma berarti. Car-free day	That means you oppose the program of Bu Risma. Car-free day	The conversation refers to the weekly worship of Catholics and Christians
Karjo	9:22	iki wong sing mengejar cita-citanya	This is a person who pursues his ideals	[the informant tells when he was a child was still Catholic but wanted to participate in learning the Qur'an in mosques, but was rejected until he converted to Islam]
Ubed	9:33	Tak kiro sampean Islam karena rabi, ta karena nglamar dadi takmir akhire terpaksa Islam. Eh ternyata panggilan	I think you (converted to) Islam because of marriage or because you applied, so you were not forced to (converted to) Islam. That is, it turns out that a call	
Ubed	9:42	berarti itu hidayah sudah datang sewaktu masih kecil	It means the <i>hidayah</i> has come since youth	
Karjo	20:20	Selamat datang! Welcome to the club, bro! Gokil! Berarti ini ulang tahun ya? Kuenya?!	Welcome! Welcome to the club, bro! Crazy! It means it is a birthday, huh? The cake?!	The informant says he just converted a year ago
Karjo	22:50	Dimbimbing. Mohon dibantu ya.	Guide him. Your help, please!	The informant says he just engaged with a Muslim woman
Ubed	24:42	Waduh. Ya emang pinter aja gitu ya. Aku yakin orang Katolik, "Masuk kembali. Kamu masih Katolik."	Oops. Yes, you are just smart. I am sure the Catholics (will say), "Reconvert. You are still Catholic."	[the informant answers correctly 2 of 3 of the Catholic question] [His hand waved as if pushing]

In the two videos, the hosts show that their jokes tend to stand on Muslims' position. Their selected words indicate certain ideologies and discourses (Haryatmoko, 2019, p. 9). The word 'another religion' selected in video 12, rather than mentioning the name of religions, showed that the hosts made the distinction between Islam as their religion and other religions. The word 'sesat or deviate', uttered explicitly in a humorous sense, affirms the hosts' bias in recognizing other religions out of Islam. This is a judgemental word used to state that the object is doing something different from the usual behavior (Cambridge Dictionary). It strengthens the boundary between Islam and 'other religions' in the discourse of civil media, which posits 'other religions' as behaving differently from the 'usual' or majority. Furthermore, the word selected comes with a criterion of aggressive humor: sending "corrective" messages to those violating communal norms (Miczo & Welter, 2006, p. 63).

Another discredit is expressed through analogy, a powerful cognitive mechanism to easily make inferences from familiar and thinkable stories and learn new

abstractions (Gentner & Holyoak, 1997). The host, Karjo, makes an analogy about conversion from 'other religion' to 'other religion' with "riding ugly bus' to riding pedicab" which both are not good vehicles and 'should not be ridden.' By repeating 'other religion' in this analogy, the hosts construct their identity and differentiate "other" to express the conceptual marker of the boundary between "us" as opposed to "them" (Guttormsen, 2018, p. 3). Both word and analogy selection show the superiority over others and a "corrective" message through aggressive humor that should not be taken by anyone who wants to convert not to Islam.

Besides the bias against 'other religions,' the hosts show their partiality to Muslims as they identify to belong in that group through supportive words. The host Ubed's sentence (minute 1:35) humorously pursues "other potential converts" to convert to Islam (signed by the blue background) by giving them a seat as informants. The hosts also frame conversion to Islam as a positive change by valuing it as "ideal," "upgrade," and "hidaya," or guidance which means in Arabic the way of

divine truth ([Ibn Manzūr, n.d., p. 4639](#)). Somehow, those words, especially the last one, are theological words used in this media, which should be religiously neutral ([Nugroho & Syarief, 2012, p. 6](#)) since it does not affiliate with a particular religion. In this section, the hosts act as agents of Islam who prevent others from converting to Islam.

This video shows the bias by framing ‘other religion’ as bad and Islam as positive, divine guidance, and an upgraded level of religion. With the analogies uttered, the hosts place themselves as the agents of Islam and the Muslims’ domination. As other researchers found, it

marks and strengthens the dominant idea of Muslims’ domination in the public sphere in Indonesia. To some extent, the hosts attempted to neglect their humorous utterances from being connected to religious issues, even though their utterances connotated that one.

