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## **How Satirists Alternate Between Discursive Modes: An Introduction of the Humoristic Metaphors in Satirical News (HMSN) Typology**

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An important challenge for communication scientists is to characterize and understand hybrid genres. Satirical news is such a hybrid genre and comprises a blend of the genres of comedy, news, and political opinion. This theoretical article aims to contribute to this discussion by further specifying the concept of discursive mode. Discursive modes designate certain communicative orientations toward a particular genre element. We make our argument concrete by introducing a typology of metaphorical humor in satirical news. Our humoristic metaphors in satirical news (HMSN) typology, demonstrates that satirists can realize and switch between 4 different discursive modes through metaphors. These discursive modes comprise different combinations of core rhetorical functions in satirical news (humor, education, and evaluation). We describe each type of metaphor in our typology and present a research agenda identifying key issues that require future research and empirical verification.

*Keywords: satirical news, metaphors, humor, hybrid genre, discursive mode, humoristic metaphors in satirical news (HMSN) typology*

The media landscape is constantly subject to transformation (Baym, 2010; Creeber; 2015). Media producers have increasingly been experimenting with their programs, by combining various traditional

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television formats into one, thereby creating new "hybrid genres" (Baym, 2013; Creeber, 2015). This phenomenon is also known as discursive integration (Baym, 2005), and has led to the redefinition of traditional television practices (Baym, 2005; Creeber, 2015). These complex and rapid transformations in the media environment create a challenge for communication scientists to precisely characterize and understand these hybrid genres (Baym, 2005; Lauerbach, 2004).

Satirical news shows (e.g., *The Daily Show*, *Last Week Tonight*) are prime examples of such "hybrid genres." Satirical news comprises a blend of the genres of comedy, news, and political opinion (Baym, 2005). Especially among younger audiences, satirical news is an important source of political information in addition to regular news (Hmielowski, Holbert, & Lee, 2011; Young & Tisinger, 2006). Satire's growing cultural and political significance has been attributed to its hybrid genre form, by offering "news that entertains" (Baym, 2005). Satire can be seen as an experiment in journalism, in which the distinctive features of each genre have disappeared and/or merged into new combinations (Baym, 2005).

Although most traditional genre studies focus on variation between genres (inter-genre differences; Chandler, 1997; Swales, 1990), the emergence of hybrid genres also make it crucial to investigate variation within genres (intra-genre differences). Genres are typically characterized by their rhetorical functions (Swales, 1990), which, in turn, are the building blocks of discursive modes. Discursive modes can be described as communicative orientations toward particular genre elements (Baym, 2013). This means that a discursive mode consists of one or more rhetorical functions.

A specific program segment can be reflective of various discursive modes. Baym's (2013) research demonstrates how various televised political interviews can reflect one of four discursive modes: (1) interrogation, (2) celebration, (3) confrontation, and (4) conversation. These four discursive modes consist of a combination of three rhetorical functions. These modes all try to acquire information from the interviewee (i.e., the rhetorical function through which these program segments belong to the same genre of political interviews). However, the differences between these discursive modes (intra-genre differences) are reflected in or can be explained by two other rhetorical functions: (1) the level of criticism (critical or noncritical) expressed by the interviewer toward the interviewee, and (2) the general tone of the interview (positive, negative, or balanced).

To illustrate, the discursive mode "conversation" consists of a noncritical attitude toward the interviewee, whereas the general tone of the interview is balanced. The mode "celebration" implies a noncritical and positive attitude toward the interviewee. By contrast, the "interrogation" mode consists of a balanced and critical attitude toward the interviewee, whereas the "confrontation" mode comprises a critical and negative attitude toward the interviewee. Together, the combinations of these various rhetorical functions point to four discursive modes of political interviews (Baym, 2013).

Although Baym (2013) primarily focused on discursive modes at the level of program segments, the current article adds a further specification of the concept of discursive mode. We complement Baym's (2013) analysis by showing that the concept of discursive mode (1) also applies to a more specific level of analysis, and that (2) discursive modes are not necessarily competing and mutually exclusive, in that switching between discursive modes is possible within one program segment (i.e., instead of only between program segments).

With this theoretical article, we thus build on the insights developed by Baym (2013) by further untangling the concept of discursive mode. We illustrate our argument on the basis of a typology of metaphorical humor in satirical news. Specifically, we show how one rhetorical device (metaphors) can be used in different ways as a means to (1) fulfill various rhetorical functions (simultaneously) and (2) switch between various discursive modes within one program segment. This approach gives a better understanding of the nature and characteristics of this hybrid genre.

We first present and explain our typology of metaphorical humor in satirical news, in which we discuss the rhetorical functions of satirical news, and show why and how metaphors can be used as a means to realize these functions. We conclude with a research agenda for future research into this topic.

### **A Typology of Metaphorical Humor in Satirical News**

To investigate intra-genre differences in satirical news through the use of discursive modes, we first need to identify satire's rhetorical functions. Although satirical news is a form of political humor (Young, 2014), scholars have struggled to precisely define this hybrid genre (Baym, 2005; Holbert, Tchernev, Walther, Esralew, & Benski, 2013). Scholars do agree that, overall, satirical news has three core rhetorical functions: (a) being humorous, (b) educating and informing the audience, and (c) criticizing structures of power (Baym, 2005). First of all, various scholars and even satirists themselves argue that comedy is satire's primary agenda (Baym, 2005; Goodnow, 2011) and that satirists' main goal is to make people laugh (Baym, 2005). Second, satirists try to educate and inform their audiences by explaining sometimes difficult, political, economic, or societal topics (Baym, 2005; Holbert, Hmielowski, Jain, Lather, & Morey, 2011). Third, satirists frequently attempt to socially attack the status quo by criticizing and ridiculing structures of power and the media outlets that fail to report on them (Baym, 2005; McClennen & Maisel, 2014).

