



**DYSPHEMISTIC LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL COGNITION: AN ANALYSIS
IN ONLINE COMMENTS ON 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
COVERAGE**

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Abstract

This study examines language practices occurring in the comment sections of online media, specifically in the comment sections of news articles related to the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. The researcher found that there were instances of dysphemistic language behavior in the majority of comments in the election news comment sections. Using the critical discourse analysis method, the researcher analyzed both the textual and contextual aspects of comments that met the criteria for dysphemistic language practices. The research findings revealed dysphemistic practices carried out by commenters, directed both at the subjects being reported on and at other commenters participating in the discussion. Furthermore, the researcher also identified two social cognitions that underlie the production of dysphemistic comments. These two social cognitions are: (1) Rejecting Prabowo as a proxy for Jokowi; and (2) Presidential and vice-presidential candidates must not have negative sides. The practical contribution of this research is to provide an understanding of the impact of dysphemistic language practices in the comment sections of 2024 presidential election news on readers' social cognition, which can assist in designing more effective communication policies or strategies for managing healthy and constructive online interactions.

Keywords: *critical discourse analysis; dysphemistic language behaviour; social cognitions*

INTRODUCTION

At first glance, the progress of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) provides optimism to further advance the quality of democracy in Indonesia. However, if not managed properly, it will actually become an inhibiting factor. The progress of ICT, which is marked by the proliferation of digital platforms, provides an increasingly wider space for people to express themselves. The flow of information is reshaping the social spaces within society. This means that the quality of freedom to access information and communicate is at a good level. Data from the Ministry of Communication and Information (Kominfo) states that 167 million Indonesians who use the internet are social media users. This data implies an opportunity for the

development of a better democracy, where everyone has the opportunity to express themselves and even disseminate their views widely through their social media.

On the other hand, this data can also be a challenge for the development of a democratic climate in Indonesia. The fact that everyone can express themselves and express their opinions freely through their respective social media accounts, is also followed by the fact that each view and opinion clashes with each other in cyberspace (Evanalia, 2022). The conflict is a real thing. Today we can easily find controversies on social media or the virtual world in general. Each of these views and opinions claims to be the most correct party by delegitimizing other opposing views or opinions, sometimes even in unethical ways. Our digital space, especially social media, which was expected to be filled with civil discourse as a sign of a healthy democratic climate, has instead become a chaotic space. Many parties no longer use the digital world simply as a space for expression and opinion, but as a space for mutually bringing down, mocking, blaspheming, and spreading hatred.

Digital space is no longer a vehicle for mutual access to information and the exchange of ethical views, but rather a battlefield for discourse that lacks substance. Discourse battles occur only to the extent of bringing down and even mocking each other (Febriansyah & Muksin, 2020). In some cases, there is even the practice of language vandalism. This practice displays indecent remarks, stigmatization, labeling, and ad hominem practices. A calm discussion turns into a debate that is far from substantial and only focuses on the behavior of finding fault and mistakes of the debate opponent. This phenomenon is especially often carried out by anonymous accounts whose identities are not clearly identified.

Concerning the phenomenon, this study reviews and analyzes language practices that occur in the digital world, especially in the online news comment column. The analysis carried out in this study aims to determine and describe the forms of dysphemistic language practices that exist in the 2024 election news comment column in online media. Following a past study Nuraeni et al., (2022), dysphemistic language analysis is carried out in this study to explore certain situations that imply emotions, feelings of displeasure, hatred, irritation, unfriendliness, or in order to emphasize certain things to achieve certain effects. In addition, this study also analyzes the dominant social cognition contained in the existing comments. Different from Firmansyah et al., (2023), this study not only describes the words and sentences used in the practice of dysphemism, but also analyzes the social cognition behind the practice. The gap in this research lies in the focus of the study which does not highlight general language phenomena but looks at the practice of dysphemistic language practices in depth.

