

Satirizing Politicians and Public Officers in Nigerian Newspapers

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Abstract

Satire is one of the major ways societal ills are ridiculed by writers and social critics. This paper examines how the Nigerian writers employ their creative potentials by manipulating words through morphological and lexico-semantic processes in order to ridicule the vices in the society. The President of the nation, politicians, and the police are the major targets of satirist. The paper identified some linguistic processes used to convey satirical expressions ion Nigerian newspapers, such as; blending, acronyming, metaphor, pun, conversion allusion and connotation.

Key words: satire, politicians, humour, media, police, lexico-semantic

Introduction

The forms and function of any language use is one of the major objectives of modern linguistic enquiry. In recent years, linguists have been studying how language is structured for certain specific communicative roles. The function a particular text is performing in the context of its use is particularly of importance in the modern day study of written and spoken texts. The concern of this work is one of such instances of language, which can be directly interpreted on the basis of its social relevance to the entire society.

The Press is often seen as the watchdog of the society, which uses language as a tool to express its feelings about how the society runs at any particular period. It manipulates the language and employs its power to point at, expose and ridicule the ills of the society and the perpetrators of such ills. Satire, as such device is called, is a writing that is critical of the evil in the society. Satirists employ humour as a tool for achieving their goal of improving the society.

The news media is an area of veritable research for linguists. Of recent, scholars have been exploring how the social structure relates to the discourse structure. The media being a widespread purveyor of talk about the world and our position in it, more linguists are getting interested in studying its language, particularly the language of newspaper. Scholars such as, van Dijk (1988), Bell (1991), Fairclough (2000), Wodak (1989) have done discourse analytic work on the language of the media and the social relevance of the language in the society. These scholars work within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis.

This paper looks at a prominent feature of language, which is creativity, which makes all languages ready to permit the expression of new meanings through the property of language called "openness". The paper therefore looks at how writers in the newspaper medium manipulate their linguistic skills to achieve their goal as the watchdog of the Nigerian society. Specifically, it looks at the various linguistic devices used in Nigerian newspaper discourse to attack and ridicule corruptive, criminal and scandalous acts in the Nigerian society. Extracts of forms considered to be satirical in the context of their use were elicited from three major Nigerian newspapers - *The Punch*, *Daily Sun* and *The Guardian*. The social, political, historical and pragmatic contexts in which such forms situate play prominent roles in interpreting them and determining their consideration as satires.

Satire in Language Use

Beyond its use to report the state of affairs among its speakers, language is also used to perform some acts. This is the major assertion of the Speech Acts Theory (see Austin, 1962). Underlying every language use is the fact that the users intended it to have some effects on the listeners and oftentimes, the speaker tries to get the listeners to recognize this intention. Such intentions include informing, requesting, ordering, warning, and so forth. In addition, language is often used to criticize. Criticism may come in different ways – directly or indirectly, constructively and destructively. Such instances of language use for critical and corrective purposes are deliberate and the users work to get their listeners or readers recognize their purpose. A particular societal or individual act is criticized because it falls short of some standard, which the critic desires that it should reach. Criticisms may be done to ridicule the target by poking fun at such targets. Such criticisms are generally regarded as satire. Thrall, et al (1960) as quoted in Harris (2004) defines satire as:

*A literary manner, which blends a critical attitude with humour
And wit to the end that human institutions or humanity may be
Improved (p.1)*

Likewise, The Wikipedia Encyclopedia defines satire as:

*A technique of writing or art which exposes the follies of its
Subjects (for example, individuals, institutions, organization
Or states) to ridicule, often as an intended means of
Provoking or preventing change*

From the two definitions of satire given above, one can identify some specific features:

- It is critical;
- It employs wit and humour;
- It ridicules the target;
- It may be aimed at individuals or institutions;
- It is sometimes aimed at improvement or change; and
- It may also be used to prevent a change.

