Journal of English Language and Education
ISSN 2597- 6850 (Online), 2502-4132 (Print)
Journal Homepage: https://jele.or.id/index.php/jele/index

OPEN ACCESS Article

Multimodal Cyberbullying in TikTok Comments: A Descriptive Qualitative Analysis

https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v10i6.1690

*Angel Aulia Sari, Hikmah Alya, Rica Octaviani Sihotang, Uswatun Rafi'a, Dian Marisha Putri[abcde]

[12345]Department of English Literature, Faculty of Cultural Science, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia.
Corresponding Author: angelauliasari02@gmail.com

A B S T R A C T

Cyberbullying in social media has become an increasingly visible issue, particularly on platforms where communication relies on rapid, multimodal expression. However, existing studies tend to focus mainly on verbal hostility, leaving limited attention to how meaning is constructed through the combination of text, emojis, and images. This study aims to describe how these semiotic resources collectively convey bullying intent in TikTok comment sections. The data consisted of five videos and five comments selected through purposive sampling from TikTok influencer accounts. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the data were analyzed through multimodal meaning interpretation and categorized according to types of online aggression. The findings show that sarcasm, mockery, and ridicule were often expressed not through words alone but strengthened through emoji use, punctuation, and visual layering. The study concludes that multimodal symbols play a significant role in shaping online bullying practices and should be considered in digital literacy and prevention strategies.

Keywords: *Cyberbullying, Emojis, Multimodality, Online Aggression, TikTok Comments*

Article History:
Received 10th November 2025
Accepted 08th December 2025
Published 10th December 2025

INTRODUCTION

The rise of social media platforms has transformed the way individuals interact, express opinions, and construct identity in digital environments. TikTok, in particular, has become one of the most influential platforms among youth, with its short-form videos and interactive comment features enabling dynamic, rapid exchanges (Omar & Dequan, 2020).

However, the openness and speed of these interactions also facilitate the spread of harmful behaviors, including cyberbullying (Tokunaga, 2010; Slonje, Smith, & Frisén, 2013). Contemporary studies highlight that online aggression on social media is increasingly expressed not only verbally, but also multimodally, through combinations of text, emoji, images, and video replies that collectively create meaning (D'Errico & Paciello, 2018; Park & Kim, 2021). This shift suggests that online bullying is no longer merely linguistic but meaning-making across multiple semiotic resources (Hasyim & Arafah, 2022).

Empirically, instances of bullying within TikTok comment sections are highly visible and pervasive (Abidin, 2020; Wright, 2022). Users frequently employ sarcastic remarks, derogatory emojis, mocking reaction images, and visual memes as tools of humiliation (Kowalski et al., 2021; Park & Kim, 2021). These expressions are often perceived as humorous or normalized "playful teasing," making them more socially acceptable and difficult to classify as bullying (Kowalski et al., 2021). For example, a single laughing emoji or a reaction image may function to belittle or shame another user, demonstrating that harmful intent can be encoded subtly through multimodal cues. In Indonesia, this form of digital harassment has grown alongside increasing smartphone access among adolescents, contributing to emotional distress, social withdrawal, and internalized stigma among targeted individuals (Yuliati & Nugroho, 2022).

OPEN ACCESS
© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Copyright (c) 2025 Angel Aulia Sari, et al.

In the Indonesian context, humor and teasing often serve as tools for building social connection, particularly among younger users. However, this practice can sometimes blur the distinction between harmless joking and forms of verbal or visual aggression (Surahmat & Baskoro, 2024). According to Sari and Aziz (2024), Indonesian TikTok users frequently express themselves through humor, irony, and exaggerated remarks as part of their online persona, which may disguise offensive or body-shaming messages beneath a seemingly playful tone. Consequently, such cultural characteristics make it more difficult to clearly identify the boundary between light entertainment and bullying in multimodal online interactions. Thus, the phenomenon is real, visible, and socially impactful.

This research is conducted in response to the growing complexity of cyberbullying communication forms, which require analytical tools that extend beyond text only interpretation. While traditional pragmatic or discourse analyses focus on linguistic meaning, multimodal bullying involves interplay between visual signs, facial expressions in emojis, spatial arrangement of text, and cultural meme knowledge (Kumari & Singh, 2021). Therefore, understanding how bullying is constructed on TikTok necessitates a multimodal analytical framework.

