



Political Gimmicks on Social Media in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election

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Abstract

Political gimmicks have become a trendy yet controversial term in the 2024 presidential election contest. Instead of conveying the vision and mission of presidential candidates, political gimmicks only present and show skin packaging rather than substance. This research aims to reveal the practices of political gimmicks on social media in the 2024 Indonesian presidential election contestation using critical discourse analysis as a method. This method is used to reveal ideology and power relations from gimmicks that appear on social media. Data collection in this study used documentation techniques, in the form of data collection from social media X during the period December 2023 - February 2024. The study's findings demonstrate that the Republic of Indonesia's 2024 presidential and vice-presidential candidates' political communication efforts on social media X are mired in creating symbols disconnected from meaningful and substantial ideas. Drawing on Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory, this study frames political gimmicks as "front stage" performances designed to manipulate voter perceptions, obscuring substantive political agendas. Political communication for presidential candidates has shifted from addressing social issues and strengthening democracy to becoming manipulative tactics aimed at winning votes.

Keywords: political gimmick, political communication, social media, 2024 presidential election

Paper type: Research paper

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INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian presidential election of 2024 will provide a platform for democratic contestants who are competing for the public's hearts. Political communication techniques are used by the presidential candidates, their campaign staffs, and their supporters across a variety of internet and social media platforms to communicate their goals, missions, and programs. Various forms of political communication are used to influence public opinion such as political campaigns, political propaganda, and political advertising (Aminulloh and Fianto 2016). However, instead of using existing forms of political communication, presidential candidates also use political gimmicks as a communication strategy to attract people's votes.

Political gimmicks have become a trendy and controversial term in the 2024 presidential election contest. The concept of political gimmicks aligns with Goffman's (1959) notion of impression management, where politicians curate mediated personas to control public narratives. Political gimmicks promote and show off only the exterior instead of substance, not reflecting the vision and mission of presidential candidates. For instance, the words "Gemoy" (cute) and "Just dance" have evolved into political slights that the public is constantly exposed to, akin to commercials, therefore drowning out the core of the presidential candidate's vision and objective. In fact, the aim of this five-yearly democratic party is to elect the best presidential candidate based on their vision, mission and work program. However, this is the reality of Indonesian democracy today, people prefer trivial and light expressions, rather than the vision of a presidential candidate which is considered heavy and confusing.

The study of political gimmicks as a form of political communication in general elections in Indonesia has not been widely studied by academics. So far, studies on political communication still revolve around political propaganda (Aminulloh et al. 2021), political campaigns (Saraswati 2018), political marketing (Baines and O'Shaughnessy 2014), political rhetoric (Deha 2021), and political advertising (Mustafa, Rohayati, and Alhidayatillah 2024). Therefore, this study is relevant and significant in the context of the 2024 Indonesian presidential election considering the many political tricks carried out by presidential candidates and participated in by their supporters. This research will examine and analyze the

practice of political gimmicks on social media in the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. The analysis will focus on the forms of political gimmicks of presidential candidates and how netizens or social media users respond to the political gimmicks of presidential candidates. It is hoped that the results of this study will contribute both theoretically and pragmatically to understanding political communication and improving the quality of democracy in Indonesia.

Political Gimmick and Propaganda. Gimmick is a term in performing arts which means the art of deceptive body movements. The goal is to convince the audience by creating atmosphere, imagery and deception (Agung 2019). Gimmick, originally said to come from the world of art, is now adopted and practiced in the world of politics, hence the term political gimmick. Political gimmicks extend beyond mere deception; they reflect the construction of mediated personas (Marwick 2013), where candidates commodify their identities into digestible symbols for digital audiences. Political gimmicks are widely used by politicians in contesting general elections including the 2024 presidential election. Politicians are occupied modifying themselves with images to draw votes instead of presenting their vision and mission and work agendas.

