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An Analysis of Satires in Green Book Movie by Peter Farrely
(*Analisa Satir dalam Film Green Book oleh Peter Farrelly*)

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Abstract

Satire is a form of literary device that mock the foolishness of individual, group or even a society Its goal is to highlight flaws or foolishness in the hope that it will encourage improvement. This study aims to analyzes the use of satire in Peter Farrelly's film Green Book, focusing on the types of satire employed and their communicative functions. Utilizing M.H. Abrams' classification of satire (Horatian, Juvenalian, Menippean), the research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to examine dialogues from the movie script. The analysis centers on the interactions between the main characters, to identify how satirical elements address themes of racism, social inequality, and cultural disparity. The findings reveal nineteen instances of satire: eight Horatian, characterized by humor and irony to critique societal norms gently; ten Juvenalian, employing direct and harsh criticism to confront racial injustices; and two Menippean, highlighting situational irony and mental attitudes. Tony Lip predominantly uses Juvenalian satire to challenge systemic racism, while Dr. Shirley employs Horatian satire to navigate cultural tensions subtly. Menippean satire, though less frequent, underscores contradictions in societal perceptions. This research contributes to linguistic studies by expanding the understanding of satire's role in cinematic discourse, particularly in addressing complex social issues. It highlights the efficacy of satire as a tool for social critique, offering insights into how different satirical styles reflect characters' backgrounds and societal dynamics. The study provides a foundation for future interdisciplinary research on satire in media, emphasizing its relevance in contemporary cultural and political contexts.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penggunaan satir dalam film Green Book karya Peter Farrelly, dengan fokus pada jenis-jenis satir yang digunakan dan fungsi komunikatifnya. Dengan menggunakan klasifikasi satir dari M.H. Abrams (Horatian, Juvenalian, Menippean), penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif untuk mengkaji dialog-dialog dari naskah film. Analisis difokuskan pada interaksi antara tokoh utama, untuk mengidentifikasi bagaimana unsur-unsur satir digunakan untuk membahas tema rasisme, ketimpangan sosial, dan perbedaan budaya. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan terdapat sembilan belas penggunaan satir: delapan satir Horatian yang ditandai dengan humor dan ironi untuk mengkritik norma sosial secara halus; sepuluh satir Juvenalian yang menggunakan kritik langsung dan tajam untuk menghadapi ketidakadilan rasial; dan dua satir Menippean yang menyoroti ironi situasional dan sikap mental. Tony Lip lebih banyak menggunakan satir Juvenalian untuk menentang rasisme sistemik, sedangkan Dr. Shirley menggunakan satir Horatian untuk menangani ketegangan budaya secara halus. Satir Menippean, meskipun jarang, menyoroti kontradiksi dalam persepsi masyarakat. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dalam kajian linguistik dengan memperluas pemahaman tentang peran satir dalam wacana

sinematik, khususnya dalam membahas isu-isu sosial yang kompleks. Studi ini menyoroti efektivitas satir sebagai alat kritik sosial, serta memberikan wawasan tentang bagaimana gaya satir yang berbeda mencerminkan latar belakang karakter dan dinamika masyarakat. Penelitian ini juga menjadi landasan bagi riset interdisipliner selanjutnya mengenai satir dalam media, dengan menekankan relevansinya dalam konteks budaya dan politik kontemporer.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a foundational tool for human communication, enabling the exchange of ideas, emotions, and cultural values (Boyd & Markowitz, 2024). It exists in both written and spoken forms—from literature and media to songs and conversations—serving as a bridge for connection, collaboration, and societal development. Historically, language has driven human progress, from ancient legal systems to modern technological innovations, by preserving knowledge and fostering collective problem-solving (Salfin et al., 2024).

Pragmatics, the study of meaning in context, examines how language conveys layered messages (Eragamreddy, 2024). Kreidler (1998) identifies connotation (e.g., symbolic meanings like a “rose” for love) and lexical ambiguity (e.g., “bank” referring either to a river's edge or a financial institution) as key elements. Writers and media creators often employ figurative language—such as metaphors, irony, and satire—to embed deeper meanings, engaging audiences through creativity and critical reflection (Laia, 2022).