Finally, this study fills this gap by examining the practice of dysphemistic language in the comments column of the 2024 presidential election news in online media, as well as its impact on the social cognition of readers. This study is different from Rizekuna & Siregar (2024) that focused more on general language phenomena without considering the negative influence of language practices in online communication and readers' social perceptions. Therefore, this study aims to (1) identify forms of language use that contain elements of insults or verbal violence, (2) to understand how these language practices affect social perceptions and interactions between online media users; and (3) to explore the influence of dysphemistic language practices on the formation of readers' political opinions and attitudes, as well

as their impact on the dynamics of social communication in the context of political news.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dysphemism

Dysphemism can be defined as a language practice that is the opposite of euphemism. If euphemism is an attempt to refine words, phrases or sentences to achieve a more refined and polite meaning, on the other hand, dysphemism is the practice of changing a refined or ordinary meaning into a harsh one through certain words, phrases and sentences (Chaer, 2004; Firmansyah et al., 2023). Dysphemism is done in certain situations that imply emotions, displeasure, hatred, irritation, unfriendliness, or in order to emphasize something to get a certain effect.

Nisa Anggraini in Jannah (2024), referring to B. Warren's article entitled "What dysphemism tells us about the interpretation of words", categorizes dysphemism into eight types. These are (1) Dysphemism by referring to a person's actual physical appearance; (2) Use of insulting and disrespectful terms; (3) Comparing humans to animals; (4) Using taboo terms to insult; (5) Giving certain nicknames; (6) Inappropriate cursing and swearing; (7) Dysphemism as an insult; and (8) Euphemism Dysphemism. In the context of this research, dysphemism is being reviewed as a language practice that leads to swear words, rude, blasphemous, demeaning, and other things that are categorized as expressions of hatred or displeasure that occur in the online news comment column. In today's digital era, recent studies Erlinawati (2016); Khaeriyah & Dewi (2023) found that dysphemistic language has been used to intentionally curse, insult, demean, and badmouth others, but most of their identities are kept anonymous and untraceable. Our digital space is now filled with practices to show dislike, unfriendliness, or irritation. These attitudes are strongly emphasized as dysphemistic comments.

Social Cognition

Discourse is the largest language unit above paragraphs, sentences, clauses, words, morphemes, and phonemes. As the largest language unit, discourse carries the most complete information in the communication process (Wisman, 2017). The communication process assumes the existence of a communicator and a communicant. A communicator as the party who delivers the message, has a certain intention that is expected to be understood by the communicant. In an effort to understand the intention of the communicator, in communication and language theory there is a method that provides an applicable analysis procedure, namely critical discourse analysis (Dhona, 2020). In critical discourse analysis, researchers do not only give meaning to the phenomena or texts they encounter, but also try to uncover what is behind the phenomena or texts, such as the ideologies, motives, and world views that may be contained within them (Van Dijk, 2015). Critical discourse analysis pays attention not only to the text being faced, but also to the context that underlies the production of the text.

The concept of social cognition emerged in critical discourse analysis (CDA) as proposed by Teun A. Van Dijk. In CDA van Dijk, a text is considered not to have its own meaning, but is attached by the language user concerned (Van Dijk, 2002). Furthermore, a produced text is the result of the text producer's interpretation of the reality that he is facing. The process of interpretation and production of the text is

bridged by a concept called social cognition (Van Dijk, 1994). In other words, text and context (reality) are connected by a certain social cognition. Therefore, it can be concluded that every text that is produced always implies a certain social cognition. Online comments on the 2024 presidential election news are the object of this research. There are certain social cognitions that the researcher wants to review and analyze. Through textual analysis of the choice of words, phrases, or sentences, the social cognition that underlies the production of the comment texts can be identified. Of course, this social cognition cannot be separated from the facts and social environment (context) that surrounds the comment producers. By linking and elaborating on the relationship between text and context, social cognition can be expressed as a worldview, political choice, ideology, or a particular morality.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study used a descriptive qualitative approach and applied the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method. Referring to Yanti et al. (2019), the intention to use a descriptive qualitative approach in this study was to describe and provide meaning to the object of this study. The depiction and interpretation of the object are expected to provide a precise, systematic, and accurate picture of the object's characteristics. Moreover, CDA was used in this study to explore textual and linguistic elements of online comments during the 2014 presidential election. While Critical Discourse (CD) focuses more on and only deals with textual analysis Silaswati et al., (2018), CDA used in this study was considered more relevant for analysing the text as well as the context surrounding its production. This study did not only explain and describe a discourse, but also provide meaning to the linguistic elements of the anonymous online comments on 2024 presidential election coverage. By using CDA, in addition to knowing the forms of language vandalism that exist, this study identified the social cognition underlying the production of comment texts containing dysphemism.