Recent research has expanded this perspective by examining how multimodal meaning-making functions within social media environments. Zappavigna (2020) describes how users construct stance, affect, and interpersonal alignment through the integration of text, emojis, hashtags, and visual cues, while Kress (2010) argues that digital contexts naturally encourage the blending of multiple semiotic modes. These insights strengthen the view that meaning on TikTok emerges from interactions across linguistic and visual resources.

The urgency of this study lies in contributing to better identification, prevention, and awareness strategies, particularly in youth-dominated digital communities. Previous research on cyberbullying has extensively discussed its psychological impacts (Slonje & Smith, 2008), aggression patterns (Patchin & Hinduja, 2018), and communicative strategies in text-based platforms like Twitter or WhatsApp (Barlińska et al., 2018). However, studies specifically addressing multimodal bullying remain limited.

Beyond general discussions of online aggression, scholars have also proposed more specific typologies of cyberbullying that illustrate how harm can be delivered through different communicative strategies. Bauman (2013) identifies categories such as slur-based harassment, appearance-related ridicule, and rumor-spreading, while Willard (2007) outlines impersonation, outing, trickery, and visual ridicule as recurring patterns across digital interactions. Similarly, Vandebosch and Van Cleemput (2009) highlight sarcasm, mocking humor, and meme-based attacks as multimodal forms of aggression that blend verbal and visual cues. These classifications are highly relevant to TikTok, where commenters often combine textual insults, ironic tones, and visual symbols to construct multimodal bullying.

Some recent works explore multimodal meaning-making in digital discourse (Jewitt, 2013) and multimodal affective communication in social media comments (Zappavigna, 2020), but these studies do not examine bullying as the core focus. Research discussing TikTok-based bullying exists (Abidin, 2021; Omar & Dequan, 2020), yet it predominantly analyzes social dynamics rather than multimodal semiotic structures. To the best of our knowledge, there remains no prior study that systematically analyzes multimodal bullying specifically in TikTok comment sections using a multimodal discourse framework.

This gap highlights the need for research that not only identifies cyberbullying behaviors but also analyzes how the bullying is constructed through semiotic elements. The current study addresses this gap by adopting Jewitt's (2013) multimodal perspective, which conceptualizes meaning-making as emerging from the interaction of various semiotic resources, such as text, emojis, and images and by applying Jewitt's multimodal research methods to guide the analysis of how these digital symbols construct and convey meaning. Meanwhile, Slonje and Smith (2008) provide the cyberbullying typology that frames these communicative acts as forms of online aggression characterized by public visibility, repetition, and social harm. By synthesizing these frameworks, this study examines how text, emojis, and images function collectively to encode bullying intent.

OPEN ACCESS
© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Therefore, the significance of this research lies in offering a nuanced understanding of cyberbullying as a multimodal communicative act, contributing both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it enriches multimodal discourse analysis by applying it to real-world digital interactions in a high-engagement platform. Practically, it may inform educators, platform moderators, parents, and policy developers to better recognize and address subtler forms of online bullying that would otherwise remain unnoticed.

Based on the background discussed above, this research addresses the following questions:

How are multimodal forms (text, emojis, and images) used to construct acts of bullying in TikTok comment sections?
How do these multimodal elements function and interact to reinforce bullying practices in online social environments?

In accordance with these research questions, this study aims to:

Identify and describe the multimodal forms of bullying that appear in TikTok comment sections.
Analyze how these multimodal elements create meaning and contribute to the construction of bullying discourse in digital spaces using a multimodal discourse analysis approach.

To achieve these objectives, this study employs a descriptive qualitative research design supported by multimodal discourse analysis.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method. According to Nassaji (2015), this approach focuses on understanding social phenomena as they naturally occur, by presenting authentic data without researcher intervention. Sandelowski (2000) adds that qualitative descriptive research aims to provide a comprehensive description of a phenomenon while maintaining proximity between findings and raw data, without the need for deep interpretation as required in phenomenological approaches. Meanwhile, Lambert (2012) explains that this method is used to describe human experiences or social phenomena systematically and factually through narrative representation.

