

Adoption forcée des SI et émotions : ce que l'humour nous révèle

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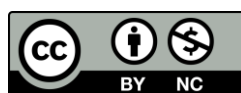
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Résumé :

La mise en œuvre du télétravail durant les confinements liés à la COVID-19 constitue un cas extrême de déploiement massif et forcé de systèmes d'information (SI) en milieu professionnel. Cette transformation brutale et soudaine des pratiques a engendré une prolifération de vidéos humoristiques sur Internet relatant les émotions ressenties par les salariés. Pour explorer les dimensions émotionnelles de l'adoption forcée des SI, cette recherche étudie les émotions exprimées dans ces vidéos humoristiques sur le télétravail imposé pendant la pandémie. Nous proposons un protocole d'analyse des vidéos et une grille de codage permettant d'identifier les types d'humour mobilisés et les émotions qu'ils suscitent chez les spectateurs. Nos résultats catégorisent les types d'humour et les relient aux dimensions instrumentale, relationnelle et managériale de l'usage des SI, soulignant le rôle du sentiment de contrôle chez les salariés pour favoriser l'adoption des SI. L'étude montre que l'analyse des émotions des salariés peut offrir aux managers des éclairages précieux sur les défis liés à l'adoption forcée des SI, leur permettant de mieux interpréter les réponses et dynamiques émotionnelles des travailleurs.

Mots clés :

Adoption forcée des SI, Méthodologie de vidéographie qualitative ; télétravail ; humour ; Covid-19



Mandatory IS Adoption and Emotions: What Humor Tells Us

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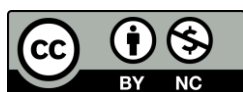
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Abstract

The implementation of teleworking during the COVID 19 lockdown is a case of extreme, massive and mandatory deployment of information systems in the workplace. This abrupt and sudden transformation of practices gave rise to a proliferation of humorous videos on the Internet depicting employees' emotional experiences. To explore the emotional dimensions of mandatory IS adoption, this study examines the feelings expressed in humorous videos about enforced teleworking during the pandemic. We developed a video analysis protocol and a coding framework to identify the types of humor employed and the emotions they evoke in viewers. Our findings categorize humor styles and link them to the instrumental, relational, and managerial dimensions of IS use, highlighting the critical role of perceived employee control. The study demonstrates that analyzing employee emotions can provide managers with valuable insights into the challenges of mandatory IS adoption, enabling them to better interpret workers' emotional responses and dynamics.

Keywords

Mandatory IS adoption, Qualitative videography methodology, teleworking, humor, Covid-19 crisis



Introduction

« *Humor is the politeness of despair.* » Boris Vian¹

The COVID-19 crisis led overnight to a large number of employees having to telework from home. Like all other employees, we, the four authors, had to face and adapt to this new use of IS for working in a brutal way and in a particularly anxious social context. In order to cope, we shared a lot of humorous videos between ourselves and exchanged comments and reactions, often late at night, about this new way of working. An abundance of humorous online cartoons, videos, memes, jokes and other satirical material appeared during the pandemic in the digital public space (Nicholls, 2020). They provided a feeling of relief, and we felt we were not alone in sharing these emotions and became intrigued by the relationship between humor, relief emotions and the mandatory adoption of IS expressed through these videos.

Humor research conceptualizes how we experience humor in many forms (Gruner, 1999). Key theories of humor are based on the cognitive and affective components of amusement including incongruity, bisociation, resolution, superiority, play, and release theories (Roberts, 2019). The release or relief theory of humor provides an appropriate conceptual backdrop as it states that humor represents the sudden relief of strong affect (Shurcliff, 1968), which is particularly related to adverse or extreme circumstances. Mayer and Mayer (2024) and Blaber et al. (2021) found that humor was used to cope with the highly challenging situation of working remotely during COVID-19 times.

As Charaudeau (2006) points out, the mechanism of humorous discourse involves three protagonists (speaker, addressee, and target) between whom a shifted vision of the social world circulates. The speaker is the one who produces the humorous act. The addressee is called upon to share the shifted vision of the world proposed by the speaker, as well as the judgment that the speaker makes of the target. The target is what the humorous act focuses on, in our case enforced teleworking.

Moreover, mandatory IS adoption is common in many organizations. In that context, Hwang et al. (2016:1266) remark that the technology acceptance model “does not provide a full picture of how such

¹ « *L'humour, c'est la politesse du désespoir* » Boris Vian

use came to be or if it is truly representative of how end-users really feel about using the system”. And Fridkin et al. (2024) claim that insights are needed to inform strategies for more effective implementation and management of IS in mandatory settings. Little has been done on humor in relation to technology acceptance (Schaupp, 2023) or to mandatory usage. Thereby, investigating humorous videos about enforced telework during COVID-19 could provide insights into intense feelings provoked by the forced adoption of IS in such an extreme context and thus contribute to enrich the understanding, and improve the management of appropriation and implementation (Mendoza et al., 2013) of IS at work in the post-COVID-19 era, and in mandatory IS adoption more generally.

Our research question therefore asks “*what feelings do humorous videos about enforced teleworking during COVID-19 express about mandatory IS adoption?*” We aim at characterizing which types of humor were used by the video authors to provide relief about feelings caused by the sudden and massive mandatory adoption of IS for working during the lockdown.

We used existing humorous videos produced in 2020 and 2021. We analyzed these videos to understand the types of humor used to convey relief feelings about enforced telework in the two following ways.

- The topics covered by the videos were new remote management practices in terms of power relations, working relationships and working conditions. This corresponds to Schütz and Noûs’s (2021) analytical framework which proved useful in categorizing our empirical material according to its three dimensions, instrumental, relational, and managerial. We found that they relate to varying degrees of perceived employee control.
- We also coded our data according to a range of types of humor, which then allowed us to cross-relate the three dimensions to types of humor.

We found that certain types of humor were more prevalent in each dimension; and interestingly, that the less perceived employee control, the harsher or more bitter the type of humor, representing a stronger need for relief, and signaling more intense and more negative emotions. This has implications for a better understanding of often hidden emotions about perceived employee control in mandatory adoption of IS.

The first part of the paper positions our work in the academic literature on teleworking, mandatory IS adoption, humor, and relief theory. We then present our research methodology based on video analysis. Our findings are presented in the next part, and we then discuss our contributions: theoretical on the use of humor as relief of feelings related to the instrumental, relational and managerial dimensions of enforced telework and perceived employee control; methodological in the collection of original video case data and the development of a video analytical grid about telework through different types of humor; managerial for post-COVID-19 management of mandatory teleworking appropriation and use and new ways of working with IS.

1. Literature Review

This part positions our research work in the academic literature on teleworking, mandatory IS adoption and humour at work.

1.1. Enforced Teleworking

The massive use of IS to telework suddenly came to the forefront at the beginning of 2020, when most countries confined their populations and directed those who could to work from home. This brutal enforcement represents a novel form of extreme context. Hällgren et al. (2018) discern three general, empirically distinct categories of extreme contexts: risky, emergency or disrupted. The COVID-19 crisis is a disrupted context, i.e. an extreme event that occurs outside the core activities of organizations or communities and is described as unique and unprecedented. Such events impose sudden operational changes, thereby challenging traditional norms of interaction and work practices (Hällgren et al., 2025). Feelings of fear, alienation, uncertainty, and stress are common reactions to extreme events and environments, affecting cognitive and behavioral responses (Hannah et al., 2009). More specifically, disrupted contexts such as the COVID-19 crisis appear to be a uniquely well-suited context “for studying ‘emotional resilience’ at the individual, organizational, and local community levels” (Hällgren et al., 2018).

Focusing on teleworking during COVID-19, authors have found that it had positive and negative individual and managerial effects. Pataki-Bittó and Kun (2022) show that it increased irritability and tension, stress levels, and overall subjective well-being, and that the level of engagement was

significantly affected particularly among teleworkers who were raising small children. Chirico et al. (2021) found reduced physical activity, increased consumption of junk food, weight gain, poor sleep quality, and musculoskeletal pain; mental effects included increased levels of anxiety, depression, stress, headache, fatigue, and lower job satisfaction. Regarding managerial effects, Waizenegger et al. (2020) demonstrated positive and negative effects on team collaboration. Fana et al. (2020) found that new forms of remote supervisory control and communication challenged the possibility to receive meaningful feedback and exchange ideas with co-workers and supervisors, and that greater clarity about working conditions were required. Lee (2021) related anxiety, stress, unfairness, inferiority and vulnerability to perceived inequity and comparison with the decisions or resources of those at higher management level; on the other hand, the emotions of pride, empathy, shared goals and support were generated by the care, collective interest and comparison of those at lower level such as subordinates.

There is a vast literature on managerial aspects of telework. Among them, Schütz and Noûs's (2021) framework is particularly relevant while we were analyzing our empirical material in terms of what managerial aspects of telework were addressed in the videos. These authors propose that there are three dimensions in this work practice. They distinguish between working conditions (instrumental), working relations (relational) and power relations (managerial). For these authors, telework must be defined not only from an instrumental perspective but also as a specific relational and managerial practice. The teleworker can be considered in his or her relationship with technology and with others (colleagues, hierarchy, and family). Furthermore, different levels of perceived employee control (Spector, 1986; O'Driscoll & Beehr, 2000) correspond to each dimension, from more to less control, that individuals feel they can exercise over telework.

1.2 Mandatory IS Adoption

COVID-19 telework not only represents an extreme case but is also a case of mandatory IS adoption about which there is limited research. It seems to be assumed that IS have to be used at work anyway: the voluntary or mandatory nature of the studied IS is not always mentioned in articles, often only in the methodology section (e.g. Beaudry & Pinsonneault, 2010). Brown et al. (2002:283) did emphasize that technology use is mandated in many organizations and their research shows that “there are differences

in underlying relationships of technology acceptance models in mandatory use situations.” In their foundational article on the technology acceptance model, Venkatesh et al. (2003:439) compared voluntary and mandatory settings and found that “social influence (subjective norm, social factors, image) has a stronger effect on behavioral intention in the mandatory context”. Wu and Lederer (2009) found that voluntariness moderates the effects of ease of use and usefulness on behavioral intention. Engelbert and Graeml (2013) suggest interpretive and constructivist approaches to analyze IT appropriation in mandatory settings. Turedi and Ekebas-Turedi (2019) claim that less is known about the role of end-user behaviors in mandatory IS adoption contexts. More recently, Fridkin et al. (2024) suggest that enhancing the perceived ease of use and usefulness of mandatory systems can significantly impact their symbolic adoption, with supervisory influence playing a crucial role in shaping user perceptions.