The most important technique of the satirist is “inversion”. Inversion is a device which turns human norms upside down - what is normally expected in such a way that it makes the reader to reflect on the issue. Inversion is often achieved through the use of some literary devices, such as exaggeration, irony, understatement, ambiguity, metaphor, and so forth. For instance, exaggeration is used when something is emphasized in order to make the unseeing see, and the seeing-but-complacent oppose and expunge evil from the society. To simply say people are evil in our age of perversion will be a waste of one’s breath. Satirists have to describe wrong doing by painting a picture of it that men are not familiar with, but which will make them see the need for correction (see Harris, 2004: 6)

Despite its use of humour and wit, a satire does not necessarily have the aim of producing laughter like comedy. The satirist presupposes an educated readership, which will easily be able to discover the implicit morality through the ironic hints used. So, rather than make people laugh, satire makes them reflective on political and economic issues. Harris (2004) identifies two major aims of any satirical writing:

To make a vice repulsive so that the vice is expunged from the person or society under attack, and

To make a vice repulsive so that it is removed from the person or society intended to benefit by the attack

The use of satire is one way language users exercise their power through language in order to see the society return to the practice of morality, which the satirist feels has been abandoned. According to

Rudolf Ogoo Okonkwo, a Nigerian freelance writer based in New York, “satire thrives on the use of ridicule, irony, and sarcasm, to portray folly and destroy them with mockery”.

A satire can be general in the sense that it is aimed at the entire society and it can also be specific if it is aimed at single specific persons. However, even when the latter is the case, the purpose is the reformation or regeneration of a whole society. It is not all satires that are necessarily corrective. An “abusive” satire does not aim at correcting the target because the satirist views them as incorrigible. So, such targets are attacked and ridiculed in order to dissuade the public from patronizing, approving of, or associating with them. A satire could be written or spoken. Some great examples of written satires are Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* used to satirize royalty, war and human nature, George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, which is a satire on communist dictatorship, Wole Soyinka’s *The Lion and The Jewel*, which takes a critical look at charismatic religious leaders in Nigeria during the 1960s.

Satirism in the Mass Media in Nigeria

The mass media is one of the platforms through which writers satirize. Film, newspaper columns, cartoons and comics are some of the media satirists use as platforms for their criticisms. Newspaper cartoonists are known to be great satirists in the Nigerian news media. Despite that cartoons are known to be largely picture-driven, notable Nigerian cartoonists, such as Josy Ajiboye, Akin Lasekan, Bayor Odulana, Egun Alesinloye, Bisi Ogunbadejo, Sanya Ojikutu, Cliff Ogiugo, to mention a few do not just explore their abilities to create caricature images, but also juxtapose this with their linguistic manipulative skills to convey their messages vividly to readers. So, their humour and wit in cartooning do not flow just from pictures. This agrees with McCloud’s (1993: 155) assertion as quoted in Olaniyan (2000: 8) that words and pictures are interdependent in cartoons to convey an idea and neither could convey it alone. Our concern in this paper is largely on newspaper writings of regular columnists, both the in-house and guest writers. Some columnists are known to be satirical sometimes in their writings. They include Reuben Abati, Femi Adesina, Dafe Onojovo, Festus Keyamo, Louis Odion, Basil Okafor, Juliana Francis, and so forth. These writers explore their creative abilities to satirize the ills in the Nigerian society and the perpetrators of these ills.

Satirism is also expressed in the electronic media through soap operas and films. Also, in recent times, some humourists, who are just jesters are emerging to brighten the entertainment industry in the country. They include Gbenga Adeyemi Jnr, Basket Mouth, Okey Bakassi, to mention just a few. This work however is only interested in satirical expressions in newspapers generally, *ie*, the ones in columns and cartoons.

Forms and Functions of Satire in Nigerian Newspapers

The data for this study reveal the employment of creative potentials of Nigerian writers and cartoonists. Most of the expressions considered show the writers’ manipulation of words through some morphological and lexico-semantic processes to produce the satirical expressions. Understanding enough about what has been going on recently in the society helps the author to recognize the allusions and cultural references in the discourse analyzed. The forms were classified on the basis of the targets of the satire and linguistic processes employed. Three broad categories of targets were identified. We have satires targeted at individuals (specific satire), an institution or a larger group of people (general satire) and individuals, who are considered incorrigible (abusive satire). Most of the forms considered as satirical point straight at groups of people in the society who are seen as failing the society. This group includes mainly the police and the politicians in general. Others made The President and some particular politicians the butt of their humour. Satirists exploit the freedom of expression they enjoy in the democratic dispensation to poke fun at the leaders of the nation including the president and other public office holders. Below are some of the satirical expressions aimed at The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo.