Conversion from Islam

To strengthen the assumption of this article that the host of Comedy Sunday shows their bias and their making of the boundary between Islam and other religions, the paper attaches selected transcripts of videos of conversion from Islam ([table 4 and 5](#)).

Table 4. Selected Transcription of Video 11

Host	Minute	Utterance	English Translation	Context
Tian	11:11	lihat ini (korden dan lampu belakang) warna sudah merah, warna-warna setan	see this (cord and taillights) the color is already red, the colors of the devil	Laugh out loud
Tian	11:30	astaghfirullah al-‘adzim, astaghfirullah al-‘adzim. Kamu pindah?!	astaghfirullah al-‘adzim, astaghfirullah al-‘adzim. You converted?!	Sources who converted from Islam came; the host expresses as want to laugh but closes his face
Tian	7:21	Eh sorry, Bila! kamu pernah gak habis mimpi gitu terus mikir ini Islamku yang kurang kuat atau aku meyakini agama Katolik? Pernah mikir gitu, nggak?	Uh, sorry, Bila! Have you ever had a dream to keep thinking if my Islamic religion that is not strong enough or if I believe in Catholicism? Ever thought about it, didn't you?	The interviewee told a second dream about a dream that led to Christianity, but the host interrupted unfinished, directing to another humorous talk
Karjo	10:45	Lah iku sek ono waktu gae muhasabah	That there is still time for <i>muhasaba</i> (contemplation, rethinking)	The informant said that there were still several stages to convert to Catholicism that had not been completed yet and can only be baptized after several moments
Tian	10:47	Lah iyo, prosese sek suwi yo, nak Islam Asyhadu allaa ilaaha illallah wa asyhadu anna muhammadan rasulullah	Yes, the process is still a long time. If it's Islam, just (saying) <i>Ashyhadu allaa ilaaha illallah wa asyhadu anna muhammadan rasulullah</i>	Responding to the source's story and corroborating Karjo's words
Tian	12:11	koen dipocong, disholati wong-wong, koen gk gelem, "hee aku Katolik." Enggak iso	You are being shuffled. You are going to be, "Hee, I am Catholic." It cannot	demonstrate if the body of the corpse is waking up
Karjo	13:14	koen siap ta tangi minggu isuk? Minggu iku, enak tangi jam 10. Sumpah. Jam 11, enak tangi jam 11. Mulet dowo.	Are you ready to wake up Sunday morning? Sunday morning, it was good to get up at 10 o'clock. Oath. 11 o'clock. It is good to get up at 11 o'clock. Long <i>Mulet</i> (body squirming, stretching muscles when waking up).	The host asked about the resource person's readiness to adapt to new habits, abandoning the lifestyle of a Muslim
Tian	15:13	coba disuruh berdoa. Siapa tau bisa tenang	try to be told to pray. Who knows can calm down	She was asked about “the person who says the beautiful name of Allah swt will make his soul become?”, and she answered “calm” correctly.

Tian	17:32	Jadi masih bisa balik lagi. (kami) masih menerima dengan lapang dada	So it can still be back again. (we) are still accepting with airy chest	The answer points to the question about Islam, and Christianity are balanced 3-3
------	-------	--	---	--

