



Language Politeness and Speech Function A Case of Public Figures in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe speech behavior and politeness in the language of Indonesian public figures. Public figures are people who are known and influenced by the broader community, and must always maintain their actions and speech in communication because they can become a concern and role model for the community. This research used a qualitative approach with a descriptive analysis method. Data were collected from the YouTube channel Indonesia Lawyers Club using purposive sampling techniques. The speeches were analyzed using language politeness principles by Leech (1993) and speech function parameters by Searle (1975). The results of the study show that (1) there is compliance with the maxim of tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. (2) there is a violation of the maxim of tact, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. (3) there are speech functions stating, asking, ordering, apologizing, and criticizing. Through this research, it is hoped to show the bigger picture of how Indonesian people use language politeness in communicating.

Keywords: *Language politeness, public figures, speech behavior, speech function.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the most important tools or mediums for humans to interact and socialize with other humans (Lutfiana & Sari, 2021; Mahmudi, Irawati & Soleh, 2021; Yanti, Suandi & Sudiana, 2021). However, each person must comply with the linguistic rules that have been established so that the meaning the speaker wishes to convey can be well received by the interlocutor. In this way, successful and good communication is built between each other (Estikomah, Wardani & Arsanti, 2019; Setiawan & Rois, 2017). Also, through language, someone can judge whether a person is good or bad. Therefore, speakers need to choose the words they use in speech when communicating with their speech partners. This activity is called a speech act.

Speech acts are a type of language science that examines the meaning that speakers want to convey in their speech (Fauzia, Haryadi & Sulistkayaningrum 2019; Lailika & Utomo, 2020). It is important to understand speech acts in communication. This is because the same speech act utterances can have different meanings. For example, the sentence, "I will come tomorrow afternoon" can have different meanings. In this sentence, it could be that the speaker just wants to give the news to his speech partner that he will come tomorrow afternoon. Or it could also be that the speaker wants the speaker to act, such as preparing a place, food, and others. Therefore, a contextual situation and conditions are needed in a conversation. So that the interlocutor can understand the meaning of the speech spoken by the speaker because each utterance has a different function and purpose ((Darwis, 2019; Faramida, Charlina & Hermendra, 2019). When a speech is uttered by a speaker, there is certainly a goal that the speaker hopes for his speech partner. This is following Austin's opinion "In which to say something is to do something or in which by saying or in saying something we are doing something" (Austin, 1962). Speech acts are divided into three parts, locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. Through Austin's speech act theory, Searle (1975) subsequently developed this speech act theory, stating that it turns out that every utterance also has action meaning. According to him, there are five types of action, namely (1) assertive/representative, (2) directive, (3) expressive, (4) commissive, and (5) declarative.

As technology develops, speech acts can be found on various social media such as Facebook (Simatupang & Gozali, 2021), Twitter (Pradana & Utomo, 2020; Siregar & Kusyani, 2021; Sari, Ikhawan & Gusnawaty, 2022), Instagram (Pande & Artana, 2020; Azizah, 2020; Astri, 2020), and YouTube (Widyawati & Utomo, 2020; Meliyawati, Saraswati & Anisa, 2023). The presence of social media is a form of society's need to receive information and communication more widely, at greater distances, and more quickly. This means that in communication on social media, even though speakers do not meet face-to-face with their speech partners, they can still carry out speech acts through messages, videos, uploads, comments, or captions in their respective social media features. However, the absence of communication actors on social media causes the language used to tend to be free and equal, thus losing its politeness (Anshori, 2022) which easily triggers misunderstandings that lead to disputes.

It is not uncommon to find on social media someone communicating or expressing their views using bad language, then arguing that this is a right to freedom of expression that must be obtained, then some people feel offended, and end up in court. For instance, In Indonesia, since the ITE Law was introduced, many case reports have been submitted to the police station. Head of the Public Information Bureau, National Police Public Relations Division, Brigadier General Rusdi Hartono, stated that there is an increase in reports related to Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions (ITE) every year. In 2018 there were 4,360 case reports to the police, then in 2019 it increased to 4,582, and then in 2020, it rose to 4,790 cases. In general, the most frequently processed cases are related to defamation and hate speech in cyberspace (Online Antara, 2023).

