

VIOLATION OF THE MAXIM OF POLITENESS IN LANGUAGE ON A MEME CONTAINING THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA PERIOD 2024-2029

Miftahulhairah Anwar

Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia
Correspondensi author email: miftahulhairah@unj.ac.id

Fachrur Razi Amir

Universitas Djuanda Bogor, Indonesia

Muhammad Bagas Ilhami

Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia

Moh. Arief Rakhman

Universitas Jambi, Indonesia

Abstract

The role of language is very important in campaigns because language is able to mobilize the masses and influence people's behavior. Ideally, campaigns present persuasive language that contains honest and polite information. However, the phenomena in the field are different from those idealized. This paper will describe the phenomenon of violations of language politeness maxims in presidential election memes. The method used is a qualitative descriptive method. The data in this research was collected from documentation in the form of meme images on the internet, focusing on the three presidential candidates announced by the General Election Commission (KPU). The three presidential candidates are Anies Baswedan, Prabowo Subianto, and Ganjar Pranowo. As a result, the language character in meme media containing presidential candidates is colored by language impoliteness. This linguistic impoliteness takes the form of violations of the language politeness maxim as follows: 27% violation of the approbation maxim, 12% violation of the opinion reticence maxim, 13% violation of the agreement maxim, modesty maxim) by 5%, violation of tact maxim by 25%, violation of the feeling reticence maxim by 13%, violation of the generosity maxim by 4%, and violation of the sympathy maxim of 1%. This violation has the potential to trigger conflict between supporters. Therefore, to create peaceful elections, memes should not contain any forms of politeness violations.

Keywords: Indonesian language, impoliteness, maxim, presidential election.

INTRODUCTION

Campaigns in general elections should ideally present memorable speeches. The obligation to provide a peaceful and conducive atmosphere during the campaign is a shared responsibility of all levels of society. However, the phenomena in the field are different from those idealized. The presence of social media has

changed people's style of communicating, conveying aspirations, appreciation, and criticism. It is not uncommon for there to be a war of words and hate speech between those who are for and against certain events, opinions, candidates, or figures.

The word war phenomena and pictures depicted in several forms. One is the form of meme. The case study conducted by the center for digital society regarding the use of memes in Donald trump's presidential campaign concluded that meme was very effective as a propaganda tool to influence people's perception of a reality through excessive media consumption.

In a 2024 election campaign, meme's use became an option in the campaign and became a medium used by both investigators and the public in responding to the current political situation. Ali (2019) revealed that meme became a "*lingua franca*" in modern communication, including in presidential election campaigns. There are three reasons why meme is an alternative media outlet. First, the birth of the meme coincides with the advent of the digital age. The advent of the digital age has enabled everyone to communicate directly through pictures with comments. Second, the marketing variant. Meme was providing new marketing needs. Third, the emergence of the era "*do it yourself*" that strengthens the individual has far-reaching effects because of digital technological support (Ali, 2019).

However, the language citizens use in memes often tend to disregard principles of civility. Some of the results indicate a widespread lack of support during the 2024 campaign. Ahead of the 2024 election, West Java Bawaslu found 3,600 pieces of hate speech content (Lukihardianti, 2023). In fact, Lemhanas emphasized that one of the biggest challenges in the escalation of Indonesian politics in 2023-2024 is the rise of hate speech (LEMHANAS, 2022). This study is like the research research carried out by Anwar, et al (2023) regarding language engineering shows that there is a violation of language impoliteness in the anecdote of the 2024 election campaign (Anwar, Amir, & Rokhman, *Rekayasa Kesantunan Berbahasa Indonesia pada Kampanye Pilpres 2024*, 2023). Anwar (2021) has conducted research on language politeness (Anwar M. , Amir, Anoegrajekti, & Muliastuti, 2021), (Anwar M. , Murtadho, Boeriswati, Yarmi G, & Rosa, 2021).