1. Presidential Media Blasting
2. Abachanjo
3. Obasanjocracy
4. Our Solomon
5. Baba

6. Chief Aso Rocker

7. The Lion in the Villa

A careful study of these expressions shows that they were meant to ridicule the generally perceived quick temper, authoritarian posture and hardliner's stance of the president in governance. For instance, *Presidential Media Blasting* is a ridicule of the monthly programme organized by The President tagged *Presidential Media Chat*. During the programme, the president entertains questions from listeners from across the country who phone in. Some selected pressmen and women from different media houses also feature on the programme. On certain occasions, the journalists and some callers had asked questions, which had attracted replies people considered too harsh from The President, hence the use of the word 'blasting' in place of 'chat' to ridicule the president's unpleasant reactions at such moments. To corroborate the view of the media on Obasanjo, Femi Adesina wrote in *Saturday Sun* of May 26, a few days to the final exit of The President:

Why should I miss Obasanjo when he finally leaves? Why should I miss a bad tongue, a foul temper, a haughty, huffy man, who pretends to know it all.

The expression *Abachanjo* was meant to paint the picture that The President has a blend of some characters of the late despotic military Head of State Sani Abacha with his. The writer of this coinage employed the literary device – exaggeration to overemphasize Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's character. General Sani Abacha was one of Nigeria's most ruthless military dictators, who nearly transformed himself to a civilian president, but for his sudden death. The writer was trying to make people believe that nothing has changed in Nigeria, even in the democratic period.

Obasanjocracy was used to ridicule the kind of government being practised by Olusegun Obasanjo, the president. According to the writer:

...This Obasanjo theory of constitutional democracy, however, is divorced from the original version. Therefore, this philosophy of government, this style, this version of democracy can and should be named after the originator, Obasanjo. There is no better epithet to this type of government than Obasanjocracy. Anyone who practices it is called Obasanjocrat. Obasanjocracy is that system of government we have seen in the last seven years, where the constitution is virtually written by Obasanjo, interpreted by Obasanjo and the decision implemented by Obasanjo

Sunday Sun October 15 2006 (p.44)

The parody was used to point attention of readers to the little respect Obasanjo had for the rule of law, which made his government to flaunt court orders and victimize its perceived enemies through the government agency, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). EFCC is a body saddled with the responsibility of fighting corruption in the nation.

The other four expressions – *Our Solomon*, *Baba*, *Chief Aso Rocker* and *The Lion of the Villa* are used to mock The President's unyielding posture, overbearing influence, his savouring and ruthless use of power respectively. The expression *our Solomon* was used in a column in *Sunday Punch* of September 4, 2005. According to the writer, The President is described as *our Solomon* an allusion to the biblical King Solomon, because of "his amorous relationship with IMF and the Paris Club". Also he was so described because he sees himself as "the messiah who is doing Nigeria a favour". Many of the president's party men refer to him as 'Baba', which in Yoruba means 'father'. However, in the context of satire, the word is used to ridicule him as a person who believes he has the authority to have the final say in all things, like a typical father in the Yoruba culture. Obasanjo, to the satirist may not be the appropriate figure to head a nation that is said to be democratizing.

Denunciations of politicians in general in the data are seen in the following expressions:

8. come and eat government
9. Toronto legislators
10. Myownisation of power
11. executheives

12. politics of the stomach
13. militicians
14. Minister for Ovation

Expression 8 ridicules the government as a corrupt one in which politicians see their being in positions of authority as an opportunity to amass wealth for themselves and their families. This is an ironical way of seeing governance in Nigeria – rather than going into government to serve, people go there to “eat” as much as they can from the so-called ‘national cake: the word ‘eat’ here denotes lavishness, squandering and misappropriation of public fund.

The expression *Toronto Legislature* is an allusion to the case of the one time speaker of the Nigerian House of Representatives, who claimed to have graduated for the University of Toronto, but later, this was found to be untrue. Though he later tendered a public apology, this discovery brought a great ridicule to the law makers. Since then, anything considered not to be genuine especially in the political circles is tagged *Toronto*. Fake certificates are also humorously referred to as *Toronto certificates*.