Emotions in IS adoption and appropriation have been studied in IS research for some time, for example: Venkatesh (2000) on intrinsic motivation and emotion as anchors that determine perceptions about the ease of use of a new system; McGrath (2006) on individuals’ feelings and De Guinea and Markus (2009) who called for investigating how emotions may contribute to intentions to continue using IT.

Emotions in technology adoption and use have been understood in many ways: loneliness, irritability, guilt (Mann & Holdsworth, 2003; Zhou et al., 2024); cynicism (Selander & Henfridsson, 2012); excitement, happiness, frustration (Beaudry & Pinsonneault, 2010; Yin & Hsu, 2023); cognitive–emotional dualism (Stein et al., 2014; Stein et al., 2015); distress, computer anxiety, technophobia, technostress (Pirkkalainen et al., 2017; Saadé & Kira, 2006; Agogo & Hess, 2018); hope, tolerance, empathy (Gkinko & Elbanna, 2022); exhaustion, self-consciousness (Vidolov, 2022); emotional attachment, trust, affect (Mamun et al., 2023; Pignot & Thompson, 2024); challenge, achievement, loss, and deterrence emotions (Amosun et al., 2024).

Pirkkalainen et al. (2017) are among the first investigations into emotional coping mechanisms in IS adoption and use. They conceptualize emotional responses to stressful IS encounters such as distress venting and distancing from IS. The authors’ intent is to address the “maladaptive nature of emotional coping responses” through “self-regulation to steer emotional responses towards more positive

outcomes” (pp. 11-12). It seems to us, as McGrath (2006:277) argued, that here emotions are “conceived as a phenomenon to be eradicated, an affliction requiring a cure”. Pirkkalainen et al. (2017) in fact “encourage IS researchers to study differing coping mechanisms such as problem-focused and emotion-focused coping” (p. 13), which we will revisit in the next section.

There is little research examining acceptance and emotions in the context of mandated IS. Bhattacharjee et al. (2018) examined emotions (excitement, indifference, skepticism, fear) and user responses (engagement, avoidance, workarounds). Turedi and Ekebas-Turedi (2019) investigated the influence of both negative (anger, anxiety) and positive (happiness, excitement) emotions on behaviors (reinvention and workaround; resistance, compliance, deviance) and how these behaviors affect usage satisfaction and use frequency of a mandatory ERP. Singh and Verma (2023) address emotions in the mandatory teleworking context of COVID-19; their aim is to evaluate the effect of COVID-19 on technological anxiety, attitudes and job satisfaction, but not on acceptance, adoption and use of IS. Our aim is to explore the relationships between mandatory telework adoption and humor.

1.3 Humor at Work

Humor primarily consists of jokes (spoken or written words) and actions (describable through words) which elicit laughter or generate merriment (Critchley, 2002; Ritchie, 2004). Humor is a ubiquitous experience that facilitates coping, social coordination, and well-being and is a response to difficult or even tragic circumstances (McGraw et al., 2014).

COVID-19 triggered humorous responses, studied by various authors through social media data (*Twitter*, Marouwa, 2021; Purigilla, 2023; *TikTok*, Xiao & Yu, 2022; *WhatsApp*, Cancelas-Ouviña, 2021), memes (Torres-Marín et al., 2022; Flaherty & Rughiniş, 2021), or cartoons and comics (Blaber et al., 2021) which “served to cushion the psychological, moral and emotional effects of the pandemic during a difficult time” (Alabi, 2020:1). Humor was also a means to create a sense of belonging and community (Oduor & Kodak, 2020). According to Cancelas-Ouviña (2021) humor was one of the most frequent and widely used strategies in an attempt to make the day-to-day more bearable.

Relief theory proposes that humor offers a function of relief or a release from tension (Freud 1905; Weick & Westley 1996). Humor is seen as a mechanism for individuals to cope with reality and protect themselves from the emotional consequences of difficulties they may face (Sen, 2012; Christopher, 2015). Svebak and Martin (2014) demonstrate that humor helps individuals reframe stressful events, reducing their perceived severity and enabling a more positive outlook. This reframing process can lead to emotional relief. The expression of emotions through humor can be used to cope with unpleasant or traumatic events in everyday life (Sen, 2012; Christopher, 2015).

Coping is the set of cognitive and behavioral efforts made to master, reduce, or tolerate demands (Baqtayan, 2015). It is distinct from 'defense mechanisms' that are subconscious or unconscious adaptive responses, both aimed to reduce or tolerate stress (Algorani & Gupta, 2022). There are two types of coping strategies: problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lefcourt et al., 1997). A problem-focused coping strategy uses humor to alter the stressful situation itself. In emotion-focused coping, attempts are made to regulate distressing emotion, to reduce the negative emotions associated with the problem. Humorous coping (Samson et al., 2014; Simione and Gnagnarella, 2023) is an emotion-focused coping strategy defined as a hedonistic escapism strategy in the presence of unpredictable or uncontrollable stressors. It leads to increases in positive emotions and decreases in negative emotions in the short-term. It can reduce stress and improve mental health outcomes.

At work, relief theory appears to support workplace assumptions that humor can provide people with a form of release and is an emotion-focused coping mechanism to alleviate tension and stress (Booth-Butterfield & Wanzer, 2016). According to Plester (2009) humor is an important facet of working life and her findings suggest that humor is used specifically to offer relief from tension, to help deal with adversity and difficult situations, and to soften directives and requests made to colleagues and subordinates. Quemener's (2009, 2014) work highlights how humor can be a means of subversion and an identity resource available to the subaltern. Holmes and Marra (2002) highlight that humor can function to construct and sustain relationships, which contribute to workplace harmony by expressing solidarity, or serves as an acceptable vehicle for expressing subversive attitudes or aggressive feelings.

Some research explores how humor can also be managed in workplaces. Collinson (2002) found that humor can be suppressed or manufactured in order to control employees. Romero and Cruthirds (2006) describe how managers can use humor to reduce stress and enhance leadership, group cohesiveness, communication, creativity, and organizational culture. Finally, in one of the few articles to look at humor at work during the COVID-19 period, Hu et al. (2023) found that leader humor affected employee creativity, moderated by perceived workload and occupational coping self-efficacy.

1.4 Humorous Relief and Mandatory IS adoption in COVID-19 Telework

We argue that in the extreme context of mandated COVID-19 telework, humor addressed intense and sensitive emotions which may not be openly expressed by workers in ‘normal’ situations, nor easily accessible to researchers, but may well exist nevertheless. By their nature, emotions are difficult to identify and characterize. We position ourselves within Reddy’s (2001) perspective for whom emotions have a performative dimension. The expression of emotions forces adaptations and reactions. It is the case for emotions expressed through humor.

Much work has been carried out on the use of humor and telework in general during the pandemic but little on IS adoption specifically. Khan (2021) studied social media jokes; Zappavigna and Logi (2021) explored the functions of emoji in digital discourse about enforced telework; Bell (2022) looked at emotions about telework expressed by humorous comic strips artists. Figure 1 provides a schematic representation of the literature gap.

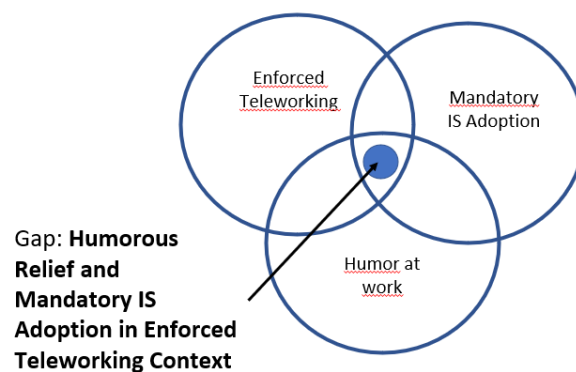


Figure 1. A schematic representation of the literature gap

Our conceptual background is based on the relief theory of humor and humorous coping, which state that humor can provide release in stressful circumstances. In order to relate humor to managerial characteristics of teleworking, we use Schütz and Noûs's (2021) three-dimensional framework. Figure 2 provides a schematic overview of the research project described in this paper.

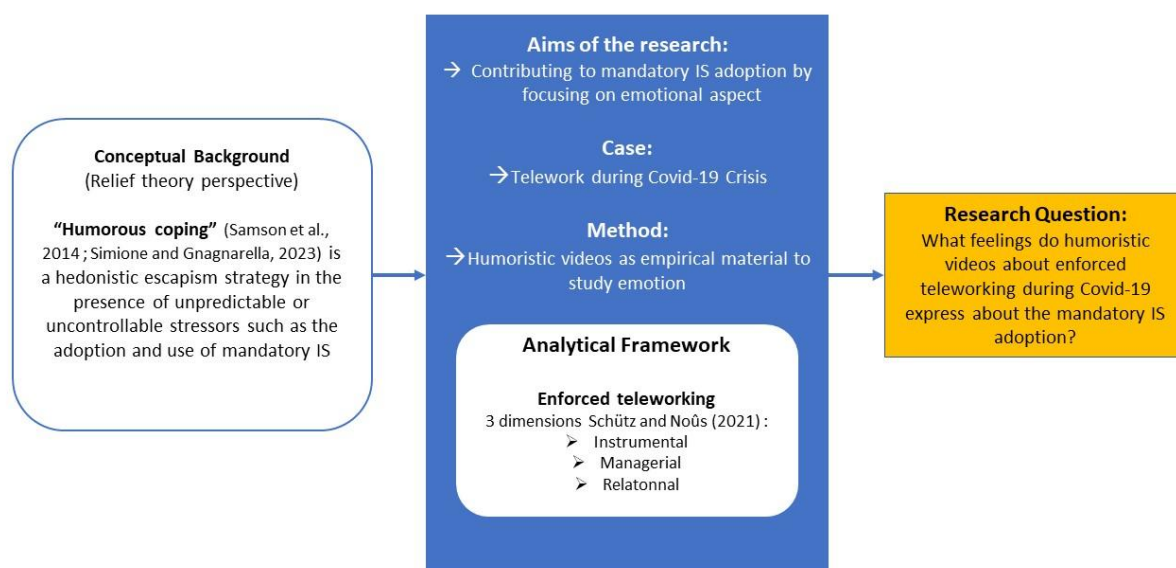


Figure 2. A schematic overview of the research project

2. Methodology: Video Analysis

During the COVID-19 period, we (the four authors) experienced enforced telework, and despite exchanging and reflecting on our emotions and feelings together, we could not really unpack the emotional dimensions of our teleworking practices. We thought that collecting testimonies through interviews could generate some results but would not be sufficient to capture how employees experienced this mandatory adoption of teleworking. Empirical observational research on teleworkers' feelings in their homes during COVID-19 was clearly difficult to carry out practically, and also because of the sensitivity of the topic. Reflecting on our own practices as colleagues provided an alternative. Indeed, we got into the habit of exchanging our news and expressing how we felt by sending each other

links to funny videos, and this provoked comments in response, especially when the author of the video managed to capture what we felt.