Table 5. Selected Transcription of Video 5

Host	Minute	Utterance	English Translation	Context
Tian	4:31	seperti yang kita tau kalau warna merah berarti kita kehilangan sahabat nabi. Satu kali lagi.	As we know, red means that we lose the prophet's friend. One more time.	
Karjo	4:42	Ada satu orang yang nanti di padang mahsyar tidak akan dipanggil-panggil namanya oleh nabi Muhammad saw.	There is one person whose name later in the field of <i>mahshar</i> will not be called by the prophet Muhammad PBUH.	
Karjo	5:08	Loh panggilan Rasul gak krungu?! Ya ampun	How you couldn't hear the Prophet's call? Oh my gosh.	Responding to the conversation before
Tian	9:25	terus kamu waktu diajak masuk Katolik, pasti iyo iyo wae, nurut? berarti kamu diperdaya orangtuamu sendiri?... kok iso?! Agama iku urusan masing-masing	then when you were invited to convert to Catholicism, you blindly obeyed? Meaning, you were deceived by your own parents?... How come?! Religion is everyone's own business	
Tian	15:22	tapi kamu pernah gak sesekali mikir, iki Katolik, tapi Islam kok ibadahe luweh gampang ngono yo? Atau kamu, ono penyesalan, gak?	but have you ever thought once in a while, this is Catholicism, but the worship in Islam is easier, huh? Or you, have a regret or not?	
Tian	16:24	Iya. Kamu kan ibadah seminggu sekali. Kita tiap kali bisa ketemu sama Tuhan kita. Ini lagi ada promo... (Karjo: yo gk sales ngono)... siapa tau dia berpikiran Islam itu indah	Yes. You worship once a week. We can meet our Lord every time. Here is a promo... (Karjo: need to be sales like that)... who knows he thinks Islam is beautiful	the speaker feels that in Islam, he can get closer to God; Karjo put on an enthusiastic pose; Tian shouted as if calling <i>Ustaz</i> (Islamic preacher)
Tian	20:24	kamu tau? Dah tau kan berarti .. menyembah selain Allah itu dosa besar... dosa besar sek dilakoni	You know what? You know, that means.. worshipping other than Allah is a big sin... (How can you) still commit the great sin?	The question of worshipping other than Allah is answered correctly by the source; the source felt the question was tricky
Karjo	20:44	kalo ada keraguan, penyesalan, boleh dipikirkan lagi	if there are doubts, regrets, you can think about it again	
Tian	21:01	ya Allah bantu kami ya Allah mengembalikan hamba-Mu ini	O, Allah! Help us, O Allah, to return thy servant	
Karjo	21:09	yang perlu diingat adalah perjalanan spiritualmu itu urusan personalmu. Tadi hanya bercanda. Tapi kalo suatu saat kamu menemukan hidayah...	what needs to be remembered is that your spiritual journey is your personal business. Just kidding just now. But if one day you find <i>hidaya</i> (guidance)...	

The host Tian opened the talk show with a laugh when joking, “*lihat ini warna (lampu belakang) sudah merah, warna-warna setan* (look at this (lamp background)'s color is already red, the colors of the devil) (minute 11:11) (table 4). He analogized conversion from Islam to another religion equal to evil's deed which this humor shows aggressive humor: belittlement over others. At

minute 11:30, again he uttered “*astaghfirullah al-'adzim, astaghfirullah al-'adzim. Kamu pindah (You converted)?!*” The word *astaghfirullah al-'adzim*, or so-called *istighfar*, is often used to seek forgiveness and protection from God when facing something terrible or wrong. Here, the host, Tian, expressed his subjectivity

to judge the wrong decision of the informant to convert from Islam to Catholicism.

The conversation ran. The informant said that she was having such as six months-Catholicism course before converting and had not been legally baptized. In that part, the hosts Karjo and Tian enacted as agents of Islam when humorously uttering, “Lah iku sek ono waktu gae muhasabah (That, there is still time for muhasaba (contemplation, rethinking)... Lah iyo, prosese sek suwi yo, nak Islam Asyhadu allaa ilaaha illallah wa asyhadu anna muhammadan rasulullah (Yes, the process is still a long time. If (reconvert to) Islam, just (say) Asyhadu allaa ilaaha illallah wa asyhadu anna muhammadan rasulullah)). This joke sends “corrective” messages to the informant for her “wrong” decision.

In such conversations, the hosts express their regret and disappointment for those who converted from Islam to other religions. Such emotion is expressed through the word “astaghfirullah” which means “I seek forgiveness from God,” aduh or “ouch no,” and “red again.” The word “astaghfirullah” is usually used to express something wrong. In those conversations, they regard conversion from Islam as wrong, strengthened by some utterances such as “splitting from the truth as well,” and contrast the informant’s story when converting to Islam before going back to Christianity in video 10 as hidaya (spiritual guidance). It features one of the features of aggressive humor in which the subject of humor sends a “corrective” message to those converts as violating Islamic norms with the conversion.