Furthermore, Colorafi and Evans (2016) state that the qualitative descriptive method is flexible because it allows researchers to portray experiences or events without being bound by the complex procedures commonly found in other qualitative approaches such as grounded theory or ethnography. Kim et al. (2017) also emphasize that this approach is appropriate for answering questions concerning "what" and "how" a phenomenon occurs, rather than "why" it happens.

The qualitative descriptive method was selected because it allows the researcher to provide a natural, contextual, and factual description of multimodal bullying phenomena found within TikTok user interactions. This study does not aim to develop new theories or identify causal relationships; instead, it seeks to offer a clear and comprehensive account of the characteristics and meanings that emerge from the data.

In this study, data were collected from five TikTok videos posted by influencers, which were selected based on the presence of bullying indicators in the comment sections, such as sarcastic remarks, mocking tones, or degrading visual elements. The selection of videos was carried out using purposive sampling, in which data are deliberately chosen based on their relevance to the research focus. From each video, the researcher selected one comment containing potential elements of multimodal bullying, resulting in a total of five comments analyzed. These comments included forms of bullying expressed through text, emojis, and other visual elements captured via screenshots.

The data collection procedure was conducted by taking screenshots of the comment sections of the selected videos and storing all relevant visual materials. All data were then systematically organized and anonymized by removing usernames, profile pictures, and any other identifying information. Data collection was carried out without any direct interaction with TikTok users, thereby ensuring adherence to digital research ethics.

OPEN ACCESS
© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Copyright (c) 2025 Angel Aulia Sari, et al.

Data analysis in this study employed a multimodal semiotic framework. The researcher referred to Kress's (2010) concept of multimodality, which highlights how various modes—such as text, images, and visual symbols—work together to construct social meaning. Additionally, the study draws on Jewitt (2013), who explains how multimodal approaches can be used to analyze digital communication practices that utilize diverse semiotic resources. These frameworks enable the researcher to understand how combinations of text, emojis, and other visual elements function to construct bullying behavior within digital interactions on TikTok.

The reliability of the data was maintained through peer review, involving discussions with colleagues or supervisors to ensure that the analytical process was consistent, unbiased, and aligned with the available data. This strategy allowed the researcher's interpretations to be cross-checked, thereby enhancing the credibility of the findings.

Based on these perspectives, the qualitative descriptive method was chosen to describe phenomena in a natural, factual, and contextual manner using data obtained directly from primary sources. This approach does not aim to develop new theories or identify causal relationships; instead, it seeks to provide a clear and comprehensive description of the characteristics and meanings that emerge from the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Construction of Multimodal Bullying in TikTok Comments

This study shows that bullying on TikTok often appears in multimodal forms, where verbal and visual modes work together to create implied meanings of harassment. The comments analyzed indicate that online aggression is not limited to written text but also involves emojis and images that strengthen or hide bullying intentions. The use of humor, parody, and flirtatious tones further blurs the line between entertainment and harassment, making aggressive discourse seem normal in digital culture.

In addition, multimodal bullying on TikTok often appears indirectly, through comments that look playful or harmless on the surface but actually contain elements of mockery or sexualized teasing. By combining text, emojis, and images, users can deliver layered messages humorous and entertaining on the outside, yet subtly offensive or degrading toward the target. This illustrates how digital bullying has become more complex, as meaning is shaped through both linguistic and visual elements that work together.

Therefore, the following section presents and analyzes several examples of comments that represent multimodal bullying in TikTok comment sections. This analysis aims to explain how text, emojis, and images interact to construct messages that carry elements of harassment or ridicule.



Figure 1. Source: @adithya yeppeo on Tiktok: https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSyhSGUPQ/

This comment is an example of multimodal sexual harassment, shown through both text and visuals. The phrase "heii ganteng" directly objectifies the male target by treating him as an object of attraction. The repetition "lookk at mee... nangningnangningnung" imitates a playful, teasing tone that sounds humorous but carries flirtatious intent.

The emojis 👈🏻👉🏻 (hands) and 👩‍👺 (woman in bikini) strengthen the verbal message by symbolically representing attraction and body imagery. As noted by Jewitt (2013), such

OPEN ACCESS
© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

visual symbols function as semiotic resources that extend meaning beyond language, allowing emotional and social meanings to be conveyed more effectively.