Several studies related to language use in general election campaigns have been conducted, including (Gunawan, 2017), (Pamungkas, 2022), (Fadeli, Wardhani, & Setiawan, 2022), (Fatmawati, 2021), (Febri, Suryanef, Hasrul, & Irwan, 2022). In general, this research focuses more on studying the meaning and semiotics of campaign attributes. Similar research was also conducted by (Silva, et al., 2020), (Zhou, 2020) and (Kriesi, 2012). This research discusses the use of linguistic features and pragmatic strategies used by presidential candidates and their vice presidents.

In contrast with existing studies, the study described the character of meme as containing three candidates for presidents of the 2024-2029 period. The three

candidates are Ganjar Pranowo, Prabowo Subianto, and Anies Baswedan. The study describes how the candidate is paged in meme by using Leech's maxims of politeness, which is (1) tact maxim (2) approbation maxim, (3) generosity maxim, (4) agreement maxim, (5) modesty maxim (6) sympathy maxim, (7) obligation of S to O maxim, (8) obligation of O to S maxim, (9) feeling reticente maxim, and (10) opinion reticente maxim. However, the study focused on the offending or violation aspect.

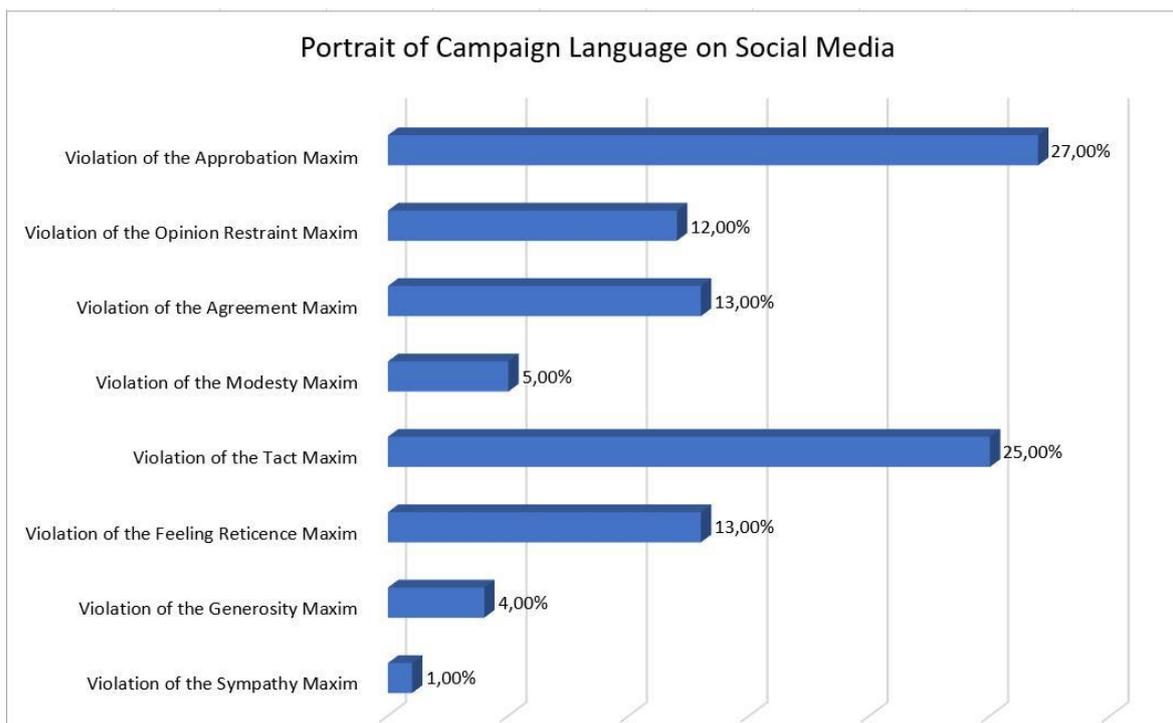
RESEARCH METHOD

The study described language impoliteness on meme about the 2024 presidential election. The method used is a qualitative descriptive method. The data in this study is collected from meme's online documentaries during juni-august 2023. The compiled meme data focuses on three (3) presidential candidates, Anies Baswedan, Prabowo Subianto, and Ganjar Pranowo. The data-collection technique used is documenting and transcribing. Documenting techniques are the techniques to document all three candidates for President on the Internet. A notepad technique is done by recording the vital information found in the picture. As for the data-analysis techniques used in this study are qualitative data analytics. Analysis activities consist of three courses of activity that is, data reduction, data presentation, and deduction drawing. The reduction of data in this stage, which is to sort out representative data. Of this data selection, 92 data have been found that potentially contain language impoliteness. Data that has been sorted further is classified based on the analysis table by using the maxim politeness theory. The final stage is to conclude the results of the data analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on the data that has been analyzed, violations of the maxim of politeness were found in memes about the 2024 presidential election. These forms can be seen in the following graph.