The expression *myownisation of power* was used by Matthew Hasan Kukah, a catholic priest, who is also a social critic in an article published in *The Guardian* of August 28, 2005. This was used to refer to the personalization of power by those who have access to it. Some of such instances in which people personalize power are seen in cases of politicians appointing their close relatives, such as brothers, cousins, and even their own children to serve as their aides and to serve in public corporations, which such politician have the privilege of constituting. To corroborate this, Felix Ofou wrote an article in *The Sunday Sun* of July 20, 2003 titled *Democracy: Government by the family*. It was once reported that a governor in one of the South Western states appointed his own younger brother as his chief-of-staff. Likewise, a big party executive appointed his wife and daughter as members of board of some government agencies, which he was overseeing.

The words *executhieves* is a creation of the writer, which came about as a result of a blend of the words *executive* and *thieves*. It was used to ridicule the executive arm of the government, which parades corrupt people, who have enriched themselves from the government’s coffers. *Politics of the stomach* also ridicules corrupt enrichment of political office holders.

Nigerians have been worried about the increase in the number of retired members of the armed forces going into politics. The top members of the ruling party are either retired military or policemen. For instance, the president, the party chairman, some members of the board of trustee, some lawmakers, governors, and so forth. This must have prompted the Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka, a strong critic of Obasanjo’s administration to coin this word *militicians*. The word is a blend of the words *military* and *politicians*. The expression was meant to ridicule military men in politics, who are not really seen as politicians because they do not necessarily want power in order to serve, but to rule. The word is meant to paint ex-armed forces men as misfits in a democracy, as they still carry over their military ideas into governance in a democracy.

The last of the expressions – *Minister for Ovation* was used to ridicule Chief Femi Fani-Kayode, who was redeployed from the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism to the Federal Ministry of Aviation to replace Prof. Babalola Borisade, whose tenure as minister witnessed series of plane crashes in the country. Chief Fani-Kayode was one time a spokesman for the president. He was however, considered to be “too loud” in his defence of the government. The cartoonist who coined this expression employed the literary device pun to poke fun at the minister, that instead of him being referred to as the *Minister for Aviation*, a more appropriate title is *Minister for Ovation*.

The era of campaign for the elections of 2007 witnessed series of political lampooning by party opponents using the newspaper medium two major political parties –Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Action Congress (AC) were at the forefront. The parties placed adverts in major newspapers satirizing candidates and their parties. The ruling party, PDP was determined to win the elections in Lagos State, a state known to be the stronghold of one of their opposition. The party’s governorship candidate Senator Musiliu Qbanikòró was one of the subjects of constant lampooning by the opposition party, AC. One of the adverts lampooning him is reproduced below:

Corrosive [KÒRÓ : SIVE]
Having the quality of
Consuming or eating away

DON'T MAKE LAGOS KOROSIVE

The word 'Kòró' is taken from 'Ọbaníkòró', the name of the candidate of PDP. It is also his nickname. What the satirist simply did was to play on the word 'kòró' which also sounds like the first segment in the word 'corrosive'. The picture painted of the candidate, Ọbaníkòró is that he has the "quality of consuming or eating away" the resources of Lagos State.

A word that is written like it but pronounced differently in the Yoruba language, the major language in the South Western Nigeria is 'korò', and it means 'bitter'. The opponents of PDP were fond of using the slogan "Kòró korò", meaning Kòró is bitter. At a point, Ọbaníkòró had to reply the opponents with an advert in the newspaper. See the advert below:

*WE HAVE HEARD THEM SAYS
KÒRÓ KORÒ (KÒRÓ IS BITTER)
YES, INDEED
THE TRUTH IS BITTER
VOTE OUT DECEIT AND FRAUD
SENATOR
MUSILIU OBANIKORO*

In this advert, Ọbaníkòró saw himself as a personification of truth, using the old adage 'truth is bitter' to argue this out. By his submission, his opponents were considered as symbols of deceit and fraud.

