



Dysphemism in the 2024 Presidential Candidate Debates and Its Relevance to Indonesian Language Learning

Diyanti T. Niyode^{1*}, Sayama Malabar², Asna Ntelu³

¹²³Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Gorontalo, Indonesia

*E-mail: diyantinide7@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze dysphemism in the 2024 presidential candidate debates and its relevance to Indonesian language learning. The research focuses on identifying the forms of dysphemism that emerge in the candidates' speech, interpreting the meaning of dysphemism in the context of political argumentation, and applying these findings to Indonesian language learning. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a literature review approach. Data collection techniques were conducted through listening and note-taking of secondary data in the form of debate transcripts on YouTube channels, while data analysis techniques used an interactive model that included data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. The results show that dysphemism appears in three main forms: words, phrases, and sentences. Words are most prominently used to deliver direct attacks through negative diction, while phrases expand criticism into more complex language constructions. Sentences convey the most complete and structured criticism, functioning to build a narrative that influences the opponent's image and credibility. The distribution of dysphemism usage differed between candidates: Anies Baswedan emphasized policy-based criticism, Prabowo Subianto focused on personal attacks, and Ganjar Pranowo was more limited and tended to be responsive. The meanings of dysphemism identified included belittling, satirizing, belittling, criticizing, accusing, and cornering opponents. These meanings demonstrate a deliberate communication strategy to strengthen arguments, weaken opponents, and influence public perception. The relevance to Indonesian language learning is evident in students' ability to recognize rhetorical functions, the impact of word choice, and communication ethics. Dysphemism analysis also supports critical literacy and character development, making learning more contextual, reflective, and aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum.

Keywords : *dysphemism, presidential candidate debates, Indonesian language learning*

Disfemia dalam Debat Calon Presiden pada Pemilu 2024 dan Relevansinya dengan Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan menganalisis disfemia dalam debat calon presiden pada Pemilu 2024 serta relevansinya dengan pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia. Fokus penelitian diarahkan pada identifikasi bentuk disfemia yang muncul dalam tuturan para kandidat, interpretasi makna disfemia dalam konteks adu argumentasi politik, serta penerapan temuan tersebut dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui teknik simak dan catat terhadap data sekunder berupa transkrip debat di kanal YouTube, sedangkan teknik analisis data menggunakan model interaktif yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan atau verifikasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa disfemia muncul dalam tiga bentuk utama, yaitu kata, frasa, dan kalimat. Bentuk kata paling menonjol digunakan untuk memberikan serangan langsung melalui diksi negatif, sedangkan bentuk frasa memperluas kritik dalam konstruksi bahasa yang lebih kompleks. Bentuk kalimat menyampaikan kritik paling utuh dan terstruktur, berfungsi membangun narasi yang memengaruhi citra dan kredibilitas lawan. Distribusi penggunaan disfemia berbeda antar kandidat: Anies Baswedan menekankan kritik berbasis kebijakan, Prabowo Subianto dominan dalam serangan personal, sedangkan Ganjar Pranowo lebih terbatas dan cenderung responsif. Makna disfemia yang ditemukan mencakup merendahkan, menyindir, meremehkan, mengkritik, menuduh, dan memojokkan lawan. Penggunaan makna ini menunjukkan strategi komunikasi yang disengaja untuk memperkuat argumen, melemahkan lawan, dan memengaruhi persepsi publik. Relevansi terhadap pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia terlihat dari kemampuan siswa mengenali fungsi retorik, dampak pilihan kata, serta etika komunikasi. Analisis disfemia juga mendukung literasi kritis dan pengembangan karakter, sehingga pembelajaran menjadi lebih kontekstual, reflektif, dan sesuai dengan Kurikulum Merdeka.

Keywords: *disfemia, debat calon presiden, pembelajaran bahasa Indonesia*

Submitted
10/12/2025

Accepted
16/01/2026

Published
18/01/2026

Citation	Niyole, D. T., Malabar, S., & Ntelu, A. (2026). Dysphemism in the 2024 Presidential Candidate Debates and Its Relevance to Indonesian Language Learning. <i>Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra, Volume 5, Nomor 1, Januari 2026</i> . 91-104. DOI: https://doi.org/10.55909/jpbs.v5i1.1062
----------	---

Publisher
Raja Zulkarnain Education Foundation

INTRODUCTION

Studies on dysphemia have generally positioned it as a speech disorder related to neurobiological, environmental, and articulation factors, leaving its origins uncertain (Campos Palomo & Campos Palomo, 2013). Some studies have also highlighted the link between dysphemia and foreign language anxiety, but their focus is limited to the experiences of foreign language learners and have not addressed the function of dysphemia as a form of harsh diction choices in public communication (García-Pastor & Miller, 2019). Clinical approaches in speech therapy also emphasize dysphemia as a fluency disorder requiring professional intervention, but have not yet recognized it as a rhetorical device that can be used strategically in social interactions, including political debates (Novosadova et al., 2023). Meanwhile, psychological studies examining self-concept, self-esteem, and psychopathological symptoms in individuals with and without dysphemia continue to view it as an individual issue and have not yet linked it to the use of dysphemia as a speech act that shapes discourse dynamics (Garaigordobil & Pérez, 2007). These studies reveal a gap in the understanding of dysphemia as a linguistic phenomenon consciously used in presidential debates to emphasize arguments, build image, or influence public perception.

Dysphemia is essentially understood as a fluency disorder characterized by impairments in speech production, such as repetition, prolongation, or pauses in sounds. Bibliographic reviews indicate that evaluating dysphemia is highly complex, involving a variety of symptoms, contexts, and developmental factors that influence how a person speaks (Estepa, 2013). Assessment of dysphemia must consider whether the condition is developmental dysphemia, developmental stuttering, or other forms of dysphemia, so that its understanding cannot be separated from environmental conditions and individual characteristics. Other research confirms that dysphemia, or *tartamudez*, is a disorder that directly affects verbal communication, particularly in children, making it difficult to

convey messages fluently and effectively (Castañeda Balón, 2024). This means that dysphemia can be understood as a fluency disorder that impacts a person's communication skills and manifests in diverse ways, both in terms of symptoms and speech situations.