The hosts’ position as agents of Islam is also explicitly reflected when they humorously say they are calling and accepting those converts to reconvert to Islam. It is expressed through utterances “(we are) still accepting with airy chest” and “Help us, O Allah, to return Thy servant.” It is also shown in the likely serious humorous question of the host Tian asking the informant Aditya if he was forced to convert by his father, as conversion from Islam is a coercive decision. The hosts frame the morning Sunday worship of Christianity as hard as well, as there are many cartoon programs on television channels, so staying lazy that morning is better. In addition, the hosts also compare the frequency of worship between Islam and Christianity, where it is more often in Islam in a day than in the one. It is aimed to attract them back to Islam.

Here, the hosts consciously, through their humorous jokes, do not stand in a neutral position in hosting their not-religiously-affiliating program. The situation strengthens that media often represent bias in supporting

the religion of the majority and softly restricting the religions of the minority through their framing as they stand on a particular religious party ([Prakoso, 2021](#); [Putri & Hasfi, 2021](#)). Furthermore, as a citizen media which usually does not engage with a particular political and economic force and can maintain its independent position ([Rodriguez, 2000, p. 150](#)) and can represent what is going on in their society, their talk show represents how Muslim society views on conversion to Islam and the otherwise. In addition, the way the hosts talk with a sense of humor is commonly grounded in society, which ensures that it usually happens in society.

Stage 2: Identifying obstacles to addressing problems in society

The existence of bias as an obstacle to equality in humor talk shows is caused by the subjectivity of majoritarianism in humorous conversations. It is important to know that humor becomes a terrain in which social superiority between the subject and object of humor is performed. To some extent, the object of humor becomes the party that is socially “inferior” to the subject of humor ([Herlianto, 2019, p. 155](#)). In this case, the hosts who come from among the majority show their subjectivity in the utterances of humor that to some extent fall into aggressive humor, where among the characteristics are enhancing feelings of superiority over others, sending a “corrective” message to one who violates group norms ([Miczo & Welter, 2006, p. 64](#)), where they deliver that corrective message through some expressions and utterances to those who converted from Islam.

The existence of majoritarianism subjectivity in the humorous utterances of religious hosts cannot be separated from the social aspect, where hosts who are Muslims easily convey humor that tends to be aggressive without being awkward. Judging from social interactions, Muslims in the majority are more difficult to “be attacked” when “attacking”, including through humor, than if the minority do the same. The existence of the Blasphemy Law is a frightening scourge for minorities because it is often seen as discriminatory and misused for certain interests ([Human Right Watch, 2017](#); [Laturhary, 2020](#)), even cases that cause mass pressure are often subjective that lead to defendants being thrown in jail ([BBC News Indonesia, 2016](#)).

Stage 3: Considering whether the social order needs social wrong or social disorder

The existence of religious competition and the affirmation of religious identity, in addition to the missionary nature of Islam itself, encouraged the birth of a desire to attract new members and maintain Muslim dominance in Indonesia. Here Muslims need agents for those two tasks, and the show hosts appear to be carrying out those duties. Although the hosts seemed to respect religious pluralism and religious conversion as personal rights several times, some humorous remarks and program settings showed partiality to Muslims as the majority. It included the selection of seven converts to Islam and five converts from Islam without explaining how they selected them, making “the score of conversion” won by Muslims, though they say it is only a joke and not a serious competition.

In this regard, the playlist “Pindah Arah” of the Comedy Sunday YouTube channel posits not only as a tool of the dominant group but also produces the dominant ideology. Media contribute to determining reality through words in how they produce it. Thus, reality produced by the media is not always necessarily neutral but, in many cases, is constructed and influenced by other powers ([Eriyanto, 2001, pp. 36, 49](#)). In this respect, socio-religious power takes a role.

The production of the discourse can be related to the political and economic competition that gave rise to latent conflicts between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia, more or less affecting the psychosocial adherents of the two religions. The history of the Crusades was politically influencing the relations and viewpoints of Muslims in most parts of the world toward Christians. That plus the arrival of Christian missionaries or Christianization in Indonesia along with the arrival of the invaders because economic and political factors made the image of Christianity not good if contrasted with the arrival of Islam brought by traders from India, China, and Arabia ([Feener, 2017](#); [Zainuddin, 2019](#)).