As highlighted by Rowe (2012) and Te'eni et al. (2015), researchers sometimes have to develop alternative techniques in order to understand certain phenomena. We adopted a qualitative approach to explore the feelings expressed by humorous videos on the mandatory adoption of teleworking. Humor, as a social and discursive practice, serves as a powerful lens to reveal and amplify emotions that are often difficult to express directly (Charaudeau, 2006). In the context of the mandatory adoption of telework during the COVID-19 lockdown, humorous videos act as a cathartic outlet for both creators and viewers. By exaggerating or dramatizing situations—such as alcoholism, depression, or workplace incivility—these videos externalize and make visible the emotional tensions generated by the forced transition to telework. The use of humor, whether satirical, self-deprecating, or absurd, does not merely entertain, it reflects and amplifies the emotional responses to the disruption of work routines, social isolation, and the blurring of professional and personal boundaries. For instance, videos depicting chaotic virtual meetings or parental interruptions during work calls do not only elicit laughter; they also resonate with viewers' lived experiences of frustration, anxiety, or helplessness. Thus, humor becomes a vehicle for emotional complicity (Charaudeau, 2006), allowing us to access the affective dimensions of IS adoption that might otherwise remain unspoken in traditional research settings.

Analyzing humorous videos also addresses ethical and methodological challenges inherent to studying sensitive topics. Participants in traditional research may hesitate to openly discuss negative emotions (e.g., disengagement, conflict) due to social desirability bias. Humor, however, provides a 'safe' space for these emotions to surface indirectly (Charaudeau, 2006). Moreover, such indirect data can reveal perspectives and emotions that individuals are not always aware of, and/or that they find difficult to express. By examining how creators frame telework experiences through humor, we access a form of 'emotional truth' that might be censored in interviews or surveys. This approach aligns with Corkin's (2013) argument that extreme cases can uncover hidden or taboo aspects of organizational phenomena, making our dataset uniquely suited to exploring the affective complexities of forced IS adoption.

We consider that a humorous video on telework during the COVID-19 lockdown is an extreme case study (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), case studies are of interest when they are extreme or unusual

because the research results can reveal information about normal processes (see for example, Corkin, 2013). By focusing on humorous videos as extreme cases, we leverage their capacity to magnify both the positive and negative emotional extremes of telework. On one hand, videos portraying telework as a source of freedom, creativity, or improved work-life balance highlight emotions such as empowerment. On the other hand, those emphasizing dysfunctions—like technological failures, social disconnection, or domestic conflicts—reveal feelings of stress, alienation, or resentment. These extremes are particularly valuable for our study, as they expose the emotional spectrum of IS adoption in a way that ‘average’ cases might obscure. In our dataset, the coexistence of these contrasting narratives offers a nuanced understanding of how mandatory IS adoption triggers divergent emotional responses, from resistance to adaptation.

Early film studies researchers collected motion picture films or video tapes (Ekman & Friesen, 1969). While visual studies have been focusing mainly on the role of images, the cultural dynamics of videos have been under-researched (Margolis & Zunjarwad, 2018). Developed on the basis of previous recording technologies including film and audiotapes, it was particularly the combination of recording and replaying, as provided by the camcorder, and its digitalization, that opened up video technologies to a broad range of applications. There is a growing body of literature on the use of film, videos and photography in sociology and cultural studies and “such media can also be very useful for researchers in business and management” (Myers, 2019:191), who points out that videos are useful documents for IS research.

2.1. Data Collection

We collected humorous videos about telework that were produced, watched and exchanged on the internet during the COVID-19 period. Videos produced between March 2020 and December 2021 were collected on different mainstream social networks (*YouTube, Facebook...*). We typed in search engines the keywords "telework(ing)", "working from home", "humo(u)r", "funny" and "COVID", and we clicked the video tab. The total number available on the internet is impossible to ascertain. We stopped at those produced in December 2021 because we kept finding the same videos indicating that there were fewer new ones, and some started covering returning to the office as the pandemic was abating. We

selected 33 English (some turned out to be in other languages e.g., Hindi with English subtitles) and 36 French videos.

Exchanging many videos amongst the four co-authors and watching them over many months, we selected the most relevant to enforced telework, the most popular and the most expressive ones, and we eliminated less relevant ones (e.g., about pupils and teachers) in order to focus on work practices. This selection process was conducted by the four researchers. We discussed our varying perspectives on each video to determine whether it should be included (Table 1).

Sources	Mainstream social networks (Facebook, YouTube...)
Keywords	"COVID" "telework(ing)", "working from home", "humo(u)r", "funny"
Period	March 2020 to December 2021
Selection criteria	- Relevance to enforced telework - Popularity - Expressivity

Table 1. Data Collection Process

We selected videos created by individuals (anonymous or with aliases) and by individual comedians specialized in stand-up comedy. Comedians are sometimes organized into a collective group, an association or a not-for-profit enterprise or institution. Their videos are titled under the names of these groups (e.g., *TOPITO*, *BRUT*, *Jules Edouard Moustic*...) and express individual perspectives (Figure 3).

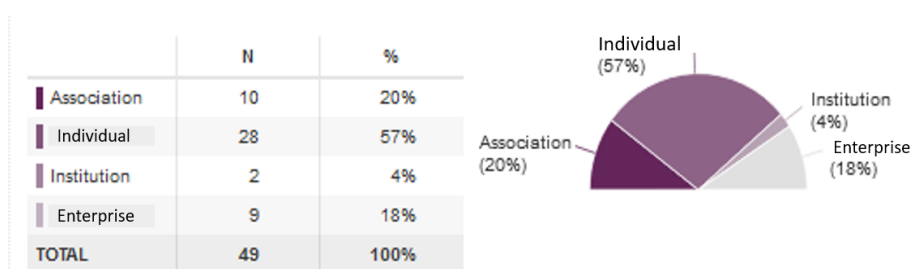


Figure 3: Video Authors (Speakers).

Finally, we focused on 49 videos (35 videos in French, produced by Belgian, French, or Swiss speakers) and 14 in English (produced by for instance Indian, Flemish, Norwegian, Americans, Australian or British speakers). This number was sufficient to reach theoretical saturation during coding. There are

more videos in French than in English because only one of the co-authors is bilingual French-English, we shared the coding and she had more coding to do.

These videos average 7 minutes in length. Social Science research using video analysis (Knoblauch et al., 2013, 2006; Knoblauch, 2012) demonstrates that such a sample is relevant. As explained by Knoblauch et al. (2013), video analysis aligns with an ethnographic case study methodology, where each video constitutes an individual case for examination. Indeed, analyzing a video does not involve applying textual analysis as one would to an interview; rather, it requires examining the video as a distinct case, drawing on ethnographic protocols. The content of a 7-minute video is therefore highly rich.

Some of these videos have been seen a few hundred times on the media where they were collected, others millions of times. They have also circulated virally through other media. The list of the videos is presented in Appendix 1.

2.2 Data Analysis

Several methods for analyzing videos have been developed and Margolis and Zunjarwad (2018) present two types of qualitative videography methodological approaches: “standardized” versus “interpretive” video analysis. With standardized video analysis, the analytical procedure consists of the coding of video segments according to a pre-established coding scheme; stretches of video-recorded interactions that vary in length from tens of seconds to several minutes are subsumed under prefixed categories, for example as “*aggressive*” or “*non-aggressive behavior*”. Interpretive video analysis assumes that the actions recorded are guided by meanings that must be understood by the actors themselves. Our approach belongs to the first standardized type of qualitative videography methodology.

Prior to coding, videos were first transcribed verbatim (from oral talk or from subtitles in French or English). We carried out a textual analysis of the transcripts but we found that the textual transcripts of the oral talk were insufficient as they did not provide descriptions of context, actions, verbal tone or visual clues. So, we watched each video in order to describe actions, characters, visual elements, story lines, use of equipment etc. to complement what was actually said orally (or in subtitles). We used the *open-coding* approach in this first step.

After analyzing the results, we decided to go further and develop an analytical framework to investigate more deeply the nature of the emotions experienced by employees (*pattern coding*). We grounded this framework in two complementary theoretical perspectives. First, the open-coding phase revealed that the videos primarily address the emergence of new power relations, new working relationships, and new working conditions. These themes align closely with the analytical framework proposed by Schütz and Noûs (2021), who conceptualize telework as a three-dimensional practice: working conditions (instrumental dimension), working relationships (relational dimension), and power relations (managerial dimension). Drawing on this perspective, we structured our coding pattern to systematically capture these dimensions in our dataset. Second, we integrated insights from Sen's (2012) work, which posits that humor analysis shares inherent attributes with traditional qualitative methods and that qualitative researchers can apply humor analysis as an analytical tool to investigate various cultural and social phenomena. Building on both foundations, we designed our video analysis template (see Appendix 2).

Thus, our qualitative data analysis is structured in three steps: (1) a first cycle of open coding followed by (2) the creation of a pattern grid based on the first coding (our video analysis template) and (3) a second cycle of pattern coding (Miles et al., 2020). The four researchers conducted the first and second cycles of coding separately, in pairs and then together during many meetings to check each other's coding. This form of collective coding helped us confront each researcher's coding and allowed us to reduce researchers' bias. Table 2 presents the three steps of the data analysis.