A rhetorical device that can be used by satirists as a means to achieve these disparate functions is metaphor (Otieno, Owino, & Attyang, 2016; Simpson, 2003; Veale, 2013; Whaley & Holloway, 1997). Metaphors are defined as "cross-domain mappings" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980/2003), in which information from a source domain is mapped onto a target domain, as in Example (1).

- (1) "When we win, we are going to drain the swamp in Washington, DC." (Donald Trump in *CBS News*; Rhodes, October 22, 2016, 0:31:15)

Example 1 describes Trump's intention to fix the problems in the federal government, uttered at various rallies during his presidential campaign of 2016. This metaphor maps information from the source domain (the ecosystem of a swamp) onto the target domain (the federal government in Washington, DC). Metaphors are capable of explaining new, complex, and abstract concepts that are sometimes difficult to express using literal language (Goode, Dahl, & Moreau, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980/2003). Moreover, metaphors are prevalent in language use. Various studies, for instance, showed that about 20% of the words used in newspaper articles are metaphorical (Burgers, Renardel de Lavalette & Steen, 2018; Steen, Dorst, Herrmann, Kaal, & Krennmayr, 2010).

Using metaphors not only results in a linguistic embellishment of a message (focusing on how something is said) but also involves a dimension of thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980/2003). Metaphors can work as reasoning devices by containing important conceptual content (focusing on what is said; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980/2003). This idea is further elaborated in figurative framing theory, which argues that metaphors work and can be seen as specific types of frames, and can thereby shape public discourse by giving meaning to the societal and political topics discussed (Burgers, Konijn, & Steen, 2016). According to Entman (1993), framing means "select[ing] some aspects of a perceived reality and mak[ing] them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 52). The "drain the swamp" metaphor, used in Example 1, fulfills all of these criteria (Burgers, Jong Tjien Fa, & de Graaf, 2019). First of all, this metaphor implies a problem definition of bad governance, in that Washington, DC, resembles a swamp. Second, this metaphor contains a moral evaluation, in that this swamp is undesirable. Last, this metaphor implies a treatment recommendation, in that the swamp needs to be drained, and thereby frames the issue of governance in the U.S. (Burgers et al., 2019).

Scholars argue that metaphors can have persuasive impact, because they play an important role in human cognition (Charteris-Black, 2011; Perrez & Reuchamps, 2015). Over the years, the use and effects of metaphors has been studied extensively in numerous research areas, from marketing (e.g., Goode et al., 2010; Gregan-Paxton, Hibbard, Brunel & Azar, 2002) to science and education (e.g., Cameron, 2002), to political discourse (e.g., Bougher, 2012; Charteris-Black, 2011). The processing of the cross-domain mapping of a metaphor can serve as a small puzzle and can generate positive affect when solved (Gregan-Paxton et al., 2002; Hoeken, Swanepoel, Saal, & Jansen, 2009). Using metaphors to talk about politics or other complex issues may make these issues more enjoyable, lively, and comprehensible (Mio, 1997; Morris, Sheldon, Ames, & Young, 2007; Read, Cesa, Jones, & Collins, 1990). In relation to political discourse, this line of research shows that, metaphors can stir emotions (Gibbs & Colston, 2012), and compared with non-metaphorical equivalents, metaphors generally influence political beliefs and attitudes to be more in line with the metaphor (Brugman, Burgers, & Vis, 2019; Sopory & Dillard, 2002). However, the use and effects of metaphors in satirical news has barely received any scholarly attention.<sup>2</sup>

### ***Metaphors and Satire***

The relation between satirical news and metaphors has been attested by satirists themselves. Satirist Hasan Minhaj, for instance once argued that "comedy is basically simile and metaphor. That's like this. This is like that" (Peele, 2018, para. 9). Humorous descriptions are often couched into the form of a metaphor (Veale, 2013).<sup>3</sup> Metaphors lend themselves well for expressing humorous intent because they

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<sup>2</sup> For exceptions see, Grofman (1989), who studied the use of metaphorical allusion in political satire, or Skalicky and Crossley (2019), who examined the online processing of satirical newspaper headlines that differed on various linguistic content elements, such as metaphors.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that linguistically speaking, (potentially) humoristic metaphors possess the same characteristics as non-humoristic metaphors. However, the difference between the two lies in the rhetorical intentions of the speaker, the context, and a viewer's evaluation of the metaphor, which depends on different kinds of circumstances.

can meet all requirements for humor expressed in the general theory of verbal humor (GTVH; Attardo & Raskin, 1991). In other words, metaphors are a suitable rhetorical device that satirists can use to fulfill the humor function of satirical news.<sup>4</sup>

According to the GTVH (Attardo & Raskin, 1991), humor arises on the basis of an incongruity between two semantic scripts, and the resolution of that incongruity causes something to be experienced as funny. Thus, the use of two semantic scripts in opposition is key to humor (Attardo & Raskin, 1991). In research on humorous metaphors, these scripts are typically described as the target and source domains. The GTVH posits that, for humor to work, the two scripts (a) have to overlap in some way and (b) should be opposed to each other. According to the incongruity-resolution principle (Attardo & Raskin, 1991), humor arises following a set process. First, an individual processes a piece of information until that individual recognizes an incongruity. The incongruity is subsequently resolved according to a cognitive rule. In the case of direct metaphors, the metaphor flag "is like" signals the individual to process the information as analogical. This means that the individual applies source-domain knowledge onto the target, which results in noticing similarities between, at first, two seemingly unrelated concepts (Whaley & Holloway, 1997), and thereby perceiving the incongruous element as somehow being congruent.