One of the most interesting problematic phenomena to study is the emergence of dysphemia in presidential debates. The complexity of symptoms previously understood only in the clinical realm interacts with situational pressures, rhetorical strategies, and the candidates' needs to respond to attacks from their opponents. In this sense, debates are seen as a mechanism for eliciting differing views, testing arguments, and enriching understanding of an issue (Rekate, 2008). In the political realm, debates have a more specific dimension as part of interpersonal political communication. Political debates are understood as a form of exchange of arguments oriented towards public issues, policies, or the political image of a particular actor, conducted dialogically to influence audience perception. In the typology of political communication, debate is distinguished from political talk, discussion, and deliberation because it involves the explicit intention to defend a political position, criticize opponents, and direct public opinion (Larrosa Fuentes, 2020). This definition creates a significant gap because political debates always involve the interests of each candidate, so that the parties in the argument often seek to corner their opponents to maintain their political reputation and attract voter support.

This aligns with the dynamics of the presidential debates in the 2024 Election, which pitted three candidate pairs against each other: Anies Baswedan–Muhaimin Iskandar, Prabowo Subianto–Gibran Rakabuming Raka, and Ganjar Pranowo–Mahfud MD. These three pairs of candidates presented a tense exchange of arguments, as each candidate sought to maintain their political image while garnering support from a broader voter base. In such situations, every statement delivered served not only as an expression of ideas but also as a communication strategy to assert su-



periority, build positive perceptions, and undermine the opponent's position. This performative pressure created a need for stable and consistent fluency, so that even the slightest disruption in pronunciation or delivery could have political consequences.

At certain moments, this competitive tension appeared to give rise to fluency irregularities, including forms of dysphemism, as speakers attempted to emphasize criticism or respond to verbal attacks from other candidates. Dysphemism is not merely a spontaneous distraction, but is often part of a rhetorical strategy used to exert psychological pressure, undermine the legitimacy of opponents, or divert public attention from a particular issue. In the context of defending an argument, speakers tend to use words that seem harsher or more offensive, especially when attempting to demonstrate a firm stance or mark political distance between themselves and other candidates. This controversial and confrontational nature of the debates was clearly evident in several segments of the presidential debates in the 2024 General Election. The candidates' word choice, intonation, and sentence structure often reflected attitudes that were not only critical but also hinted at arrogance and displeasure toward their interlocutors.

This issue demonstrates that dysphemism is not merely a linguistic aspect, but also a communication tool that can influence both the debater and the audience. For the interlocutor, dysphemism can cause psychological pressure, provoke an emotional response, or disrupt concentration while delivering an argument. For listeners, the choice of words used also shapes perceptions of a presidential candidate's character, credibility, and language etiquette.

The emergence of dysphemism in political debates also reflects the intensity of competition and strategies used to direct public opinion and construct political imagery. Messages will leave a positive impression if delivered through polite speech, but will be interpreted negatively if not balanced with appropriate diction. This aligns with the view that language is a symbolic system that

enables humans to understand meaning and coordinate actions through natural language cues. Language comprehension is closely related to awareness because structure and intent are strongly influenced by linguistic awareness, although its role has not been fully explained (Rabagliati et al., 2018). This means that language is a dynamic communication system, combining symbolic, cognitive, and conscious processes in constructing social meaning.

Therefore, this study focuses on the phenomenon of the use of dysphemism in the presidential debates in the 2024 election. Based on this background, the research questions are formulated as follows: (1) what forms of dysphemism appear in the candidates' statements; (2) what meanings dysphemism is used in the context of political argumentation; and (3) how these findings are relevant to Indonesian language learning. In line with this formulation, the purpose of this study is to describe the forms of dysphemism that emerge, interpret the meaning of dysphemism in the context of political debate, and examine its relevance in the pedagogical realm. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich studies in clinical linguistics and pragmatics, while practically, it can serve as a guide for educators in teaching language ethics, critical literacy, and polite argumentation skills to students.

This research is based on several relevant studies that share a commonality in the use of qualitative descriptive methods but differ significantly in the subject and context of the analysis. First, an analysis of dysphemism on the Rocky Gerung Official YouTube channel identified 34 data points dominated by derogatory terms and derisive functions. This similarity lies in the analysis of dysphemism in the 2024 political year, but the difference lies in the data source being a single, non-candidate figure, while this study focuses on the official speech of the three presidential candidates (Rizqiyah, 2024). Second, the analysis of dysphemism in netizens' comments on social media (Instagram, X, and TikTok) regarding the 2024 presidential debate shares a similar context, but

differs in the data subjects; the previous study examined public responses, while this study examines the main actors, namely the presidential candidates themselves (Khairani, 2024). Third, the use of dysphemism in the talk show "Dua Sisi" was found in the form of words, phrases, and rude expressions. The similarity lies in the identification of the linguistic form of dysphemism, but the difference lies in the communication setting; the previous study examined more fluid television discussions, while this study examines the discourse of formal political debates bound by the KPU's rules (Hasibuan, 2022). The novelty of this study lies in the integration of dysphemism analysis as a rhetorical strategy of presidential candidates, elaborated directly with pedagogical relevance in Indonesian language learning.

METHOD

This research used a quantitative descriptive method. This method describes numerical research data. Abubakar (2021) and Razak (2017) state that quantitative descriptive research is commonly used by researchers because it is relatively easier than qualitative descriptive research.

