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Types of Euphemism in Anies Baswedan's Speech

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ABSTRACT

Euphemisms are often used in language activities to subtly convey sensitive information. Careful word choice allows one to avoid using vulgar or unpleasant language that may offend others. This study aims to explain the types of euphemisms used by Anies Baswedan in his statement after the announcement of his candidacy as Indonesia's presidential candidate in the 2024 election by the Nasdem Party. Allan and Burrige's framework in categorizing the types of euphemisms becomes the theoretical basis in this research. This research uses a qualitative approach with a content analysis method, by analyzing words, phrases, or sentences containing euphemism components found in Anies Baswedan's speech on 4 October 2022, sourced from metro.tempo.co. The analysis reveals four main types of euphemisms: 11 instances of metaphor (32.35%), 6 cases of one-for-one substitution (17.65%), 16 occurrences of circumlocution (47.06%), and 1 instance of figurative expression (2.94%). These forms of euphemism are used as alternative linguistic expressions, softening the language to prevent the use of sensitive or vulgar expressions that can offend others.

Keywords: *Euphemism, Language Refinement, Speech*

Abstrak

Eufemisme sering digunakan dalam kegiatan berbahasa untuk menyampaikan informasi sensitif secara halus. Pemilihan kata yang cermat memungkinkan seseorang untuk menghindari penggunaan bahasa yang vulgar atau tidak menyenangkan yang dapat menyinggung perasaan orang lain. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan jenis-jenis eufemisme yang digunakan oleh Anies Baswedan dalam pernyataannya setelah pengumuman pencalonan dirinya sebagai calon presiden Indonesia pada pemilu 2024 oleh Partai Nasdem. Kerangka kerja Allan dan Burrige dalam mengkategorikan jenis-jenis eufemisme menjadi landasan teori dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode analisis isi, dengan cara menganalisis kata, frasa, atau kalimat yang mengandung komponen eufemisme yang ditemukan dalam pidato Anies Baswedan tanggal 4 Oktober 2022, yang bersumber dari metro.tempo.co. Analisis tersebut mengungkapkan empat jenis utama eufemisme: 11 contoh metafora (32,35%), 6 kasus substitusi satu-untuk-satu (17,65%), 16 kemunculan sirkumlokusi

(47,06%), dan 1 contoh ungkapan kiasan (2,94%). Bentuk-bentuk eufemisme ini digunakan sebagai ekspresi linguistik alternatif, memperhalus bahasa untuk mencegah penggunaan ekspresi yang sensitif atau vulgar yang dapat menyinggung perasaan orang lain.

Kata kunci: Eufemisme, Penghalusan Bahasa, Pidato

INTRODUCTION

Human interaction is deeply rooted in the intricate web of communication, serving as the linchpin of our social fabric. As social beings, humans rely on this intricate system to convey thoughts, emotions, and ideas, forging connections and prospering in the company of others. Within this complex framework, our choice of words and linguistic nuances becomes instrumental in communicating our intentions and emotions. Language isn't just a medium for sharing facts; it is a dynamic tool that adapts to diverse social contexts and objectives (Poole 1999, p. 8). This is in accordance with Korneeva (2019), who says that it is impossible for a person to live alone without interacting with other people. In their daily lives, humans recognize culture and create various forms of ideas, activities, and artifacts to meet their needs.

In our quest to navigate the intricate web of societal relationships, politeness emerges as a cornerstone. Effective communication is not merely about conveying facts but also about doing so in a good, polite, and effective manner. Language ethics, the set of principles that dictate our language usage, is inextricably linked with broader cultural and social norms. It governs when we speak, what words we use in different sociolinguistic contexts, how we navigate our turns to speak, when silence is warranted, and the quality of our voice and physical demeanor when communicating (Noermanzah, 2019). These ethics are a barometer of a person's conversational prowess, reflecting their mastery of language procedures.

The uniqueness of human language is evident in its capacity to help us comprehend the universe's expectations, both material and metaphysical. In the words of Saussure, the famous linguist, "language is the most direct and universal means of fulfilling these expectations" (Saussure, 1988: 90). Language not only acts as a conduit for understanding but also facilitates interactions and connections between individuals across the globe. Thus, it becomes paramount to use language in a manner that preserves balance and harmony in our shared world.

