



The Use of Figurative Language in Social Media Discourse during the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election

Syamsuddin Syamsuddin^a, Sakina Munfarida^b

^aUniversitas Negeri Gorontalo, Indonesia

^bUniversitas Alkhairaat Palu, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study examines the language styles used in netizens' posts and comments on social media during the 2024 Presidential Election (Pilpres). Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the research analyzes primary data in the form of written social media content and secondary data from relevant literature, utilizing orthographic and referential matching techniques. Among the 100 instances of hate speech identified, 30 distinct language styles were observed, with sarcasm (50 occurrences), hyperbole (30 occurrences), irony (20 occurrences), and rhetoric (10 occurrences) being the most prevalent. These language styles reflect expressions of dissatisfaction, anger, and criticism, while also capturing public attention. Sarcasm and irony effectively convey sharp satire, hyperbole introduces dramatic emphasis, and rhetoric evokes emotional reactions. The findings reveal that social media serves as a platform for political opinion contests, where language style functions as a strategic tool to construct narratives and influence public perception persuasively.

KEYWORDS

Figure of speech;
Netizens;
Social Media;
2024 Presidential Election.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menganalisis gaya bahasa dalam ujaran dan komentar netizen di media sosial selama Pemilihan Presiden (Pilpres) 2024. Dengan metode deskriptif kualitatif, data primer berupa ujaran tertulis di media sosial dan data sekunder dari literatur terkait dianalisis menggunakan teknik padan ortografis dan referensial. Dari 100 ujaran kebencian yang ditemukan, teridentifikasi 30 jenis gaya bahasa, dengan dominasi sarkasme (50 kali), hiperbola (30 kali), ironi (20 kali), dan retorika (10 kali). Gaya bahasa ini mencerminkan ekspresi ketidakpuasan, kemarahan, dan kritik, sekaligus menarik perhatian publik. Sarkasme dan ironi efektif menyampaikan sindiran tajam, hiperbola menambah dramatisasi, dan retorika memancing reaksi emosional. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa media sosial menjadi arena persaingan opini politik, di mana gaya bahasa menjadi alat strategis untuk membangun narasi dan memengaruhi persepsi publik secara persuasif.

KATAKUNCI

Gaya Bahasa;
Netizen;
Media Sosial;
Pilpres 2024.

Contact

Syamsuddin Syamsuddin

syam.50TV@gmail.com

Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Indonesia

How to cite:



Syamsuddin, S. (2024). The Use of Figurative Language in Social Media Discourse during the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election. *Pulchra Lingua: A Journal of Language Study, Literature, & Linguistics*, 3(2), 138-154. <https://doi.org/10.58989/plj.v3i2.39>

1. Introduction

In presidential and vice-presidential elections, social media plays a crucial role. The anonymity offered by social media allows users to conceal their identities, which grants them the ability to mask their true selves, creating an environment where they feel emboldened and less accountable for their actions. Users who choose to remain anonymous are more likely to disseminate any type of information without fear of legal consequences or social backlash.

Today, social media has profoundly transformed the way we interact, communicate, and share information. In Indonesia and around the world, social media has become an integral part of daily life for many individuals. The advantages of social media, including ease of interaction, widespread connectivity, and the ability to communicate instantly, have reshaped the communication landscape. This is evident across various domains, such as business, social networking, and even political information exchange. Social media platforms offer individuals from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to connect and share.

Technological advancements, such as mobile phones and increased internet access, have been the primary drivers behind the growth and popularity of social media. New social networking sites continue to emerge, offering various features and advantages to meet the needs of online interaction and communication. It is important to note that responsible and informed use of social media is crucial, given its significant impact on both personal and societal life. The value of social media in communication lies in its capacity to convey messages through multiple media formats (text, images, video, etc.) to a broad audience, making it a platform where people can share information, influence opinions, and alter behaviors on a larger scale than ever before.

The unrestricted freedom of expression and the public nature of information on social media contribute to the growing trend of hate speech. Features such as comment sections or interaction spaces between researchers and readers on social media platforms provide opportunities for anyone to respond, either positively or negatively, to content. The ease of posting comments or feedback has often become a means for some individuals to express opinions containing hate speech, misinformation, or disrespectful behavior toward individuals or certain groups. This can trigger the spread of negative messages and even harm relationships between individuals or groups.

Currently, social media holds a unique appeal in the political realm. Politics, inherently tied to the processes of influencing and being influenced, makes social media a virtual arena for shaping public opinion. The freedom provided by the internet has led individuals to exploit political situations. As of now, social media consistently provides information related to the upcoming General Election on February 14, 2024, which the public consumes daily. This information sparks discussions and opinions from the

electorate and supporters of presidential candidates, especially as social media continues to evolve.