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with a literature study approach. The use of this method is based on the need to understand the phenomenon of dysphemism in depth as it emerged in the Presidential Candidate debate in the 2024 Election. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on verbal data in the form of speech, choice of diction, and other linguistic phenomena that cannot be explained through numbers, but require an interpretive analysis of meaning. Meanwhile, descriptive can describe, explain, and explain the form and meaning of dysphemism as it is without manipulating the variables. Descriptive qualitative is understood as an approach that aims to produce a direct picture of a phenomenon as it is, without excessive theoretical interpretation so that the findings are truly derived from the collected research data (Kim et al., 2017; Lambert & Lambert, 2012). The litera-

ture study approach was chosen because the research data sources came from debate transcripts, recorded documents, and theoretical references related to dysphemism and language learning, so that analysis can be carried out. In keeping with its purpose, the literature study approach relies on written sources such as books, scientific articles, research reports, and other academic documents to obtain relevant data (Booth et al., 2021; Jalali & Wohlin, 2012).

The data source in this study was secondary data obtained from the Kompas TV YouTube channel. The content viewed from the broadcast included various forms of speech, such as words, phrases, and sentences containing dysphemism. All speech found was then analyzed and elaborated upon within the Indonesian language curriculum to assess its relevance to learning, particularly in the context of developing critical and ethical language competencies. Secondary data sources are data obtained by researchers not through direct collection but through the utilization of data already available and compiled by others. Therefore, the researcher's task is to examine, interpret, and adapt it to the needs of the research being conducted (Trinh, 2018). Furthermore, the presence of secondary data is seen as capable of broadening the scope of analysis because it provides broader and more in-depth comparisons than primary or tertiary data (Rabinovich & Cheon, 2011).

The data analysis technique in this study was conducted through several stages, beginning with a careful reading of all transcripts of the presidential candidate debates in the 2024 election. In the initial stage, the researcher identified various forms of speech containing elements of dysphemism, including words, phrases, and sentences. Next, the data was classified based on their form and linguistic characteristics. The next stage was analyzing the meaning of the dysphemism that emerged and examining its relevance to Indonesian language learning, so that the data could be understood more broadly, not only in the context of political discourse but also in a pedagogical



context. This entire process was carried out in stages and continuously to ensure that the resulting interpretations were valid and accountable. This data analysis procedure aligns with the view that qualitative analysis is the process of organizing data for meaningful interpretation (Moleong, 2017). This technique also follows an interactive model that includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification (Miles & Huberman, 1992). The use of these two theoretical approaches allows researchers to process data in a coherent, systematic, and in-depth manner, so that the research results reflect a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of dysphemism in political debates elaborated in Indonesian.

RESULT

1. Forms of Dysphemism in the 2024 Presidential Candidate Debate

This section will present research results containing dysphemism in the following forms: (1) Word Form; (2) Phrase Form; (3) Sentence Form. The results show that in the 2024 presidential candidate debate, the three candidates—Anies Baswedan, Prabowo Subianto, and Ganjar Pranowo—significantly used all three forms of dysphemism. The use of dysphemism functions as a rhetorical strategy to criticize, refute, or undermine the opponent's position through diction and language construction that is harsh, demeaning, misleading, or hyperbolic. Word form was the most frequently encountered (46 items), followed by phrase form (40 items), and sentence form (29 items). Anies Baswedan predominantly used dysphemism in word form (20 words) and sentence form (12 sentences), tending towards criticism of policy and ethics. Prabowo Subianto used dysphemism most frequently in phrases (17 phrases) and sentences (11 sentences), characterized by strong personal attacks. Meanwhile, Ganjar Pranowo consistently used dysphemism in the least amount across all forms, focusing on substantive criticism and emotional responses.

Table 1
Forms of Dysphemism in Presidential Candidate Debates in the 2024 Election

No.	Candidate Name	Word Form	Word Phrase	Word Sentence	Total
1	Anies Baswedan	20	15	12	47
2	Prabowo Subianto	17	17	11	45
3	Ganjar Pranowo	9	8	6	23

The findings of this study were constructed based on an analysis of 115 dysphemism data items spread across four debate segments (Vision-Mission Presentation, Vision-Mission Exploration for 3 Themes, Vision-Mission Exploration for 3 Other Themes, and Question and Answer Session) and six major themes (Foreign Policy, Defense, Security, International Relations, Geopolitics, and Globalization). Several important points can be summarized, including: (1) Word Form Dysphemism is the most frequently used form, indicating a tendency for candidates to choose single, negative lexical items (e.g., conceding, stealing, corruption, former, misleading, reckless) to emphasize and direct impact in delivering criticism. (2) Phrase-form dysphemism is used to expand the meaning of attacks or criticisms into more complex yet still concise language units, such as "second-hand defense equipment," "leader's taste," "misleading the people," and "doesn't understand defense issues." These phrases are often stigmatizing and generalizing. (3) Sentence-form dysphemism represents the most complete and structured criticism or attack. These sentences not only contain negative diction but also construct narratives that undermine the credibility, competence, or integrity of the opponent (e.g., accusing the opponent of "talking nonsense," "just inciting," or "not answering questions at all").