Figurative language enhances expression by deviating from literal meanings. Dancygier and Sweetser (2014) emphasizes its crucial role in literature and art, enabling vivid imagery and emotional resonance through devices like metaphor and personification. Among these, satire stands out as a potent form of figurative language, critiquing societal flaws using humor, irony, and exaggeration (Angelika, 2024). As Gottlieb (2019) notes, satire aims to provoke critical thought by mocking power structures and exposing cultural contradictions, making it an effective tool for social commentary.

The film "Green Book" exemplifies satire's power in addressing racial and social injustices. Set in 1960s America, it contrasts the comedic styles of its protagonists: Tony Lip, a working-class Italian-American with blunt, streetwise humor, and Dr. Don Shirley, a refined African-American pianist whose wit reflects both intellectual depth and societal struggle. Their interactions highlight racial divides and cultural disparities, using satire to critique systemic inequities.

By weaving satire into dialogue and character dynamics, "Green Book" critiques both historical and contemporary social issues. Tony’s humor breaks down racial barriers, while Dr. Shirley’s irony exposes the absurdities of prejudice. The film’s narrative invites viewers to reflect on personal biases and societal structures, positioning it as a lens for analyzing real-world injustices.

Previous research on satire has primarily focused on its literary and historical dimensions. For example, Simpson (2003) explores how satire functions through stylistic features in written texts, while Griffin (1994) studies the evolution of satire in classical and Enlightenment literature. Meanwhile, studies like those by Holbert et al. (2011) have examined satire in political television shows such as *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*, highlighting satire's role in shaping public opinion and fostering political criticism. However, despite extensive research on satire in literature and television, relatively few studies have analyzed satire within cinematic dialogues from a pragmatic-linguistic perspective, especially in the context of films like *Green Book* that combine humor and social critique.

Thus, the research gap lies in the limited exploration of how satire operates linguistically within film dialogues to convey social commentary. In particular, there is a lack of studies addressing the types and pragmatic functions of satire in movies, especially within the academic context of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, where satire has traditionally been examined through literary, rather than communicative or linguistic, frameworks.

This study seeks to fill that gap by focusing on the types and functions of satire used in the film *Green Book*. Through a pragmatic and linguistic analysis, this research contributes to interdisciplinary

scholarship, expanding satire as a field of linguistic inquiry. Ultimately, the film's exploration of power dynamics and human resilience underscores satire's relevance in modern discourse. As societal divisions persist, understanding how media like *Green Book* utilize linguistic tools to challenge norms fosters critical engagement, making this study both timely and transformative for academic and public audiences alike.

2. METHOD OF RESEARCH

This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. According to Nguyen et al. (2022) descriptive qualitative research aims to describe an existing phenomenon. The objective of this research is to analyze the use of satires in the "Green Book" movie. The researcher aims to identify the types of satire used in the movie and understand their impact on the audience. The study focuses on analyzing the movie script to identify various satirical elements and their functions.

2.1 Data Source

The primary data source for this research comprises the dialogues among the characters in the "Green Book" movie. The data, consisting of utterances, are obtained from the movie transcript and are characterized by the presence of satirical elements. These utterances include words, phrases, and sentences that exhibit figurative language. The movie script was accessed from the internet, providing a comprehensive basis for analysis.

2.2 Data Collection

The process of data collection involved several systematic steps to ensure a thorough understanding and accurate capture of satirical elements in the "Green Book" movie:

1) Repeated Viewing: The researcher watched the movie multiple times to gain a comprehensive understanding of the storyline and to develop deeper insights into the satirical elements.
2) Script Analysis: While watching the movie, the researcher concurrently read and made corrections to the movie script to ensure accuracy.
3) Scene Examination: Specific scenes where satire was evident were analyzed, noting the dialogue, actions, and visual elements that conveyed satirical commentary.
4) Detailed Note-Taking: During each viewing session, detailed notes were taken focusing on characters, themes, and instances of satire.
5) Satirical Techniques: Identification Key satirical techniques such as irony, exaggeration, and parody were identified and categorized.
6) Data Organization: A spreadsheet or table was created to organize the collected data, allowing for easy reference and analysis.
7) Dialogue Transcription: Relevant dialogues and scenes that showcased satire were transcribed to ensure accuracy in capturing the intended message.
8) Context Recording: Additional context for each satirical moment and its significance within the overall narrative was recorded to provide depth to the analysis.
9) Literature Cross-Referencing: The collected data was cross-referenced with existing literature on satire to deepen the understanding of the genre and its forms.
10) Review and Validation: The data collection process concluded with a thorough review and validation of the gathered information to ensure its reliability and relevance to the research objectives.