One crucial facet of language use in this societal context is politeness. Politeness isn't confined to a particular culture or language; rather, it is a universal tenet, albeit one that is expressed differently across cultures. It emerges

as the product of the interplay between individuals and their respective cultures, and it is acquired and refined over time as individuals coexist within the socio-cultural milieu (Shalihah and Zuhd, 2020). Politeness functions as the lubricant that facilitates smooth and effective communication among people. It's the adhesive that binds our interactions, fostering respect and face-saving in various social situations.

In this intricate web of language usage and societal norms, euphemisms play a distinct role. Allan and Burridge (1991) describe euphemisms as expressions deliberately chosen by speakers to be less offensive, annoying, or disturbing than the original words or phrases they replace. When faced with unpleasant or sensitive issues, individuals often resort to these veiled expressions to avoid causing offense or discomfort to others. Euphemisms act as a linguistic safety net, mitigating the impact of potentially harsh or stark realities, thus averting conflicts and animosity. This nuanced and strategic use of language reflects individuals' discretion and is a means of preserving social harmony.

Meanwhile, Barus (2020) states that euphemisms are words or phrases that are used as alternatives to expressions that are not liked. They avoid the possibility of losing face by the speaker and also by the listener or third party. Wardaugh (2010: 249) states that euphemisms refer to certain things that are not said, not because people don't talk about those things, but because they talk about them indirectly. In short, unpleasant ideas, taboo words, and so on are not spoken outright but are "covered up" or disguised with euphemistic expressions. Taboo is a word that should not be used or, at least, is considered taboo in "polite society".

Euphemisms are a versatile tool, serving both individuals and the larger society. They allow individuals to navigate potentially awkward or unpleasant conversations with tact and sensitivity. This, in turn, safeguards personal and social relationships. Furthermore, they have broader societal implications. Euphemistic language has an essential role in addressing taboo topics or concepts that are considered off-limits in polite society, such as discussions around sex, death, social status, or sensitive issues like unemployment (Serli, 2018) By masking these potentially uncomfortable topics with euphemisms, individuals avoid causing offense and maintain an aura of decorum.

Euphemism can be positive because people, groups, institutions, and authorities can use it to create peace and stability, but it can also be negative because the reality is not known for certain (Suhadi et al., 2021). The use of euphemisms is very important in the communication process to avoid expressions that are unpleasant for other people, even though the use of euphemisms always has language that is convoluted or complicated to

understand because euphemistic language has a meaning that not everyone can understand the intent and purpose of the speaker (Nusri and Mubarak, 2022). Euphemisms are also used by news writers to change the names of certain unpleasant things to make them more acceptable (Tuerah, 2021).

Effective communication is a cornerstone of human interaction, with language serving as a versatile tool that adapts to various contexts and intentions. In the realm of political discourse, language is wielded by leaders to convey complex messages, often laden with nuance. Anies Baswedan, a prominent figure in Indonesian politics, is known for his adept use of language, particularly the deployment of euphemisms. This research delves into the various types of euphemisms utilized in Anies Baswedan's pivotal speech following his announcement as a presidential candidate by the NasDem Party on October 4, 2022. This speech serves as a remarkable case study, offering insights into how a political leader navigates sensitive issues, maintains public relations, and communicates diplomatically.

Euphemisms, as linguistic tools, play a pivotal role in political communication. They allow political figures to address delicate issues, avoid offense, and establish rapport with their audience. Allan and Burridge (1991) have classified euphemisms into diverse types, such as metaphor, hyperbole, circumlocution, initialism, acronym, omission, and more, each serving distinct communicative purposes.

Anies Baswedan's journey from the governorship of Jakarta to his presidential candidacy underscores the importance of dissecting his speech from a linguistic perspective. His choice of language in this speech, marked by its use of euphemisms, is emblematic of his approach to sensitive issues. Understanding these euphemisms offers a nuanced glimpse into his communication strategy, revealing the intricate interplay between politics and language.