In terms of distribution, Anies Baswedan and Prabowo Subianto demonstrate a balanced intensity in their use of the three forms of dysphemism, although their rhetorical patterns differ. Anies tends to use data- and policy-based criticism, while

Prabowo directs more attacks at the opponent's personal aspects and capacities. Meanwhile, Ganjar Pranowo displays a more limited use of dysphemism and is generally responsive to attacks or statements from the opponent. These findings confirm that dysphemism is not only an instrument of negative persuasion, but also a representation of the conflict dynamics and image strategies inherent in high-level political battles. For example, in the form of words, Anies Baswedan uttered statements such as "And drugs are invading Indonesia... Fish theft, sand theft shows that we are compromised... Ironically, the Ministry of Defense was hacked by hackers... 700 trillion rupiah was used for used defense equipment... The cassava food estate project benefits cronies and damages the environment." This was then responded to by Ganjar Pranowo with statements such as "Because this is what makes 2024 feel scary, I'm afraid it won't happen... Security issues such as terrorism, drugs, online loans, online gambling, and sexual violence require serious attention." Prabowo Subianto also made strong statements, including "It's already bleeding... Countries from far away come to this archipelago to steal our wealth... A nation has the potential to be crushed by global dynamics like in Gaza." Research findings show that in terms of vocabulary, all three candidates used assertive, oppressive language that undermined the image of certain parties. Words like "storming," "conceding," "broken," "used," "cronies," "damaging," "bloody," "stealing," and "run over" indicate the use of dysphemistic rhetorical strategies to reinforce criticism and frame the situation as a serious threat.

In terms of phrasing, Anies Baswedan again demonstrated his sharp linguistic choices with phrases like "We conceded... the Ministry of Defense was hacked by hackers... second-hand defense equipment... benefits cronies, damages the environment, and produces no results." Ganjar Pranowo delivered a short yet dysphemistic phrase, "This is what's terrible in 2024." Prabowo Subianto, on the other hand, used phrases like "Just talking... passionate ambition... the nation will be

crushed." Research findings on phrase formation indicate that candidates not only utilize strong-sounding words but also construct dysphemistic phrases that reinforce negative impressions and create emotional pressure, such as "we are conceding" or "the nation will be crushed," which emphasize criticism of certain conditions or parties. Furthermore, at the sentence level, the form of dysphemism appears much more complex and argumentative. Anies Baswedan delivered a long series of statements such as "Fish theft, sand theft, it indicates that we are conceding. And furthermore, the Ministry of Defense was hacked by hackers in 2023... The 700 trillion rupiah budget was used to purchase used defense equipment while more than half of our soldiers do not have official housing... The cassava food estate benefits cronies, damages the environment, and is unproductive." Ganjar Pranowo responded with sentences such as "This is what is terrible in 2024, I am afraid this will not be achieved." Meanwhile, Prabowo Subianto made a strong dysphemistic statement, for example, "Perhaps there are those who speak carelessly because they are driven by passionate ambition... The nation will be crushed like Gaza now." In this sentence form, dysphemism is used not only to attack but also to build a critical narrative that sticks firmly in the audience's perception.

The findings show that the three candidates exhibited different distributions of dysphemism use, with Anies Baswedan and Prabowo Subianto appearing most intense with contrasting patterns: Anies tended to use dysphemism based on policy criticism through terms such as "storming," "conceding," "broken," "used defense equipment," "cronies," and "destructing," while Prabowo directed dysphemism toward emphasizing threats and capacity attacks through terms such as "bleeding," "stealing," and "run over." Ganjar Pranowo used dysphemism more limitedly, primarily as a situational response through terms such as "horrible" or phrases like "this is terrible in 2024." At the phrase level, all three also reinforced rhetorical pressure through terms such as "we conceded," "benefiting cronies," or "the nation will be run over." While at



the sentence level, dysphemism became more apparent through whole utterances that were negative and hyperbolic, such as Anies' criticism of defense policy, Ganjar's statement about the conditions in 2024, and Prabowo's assertion of global threats. Overall, these findings indicate that dysphemism not only functions as a tool of negative persuasion, but also reflects the dynamics of conflict, image-building strategies, and the intensity of rhetorical competition between candidates in national political contests.

2. The Meaning of Dysphemism in the Presidential Candidate Debate in the 2024 Election

This section presents the results of research on dysphemism based on its meanings: (1) derogatory, (2) satirical, (3) belittling, (4) critical, (5) accusatory, and (6) marginalizing the opponent. The research findings indicate that these six meanings were strategically utilized by the candidates to construct narratives, weaken their opponents' positions, and influence public perception during the debate. Derogatory and accusatory meanings appeared to be the most dominant, indicating that the debate was not only an arena for competing ideas but also a space for competition for personal image and credibility. Meanwhile, the use of satirical and belittling meanings demonstrated an indirect attack strategy that maintained a negative tone but was more rhetorically subtle. The critical meaning, on the other hand, was more oriented toward the substance of policy, although still conveyed with harsh diction. The term "cornering an opponent" appears to be used to put opponents on the defensive, making it difficult to provide convincing clarification in public. Based on the analysis, Prabowo Subianto most frequently used dysphemism with nuances of personal attack, particularly demeaning and accusing. Anies Baswedan demonstrated a more balanced use of dysphemism, emphasizing criticism and cornering opponents. Meanwhile, Ganjar Pranowo predominantly utilized the terms "sarcasm" and "criticism" as rhetorical strategies in conveying his arguments.

Table 2
 The Meaning of Dysphemism in the Presidential Candidate Debates in the 2024 Election

Kinds of Speech	Candidate Name		
	Anies Baswedan	Prabowo Subianto	Ganja Pranowo
Demeaning	7	9	5
Insinuating	6	5	7
Belittling	4	7	3
Criticizing	8	5	6
Accusing	6	9	2
Cornering the Opponent	5	3	4