Another advert used to ridicule Ọbaníkòró in most of the national dailies is the one put in form of a prayer. In this advert, there was a bold praying hand and the following was written under it:

*MAY MY FUTURE
NOT BE
KORODED
MAY IT BE A
BRIGHTER REWARDING FUTURE
AMEN*

This advert has two prayers - a prayer of rejection and a prayer of acceptance. In the first prayer, there is a play on the word *corrode* deliberately distorting the spelling of the past form as 'koroded'. Even though the name of Senator Ọbaníkòró was not mentioned at all in the advert, readers' familiarity with the field, allusions, issues and cultural references made it possible for them to be able to decode the content and interpret the advert to be referring to the senator. The understanding of an average Nigerian about what has been going on and the reality that is assumed to be widespread in the society at that particular time helps in the interpretation. The second prayer is a prayer accepting a Brighter Rewarding Future. The first letters of each of the three words brighter, rewarding and future were foregrounded and coincidentally, those letters also represent the initials of the candidate of Action Congress (AC), the party that placed the advert. The AC candidate is Babatunde Raji Fashola (BRF). This again presupposes certain stock of knowledge to get what the message was driving at. The message focused on the future and saw a brighter future for the people of Lagos State in Fashola, the AC candidate, while it sees a corroded future in Obanikoro, the PDP candidate.

Another advert used to deride other parties by satirizing them is reproduced below.

*Vote Possibilities. Vote Opportunities
Not Probability, Not Promises, Not Excuses, Not Thuggery
Not Mediocrity, Not Arson, Not Violence, Not Lip Service
Not Depression Permanently Allowed
Not Punishment Depressingly Present
Not Lies Perpetuated*

The principal method of satire used in this advert is distortions of the names of major opposition parties in Lagos State. Just like in other adverts, these distortions were cleverly done. However, readers are still able to recognize the distortions and what they alluded to. The last three lines refer to the three major opposition parties in the state:

Democratic Peoples Alliance (DPA) alluded to as Depression Permanently Allowed
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) alluded to as Punishment Depressingly Present
Labour Party alluded to as Lies Perpetuated.

Another advert that used this method is the one targeted at PDP, reproduced below:

Say No to the Satanic

POWER OF DARKNESS PERMANENTLY

In this advert, the ruling party was described as 'satanic', and the name was distorted to reflect this. This may also be connected with the inability of the ruling party to handle the power generation crisis that the nation has been facing. Irregular supply of electricity has thrown many parts of the country into 'permanent darkness' for many days and weeks sometimes. This advert is calling on the voters to reject the ruling party because of inability supply electricity to the nation.

The Nigerian Police is one of the ready targets of satirists. One major means of ridiculing the police is irony. Some of the expressions used to satirize them are: *kill and go*, (describing their indiscriminate killing of innocent people), *wetin you carry* (Nigerian Pidgin English for "what do you have with you" or "what do you have for us?") Describing their demand for bribe from motorists, particularly commercial vehicles drivers), *wey your particulars* (Nigerian Pidgin English for "where are your particulars?") This is the usual questions they pose to motorists whenever they stop them on the highway), *uniformed crooks*, and *men in black* (describing their uniform, which is black). Their readiness to demand for and accept bribe is also ridiculed by using these expressions: toll collection, highway honorarium, illicit trade. A write up in Cocktail Circuit in The Guardian on Sunday of November 28, 2004 (p.49) paints this picture of the Nigerian Police:

Wonders indeed will never end. At a time Nigerians are praying that something drastic will happen to take corrupt Nigerian Police out of their lives, the Republic of Benin Police Command has requested Nigeria to dispatch our men in black to help in cleansing their land of robbers and anti-law

This write-up show how hopeless Nigerians feel on the inability of The Police to combat crime. It is an irony that the police who cannot effectively fight crime in Nigeria are being invited to Benin Republic to help them fight crime.

On one occasion when a naval officer shot at a close range a motorcyclist, who scratched his car while trying to maneuver through the typical Lagos traffic congestions. The motorcyclist died on the spot. A newspaper columnist wrote this to satirize the brutal murder of innocent Nigerians by men of the armed forces: "the monopoly of policemen for killing innocent people at checkpoints has been broken". It was because that time around, the killing was not done by the police but by a naval office.