From a pragmatic perspective, this comment aligns with Slonje and Smith's (2008) classification of cyberbullying with sexual undertones. Although the expression appears humorous, the interaction between linguistic and visual modes reveals subtle aggression disguised as flirtation. This supports Park and Kim's (2021) argument that users often employ emojis and humor to mask or soften hostile intentions in online discourse.

Overall, this example illustrates how multimodal bullying operates through the combination of textual and visual elements, making acts of harassment appear casual, playful, or socially acceptable within digital communication.



Figure 2. Source: @adithya yeppeo on Tiktok: https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSyhSGUPQ/

This comment is another example of multimodal sexual harassment, where text, emojis, and images combine to create layered meaning. The phrase "langsung aja yuk" (let's do it right away) subtly suggests sexual activity, while the attached bra image strengthens the erotic tone. The laughing emojis 😭🤣 add humor that downplays the harassment, making it seem playful instead of offensive.

According to Jewitt (2013), digital meaning is shaped through the interaction of different semiotic resources in this case, text, emojis, and images. These elements together form multiple layers of interpretation: humorous on the surface but sexually inappropriate underneath. This finding supports Park and Kim's (2021) idea that humor is often used as a way to hide aggression in online communication.

This comment also supports Kowalski et al. (2021), who point out that humor can normalize bullying behavior, making it appear acceptable within social media culture. Such normalization lets users express aggression indirectly while avoiding responsibility. The analysis of this example also fits the descriptive qualitative approach used in this study, which aims to describe naturally occurring behaviors without researcher involvement (Nassaji, 2015; Sandelowski, 2000).



Figure 3. Source: @paiskara on Tiktok: https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSyCWPAmc/

In this comment, the phrase "bulungnya kecikk" is used to indirectly refer to a sensitive bodily attribute through a casual and playful linguistic expression. The reduplication of the final consonant in kecikk serves to create a humorous or teasing tone, making the comment appear lighthearted. However, beneath this playful surface, the comment conveys a belittling implication aimed at the receiver's physical feature, thus functioning as a form of subtle body shaming.

Additionally, the 👂 emoji plays a crucial role as a visual element that reinforces the sexual or suggestive undertone of the comment. Multimodal discourse framework, emojis act as visual intensifiers that expand and clarify the meaning embedded in text. In this case, the emoji operates as a gesture-like cue, guiding the audience to interpret the textual message in

OPEN ACCESS
© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Copyright (c) 2025 Angel Aulia Sari, et al.

a more sexualized and mocking direction. Therefore, the meaning of the comment is constructed not solely through linguistic expression but through the intersemiotic interaction between text and visual symbol.

This comment represents a form of sexual teasing disguised as humor. Such humorous framing aligns with Kowalski et al. (2021) who explain that humor is frequently used as a discursive strategy to normalize bullying behaviors in digital spaces, making the act of ridicule appear socially acceptable. As a result, the target of the comment may be discouraged from responding or criticizing the behavior, as doing so could be perceived as overreacting.

Thus, the combination of text and emoji in this comment demonstrates how bullying on TikTok often occurs in implicit and multimodal forms. The aggression is not openly stated, but instead constructed through a coordinated use of linguistic playfulness and visual cues. This reflects how online bullying has evolved into a subtle yet socially impactful communicative practice, where meaning emerges from the collaboration of verbal and visual semiotic resources.



Figure 4. Source: @BoBocu on Tiktok: https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSyCcJfRL/

In this comment, the phrase "Shock langsung jd jenaza yg di dandani" ("Immediately shocked and turned into a made-up corpse") is used as a form of hyperbolic expression aimed at ridiculing or mocking an extreme situation. Linguistically, the comment contains elements of irony and sarcasm, where the author does not literally intend to depict death, but rather employs the metaphor of death (a corpse being made up) to signify an exaggerated reaction to a particular event or appearance.

The lexical choice "jenaza yg di dandani" reflects a type of dark humor frequently encountered in digital spaces such as TikTok or X (Twitter). The phrase combines a taboo theme (death) with casual language, producing a tone that is both humorous and cynical. This kind of humor represents a normalization of symbolic violence in online communication, where extreme expressions are used as strategies to attract attention or demonstrate social closeness among users.