First cycle open coding	Pattern creation	Second cycle Pattern coding
We watched each video and described in our own words the story plot, the characters, the most salient visual elements, the teleworking stereotypes and the use of computer equipment.  14 emergent themes	We then recoded these 14 initial themes using a theoretical coding grid derived from research on telework by Schütz & Noûs (2021) who distinguish, between working conditions (instrumental), working relations (relational) and power relations (managerial) and added a coding by the type(s) of humor used in each video.	We qualified, for each video, the emotions expressed through different types of humor Iterative and collective coding: The 49 videos were coded using the grid. Textual data analysis (Lebart et al., 2019) using Dataviv software applied to text we provided by watching, often repeatedly, the videos and described various elements using the analytical grid.

Table 2. The Three Steps of Data Analysis

2.2.1 First Cycle Coding: Open Descriptive Coding

First, open descriptive coding was conducted (Saldaña & Omasta, 2016). We identified the main themes of telework in lockdown that the videos address (see Table 3). A single video can address several themes and the percentage is relative to the total number of identified themes.

Themes	No	%
Work disrupted by personal life	25	15%
Video meeting	24	14%
Personal life disrupted, intrusion	20	12%
Adaptation to teleworking, age	15	9%
Technology, applications, defective network, microphone, video	15	9%
Competence/incompetence in the use of IT	15	9%
Team management, remote management	12	7%
Harmful effects, health problems	10	6%
Defensive strategies	8	5%
Social divide: core and non-core activities, front/back-office workers	7	4%
Socializing with colleagues: informal relations, Zoom cafés, drinks and cocktails, games...	6	4%
Cybersurveillance, monitoring	5	3%
Self-image	4	2%
Information overload	3	2%
TOTAL	169	100%

Table 3. First Coding (several themes are possible for each video).

The main theme developed in these videos is the boundary between work and personal life. They focus on this double-edged issue: how to work efficiently when work is done at home and can be disrupted by personal life, and how to keep a personal and intimate life when work bursts into the home through teleworking. Themes around new work and management methods (video meetings, remote management), confrontation with technological tools and in/competence in using these tools also emerge. The negative aspects of telework, including health, are also mentioned (deleterious effects, defensive strategies, social divide, information overload).

This first coding confirms the relevance of the data collected and shows that some themes related to telework during lockdown have aroused more emotions than others. In fact, if these videos have found an audience, it is because their speakers have expressed emotions shared by their addressees (including us, the co-authors). This analysis led to a second level of coding to investigate further the nature of the emotions felt towards these different dimensions of telework during the lockdown period.

2.2.2 Second Cycle: Pattern Creation

We then used these emergent themes for building our *pattern grid*. We reworked these 14 initial themes using a theoretical coding grid derived from research on telework by Schütz and Noûs (2021) who distinguish between working conditions (instrumental), working relations (relational) and power relations (managerial). We retained these three main dimensions, instrumental, relational and managerial, to which correspond different levels of control (from more to less control, respectively) that an individual can exercise over telework as evoked in the videos (Table 4).

Instrumental dimension: working conditions, individual control over the work situation
- Competence/incompetence in the use of computers - Technological tools, applications, network, microphone, video that do not work - Adaptation to teleworking, age - Video meeting
Relational dimension: working relations with others, relative control over the work situation
- Socialization with colleagues: informal relations with colleagues, coffee breaks, cocktails, games - Self-image - Work disrupted by personal life - Personal life disrupted, intrusion - Social divide: essential, non-essential activities, front and back-office workers
Managerial dimension: regulation of telework and work, little or no control over the work situation
- Defensive strategies (health, safety at work, psychodynamics of work) - Deleterious effects, health problems - Cybersurveillance, control - Team management, remote management - Information overload

Table 4. Categorizing the Themes Addressed by the Videos (based on Schütz & Noûs, 2021).

Our objective was to qualify, for each video, the emotions expressed through different types of humor by the speakers on telework both in its instrumental (technologies used), relational (cooperation conditions), and managerial dimensions, along decreasing degrees of perceived employee control (Spector, 1986) respectively.

In addition to the elements mentioned above (the video story line, the characters portrayed, the visual elements, the teleworking issues, the use of computer equipment) and to the first coding, we coded the type(s) of humor used in each video (see Appendix 3 for an example of the coding for a video). Of course, there are many classifications of types of humor, and researchers have been “unable to determine whether their classification systems applied to all kinds of humor” (Martin & Ford, 2018:197). For instance, Long and Graesser (1988) identified 11 categories on the basis of intentions or uses of humor, and comedians and humorists use up to 45 different types of humor². For the sake of simplicity, we used the following well-known humor types (Académie de Strasbourg, 2021): self-mockery, comedy of character, comedy of gestures, comedy of the absurd or nonsense, comedy of words, comedy of

² For example, <https://humornama.com/featured/education/types-of-humor/>

repetition, situational comedy, burlesque and heroic comedy, laughter with others, irony, grotesque, English humor, black humor, parody.

2.2.3 Third Cycle: Pattern Coding

This pattern coding was carried out iteratively and collectively. First, an individual analysis of one same video was carried out by each of the four researchers. Then we compared the results of our respective coding. Another four videos were then coded by each researcher to compare our analyses together and to converge towards the final analysis. The 49 videos were then coded by the researchers working in pairs. After watching the videos together once, the filling in of the analytical grid (Appendix 2) was done by discussing together.

We then conducted a textual data analysis of our coding (Lebart et al., 2019) using *Dataviv* software to enrich our analysis. Textual data analysis is a methodology born from the meeting between literature researchers and statisticians of the French school. It proposes, as a prerequisite to the production of meaning, the analysis of large corpora by statistical, computer and linguistic methods. It has proved its effectiveness in recent years with the evolution of textual data analysis technologies (Mothe et al., 2021; Moscarola, 2018). The analysis of textual data using specific software allows the researcher to confront his or her own interpretation with a statistical and semantic analysis of the data. Using such textual data analysis allows a distancing from the data and a discussion of the different subjective perspectives of the researchers involved in the research project.

This analysis was applied to text input by the researchers who watched, often repeatedly, the videos and described in their own words various elements using the analytical grid. It enabled the four researchers involved to compare their interpretations of the results of the coding and to converge on the final analysis of the results.

3. Findings

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

Videos feature mainly men in the age group of established working staff (30-50 years). Three quarters of the characters are employees in a subordinate position. One third of the videos feature local

managers/team leaders (Figure 4a and Figure 4b). Videos often showed both subordinates and managers, which is why the sum of fractions exceeds 100%.

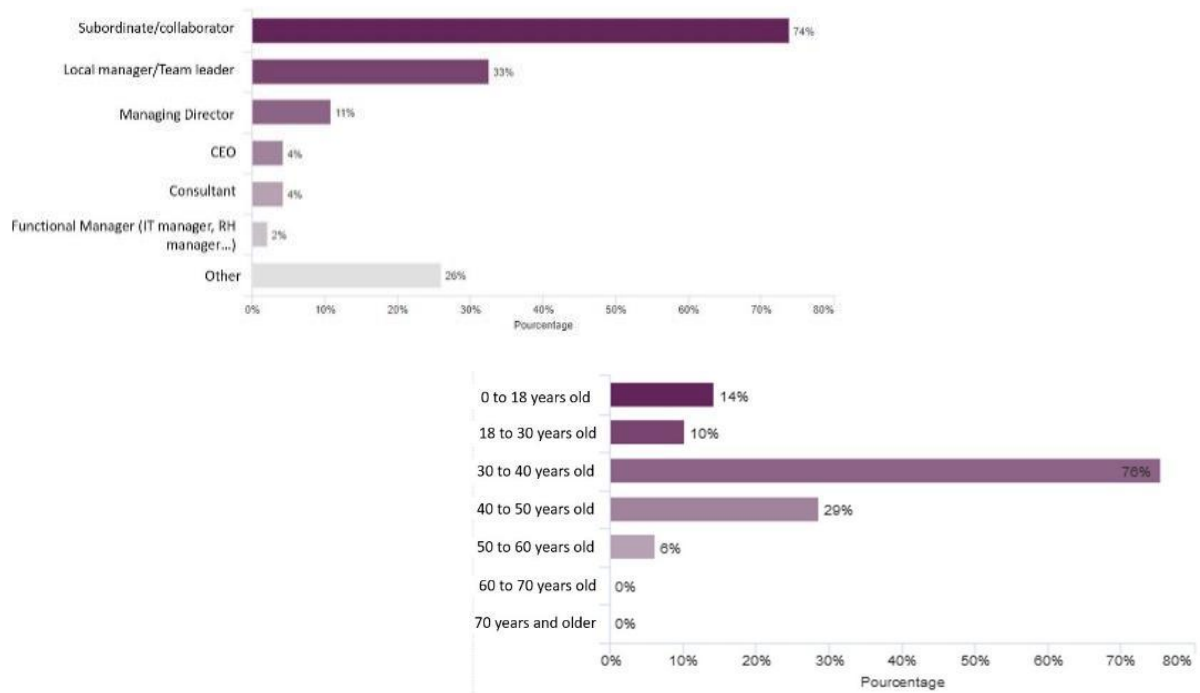


Figure 4a and Figure 4b. Characters Represented in the Videos.

We can speculate several reasons for this choice of characters represented in the videos. The first reason is that this population has been most affected by the implementation of enforced teleworking during the lockdown. The Internet public audience targeted by the video authors is presumably the ‘average’ working population which would correspond to this age bracket. Another reason is that the characters chosen should create a complicity between the speaker and the addressee and that this population is more likely to use the social networks on which these videos were collected. Finally, one explanation is that it is probably this population of 30–50-year-olds with children who have experienced this situation of teleworking in lockdown in the most emotional way.

In terms of the type of humor used to express emotions, the most frequent types of humor are: black humor (irony), situational comedy (quip), character comedy, comedy of the absurd (nonsense), self-mockery and grotesque humor (Table 5). This analysis demonstrates the diversity of the videos in terms of the type of humor they mobilize.