Political gimmicks are now colouring the political contestation approaching the presidential election in 2024. Political gimmicks that are extensively shared on social media are said to lower the quality of Indonesian democracy since they overlook the essence of democracy as a way of selecting quality leaders and replace them with meaningless objects. The presidential election is no longer a battle of ideas and vision and mission in the campaign, but a battle of empty words and jargon (Kendra Paramita 2024). An example of the political gimmick of the Anies-Muhaimin pair is "slepet", Prabowo-Gibran is "gemoy", and the Ganjar-Mahfud pair is "sat-set". This jargon in the form of gimmicks is used by presidential candidates to attract first-time voters consisting of the millennial generation and generation Z. Long and complex vocabulary like vision and mission affects none of these two generations. One can argue that political tricks using vocabulary and images on social media lacking substance that corresponds with the facts qualify as propaganda. Propaganda is used to change public perspective on social media (Black 2003).

Political Gimmick in Social Media. Political gimmicks in the presidential election campaign often utilize social media. Almost all socially, economically, and

culturally heterogeneous groups use this platform. This media platform facilitates a wide range of communication activities. We can engage in personal, group, and organizational communication, as well as mass communication to disseminate information. The content can range from personal, public, formal, and informal (Iblasi, Bader, and Al-Qreini 2016). Social media encourages greater collaboration and social interaction for its users (Lim 2017). According to (Yadav, Joshi, and Rahman 2015), social media is a channel or means of online social interaction in cyberspace (the internet). Social media users will communicate, interact, send messages to each other, share, and build networks. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein define social media as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of the web that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content. We predict that this medium will continue to develop in tandem with the rapid growth of communication technology. This medium will not be eroded by time in the future. This implies that users of this media application will not face a decline, provided the application provider continues to update features that cater to their needs.

Social media has many characteristics that other media do not have. First, it allows messages to be delivered not only to one person, but to many people at the same time. Second, there is no gatekeeper like in conventional media who will cross-check the messages to be disseminated. On social media, anyone can freely produce and distribute messages without being bound by rules. Third, the communicant or recipient of the message acts as the party who determines the time of interaction. The communicant will independently determine when the message is ready to be received so that the communicator can measure the extent to which the message was received and understood by the communicant (Gamble and Gamble 2005).

The characteristics of social media expressed by Gamble and Gamble above are that it is the only media free from rules. Through social media, people can freely spread messages in any form and to any audience they want. This is what makes social media so many users. Social media offers many features that are considered to have few rules to freely create and disseminate information regardless of the content contained in the message. Social media is no longer just a medium for interaction and communication, but has become a propaganda medium for

influencing public opinion through digital networks. This is used by several users to persuade the public with the information shared (Ammarie and Nurfebiaraning 2019).

METHODS

This research uses the critical discourse analysis method of Norman Fairclough. Critical discourse analysis focuses on discussing discourse that is connected to power, ideology and the social context in which the discourse is located (Ikhsan 2022). According to Fairclough and Wodak, critical discourse analysis sees discourse as a form of social practice and describes the dialectical relationship between certain discursive events and the situations, institutions and social structures that shape them (Eriyanto 2008). The use of critical discourse analysis methods in this research is considered relevant because the use of this method is considered capable of revealing the motives or meanings behind a context and the power behind text production. Choosing discourse analysis as a research method is not only useful for uncovering the various meanings contained in a text. However, it is also considered capable of revealing various things behind reality which are connected to other realities that are still related, for example social, economic, political, cultural, and so on (Gee 1999).

In this research, the critical discourse analysis method still requires data to study a text and the context in a discourse found in the media (Badara 2012). In this research, data collection was conducted using documentation techniques. The documentation technique involves collecting data from social media X, formerly known as Twitter. Data was taken in the period 28 November 2023 to 10 February 2024 to describe conversations about political gimmicks by the three pairs of 2024 presidential candidates.

This study employs Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA model, augmented with multimodal discourse analysis (Kress and Leeuwen 2001) to examine the interplay of text, images, and socio-political context. Audience comments and engagement metrics (e.g., likes, shares) were analyzed to assess how netizens co-construct meaning. To support the documentation data that has been determined, other data of a secondary nature is needed, namely in the form of other text. These other texts can be in the form of online news, online documents, expert interviews quoted by the media, and other data. This secondary data provides

benefits in interpreting and interpreting the main text in this research. This kind of thing is called intertextuality, namely understanding one text with other texts. Intertextuality is the presence of other elements in the form of text outside the original text that will be given meaning. These other texts can be quotes, references, or content. This intertextuality shows how other voices contained in the text can be quoted, compared and dialogued (Haryatmoko 2019).