On the other hand, the emergence of concerns from adherents of the two religions about the proselytizing of their “rivals”, namely Islamization and Christianization, which also occurred due to factors of the political history of the New Order also enlivened this interfaith competition, so that to some extent it wanted to reduce and even eliminate the influence of other religions in the public sphere ([Arifianto, 2009, p. 86](#)). Religious competition between Muslims as the majority, especially

Christians as the most significant minority. This situation is embedded within Muslim groups and passively perceived and maintained by reproducing it. Humorous conversation as a social phenomenon can maintain the reproduction of ideology, similar to racial humor, which can preserve the stereotype of a particular racial group ([Herlianto, 2019](#)).

Nevertheless, it is also necessary to consider the slogan of ‘respecting everyone’s spiritual journey in the right of conversion’ as part of the program’s religious freedom. However, their jokes are, to some extent, contradictory to the idea of religious freedom. The socio-cultural background of the host and their team living in Surabaya’s metropolitan, multicultural city may further explain why they raise such ideas in their videos.

In this section, the way to know whether the social order in Indonesia needs this kind of humorous violation of the right of religious conversion can be represented by comments on the videos. Some comments support conversion to Islam, such as “because Islam is easy. Islam is a firm religion” (video 1), “Subhanallah! It is obvious that the convert to Islam (*muallaf*) is committed to his religion such as my father” (video 8). Even though many more comments are neutral by focusing on jokes and how the hosts set the program to discover “the uncovered stories of converts,” especially for those who convert to religions other than Islam, in this consumption process, the audiences do not respond supporting the bias in humor. Even some of them commented to correct the bias and support the program since it provides the “unheard voices” of the religious minority. In this respect, with its risky feature, it is considered that the talk show shows the paradoxical functions of humor as a unifier and divider through its power to delineate social boundaries ([Bitterly, 2022](#); [Meyer, 2000](#)).

Stage 4: Identifying possible ways to deal with the obstacles

Since the program promotes the right of religious conversion as a personal choice through its slogan, the program, and the hosts are engaged in the dialog of intercultural encounters. The dialog involves interaction between persons with different cultures and the exchange of cultural identities and ideas ([Guttormsen, 2018, p. 3](#)), in which religion is included. In addition, the chance given to both parties of converts to Islam and other religions marks the excellent beginning of citizen media to sound to minority voices. However, as a

beginning, biased humor still often happens. Perhaps it is the mechanism to respond to some stories and make them funny by involving majority power in their “contradictory” or “paradoxical” discourse since some humor need to violate particular subjective moral principle (Veatch, 1998, pp. 163–164).

Somehow, the jokes that insult the personal right of religious conversion through correcting conversion from Islam to other religions and labeling it as the wrong decision is categorized as aggressive humor, which can be earnestly perceived by some parties, notably the minority itself, as a threat to them. In this regard, affiliative humor is the alternative way for the hosts to deliver their program positively and acceptably of humor. Affiliative humor can be understood as humor that reduces interactants’ tension and conflict, garners social support, and provides a perspective on life problems (Miczo & Welter, 2006, p. 63). The hosts can express this kind of humor by enhancing social cohesion instead of showing their superiority as the majority through bias in humor. In addition, the hosts can also deliver social criticism to religious adherents through humor to break stigmas. It is also better for the hosts to understand religious freedom comprehensively to respect everyone’s choice to convert, even through humor. Thus, through this alternative kind of humor, the program can run as it should, and the hosts do not do something contradictory to their slogan of religious freedom.

CONCLUSION

Violations of religious freedom are opponents to democratic values and individual rights. Everyone must be respected for his/her decision of religion and respect another’s religion. Humorous talk show on religious conversion on YouTube gives us a new perspective on how one religiously converts more acceptably. Providing a stage for both converts to Islam and from Islam and holding the principle to respect everyone’s spiritual journey, the “Pindah Arah” playlist of the Comedy Sunday YouTube Channel attempts to provide a spiritual story of conversion.