The data used in this study were comment texts found in the comment sections of 2024 election news articles on the online media platforms Detik.com and Kompas.com. Comments identified by the researchers as instances of dysphemistic language practices were recorded and classified based on the predetermined categories. The recorded and classified data were then analyzed textually and contextually. Textual analysis involved describing the meaning of the words or sentences used, in order to consider why the words or sentences were considered examples of dysphemism. Meanwhile, contextual analysis was carried out by connecting the commentary text to the surrounding issues or discourses that influenced their production, such as existing political contestation, ideology, and values held by the text producers.

DISCUSSION

Dysphemistic Language in Online Comments on 2024 Election News

The following subsection presents comment data related to language vandalism in the form of dysphemism. Words, phrases, or sentences in bold represent instances of dysphemistic language practices found in the comments. Each data sample (D) is followed by an analysis to determine the elements that indicate the presence of dysphemistic practices.

Data 1

"Your dirty mouth has been forgiven, you still don't know yourself!"

Dysphemistic language in Data 1 refers to the use of the phrases 'Mulut filthymu' and 'ga tau diri'. The phrases 'mulutmu' and 'ga tau diri' are forms of insults towards the person you are talking to. If 'mulutku isi' means a mouth that likes to talk about bad things, then 'ga tau diri' means that someone who is attached to the phrase has a character that cannot position themselves, does not have the ability to assess themselves, and other bad traits depending on the context of the situation and the events that surround them. Both phrases are insults towards the person you are talking to that are produced in a situation of irritation, emotion, and anger.

Data 2

"Oh, the dirty mouth is ranting again... Rotten..."

The dysphemistic language in Data 2 refers to the use of the phrase 'the dirty mouth' and the word 'rotten'. 'The dirty mouth' means a person who likes to say or speak bad things, while 'rotten' according to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI) has various meanings such as; smells bad, unpleasant, bad, ugly, and can also be related to disease and crime. Both phrases are insults to the interlocutor produced in a situation of irritation, emotion, and anger.

Data 3

"Shrimp brains who have no manners, can't differentiate between insulting and criticizing. Old and doesn't know their place"

The dysphemistic language in Data 3 refers to the use of the phrase 'shrimp brain' and the sentence 'old and doesn't know their place'. According to the Indonesian thematic thesaurus, shrimp brain means stupid, lacking in thinking, foolish, stupid, foolish, short-sighted. The phrase 'engga tahu diri' refers to an attitude of not being able to position oneself, not having the ability to assess oneself, and in certain contexts means a person who cannot appreciate the kindness of others. The use of both phrases and sentences is a form of cursing and insulting the person you are talking to accompanied by an unpleasant situation.

Data 4

"Pretending to be the most correct!!! Is the one you support the most correct, Ted!! Butet?!! Don't just insult politics, Butet!!"

The dysphemistic language in Data 4 refers to the use of the sentence 'you become insulted'. The sentence attaches someone with the word 'insane' which according to KBBI means low in terms of status, vile, despicable, bad, vile. So, attaching someone with the word 'insane' means positioning the person in a very low, bad, and very bad position. If you look at the punctuation used in the comment, namely the exclamation mark (!), then it can be interpreted that the sentence represents strong emotions (<https://ejaan.kemdikbud.go.id/eyd>).

Data 5

"@Tedi Mulyono the insulted person is stupid! The community is protected by law in conveying Ganjar kemlinthi."

The dysphemistic language in Data 5 refers to the use of the words 'dumb' and 'kemlinthi'. Stupid according to KBBI means very dull-minded, not intelligent, stupid, and added to that it ends with an exclamation mark (!) which strengthens the emotion in its delivery. The word 'kemlinthi' is rooted in Javanese which means pretentious, arrogant, and cocky. In KBBI, these words mean to exalt oneself excessively, to be arrogant, to be proud. Therefore, someone who is attached to the word 'kemlinthi' is identical to someone who is arrogant or haughty. These two words are insults to someone to express displeasure.