The humorous function of metaphors arises from a partial resolution of the metaphorical mapping (Oring, 2003). According to Dynel (2009), a complete removal of the incongruity between two semantic scripts, would stand in the way of the appreciation of the two competitive meanings, and in turn of the whole humorous message. Such a partial resolution can for instance be found in Example 2.

- (2) "Donald Trump is like Godzilla; everything they throw at the monster makes him stronger."  
(In *Real Time With Bill Maher*; Maher & Casey, August 14, 2018, 0:04:42)

The humoristic metaphor in Example 2 contains a human (Donald Trump) versus animal (Godzilla) script opposition. This script opposition is partially resolved by analogically applying similarities from the source domain "Godzilla" onto the target domain "Donald Trump." Bill Maher therefore implies that, like Godzilla, Trump encountered all kinds of attacks in an effort trying to stop him. However, as with Godzilla, most of these attacks were unsuccessful. Nevertheless, not all Godzilla's characteristics can be mapped onto Trump (e.g., throughout different movies, Godzilla changes in character; sometimes he

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<sup>4</sup> Metaphors can be divided into two different types—indirect and direct metaphors. For indirect metaphors such as "Donald Trump attacked Hillary Clinton during the debate," the cross-domain mapping is implied rather than explicitly expressed in language (the source domain of WAR, FIGHTING, or VIOLENCE is evoked indirectly). For direct metaphors such as "This election is like *The Hunger Games*," the opposite is true; the cross-domain mapping is explicitly expressed in language. Direct metaphors are often (but not always) characterized by the presence of a signal for comparison (e.g., "like" or "such as"), whereas indirect metaphors typically do not contain such a signal (Steen et al., 2010). The bulk of metaphorical language in regular discourse is indirect (Steen et al., 2010). However, in this article, we focused on the use of direct metaphors, because humor revolves around contrast and similarities between two semantic scripts (as explained in the GTVH; Attardo & Raskin, 1991). To make this incongruity-resolution principle work, both scripts must be present in the utterance, as is the case in direct metaphors.

is portrayed as a devastating monster, and other times as a protector of the Earth). This means that the incongruity of the metaphorical mapping is only partially resolved (Oring, 2003). When the balance of the similarity and dissimilarity between the target and the source domain reaches a level of “appropriate incongruity” (Oring, 2003), the result is often witty, insightful, and ridiculous (Veale, 2013).

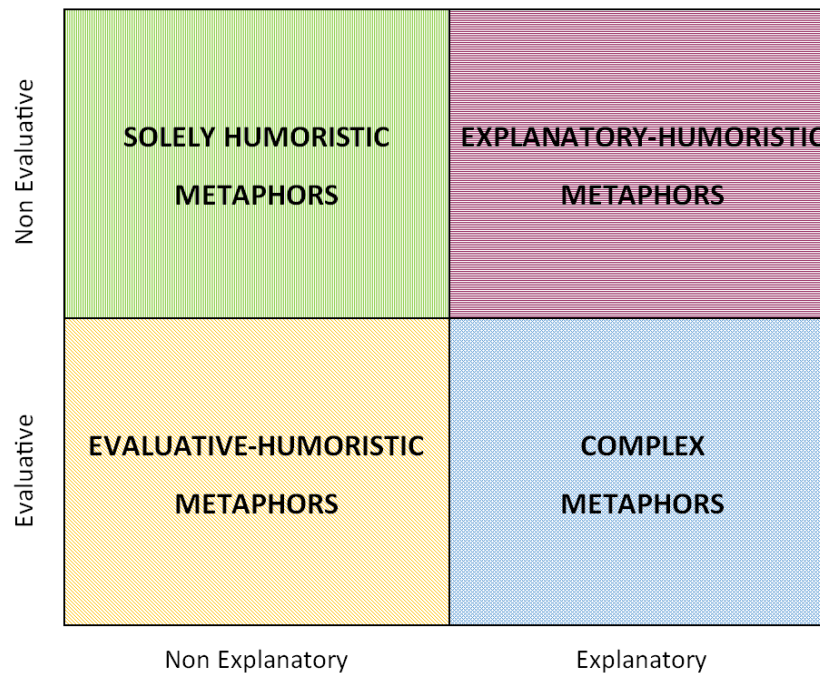
According to Dynel (2009), the humorous potential of the incongruity-resolution principle in metaphors can derive from surprising, novel, and unconventional cross-domain mappings. It is often assumed that the greater the semantic distance between the target and the source domain, the more humorous the metaphor will be (Pollio, 1996). However, Dynel (2009) argues that it might not necessarily be the size of the semantic distance between the two domains, but the kind of domains that are used, in that the source domain might be perceived as taboo or inappropriate. Such metaphors describe a source domain that is inherently funny, and can therefore also be considered as potentially humorous (Attardo, 2015).