The number of cases involving communication on social media is very worrying and dangerous. Research from Nuralifa, Rahim, and Mudhina (2021) shows that Facebook users' speech is dominated by speech containing sarcasm. Fajri, Puspitasari, Irfansyah, Wijiarko, and Rahmawati (2022) show the language use of YouTubers who play online games using negative language behavior, such as using dirty words, swearing, and cursing when playing online games with opponents. Bad language behavior also harms the existence of the Indonesian language itself and disrupts social relations in society. Efforts to create an environment in which people speak politely are a very important agenda.

This research has similarities and differences with previous research. The similarities are both discussing language politeness on social media. The difference is that this research focuses on language politeness on YouTube social media carried out by public figures.

A public figure is known for his knowledge, work, and ideas. Has a big influence on society. As a public figure, his actions, style, and language can become a concern and even a role model for Indonesian society. This research focuses on speech behavior and language politeness carried out by public figures in welcoming the upcoming 2024 General Election. In election contestations, the use of language is very important. To convey ideas, thoughts, vision, and mission to the community, good language skills are needed. Politeness is one of the main factors in assessing someone's character.

Therefore, in this study, the researcher attempted to examine the language politeness and the speech function of public figures in Indonesia who were involved in the 2024 elections. The data were taken from the Indonesia Lawyers Club YouTube video with the title "The Three Presidential Candidates Are Still Single, It's Difficult for Them to Find a Soulmate". The video contains question-and-answer activities regarding the 2024 election from several sources representing parties in Indonesia. The discussion was led by Karni Ilyas as the host. In discussion activities, vigilance and tact in speaking are certainly needed to create harmony in communication. Hence, the researchers investigated politeness in the speech of public figures using the six principles of politeness proposed by Leech (1993) and analyzed their speech functions by using Searle (1975) which consists of stating, asking, ordering, apologizing, and criticizing.

2. METHOD

The method used in this qualitative research was descriptive to collect, describe, and interpret the data. The data were presented in the form of verbal utterances of public figures on YouTube. The data were taken from the YouTube channel Indonesia Lawyers Club which was uploaded on 8 June 2023 with the video title "The Three Presidential Candidates Are Still Single, It's Difficult for Them to Get Matches". The public figures who were analyzed in this study were Indonesian politicians and humanists; namely, (1) Karni Ilyas (as Host), (2) Andreas Hugo Pareira from the party (PDIP) (3) Saleh Partaonan Daulay (PAN) (4) Habiburokhman (Gerindra), (5) Herzaky Mahendra Putra (Demokrat), (6) Taufik Basari (Nasdem), (7) Nasir Djamil (PKS) (8) Nurdin Halid (Golkar), (9) Sujiwo Tejo (humanist). The data were labeled with the letters PA, N1, N2, etc. up to N8, which were used to mark public figures who obey or violate the maxim of politeness in language. The speeches of these public figures were then analyzed using politeness principles in language by Leech (1993) and speech function parameters by Searle (1975).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings

Based on the results of the analysis that was carried out on the Indonesia Lawyers Club YouTube video with the title “The Three Presidential Candidates Are Still Single, It's Difficult for Them to Get Matches”, there are several findings that involve the utterances of 9 public figures which were: Karni Ilyas, Andreas Hugo, Saleh Partaonan, Habiburokhman, Herzaky Mahendra Putra, Taufik Basari, Nasir Djamil, Nurdin Halid, and Sujiwo Tejo. The utterances of these characters were analyzed by using Leech’s (1993) language politeness and the theory of speech acts by Searle (1975). The results are as follows: 1) six politeness principles according to Leech (1993) were found, namely tact maxim, generosity maxim, praise maxim, politeness maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim; 2) there are only five violations of the politeness principle according to Leech and Svartvik (1975), namely the maxim of tact, the maxim of praise, the maxim of politeness, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy; 3) there are five speech functions according to Searle’s (1975) illocutionary speech acts, namely declaring, asking, ordering, apologizing, and criticizing. The details of each finding are elaborated in the next part.