Data 6

"@Djunov Namlima, Little kid, but he can step up to become vice president, that's great... Highly educated, become a mayor, has the blood of a leader. Now who are you, you're just a glass of warteg."

The dysphemistic language in Data 6 refers to the use of the sentence 'ente tetapi gelas warteg aja'. If the sentence is arranged in Indonesian, it becomes 'Kamu tetapi gelas warteg saja'. The sentence is a form of insult to someone who is considered to have a very low status, because it is only equal to an inanimate object (a glass). Furthermore, the glass in question is a glass in a *warteg* (local food stall) which is symbolically a place to eat for the lower middle class. The sentence feels even more derogatory because it was previously compared to something that has a better meaning, namely 'highly educated', 'become a mayor', and 'have the blood of a leader'.

Data 7

@Dido Jr. I don't think it's a warteg glass, it's more like warteg coffee grounds hehehhe."

The dysphemistic language in Data 7 refers to the use of the sentence 'more suitable than warteg coffee grounds'. If arranged in a good Indonesian sentence, it becomes '(He) is more suitable (like) warteg coffee grounds'. The comment is a response to the previous comment: you are just a warteg glass. So, the sentence '(He) is more suitable (like) warteg coffee grounds' is an insult or derogatory remark to someone. In the context of the comment, someone is equated with 'coffee grounds'. According to KBBI, grounds are the remains of goods from which the essence or starch has been removed. Grounds are the remaining parts that no longer have a function and most of them will be thrown away. So, equating someone with coffee grounds is a form of insult or derogation.

Data 8

"@Otheothe Rather than your mouth sing ora isoh mingkem alias mronggos."

Dysphemistic language in Data 8 refers to the use of the words 'mrongos' and 'ora iso mingkem'. The word mrongos comes from Javanese, which in Indonesian means tonggos. Tonggos according to KBBI means a condition of front teeth that protrude forward. The word tonggos actually does not have a negative connotation because it is a variation of the structure of human front teeth which are indeed diverse. However, if the word is attached to someone in an emotional interaction situation, a negative connotation will arise. The general view is that buck teeth are considered undesirable, and needs to be corrected to improve one's appearance.

There is also the sentence 'mulutmu sing ora iso mingkem' (Javanese) which means someone's mouth that cannot close. The condition of the mouth that cannot close when viewed from the entire context of the comment is caused by (teeth) mrongos. So, the comment above is a form of insult or curse towards others using physical shortcomings.

Data 9

"@Fatra Luqman it's clear Puan didn't use the right of inquiry... Nasdem didn't either... It's just a psk party... wkwkwkwk."

The dysphemistic language in Data 9 refers to the use of the word 'psk'. The word 'psk' in the comment can be associated with the name of a certain political party. If you look at the comment, several things related to political parties have been mentioned previously, namely Puan (the name of the politician: Puan Maharani) and Nasdem (political party), then 'psk' in the comment is related to a political party whose name is twisted to have a negative meaning. In general, 'PSK' is understood as an abbreviation for Commercial Sex Workers. So, twisting the name of a party to PSK is an insult as well as a fairly harsh curse. In the comment, the commentator also added 'wkwkwkwk' which means laughing at the party being insulted, as well as a form of harassment.

Data 10

"Njarr njarr...tong kosong glondangan."

The dysphemistic language in Data 10 refers to the use of the phrase 'tong kosong glondangan'. The phrase 'tong kosong glondangan', often directed at someone who is called as "njarr...njarr", means that the person is perceived as lacking critical thinking skills but talks a lot. 'tong kosong glondangan' is a modification of the proverb 'tong kosong nyaring suaranya'. In Javanese, 'glondangan' means a loud sound produced by a barrel or hollow object that has no contents when it falls to the floor. Thus, 'tong kosong glondangan' is a form of insult to someone who is considered as incompetent.