Types of humor used in the videos	No	%
Irony - black humor (humor that takes a painful reality as a theme to underline the absurdity of the world with cruelty or despair)	17	16,8%
Situational comedy - misunderstanding, mistake, mistaking someone for someone else	17	16,8%
Character comedy (comedy based on the exaggeration of a human flaw)	15	14,9%
Nonsense (humor based on the absence of logic)	13	12,9%
Self-deprecation (laughing at oneself and one's own faults)	11	10,9%
Grotesque (very accentuated deformation of natural traits, taste for the bizarre, the buffoon, the caricature)	7	6,9%
Comedy of gestures (comedy based on exaggerated gestures such as making faces)	5	5%
Comedy of repetition	5	5%
Puns (wordplay based on a difference in the meaning of words that are pronounced the same)	4	3,95%
Parody of a literary text (imitation of an author's style or text in order to make people laugh or satirize it)	4	3,95%
English humor (subtle humor based on paradox, deadpan expression)	3	2,9%
TOTAL	101	100%

Table 5. Types of Humor Used in the Videos (several themes are possible for each video).

A correspondence factor analysis applied to the types of humor makes it possible to identify four main categories of humor. To visualize this analysis, we project the results on a factorial map (Figure 5). This map makes it possible to see how different types of humor are grouped and opposed, highlighting their relationships. The correspondence factor analysis represents the types of humor along two main axes:

- Axis 1 (45%): This axis contrasts cheerful humor (on the left) with more ironic and dark humor (on the right). On one side, there is situational, character and gestural humor, often associated with a light and entertaining tone. On the other side, there is dark humor, which often involves social criticism or a darker and more sarcastic representation of reality.
- Axis 2 (24%): This axis differentiates between more self-deprecating and introspective forms of humor (top) and grotesque and absurd forms of humor (bottom). The upper part contains humor based on self-mockery, while the lower part groups nonsense and the grotesque.

The identified blocks are groupings of types of humor. The first category (Block 1) is cheerful humor that finds new opportunities to laugh in new situations (situation comedy/character comedy/burlesque). The second category (Block 2), based on self-deprecation, shows an understanding and mastery of the situation being played with, even if it involves painful experiences (self-deprecation, parody). The third category (Block 3) of humor is based on nonsense, the absurd and grotesque and caricatural situations. The fourth category (Block 4), black humor, mobilizes forms of humor that express a loss of bearings and control over situations that lead painful experiences.

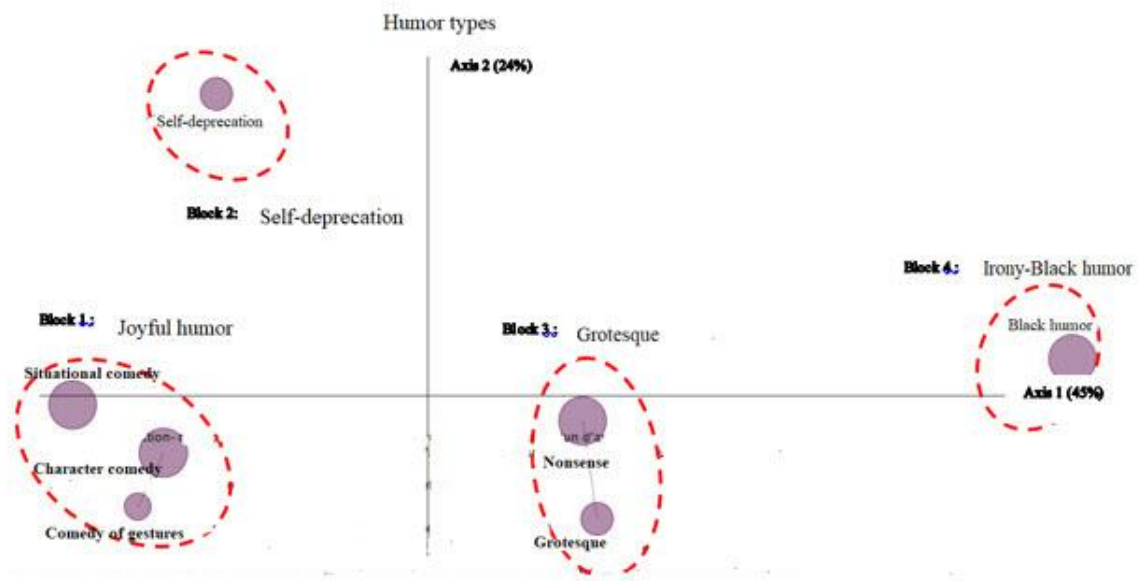


Figure 5. Factorial Analysis of Types of Humor.³

3.2. Humor and Enforced Telework: Key Findings

3.2.1. Overview

The correspondence factorial map (CFA) in Figure 6 allows us to visualize the association between the types of humor and the themes of the videos, presented in Table 3, verified by a Chi-square test. The CFA represents these relationships, when significant, on two axes:

³ The AFC map reproduces 69% of the information, divided into 45% horizontally (F) and 24% vertically (F2). The proximity or distance between modalities visualizes over-or under-represented associations. The calculation is based on dichotomized variables : each responses modality is transformed into a new variable indicator the presence/absence of the modality.

- Axis 1 (81%): This mainly structures the opposition between cheerful and absurd/grotesque humor on the right and dark humor on the left. It also highlights the proximity between cheerful humor and the instrumental dimension of teleworking (technical problems, adaptation, videoconferencing), suggesting that these videos exploit situations related to tools and working conditions with a light tone. Conversely, dark humor is closer to the managerial dimension, indicating a criticism of excessive control, surveillance or the negative impacts of teleworking.
- Axis 2 (19%): It contrasts videos that use self-derisive humor and the relational dimension at the top, with other types of humor more situated on the horizontal axis. This suggests that videos dealing with social relationships at work (socialization, intrusion of personal life into professional life) frequently use humor based on self-derision.

Correspondence analysis highlights significant relationships between the types of humor and the themes addressed in the videos. Joyful humor is strongly associated with the instrumental dimension of teleworking, where comical situations mainly emerge from technological bugs, chaotic videoconferences or difficulties related to the use of digital tools. Self-deprecation, on the other hand, is more related to social relations at work, particularly socialization, the intrusion of personal life into professional life, or tensions between essential and non-essential activities. This suggests that these videos often exploit personal discomfort or contradictions of teleworking through humor in which individuals laugh at themselves. Absurd and grotesque humor is also related to the instrumental dimension, which indicates an exaggeration of the technological dysfunctions and absurdities of teleworking to produce comic effects. Finally, black humor is mainly associated with the managerial dimension, highlighting themes such as surveillance, excessive control and the harmful effects of teleworking, such as burnout or information overload. This type of humor reflects a critical view of remote management, adopting a dark or cynical tone to denounce abusive practices.

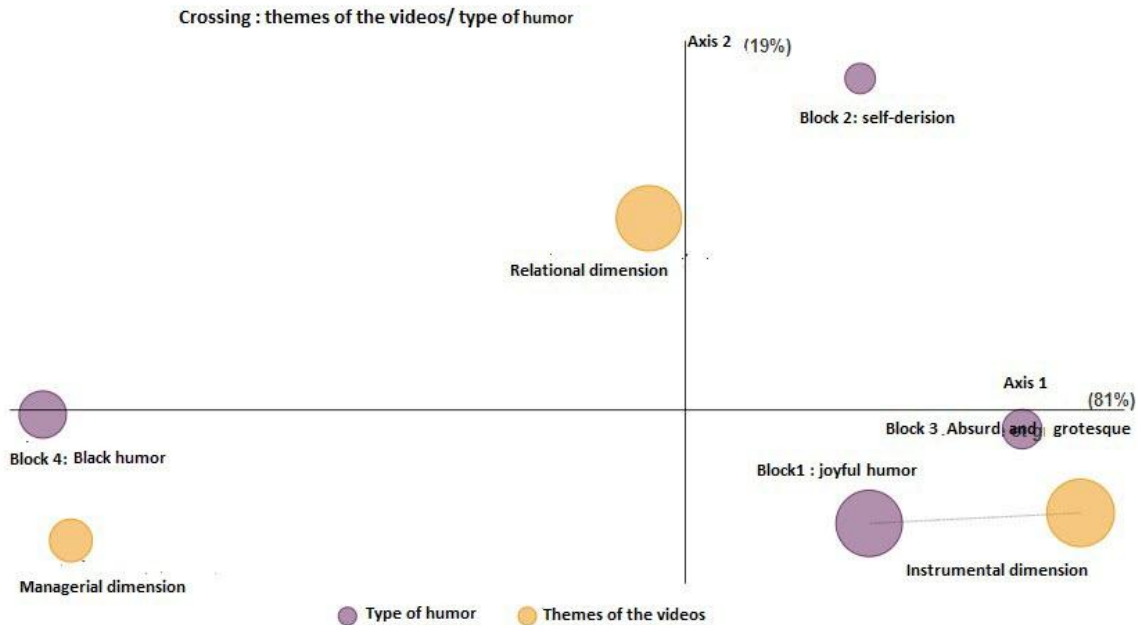


Figure 6. Cross-Analysis between Themes and Types of Humor⁴.

3.2.2. Detailed Findings and Case Illustrations

This cross-analysis between the types of humor used and the themes shows that joyful humor (Block 1), and absurd and grotesque humor (Block 3) are associated with the organization of videoconference meetings, the use of the tools, the skills around the tools, and the adaptation to telework. *This category covers the instrumental dimension of telework.* Under this dimension, telework situations in lockdown seem to be experienced positively as situations that bring new creativity. The mastery or lack of mastery of these new tools does not cause negative emotions. It opens up a whole field of possibilities.

A good example of this perspective is the video entitled "*Telework in lockdown*"⁵. This video (see Appendix 4) shows a manager who wants to take stock of the company's situation by videoconferencing with his team. He doesn't know how to use the videoconference system and his face is a distorted image of himself, hijacked by crazy "lenses". The actor plays a director dressed in a suit and tie, with a background of a classic, plush flat (exposed beams, pictures on the wall) visible on the screen. He is

⁴ The AFC map shows 100% of the information, divided into 81% horizontally (Axis 1) and 19% vertically (Axis 2). The proximity or the distance between modalities visualizes the over and under represented associations.