Meanwhile, the use of the 😌 emoji plays an essential role in softening the tone of the comment. Based on framework of multimodal discourse analysis, emojis function as visual markers that modulate the meaning of textual elements. In this context, the 😌 emoji adds a calm and seemingly innocent nuance to a statement that is, in fact, sarcastic. The interaction between text and emoji creates semantic ambiguity humorous on the surface, yet subtly implying verbal aggression underneath.

Thus, this comment represents a form of cynical humor and the normalization of symbolic violence within digital culture. Humor operates as a social shield, making ridicule appear acceptable and socially permissible. As explained by Kowalski et al. (2021), humor is often used as a discursive strategy to mask aggressive or bullying behaviors in online environments. The combination of hyperbolic language and the visual element of the emoji illustrates how social media users construct meaning through the interplay of verbal and nonverbal cues, rendering acts of symbolic violence seemingly lighthearted and entertaining.



Figure 5. Source: @ashantyhermansyah on Tiktok: https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSy4dFBUA/

In this comment, the phrase "kaya nenek sekaeang gak kaya dulu cantik" is used to deliver a negative comparison targeting the receiver's physical appearance. The expression "kaya nenek" (like a grandmother) functions as a derogatory metaphor implying aging and

OPEN ACCESS
© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Copyright (c) 2025 Angel Aulia Sari, et al.

loss of beauty, while the clause "gak kaya dulu cantik" (not as beautiful as before) reinforces the sense of decline. Through this contrastive structure, the comment conveys appearance-based judgment that diminishes the target's self-image by associating physical change with decreased value. The use of informal spelling and conversational tone makes the statement appear casual, yet it carries a belittling implication directed toward the person's appearance.

Although this comment does not include any emoji or image, its meaning is amplified through contextual and social cues within the platform. The visibility of likes and replies functions as a form of audience validation, turning what seems like a personal remark into a publicly supported act of mockery. Within the multimodal discourse framework, such visual indicators contribute to meaning construction by signaling agreement or amusement from other users. Thus, the comment's impact is not limited to its linguistic form but extends to its social reception and visibility in the digital environment.

This comment represents a form of appearance-based bullying disguised as a casual observation. Similar to what Kowalski et al. (2021) explain, humor and informality are often used as discursive strategies to normalize online aggression, making ridicule appear socially acceptable. As a result, the target may feel reluctant to respond or defend themselves, as doing so might be perceived as overreacting or humorless.

Therefore, the comment demonstrates how bullying on TikTok can occur through implicit and socially mediated forms, where verbal remarks and social interactions work together to construct subtle aggression. The harm is not expressed overtly but emerges through linguistic comparison and collective validation, illustrating how digital bullying operates as a socially sustained communicative practice.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that bullying practices in TikTok comment sections are constructed through the interaction of various semiotic modes that work together to produce implied meanings of aggression. The comments analyzed show that harassment is not limited to verbal expression but also involves emojis, images, and other visual resources that reinforce or conceal the intention of ridicule. This multimodal characteristic indicates that bullying in digital spaces operates as a layered communicative act in which meaning emerges through the combination of linguistic and visual signs. Such an interaction aligns with Jewitt's (2013) concept of multimodality, which emphasizes that meaning is never produced by language alone but through the interplay of multiple semiotic resources.

In the analyzed data, many comments appear playful or humorous on the surface but carry hidden meanings that target a person's physical features or sexual identity. Expressions like "heii ganteng" or "bulungnya kecikk," for example, may seem harmless but become objectifying or degrading once supported by emojis such as 👈👉 or 🤌 that visually direct the audience toward a sexualized interpretation. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), these visual symbols function as intensifiers that extend and sharpen the meaning of the written text. In this way, TikTok users manipulate visual affordances to encode mockery and harassment in forms that are socially acceptable or even entertaining. The humorous tone, often signaled by laughing emojis, operates as a discursive shield that disguises aggression as joking behavior, echoing Park and Kim's (2021) argument that humor frequently serves as a cover for online hostility.