To integrate research on satirical news with research on metaphors and humor, we created a typology of metaphorical humor that shows how metaphors are used by satirists as rhetorical devices to fulfill satire’s three core rhetorical functions (Otieno et al., 2016; Veale, 2013; Whaley & Holloway, 1997). Because humor is satire’s primary function (Baym, 2005; Goodnow, 2011), we argue that almost all<sup>5</sup> metaphors used in satirical news have a humorous rhetorical goal. This resulted in our humoristic metaphors in satirical news (HMSN) typology. This typology consists of four types of metaphors that are reflective of four discursive modes: solely humoristic metaphors, explanatory-humoristic metaphors, evaluative-humoristic metaphors, and complex metaphors that contain all three functions of satirical news (see Figure 1).

In the following sections, we explicate the characteristics and roles of each of these types of metaphors in satirical news. To further specify the concept of discursive mode (Baym, 2013), we analyze metaphors from satirical monologues and show how one metaphor can be used to fulfill one or more rhetorical functions, and that through the use of metaphors, satirists can switch between various discursive modes within one program segment. Overall, our typology increases our understanding of the nature and characteristics of satirical news by highlighting the role of metaphors in satirical news.

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<sup>5</sup> There are a few instances where satirists also use non-humoristic metaphors. This often happens shortly after serious events (e.g., the 9/11 attacks), or when very serious political issues are discussed (e.g., a metaphor uttered by the satirist Hasan Minhaj in his show *Patriot Act With Hasan Minhaj*: “Trump treats all undocumented immigrants like criminals”; Minhaj & Preuss, November 25, 2018, 0:03:18).



**Figure 1. The humoristic metaphors in satirical news (HMSN) typology.**

### ***Solely Humoristic Metaphors***

Satirical news balances providing humor, information, and criticism about political, economic, or social affairs (Caufield, 2008). Like metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980/2003), satirical news must contain a political, economic, or social target (Caufield, 2008), which serves as the object of humorous explanations and evaluations. However, in some cases, satirists use metaphors that do not contain a political, economic, or social target. We label this type as solely humoristic metaphors (see Figure 1). This type of metaphor is often used to make jokes about the satirist him- or herself or to explain parts of the satirical news program, for example:

- (3) "You know, I tend to focus on the big, meaty stories. But sometimes, I like to scrape together the little greasy bits and mush them together with cornmeal to make news scrapple, in my segment . . . 'Meanwhile.'" (In *The Late Show With Stephen Colbert*; Katsir & Hoskinson, January 22, 2019, 00:00:01)

Example 3 employs the incongruity-resolution principle, as expressed in the GTVH (Attardo & Raskin, 1991), making the example humorous. The novel metaphor in Example 3 used in the introduction of Stephen Colbert's satirical monologue, contains a nonedible ("Meanwhile"—a news story segment in Colbert's satirical news show) versus edible (scrapple—a dish composed of a mush of pork scraps, cornmeal, wheat flour, and spices) script opposition. This script opposition is partially resolved by analogically applying characteristics from



the source domain “scrapple” onto the target domain “news stories in ‘Meanwhile.’” This implies that Colbert’s story segment is a collection of news stories that were not covered in other segments.

This example shows that metaphors can be used by satirists to explain certain nonpolitical, noneconomic, and nonsocial issues. On its own, this solely humoristic discursive mode, cannot be classified as “satirical,” because the metaphor does not contain a political, economic, or social target (Caufield, 2008). However, when this discursive mode is used in combination with the other discursive modes in our HMSN typology, solely humoristic metaphors can contribute to the realizations of all rhetorical functions of satirical news, and can thereby still work as frames by giving meaning to the larger political, economic or societal topics that are discussed in the satirical news segment (Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016).

### ***Explanatory-Humoristic Metaphors***

Metaphors can help people make sense of political events such as presidential campaigns, policy issues, or political institutions (Otieno et al., 2016), by expressing concepts and ideas that are difficult to express literally. This means that metaphors are a suitable rhetorical device that satirists can use to fulfill the educational and humor functions of satirical news simultaneously, by trying to humorously explain difficult political topics to their audience (Baym, 2005; Holbert et al., 2011). In other words, metaphors can be reflective of an explanatory-humoristic discursive mode. This results in the second form in our typology: the explanatory-humoristic metaphors (see Figure 1).

Explanations are characterized by features that aid in understanding, such as specificity, clarity, and systematicity (Gentner, 1982). These types of metaphors are used to explain the unknown in terms of the known with the goal of sensemaking (Hoffman, Eskridge & Shelley, 2009). Simpson (2003) argues that the “conjunction of two domains of reference invites a fresh perspective, which, in the specific situation of satirical discourse, translates into a ‘new way of seeing’ a projected object of attack” (p. 143). Studies into the use and effects explanatory metaphors in other research areas show that these metaphors can have a positive influence on learning and comprehension (Cameron, 2002; Glynn & Takahashi, 1998). To illustrate these functions of metaphors in satirical news, consider the following two examples:

- (4) “There are actually three different divisions of ICE [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement]. They are called HIS, OPLA, and ERO. Think of them like the Franco brothers. OPLA is like Tom Franco; he’s irrelevant and you didn’t know he existed until I said his name right now. ERO are the ones who do the aggressive shit—immigration rates, detaining people, cuffing construction workers. They are like James Franco; they attract the most media attention, they have to defend against claims of harassment. . . . The third branch is HSI. HSI is like Dave Franco; it puts out an uneven but at times respectable body of work quietly and methodically. Now, Dave isn’t perfect, but he does the important shit, like cracking down on transnational crime.” (In *Patriot Act With Hasan Minhaj*; Minhaj & Preuss, November 25, 2018, 0:04:42).
- (5) “Basically, think of getting a work visa [in the United States] as getting a backstage pass to see [South Korean boy band] BTS. Sure, it’ll allow you to hang around for a bit, but you’re

probably not going to end up becoming part of the band.” (In *Last Week Tonight With John Oliver*; Oliver & Perota, September 15, 2019, 0:10:15)

Examples 4 and 5 employ the incongruity-resolution principle (Attardo & Raskin, 1991), making the metaphors humorous. For instance, the novel and somewhat absurd metaphor in Example 4 contains a nonhuman (HIS, OPLA, and ERO, the three divisions of the government organization ICE) versus human (the Franco brothers, who are three famous brothers in the entertainment world) script opposition. In the novel metaphor in Example 5, John Oliver argues that when someone receives a work visa, this does not mean he or she is guaranteed to stay in the U.S. This example is humorous because it contains a politics (the rules for receiving a work visa) versus popular culture (getting a backstage pass for the popular boy band BTS) script opposition.

Moreover, the metaphors in Examples 4 and 5 are used to explain something to the audience. Through comparing the three divisions of ICE with the three Franco brothers, Example 4 explains that HIS, OPLA, and ERO have different tasks. Thus, this framing helps people comprehend the organizational structure of ICE, an American government organization that some viewers may know little about. The metaphor in Example 5 helps people make sense of the complexity of turning a work visa into a green card in America. This metaphor compares getting a work visa, which often precedes getting a green card, to getting a backstage pass to see BTS. This framing helps explain that getting a work visa does not necessarily guarantee a green card. Just like receiving a rare backstage pass to see BTS, it does not guarantee you a place in the boy band; you are only allowed to stay backstage (in America) for a while.

Such examples show that, although expressing a humorous discursive mode can be achieved in different ways, the humorous potential of the metaphor is typically based on the incongruity-resolution principle (Attardo & Raskin, 1991). In the examples above, satirists chose a source domain that is somewhat absurd and/or ridiculous, to increase the dissimilarity between the target and the source domain. This means that in the case of humorous metaphors (compared with non-humorous ones), the comparison between the target and the source domain is not only used to show similarities but also to emphasize dissimilarities between the concepts. It is exactly that contrast (the balance of similarity and dissimilarity, i.e., appropriate incongruity; Oring, 2003) that makes these metaphors humorous.

Moreover, these examples illustrate that, by choosing source domains that are novel, absurd, and/or somewhat ridiculous, satirists are not only trying to express humorous intent but also try to educate their audience, by explaining something unknown in terms of something known, making difficult and abstract political or societal topics easier to comprehend. Therefore, these metaphors are reflective of an explanatory-humoristic discursive mode. Although these metaphors are meant to be explanatory, that does not necessarily mean that they will always contribute to people's sensemaking. Sometimes, metaphors may confuse rather than clarify; this can, for example, happen when the dissimilarities between the two domains are too large, or when the source domain is unknown to the public (e.g., when the audience does not know the Franco brothers or BTS; Attardo & Raskin, 1991; Hoeken et al., 2009).

### ***Evaluative-Humoristic Metaphors***

Metaphors can add evaluative meaning to political issues— by for example, using “humor and ridicule to attack the opponent in a condensed, quotable form perfectly adapted for the media” (Whaley & Holloway, 1997, p. 294). This means that metaphors are a suitable rhetorical device that satirists can use to fulfil the criticism and humor functions of satirical news simultaneously, by humorously attacking the status quo (Baym, 2005; McClennen & Maisel, 2014). In other words, metaphors can be reflective of an evaluative-humoristic discursive mode. This results in the third form in our typology: the evaluative-humoristic metaphors (see Figure 1).

Research into the use and effects of evaluative metaphors<sup>6</sup> shows that they can negatively affect precursors to persuasion (Whaley, 1997), such as individuals’ likability ratings of the communicator, and indirectly (through likability) influence the attitude toward the position advocated in the message (Whaley & Wagner, 2000). To illustrate these functions of metaphors in satirical news, consider the following two examples:

- (6) “Our [American] representatives are like badly trained dogs; we can pretend that they’re following our orders, but they’ll mostly just do whatever they want and take huge shits on all the things you care about.” (In *The Jim Jefferies Show*; Reich & McAloon, October 9, 2018, 0:00:16)
- (7) “So, Trump wants to strip away the constitutional rights of immigrants, but when it’s his own aides being investigated, he suddenly sounds like a guy being dragged away from the buffet for trying to put shrimp in his pockets: ‘How dare you!’” (In *Late Night With Seth Meyers*; Baze & Vietmeier, June 26, 2018, 0:10:10)

Examples 6 and 7 employ the incongruity-resolution principle (Attardo & Raskin, 1991), making the metaphors humorous. For instance, the novel and slightly inappropriate (e.g., poorly trained dogs that relieve themselves) metaphor in Example 6 contains a human (American representatives) versus animal (poorly trained dogs) script opposition. The absurd and ridiculous metaphor in Example 7 contains a politics (Donald Trump making decisions about the rights of immigrants) versus childish behavior (being dragged away from the buffet) script opposition.