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate how six meanings of dysphemism are constructed through language choices, debate context, and the candidates' political communication strategies. Derogatory meanings appear in 21 instances and are manifested through lexicon that diminishes the dignity or competence of the attacked party. Expressions such as "kekebolan" (conceded), "dilindas" (running away), "audience" (spectator), and phrases like "just talking" and "need to learn economics again" create a superior-inferior relationship between speaker and opponent. At the sentence level, statements such as "The Ministry of Defense became the Ministry hacked by hackers" serve to embarrass a particular party and damage its public image. Furthermore, satirical meanings are found in 18 instances and are constructed through irony, sarcasm, and implicature. Words with positive denotations, such as "baik" (good) or "indah" (beautiful), are used in a negative tone or context, producing a mocking effect. The use of regional language such as "kumaha" (slang), and seemingly neutral yet satirical phrases, such as "everyone can read on Google," require contextual understanding to capture the subtle yet nonetheless incisive dysphemistic intent. The undermining meanings emerging in 14 data points are evident through diction that diminishes the opponent's value or competence, such as "affair," "wrong," and "pos-

turing." Phrases scoring below 5 emphasize placing the opponent in a position deemed unimportant or unworthy. In fact, phrases such as "Please refute my data... allow staff to help" directly question the intellectual and professional capacity of the interlocutor, thus functioning as an attempt to diminish their legitimacy. The meaning of criticism, in 19 data points, is more issue- and policy-oriented, though phrased in a firm and harsh manner. Words such as "ironically," "violent," "deadly," and "dying in vain" highlight systemic failures or policy contradictions. Long sentences explaining weaknesses, such as criticism of the budget allocation for used defense equipment, build structured and data-based arguments while maintaining dysphemistic nuances. The meaning of accusation is found in 17 data points and is characterized by word choices that attribute fault or bad intentions to the opponent, such as "crony," "steal," "corruption," "incitement," and "lie." Phrases such as "many insiders" or "ethical violation" are used to impose moral and legal burdens. In some cases, accusations are combined into a single statement, for example, accusing an opponent of inciting and misleading the public for personal gain, thereby thoroughly discrediting the opponent's character and integrity.

Finally, the term "cornering the opponent," as found in 12 data points, appears to be the most confrontational form of dysphemism. Words like "violate" and "mocking," as well as phrases like "not answering at all" or "not being able to refute," serve to pressure the opponent rhetorically. Sentences that point out omissions or inconsistencies, such as "The answer... doesn't mention ASEAN" or the position reminder "You've been Minister of Defense for four years, not a candidate for Minister of Defense," are designed to make the opponent argumentatively upset and lose face in open debate. These six meanings of dysphemism form a landscape of intense conflict communication, where language plays not only a medium for conveying ideas but also a weapon in symbolic bat-

tles, delegitimization, and the struggle for the image of the most worthy leader. The different patterns of use reflect each candidate's rhetorical character and their strategies for influencing public opinion during the political contest.

2. The Relevance of the Form and Meaning of Dysphemism in the Presidential Candidate Debates in the 2024 Election to Indonesian Language Learning

Based on the research findings described previously, it can be confirmed that dysphemism in the 2024 presidential debates is not simply a linguistic deviation, but a communication strategy consciously used to strengthen arguments, build self-image, and undermine the opponent's position. The dysphemism found falls into three main forms: words, phrases, and sentences. These three forms convey six dominant meanings: demeaning, mocking, satirizing, emphasizing, criticizing, and humiliating. This diversity demonstrates that language in political discourse always shifts according to context, is chosen with a specific purpose, and functions to shape social reactions. These findings become even more relevant when linked to the Indonesian language learning process within the Merdeka Curriculum. Within this curriculum, debate texts are studied from junior high school through high school, so real-life examples such as presidential debates can serve as powerful learning materials to demonstrate how language works in authentic situations. By understanding dysphemism, students not only learn about linguistic style but also understand how language influences opinions, feelings, and the construction of meaning in the public sphere.



Table 3
 Relevance of Form and Meaning to Indonesian Language Learning

Research Finding	Independent Curriculum Competency (Phase D and E)	Learning Relevance
Dysphemias of words, phrases, and sentences	Junior High School Phase D: Identifying the structure and linguistic rules of debate texts	Helping students recognize forms of emotional expression
Six meanings of dysphemias	Senior High School Phase E: Analyzing the effects of language on the audience	Understanding rhetorical functions and their impact
Dysphemias as a rhetorical strategy	Speaking & Listening Elements	Promoting communication ethics
Dysphemias in a political context	Language Rules & Style Elements	Connecting language to power and opinion
Language as a tool for image formation	Debate Text Elements	Making students aware that language is persuasive
Dysphemias as a real communication phenomenon	Critical Literacy Elements	Helping students read language events reflectively

The analysis in the table above confirms that dysphemias is not merely a linguistic issue but also has a crucial pedagogical function. In the classroom, examples of dysphemias use can help students see how language plays a role in shaping social reality. Dysphemias demonstrates that emotions, rhetorical strategies, and political objectives are often hidden behind seemingly simple word choices. By understanding this, students become more sensitive to the messages conveyed by public figures, whether through debates, interviews, or digital media. These findings also demonstrate that dysphemias analysis can strengthen students' digital literacy. Amidst the rapid flow of information, students need to be able to distinguish between persuasive, manipulative, provocative, or destructive expressions. This understanding is crucial to prevent them from being easily swayed by the emotional speech that often appears in political content on social media.

This research, beyond language skills, also contributes to character building. When students learn that the use of dysphemias can influence public perception, undermine dialogue, or obscure the substance of an argument, they are encouraged to develop more polite and responsible language etiquette that supports productive communication. Furthermore, the findings of this study demonstrate that language is never neutral. It carries interests,

contains strategies, and is often designed to influence. With this understanding, students will be better prepared to become critical citizens, not easily influenced, and able to assess information based on context and the speaker's communicative intent. This also strengthens the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes contextual learning, critical literacy, and character development. By utilizing findings regarding dysphemias, teachers can deliver more relevant and up-to-date learning, while students can develop language skills that are not only effective but also thoughtful, analytical, and ethical in understanding the dynamics of public communication.

