

# Realization of Criticism in Political Discourse and Its Impact on Advance Threats and Polite Language

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## ABSTRACT

The political constellation in the last few years has left a problem in the enforcement of democracy in the country. This is due to the fact that the discourse in the political space takes place in a tight and harsh competitive form that creates conflict in the community. Democratic parties such as Pilkada, Pileg, and Presidential Election not only function as a means of conveying the vision, mission, and programs to be carried out, but more than that as an arena for arguing, criticizing each other negatively, both among politicians and fellow supporters. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the realization of criticizing politicians in the discourse of political contestation and how it impacts on facial threats and language politeness. This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach and content analysis methods and is based on the socio-pragmatic-semantic grand theory. The results showed that: (1) based on the style used, politicians were more dominant in using cynicism and sarcasm; (2) whereas based on the strategy of his derivation, politicians are more dominant in using straightforward methods without further ado. That is, criticism that is expressed by politicians tends to be realized as a negative evaluation in an explicit way or directly targeting the weaknesses and ugliness of the candidates by using sarcastic and cynical styles to mock, humiliate, even insult the intended person / party so that the threat of face is 'high' and resulting in 'less polite' speech.

**Keywords:** style, strategy, criticize, politician, political constellation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Political constellation has always been an interesting thing to observe because it is not only a place to convey the vision and mission, but also serves as an arena for exchanging criticisms by both fellow politicians and fellow supporters. However, it is not uncommon for criticism to be conveyed sarcastically so that it has the potential to cause conflict in the community [1]. Even now, even though the democratic party is over, criticizing and insinuating between contesting groups is still taking place in the mass media, especially on social media [2]. Hasanah also conveyed this phenomenon that the political elite had gone too far and were almost without ethics and did not provide political education for the community; whereas political contestation should be a place for political maturity, however, it has dispelled political awareness because of various methods, both halal and haram, and even black campaigns to bring down each other [3]. Such negative impacts have the potential to lead to intolerance in society, not only by fellow politicians and political elites but also among the community itself.

Research on criticism in various discourses has been carried out, including criticizing linguistic and interpersonal communication in politics, including by [4];[5]; [6]; [7]; [8]; [9]; and [10]. Then, criticism in the

second language learners class (L2) by [11]; [12]; [13]; and [14]. In Indonesian literature, criticism in speech acts is carried out by [15]; [16]; [17]. Then, criticizing based on socio-ethnicity is found in research [18] and [19].

Based on this research, how powerful the influence of criticism is in the world of politics, education and culture. What has had the most impact so far in Indonesia is the political world, the emergence of intolerant attitudes in society with evidence of a decline in the Indonesian Democracy Index (IDI) from year to year, especially indicators 16-17, which according to the IDI Report (Kement-PPN/BAPENAS, 2017) intolerance shows a poor number or below the number 60 in the last three years because expressions of public involvement still end in violence, which is against democracy, and even tends to be anti-democratic [20].

It is in this regard that this research is important to do, to reveal the realization of criticism chosen by politicians in the discourse of political contestation on two aspects, namely (1) based on the style of criticism and (2) based on the strategy of criticizing. The use of these two aspects in this article is limited to their impact on facial acuity and language politeness.

The data of this research are politicians' utterances that contain criticism on the political contestation arena (Pilkada 2017 and Pileg and Pilpres 2019) which are contained in news sourced from (a) online mass media, television, and newspapers and (b) debates of

cagub–cawagub, legislative candidates, and cawapres candidates organized by the KPU and other electronic mass media. The use of a percentage of research results only aims to see the dominant results of data analysis as a determinant of the minimum-maximum level of research findings.

## 2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Use of Critical Style

Based on the results of data analysis, the realization of criticizing politicians in political contestation (Pilkada, Pileg, and Presidential Election) is found in five styles, starting from the crudest to the subtle ones, namely sarcasm, cynicism, irony, anti-racism, and allusion.

The style of criticizing Sarcasm is the second dominant order used by politicians in criticizing, including the following data.