However, the hosts’ jokes still contain bias against the minority, namely those who converted from Islam, through word choices and analogy as well as their program concepts. The hosts enact as agents of their religion instead of being more neutral. This paper argues that the playlist “Pindah Arah” of the Comedy Sunday YouTube channel implicitly violates personal freedom of

religious conversion through aggressive humor and shows a contradiction between their slogan and jokes.

To some extent, this paper still contains limitations in which since it focuses on the bias in spoken jokes and discourse, it does not entirely explore the mechanism of jokes from the broader perspective of humor. Thus, further research on the way the humor of this playlist unifies many parties and blurs socio-religious boundaries is necessary and can be explored more.

REFERENCES

- Agustina, & Adek, M. (2020). That Unjust God: Critical Discourse Analysis on the Violations of Religious Freedom. In *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Language, Literature, and Education (ICLLE)* (pp. 23–28). Padang: Universitas Negeri Padang. Retrieved 3 April 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201109.004>
- Ahyar, M. (2017). Islamic Clicktivism: Internet, Democracy and Contemporary Islamist Activism in Surakarta. *Studia Islamika*, 24(3), 435–468. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v24i3.4859>
- Andalas, E. F., & Prihatini, A. (2018). Representasi perempuan dalam tulisan dan gambar bak belakang truk: Analisis wacana kritis multimodal terhadap bahasa seksis. *Satwika: Kajian Budaya Dan Perubahan Sosial*, 2(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.22219/satwika.v2i1.7018>
- Arifianto, A. R. (2009). Explaining the cause of Muslim-Christian conflicts in Indonesia: Tracing the origins of Kristenisasi and Islamisasi. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 20(1), 73–89. Retrieved 6 January 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410802542144>
- BBC News Indonesia. (2016). Inilah kasus-kasus penistaan agama di Indonesia, ‘subjektif’ dan ‘ada tekanan massa’. Retrieved 6 January 2023, from <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/trensosial-38001552>
- Bitterly, T. B. (2022). Humor and power. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 43, 125–128. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2021.06.017>
- Budiawan, B. (2020). New Media and Religious Conversion Out of Islam Among Celebrities in Indonesia. *IKAT: The Indonesian Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 3(2), 189. Retrieved from

- <https://doi.org/10.22146/ikat.v3i2.51048>
- Cambridge Dictionary. (2023). Deviate. Retrieved 3 April 2023, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/deviate>
- Dunbar, N. E., Banas, J. A., Rodriguez, D., Liu, S.-J., & Abra, G. (2012). Humor used in power-differentiated interactions. *Humor*, 25(4). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1515/humor-2012-0025>
- Eriyanto. (2001). *Analisis Wacana: Pengantar Analisis Teks Media*. Yogyakarta: LKiS.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. New York: Longman Inc.
- Fairclough, N. (2010). *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Feener, R. M. (2017). Religious competition and conflict over the longue durée: Christianity and Islam in the Indonesian Archipelago. *Asian Journal of Religion and Society*, 5(1), 1–22. <https://www.dbpia.co.kr/Journal/articleDetail?nodeId=NODE07099955>
- Ferguson, M. A., & Ford, T. E. (2008). Disparagement humor: A theoretical and empirical review of psychoanalytic, superiority, and social identity theories. *Humor*, 21(3), 283–312. Retrieved 11 January 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.1515/HUMOR.2008.014/HTML>
- Gentner, D., & Holyoak, K. J. (1997). Reasoning and learning by analogy: Introduction. *American Psychologist*, 52(1), 32–34. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.52.1.32>
- Gordon, M. (2014). Friendship, Intimacy and Humor. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 46(2), 162–174. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2012.721732>
- Guttormsen, D. S. A. (2018). Advancing Otherness and Othering of the Cultural Other during “Intercultural Encounters” in Cross-Cultural Management Research. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 48(3), 314–332. Retrieved from
- <https://doi.org/10.1080/00208825.2018.1480874>
- Haryatmoko. (2019). *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis): Landasan Teori, Metodologi dan Penerapan* (3rd ed.). Depok: Rajawali Press.
- Herlianto, A. (2019). Dari Kolektor Besi Tua Hingga Sosok Religius: Stereotip Orang Madura Melalui Humor. *Deskripsi Bahasa*, 2(2), 155–164. Retrieved 6 January 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.22146/db.v2i2.355>
- Human Right Watch. (2017). Indonesia: RUU ‘Pelindungan Umat Beragama’ Akan Membahayakan Kalangan Minoritas | Human Rights Watch. Retrieved 6 January 2023, from <https://www.hrw.org/id/news/2017/07/20/306743>
- Ibn Manzūr. (n.d.). *Lisān al-‘Arab*.
- KontraS (Komisi untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan). (2021). *Meninjau Pemulihan Negara atas Pelanggaran Kebebasan Beragama, Beribadah, & Berkeyakinan*. Retrieved 6 January 2023 from Jakarta: https://kontras.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/KontraS_Meninjau_Pemulihan_Negara_atas_Pelanggaran_Kebebasan_Beragama.pdf
- Laturhary. (2020). Kriminalisasi Berbau Penistaan Agama Marak, Komnas HAM Tawarkan Solusi - Komnas HAM. Retrieved 6 January 2023, from <https://www.komnasham.go.id/index.php/news/2020/8/27/1537/kriminalisasi-berbau-penistaan-agama-marak-komnas-ham-tawarkan-solusi.html>
- Lim, M. (2017). Freedom to hate: social media, algorithmic enclaves, and the rise of tribal nationalism in Indonesia. *Critical Asian Studies*, 49(3), 411–427. Retrieved 6 January 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.2017.1341188>
- Meyer, J. C. (2000). Humor as a Double-Edged Sword: Four Functions of Humor in Communication. *Communication Theory*, 10(3), 310–331. Retrieved 2 April 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1468-2885.2000.TB00194.X>
- Miczo, N., & Welter, R. E. (2006). Aggressive and Affiliative Humor: Relationships to Aspects of