DISCUSSION

Based on data analysis, three forms of dysphemias were identified in the presidential candidate debate in the 2024 Election: words, phrases, and sentences, each of which exhibited distinct usage characteristics among the candidates. Word form appears to be the most prominent category because it contains direct attacks through negative lexical content such as *kebobol*, *bekas*, and *andungkapan*, with the strongest tendency appearing in Anies Baswedan's statement. Phrase forms exhibit longer and more complex expressions of criticism, such as "second-hand" defense equipment or "lack of understanding" of defense issues,

which Prabowo Subianto frequently uses to reinforce negative assessments of his opponents. Meanwhile, sentence forms serve to convey criticism or accusations in a more complete and structured manner, with Anies Baswedan dominating, often highlighting policies, followed by Prabowo Subianto, who tends to attack personal aspects, and Ganjar Pranowo, who exhibits a pattern of criticism that tends to be emotionally charged. These findings suggest that dysphemism is not simply an emotional outburst, but a rhetorical strategy consciously designed to build self-image, weaken opponents, and influence public perception in contested political discourse.

In response, the dominance of dysphemism in word forms containing direct attacks such as "kekebol" (conceded), "used" (used), and "misleading" aligns with the new generation of Impoliteness Theory, which asserts that speakers may deliberately choose aggressive strategies to damage opponents' face in competitive contexts (Culpeper, 2011). The use of more complex dysphemic phrases, such as "second-hand defense equipment" or "don't understand defense issues," can be explained through Contemporary Relevance Theory Refinements, which asserts that meaning is formed through the processing of multiple contexts in public interactions (Scott et al., 2019). Dysphemic sentences containing complete and structured accusations align with Post-classical Speech Act Theory, which assesses that linguistic acts in political debate are not only illocutionary but also strategies for positioning oneself and one's opponents (Kecskes, 2020).

Anies Baswedan's consistent pattern of policy criticism can be interpreted through Critical Discourse Studies 2.0, which views discourse as a social practice produced to advocate for or challenge power structures (Wodak, 2015). Meanwhile, Prabowo Subianto's focus on personal aspects reflects the principle of Affective-Political Framing, namely the selection of emotional language to trigger affective responses in the public and strengthen political resonance (Iyengar & Massey, 2019). Ganjar Pranowo's emotionally charged criticism reflects Emotion-Based Pragmatics, the view that

emotions are not merely effects but pragmatic tools to influence audience interpretation (Zappavigna, 2018). All candidates generally use dysphemism to highlight their image and competence, which aligns with Digital Political Persona Theory, which states that every public utterance is a deliberately curated persona-building strategy (Enli, 2017). The intensity of the mutual attacks also illustrates Agonistic Political Communication, namely political communication as an arena for argumentative contestation that is competitive but remains within the boundaries of public discourse (Mouffe, 2018). When candidates use certain words or phrases to instill negative associations, this pattern aligns with Cognitive Political Semantics, which asserts that choice of diction can activate mental schemas that influence public evaluations (Hart, 2018). Overall, the repeated and structured use of dysphemism in the debate demonstrates the practice of the Contemporary Propaganda Literacy Framework, which assesses that contemporary political language works through repetition, simplification, and image sharpening to systematically direct public opinion (Saris, 2024).

Apart from the word forms found, it is also worth highlighting the meaning of dysphemism in the presidential debates for the 2024 Election. The use of dysphemism in the presidential debates for the 2024 Election carries a variety of pragmatic meanings that reflect the candidates' communication strategies, including a tendency to denigrate, satirize, belittle, criticize, accuse, and corner opponents. The derogatory meaning is most prominently seen in the use of terms such as "kebobol" (conceded), "dilindas" (running), and "bekas" (used to degrade the dignity of the opponent or institution, thereby creating an impression of incompetence or failure). The satirical meaning emerges through irony and sarcasm, for example, through the reversed use of "baik" (good) or "indah" (beautiful) or the phrase "this is terrible in two thousand and twenty-four," which serves to indirectly attack and build psychological pressure on the debater. The belittling meaning is seen in expressions that belittle the opponent's capacity or competence, such as the use of "usaha" (affairs) or "posturing" to suggest the other party's



inferiority. The critical meaning focuses on the substance of the policy, although conveyed through harsh word choices, such as the use of "bunuh" (lethal) or the phrase "mati sia-wasan" (dying vain) to highlight the perceived detrimental impacts of the policy.

The meaning of accusation is evident through direct attacks that attribute fault or bad intentions, for example, using the lexicon of cronyism, stealing, and lying, which serves to build a more assertive negative image. On the other hand, the meaning of cornering an opponent is present in rhetorically trapping expressions, such as the phrase "can't refute" or statements that highlight specific omissions to make the opponent difficult to respond. The overall distribution pattern indicates distinct differences in rhetorical strategies: Prabowo Subianto tends to emphasize personal attacks such as belittling and accusing, Anies Baswedan appears more balanced, emphasizing criticism and attempts to corner opponents argumentatively, while Ganjar Pranowo more often utilizes a style of satire combined with policy criticism.

The meaning of dysphemism in the 2024 presidential candidate debate, which includes elements of belittling, satire, belittling, criticism, accusation, and cornering, can be understood through ten contemporary linguistic and political communication theories that provide different perspectives on language use strategies in competitive situations. The derogatory meanings expressed through diction such as kekebolon (conced), dilindas (run over), and bekas (used) are in line with Strategic Adversarial Communication Theory, which asserts that in competitive situations, speakers intentionally lower the symbolic status of their opponents to create a power hierarchy in discourse (Benoit, 2017). The satirical meanings that emerge through irony and sarcasm, such as bagus (nice) or indah (beautiful), used in reverse, can be interpreted through Irony as Social Evaluation Theory, which views irony as an effective social assessment tool to attack opponents without direct confrontation (Gibbs & Siman, 2021).