⁵ "Le télétravail en confinement", <https://fr-fr.facebook.com/gasteuil.maxime/videos/le-t%C3%A9l%C3%A9travail-en-confinement/247333999774082/> - Maxime Gasteuil.

serious and tries to convey managerial newspeak. The video addressee is put in the position of being a member of the team attending the meeting. The laughter comes from the grotesque situation and the ability to ridicule the manager because of his distorted face. The speaker creates a complicity that is based on the observation that in many cases the managers at the time of the lockdown did not have the competence to use IT, whereas they were demanding it from their subordinates. The addressee of this humor is also the subordinate who was subjected to executive newspeak, who yearned to laugh at executives because their speech and posture seemed so out of step with what the employees were experiencing during this period. Finally, complicity is also created by mobilizing the more classic lever of making fun of the executive as a representative of authority.

Self-derision humor is associated with situations of socialization and informal exchanges with colleagues (Zoom cocktails, games, informal meetings, etc.), i.e., *the relational dimension of telework*. The use of this type of humor to evoke these work situations can be interpreted as the expression of a form of contempt towards fake professional socialization events: remote socialization is not the same as face-to-face socialization, and the declared equality of remote socialization does not erase the relationships of domination and subordination in the workplace, aiming at power relations.

This relationship between subordinates and superiors is for example portrayed in the video "*One boss, one bitch*"⁶ by Anne Van den Sande (see Appendix 5). This video caricatures the relationship between a superior and his employee. An employee starts her day of teleworking. Her manager (the boss) invites her to a videoconference meeting to learn how to produce a business estimate in the "modern" way, i.e., via IS. The video focuses on misunderstandings that video exchanges create for people who already have difficulties understanding each other. The employee is dressed as if she is going to the office. She is in her living room with her daughter in the background, headphones on. The manager is in an office with a bookcase behind him. He is dressed in casual clothes. The inequality of the situation between staff who have a dedicated space to work and those who do not is immediately established. The laughter comes from the presentation of the stereotypical relationship between the work-averse, change-resistant employee and her superior. The superior tries to make her improve her skills, but she is unwilling to do

⁶ "Un boss, une chieuse", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANkZxB9Z-SQ>, Anne Van den Sande.

so because she does not like her boss. The video addressee feels empathy with the two actors who do not understand each other. The following dialogue gives an example of the misunderstandings between the characters:

"That's a modern way of doing an estimate"

"Are you saying that I am an old woman?"

"Sometimes you can be young and work in an old way".

Remote socialization, even if it allows individuals to see intimate spaces, does not erase power relations and increases the difficulties of dialogue and mutual understanding, particularly when the actors already have preconceived ideas about the others.

Black humor is used to evoke managerial situations (use of data by the employer, team management/supervision, cyber surveillance), the deleterious effects of telework such as health problems, defensive strategies put in place by individuals, information overload and the disruption of the boundaries between professional and personal life. This category covers *the managerial dimension of work* as well as new power relations and loss of control for the employee. Black humor, often referred to as humor of despair, is a form of humor which allows the individual to distance her/himself from situations which are particularly painful. The use of this form of humor to evoke these specific situations, and the audience it attracts, show that these dimensions of telework during the lockdown have been a source of negative emotions for individuals.

An example of this type of video is BROUTE's *"He is the only one going to the office"*⁷. This video (see Appendix 6) parodies a documentary about an IT manager who comes to the office to check remotely that employees are working from home. A stereotypical computer engineer, the man is dressed in a business dress code (tie, shirt). He is seated at a desk cluttered with computers, drinks, chips, biscuits..., which he calls his *"control room."* The video shows him calling employees he sees disconnected to make sure they are working or to get them to work by telling them the end of the television or video series they (and he) are watching. He explains: *"This is my control room, so I can*

⁷ "Il est seul à venir dans son entreprise", <https://youtu.be/TPT2NYZxltk>, BROUTE.

see all the employees who are logged in live and then I stand there doing nothing, checking that people don't start doing what I'm doing." The video underlines the interest that telework can have for an employer, especially in terms of work flexibility. The character becomes the eager agent of management and explains: *"This new organization pleases management very much because before, when they tried to contact the employees in the evening or at the weekend, well, they didn't answer as they were no longer in the office. But now they have no excuse, because they live in the office."* The video author (speaker) bases the complicity with the video addressee on the loathsome nature (dirty, servile, stupid) of the character, and on the feeling of intrusion of work into private life and of surveillance of work outside of any rules. The addressee laughs at the exaggeration of situations that s/he feels s/he is experiencing.

3.2.3. Consolidated Findings

The different dimensions of telework expressed through different types of humor did not evoke the same type of feelings (Table 6).

- The instrumental dimension of enforced telework (IS enactment) aroused positive emotions and opened up new spaces of freedom and creativity. Regarding this aspect of telework, employees retain control. They may choose whether or not to acquire proficiency with the tools provided. These tools are generally straightforward to master and are perceived as artifacts that afford new possibilities. The type of humor employed to address this dimension of telework is joyful humor and absurd and grotesque.
- The relational dimension of enforced telework (socialization with IS) has been experienced as fake and has provoked contempt. Concerning this dimension, the videos indicate that employees perceive a degree of control over the situation, although this sense of agency is not shared by all. While remote socialization permits individuals to glimpse intimate spaces and to forge new proximities, it does not eliminate existing power relations. Here self-derision is the most frequent type of humor.
- The managerial dimension of enforced telework (management with IS) entailed painful experiences and provoked negative emotions. Such videos convey that employees feel they

possess little or no control over their work situation. They are compelled to endure managerial directives concerning IS use at work, without any viable recourse. This managerial dimension of enforced telework is expressed by black humor.

Dimension	Type of humor	Emotions	Telework Themes	Video Illustration
Instrumental dimension: employee control of work situation	Joyful humor Absurd and grotesque	Opportunity for laughter Creativity Complicity	Technological tools and uses, videoconference meetings, adaptation to telework	“Telework in lockdown”
Relational dimension: some employee control over the work situation	Self-derision	Contempt Self-deprecation Questioning job motivation and investment in work Hierarchical inequality	Socialization, self-image, work disrupted by professional life, personal life disrupted, intrusion	“One boss, one bitch”
Managerial dimension: little or no control over the work situation by the employee	Black humor	Despair Fatigue, pain, stress, isolation, boredom, loss of meaning Surveillance (servile, loathsome) loss of reference points and of control	Deleterious effects, health problems, information overload, defensive strategies, cyber surveillance, control, team management, remote management	“He is the only one going to the office”

Table 6. Summary of Findings: Instrumental, Relational and Managerial Dimensions, and Emotions about Telework Expressed through Different Types of Humor

4. Discussion

Our research aimed to study the feelings conveyed by humorous videos publicly available on the Internet about enforced teleworking during COVID-19 and what they express on mandatory IS adoption. We suggest that humorous videos about telework created during the pandemic are an appropriate set of extreme cases related to mandatory IS adoption at work that constitute an empirical dataset relevant to our research question. Our findings characterize what types of humor were used by the video authors to

address which feelings in order to provide relief about the sudden and massive IS mandatory adoption for working during the lockdown. The characterization of these types of humor and the feelings they address gives insights into how organizational support could potentially impact their experiences and improve managing new mandatory IS adoption at work post-COVID-19.

4.1 Theoretical Contributions

4.1.1 Three Dimensions of Teleworking and Employee Control

Humorous videos about enforced teleworking produced during the pandemic express aspects humorists saw as the difficulties, paradoxes and tensions teleworking presented under mandatory extreme conditions, which we categorize under three dimensions, instrumental, relational and managerial. Different types of humor were used by video speakers to express a range of emotions, from negative about power relations, to positive emotions which created a feeling of complicity and self-identification in video addresses. These emotions were associated with decreasing levels of perceived employee control along the three dimensions, instrumental, relational and managerial respectively.

The instrumental dimension relates to the use of new technologies over which employees have control, and leads to joyful, absurd and grotesque humor, for instance, by gently mocking their superiors' technical competences; the relational dimension is about the social aspects over which employees have some control, and leads to self-derision by, for instance, laughing at one's own painful teleworking experiences. Little control is possible in the managerial dimension, leading to black humor about power relations, harsher and more bitter forms of humor, reflecting a stronger need for relief, and signaling more intense and more negative emotions.

This is consistent with the psychology literature on perceived control (e.g., Taylor & Brown, 1994; Spector, 1986) which suggests that individuals tend to be more comfortable in situations where they believe they have control over personal outcomes, even when they may not have control in objective terms. This is also suggested by for instance Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) who explored feelings of control and interactions with colleagues. IS researchers (e.g., Dudézert & Leidner, 2011) have also shown that IS are easier to use when employees feel in control or have the illusion of control, which humorous videos enable to re/gain.

Our results are also in line with Schütz & Noûs's (2021) comment that it is impossible to adjudicate whether telework generates more employee autonomy, or conversely more control. Similarly, we cannot conclude that it allows a better quality of life, at work as well as outside, or if, on the contrary, it is a source of work intensification or a harmful blurring of boundaries between private and professional life. Moreover, our video analysis highlights the same challenges discussed by Schütz and Noûs (2021) namely: adaptation to telework, socialization, work disrupted by professional life, personal life disrupted, intrusion, health problems, control, and remote management. As others point out (e.g., Benedetto-Meyer & Klein, 2017), like other attempts to "digitalize" the economy, teleworking does not erase power relations or automatically flattens relationships within organizations.

According to Lee (2021) the literature on teleworking has often adopted a normative stance, aiming to identify best practices. However, this approach can overshadow a more analytical perspective that seeks to understand and explain the complexities of teleworking. Focusing on the types of humor mobilized in each dimension of telework can provide a more detailed understanding of employees' feelings.

4.1.2 Humor as Relief

We showed that focusing on humorous material can generate insights into emotions of a sensitive nature and that different forms of humor can be used as a relief for these emotions (Sen, 2012). This is similar to Oduor and Kodak's (2020) results and in accordance with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) relief of emotions through humor. Incidentally, there appeared to be no differences of types of humor between countries of origin of the video authors which concurs with findings by Jiang et al. (2019) and Oduor and Kodak (2020). Our findings also align with the studies of Romero and Cruthirds (2006), Collinson (2002), and Hu et al. (2023), who have examined the use of humor in the workplace and its potential to improve management practices.

The analysis of humorous videos can serve as an emotional revealer. Understanding different forms of humor can help identify sensitive issues that are not easily accessible or openly expressed especially in IS mandatory adoption and use.