Graph 1: Results of Data Analysis

From the graph, it can be seen that the amount of data found in each form, namely violations of *approbation maxim* were 27%, violations of the *opinion reticence maxim* were 12%, violations of the *agreement maxim* were 13% , violations of the *modesty maxim* by 5%, violations of the *tact maxim* by 25%, violations of the *feeling reticence maxim* by 13%, violations of the *generosity maxim*) by 4%, and violations of the *sympathy maxim* by 1%.

The following is an explanation of the forms of violation of language politeness maxims in memes about the 2024-2029 presidential election campaign.

1) Violation of the Approbation Maxim

Language units in meme texts that do not comply with the approbation maxim are speech that does not maximize respect for other people. Therefore, insincere praise, ridicule, insults, or mutual belittling of other parties constitutes non-compliance with the approbation maxim. Data containing speech containing violations of the approbation maxim were found in 27% or 25 of the 92 data analyzed. The following is an example of a violation of the approbation maxim.



Figure 1 (source : <https://pin.it/1NPDceG>)

This meme contains two people. One of these two people is a presidential candidate named Prabowo Subianto. In the meme, the first person points to Prabowo Subianto by saying, "I salute him. He always runs for president, has no shame."

This meme appears to be praising, but actually violates the maxim of appreciation, namely praising insincerely. This insincere praise is shown by the word "salute" but followed by the sentence "He always runs for president, he has no shame." This statement is not a compliment, but rather a mockery of Prabowo because he has run for president several times. However, he always failed to get the most votes. Prabowo is considered shameless because he always runs for president. In this context, this speech demeans and insults Prabowo, thereby potentially violating the maxim of politeness.

2) Violation of the Opinion Reticence Maxim

This maxim adheres to the principle: *Give a low value to S's opinions*. It is considered to violate this maxim if someone is not sure about the opinion of the person speaking or is at odds with the opinion that has been expressed. Data containing speech containing violations of this maxim were found in 12% or 11 of the 92 data analyzed. The following is an example of this form of violation.



Figure 2 (source: <https://images.app.goo.gl/wi1xSKiZkoUHvtjg6>)

This meme circulated before the Presidential Candidate was determined by the General Election Commission (KPU). In this meme there are three people, namely Ganjar Pranowo as a presidential candidate from the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), Puan Maharani (next to Ganjar) also as a presidential candidate from PDIP, and one party cadre who carries a plan that says "Ganjar for President 2024".

Based on this context, this meme promotes Ganjar Pranowo as a presidential candidate from the PDIP party through a plan that reads "Ganjar for President 2024". The word "ahem" expressed by Puan Maharani in the picture indicates Puan's lack of confidence in Ganjar as the PDIP presidential candidate. This meme certainly has the potential to violate the maxim of politeness.

3) Violation of the Agreement Maxim

Language units in meme texts that do not comply with the agreement maxim are when the speech participants are unable to build consensus or agreement in speaking activities. Each speaker has their own wishes. Data containing violations of the agreement maxim were found in 13% or 12 of the 92 data analyzed.



Figure 3 (Source : <https://images.app.goo.gl/wubarGBLMe46igGd8>)

This meme circulated before the presidential candidate was determined by the General Election Commission (KPU). In this meme, Ganjar Pranowo, one of the presidential candidates from the PDIP Party, walks by pulling a bull. The bull is the symbol of the PDIP Party. Behind the bull, there was a small person who asked Ganjar, "The boss doesn't know, does he?" Ganjar answered "There is no need to use the chairman's blessing".