2.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis involves transforming data into meaningful information that is comprehensible and valuable for the research purposes. The following steps were undertaken for data analysis:

1) Selection: Utterances indicating satire were chosen for analysis.
2) Categorization: The data was classified based on different types of satire.
3) Data Reduction: The data was refined and condensed by focusing on key themes, simplifying lengthy responses, and organizing the data into categories or themes. Miles and Huberman (1994) emphasize that data reduction is essential for managing and analyzing qualitative data efficiently. This step ensures the data is manageable and relevant for further analysis.
4) Analysis: The refined and categorized data were analyzed using Gottlieb's theory, along with support from other experts' theories related to the cooperative principle. This involved interpreting the data to uncover insights and draw conclusions about the use of satire in the movie "Green Book." The use of Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework for data reduction was particularly relevant for identifying and classifying the types of satire, as it helped in distilling vast amounts of data into concise and meaningful information that could be systematically analyzed.

Overall, the "Green Book" movie leverages satire not only as a tool for humor but also as a powerful medium for social and political commentary. The study underscores the importance of satire in contemporary

cinema as a reflective mirror that encourages audiences to contemplate and critically engage with complex societal issues. The research contributes to the understanding of satirical techniques in film, providing a foundation for further studies in the intersection of linguistics, literature, and social critique.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The chapter presents a deep and clear discussion of the findings of this study. The researcher will discuss the finding correlated with the answer to the research question. The research question relies on the types of satires that occur in Green Book movie. In order to answer the question, the researcher uses the theory of satire (Abrams, 2012, p.168-169).

3.1 Horatian satires

Horatian satire is a type of satire that uses mild or gentle language. It employs humor and comedy to convey its message and does not directly criticize or target any particular individual or group. It uses wit, irony, and understatement to expose and criticize foolishness, hypocrisy, and absurdities in a way that is entertaining and thought-provoking (Abrams, 2012, p.168). Even though Horatian satire uses mild language and comedy to deliver its message, it still requires critical thinking to fully understand.

The researcher discovered a total of seven utterances identified as cases of Horatian satire. Each character who uses this type of satire tends to provide critique or opinion, with Horatian satire aiming primarily to entertain and make the audience laugh, yet the expressions still carry meaning that criticizes and emphasizes irony regarding someone's actions, behavior, or circumstances.

This type of satire expects participants to satirize actions or behaviors they observe in others. However, in conveying their opinions, users of Horatian satire often employ words or phrases that are more subtle, aiming to prevent the other person from feeling offended. They provide statements that highlight the issues they face. Some characters in this movie have used Horatian satire to expose foolishness and critique actions by delivering simple sentences that point out problems while attempting to use humor to soften the situation.

Upon closer examination, it becomes apparent that characters such as Lip and Dr. Shirley employ Horatian satire for various purposes. Their use of Horatian satire often stems from a desire to sidestep discussions on topics they consider trivial or prefer not to delve into. This comedic tactic is particularly relevant to the central theme of the movie, which revolves around interactions between individuals of different racial backgrounds, notably with a black man assuming a position of authority among those of lighter skin tones. The disparity in their communication styles and language choices serves as a catalyst for the deployment of Horatian satire.

In various situations throughout the movie, Horatian satire emerges as a coping mechanism for characters when addressing sensitive or uncomfortable topics related to race, class, and societal norms. For example, when faced with overt racism or discriminatory practices, characters may resort to using humor and satire as a means of deflecting tension or highlighting absurdities in prevailing attitudes. Additionally, Horatian satire often appears in scenes where characters navigate cultural misunderstandings or clash over differing perspectives on tradition and propriety.