(1) *Jokowi adalah Presiden Pertama Indonesia yang paling banyak diolok-olok rakyat. Paling banyak dileded rakyat. Paling banyak dikritik rakyat. Paling banyak dibully rakyat. Baru kali ini seorang presiden hampir tak ada harganya didepan rakyat!* (BPN, FH:7/1/19).

‘Jokowi is Indonesia’s first president who has been ridiculed by the people. Most of the people ridiculed. Most criticized by the people. Most people bully. Only this time a president is almost worthless in front of the people!’.

(2) *Kalau nanti terjadi kecurangan, kita nggak akan ke MK (Mahkamah Konstitusi). Nggak ada gunanya, tapi kita people power, people power sah* (DN, AR:31/3/19).

‘If there is fraud later, we will not go to the Constitutional Court (MK). It’s no use, but we are people power, people power is legitimate’.

Sarcasm is a sarcasm that is harsh and unpleasant to hear because it aims to hurt the heart and contains bitterness and bitter reproach [21]. Harsh insinuation This is the first time a president is almost worthless in front of the people (1) to criticize and at the same time denounce the authority or position of a state leader whom according to him is the most ridiculed, ridiculed, criticized and bullied by the people (2). Sarcastic insinuation There is no point in going to the Constitutional Court if there is fraud aimed at criticizing the Constitutional Court, which according to the politician, cannot resolve election disputes. In this statement, the politician not only criticized and criticized the Constitutional Court, but also incited the public to exercise people power.

Next, the most dominant style of criticism used by politicians is cynicism (46%), which is a language style that is skeptical and contains ridicule that aims to emphasize, ridicule, or criticize [22], as in the following data.

(3) *Karena banyak (pemilik lahan) yang nakal-nakal bukan orang miskin, itu orang-orang kaya yang ngerampok kita* (Sl, J:24/3/19).

‘Because many (land owners) who are naughty are not poor people, it is rich people who rob us’.

(4) *Sikap reaktif yang ditunjukkan Pak Jokowi akhir-akhir ini menunjukkan beliau masih jauh dari kapasitas sebagai seorang negarawan. Justru sikap ini telah memicu ketegangan baru ditengah-tengah masyarakat* (DN, HR:24/3/19).

‘The reactive attitude shown by Pak Jokowi recently shows that he is still far from being a statesman. In fact, this attitude has sparked new tensions in the community’.

(5) *Ini berarti, masalah politik identitas masih menjadi faktor cukup signifikan di Pilkada DKI Jakarta. Sebab, identitas lebih utama dibandingkan dengan visi-misi yang diusung. "Ini jelas bukti dari masyarakat belum lulus ujian demokrasi," kata Nona* (LP, N:21/4/17)

‘This means that the issue of identity politics is still a significant factor in the Pilkada of DKI Jakarta. Because, identity is more important than the vision and mission that is carried. "This is clear evidence from the public that they have not passed the test of democracy," said Nona’.

The cynical criticism of the rich who rob us (4) in its context aims to criticize those who control state land. Likewise, in data (5) his criticism is still far from the capacity of a statesman delivered cynically by a politician who doubts and ridicules Jokowi’s statesman due to his reactive attitude in responding to the accusations against him. Furthermore, this cynical criticism is clear evidence from the public that they have not passed the test of democracy (6) aimed at people who prioritize identity politics in the DKI Pilkada.

Subtle criticisms were also found, including ironic, anti-racist, and alusio; but very little use by politicians. If ironic is a subtle satirical style through metaphors, then antifrasis uses the opposite meaning, while alusio is through proverbs / expressions; but all three are equally ironic [23], as in the following data.

(6) *Menjelang pemilu, tiba-tiba Indonesia menjadi pengimpor gula terbesar di Dunia. Praktek rente gila-gilaan seperti ini berkontribusi memperburuk defisit perdagangan.* (TKN, FB:18/12/19).