Social Cognition in Online Comments on the 2024 Election News

The practice of producing commentary texts on the 2024 election news by anonymous accounts can be viewed as a form of discourse practice. Discourse as a language and communication practice can be seen as carrying a certain social cognition (Cahyono et al., 2023). In the context of this study, it can therefore be argued that each commentary text, including those made by anonymous accounts, is

produced based on a certain social cognition. The findings of particular social cognitions in this study are further illustrated as follows.

Data 11

"When Anies and Prabowo met, they discussed not to attack Prabowo, his illness is relapsing."

In this comment, there are at least two social cognitions. First, social cognition formed by information or insight that shows that Prabowo as a presidential candidate is in an unhealthy condition or at least has a history of certain diseases. If analyzed: everyone has certainly been sick or had certain diseases, but information that a presidential candidate is sick is certainly a valuable fact, at least for the opposing party or opponent. A presidential candidate should be healthy and in prime condition to be able to support his activities as president in the future. Second, social cognition related to the motive of information that Anies deliberately did not attack Prabowo in the debate because Prabowo was in an unhealthy condition. Comment producers use the social cognition of certain groups who see that information that Prabowo is sick is an advantage in the context of the election contest.

Data 12

"Prabocor and Gibran never had time to talk about their vision and mission... this candidate pair is filled with problems that only start from the decision of the Constitutional Court, their uncle... FACTS, guys."

In Data 12, there are at least two social cognitions in its production. First, social cognition formed through insight or information that 'prabocor' is a pun on the name Prabowo which has a somewhat negative connotation. Initially, this pun was attached not long after Prabowo on one occasion revealed that the state budget was 'leaking' so that the people were not prosperous. However, over time, Prabowo's criticism, which was actually good, was attached to his name. For those who do not like Prabowo, the term 'Prabocor' is actually a joke (Wulandari et al., 2023). At least for those who are against it, Prabowo is currently on the side that has always been considered the source of the budget leak, namely the ruling regime.

Second, the social cognition that underlies the production of the above commentary text is an understanding of the ethical issues related to Gibran's advancement as Prabowo's vice presidential candidate. It is widely known that Gibran's advancement as a vice presidential candidate went through a process that was considered by the public to violate ethics. The Constitutional Court (MK) granted the lawsuit regarding the requirements for someone to advance as a vice presidential candidate that allowed Gibran to meet the requirements (Nikmah, 2024). The ethical issue arose when there was the fact that the MK chairman who decided the lawsuit turned out to be Gibran's uncle. So, this loophole with a nuance of ethical violation was used as a 'bullet' for the opposing party to discredit the Prabowo-Gibran pair (Rifqi, 2025).

After analysing the online comments used as the data in this study, two social cognitions are identified as the basis for the production of these comments: (1) rejecting Prabowo as an extension of Jokowi, and (2) presidential and vice

presidential candidates must not have negative sides. A detailed analysis of these findings is presented as follows.

Rejecting Prabowo as an Extension of Jokowi

Although the political map during the 2024 election shows three support options, it can actually be simplified into just two. This can be explained as follows. First, support for Anies Baswedan mostly comes from groups that previously supported Prabowo when he fought Jokowi in the 2019 contest (Sonny, 2019). In 2024, most of these groups, especially those based on religious identity movements, still solidly reject Jokowi. So, when Prabowo approached Jokowi, they withdrew their support, especially since Prabowo's vice presidential candidate was Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Jokowi's son (Widodo & Almansur, 2023).

Second, when Jokowi indirectly supported Prabowo, by making his son Prabowo's vice presidential candidate, Jokowi simultaneously separated from the PDI-P which had been his main supporter. PDI-P has its own presidential candidate, namely Ganjar Pranowo. In fact, PDI-P not only felt abandoned by Jokowi, but also felt disappointed because it had given its full support during his time as president (Muhammad, 2023). From the two arguments, it can be concluded that although the 2024 presidential election has three choices or 'camps', it can actually be simplified into only two camps (Hamdi et al., 2024). The two camps represent two social cognitions, namely pro Jokowi and anti Jokowi.

Social cognition that represents rejection of Jokowi is found in the comments that are the data for this study. This 'anti-Jokowi' social cognition is the basis for the production of discourse on rejection of Prabowo (Hamdanny & Mukhtar, 2021). In the following coded comments, we can see social cognition that links Prabowo and the election administration with negative views of Jokowi's government and his family.