4.1.3 Mandatory IS Adoption

We underscore the usefulness of examining mandatory IS adoption in extreme situations. Our findings confirm research conducted by Hwang et al. (2016), Pirkkalainen et al. (2017), Kristy et al. (2022), and Fridkin et al. (2024), who called for investigating how emotions can significantly impact mandatory IS adoption. Negative emotions could result in counterproductive work behavior and influence their symbolic adoption. Managers also play a pivotal role in shaping user perceptions.

Our findings provide a contribution to the existing literature on IS adoption and use, particularly the work of Venkatesh (2000) on the role of emotions in the technology acceptance model, by recognizing the importance of characterizing which types of humor were used by the video authors to provide relief about enforced teleworking emotions.

By investigating a mandatory extreme situation, we were able to uncover different reactions to the implementation of mandatory IS in teleworking environments. Indeed, the videos humorously portray behaviors which emerge with the deployment of mandatory IS, for example: distancing from IS behavior is observed through actions like logging in and then faking connection problems so as not to be visible or audible, drinking, and seeking distractions; distress venting is observed through creating situations to disrupt the meeting, for example playing games between attendees to distract attention and mess up a meeting.

4.2 Methodological Contribution

This paper makes a methodological contribution by using original data and by developing a video analysis research protocol, as well as a grid to analyze humor. As stated by Renzetti and Lee (1993), sensitive situations make the collection and the dissemination of emotional research data problematic. In such sensitive settings researchers could adopt our video analysis research protocol to build and analyze datasets. Such methodologies are still underused in IS research (Myers, 2019). Interviewing or observational research on teleworkers' emotions in their homes during COVID-19 was clearly difficult to carry out practically. Also, emotions are difficult to identify and characterize directly, so an analysis based on videos can circumvent this issue. This illustrates what Rowe (2012) and Te'eni et al. (2015) suggest as alternatives techniques in order to understand a phenomenon.

4.3 Managerial Contributions

Findings from extreme cases are of interest because they can reveal information about normal processes (Yin, 2018). And as pointed out by Venkatesh et al. (2003:437) results from mandatory settings are of more interest to managers. They can help managers understand the difficulties in mandatory IS adoption more generally and be aware of and address the three dimensions. For the managerial dimension, supervision and meaningful feedback could be improved. New mandatory IS adoption can also be improved through a better consideration of the relational dimension, i.e., communicating and exchanging with co-workers and supervisors.

In an actionist perspective, emotional responses could be considered around designing mandatory technologies and practices to enable both effectiveness and sociality. It can help managers understand differences between employees who have a positive experience and those who do not. Differences can be interpreted by the fact that some employees may pay more attention to the benefits of the instrumental dimension; or by the fact that they may be more susceptible to the managerial dimension and how supervisory control and feedback are conducted.

Managerial interventions based on humor could also be considered. For instance, humor-based training in health organizations have aimed at improving employees' adaptive use of humor at work, which can be a useful resource to deal with workplace stress and foster employee well-being (León-Pérez et al., 2021). Bartzik et al. (2021) also found positive effects of a humor intervention on perceived meaningfulness of work, work enjoyment, and on the frequency of flow at work.

4.5 Limitations and Further Research

Although this study yielded promising results, using only video authors' material has limitations and it could benefit from further research. Our methodology has enriched the understanding of collective emotions, but it does not capture the full diversity of individual feelings. Complementing with other data collection methods would investigate this further. For instance: setting up an experiment showing videos to some teleworkers; carrying out interviews when a new mandatory IS is introduced and implemented; conducting immersive research such as participant-observation or ethnography to access individual reactions.

Our research protocol and its grid to analyze humor can be generalized and applied to other managerial situations. Thus, a humor analysis could serve as an emotional decoding tool to relate emotions, psychological safety and organizational support and help managers evaluate and then modify uses of IT at work. This would address a call for rethinking interpersonal relationships at work in the context of hybrid work as well as greater clarity about power relations and working conditions (Fana et al., 2020). Crossing humor and occupational health is another avenue for further research, particularly regarding employee resilience and engagement.

The results about the instrumental dimension are less generalizable because they are about mass IT communication tools. It would be interesting to explore this for more sophisticated IS such as new ERP or AI adoption and use. Our research and its humor analysis could be useful to study the emotions occasioned by the deployment of generative AI in work practices. Generative AI is considered as disrupting work practices in many domains (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Ritala et al., 2023) and as stated by Goldkind (2024), it is generating both awe and fear from users across domains, age, and expertise.

Schaupp (2023) analyzed employees' appropriation of AI systems and found that in settings where management was absent, the dysfunctionalities and disciplining functions of these systems were criticized openly by employees ascribing to them absurd identities; while in situations of co-presence with managers this criticism predominantly took the form of subversive humor. He concludes that such practices of subversive humor are indicative of the critical lucidity of employees but also signify a relative inability to influence workplaces and their technological infrastructures. Decoding such emotions with humor analysis could help managers to develop an appropriate use of generative AI at work.

Conclusion

This research explores the feelings addressed in humorous videos about the mandatory adoption of telework during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to characterize which types of humor were used by the video authors to provide relief about enforced teleworking emotions caused by the sudden and massive mandatory IS adoption.

We proposed a novel approach: the analysis of pandemic humorous videos about enforced telework with a structured analysis protocol presented an interesting opportunity of an extreme context of a brutal enforcement of teleworking. In such a setting, feelings are more intensely expressed, which may not be accessible in ‘normal’ situations, but may well exist nevertheless, especially with mandatory IS adoption, about which there is limited research. We categorized humor styles and linked them to instrumental, relational, and managerial dimensions of technology use, revealing the importance of perceived employee control.

The study suggests that analyzing employee feelings can help managers understand the difficulties in mandatory IS adoption and help them to interpret the emotional responses and dynamics of workers. This research provides a good basis for upcoming studies in understanding and managing other mandatory disruptive IS adoption such as generative AI.

Déclaration CRediT des auteurs

Aurélie Dudézert : Supervision, Conceptualisation, Méthodologie, Collecte des données, Analyse des données, Ecriture.

Florence Laval : Conceptualisation, Méthodologie, Collecte des données, Analyse des données, Ecriture.

Nathalie Mitev : Conceptualisation, Méthodologie, Collecte des données, Analyse des données, Ecriture.

Olfa Chourabi : Conceptualisation, Collecte des données, Analyse des données, Ecriture.

Déclaration des technologies d’Intelligence Artificielle Générative

Au cours de la préparation de ce travail, les auteurs ont utilisé ChatGPT et Mistral le Chat afin de copyéditer le manuscrit. Après avoir utilisé cet outil/service, les auteurs ont révisé et édité le contenu si nécessaire et assument l’entière responsabilité du contenu de la publication.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: List of the 49 videos

Title	URL	Date	Duration	Number of views
LA REUNION 2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-HM6oA3mJU	11/01/2021	00:07:40	794071
Le télétravail forcé c'est pourri	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSKZ0535ao	14/04/2020	05:07:00	124327
Nouvelle parodie chantée, "Ta tête en télétravail" sur une musique d'Indochine	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StFuE6850g	01/02/2021	00:01:08	8827
Télétravailler avec des enfants, c'est possible? Télétravailler avec des enfants	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYUeFe68MjY	11/04/2021	00:02:53	452736
La morosité en télétravail, ça existe?	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCg12G_74_s	02/08/2020	00:03:58	175710
Les avantages du TÉLÉTRAVAIL !	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8RKlPC3eNs	05/12/2019	00:01:54	484600
Il est le seul à venir dans son entreprise	https://youtu.be/TPt2NYZ3itk	21/05/2020	00:02:04	760274
Télétravail - La réunion	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szYISobR_s	14/04/2020	00:05:00	894149
Le télétravail avec ses enfants	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gK32imGXd8I	16/03/2020	00:01:46	267294
Types of people who work from home	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzTrt67tM	20/03/2020	00:03:27	769885
Funny Work from Home Fails During Coronavirus Quarantine Lockdown	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twMO9TNldHs	12/05/2020	00:03:32	10364464
Zoom video calls gone wrong	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7VwMfIP7jk	06/03/2021	00:02:59	2624248
"The Camera Is On!" When Online Calls Go Wrong	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoNsLnIVe10	26/03/2021	00:03:19	6704418
2020's Most Embarrassing Zoom Moments	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZpEpNPasw	30/12/2020	00:03:57	5723213
"We're toast": Teacher drops off zoom call and 2nd graders hilariously try to	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPr8nComZyG	07/10/2020	00:02:13	14069487
Napo is... teleworking to stop the pandemic	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TB_d6kKwGM	28/04/2020	00:01:36	88809
Un référent Covid au bureau	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Kk0ENwp3M4	06/09/2020	00:01:45	435000
Le télétravail, c'est compliqué	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULdLw6wzjg	09/11/2020	00:03:45	224000
Réunion de budget en télétravail	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZJum6bIM	08/11/2020	00:03:47	5600
Se détendre pendant la réunion hebdomadaire	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbr0eumKG4	23/01/2021	00:03:56	490
Le télétravail en confinement	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggufDcjsiY	25/03/2020	00:01:20	264323
# Télétravail, je craque	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ldbu-Z2am6E	13/03/2022	00:03:24	10576
Le télétravail en confinement	https://fr-fr.facebook.com/gasteuilmaxime/videos/?le-t%C3%A9l%C3%A9travail-en-confinement/24733399774082/	09/04/2020		1300000
Ma caméra ne fonctionne pas	https://www.facebook.com/ozecla/videos/ma-camera-ne-fonctionne-pas-1809555162975769/	22/03/2021	00:00:46	139
8.The whole working-from-home thing	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_pru8U2RmM	13/07/2020	00:06:55	33313090
Un boss, une chieuse: le télétravail	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANk2xIB9Z-SQ	15/08/2020	00:03:35	172
LE TÉLÉTRAVAIL (RÊVE VS RÉALITÉ)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKSmFRZsVjs	01/05/2020	00:03:35	24681
3/Work From the Office VS Work from Home	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKM5uJ0EwsM	07/04/2020	00:01:47	28153
Work from Home - Expectation vs Reality in a Desi Household	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luQYPUwA0bs	22/04/2020	00:03:50	3080
Le seul open bar, c'est pour les GAFAS ! Le Billet de Charline	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOVnvSQk0m0	19/05/2020	00:02:08	15158
Le télétravail	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX6azJsvzCA	23/04/2020	00:02:23	10418
Funny Teleworking Scenes	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baskiCjctN0	17/04/2020	00:01:39	766
Working from home with kids	https://www.pinterest.com/pin/57139489011395673/		00:00:16	47000
Workin' From Home (Funny Song Parody of Bon Jovi)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDzbpgk30	31/03/2020	00:04:06	235190
Help Desk - Extremely Funny	https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2ojz20		00:01:13	
Zoomin' 9 to 5 (Dolly Parton parody)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geNSFs7wU	25/10/2020	00:03:10	555
(Not) Working 9 to 5 - A Dolly Parton Covid Parody - Unsung Heroes Cast	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JBF_8ipag8	15/01/2021	00:06:05	3338
BBC interview hijacked by children prompts social media debate	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mh4f9AYRCZY	10/03/2017	00:00:43	51578506
Adults returning to work	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-gCRX23slw	10/09/2021	00:01:40	533700
8 publicités amusantes sur le télétravail	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuA2dsQnwo	11/05/2020	00:03:24	331270
Le télétravail en confinement	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggufDcjsiY	25/03/2020	00:01:20	266085
Télétravail de retour	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ij_0UBjy5Mk	10/11/2020	00:01:18	1888758
Guilhome vous détend - Le télétravail	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aB-mQAVUJsQE	07/04/2020	00:02:49	247883
Ce qu'il ne faut pas dire en télétravail	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-E7V8pRTM	21/04/2020	00:03:19	155281
Le télétravail quand t'es...	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKGjzphLTY	24/05/2020	00:04:55	101912
Comment télétravailler avec deux enfants ? Gérémy part en live	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQSPtD46w	08/04/2021	00:03:26	105033
La médecine du télétravail	https://www.facebook.com/Topito-136164895246/videos/la-m%C3%A9decine-du-t%C3%A9l%C3%A9travail/477380116603490/	08/02/2021	00:03:49	1364399
Le télétravail c'était bien mais au début	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoM4YdVlIk	05/05/2021	00:02:19	209234
Une journée type de télétravail en confinement	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvyqBOYpNj8	27/03/2020	00:01:46	185298