‘Ahead of the election, suddenly Indonesia became the largest sugar importer in the world. The practice of frenetic rents like this contributed to exacerbating the trade deficit’.

(7) *Faktor ketiga, kata Eep, yaitu hujan sembako yang terjadi di akhir-akhir menjelang Pilkada oleh salah satu kubu pasangan calon* (LP, E:22/4/17).

‘The third factor, said Eep, is the rain of basic necessities that occurred recently before the Pilkada by one of the candidate pairs’ camps’.

(8) *“Negara sebesar Indonesia ini masa baru punya MRT sekarang. Itu pun putusan politiknya kami putuskan saat saya jadi gubernur dengan Pak Ahok”* (TKN, JW:27/3/19).

‘A country as big as Indonesia has only recently had the MRT now. That was the political decision we made when I was governor with Pak Ahok’.

(9) *“Terima kasih juga buat mereka yang banyak sumbang sembako, terima kasih dan kalau bisa jangan berhenti, terus bagikan,” katanya... (VN7, P:19/4/17).*

‘Thank you also for those who donated a lot of basic food, thank you and if possible don't stop, continue to share,’ he said’.

(10) *Dana Desa dalam APBN 2019 dipatok 70 Triliun, naik 10 T dari tahun sebelumnya yang hanya 60 T. Kita tahu, dana desa ini efektif sebagai lumbung suara. Makanya di dalam internal koalisi pemerintahan saja tarik-menarik antar parpolnya kuat. (BPN, FHM:11/1/19)*

‘The Village Fund in the 2019 State Budget is pegged at 70 Trillion, an increase of 10 T from the previous year which was only 60 T. We know, this village fund is effective as a polling station. That's why within the government coalition the tug-of-war between the political parties is strong’.

(11) *Masjid menjadi tempat mengumandangkan semua hal yang baik. Merangkul bukan memukul, mengajak bukan mengejek. Tidak ada lagi saling mengkafirkan dan memunafikkan,” tuturnya... (DT, Y:29/4/17).*

‘Mosque be a place for all good things to be announced. Embracing is not hitting, inviting, not mocking. There is no more mutilating and forgiving each other,’ He said’.

The metaphor expression *suddenly became the largest sugar importer in the world* (7) ironic criticism from a politician before the election so that according to him it contributed to worsening the trade deficit; Likewise, the rain of groceries (8) was expressed as an ironic metaphorical criticism aimed at the candidate pairs who were distributing basic necessities ahead of the Pilkada. Then, satire in an anti-racist style *A country as big as Indonesia has only recently had the MRT now* (9) expressed by one of the presidential candidates to criticize those who considered him not having a clear program beforehand; Likewise, the anti-racist satire should not stop, continue to distribute (10) is a criticism of the candidate pairs who distribute basic necessities ahead of the presidential election. Furthermore, the allusion in the alusio style of village funds to be effective as a barn of votes is a criticism of the government policy to increase village funds which he considers a tactic to gain votes; Furthermore, the expression of the mosque is a place for embracing not hitting, inviting instead of mocking as a criticism of the faction that manipulates the mosque into a place for spreading the ugliness of the opposing party, even propagating negative issues that are racial in nature so that there is no longer mutual disbelief and forgiveness.

Based on a style of criticism that is dominated by cynicism and sarcasm, it indicates that politicians prefer a sarcastic style in conveying criticism. This shows that criticism as an evaluation of performance, actions, behavior, and other choices with the aim of improving future improvements [11] [13] it turns out that in the political contestation discourse not only has an evaluative

function, but criticism as a speech act is more functional. competitive, even conflictive [24]. If it is related to language politeness, the choice of sarcastic diction has implications for the threatening faces of the person/party being addressed. The concept of "face" is a personal form of a person in society which refers to the social and emotional meaning of a person that should be known by others.

## 2. Use of Critical Strategies

The strategy of criticizing is how the criticism is said or conveyed; derived from the storytelling strategy. In this political contestation discourse, criticism is described in four strategies, namely bluntly without further ado, making small talk negatively, chasing positive, and vague; as shown in the following table.