METHODS

This is qualitative research with content analysis methods. The qualitative method requires categories as the unit of analysis; various categories are created based on theoretical references, both categories of form, purpose, and meaning, which are then simplified in steps using rational thinking (Moleong, 2018), while the design uses inductive and deductive design models. This research data consists of words, phrases, and sentences that contain euphemisms. The data source for this research is the text of Anies Baswedan's speech after being announced as a presidential candidate by the Nasdem party on October 4, 2022, which was obtained from metro.tempo.co. The data were taken randomly in the form of words and phrases oriented towards euphemisms.

The data collection techniques used in this research are observation and recording. To make this research more accurate, the author (1) read the speech text intensively, (2) noted the use of euphemisms in the speech, and (3) sorted the data by type and then presented it in the form of a discussion. The data analysis procedure in this research relates to symbolic information messages in the following steps: 1) know the form of each euphemism; 2) explore and reveal the meaning of each euphemism. 3) reveal the meaning of the euphemism used. 4) and based on these steps, conclusions are drawn, which are then used as the basis for realizing the research report (Busetto, 2020).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on data collected and analyzed, there were 35 euphemisms found in the text of Anies Baswedan's speech after he was announced as the 2024 Presidential Candidate by the NasDem Party on October 4, 2022, obtained from metro.tempo.co. In this speech, four types of euphemisms were found, as shown in the following table.

Table 1. Data findings

Types of Euphemism	Total	Percentage
Metaphor	11	32,35 %
One-for-one substitution	6	17,65 %
Circumlocution	16	47,06 %
Figurative Expression	1	2,94 %
Total	34	100 %

From the analysis of all existing data, the researcher did not find several types of euphemisms that exist in Allan and Burrige's theory, namely: hyperbole, initialism, general for specific (hypernym), understatement, acronym, colloquial, and jargon. Meanwhile, the four types of euphemism found in the data are metaphor, hyperbole, circumlocution, and figurative expression.

Metaphor as Euphemism

Euphemism in the type of metaphor is euphemism that refines words by using implicit comparisons between two different things (Nazar, 2022). There were 11 euphemisms of this type in the speech, three of which were analyzed as follows:

Data 1

“... kita berkumpul di tempat ini yang insya Allah **membuat babak baru** untuk perjalanan NasDem dan perjalanan Indonesia ke depan.”

“... we gather in this place which, God willing, will create a new chapter for NasDem's journey and Indonesia's further journey.”

The phrase *membuat babak baru* ‘creating a new round’ in Data 1 above is a euphemism, because it functions to refine the language. The word *babak* is usually used in football matches, namely the duration of the match which is 45 minutes, and one match consists of two halves multiplied by 45 minutes. *Babak baru* ‘new chapter’ is a comparative form of the phrase ‘era of change’, namely an era that is different from the previous period. The speaker compared Indonesia's journey as if it were the same as a football match. In this case, the phrase concerned is a refined form of *menciptakan perubahan* ‘creating change’, and it is considered moresubtle than the latter phrase.

Data 2

“Kami mencita-citakan demokrasi Indonesia yang **matang** yang menjadi tempat persandingan keragaman dengan kesatuan, dinamika dengan ketertiban, kompetisi dengan persamaan, kebebasan dengan kesejahteraan.”

“We aspire to a mature Indonesian democracy that is a place where diversity meets unity, dynamism with order, competition with equality, and freedom with prosperity.”

The word *matang* ‘ripe’ in Data 2 is a form of word that is commonly associated with food or fruit. The word concerned in Data 2 is related to Indonesian democracy; in this case, Anies compared Indonesian democracy to food or ripe fruit. Democracy is a word related to a state, so it cannot be ripe like food or fruit, but the word *matang* ‘ripe’ is used as a metaphor to refine the commonly used word, namely *dewasa* ‘mature’.

Data 3

“Kami mencita-citakan demokrasi Indonesia yang **matang** yang menjadi tempat **persandingan** keragaman dengan kesatuan, dinamika dengan ketertiban, kompetisi dengan persamaan, kebebasan dengan kesejahteraan.”

“We aspire to a mature Indonesian democracy that is a place where diversity meets unity, dynamism with order, competition with equality, and freedom with prosperity.”

The word *persandingan* ‘bridal seat’, as found in Data 3, is generally used to indicate the place where two bridal couples gather during a wedding ceremony. In the data referred to, *persandingan* is not used as it is, but is used as a place to unite the various differences that a nation has. In this case, *Indonesia* is equated with the word *persandingan* as a place where the various differences of the

Indonesian state come together. This makes this word to be classified as a euphemism in metaphorical type.