Data 13

"It would be good if Mr. Mahfud could OPEN all the SORES of the OLIGARCHY who are hungry for power, now is the time to open to the public all the conspiracies and bad behavior in that dirty oil so that we DON'T MAKE THE WRONG CHOICE. Since the game by the uncle apparently spread to the chairman of the KPU and could be fatal later on the final calculation decision of the KPU which is controlled by the warriors."

The comment in Data 13 discusses the negative side of the Jokowi government. Commentators consider that the Jokowi government has turned into an oligarchic government. In addition, there is also an issue related to ethical violations committed by the Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court (MK) because he is considered to have helped Gibran become a vice presidential candidate even though he changed the existing requirements (Tambunan et al., 2024). Not only that, even the social cognition that builds a negative perspective on the Prabowo-Gibran pair is also formed through a slanted view of the General Election Commission (KPU) which is considered not neutral (Supriyadi, 2024). It is clear that the comments aimed at rejecting Prabowo are built on the basis of 'anti-Jokowi' social cognition.

The following stigmatization and dysphemism comments also represent the social cognition of 'rejecting Prabowo because he is an extension of Jokowi'.

Data 14

@Moh Benar Salah, what are the achievements of a former TNI dismissal due to gross human rights violations? Same as his vice presidential candidate who was only mayor for 2 years as a result of an uncle's haram trial at the Constitutional Court. I ask, is this really true, please, can you sycophants and bujers answer?

In the aforementioned comments, in addition to past facts related to Prabowo's actions during his time as an Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), the commentator also mentioned the fact that he was paired with Jokowi's son. The comments that tend to discredit Prabowo as a presidential candidate contain two pieces of information that are sufficient to stigmatize Prabowo. Specifically, the information that Prabowo's vice presidential candidate is Jokowi's son who was promoted through 'uncle's illegitimate trial at the Constitutional Court' is supporting data to further worsen Prabowo's image as a presidential candidate.

Communication patterns in the context of politics allow a person or party to make narrative choices in the form of words, phrases, and sentences so that political opponents look bad (Azka & Syahputra, 2023). Self-image in political communication is no longer about a person's true 'self', but rather 'how he is presented through the media, including language. So, comments that dig up Prabowo's past as a member of the TNI and his partner, Gibran, as a vice presidential candidate are considered to have violated ethics in his candidacy.

Data 15

In fact, the elderly presidential candidate who was dismissed by the TNI and failed to become a candidate many times justifies any means to come to power... one of which is to partner with a vice presidential candidate who was the result of an illegitimate trial at the Constitutional Court which is clearly a serious violation of the uncle of the Constitutional Court.

The comments in Data 15 also reveal Prabowo's traces when he was still active in the TNI, and once again by adding facts related to Jokowi's son as his vice presidential candidate. Social cognition is a 'basic material' when someone begins to construct a discourse, be it in the form of comments, opinions, news, and so on (Rahmadi et al., 2024). This social cognition guides us to understand and respond to what is happening around us. Rejecting Prabowo as a presidential candidate because he is considered close to Jokowi is one of the social cognitions found in news comments related to the 2024 presidential election.

Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidates Must not Have Negative Sides

In the comments on the 2024 presidential election news that served as data in this study, one of the social cognitions identified was the tendency to associate all candidates with perfection. This means that presidential and vice presidential candidates must not have gaps or deficiencies in various aspects, such as attitudes, traits, integrity, abilities, past, and even physically (Hasanah et al., 2024). Deficiencies in these aspects are unacceptable to society, at least from the analysis of comments conducted by the researcher.

Through textual and contextual analysis of the existing data, it was found that the social cognition 'presidential and vice presidential candidates must not have negative sides' is directly proportional to the reality in society (Juditha, 2014). Society wants leaders who are capable, smart, have integrity, and have a strong and healthy physique (Majid, 2023). Therefore, comments in the form of dysphemism, stigmatization, and ad hominem are the embodiment of the public's hope to have a flawless leader.

The following comments are examples of how the social cognition of 'presidential and vice presidential candidates must not have negative sides'.