Findings on compliance and maxim violation are shown in Figures 1 and 2 with the information regarding the occurrences and percentage.

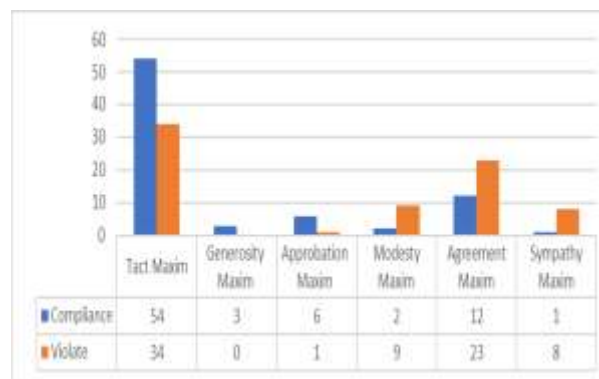


Figure 1 Compliance and violation maxims.



Figure 2 Compliance maxims.

From Figures 1 and 2, it can be seen that the compliance with the politeness principle in this study involved six maxims, namely (1) Tact maxim of 54 utterances (69%), (2) Generosity maxims of 3 utterances (4%), (3) Approbation maxim 6 utterances (8%), (4) Modesty maxim with 2 utterances (3%), (5) Agreement maxim with 12 utterances (15%), (6) Sympathy maxim with only 1 utterance (1%).

As for functions for both maxim violation and speech function, the data are presented in Figures 3 and 4 along with their occurrences and percentages.

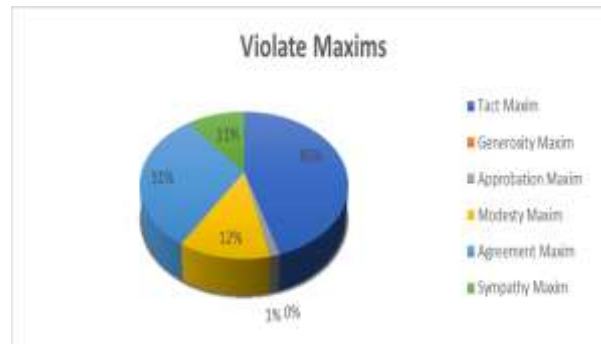


Figure 3 Maxims violation.

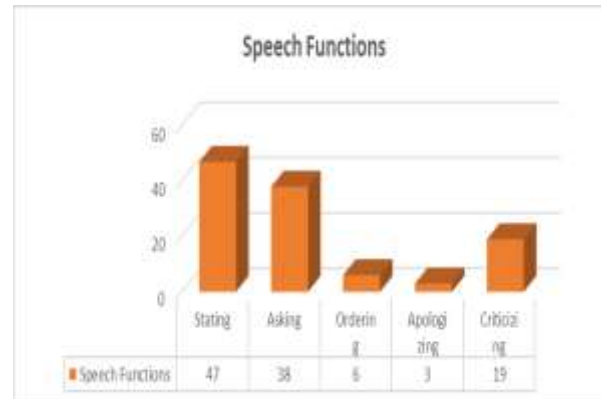


Figure 4 Speech functions.

Meanwhile, based on figures 1 and 3, public figures in Indonesia also found violations of the politeness principle. In the data source video, 5 maxims were found, namely (1) Tact maxim of 34 utterances (45%), (2) Approbation maxim of 1 utterance (1%), (3) Modesty maxim of 9 utterances (12%), (4) Agreement maxim with 23 utterances (31%), and (5) Sympathy maxim with 8 utterances (11%).

Then, figure 4 depicts the information about five speech functions which are found in the Indonesia Lawyers Club YouTube video with the title “Three Presidential Candidates Still Single, Hard to Get a Match”. The speech functions most often used by public figures are stating (47), asking (38), and criticizing (19) data. The least is ordering (6) and Apologizing (3) data.

3.2. Discussion

The following is the discussion part about the utterances found in this study and included in the politeness principles according to Leech, both in the form of compliance with the politeness principles and deviations from the politeness principles.