One-for-one Substitution as Euphemism

One-for-one substitution euphemism is a euphemism that refines a word by replacing a particular word with another word that has the same meaning. In the text of Anies Baswedan's speech, 6 data on one-for-one substitution euphemisms were found, three of which are analyzed below:

Data 4

"... kita berkumpul di tempat ini yang insya Allah membuat babak baru untuk *perjalanan* NasDem dan *perjalanan* Indonesia ke depan."

"... we gather in this place which, God willing, will create a new chapter for NasDem's journey and Indonesia's further journey."

The word *perjalanan* 'journey' means going from one place to another. This word is usually used for human or vehicle activities that move from the point of movement to the destination. However, in data 4, *perjalanan* 'journey' is a form of one-for-one substitution euphemism, namely a word that replaces another word, namely *kemajuan*. The word *perjalanan* contains the same elements of meaning as *kemajuan*, both of words have the same elements of movement.

Data 5

"Dan itulah ketika Bang Surya dan teman-teman di NasDem mengajak kami untuk *berdampingan*, untuk berjalan Bersama, untuk meneruskan pembangunan di republik ini ..."

"And that is when Bang Surya and our friends at NasDem invited us to stand side by side, to walk together, to continue the development of this republic ..."

The word *berdampingan* 'adjacent' means 'side by side' or 'together'. The word *berdampingan* in data 5 is a form of euphemism with the type of one-for-one substitution, because this word is used as a form of language refinement of the word *bergabung* 'joining'. The use of the word *berdampingan* is considered to indicate that the speaker's position is at the same level, or does not indicate superior and inferior level between Anies Baswedan and Bang Surya as Chairman of NasDem. This shows a form of mutual need and complementarity between one another. Thus, the word *berdampingan* 'side by side' is a refinement of another word, *bergabung*.

Data 6

“... kita saling mengisi, saling menopang, dan insya Allah menjadi keutuhan dan kekuatan yang bisa *menggerakkan* perubahan di negeri ini.”

“... we complement each other, support each other, and God willing, it will become integrity and strength that can drive change to this country.”

In data 6, the word *menggerakkan* ‘move’ is a euphemism in the type of one-for-one substitution. The word concerned means ‘to make move’ or ‘change position’. In the context of data 6, the word *menggerakkan* is used to replace the word *melakukan* ‘do’ which contains the same meaning elements, but *melakukan* announce more frontal meaning, so it could rise to a less good meaning. The word *menggerakkan* is considered more subtle and achieves the desired communication goal.

Circumlocution as Euphemism

Circumlocution euphemism is euphemism that uses several longer words and is stating what is meant indirectly. In this research, 16 pieces of data were found that contained this type of euphemism. Some euphemisms of this type are analyzed as follows:

Data 7

“Dalam *manifesto* Nasional Demokrat yang berjudul *Restorasi Indonesia* izinkan saya bacakan sebagian isinya...”

“In the Democratic National manifesto entitled *Restorasi Indonesia*, allow me to read some of its contents...”

The word *manifesto* in data 7 is a form of euphemism in the type of circumlocution. *Manifesto* means ‘statement of principle’ thus the word *manifesto* represents a longer and more direct word. This word *manifesto* replaces the longer and harsher statement, which implies the intention of criticizing or demanding others or something. Therefore, Anies Baswedan prefers to use the word *manifesto* rather than using the phrase *pernyataan sikap*.

Data 8

“*Konsistensi membutuhkan keberanian, konsistensi membutuhkan sebuah kesolidan pikiran antara apa yang ada di dalam gagasan, dan apa yang ada di dalam hati, dan apa yang ada dalam tindakan.*”

“Consistency requires courage, consistency requires a solidity of mind between what is in ideas, and what is in the heart, and what is in action.”

The phrase *konsistensi membutuhkan keberanian* ‘consistency requires courage’ in data 8 above is a form of circumlocution euphemism. This type of euphemism is a form of language euphemism that represents several words that are considered direct. The phrase *konsistensi membutuhkan keberanian* is used to

replace the phrase *ketaatan harus berani*. The phrase *harus berani* 'must be brave' is considered harsher because it gives a clear order or obligation to be brave. This is different from the phrase *membutuhkan keberanian* which does not directly indicate the conditions for being brave.