Data 16

"Mr. Uban should immediately drink a bottle of Baygon so that his soul is calm rather than living with the shame of losing to a small child"

The phrase 'Mr. Uban' (Mr. Gray Hair), used to refer to the figure mentioned in Data 16, serves as a form of mockery directed at Ganjar Pranowo. Ganjar, a presidential candidate, is known for having completely white hair, which visually distinguishes him from other presidential candidates who are perhaps older in age. The term 'Mr. Uban' seems to attach Ganjar's self-image as a very old presidential candidate. Gray hair is a symbol of old age in Indonesian tradition. In addition, the use of the term 'Mr. Uban' as a form of mockery is a sign that a presidential candidate who is old and even has completely gray hair is unacceptable. Being too old is considered a deficiency that presidential and vice presidential candidates should not have.

Data 17

"Njarr njarr... empty barrel glondangan"

The comment in Data 17 is a representation of the assumption that Ganjar Pranowo for some people is an inappropriate figure because he talks too much. Referring to the proverb that applies in Indonesian society, namely "Empty barrels make loud noises", people who are considered to talk a lot are usually not very smart. Although this assumption is subjective, one conclusion can be drawn from this comment that people do not like leaders who talk too much but in reality do not have adequate abilities.

The practice of vandalism in language with social cognition 'presidential and vice presidential candidates must not have negative sides' is not only directed at Ganjar Pranowo, but also at the other two presidential candidates. Prabowo Subianto as Ganjar's rival presidential candidate also did not escape the attacks of vandals who used the social cognitive language 'presidential and vice presidential candidates must not have negative sides'.

Data 18

"When Anies and Prabowo met, they discussed not attacking Prabowo, his illness is relapsing"

The comment in Data 18 is an example that a leader or prospective leader should not have any shortcomings, especially regarding his health. So, when a presidential candidate has indications of being physically unhealthy, he will

immediately receive criticism. In the context of the comment above, the criticism is in the form of ridicule. Apart from being the oldest candidate among the others, Prabowo in fact also shows body gestures like someone who is elderly. On the other hand, Prabowo also has a scar on his leg which causes his gait to be a little unsteady.

Data 19

“Poor guy who wants to attack Wowok. His face is already asymmetrical due to yesterday's illness (stroke?)”

In Data 19, there is even a description that is actually very detrimental to Prabowo's image as a presidential candidate. Social cognition that requires prospective leaders to have no physical shortcomings is actually a necessity ([Haris et al., 2022](#)). The heavy and great task that will be borne by a president and his vice president requires good physical and mental condition in order to be able to carry out state duties. In the context of the vandal comments analyzed in this study, the hopes and desires of the community to have a leader who is physically and mentally healthy.

Data 20

What are the achievements of a former TNI dismissal due to gross human rights violations? Same as his vice presidential candidate who was only mayor for 2 years as a result of an uncle's haram trial at the Constitutional Court. I ask, is this really true, please, can the sycophants and bujers answer?

In addition, the vandal comments reflect the community's desire for a leader who is beyond reproach in behaviour, moralily, and integrity. In Data 20, it can be indicated that the underlying social cognition emphasizes the importance of these qualities in a presidential candidate.

CONCLUSION

This study found that language behavior in the form of dysphemism frequently occurs in the comment sections of online news. Dysphemistic expressions are directed toward the reported figures, individuals associated with them, and fellow commentators engaged in debate. The dysphemistic expressions include curses, dirty words, demeaning, and equating with inappropriate things. This study also found data that there are certain social cognitions in the process of producing dysphemism comments carried out by commentators. These social cognitions are both explicitly and implicitly embedded in the comments texts. The underlying social cognitions identified include: (1) Rejecting Prabowo as an extension of Jokowi; (2) Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidates must not have negative sides.

The practical contribution of this study lies in its insight into dysphemistic language behaviour in online comment sections and its identification of the social cognition driving such discourse. . For future research, it is recommended to further investigate the influence of dysphemistic language practices on public opinion and to examine the role of social media in shaping political perceptions through online commentary text. In addition, future studies can expand the scope by taking into account other factors such as educational background and the influence of other media in shaping online language behavior.

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