3.2.1. Tact Maxim

Wisdom in speaking is needed so that communication between speakers and speech partners can run well. The maxim of wisdom according to Leech (1993), is that the speaker must give as little loss as possible to the hearer and make as much profit as possible to the hearer. The policy statement of a public figure in the YouTube video for the Indonesia Lawyers Club with the title “The Three Presidential Candidates Are Still Single, It’s Difficult for Them to Get Matches” is as follows.

Data 1

Nasir Djamil: “Mr. Karni, so from the start we gave the right to the presidential candidate Anies Baswedan to determine the vice-presidential candidate. So, as Mas Tobas said earlier, there is no domination and no submissiveness. So, nothing dominates, and nothing is then submissible.”

The utterances in Data 1 show that the speaker has obeyed the maxim of wisdom. The speaker explained that in the coalition for change, they formed (Democrat, Nasdem, and PKS) no party was the most powerful. No one

dominates and becomes submissive. Speakers do not feel fully empowered to make decisions. It can be seen from the words "... there is no domination, there is no submissiveness ". This they have decided together. The speaker gives an advantage to the speech partner, namely his coalition partners (Nasdem and Democrats) by showing that the three of them have the same rights.

The following Data 2 is an example of violating the maxim of wisdom.

Data 2

Saleh Partaonan: *"So Bang Karni, the DKI Pilgub people still feel now how the division of society including Nasdem is also dividing. Politics is divisive. So, some come here, some go there, it's called dividing."*

The above statement violates the maxim of tact because the speaker claims that the Nasdem party during the 2017 DKI Jakarta Governor election had divided society. According to political speakers owned by speech partners, the Nasdem party (Taufik Basari) is inconsistent with politics that can divide society. It is known that Nasdem supported Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) during the election for the Governor of DKI Jakarta in 2017. Then currently, the 2024 Presidential Election supports Anies Baswedan, who is Ahok's rival candidate. Of course, this threatens the positive face of the speech partner and harms him.

3.2.2. Generosity Maxim

Obeying the maxim of generosity according to Leech (1993) is to make as little self-benefit as possible and make as much self-harm as possible. This maxim allows the speaker to provide as much benefit to the hearer as possible. The maxim of generosity can be seen in the following Data 3 utterance.

Data 3

Habiburokhman: *"In the 2014 Red and White Coalition. At that time, the Gerindra party, if I'm not mistaken, was the second party that won seats after Golkar in the red and white coalition, and if I'm not mistaken it was for the MPR chairperson position, just right for the Gerindra party. But with a big heart, with a spirit of togetherness, a spirit of sharing, the chairman of the MPR at that time went to Bang Zul, yes, to Bang Zul."*

This speech obeys the maxim of generosity which can be seen in the utterance that the speaker does not force power to fall only on his party (Gerindra). However, speakers share this power with other parties (PAN). In this story, the most important thing is to share, don't be greedy for position because the victory has been achieved together.

3.2.3. Approbation Maxim

Compliments in communication are also important. However, this must be considered carefully so as not to cause misunderstandings or appear insincere. The maxim of praise according to Leech (1993) is that the speaker tries to give praise to the speech partner as much as possible, and the speaker must avoid insulting the speech partner so that the speech delivered is polite. The following Data 4 is an example of an utterance that obeys the maxims of praise.

Data 4

Nurdin Halid: *"Bang Karni Indonesia will be guaranteed by two figures, namely Prabowo and Erlangga. Why Prabowo? Because he's a successful Defense Minister. The survey proves that people's satisfaction is approximately 80%, and SBY also had 80%. Those few percent are because the indicators are political stability, stable economy, stable democracy, and stable security. Those are the factors that make public satisfaction high with President Jokowi. So, if we look at the Minister of Defense, whose security, is it? Prabowo."*

The above utterance obeys the maxim of praise. The speaker Nurdin Halid is a politician from the Golkar party, and he maximizes praise to his interlocutors. The speaker praised Prabowo and SBY in their speech because they succeeded in giving around 80% satisfaction. This is also an indirect compliment to the speech partner, namely the politician of the party concerned who was present at the event. The speech partners in question are Habiburokhman a politician from the Gerindra party and Herzaky Mahendra a politician from the Democrat party.