In the context of this image, Ganjar wants to run for president in 2024 without the knowledge of the head of the party that oversees him. This is shown by the statement "You don't need to use the chairman's blessing". Memes that contain the nomination of Ganjar as a presidential candidate without seeking approval from the party chairman are a violation of the agreement maxim.

4) Violation of the Modesty Maxim

The language unit in meme text on social media that does not comply with the modesty maxim is when the speaker acts arrogantly by maximizing praise or respect for himself and minimizing respect or praise for other people. Some data containing speech containing violations of the modesty maxim were found in 5% or as many as 4 of the 92 data analyzed. Here is one example.



Figure 4 (Source: @poliklitik.com)

In this meme there are two presidential candidates, Ganjar Pranowo and Prabowo Subianto. In the Ganjar meme, there is the word "serve" and the sentence "My Lord is the People". In the Prabowo meme, there is the word "ambitious" and the sentence "I want to rule".

Based on this context, this meme contains a violation of the modesty maxim. Both figures maximize praise for themselves. Ganjar is described as a presidential candidate who is able to serve the people well. As for Prabowo, he seems very ambitious to become ruler.

5) Violations of the Tact Maxim

Language units in meme texts on social media that do not comply with the tact maxim are speech that minimizes benefits for other people and maximizes losses for other people. Some data containing speech containing violations of the tact maxim were found in 25% or 23 of the 92 data analyzed.



Figure 5 (Source: https://www.google.com/save/list/6yKCNcTZoPljGKrO_5oRAhjxYrTpPQ?hl=id&cs=1)

In this meme there are three characters. First, Jokowi is the current president of the Republic of Indonesia, namely for the 2019-2024 period. Second, Ganjar Pranowo as a presidential candidate for the 2024-2029 period. Third, Anis Baswedan as a presidential candidate for the 2024-2029 period. In the meme, Jokowi is depicted smiling with the word "present". Ganjar is depicted smiling broadly with "the future". In contrast to these two figures, Anies is depicted frowning with the words "whatever".

Based on this context, this meme contains a violation of the tact maxim. The words attributed to Ganjar maximize profits for oneself. This benefit for oneself is reflected in the word "future". Contrary to that, the statement attached to Anies baswedan "whatever" really maximizes losses for Anies. "Whatever" has a negative connotation. This meme has the potential to violate the tact maxim.

6) Violation of the Feeling Reticente Maxim

Language units in meme texts on social media that do not comply with the feeling reticente maxim are speech that maximizes the speaker's feelings of displeasure and minimizes the speaker's feelings of pleasure. Some data containing speech containing violations of the feeling reticente maxim were found in 13% or 12 of the 92 data analyzed.



Figure 6 (source: @poliklitik.com)

This meme contains dialogue about the slogans of presidential candidates. The first image contains Anies Baswedan's slogan, namely "change". The second image contains Prabowo's slogan, namely "continue". The third image contains dialogue about Ganjar's slogan. In the picture, someone asks about Ganjar's slogan. The question was answered with "hmmm, confused". The response "hmmmm confused" directed at presidential candidate Ganjar's slogan shows a violation of the feeling reticente maxim. This speech shows his displeasure with the figure of Ganjar, thereby potentially violating the maxim of politeness.

7) Violation of the Generosity Maxim

Language units in meme texts on social media that do not comply with the generosity maxim are speech that maximizes profits for oneself. Data indicating violations of the maxim of appreciation were found in 4% or 4 of the 92 data analyzed. The following is an example of data on violations of the maxim of generosity



figure 7 (Source: <https://images.app.goo.gl/Pf7J3oebvGMX2TVV9>)

In the meme there is a statement that seems to be expressed by Prabowo, "Asem! How come you know my land is everywhere? Then I'll be told to share it again!" This statement has the potential to violate the maxim of generosity because Prabowo

is depicted as if he is maximizing his own profits by not wanting to share land. The context in which this image appears is because there are allegations that Prabowo owns large areas of land in several areas.

8) Violation of the the Sympathy Maxim

Language units in meme texts on social media that do not comply with the maxim of sympathy are speech that minimizes the attitude of sympathy between one party and another. Data containing violations of the maxim of sympathy were found as much as 1%. The following is an example of data on violations of the maxim of sympathy.