Horatian satire also serves as a means to soften the impact of sensitive or provocative situations, offering a lighthearted approach to addressing contentious issues. For example, in *datum one*, in a scene where Dolores' father employs satire to mock Lip for renovating his kitchen while being unemployed, Horatian satire is evident in his jesting tone and playful demeanor. By using humor to highlight Lip's perceived contradictions, the satire not only diffuses the tension in the moment but also provides insight into the characters' differing perspectives on work, responsibility, and social status.

Among the characters, Dr. Shirley is portrayed as the primary user of Horatian satire, employing wit and humor to navigate the complexities of racial dynamics and social expectations. His use of satire serves as a tool for self-expression and a means of challenging societal norms. On the other hand, Lip and Nicola also utilize Horatian satire, albeit to a lesser extent, employing humor as a way to lighten tense situations or express dissent without directly confronting contentious issues. Overall, the prevalence of Horatian satire underscores the movie's exploration of race, identity, and social hierarchy, highlighting the power of humor in addressing sensitive topics and fostering dialogue.

These characters employ Horatian satire when conversations touch upon roles or actions they deem unnecessary. Instead of directly addressing the issues, they prefer providing more information related to the action in question, subtly exposing what they perceive as foolishness in others. Furthermore, they go beyond simply meeting the speaker's informational needs by incorporating hidden messages into their satire, intending for the listener to discern and grasp the underlying meaning.

Most sentences of this type typically point out the irony of unnecessary actions by an individual. Additionally, some characters opt for Horatian satire by offering supplementary information for particular reasons. For instance, in response to Dr. Shirley's excessive and absurd requests, Lip humorously replies,

"Good luck, doc." This aligns with the theory of Horatian satire by Abrams (2012, p.168), which states that Horatian satire primarily aims to entertain and elicit laughter from the audience, while still bearing meaning that critiques and underscores irony in someone's actions, behavior, or circumstances.

In *datum four*, Dr. Shirley attempts to express his opinion about Lip's informal and profanity-laden way of speaking, while still choosing his words carefully to avoid hurting Lip's feelings. In doing so, he highlights Lip's shortcomings in formal communication. This approach aligns with Hodgart's theory (2017, p.7), as Shirley implicitly highlights Lip's limited formal communication ability.

Horatian satire is a type of satire that employs mild or gentle language. It uses humor and comedy to convey its message without directly criticizing or targeting any specific individual or group.

Using a form of communication that diverges from expected norms might lead to misinterpretation and adversely affect how listeners understand the conveyed meaning. It is crucial to align information with the listeners' needs to ensure smooth and comprehensible conversations, minimizing the risk of misunderstandings. The use of Horatian satire becomes problematic when the implied meaning is not understood by the hearer, as it can lead to confusion and hinder effective communication. Therefore, adhering to Horatian satire principles, which emphasize gentle and considerate language, contributes to successful and meaningful exchanges without causing unnecessary disruptions in conversation.

Out of the eight data points, one example involves the characters offering excessive information and using implication to mitigate the situation. In the remaining seven data points, the characters provide information with the intention of mocking the actions of their listeners. Two data points indicate cases where the use of Horatian satire by the speaker aims to deflect the topic to soften the situation but ultimately leads to misunderstandings. Additionally, one data point highlights a scenario where both the speaker and the listener engage in Horatian satire, as the listener successfully grasps the hidden message conveyed.

3.2 Juvenalian Satires

Juvenalian satire, in contrast to Horatian satire, is named after the Roman poet Juvenal. This type of satire is biting, harsh, and angry. Juvenalian satire uses strong language and directly targets individuals or institutions (Abrams, 2012, p. 169). The researcher identified a total of ten utterances as examples of Juvenalian satire. Characters employing this type of satire typically deliver information with a harsh tone, frequently highlighting what they perceive as incorrect or inappropriate based on facts. Juvenalian satire explicitly depicts the targets as evil or wicked. In the film, characters—especially Tony Lip—use Juvenalian satire to expose the evil and wickedness of racist attitudes and practices. This type of satire provokes a strong emotional response from the audience, emphasizing the severity of the societal issues depicted in the film. The biting critique and condemnation embedded in the satire serve to underscore the gravity of the characters' experiences and the broader implications of systemic racism.