In this research, the critical discourse analysis method still requires data to study a text and the context in a discourse found in the media (Badara 2012). This research employed documentation techniques for data collection. The documentation technique involves collecting data from social media X, formerly known as Twitter. We collected data from 28 November 2023 to 10 February 2024, detailing the three pairs' discussions about political gimmicks. We will then analyze the obtained data using Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis technique. Eriyanto stated that there are three stages of analysis in Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis model (Eriyanto 2008). The initial step involves describing the content and conducting a descriptive analysis of the text. The text is explained independently without being connected to other aspects. Secondly, we engage in interpretation, which involves interpreting a text in relation to the current discourse practice. The text is not analyzed descriptively but is interpreted by connecting it to the context of the text production process. The third step is the explanation phase, which aims to provide an explanation for the outcomes of the second stage of interpretation. To explain the presence of a text, Fairclough's model requires connecting text with context. We apply Fairclough's text analysis to scrutinize narratives and political gimmicks on social media during the 2024 presidential election. 2024 presidential candidates.

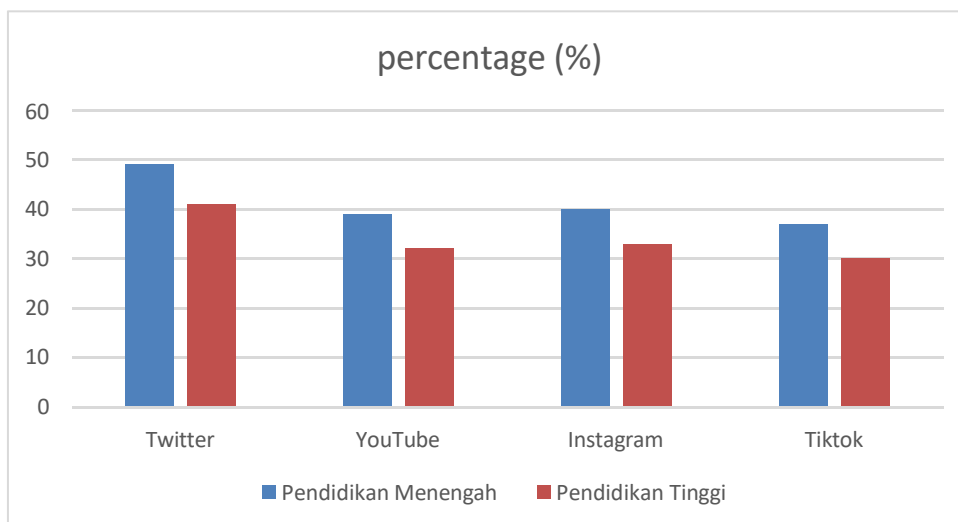
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections will be filled with political communication tools that are different from previous years. Political communication has evolved into a war of digital symbols that attract voters' attention, particularly first-time voters, dominated by the millennial and Z generations. Various social media platforms, particularly social media X, disseminate these political communication symbols. This is not only a form of

freedom of expression, but also part of the current methods used by political communicators, in this case figures or presidential and vice-presidential candidates, to attract voters' attention and gain votes. So far, of all the political communication strategies that have been used by presidential candidates in the previous democratic period, the strategy of memes or political gimmicks used by almost all candidate pairs, especially those used by candidate pair number two, has become a topic of conversation among the public in public spaces, particularly on social media X, the current name of Twitter. Similar to other social media platforms, through X, the public or users can not only consume but also produce content in the form of writing, images, or short videos. People with a higher educational background tend to use X more widely.

Figure 1.