However, Examples 6 and 7 are different from Examples 4 and 5, in that Examples 6 and 7 contain an evaluation about a political actor or object. In satirical news, evaluative metaphors serve as social attacks, by critiquing a political object, by challenging a political actor’s claim, or by exposing their fallacious reasoning (Whaley & Holloway, 1997). A humoristic metaphor in satire is therefore evaluative if it (in)directly casts an opinion about a certain political object. The metaphor in Example 6 frames the issue of American politics and politicians and is evaluative because Jim Jefferies casts a negative opinion about the American

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<sup>6</sup> The studies mentioned (Whaley, 1997; Whaley & Wagner, 2000, and later in the article Colston, 2000; Colston & Gibbs, 1998) talk about the persuasive effects of rebuttal analogies. Analogies are not necessarily always metaphorical, but they can be. Almost all rebuttal analogies used in the stimulus materials of these experiments were metaphorical in nature.

representatives, by implying that they do not care about “the people.” In Example 7, Seth Meyers indirectly communicates that he sees Donald Trump’s behavior as hypocritical through the comparison between “stripping away the constitutional rights of immigrants” and “being dragged away from a buffet.” This metaphor therefore casts a negative evaluation about Trump’s actions.

In relation to the evaluative nature of satirical news, an important distinction can be made between Horatian and Juvenalian satire (Knight, 2004; Simpson, 2003). Horatian satire is characterized as a light form of criticism (Holbert et al., 2011) and is often classified as comedy, optimistic and gentle in tone (Knight, 2004; Simpson, 2003). By contrast, Juvenalian satire is characterized as a harsher form of criticism, and is often classified as tragedy, pessimistic and more acidic in tone (Knight, 2004; Simpson, 2003). To the best of our knowledge, no empirical studies have investigated on which message elements these different types of criticism really differ, and how (LaMarre, Landreville, Young, & Gilkerson, 2014). Scholars argue that satirical news shows, such as *Full Frontal With Samantha Bee* (Kaye, 2020), are more Juvenalian in tone (Holbert et al., 2011), whereas shows such as *The Daily Show* are more Horatian (Baym, 2005). Nevertheless, satirists often use multiple forms of satire in their shows, making it important not to categorize entire shows as either Juvenalian or Horatian satire (Holbert, 2016; Holbert et al., 2011; LaMarre et al., 2014). We integrate the distinction between Horatian and Juvenalian satire into our HMSN typology by further specifying the discursive mode of humoristic-evaluative metaphors through Holbert’s (2016) political satire appropriateness (PSA) Model.

To assess how “harsh” these metaphorical humoristic attacks are, we can use the folly, vice, sin division proposed by Holbert (2016), by applying it on the content of the evaluative-humoristic metaphor. In his PSA model, Holbert argues that the folly-vice-sin-quotient is one of the two factors that determine what and when political objects are likely to attract satire’s attention. Although Holbert does not provide a further definition for these categories, the *Macmillan Dictionary–American English Edition* indicates that folly can be described as “a way of thinking or behaving that is stupid and careless, and likely to have bad results,” (“folly,” n.d., def. 1) vice can be seen as “a bad habit or personal quality” (“vice,” n.d., def. 1) and sin is defined as “an action or way of behaving that you think is morally wrong” (“sin,” n.d., def. 2). This classification thus ranges from slightly bad (folly, e.g., a politician making a gaffe in a public performance), to bad (vice, e.g., a politician having an affair), to very bad (sin, e.g., a politician lying under oath).

Comparing the assessment of the behavior of the political object in the target domain of the metaphor on folly, vice, or sin with the assessment of the behavior of the object in the source domain of the metaphor on folly, vice, or sin can provide an indication of the harshness of the humoristic attack. In particular, when the behavior of the political object in the target domain of a metaphor is categorized as vice or sin, whereas the behavior of the object in the source domain of a metaphor is only categorized as folly, the criticism in the humoristic metaphor can be seen as “mild,” as is the case in Example 7. In this metaphor, the target “stripping away the constitutional rights of immigrants” can be seen, in the view of Democrats, as vice or even sinful behavior, whereas the source “sounding like a guy who is being dragged away from the buffet for trying to put shrimp in his pockets” is a somewhat “milder” form of bad behavior; the example can therefore be considered as illustrating folly. The classification of the target behavior and the source behavior in this metaphor is unequal, which results in a mild form of criticism (i.e., this metaphor is more Horatian in tone).

When both the target and source behaviors fall into the same category (e.g., both folly), the evaluative-humorous metaphor can be seen as not too harsh and not too mild, but as “moderate” (i.e., this metaphor can be placed somewhere between Horatian and Juvenalian satire). This is, for instance, reflected in Example 6, where both the selfish behavior of the representatives in America in the target domain of the metaphor, as well as the behavior of the poorly trained dogs in the source domain of the metaphor, can be categorized as folly. This means that the degree of criticism in the source domain, justifies and is appropriate to the degree of “bad” behavior of the political object in the target domain.