Juvenalian satire in the movie *Green Book* manifests in various situations and interactions, reflecting the characters' responses to themes of racism, inequality, and prejudice. Throughout the film, characters like Lip and Dr. Shirley employ Juvenalian satire as a means of confronting the injustices they encounter. Whether it is Lip's blunt and confrontational demeanor or Dr. Shirley's subtle yet incisive commentary, Juvenalian satire is consistently present. Lip, in particular, emerges as the character most adept at employing Juvenalian satire, characterized by his direct and confrontational manner in addressing societal injustices, particularly those related to race and ethnicity. On the other hand, Dr. Shirley is often the primary recipient of Juvenalian satire, facing subtle yet incisive commentary and overt expressions of outrage from characters like Lip. Each character utilizes satire to critique societal norms and challenge prevailing attitudes toward race and ethnicity.

In the movie *Green Book*, Juvenalian satire is evident in various scenes, particularly in the characters' sharp critiques of societal injustices and racism. The film delves into the harsh realities of racial discrimination and the struggles faced by Dr. Don Shirley, an African American pianist, during a concert tour in the 1960s American South. One notable example occurs in a scene where Dr. Shirley is referred to as a "tool for washing dishes" in a bar, highlighting the dehumanizing language and discriminatory treatment he faces because of his skin color. This example aligns with the theory of Juvenalian satire (Abrams, 2012, p. 169).

Additionally, confrontations with law enforcement officers, who engage in racial profiling and unjust treatment, serve as stark reminders of the systemic racism ingrained in the criminal justice system. Moreover, the film portrays scenes of Dr. Shirley being denied service or relegated to inferior accommodations in restaurants due to segregation policies, exposing the absurdity and injustice of such discriminatory practices. This situation aligns with Hodgart's theory (2017, p. 7), as it shows the irony of the circumstances. Furthermore, Dr. Shirley's interactions with hosts and guests at events—where he faces condescension and hostility—highlight the hypocrisy and ignorance underlying racial prejudices.

The recurring use of racial slurs and derogatory remarks serves as a stark reminder of the deep-rooted prejudices that persist within society, highlighting the urgent need for social change and racial

equality. However, while Juvenalian satire allows characters to voice their frustrations and expose the absurdities of racism, it also reveals the limitations of satire in addressing systemic issues. Despite their efforts to confront racism through satire, the characters ultimately grapple with the harsh realities of discrimination and inequality, underscoring the complexities of racial dynamics in America.

Characters also use Juvenalian satire through sarcasm, irony, and understatement in their utterances. For example, a Black man in a motel invites Dr. Shirley to join their game while mockingly calling him "fancy pants" and "too high and mighty," using irony and sarcasm—seemingly complimenting Dr. Shirley's outfit but actually implying a negative judgment. Additionally, Italian characters in the movie frequently employ Juvenalian satire, but often avoid direct confrontation by expressing it in the Italian language. This use of irony is in line with Abrams' theory (2012, p. 160), which states that irony occurs when speakers say something positive with an underlying negative meaning.

3.3 Menippean Satires

Menippean satire, unlike Horatian satire, takes a more complex and indirect approach to critique, blending humor and philosophy. It doesn't rely on harsh criticism but rather weaves together various perspectives and ideas to satirize societal issues (Abrams, 2012, p.169). In "Green Book," certain data exhibit characteristics of Menippean satire, where characters navigate through nuanced situations related to racism and discrimination.

The researcher discovered a total of two utterances that were identified as the cases of Menippean satires. This type is the least satire said by the character in movie the character who use this type of satire tend to emphasize irony in situation rather than directly criticizing someone action. The point is that the speaker that use Menippean satires appear to be obscure. It is quite the opposite to the theory of Horatian and Juvenalian satires where satire is said directly to the listener

Menippean satire often utilize in "Green Book" in situations where characters encounter irony or contradiction in their interactions or circumstances. For example, scenes involving Dr. Shirley and Lip often present opportunities for Menippean satire when their roles and expectations are reversed or challenged, leading to ironic outcomes. Additionally, topics related to racial discrimination, social hierarchy, and cultural misunderstandings provide fertile ground for the emergence of Menippean satire, as these themes inherently contain elements of contradiction and absurdity within them. Furthermore, moments of tension or conflict, particularly those arising from misunderstandings or miscommunications between characters, may also give rise to Menippean satire as a means of highlighting the absurdity of the situation. Overall, Menippean satire in "Green Book" tends to emerge in situations where the characters' mental attitudes or perceptions are challenged or subverted, leading to ironic or contradictory outcomes that underscore broader themes of societal critique and cultural commentary.