To put it bluntly without further ado, it turns out that the critical strategy that is most often found in the discourse of political contestation. Bluntly without further ado, it is also called a bald on record, which is a way of speaking directly with an explicit illocutionary emphasis, without reducing the burden [25]; as in the following data.

(12) *Kepemilikan @prabowo atas ratusan ribu hektare lahan itu bukan masalah pribadi, tapi soal komitmen calon pemimpin yg kemana2 koar2 pro rakyat tp saat yg sama menguasai ratusan ribu lahan yg bisa menjadi sumber kehidupan rakyat banyak (TKN, MGR:19/2/19).*

‘Ownership @prabowo over hundreds of thousands of hectares of land is not a personal matter, but a matter of commitment from potential leaders who are pro-people, but at the same time controlling hundreds of thousands of land which can be the source of livelihood for many people’.

(13) *Dulu yang memusuhi kebangsaan RI adalah kaum penjajah. Kini yang memusuhi kebangsaan RI adalah para pendukung khilafah (RM, AS:12/5/17).*

‘In the past, those who were hostile to the Indonesian nationality were the colonizers. Now those who are hostile to the Indonesian nationality are the supporters of the caliphate’.

Criticism in [12] is spoken frankly without taking into account the threatening faces of the intended person. In this case, there is pressure or coercion so that the power of illocution is high on information that is conveyed contradictory, namely the commitment of a candidate for leader who is pro-people but controls hundreds of thousands of lands that can be the source of people's livelihoods. Likewise, the criticism at [13] directly targets that those who are hostile to the Indonesian nationality are supporters of the Caliphate. Using past and present comparisons, the politician compares the nation's enemy between the colonizers and the (supporters) of the caliphate, a very high ratio threatens the faces of the parties in question.

The strategy of criticizing that is still rather dominant is using negative pleasantries, namely narrative that disturbs people's need for independence.

(14) **DEBAT itu adu program terbaik bukan adu omong kosong** (RM,FR:3/4/17).

‘DEBATE it’s the best program contest, not a bullshit contest’.

(15) **Pilgub DKI 2017 ini terburuk sepanjang Pilkada Daerah yang sudah digelar karena masyarakat digiring ke isu-isu seperti SARA, dan SARA menjadi bahaya laten karena diulang-ulang,**” ujarnya (MI3, SZ:10/4/17)

‘2017 DKI Pilgub is the worst during the Regional Pilkada which has been held because the public is led to issues such as SARA, and SARA is a latent danger because it is repeated,’ he said’.

Criticism in [14] is addressed to one of the candidate pairs with sarcasm comparing two contradictory things, namely (there is) a program with nonsense, which means there is no program. Likewise criticism [15], using the worst diction of an adjective with an excessive level of meaning emphasizes that this political contestation is truly the worst throughout history because society is led to the issue of SARA, so it becomes a latent danger because it is repeated. In this case, the choice of diction for contradictory statements is used as a powerful weapon that is fired to destroy one’s self-image in front of the public.

Next is positive chit-chat, namely narrative that emphasizes the same needs and goals; in the sense of minimizing the disturbance of others resulting in a decrease in illocutionary power.

(16) **Wahai tuan @KPU ID, apakah kalian ingin menyelamatkan Jokowi Maaruf hingga hrs dibatalkan? Pilpres itu memilih Capres dgn programnya, bkn memilih Tim Sukses dgn program capres. Lagipula, kami tdk keberatan kalau visi misi Jokowi disampaikan timsesnya**” katanya. (BPN, FH:4/1/19).

‘O sir @Police ID, do you want to save Jokowi Maaruf until it has to be canceled? The presidential election chose the presidential candidate with the program, not the success team with the presidential candidate program. Moreover, we do not mind if Jokowi’s vision and mission is conveyed by the timses,’ he said’.