The following is an example of violating the maxim of approbation.

Data 5

Karni Ilyas: *"...AHY is following what Ms. Puan said that the right candidate for Ganjar Pranowo, Ms. Puan said was AHY. Yes, AHY was chosen. But I think it was Ibu Mega who didn't choose AHY ha ha ha."*

Data 5 is the speech violated the maxim of praise. This is caused by speakers who criticize others by criticizing them. The speaker indirectly criticized the two speech partners at the event for their words in the sentence "But I think

it was Megawati who didn't choose AHY hahaha.” First, the speech partners who were criticized were politicians from the Democratic party, Herzaky Mahendra, because AHY (Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono), the candidate from the Democratic party, was not good enough to coexist with the candidate from the Gerindra party. Second, the speech partner who was criticized was Gerindra party politician Andreas Hugo, because the main members of his party had different opinions about AHY. Puan Maharani agreed with AHY as the vice-presidential candidate they would support, and Megawati disagreed. The speech shows great criticism for the two speech partners.

3.2.4. Modesty Maxim

In the humility maxim, the speaker is expected to reduce self-praise such as boasting himself above others and giving as much praise to the speech partner as possible. This is done so that the speech partner feels comfortable and not intimidated when communicating (Leech, 1993). The following Data 6 is an example of observing the maxim of modesty.

Data 6

Saleh Partaonan: *“Okay, thank you Bang Karni. First, I need to say that the National Mandate Party in the last two elections. I mean the last two elections we were not lucky. This means that the candidate we support was not lucky at that time.”*

The speech obeys the maxim of humility because the speaker criticizes himself as much as possible to give praise to the speech partner who won the last two elections. Speakers admit their defeat with humility and simplicity, without any intention of cornering the candidate they previously supported.

The following Data 7 is an example of a violation of the maxim of modesty.

Data 7

Andreas Hugo: *“...Many names came in and today, adding one name he said, maybe 40% of the survey earlier, so 40% is because of Miss. That was mentioned earlier [Laughter] is endorsed so add more.”*

This utterance is a violation of the maxim of humility. In context, there is a survey that says that AHY (Anies Harimurti Yudhoyono) is the vice-presidential candidate with a 40% victory. Then the speaker, Andreas Hugo, a politician from the Gerindra party, said that such great results were obtained by AHY because of the influence exerted by Puan Maharani as a cadre of the Gerindra party. Not from AHY's abilities.

3.2.5. Agreement Maxim

The maxim of agreement requires that speakers and partners agree on something to maximize compatibility in communication between them. The greater the discrepancy, the greater the violation of the maxim of agreement made by Leech (1993).

The following Data 8 is an example of compliance with the maxims of agreement.

Data 8

Sujiwo Tejo: *“Mr. Andreas, I also have a moral responsibility towards Mr. Karni's grandson as well.”*

Andreas Hugo: *“Exactly.”*

Sujiwo Tejo: *“So, is it okay guys?”*

Andreas Hugo: *“It's okay.”*

The context of the speech above is Sujiwo Tejo at first, explaining how he “cawe-cawe” to his son for the good of his grandson. Then this same concept is used to define how President Jokowi actually “cawe-cawe” to the next Presidential candidate for the good of the Indonesian people. The above utterance obeys the maxim of agreement because speakers and interlocutors have compatibility and the same views regarding “cawe-cawe” by President Jokowi.

The following Data 9 is an example of a violation of the maxim of agreement.

Data 9

Herzaky Mahendra: *“Oh, let's talk about girls now. Permission Mr. Karni if we see it like this. In what context are these girls dangerous? First, let's talk, the President should understand which are the main tasks and which are the additional tasks. It seems as if the cawes are ensuring honest and fair democratic elections. That is not the main task of the President.”*

Then the utterance above is a violation of the maxim of agreement. For Herzaky Mahendra, the “cawe-cawe” carried out by President Jokowi is a dangerous thing because it will damage the course of the 2024 election. There is

no agreement between Herzaky, Sujiwo Tejo, and Andreas Hugo. There are different views between the two regarding the definition of “*cawe-cawe*” by President Jokowi.