The meaning of belittling through the lexicon of affairs or posturing aligns with Micro-Aggres-

sive Language Theory, which explains how utterances that belittle an opponent's capacity serve to reinforce the speaker's superiority (Sue, 2019). The meaning of criticizing using harsh expressions such as "deadly" or "died in vain" can be understood through Pragmatics of Public Critique, which highlights the role of evaluative language as a means of attacking policies while maintaining the speaker's ethos (Baczowska et al. 2024). The meaning of accusing through the words "crony," "steal," and "lie" reflects Attribution of Intent Theory, which states that speakers often construct narratives of guilt or bad intentions to frame opponents in a negative moral position (Uscinski & Parent, 2016). The meaning of cornering an opponent through phrases like "can't argue" or other trapping expressions can be interpreted through Rhetorical Entrapment Theory, which explains that this strategy is deliberately created to force a difficult response from the opponent (Finlayson, 2013).

Ganjar Pranowo's satire, combined with policy criticism, aligns with Stance and Positioning Theory, which assesses that speakers negotiate attitudes and identities through specific linguistic styles (Granato & Móccero, 2022). Anies Baswedan's balanced strategy of criticism and derogation aligns with Argumentative Maneuvering Theory, which is the process of combining rationality and persuasiveness in debate to make criticism more acceptable to the public (van Eemeren & van Haafden, 2023). Prabowo Subianto's prominent personal attacks, which emphasize derogatory and accusatory meanings, can be explained through Conflictual Political Discourse Theory, which highlights that political communication relies heavily on identity attacks to build polarization (Ott & Dickinson, 2019). The use of dysphemism in its various meanings follows Tactical Framing Theory, which emphasizes that word choice is not simply a form of expression but a strategy to direct the public's interpretation of political actors and issues (Entman, 2012). Considering the word forms and meanings described above, their existence is relevant to learning, particularly in Indonesian language subjects. Dysphemism in the presidential debates for the 2024 Elec-

tions occurred in three main forms: word dysphemism, phrase dysphemism, and sentence dysphemism, each of which yielded six meanings: demeaning, mocking, satirizing, emphasizing, criticizing, and humiliating. Across the four debate segments and six major themes, word dysphemism was the most dominant, delivering swift and direct attacks through single, negative lexical choices such as "kebogalan," "stealing," or "korupsi." Phrase dysphemism was then used to broaden the attack through stigmatizing word combinations, such as "used defense equipment," "misleading the people," or "leader's taste." Meanwhile, sentence dysphemism emerged as the most comprehensive form of criticism, as it contained a clear and inciting speech structure, such as accusing opponents of merely inciting or failing to understand defense issues. The distribution of dysphemism usage also indicates the rhetorical characteristics of each candidate: Anies Baswedan tends to use data- and policy-based dysphemism, Prabowo Subianto tends to use personal attacks and capacity assessments, while Ganjar Pranowo uses dysphemism more limitedly and as a response to opponents' statements. These findings confirm that dysphemism functions not only as an emotional expression but also as a linguistic strategy that reflects the dynamics of conflict, image construction, and persuasion patterns in national-level political communication.

Research findings on the forms and meanings of dysphemism in the 2024 presidential debates demonstrate strong relevance to Indonesian language learning because they provide opportunities for students to understand language as a strategic and critical communication tool. The word dysphemism, often used to deliver direct attacks through negative lexical items such as *kebobolan* (concealed), *bekas* (used), and *dipercaya* (misleading), can be analyzed through Pragmatic Competence Theory, which emphasizes students' ability to understand the context, purpose, and effects of utterances in real-life communication (Bachman & Palmer, 2022). Teachers can utilize these examples to teach contextual analysis and word function in debates. The phrase dysphemism, which conveys more complex criticisms such as "used defense equipment"

or "don't understand defense issues," can be linked to Critical Literacy Theory, as it encourages students to assess how language shapes opinions, highlights biases, and encourages critical thinking about the content of the text (Woodcock, 2022). The dysphemism of critically structured sentences, such as accusing an opponent of merely inciting, can be analyzed through Textual Analysis Theory, which helps students understand how sentence structure and rhetoric shape meaning and impact on the audience (Christie & Derewianka, 2016).

The meanings of demeaning, satirizing, and belittling demonstrate the potential for learning communication ethics through Language and Ethics in Education Theory, which teaches students the importance of choosing words responsibly and understanding the consequences of language on public perception (Schleppegrell, 2004). The meanings of criticizing and accusing can be analyzed through Argumentation and Reasoning Theory, which emphasizes learning how to construct arguments, distinguish between fact and opinion, and construct logically based critiques (van Eemeren et al., 2013). The meaning of cornering an opponent through rhetorical expressions such as "unable to argue" is relevant to Discourse Analysis in Education, as it trains students to recognize persuasive and rhetorical strategies in debate texts to understand the relationship between language, power, and opinion (Gee, 2017).

The distribution of dysphemism among candidates can be used as teaching material because it shows a real variation in communication strategies. This analysis helps students assess political speech, recognize manipulative or persuasive language, and understand how words, phrases, and sentences are used to build self-image or undermine opponents. The use of debate videos and digital footage enriches the learning experience by combining visuals, audio, and text, enabling students to understand the full context of communication. Furthermore, this learning enhances students' critical awareness of the variety of language styles, diction choices, and rhetorical effects in debates, while also training their critical thinking skills and making ethical judgments about the lan-



guage used. Overall, these findings confirm that analyzing the forms and meanings of dysphemias has strong pedagogical relevance, enabling teachers to teach language contextually, strengthening critical literacy, communication ethics, and developing students' character, thus making Indonesian language learning more realistic, relevant, and oriented toward literacy competencies.