In addition, another possibility entails that the political object in the target domain of the metaphor falls into the category of “folly” and the behavior of the object in the source domain falls into the category of “sin,” then the criticism can be seen as harsh (because of the mismatch between the behavior in the target domain and the criticism in the source domain), as is the case in Example (8), from *The Opposition With Jordan Klepper*. In his show, Klepper parodies far-right conservative Internet personalities. In this example, Klepper’s ironic persona responds to the news that Trump had the second-highest presidential approval rating within the Republican Party:

- (8) “But Opposers [audience of the show], let’s stay humble about this winning, because like George W. Bush on 9/11, we didn’t do it alone.” (In *The Opposition With Jordan Klepper*; Klepper & O’Neil, June 28, 2018, 0:00:16)

Because Klepper assumes an ironic persona, almost anything he says while being in character can be ironically interpreted. In this example, Klepper compares the high presidential approval ratings in the Republican Party for President Trump with the horrible 9/11 terroristic attacks. He also indirectly hints about the comparison between the alleged aid the Trump campaign received from Russia, and conspiracy theories that claim President George W. Bush orchestrated 9/11. In the view of liberals, these high presidential approval ratings can be seen as folly or vice, whereas the 9/11 terroristic attack was definitely a sinful act. Therefore, this metaphorical attack can be seen as “harsh,” because the comparison with the sinful source behavior is not justified in relation to the lighter target behavior (i.e., this metaphor is more Juvenalian in tone). When Klepper uttered this metaphor, the public started groaning.

Overall, these examples show that evaluative-humorous metaphors can be reflective of various degrees of harshness. How this categorization should be further defined and operationalized so that it can reliably be applied to large data sets, is a very complex task, which should receive more attention in the future. Furthermore, these examples show that the use of other rhetorical devices, such as verbal irony and hyperbole, can also enhance the strength of the metaphorical attack on a political object. Although these metaphors reflect various degrees of harshness, that does not necessarily mean that they will always be perceived as such by the receiver. It is often assumed that individuals who identify with the aggressor rather than the victim of a joke perceive the joke as being more humorous (Ferguson & Ford, 2008). This means that Democrats may be likelier than Republicans to perceive a moderate to harsh satirical attack on a Republican politician as funny and appropriate, and vice versa.

### **Complex Metaphors**

Although the metaphors used in the previous sections illustrated how the discursive modes used in satirical news consist of one or a combination of two rhetorical functions, all three rhetorical functions can be realized through the use of a single metaphor. This means that metaphors are able to simultaneously express humorous intent, explain something to the audience, and criticize structures of powers. In other words, metaphors can be reflective of an evaluative-explanatory-humoristic (i.e., complex) discursive mode. This results in the last and fourth form in our typology: the complex metaphors (see Figure 1). To illustrate these functions of metaphors in satirical news, consider the following examples:

(9) “[The clothing brand] Supreme is a cultural phenomenon built on hype. And if you don’t know what hype is . . . Hype is kind of a big excitement that has a deep emptiness at its core, like New Year’s Eve or the Democratic Party.” (In *Patriot Act With Hasan Minhaj*; Minhaj & Preuss, November 18, 2018, 0:02:54)

(10) “Because one of the problems with a roaring economy is that it tends to make people put up with a bad president. It’s like great sex in bad relationship, when the sex is good, all the annoying things your partner does are forgiven. That’s what we’re in right now: the good sex economy. I just want America to say about Trump what everybody in a relationship says when the hot sex wears off: What the fuck am I doing with this person?” (In *Real Time With Bill Maher*; Maher & Casey, June 22, 2018, 0:06:13)

Examples 9 and 10 are different from all other examples used above, in that they fulfil the three core functions of satirical news simultaneously. First of all, the novel and sometimes absurd metaphors in Examples 9 and 10 are both humorous, and employ the incongruity-resolution principle (Attardo & Raskin, 1991). Example 9, for instance, contains a popular culture (hype) versus political (Democratic party) script opposition, and Example 10 contains a non-sex (putting up with a bad president) versus sex (great sex in a bad relationship) script opposition.

Second, these humoristic metaphors fulfil the educational function of satirical news, making these examples both explanatory. This is reflected in Example 9, in which the comparison with New Year’s Eve or the Democratic Party defines hype. The metaphor in Example 10 provides a frame about America’s society and helps people make sense of America’s current economic and societal situation.

Finally, Examples 9 and 10 fulfil the criticism function of satirical news, making them evaluative as well. In Example 9, this is demonstrated by Hasan Minhaj indirectly casting a negative opinion about the Democratic Party, in that he implies that the Democratic Party has a deep emptiness at its core. In addition, Bill Maher in Example 10 also indirectly communicates that, in his opinion, America should replace Donald Trump, by comparing him with a sex partner whom you should say goodbye to when the “hot sex wears off.”

Overall, Examples 9 and 10 illustrate that metaphors can simultaneously express humorous intent, explain difficult political topics, and criticize structures of power when talking about political, economic, or societal issues. This makes the use of metaphors a useful, versatile, and fruitful rhetorical device for satirists

to achieve their rhetorical goals. However, satirists will probably use some combinations of rhetorical functions (i.e., a discursive mode) in certain situations more than other combinations of rhetorical functions, depending on the topic and the location of that topic in the satirical show.