Figure 8 (source: @poliklitik.com)

This meme contains a statement of promise from one of the presidential candidates in 2024. The statement is "I promise, if I am elected, education and health will be free, basic food products will be cheap, minimum wages will double...". This statement was answered by two people who sat listening to it. The first person said "Ah...how sweet". The second person said "that's right". Then a voice came over the radio, "It's all just a lie." This meme has the potential to violate the maxim of sympathy. This is shown by the statement "It's really melodious and it's all just lies". This statement illustrates the listener's lack of sympathy for what the presidential candidate said. However, this meme is actually intended to satirize candidates who are campaigning. They always promise, but after being elected, they often forget their promises.

Analysis/Discussion

From the data classification and analysis, it can be seen that memes containing the presidential election campaign violate the maxims of language politeness. The biggest violation is the approbation maxim. This violation is characterized by giving insincere praise, ridiculing, insulting, or demeaning each other. The large number of politeness violations in memes shows that memes often tend to ignore the principles of politeness.

There are several reasons why language on social media, including memes on the internet, tends to be impolite. First, social media users often do not include their identity (anonymous). This lack of identity makes them freer to speak and express themselves without further consideration (Kramer, 2016). Second, there is physical distance. When communicating on social media, someone cannot read the facial expressions, tone of voice and body language of the person they are talking to. This condition certainly provides free movement for them to communicate. Third, group influence. Many social media have certain groups or communities where people share similar views. This can reinforce incivility because there is a drive to please group members and demonstrate loyalty to shared views (Spears, 2021). Fourth, Criticism and Controversy. Some people use social media to seek attention or express their dissatisfaction. This may include criticism, insults, or controversy to attract attention (Hawk, Eijnden, Lissa, & Bogt, 2019) & (Ran, 2023). Fifth, Lack of Filtering. Without proper restrictions, filters or supervision, some people use social media as a platform to express emotions without consideration (Shahbaztabar, 2017). Sixth, Debates and Disputes (Zeitsoff, 2017), (Tagg, 2019). Discussions on social media often turn into emotional debates. When people have different opinions, they tend to have more difficulty communicating politely. Seventh, Pursuit of Attention. To get likes, shares, or other attention, some people use provocative or inappropriate language or content. Eighth, Misunderstanding. Sometimes, posts on social media can be misunderstood due to a lack of context or different interpretations from readers. Ninth, Internet Culture. There is a kind of culture or "environment" on social media that reinforces certain norms of behavior. If the norm is impolite, then it can spread and be adopted by more people.

However, violations of language politeness maxims certainly cannot be ignored. This impolite behavior can create polarization and conflict regarding freedom of expression in the important democratic process of presidential election. Therefore, politeness in Indonesian is important for every individual to implement in using social media to improve ethics in media. Language has the main power to help create social cohesion, as stated by Rubinelli "*Language is essential to politics as politics exercises its power of making decisions and influencing citizens through language. The ancient Greeks started a tradition of the study of language focused on this power of influencing civic life under the field of 'rhetoric'.*" (Rubinelli, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The language used by the public in memes related to presidential campaigns often tends to ignore the maxims of politeness. Ignoring the maxims of politeness certainly has an impact on the potential for creating social conflict. To overcome this, it is important to understand how to communicate well on social media. Awareness of

the effects of words and actions is essential to building a more positive language environment. Therefore, it is very necessary to maintain a polite language climate.

Acknowledgement

This paper is part of a fundamental research grant. Thank you to the Directorate of Research and Community Service (DRPM) of the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia for funding this research in 2023.