(17) **Intelijen itu ngintelin musuh negara. Jangan intelin mantan presiden RI. Jangan intelin mantan Ketua MPR RI. Jangan intelin anaknya proklamator. Jangan intelin mantan Panglima TNI. Jangan intelin ulama-ulama besar kita.**” Katanya... (BPN, PS:15/1/19).

‘Intelligence intervenes against the enemy of the state. Don’t intelligence the former president of the Republic of Indonesia. Do not intelligence the former chairman of the MPR RI. Do not intelin the son of the proclaimer. Don’t intelligence the former TNI Commander. Do not intelligence our big ulama. ” He said’.

Criticism (16) is targeting the KPU policy which plans to cancel the socialization of the vision and mission of the presidential-cawapres candidates. Although the criticism is aimed at the formal institutions that handle elections, there is a softening of the illocutionary power with the

use of diction, O KPU\_ID sir as an invitation and use of interrogation whether to suppress the anger of the politician and trying to find a solution as a bid for his disapproval of the KPU plan. Likewise in (17), speakers criticized the intelligence agency by using the intelligence statement to intrigue the enemy of the state as a common goal, and using the imperative repetitive paradoxical statement not with different objects as a climax marker of their anger towards the institution in question. In this way, speakers are still trying to reduce the fall in the face of the party in question so that the narrative is more formal and respectful [25].

The use of cryptic strategies is also common. Vague criticism strategies include indirect ways of presenting. This strategy is expressed by using cues, associations, presuppositions, and using exaggerated metaphors [26], as shown in the following data.

(18) **Saya berdiri di sini karena berpandangan bahwa negara kita sedang sakit, saudara-saudara. Ibu Pertiwi sedang diperkosa, saudara-saudara sekalian???** (Wk, PS:7/4/19).

‘I stand here thinking that our country is sick, brothers and sisters. Mother Earth is being raped, brothers and sisters ???’.

(19) **Dari Senayan sampai Istana, berjejer Tukang Orba. Sambung menyambung menjadi satu, itulah kemunafikan** (RM, RG:16/3/17).

‘From Senayan to the Palace, there are lines of New Order builders. Connecting together, that is hypocrisy’.

Ondata [18] criticism uses the metaphor of Mother Earth being raped which implies that the country is in a state of danger. This criticism is aimed at political elites who, according to the speakers, no longer care about the safety of the nation. Furthermore, in the data [19] criticism is conveyed through idioms of new order craftsmen, ranging from Senayan (members of the DPR) to the Palace (presidential staff), which according to the speakers are hypocrites. This criticism implies that the government regime is filled with new order people who now seem to want change.

Based on this fact, it can be concluded that the use of straightforward strategies without further ado in the context of this research data is generally carried out without reducing the burden on the person/party in question. In the use of polite language, bald on record narrative as above should be avoided because it represents a threat to other people/parties. In fact, bald on record can be used by people/parties who have hierarchical power (to control subordinates with words), and or have the same social rank [25]. Likewise, the use of negative and positive pleasantries is a face-saving speech act strategy used to avoid using bald on record. However, in reality the data, although in content it can be a fact, in terms of speech or use of language violates the rules of politeness because it contains a high illocutionary power so that it threatens the face of the person/party being addressed, although in positive

pleasantries there is a softening of illocutionary power so that it does not threaten people's faces too much party being criticized. Next, use strategies to criticize vaguely include speaking indirectly so that it has low illocutionary power because it is conveyed by signs, metaphors, and other indirect ways. However, in this political contestation discourse, it turns out that the use of a vague strategy still causes a rather high threat of face threat. This is due to the high political competitiveness and competitiveness of both fellow candidates and fellow supporting parties, so that the speech act of criticism does not only have a competitive function, but has created a complicative function. Thus it can be concluded that the use of the strategy of criticizing political contestation above has the potential to threaten the faces of the speakers at the 'high' level so that the politicians' level of politeness is in the category of 'less polite'.

**3. Realization of Criticism and its Impact on Persistence of Faces and Politeness in Language**

Based on the results of the data analysis above, it can be summarized that the realization of criticizing politicians in political discourse and its impact on facial acuity and language politeness, as can be seen in the following table.