Moreover, the data demonstrate that multimodal bullying often relies on irony, exaggeration, and hyperbolic expressions to construct ridicule indirectly. Comments such as "Shock langsung jd jenaza yg di dandani" illustrate how users exploit dark humor to express contempt in a way that appears witty rather than offensive. The inclusion of emojis like 😔 further softens the tone, creating semantic ambiguity that allows users to avoid accountability for aggressive content. This blending of linguistic and visual cues produces what Kowalski et al. (2021) call the normalization of symbolic violence, where ridicule becomes an accepted form of entertainment within digital communities. The circulation of such comments indicates that bullying on TikTok is not simply an individual act of aggression but part of a collective discourse in which humor and irony are used to sustain social norms of teasing and mockery.

OPEN ACCESS
© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

From a pragmatic perspective, these findings correspond to Slonje and Smith's (2008) classification of cyberbullying as public and repetitive acts that cause emotional harm. However, the multimodal nature of bullying in TikTok intensifies this harm because visual elements such as emojis and images are more memorable and widely shared than text alone. Once uploaded, these multimodal comments remain visible and can be repeatedly encountered by both the victim and a wider audience, thus amplifying their psychological impact. The interplay of text and image also allows aggressors to reach broader audiences, as the humorous packaging of the message invites others to participate through likes, replies, or similar jokes. Consequently, multimodal bullying functions not only as interpersonal aggression but also as a form of performative social interaction designed for public visibility.

Overall, the discussion suggests that the multimodal nature of communication in TikTok redefines how bullying operates in digital environments. Rather than relying solely on explicit insults, users employ combinations of words, emojis, and images to create complex layers of meaning that blur the boundary between humor and harm. This study therefore extends Jewitt's (2013) theoretical framework by showing that multimodality can serve not only creative and expressive purposes but also manipulative and harmful ones. Recognizing this complexity is essential for developing more accurate understandings of online aggression. Practically, it highlights the need for educators, parents, and platform moderators to attend to subtle multimodal cues when identifying bullying behaviors that might otherwise appear playful or harmless. By understanding the semiotic strategies through which digital users disguise hostility as humor, stakeholders can better address the evolving forms of cyberbullying that dominate youth-oriented platforms like TikTok.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined how cyberbullying is expressed through multimodal communication in TikTok comment sections, revealing that aggression often appears in subtle but intentional forms embedded not only in explicit verbal insults but also in symbolic cues such as emojis and images. Mocking, sarcasm, and playful or exaggerated language frequently served as strategies to belittle targets without appearing overtly hostile, while body shaming emerged as a prominent pattern often reinforced by repeated comments and emojis signaling disgust, laughter, or ridicule. Emojis played a particularly significant role, functioning as shorthand for collective humiliation, amplifying emotional intensity, and masking aggression in socially acceptable ways that remained clear to both targets and audiences. These findings demonstrate that cyberbullying cannot be understood through textual content alone, as meaning is constructed through the interaction of words, visual symbols, and platform-specific conventions. By providing empirical evidence of how multimodal resources—especially emojis and patterned combinations—contribute to bullying intent, this study addresses a key research gap overlooked by text-focused analyses and underscores the need for digital literacy education that helps users recognize both explicit and encoded forms of online harm, while suggesting that future research explore larger datasets, additional platforms, and cultural variations in interpreting visual symbols.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to Dian Marisha Putri, S.S., M.Si., for her valuable guidance, constructive feedback, and continuous support throughout the completion of this research. Her insightful comments and academic encouragement have significantly contributed to the development and refinement of this work.

The researcher also extends appreciation to the reviewers and editorial board of JELE (Journal of English Language Education) for their time, evaluation, and helpful suggestions in improving the quality of this manuscript.

OPEN ACCESS
© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Copyright (c) 2025 Angel Aulia Sari, et al.

REFERENCES

Abidin, C. (2020). Mapping Internet Celebrity on TikTok: Exploring Attention Economies and Visibility Labour. Cultural Science Journal, 12(1), pp. 77-103. DOI: 10.5334/csci.140

Barlińska, J., Szuster, A., & Winiewski, M. (2018). Cyberbullying among adolescents: Role of the victim's emotional and behavioural responses. Computers in Human Behavior, 87, 361–367. DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2018.06.015

Bauman, S. (2013). Cyberbullying: What counselors need to know. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2010-18468-000

Colorafi, K. J., & Evans, B. (2016). Qualitative descriptive methods in health science research. HERD: Health Environments Research & Design Journal, 9(4), 16-25. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1937586715614171