Social Media with the Highest Proportion of Highly Educated People



Source: Reuters Institute (2023)

From Reuters Institute Research data 2023, the majority of highly educated individuals use social media, Twitter (X) with a percentage of 49% of the total platform users, followed by Instagram with a percentage of 40% and YouTube with a percentage of 39%. Social media Political communication in the 2024 election is more unique because it involves many new symbols that no longer represent identity politics but instead occur in the form of gimmick wars that are widely spread on various social media platforms, especially social media X.

Anies-Muhaimin Political Gimmick

The number one presidential and vice-presidential pair, Anies Baswedan and Cak Imin (Muhaimin Iskadar), are well-known for their slepetan sarong political stunt. The "slepet sarong" gimmick frames political agency as a performative act of "awakening" the public, reinforcing a paternalistic power dynamic where elites position themselves as saviors. This depoliticizes structural issues by reducing systemic critiques to symbolic gestures. This emerged after Muhaimin Iskandar, also known as Cak Imin, explained the three functions of a sarong to Anies Baswedan in a video that circulated on various social media platforms. In the third function, Cak Imin explained the role of a sarong as a tool for slepet. From there, the Sarong slip gimmick emerged and became part of the winning campaign for candidate pair number 1, which was also widely disseminated on X's social media platform.

Figure 2.

The Anies-Muhaimin couple's sarong gimmick on X's social media



Source: X (2024)

This textual analysis concentrates on the content of the tweets that were uploaded by the two social media users X mentioned earlier. In the picture on the left, there is a tweet with text from deputy presidential candidate number 1 Muhaimin Iskandar's statement when taking part in the 2024 Election Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidate debate. "A selepet is like a sarong that I carry, among which "students can wake up those who are sleeping, move those who are sluggish, and at the same time remind those who are inattentive," explained Cawapres Gus Muahaimin @cakimiNOW in the tweet that was quoted from Muhaimin Iskandar. "The hashtags #SlepetAjaGus, #SlepetNomic, and #AniesMuhaimin2024 are listed under the article. Below the hashtag, there is a video clip of Muhaimin Iskandar making this statement while taking part in the 2024 Presidential-Vice Presidential Candidate debate. The image on the right shows a photo of Anies Baswedan participating in the 2024 Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidate debate, accompanied by the statement, "Anies possesses a strong nationalist spirit, capable of upholding the integrity and sovereignty of the country." Above the photo, there is a tweet from one user, namely the words "Those who are upset and disappointed today, come here together, amen, so that you can wear a sarong (three laughing emoticons); just be united, amen."

Upon examining these two tweets, it becomes evident that users, generally categorized as supporters of Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidate number 1, appear eager to introduce and advocate for the grand vision of their chosen candidate, symbolized by the term slepet sarong. People use the term slepet sarong as a tool to wake up those who are sleeping, move those who are sluggish, and remind those who are lazy. This term, of course, is intended as an allusion to certain institutions or groups of people who are considered negligent, sluggish, and mostly sleeping in a connotative sense in carrying out the obligations given by the people. Then in the picture on the right, the narrative contained in Anies Baswedan's photo is intended to campaign for the quality of Anies Baswedan, who he considers to be a quality person, a strong nationalist, who with this capital is believed to be able to maintain the integrity and sovereignty of the Indonesian state and nation. Based on this, the dimensions of the text in the two tweets in Figure 2 ultimately represent the presidential-vice presidential candidate pair who have a big vision to reform the instability and injustice caused by state officials themselves, as well as an effort that candidate number one is worthy of being elected. protect this country and nation.

We will study the text production process at the discursive practice level, using the @DPNAminBalad account for the image on the left and the @wxipe account for the tweet on the right. These two accounts often upload tweets on social media uploaded by both accounts. The process can be described by conducting research or gathering data on the responses of netizens or other users to the tweets uploaded in image 2. For the tweet uploaded by the @DPNAminBalad account, there were several other users who wrote comments, one of which was "Amen for change" with a poster that read "Slepet Nomics, Solution to a Prosperous, Comfortable, and Happy Life," "Smooth the Road, Smooth Fortune," and "Drag Budget for Villages, 5 Billion Village Funds." This expression implies that the Anies Bawedan-Muhaimin Iskandar pair is the solution to the problems that have been plaguing the nation. Most of the comments expressed positive affirmation of the couple's candidacy and vision. The majority of the discourse that emerged expressed support for the number one pair to continue moving forward with their "slepet slogan". Meanwhile, the @wxipe account's tweet received no comments from netizens or other users. The upload only got 4 views and 1 like. This demonstrates that not many netizens paid attention to the tweet, even though it was about presidential candidate Muhaimin Iskandar.