References

- Ali, D. J. (2019). *Katakanlah dengan Meme*. Jakarta, Jakarta: Cerah Budaya Indonesia.
- Anwar, M., Amir, F. R., Anoegrajekti, N., & Muliastuti, L. (2021). Language Impoliteness among Indonesian on Twitter. *Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 37 (4), 161-176.
- Anwar, M., Amir, F., & Rokhman, M. (2023). *Rekayasa Kesantunan Berbahasa Indonesia pada Kampanye Pilpres 2024*. Jakarta: DRPM Kemdikbudristek.
- Anwar, M., Murtadho, F., Boeriswati, E., Yarmi G, & Rosa, H. T. (2021). The Analysis model of impolite Indonesian language use. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, Vol 5, 1426-1441.
- Fadeli, M., Wardhani, T. F., & Setiawan, A. (2022). Semiotics of Political Campaign Through Advertising Boards. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Informasi dan Komunikasi*, Vol 6 Nomer 1, 14-30.
- Fatmawati. (2021). *Kampanye Politik: Sebuah Pendekatan Fenomenologi*. Banyumas: Amerta Media.
- Febri, R., Suryanef, Hasrul, & Irwan. (2022). Kampanye Politik Melalui Media Sosial oleh Kandidat Calon Kepala Daerah Kabupaten Pesisir Selatan paa Pilkada Tahun 2020. *Journal of Civic Education*, Volume 5 Nomor 2, 269-277.
- Gunawan, S. (2017). Hillari Clinton's presidential campaign rhetoric: Making America whole again. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, 50-55.
- Hawk, S. T., Eijnden, R. J., Lissa, C. J., & Bogt, T. F. (2019). Narcissistic adolescents' attention-seeking following social rejection: Links with social media . *Computer in Human Behavior*, vol 92, 65-75.
- Kramer, L. R. (2016). Verbal Venting in the Social Web: Effects of Anonymity and Group Norms on Aggressive LanguageUse in Online Comments. *Social Media + Society*, Vol. 2 (3), --.
- Kriesi, H. (2012). Personalization of national election campaigns. *Political Party Sage Journals*, 18 (6), 825-844.
- LEMHANAS, B. H. (2022, Desember 21). <https://www.lemhannas.go.id/index.php/publikasi/press-release/1788-gubernur-lemhannas-ri-tiga-tantangan-terbesar-eskalasi-politik-indonesia-2023-2024>. Retrieved from <https://lemhannas.go.id:https://www.lemhannas.go.id/index.php/publikasi/press-release/1788-gubernur-lemhannas-ri-tiga-tantangan-terbesar-eskalasi-politik-indonesia-2023-2024>
- Lukihardianti, A. (2023, Februari 14). <https://rejabar.republika.co.id/berita/rq2gig291/jelang-pemilu-2024-bawaslu-jabar->

- temukan-3600-konten-ujaran-kebencian. Retrieved from <https://rejabar.republika.co.id/berita/rq2gig291/jelang-pemilu-2024-bawaslu-jabar-temukan-3600-konten-ujaran-kebencian>
- Pamungkas, A. (2022). Pemasaran Retorika Politik dalam Iklan Tokoh Politik Indonesia. *Kalijaga Journal of Communication* , 133-154.
- Ran, A. S. (2023). Exploring the Role of Fear Missing Out and Attention-Seeking Behavior in Problematic Social Media Use among Adolescent Instagram Users . *Jurnal Psikologika*, Vol. 28 (1) , 15-28.
- Rubinelli, S. (2018). Thetoric as a civic art from antiquity to the beginning of modernity. In R. W. Forchtner, *The Roudledge Handbook of Language and Politics* (p. 120). Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge.
- Shahbaztabar, H. R. (2017). The Effect of Internet filtering on user's information seeking behavior and emotions. *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 69 (4), 408-425.
- Silva, M., Godinho, C., Salavisa, M., Owen, K., Santos, R., Silva, C., . . . Bauman, A. (2020). Follow the Whistle: Physical Activity is Calling You. Evaluation of Implementation and Impact of a Portuguese Nationwide Mass Media Campaign to Promote Physical Activity . *International Journal of Environment Research and Public Health*, Vol 17 (1), 8062.
- Spears, R. (2021). Social Influence and Group Identity . *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol. 72, 367-390.
- Tagg, P. S. (2019). Social media and the future of open debate: A user-oriented approach to Facebook's filter bubble condundrum. *Discourse, Context & Media*, Vol. 27, 41-48.
- Zeitsoff, T. (2017). How Social Media is Chaning Conflict. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol 61 (20), --.
- Zhou, L. (2020). Moral stance taking as device of covert aggression in Chinese political language use. *Discourse, Context & Media* 36 (1), 100415.