The researcher identified two data of Menippean satire in the film. This type of satire is the least utilized by the characters and tends to emphasize irony in situations rather than directly criticizing someone's actions. It aligns with Holman's theory that Menippean satire deals with mental attitudes rather than fully realized characters. Unlike Horatian and Juvenalian satires, which are delivered directly to the listener, Menippean satire appears more obscure. In "Green Book," Dr. Shirley and Morgan are the characters who employ Menippean satire. For example, Dr. Shirley exhibits this type of satire when he calmly confronts Lip about stealing a jade stone, highlighting the irony of Lip's role as Dr. Shirley's protector (Hodgart, 2017, p.7). Another example occurs when Dr. Shirley encounters racism in a seemingly friendly manner from Morgan, who restricts him to using an outdoor toilet despite being the main guest. This reflects the theme of racial discrimination and social hierarchy, demonstrating the subtle ways in which satire can critique societal norms and attitudes.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS/ RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Conclusion

This research aimed to explore and analyze the use of satire in *Green Book* directed by Peter Farrelly, employing a qualitative descriptive approach based on Abrams' theory of satire (2012, p. 168–169). The study investigated the various types of satire—Horatian, Juvenalian, and Menippean—embedded in the film's narrative and examined their impact on the audience. The findings revealed that Horatian satire, characterized by its light-hearted and humorous tone, was effectively utilized by characters such as Dr. Shirley, Lip, and Nicola to critique societal norms while engaging the audience in a more accessible manner. In contrast, Juvenalian satire emerged as the most dominant form, with characters like Lip using blunt and confrontational humor to expose systemic racism and societal injustices, provoking a strong emotional response from viewers. Although Menippean satire appeared less frequently, it played a crucial role in highlighting contradictions and absurdities within characters' attitudes and societal perceptions, fostering deeper critical reflection. Overall, *Green Book* demonstrates how satire functions not only as a means of entertainment but also as a powerful tool for social and political commentary. This study underscores the

significance of satire in contemporary cinema as a reflective medium that challenges audiences to critically engage with complex societal issues, thereby contributing to broader discussions at the intersection of linguistics, literature, and social critique.

4.2 Suggestions/Recommendation

The researcher aims for this study to enhance readers' knowledge about satire, providing valuable insights into its types and applications. By understanding satire, readers can learn how to construct effective critiques and express opinions thoughtfully. This research also serves as a valuable resource for English learners, helping them grasp the nuances of figurative language in Pragmatics. Recognizing the hidden meanings in everyday utterances can improve their interpretative skills and communication. For English teachers, this study offers reference material on Pragmatics, particularly figurative language, which can be integrated into their teaching to better inform students about satire. By incorporating this knowledge, students can learn to communicate more effectively, avoiding misunderstandings and fostering cooperative interaction. Furthermore, this research highlights the importance of satire as a topic worthy of further exploration. Numerous movies and novels depict this phenomenon, presenting ample opportunities for future analysis. This study can serve as a foundational reference for subsequent research, expanding students' ability to identify, analyze, and classify satire.

Additionally, the researcher encourages further studies to add novelty to the existing body of knowledge by exploring new dimensions of satire in various contexts. Since this research focuses primarily on the utterances of characters in the Green Book movie, future research could explore other aspects that contain satire, such as gestures, facial expressions, and visual elements. This research can serve as a basis for interdisciplinary studies, bridging gaps between literature, linguistics, sociology, and cultural studies. By fostering interdisciplinary research, scholars can uncover deeper insights into the role of satire in societal critique and communication. Overall, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of satire. While acknowledging its limitations, the researcher hopes it will be a valuable resource for future studies, contributing to the academic discussion and application of satire in various contexts. This study not only adds to the scientific development of satire as a field of study but also serves as a catalyst for encouraging more research, ultimately enriching the academic landscape.

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