The third dimension under study pertains to sociocultural or sociocultural practices. This dimension is grounded in the social context that exists beyond social media X, and it significantly influences the production of texts. The situational, institutional, and social level elements form the foundation of this dimension. Regarding the situational element, the text or tweet in Figure 2 cannot be separated from phenomena that may occur in Indonesia in the period leading up to the 2024 general election. One potential situational aspect could be the formation of an axis or group by the parties to provide full support to a particular pair of candidates. Of course, the issues described above cannot be separated from the targets or objectives to be achieved, which is why this tweet emerged.

Prabowo-Gibran Political Gimmick

The Prabowo-Gibran duo's political strategy is evident in the animated photos that appear to be humorous and endearing. Prabowo Subianto and his colleague, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, use artificial intelligence (AI) to create these

visuals. Both Prabowo and Gibran are portrayed in this image as two very endearing little children, or perhaps more accurately, as charming dolls that young children find very endearing.

Figure 3.
Gemoy Gimmick on Social Media X



Source: X (2024)

This section's textual analysis focuses on tweets from users X or netizens that mention Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka, the vice presidential and presidential contenders for the 2024 election. This is so because the text in the tweet expresses the user's or person's opinions. Next, there are the hashtags #gemoy and #PrabowoGibran2024. Two images of Prabowo using AI were also included with the tweet. On the left, the AI version of Prabowo is seen hugging a white cat and wearing a black skullcap, while on the right, the AI version of Prabowo is seen in full body with the words "Gemoy Together with Advanced Indonesia" displayed as a background. Meanwhile, the word "Morning guys... " appears in the image on the right. Do you still find Prabowo Gibran's one-round victory exciting?"Must be passionate about Indonesia's progress." Two emoticons that express "enthusiasm" and a two-finger symbol follow the article's conclusion. The words "Prabo Gibran"

appear on the left, while "It's Time for Indonesia to Move Forward" appears on the right.

It is clear from the text in the two photographs above that there is an attempt to spread awareness among other users on the word "gemoy" also conveys the idea that the future president of Indonesia will be a charming, witty, and accessible figurehead. Everything is pointing or going in the direction of "Gemoy" Prabowo Gibran, the presidential and vice-presidential duo, who will attempt to win in a single round. The statement "You must be enthusiastic about Indonesia's progress" validates this.

The analysis of discursive practices examines the process of text consumption, which shapes the creation of the text in the @my1007san and @nanininaninna social media accounts. On October 31, 2023, the image on the left showcases the uploaded text. The text has received 262 impressions, indicating that 262 people have consumed or viewed it. The sole comment on the text consists of the phrase "Thank you, Mr. Prabowo, for providing assistance with a drilled well; thanks to your help, the residents of Suro village are no longer difficult to get access to clean water," followed by the hashtags #prabowo, #prabowopresi, #gerindra, #wiswayahe, and #gerindramenang. On January 5, 2024, a user uploaded the text in the second image, specifically the one on the right. Several users commented on the upload, including one who said, "Mrs. Mega is becoming popular, followed by Mr. Prabowo, who is losing; Mr. Hatta Radjasa, who is Mr. SBY's father, is following Mr. Prabowo, who is losing; Pak Sandiaga Uno won in Jakarta; and Pak Prabowo lost." So now what are the predictions?" Other users' comments suggest that the program is fraudulent and deceptive. One user even posted a comment stating simply "AMEN" first. Others responded by uploading an image with the caption, "Leading prayers, you can't." I led troops and got fired. The family's leadership was disbanded. "Do you want to give him a try at leading the country?" was the tweet that preceded it.