3.2.6. *Sympathy Maxim*

Good communication must have no antipathy between speakers and speech partners. In this sympathy maxim, the speaker and the hearer must both give sympathy to one another (Leech, 1993). The following Data 10 is an example of the sympathy maxim.

Data 10

Karni Ilyas: “*This is more, more and more, more promising, the Gerindra party is rich.*”

The context of the speech is that the Gerindra party explains the strengths and concepts they have so that it becomes material for consideration to other parties if they want to form a coalition with the Gerindra party. Then Karni Ilyas said that “more promising, the Gerindra party is richer is the obedience of the maxim of sympathy. Karni Ilyas agreed and liked the ideas presented by the Gerindra party.

The following Data 11 is an example of a violation of the sympathy maxim.

Data 11

Andreas Hugo: “*Is victim playing still being used as a campaign tool? Maybe this was meant to increase Anies' electability earlier.*”

The utterance in Data 11 is a violation of the maxim of sympathy. This can be seen from the words used in the speech delivered. From the data above, there is a rejection or feeling of dislike for Andreas Hugo for the attitude of the change coalition which acts as a “victim” and criticizes the electability of the presidential candidates supported by the change coalition.

Apart from language politeness, this research also examines the function of public figures' speech based on Searle's (1975) theory. Five speech functions were found in the Indonesia Lawyers Club YouTube video with the title “Three Presidential Candidates Still Single, Hard to Get a Match”. Here's an example of the data found in the video.

- (1) Stating. Karni Ilyas: Before that, I want to show you the votes I got, from yesterday to this afternoon. Who is the ideal candidate for vice president? As a result of the 78,426 votes, Erick Thohir got 25%, Ridwan Kamil 33%, AHY 40%, and Mahfud MD I got 2%. [Clap].
- (2) Asking. Saleh Partaonan: Actually, Bang Karni is like this, I have a question for PDI Perjuangan. If you have questions, for example, this is part of this, right? So, if, for example, another party wants to join the PDI Perjuangan train, say that. Does the determination of the vice-presidential candidate still have to be Mrs. Mega? If you must stay, Mrs. Mega, it means you have already got your own ticket, you don't have to wait.
- (3) Ordering. Karni Ilyas: Yes, Mr. Andreas, please answer.
- (4) Apologizing. Herazaky: Sorry, Bang Karni, we are fighting over the vice-presidential candidate, for example, like earlier, right? The presidential candidate must be A or B, but what's the point of not winning?
- (5) Criticizing. Sujiwo Tejo: But if I'm a theater person, OK, Mr. Andreas, I'm *sorry, I'm sorry*, but if you look at her body language, Ms. Puan, when you made the declaration with Ganjar, why didn't you seem sincere like that? That's how it looks like that, huh, it looks like that. like it looks like. I could be wrong like that.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on the Indonesia Lawyers Club YouTube video with the title “The Three Presidential Candidates Are Still Single, It's Difficult for Them to Get Matches,” conclusions are obtained. Findings demonstrated compliance and violation of the politeness principle done by the public figures in this study. First, compliance with the politeness principle of public figures was mostly found in tact maxims of 69% or 54 data and the least was in sympathy maxims of 1% or 1 data. Second, violations of the politeness principle of public figures were found chiefly in the tact maxim of 45% or 34 data, and no violations were found in the generosity maxim. Third, all public figures in their utterances mainly used speech functions for stating, asking, and criticizing, while speech functions for ordering and apologizing were used the least.

From the research results, it can also be seen that most public figures in this study still pay attention to language politeness. They convey their thoughts with polite diction and polite etiquette. This can be seen when they convey their criticism to their interlocutor or to the person they are addressing. They use requests for permission or expressions of apology such as the words ‘permission’ and ‘sorry’ when they want to express an opinion and criticize

someone. However, not all speakers express their thoughts in a very polite manner, there are also some violations of maxims that they commit, and this should be a benchmark and reflection for other speakers.

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