**Table 1. Critical Realizations**

Aspects Assessed	Findings Research	Percentage	Face Threatening Acts (FTA)	Politeness Category
<b>Critical Style</b>	1. Sarcasm	31%	High	Disrespectful
	2. Cynicism	46%	Rather high	Less Polite
	3. Irony	12%	Slightly Low	Kind of polite
	4. Antifrasis	8%	Low	
	5. Alusio	3%		
		100%		
<b>Strategy Criticize</b>	1. Keep going straight without further ado	35%	High	Disrespectful
	2. Negative small talk	27%	Rather high	Less Polite
	3. Positive pleasantries	20%	Slightly Low	
	4. Vague	187%	Low	Kind of polite
		100%		

Criticizing speech acts are classified as expressive speech acts, namely speech acts that express a speaker's

psychological attitude or state. Based on the parameter of 'face threatening actions' (FTA), criticism is included in speech acts that threaten 'positive faces' [27]. However, in the political contestation of Pilkada, Pileg, and Presidential Election, it turns out that criticism of politicians not only threatens the positive face but also threatens the negative face of the targeted person/party, because in reality criticism often becomes a weapon to overthrow and enforce the truth of what is conveyed by certain parties to defend or vice versa.

Facts like that are found in this study. First, based on the style of criticism used, politicians prefer sarcasm (31%) cynicism (46%), with the level of threatening faces between 'very high' and 'high', so that the overall level of politeness is in the category of 'less polite'. Second, based on the critical strategy used, politicians prefer the strategy of criticizing bluntly without further ado (35%), negative pleasantries (27%), and positive pleasantries (20%), with a level of threatening face to the position. between 'very high' and 'high' with the overall politeness level being in the 'less polite' category.

Based on this fact, it is clear that criticism is more dominant to convey the speaker's dissatisfaction or dislike of what the speaker is doing, which is focused on personal problems. In this reality, criticism has a more negative image. Thus, the criticism of politicians in political contestation has its own character, is contextual and situational in nature, and is in accordance with the wishes of the current political flow.

However, in ethics, critical language in various cultural perspectives cannot be expressed haphazardly and 'haphazardly', but still must be conveyed carefully by paying attention to the values of politeness or the socio-cultural rules that apply in that society. Moreover, in political contestation, criticism is a form of communication that is indispensable in building a democratic order. Therefore, in political contestation, criticism should focus on concrete programs and plans for development and governance of the state.

As a solution to this problem, in the continuation of this research, a polite criticizing model will be designed. If in reality the data acts criticizing speech can be divided into negative criticism and positive criticism, then in polite criticism displays positive criticism. In positive criticism, positive language and behavior are displayed in the hope that a very specific change will occur. Positive criticism contains positive meanings for listeners and can avoid harmful things between speakers and speakers. Another tool that can be used in designing polite criticism is by refining positive criticism, using measuring words, soft pedaling, using varied languages, and using negotiation language [28]. Besides that, politeness criticism can be created from a combination of direct criticism and indirect criticism.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The use of language in each regime of power has a different color. History shows that every regime has an interest in the role of language in accordance with the tendencies of power at that time. In fact, because political reality is a struggle for power and interest, political events tend to justify any means. This fact has an impact on the use of language that is often politicized. In this case, the politicization of language often plays a role in criticism, especially in political contestation.

In fact, criticism is a form of communication needed in building a democratic order, because with criticism all weaknesses and shortcomings can be overcome and rectified. In this case, criticism is conveyed in polite / neutral language so that criticism aims to build (positive) and functions to provide input (solution). However, in the political constellation of Pilkada, Pileg, and Presidential Election recently, criticism tends to be interpreted as a compilation of expressions of disapproval, negative evaluation, or wrong action statements, which predominantly target personality and personality ugliness than program, performance, as the conception of criticism itself. In this view, criticism functions as a competition, so it tends to be conveyed directly without small talk in sarcastic, vulgar, language.

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