- Intercultural Communication. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 35(1), 61–77. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/17475740600739305>
- Muhshi, A. (2015). *Teologi Konstitusi: Hukum Hak Asasi Manusia atas Kebebasan Beragama*. Yogyakarta: LKiS Pelangi Aksara.
- Muwahidah. (2020). National (In)security and Identity Boundaries: The Rise of Muslim Conservative Propaganda in Indonesia. *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies*, 5(1), 1. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2979/jims.5.1.01>
- Nugroho, Y., & Syarief, S. S. (2012). *Beyond Click-Activism: New Media and Political Processes in Contemporary Indonesia* (Vol. FES Media Asia). Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Retrieved 6 January 2023 from https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/33805670/FULL_TEXT.PDF
- Prakoso, B. (2021). *Analisis Wacana Pemberitaan Pindah Agama Selebritas di Media Online* (Master Thesis). Universitas Diponegoro, Semarang.
- Putri, L., & Hasfi, N. (2021). Analisis Framing Pemberitaan Salmafina Sunan di Detik. com. *Interaksi Online*, 9(3), 68–74. Retrieved 2 April 2023 from <https://ejournal3.undip.ac.id/index.php/interaksi-online/article/view/31306>
- Rodriguez, C. (2000). Civil Society and Citizen's Media: Peace Architects for the New Millenium. In K. G. Wilkins (Ed.), *Redeveloping Communication for Social Change: Theory, Practice, and Power* (pp. 147–160). New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Sakina, C. D., & Purba, E. R. (2022). Mitos dan paradoks diskursus perempuan dalam film horor Kuime (Over Your Dead Body). *Satwika: Kajian Ilmu Budaya*, 6(2), 367–384. Retrieved 16 January 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.22219/satwika.v6i2.22952>
- Tampubolon, M., & Aziz, N. A. (2021). Violating Christian Minority Freedom of Religion in Indonesia. *The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society*, 11(1), 235–253. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.18848/2154-8633/CGP/v11i01/235-253>
- Veatch, T. C. (1998). A theory of humor. *Humr*, 11(2), 161–216. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1515/humr.1998.11.2.161>
- Zainuddin, M. (2019). Islam-Christian relations in Indonesia. *Pertanika: Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, 2099–2107. Retrieved 16 November 2022 from http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/regular_issues.php?type=3