### Research Agenda

In this article, we took on the question of how satirists use metaphors as a rhetorical device to realize and switch between various discursive modes in this hybrid genre. We have shown through an interdisciplinary link between discursive modes (Baym, 2013), figurative framing theory (Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016), and the GTVH (Attardo & Raskin, 1991), that the concept of discursive mode (Baym, 2013) not only contrasts specific segments within a genre but can also be used to contrast rhetorical functions within the same program segment. We thus demonstrated that the concept discursive mode (1) also applies to a more specific level of analysis, and that (2) discursive modes are not necessarily competing and mutually exclusive, in that switching between discursive modes is possible within one program segment. This categorization broadens our understanding of the nature and characteristics of the hybrid genre of satirical news, in that these various forms of metaphors have important implications for talking about and understanding politics (Baym, 2013; Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016). We argue that these metaphors can shape public discourse by giving meaning to the societal and political issues discussed in satirical news (Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016), in that these metaphors frame these issues by trying to humorously explaining and/or by humorously criticizing them.

Through our HMSN typology, we have established a framework for further systematic research into the use of metaphors as a means of reflecting various discursive modes in satirical news, in that it makes all the types of discursive modes visible and explicit. A key issue to be addressed in future research is how metaphors are used as realizations of discursive modes in other segments of satirical news shows beyond monologues—for example, in the political interviews that were the subject of study in the research of Baym (2013), or in other satirical segments, such as political sketches in shows like *Saturday Night Live*. Additional studies are needed to investigate when and why satirists use certain discursive modes more than others when addressing certain political, economic, or societal issues.

Moreover, according to Baym (2013) “particular genres may lend themselves more readily to particular discursive modes or erect greater barriers to the articulation of others” (p. 16). To further expand the concept of discursive mode, it might therefore be useful to assess whether this typology can also be applied to other humorous media genres, such as sitcoms, romantic comedies, or stand-up comedy.

Furthermore, in addition to metaphors, other rhetorical devices, such as verbal irony and hyperbole, can be used by satirist as a means to reflect various discursive modes (Simpson, 2003; Young, Bagozzi, Goldring, Poulsen, & Drouin, 2017). Research has shown that these rhetorical devices can play an important role in evaluative-humoristic metaphors, in that the degree of “social attack” of the metaphor is directly linked to the exaggeration (hyperbole) of the target domain of the metaphor (Whaley & Holloway, 1997). The more exaggerated the source domain, the more ridicule and humor the metaphor creates. Moreover, according to Colston and Gibbs (1998), verbal irony is a crucial component of evaluative-humoristic metaphors. In various experimental studies, Colston (2000) shows that ironic evaluative-

humoristic metaphors are more argumentative and perceived as more of a "social attack" than are non-ironic evaluative-humoristic metaphors.

In addition, figurative framing theory claims that the use of frames that consist of combinations of irony, hyperbole, and metaphor can have an impact beyond the use of each of these devices in isolation (Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016). The use of two or more rhetorical devices makes it harder for the audience to challenge the message. When two or more rhetorical devices operate at the same time (e.g., when the satirist Jordan Klepper uses an ironic metaphor), it becomes difficult for the viewer to pin down satirists on their words (Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016). Future research should therefore be concerned with how and when rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphor, irony, hyperbole) are used, in isolation or in combination, to realize various discursive modes. However, when studying the use of other, or combinations of, rhetorical devices, researchers should consider that rhetorical devices such as hyperbole and verbal irony are inherently evaluative (Burgers, van Mulken & Schellens, 2011; Burgers, Brugman, Renardel de Lavalette, & Steen, 2016). Hyperbole and verbal irony thus cannot perform all of the same (combinations of) rhetorical functions as metaphors in satirical news.

Another step to further the research on the theoretical concept of discursive modes concerns how viewers respond to various discursive modes within the same segment (Baym, 2013). To investigate how the various metaphorical discursive modes in the HMSN typology can affect viewers, it is important to consider how metaphors are processed. Novel, direct metaphors are often processed by comparison, whereas familiar, indirect metaphors are often processed by categorization (Bowdle & Gentner, 2005). The analogical processing of a novel, direct metaphor consists of three stages: access, mapping, and inference (Gentner & Markman, 1997). The access phase consists of an individual retrieving the source domain of the metaphor from his or her long-term memory. When the target domain is activated in the brain, the mapping phase is initiated, in which structural similarities between the target and the source domain are identified and aligned. This mapping phase is a necessary step for individuals to eventually generate inferences about the target domain of the metaphor (Gentner & Markman, 1997). An important question to address in future research is whether the use of the four discursive modes in our HMSN typology might also lead to differences in processing, and if this in turn might affect the informative and persuasive potential of these metaphors.

### **Conclusion**

The goal of this article was to gain more insight into the nature and characteristics of the hybrid genre of satirical news, by further specifying the concept of discursive mode. We introduced the HMSN typology of metaphorical humor containing various forms of humoristic metaphors that reflect four different discursive modes. With this typology, we first of all showed that metaphors can be used as a means to operationalize satire's three core rhetorical functions, which are the building blocks of discursive modes. Second, we demonstrated that the concept of discursive mode also applies to a more specific level of analysis, and that discursive modes are not necessarily competing and mutually exclusive, in that switching between discursive modes is possible within one program segment. Overall, this typology gives us a better understanding of the hybrid genre of satirical news, and how the use of metaphors can frame public discourse by giving meaning to the important and relevant societal and political issues discussed in satirical news.



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