The tweet on the left portrays Prabowo Subianto as a community-focused presidential candidate. Meanwhile, in the text tweets depicted in the image on the right, the majority of the discourse centered on either endorsing or rejecting Prabowo as the leader of the Indonesian state critical comments like "We don't want a kidnapper president" reveal voter skepticism. The dissonance between the

infantilized aesthetic and Prabowo's controversial past exemplifies how gimmicks may backfire, exposing gaps between persona and reality. The text that recounted Prabowo's victory in the first round drew numerous objections, with some criticizing his choice of AMIN as his partner.

The third level examined in this research is the sociocultural dimension, or sociocultural practices. This aspect consists of three levels, namely the situational level, institutional level, and social level. From these three levels, it becomes clear that the production of the text is inextricably linked to the prevailing phenomena of the time. One situation that is likely to arise at that time is a phenomenon or reality where people are drawn to Prabowo's adorable physique and chubby cheeks, attracting mothers to pinch his cheeks and take photos with him. Another situation involves the supporters' unwavering loyalty and belief in Prabowo-Gibran's victory. This does more than simply unite all support for candidate number two. Then, during the production of the text in the image on the right, there was an attitude of loyalty, struggle, and belief in winning the Prabowo-Gibran pair in one round. This is based on the situation where three pairs of candidates will participate in the 2024 election, where if two pairs of candidates win with the same number of votes or get votes with a percentage that forces both pairs to continue to the second round of elections, then it is possible that the Prabowo-pair Gibran will lose. Because of developing opinion, if the election continues in the second round, then supporters of one of the candidates who lost in the first round will switch their support to one of the candidate pairs in the third round. This situation will pose a challenge for one of the candidate pairs, particularly the Prabowo-Gibran pair, as there is a growing perception that the Ganjar-Mahfud pair, who are expected to lose, may shift their support to the Anies-Imin pair.

Institutionally, the aforementioned issues emerge due to the text's targeting of specific spaces and communities, which have historically been the focus of the Prabowo-Gibran pair. In addition, from a sociocultural perspective, the public may perceive the Prabowo-Gibran pair as aggressively attempting to win the election in a single round, a perception that reflects Prabowo's ambition despite his two previous election losses.

Ganjar-Mahfud Political Gimmick

The presidential and vice presidential candidate pair number 3, namely Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD, is very attached to the term "Three Finger Greetings". This pair's number, 3, may have inspired this greeting. The "Three Finger Greeting" also mirrors global populist strategies, such as Thailand's "Three Fingers" protest symbol or Trump's "MAGA" branding. Such symbols weaponize pop culture to simplify complex ideologies, risking voter manipulation through emotional resonance over rational debate. (Moffitt 2016).

Figure 4.
Ganjar-Mahfud couple's political gimmick on X social media



Source: X (2024)

The three-finger salute performed by Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud, MD, appears to have been influenced by the Hunger Games movie, when the character raises their index, middle, and ring fingers. Ganjar Pranowo defined the three-finger gesture—obeying God, following the law, and showing loyalty to the people—in a tweet. He referred to this symbol as the "three fingers of promise." Later on, Ganjar Pranowo's sign and interpretation of the three fingers evolved into the centerpiece

of this couple's campaign, which is known as the Three Finger Greeting. This salutation is a component of Ganjar's public persona that he wishes to present, and it has since surfaced on a number of social media sites, including social media. "It's not just about competing; it's about competing while upholding sportsmanship." When competing, it's imperative to put honesty first. It is crucial to promise something and to promise it with all of your seriousness.

Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud, MD, extends her three-finger greetings to all the youngsters of the country." A cartoon animation with the phrases "Three Fingers Greetings for Victory" and "Fast Action is Surely Better" appears beneath the text. Meanwhile, the tweet "Ganjar Pranowo's three-finger greeting has succeeded in igniting the enthusiasm of millennials in Merauke" appears in the image on the right. The three-finger greeting, together with the hashtag #GanjarMahfud2024, has the following meanings: 1. Obedient to God, 2. Obedient to the Constitution, 3. Loyal to the People. The image of Ganjar Pranowo that goes with the tweet has the same inscription on it.