Data 9

"Konsistensi membutuhkan keberanian, konsistensi membutuhkan sebuah kesolidan pikiran antara apa yang ada di dalam gagasan, dan apa yang ada di dalam hati, dan apa yang ada dalam tindakan."

"Consistency requires courage, consistency requires a solidity of mind between what is in ideas, what is in the heart, and what is in action."

Data 9 in the sentence above is quite a long phrase. The phrase is *antara apa yang ada di dalam gagasan, dan apa yang ada di dalam hati, dan apa yang ada dalam tindakan* 'between what is in ideas, what is in the heart, and what is in action.' This data is a euphemism in the type of circumlocution. The phrase concerned is considered softer because they do not directly indicate something the speaker wants to convey. The general form of the phrase spoken is between *apa yang dipikirkan, apa yang dikatakan, dan apa yang dilakukan* 'what is thought, what is said, and what is done'. This phrase can certainly give a different image because it directly conveys the suitability of what is thought, what is said and what is done.

Figurative Expressions as Euphemism

Figurative expression as a type of euphemism is used in a way that is different from their usual meaning to create a certain mental image. Expression like this is often difficult to understand because it is conveyed indirectly. Some words sound very common, and their use is usually indirect and difficult to understand unless the context is clear.

Data 10

*"Izinkan kami nanti mengembalikan amanat dan mandat dari rakyat Jakarta. **Datang tampak muka, pulang tampak punggung** untuk warga Jakarta."*

"Allow us to restore the trusteeship and mandate of the people of Jakarta."

Datang tampak muka, pulang tampak punggung 'come is showing face, get back is showing back' for the people of Jakarta.

In data 10 above, *datang tampak muka, pulang tampak punggung* 'come is showing face, get back is showing back', is a sentence that belong euphemism in the type of figurative expression. This expression is a refined form of the sentence *menerima dan menyerahkan jabatan harus dengan cara yang baik* 'accepting and handing over positions must be done in a good manner.' This sentence is not used because by saying *menerima dan menyerahkan jabatan harus dengan cara yang*

baik, it will be very clear for audiences that Anies Baswedan's position as Governor of Jakarta will soon end. Therefore, he uses other expressions that are considered more subtle to convey his message, and these expressions are already familiar to the public. The phrase *datang tampak muka, pulang tampak punggung* indicates a deep meaning and can be understood if someone understands the context of the expression.

CONCLUSION

In the analysis of Anies Baswedan's speech following his announcement as a presidential candidate by the NasDem Party on October 4, 2022, it is evident that euphemisms play a significant role in shaping the discourse of political communication. This research identified four predominant types of euphemisms used in the speech: metaphor, one-for-one substitution, circumlocution, and figurative expression. Among these, circumlocution and metaphor were the most dominant, constituting 47.06% and 32.35% of the total euphemisms used, respectively.

Circumlocution, as a prevalent form of euphemism, serves to refine language by employing alternative words or phrases to convey certain concepts or ideas indirectly. Anies Baswedan's strategic use of circumlocution allows him to communicate sensitive topics with diplomacy, avoiding direct confrontation.

Metaphorical euphemisms, on the other hand, play a crucial role in making complex ideas more accessible to the audience. By comparing one concept to another through metaphors, Anies effectively conveys messages in a way that is easily understood and comfortable to hear. These metaphors create vivid mental images, enhancing the impact of his speech.

The data collected in this research highlights Anies Baswedan's adeptness in utilizing euphemisms as a means to uphold linguistic decorum and minimize offense. In his concise speech, he employed a total of 34 language refinements. This demonstrates his linguistic prowess and the careful consideration given to the feelings and sensibilities of his audience.

In essence, this study illuminates the integral role of euphemisms in the realm of political communication, as well as Anies Baswedan's proficiency in their strategic application. Euphemisms enable political leaders to navigate complex issues with finesse, maintaining rapport with their audience and preserving the subtleties of language. They are not just linguistic tools but also essential instruments in achieving effective communication and maintaining harmony within the societal discourse.

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