Institutions, especially political parties, government agencies, and sometimes, private institutions are also ridiculed by satirists. The major device used here is to substitute their names with distorted ones, purposed to ridicule them in such a way that the new name appears to be saying exactly the opposite of what they represent. Such names are still represented by their well-known acronyms. Examples of these are:

Peoples Demolition Party (PDP) in place of Peoples Democratic Party
Alliance for Disappearance (AD) in place of Alliance for Democracy
Annual Deadly Crashes (ADC) in place of Aviation Development Company
Power Hoarders Company of Nigeria (PHCN) in place of Power Holding Company of Nigeria

These expressions paint the picture of the exact opposite of what these institutions stand for. For instance, PHCH (Power Holdings Company of Nigeria), which is the government agency, which ought to generate electricity for the nation has failed in the assignment, as many communities suffer unstable electricity supply or total blackout for days and sometimes weeks. So, the agency is ridiculed through the use of irony as hoarders of power rather than supplier of power. There is also a play on word here – the words *hold* and *hoard* do not just have similarity in sound, they are also similar in basic/core meaning. However, while the word ‘hold’ has a neutral meaning, ‘hoard’ has a negative connotation.

Likewise, ADC is the name of an airline, whose plane crash-landed in October, 2006, leaving 97 people, including some prominent Nigerians, dead. The expression *Annual Deadly Crashes* sounds like an exaggeration because the series of crashes witnessed by the country involved different airlines. This however drives a point home through ridicule – that the crashes are just too frequent in recent times

One of the most biting satires of the ruling party PDP was the one expressed in the following words: “it takes a goat to declare for PDP to become a governor”. This abusive lampooning of PDP tells the reader how the writer of this piece felt about the quality of person in the ruling party and the overall integrity of the party. This is clearly an abusive satire, as the attack was too sharp and aggressive. A writer’s mood determines how mild or sharp they sound in their satire.

The nation’s economy and government policies are not also spared by satirists. In *Daily Sun* of December 24, 2004 (p.9), the Nigerian economy was described as *okada driven economy*. Robbers’, fraudsters’ and area boys’, pipeline vandals’ activities were subtly justified, as what they do was referred to as *resource appropriation*. As Government ‘allocates’ resources, these victims of bad economic policies (the unemployed, who decided to go into robbery, swindling, etc, for livelihood) ‘appropriate’ resources, *ie*, taking something without asking for permission. So, there is *allocation of resources* by the government and there is *appropriation of resources* by these criminals.

One writer also used the expression *deregulation of poverty* to paint the pathetic picture of the increase in the number of people in the poverty brackets in the country. Deregulation is an economic policy the Nigerian government embarked upon as part of her economic reforms. By deregulating, the government withdraws her control in most of her corporations and allows the market forces to determine the prices of commodities, hence, the expression “deregulation of petroleum prices”. Deregulation of poverty is used to expose the government’s inability to provide for the Nigerians, thereby leaving the people below the poverty level in a very miserable condition. Rather than preventing poverty by controlling the economy, the government was seen as encouraging it through its policies.

On the basis of linguistic processes used to convey the satirical expression identified in the data, two major processes were identified – morphological and lexico-semantic processes.

The two morphological processes are blending and acronyming.

Blending

Militricians	military + politicians
Executhieves	executive + thieves
Kleptocracy	kleptomania + democracy
Abachanjo	Abacha + Obasanjo
Obasanjocracy	Obasanjo + democracy

Acronymy

CAR	Chief Aso Rocker
PDP	Peoples Demolition Party
ADC	Annual Deadly Crashes
AD	Alliance for Disappearance

PHCH Power Hoarders Company of Nigeria

The lexico-semantic processes include the following:

Metaphor	Our Solomon The Lion in the Villa Maradona
Pun	resource appropriation Minister for Ovation Deregulation of poverty Korosive, koroded
Connotation	Toronto Legislators Toll collection
Conversion	kill and go Mr Know it all
Allusion	Depression Permanently Allowed Lies Perpetuated Punishment Depressingly Present

Conclusion

In this work, language has been seen as a very powerful tool in the hands of newspaper writers and cartoonists. Apart from providing news about the society, newspapers writers also help the readers to reflect on the society and seek ways to improve it. Through the use of satire, writers ridicule the evil in the society, such as corruption, crime and scandal. We have been able to show in this work, how through the manipulation of language, satirists poke fun at public office holders and institutions. One major implications of the use of satire is that it keeps the targets of these satires on their toes because they are aware that they are being watched and could be ridiculed. It makes the readership to learn from the mistakes of their leaders.

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