These two tweets demonstrate Ganjar's attempt to build his brand through the use of the three-finger greeting, which has the previously indicated connotation. With his three-finger salute in the vein of the movie *The Hunger Games*, the character Ganjar is characterized in this text analysis as someone who is similar to millennials. The meaning of the salute is that Ganjar is a person who restores hope to society by abiding by the law, obeying God, and being devoted to the people. This indicates that the three-finger welcome is more than just a meaningless sign.

This dimension looks at how the social consumption of a text affects the process of producing the text itself, as seen in the tweets from Figure 4's @SempaX_Elon and @AzzamAlifAditya accounts. Using response data from netizens, it is possible to investigate how the process of consuming text affects the production of text. In image 4, the tweet. The tweet in the image on the left was posted on November 26, 2023, by the @SempaX_Elon account, and on November 30, 2023, by @AzzamAlifAditya. With only one remark, @SempaX_Elon's tweet in image 4 garnered 15 views. "Three fingers, three promises: obey God, obey the law, and be loyal to the people. #GanjarMahfudM3nang" was one of the comments written by the account owner himself. In the meantime, @AzzamAlifAditya's tweet got 26 views and no comments. The lack of replies from other netizens on the two tweets suggests that either not many people saw them or they didn't pique their

curiosity. In spite of the fact that the two tweets had been viewed over ten times, no internet users felt compelled to reply with a comment. This suggests that no one on the internet is interested in the tweet. If nothing else, this tweet makes it clear that the Ganjar-Mahfud team is serious about becoming the next president of Indonesia. This is further supported by the significance of their three-finger welcome.

This dimension examines external factors beyond X's social media, which often significantly impact the discourse formation process on X's social media, as exemplified by these two tweets. In this dimension, three elements were studied: situational, institutional, and social. From a situational perspective, it's impossible to isolate the tweet in Figure 4's left image from the social phenomena or realities that could emerge in the months before the 2024 election. One phenomenon that could emerge is an attitude of loyalty towards a political party, as demonstrated by both Ganjar and Mahfud, who are members of the party and follow the party chairman. This attitude also includes a figure's efforts to introduce his image to the wider community in order to obtain both moral and material support. By including expressions such as God, law, and loyalty to the people, the issues described above are born, namely, how the tweet text on social media X is produced, which is actually conveyed to the target of the issue, namely, the public.

Discussion

The 2024 elections for president and vice president showcase a variety of political communication methods, bolstered by symbols and identities tailored to the current circumstances, particularly the millennial and generation Z demographics. Candidates' political communication has evolved from serious messages or symbols to symbols that potential voters, particularly first-time voters like the millennial generation and generation Z, can easily accept and digest. The young generation in these two categories is highly dependent on technological sophistication, including, in this case, the use of social media, which has been able to influence young people's behavior and habits in recent years. (Ardi and Putri 2020; Szymkowiak et al. 2021).

This happens because the millennial generation and generation Z more often interact and consume information through social media, one of which is social media such as complicated and prefers messages that are easy for the mind to digest;

in the end, it is more likely to lead to purely political gimmicks (Sahroni et al. 2020). The presidential and vice-presidential candidates of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024 find themselves ensnared in communication activities, producing symbols that fall short of their true meaning, ideas, and substantive thoughts (Faraid, Hamad, and Sari 2023). This was also observed in the political communications of the three pairs of presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the 2024 elections on social media X, which ultimately resulted in the creation of gimmicks. The orientation of political communication activities shifted, initially focusing on solving social problems in society, but ultimately evolving into manipulative efforts that neglected concrete societal issues (El Qudsi and Syamtar 2020). The shift from issue-based discourse to gimmickry reflects a global trend toward "post-truth" politics (Bennett and Livingston 2018), where affective symbols replace substantive debate. This depoliticization entrenches symbolic power structures, privileging elites who master digital theatrics over those addressing material realities.