Appendix 2: Video Analytical Grid for Pattern Coding

This analytical grid is designed to structure the examination and coding of humorous videos, focusing on their content, tone, and representation of telework situations. It is divided into several sections:

- **Factual Information:** This section records basic data about the video (title, URL, date, author and affiliation, duration, number of views, country of origin) to contextualize it.
- **General Description:** It provides an overview of the video's content and plot, highlighting key humorous elements.
- **Types of Humor:** The grid identifies different comedic registers used, ranging from irony and parody to absurd humor, situational comedy, and repetition-based humor.
- **Themes Covered:** It lists themes related to telework and technology, such as remote management, intrusion of work into personal life, cybersecurity, surveillance, and adaptation to digital tools.
- **Character and Representation Analysis:** This section examines how characters are portrayed and the stereotypes they embody (young rebel, employee struggling with technology, authoritative figure, etc.).
- **Visual Elements and Staging:** It highlights significant visual aspects, the teleworking stereotypes depicted, and the use of computer equipment in the video.

Factual description	
Title	
URL	
Date of video	
Author	☐ Association ☐ Individual ☐ Institution ☐ Enterprise Name of author:
Duration	
Number of views	
Country of origin	
Description of video	
Type of humor	☐ Self-derision ☐ Comedy of character ☐ Comedy of gestures ☐ Comedy of the absurd, nonsense

	⊗ Puns ⊗ Comedy of repetition ⊗ Comedy of situation ⊗ Grotesque ⊗ English humor ⊗ Irony, black humor ⊗ Parody of a text, satire
Brief description of the plot	
Themes	⊗ Videoconference ⊗ Team management/remote management ⊗ Intrusion in personal life ⊗ Work disturbed by personal life ⊗ Technological tools ⊗ Competent/incompetent use of technology ⊗ Digital divide ⊗ Self-image ⊗ Socialization ⊗ Harmful effects ⊗ Defensive strategies (health and safety) ⊗ Information overload ⊗ Adaptation to telework, age ⊗ IT department ⊗ Use of data by GAFA ⊗ Use of data by employer ⊗ Cybersurveillance, monitoring ⊗ Cybersecurity, information risk, malware ⊗ Return to work face to face, hybrid ⊗ Others
Describe characters	What image of the actors is given by this video? Explain how people are "represented/stereotyped" in this video. (A young person? Rebel? Anti-authoritarian? Aggressive? Despising social values? Consumes food/drugs/alcohol, etc.? Success against all odds? Creative? Conventional? Etc.)
Describe the most salient visual elements of the story	
Describe the stereotypes of teleworking situations evoked in the video	
Describe the use of the computer equipment mentioned in the video	
Include some illustrative text from the audio file transcript	

Appendix 3: Extract of Video Coding with pattern

TITLE	"LA REUNION 2#"
URL	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-HMj6oA3mU
DURATION	00:07:40
NUMBER OF VIEWS	1.2 M (@14/3/2025)
COUNTRY	France
AUTHOR TYPES	Private individuals
AUTHORS' NAMES	Franjo, Nino Ariel, Clémentin
HUMOUR TYPE	Situation comedy - mistaking a situation for another
EQUIPMENT	Zoom meeting, four people at their computers, some wearing headphones, one playing a game on his mobile phone and switching his Zoom microphone and camera on and off
VISUALS	Computer screen with four 'windows' with the four people, we can also see in the background the home settings of the meeting participants. There is much messing around with the connection, the cameras and the microphones. There is a cupboard which we realise shows a woman (partner of one participant) in its mirror, listening in. The marketing manager fiddles with a folder, and with his glasses. One participant keeps disappearing leaving a black screen, when he is visible, he is in bed, dishevelled (in his pyjamas?), eating biscuits, drinking from a wine bottle. The language used is familiar for the characters who are subordinate, especially the asides between the three subordinates, or when they think that they have turned on their microphone (one shouts loudly at another person in his room who is not visible). The marketing manager uses business speak and tries to steer the meeting. There are several misunderstandings whilst speaking to each other.
WORDS/LANGUAGE	The familiar language is finally adopted by the marketing manager, when he realizes that this is not the right meeting and he becomes rude and aggressive.
THEMES	Videoconference work meeting; Remote team management; Clash between work and personal life; Intrusion into personal space; Work impeded by personal life; Technological misuses (network, microphone, camera) but also abuses; Overlap between work and socialisation with colleagues; Informal relations; Playing games; Defensive strategies (psychodynamics, hierarchy)
SUMMARY	The new marketing manager tries to steer the team meeting, battling with the technological issues, as well as the personal aspects of the participants' lives. He tries to make the team members focus on work, whilst various personal events interfere: someone else, not visible, in his room making a lot of noise for one participant who starts shouting at this other invisible person, thinking he has switched his microphone off; the informal joking exchanges between two of the subordinates, who know each other; one of them alluding to an affair the other had with someone at the office, overheard with his female partner (visible in the cupboard mirror) who also starts shouting; then the final realisation that this is the wrong meeting, having connected to the wrong link, the manager getting angry and rude; the others then start talking about playing a game together.
ACTORS	The actors play the role of active young males, 25-30 years old, who do not take themselves seriously and make silly jokes. One of them lives in a flat with his unemployed brother; another lives as a couple without children and his colleague lets out that he had an extramarital relationship with one of his colleagues. The slightly older manager is in representation: he represents his function and his hierarchical level (elaborate hairstyle, glasses, white shirt, black tie), his environment more professional (bookshelf, office chair, clock on the wall).
AUDIENCE REACTION	Laugh about the various misunderstandings and mishaps, and identify with the subordinates, more than the manager, who turns out to be more risible in trying to assert control over a chaotic situation. Realise that other employees also encounter technical difficulties, struggle with telework and home life, and that managing a meeting in these circumstances is hard. This can be reassuring and lead to self-derision. Contemplate how the intrusiveness of teleworking into personal lives makes working ineffective, and laugh at how the subordinates deal with it through jokes and hijack the situation to do less work.
REPRESENTATIVE VERBATIMS	3mins03: "Yes, that's cool. On the other hand, we saw, Mathieu, that you were in mode... quiet work there. Well, even in quiet teleworking mode, I would say." (Marketing manager) 6mins48: "Are you telling me that I've been messing around with idiots for 10 minutes and this isn't the right meeting?" (Marketing manager). "Calm down, Mr. Julien! We are in accounting! We don't pretend to be working in marketing, or I don't know what!" (Subordinate) [Marketing manager quits Zoom]. "Okay, Mathieu, are you there? Are we having a little game or something?" (Subordinate).
USE OF EQUIPMENT	Use and fake misuse of the camera, mishandling of the microphone, connection to an incorrect videoconference link.
AMBIANCE	The meeting atmosphere is initially friendly and cool, the marketing manager trying his best. But as the various genuine and bogus technical mishaps, and intrusions into personal lives develop, the atmosphere gets more tense, the subordinates more rebellious, culminating in the manager's realisation of his own connection mistake leading to angry exchanges. It then calms down again, with the manager quitting the meeting, and a participant inviting another to play a game.
STEREOTYPES	The stereotype of the subordinate employee, lazy, heavy-handed, obsequious with the hierarchy. The stereotype of the employee trying not to obey his superior by all possible means and taking advantage of situations to fulfill his personal pleasure. Two main postures: "manager, ambitious", "subordinate, little involved" and two professional universes, accounting (the 3 subordinates) and marketing (the manager).
INTENDED AUDIENCE	General public: adults aware of teleworking and videoconferencing tools. Teleworking employees who experience the intrusion of videoconferencing into their personal lives on a daily basis. How their experience of intentional and sometimes unintentional manipulations of connection, camera and sound controls can have hilarious effects.

Appendix 4. Video Still from “Telework in Lockdown”, Maxime Gasteuil (translation of text on the picture: “but, in spite of COVID, I will try to run this meeting as best as possible”).



Appendix 5. Video Still from “One boss, one bitch”, Anne Van den Sande.



Appendix 6. Video still from “He is the only one going to the office”, BROUTE (translation of text on picture: “because before they used to try”).