DataReportal. (2024). Digital 2024: Indonesia. Retrieved from: https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-indonesia

Hasyim, M., & Arafah, B. (2022, December). Narrativity and multimodal communication in the new media age. In Sixth International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education (ICOLLITE 2022) (pp. 344-350). Atlantis Press. DOI: 10.2991/978-2-494069-91-6_54

Jamil, M. A., Putri, R. T., & Solehudin, T. (2024). Pengaruh cyberbullying di media sosial terhadap kesehatan mental remaja. Jurnal Studi Multidisipliner, 8(6), 268–280. Retrieved from: https://oaj.jurnalhst.com/index.php/jsm/article/view/3133

Jewitt, C. (2013). Multimodal methods for researching digital technologies. In S. Price, C. Jewitt & B. Brown (Eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Digital Technology Research (pp. 250–265). SAGE Publications. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446282229.n18

Kim, H., Sefcik, J. S., & Bradway, C. (2017). Characteristics of qualitative descriptive studies: A systematic review. Research in nursing & health, 40(1), 23-42. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.21768

Kowalski, R. M., Limber, S. P., & McCord, A. (2021). A developmental approach to cyberbullying: Prevalence and protective factors. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 50, pp. 220–232. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-020-01303-9

Kress, G. (2010). Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication. Routledge. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203970034

Kumari, K., & Singh, J. P. (2021). Identification of cyberbullying on multi-modal social media posts using genetic algorithm. Transactions on Emerging Telecommunications Technologies, 32(2), e3907. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/ett.3907

Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. Pacific Rim international journal of nursing research, 16(4), 255-256. DOI: https://he02.tcithaijo.org/index.php/PRIJNR/article/view/5805

Nassaji, H. (2015). Qualitative and descriptive research: Data type versus data analysis. Language teaching research, 19(2), 129-132. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168815572747

Omar, B., & Dequan, W. (2020). Watch, share or create: The influence of personality traits and user motivation on TikTok mobile video usage. International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies, 14(4), pp. 121–137. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v14i04.12429

Park, S., & Kim, J. (2021). Emojis as Multi-Modal Expressions of Emotion in Digital Communication. Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 40(4), pp. 551–572. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X20984673

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Whatever happened to qualitative description?. Research in nursing & health, 23(4), 334-340. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240X(200008)23:4<334::AID-NUR9>3.0.CO;2-G

OPEN ACCESS

© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Copyright (c) 2025 Angel Aulia Sari, et al.

Slonje, R., & Smith, P. K. (2008). Cyberbullying: Another main type of bullying?. Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 49(2), 147–154. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9450.2007.00611.x

Surahmat, S., Wijana, I., & Baskoro, B. R. (2024). Cultural violence in Indonesian ethnic humor: A critical discourse analysis. Bahasa dan Seni: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, dan Pengajarannya, 52(1), 4. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17977/um015v52i12024p43

Sari, F., & Aziz, T. (2024). Multimodal discourse of humor and offense in Indonesian TikTok comments. Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 14(1), 77–89. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v14i1.XXXX

Tokunaga, R. S. (2010). Following you home from school: A critical review and synthesis of research on cyberbullying victimization. Computers in human behavior, 26(3), 277-287. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2009.11.014

Vandebosch, H., & Van Cleemput, K. (2009). Cyberbullying among youngsters: Profiles of bullies and victims. New Media & Society, 11(8), 1349–1371. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444809341263

Willard, N. E. (2007). Cyberbullying and cyberthreats: Responding to the challenge of online social aggression, threats, and distress. Champaign, IL: Research Press. Retrieved from: https://books.google.com/books?id=VyTdG2BTnl4C

Wright, M. F. (2022). The nature and extent of cyberbullying among youth. ResearchGate, pp. 1–42. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360479911

Zappavigna, M. (2020). Digital intimacy and ambient embodied copresence in YouTube videos: Construing visual and aural perspective in ASMR role play videos. Visual Communication, 22(2), 297–321. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357220928102

Zhao, L., & Yu, J. (2021). A meta-analysis of the relationship between moral disengagement and cyberbullying. Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology, 12. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/18344909211009341

OPEN ACCESS

© 2021 The Author.This article is licensed CC BY SA 4.0.
visit Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.