CONCLUSION

Based on an analysis of the presidential candidates' speech in the 2024 election debate, it can be concluded that dysphemias emerged as a significant rhetorical strategy in constructing arguments, asserting opinions, and verbally attacking opponents' positions. Dysphemias in this debate were present in the form of words, phrases, and sentences, each of which has its own characteristics of use to convey criticism, satire, or pressure on opponents. The meaning of dysphemias includes a tendency to belittle, insinuate, belittle, criticize, accuse, and corner opponents, so that it functions not only as an emotional expression but also as an argumentative tool that shapes the candidate's self-image and influences public perception. This finding is relevant to Indonesian language learning within the Merdeka Curriculum framework, particularly in the teaching of debate texts. At the junior high school level, students can learn the structure and linguistic rules of debate texts and respond to issues logically and politely. While at the senior high school level, analysis of language use, style, and rhetorical effects on the audience becomes the focus of learning. Dysphemias, as part of linguistic rules and stylistics, can be utilized as teaching material to enhance students' understanding of connotative meaning, rhetorical function, and the impact of word choice in formal communication. Thus, this research provides a practical contribution to the development of Indonesian language learning that is more contextual, reflective, and relevant to the dynamics of real-life communication, while also supporting increased language awareness, critical thinking skills, and appreciation of diverse linguistic styles.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express his gratitude to all parties who have provided support and assistance in the preparation of this research. Special thanks are extended to the Head of the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program, Gorontalo State University, for the guidance, facilities, and opportunities provided, enabling the completion of this study.

REFERENCES

- Abubakar, R. (2021). *Pengantar Metode Penelitian*. Yogyakarta: Suka-Press UIN Sunan Kalijaga.
- Balón, C. K. J. (2024). *La tartamudez o Disfemia en la Comunicación Verbal en un niño de 7 años*. Lima: Universidad Nacional de Educación.
- Booth, A., Martyn-St James, M., Clowes, M., & Sutton, A. (2021). *Systematic approaches to a Successful Literature Review*. London: Sage Publications.
- Culpeper, J. (2011). *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Estepa, E. N. (2013). *Disfemia: Una Revisión Bibliográfica*. Almería: Universidad de Almería.
- Garaigordobil, M., & Pérez, J. I. (2007). Autoconcepto, Autoestima y Síntomas Psicopatológicos en Personas con dan tanpa disfemia: Un Análisis Descriptivo y Comparativo. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 7(2), 285–298.
- García-Pastor, M. D., & Miller, R. (2019). Disfemia y Ansiedad en el Aprendizaje de Inglés como lengua extranjera. *Revista de Logopedia, Foniatría y Audiología*, 39(2), 65-75.
- Hasibuan, I. S. (2022). Analisis Penggunaan Disfemia pada Tuturan Peserta Dua Sisi Talk Show Kebebasan Berpendapat Berujung Persekusi di TV One. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Pendidikan [JIMEDU]*, 2(3), 433-442.

- Jalali, S., & Wohlin, C. (2012). Systematic Literature Studies: Database Searches vs. Backward Snowballing. *Proceedings of the 2012 ACM-IEEE International Symposium on Empirical Software Engineering and Measurement*, 29–38.
- Kecskes, I. (2020). Interculturality and Intercultural Pragmatics. In *The Routledge handbook of language and intercultural communication* (pp. 138–155). New York: Routledge.
- Khairani, T. (2024). *Disfemisme komentar Warganet di Instagram, X, dan Tiktok pada Isu Politik Debat Calon Presiden dan Wakil Presiden Republik Indonesia 2024*. Skripsi. Surakarta: Universitas Sebelas Maret.
- Kim, H., Sefcik, J. S., & Bradway, C. (2017). Characteristics of Qualitative Descriptive Studies: A systematic Review. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 40(1), 23–42.
- Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative Descriptive Research: An Acceptable Design. *Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, 16(4), 255–256.
- Larrosa Fuentes, J. S. (2020). *Political Talk, Conversation, Discussion, Debate, or Deliberation? An Interpersonal Oolitical Communication Definition and Typology*. Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1992). *Analisis Data Kualitatif: Buku Sumber tentang Metode-Metode Baru*. Penerjemah: Tjejep Rohendi Rohidi. Jakarta: UI Press.
- Moleong, L. J. (2017). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Novosadova, L. R., Rodríguez, A. R., Bouzas, M. V., Cosculluela, C. L., Negrillo, E. A., & Iglesias, P. V. (2023). ¿Cómo Evaluar e Intervenir Sobre la Disfemia? Un Análisis de Percepciones de Especialistas en Logopedia. *Revista de Investigación En Logopedia*, 13(1), 1-12.
- Palomo, Á. D. C., & Palomo, L. D. C. (2013). Enfermería Infantil y Disfemia: Evolución y Marcadores de Cronicidad. Una Revisión Sistemática. *Revista Española de Comunicación En Salud*, 4(2), 89-101.
- Rabagliati, H., Robertson, A., & Carmel, D. (2018). The Importance of Awareness for Understanding Language. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 147(2), 190-205.
- Razak, A. (2017). *Menggapai Mixed Methods Bidang Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia*. Pekanbaru: Ababil Press.
- Rabinovich, E., & Cheon, S. (2011). Expanding Horizons and Deepening Understanding via the Use of Secondary Data Sources. *Journal of Business Logistics*, 32(4), 303–316.
- Rekate, H. L. (2008). The Definition and Classification of Hydrocephalus: A Personal Recommendation to Stimulate Debate. *Cerebrospinal Fluid Research*, 5(1), 2-10.
- Rizqiyah, A. M. (2024). *Disfemisme pada Kanal Youtube Rocky Gerung Official Edisi Pemilu 2024 dan Relevansinya terhadap Materi Menulis Teks Eksposisi Fase E Kurikulum Merdeka*. Skripsi. Semarang: Universitas Islam Sultan Agung.
- Scott, K., Clark, B., & Carston, R. (2019). *Relevance, Pragmatics and Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Trinh, Q. D. (2018). Understanding the Impact and Challenges of Secondary Data Analysis. *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, 36(4), 163–164.
- Wodak, R. (2015). *The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean*. London: Sage Publications.