The three pairs of presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the 2024 elections employ political communication strategies that align with the societal goals they aim to attain. First, the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair number 1, namely the pair Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar, attached the term 'Selepet Sarung', which was then interpreted as an effort and struggle to wake up people who were tyrannical, who forgot their duties and obligations, who were sluggish. And still lulled into sleep. Indeed, the creators of these symbols imbue them with meanings and interpretations that align with their original intentions. Second, political communication terms attached to the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair number 2, namely 'Gemoy' and 'Just Jogetin'. This term emerged after a forum, where the declaration of candidate pairs was carried out by the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI), where at that time, Prabowo, in his declaration, mentioned the term 'Gemoy', which several people said to him. Furthermore, this term became a trend mark for the Prabowo-Gibran pair in every political campaign, especially those circulating on social media X. Third, the symbol or term attached to the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair number 3, Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD, is 'Three Finger Greetings in the style of the film The Hunger Games'. The Three Finger Greeting is not just a symbol or term that is left free to be interpreted by netizens or the public, but the producer or in this case Ganjar has determined or expressed the meaning behind the three finger

greeting, namely obeying God, obeying or complying with the law, and every to the people. Symbols and meanings continue to be produced (meanings are not partially separated from the symbols) and distributed on social media, so that netizens or the public can understand these symbols well (Kholik and Subiantoro 2023).

However, the issue lies in the nicknames or terms associated with each candidate; ultimately, these terms merely mask the true meaning and significance of the nickname itself, transforming them into mere political gimmicks. (Awalia 2017). Nicknames such as 'Selepet Sarong', 'Gemoy', and 'Three Finger Greetings' become symbols at the end of which each candidate, sympathizers, supporters, and the public group come together to introduce the image of the candidate pair with political communication mechanisms, which are represented in the form of nicknames or immicks. The three pairs of candidates, along with their sympathizers, aim to garner public sympathy and support by promoting the image of their respective figures through a single term. However, this approach has the potential to obscure the substance and crucial issues that the three pairs of candidates need to address. (Al-Fayyadl 2005). Cak Imin and his supporters produce the Selepet Sarong, a gimmick that appeals to millennials and the general public, the majority of whom are from Islamic boarding school circles.

Prabowo Subianto and his partner, Gibran Rakabuming, use the term "Gemoy" as a gimmick to attract the interest of the millennial generation and generation Z, who are surrounded by technological sophistication, including AI. When a group of people encounter cultural terms or symbols they are familiar with, they readily identify and integrate into these symbols. (Lainsyamputty 2021). Ganjar Pranowo then used the gimmick nicknamed Three Finger Greetings to capture the hearts and attention of the public, which was once again dominated by millennials and Generation Z. Instead of relying on monotonous and boring orations in a campaign, a gimmick that incorporates cultural codes could potentially garner more public attention. This is due to their familiarity with the target's or the target's daily life. (Antokosuryo 2015). Each candidate employs political gimmicks, such as nicknames and terms, that deviate from the truth, in an attempt to manipulate voters and secure victory in the election.

CONCLUSION

The political communication discourse of the three presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs in the 2024 election on social media X is a form of political gimmick consisting of symbols and sweet terms to attract public sympathy and support. Both pairs 1, 2, and 3 employ deceptive political gimmicks or resort to mere language and symbol acrobatics, which are not aligned with the primary message they aim to convey to the public. They primarily concentrate on identifying or forming associations between terms or symbols that align with the conditions of the voting public, which is predominantly composed of young individuals, thereby creating symbols and language that they are familiar with. While gimmicks resonate with digitally native voters, they threaten democratic quality by prioritizing spectacle over substance. Future studies should explore the longitudinal impacts of such tactics on voter apathy and political literacy. Discourse practices, which involve users focusing on text production and the attitudes of netizens who either accept or reject the text through diverse attitudes or comments, are inextricably linked to the discourse in these political gimmicks. Another element that influences text production is the socio-cultural aspect, which includes the existence of phenomena or realities outside of social media. Political parties often form coalitions or groups to endorse their proposed candidates. Apart from all that, the texts in all the tweets on social media show that the political gimmick used by the three candidates is a strategy to gain support from the public to become the next vice president in Indonesia.

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