In essence, statements or comments made by netizens on social media have the potential to impact the foundation of democratic environments, shaping electoral outcomes and public opinion. In the context of a presidential election, hate speech can obstruct the electoral process and negatively influence voters in an unhealthy way, as many Indonesians tend to take information at face value without verifying its accuracy. This phenomenon can deepen societal polarization, reinforcing divisions among groups. If social media is used to spread harmful messages, it can complicate efforts to unify the nation after the election. Moreover, using social media to propagate hate speech can create an imbalance in access to information. Certain groups may be more exposed to or vulnerable to hate speech, undermining the democratic process. Furthermore, hate speech on social media can disrupt the election process, creating an atmosphere that is not conducive to a fair and peaceful election.

According to a study by the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) Indonesia, from September 1, 2023, to January 2024, a total of 182,118 texts containing hate speech were found, with 61,340 texts directly related to the election issues. The prevalence of hate speech cases increased during the presidential and vice-presidential election campaigns, with 51.2% on X (formerly Twitter), 45.15% on Facebook, and 3.34% on Instagram. Meanwhile, data from the Ministry of Communication and Informatics reported nearly 3 million negative content items, including hate speech, on social media throughout 2023.

At its core, X (formerly Twitter) is a social networking and microblogging service designed to facilitate interactions and connections among users, allowing them to share their thoughts or opinions on various societal issues. X users come from diverse backgrounds, including ordinary citizens, politicians, celebrities, government officials, and even the president. Beyond fostering interaction, X offers an additional feature by showcasing trending topics and phenomena, allowing users to easily track current trends. Furthermore, users can access information effortlessly through hashtags, providing insight into what is currently or has been trending on X.

Similarly, Facebook is a platform for sharing content, such as personal profiles, activities, and opinions. It also enables communication and interaction within online social networks. Facebook's popularity in Indonesia is immense, with users spanning all age groups, from children to adults, in both rural and urban areas.

1.1. Semantics

Semantics, in its essence, is the study of meaning in language. It delves into how meaning is conveyed through words, phrases, and other linguistic units. Just as sounds

and grammar have their specific roles in language, meaning also occupies a significant position within the structure of language. These components—sound, grammar, and meaning—are intrinsically linked. Initially, language consists of abstract sounds, which, through the process of structuring and organizing, become symbols that carry meaning. These symbols, when placed within a specific linguistic system, form connections that create the framework for how meaning is communicated in human communication. According to Aminuddin (2003), the interrelationship between these elements allows for the understanding of meaning in a language.

Tarigan (1985) offers a more detailed explanation of semantics by emphasizing its role in studying the relationship between signs (or symbols) and meaning. He describes semantics as the study of how symbols or signs convey meaning, how different meanings relate to one another, and the effects these meanings have on individuals and society at large. Tarigan's view highlights the dual nature of meaning in language, dividing it into two broad categories: linguistic meaning and social meaning. Linguistic meaning refers to the inherent meanings of words, phrases, and sentences within the context of language, while social meaning pertains to the role that language and its meanings play in shaping social interactions, behaviors, and perceptions. Linguistic meaning is further subdivided into lexical meaning, which refers to the direct meaning of words (such as the dictionary definition), and structural meaning, which involves how words function together in a sentence to form a larger meaning.

Kridalaksana (2008), on the other hand, offers a more structural perspective of semantics. He defines semantics as (1) a component of the language system that is concerned with the meaning of expressions and the structure of meaning within speech, and (2) a system of inquiry that explores meaning and interpretation within a language more broadly. In this sense, semantics not only examines how individual words convey meaning, but also how the structure of language—the arrangement of words, sentences, and larger discourse—affects the conveyance and interpretation of meaning. Kridalaksana's definition underscores the complexity of semantics, which is not limited to the study of isolated words but extends to the analysis of how meaning is shaped by linguistic structures at different levels, from the level of the word to that of the entire language system.

Thus, the study of semantics is essential for understanding how meaning is produced, transmitted, and interpreted in communication. It allows us to explore the dynamic relationship between language and meaning, and how this relationship influences both personal and societal contexts. The exploration of linguistic meaning, through lexical and structural analysis, and social meaning, through understanding its impact on social interactions, provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the ways in which language functions within various aspects of human life.

1.2. Figure of Speech

According to Keraf (2004), a figure of speech is a way of expressing thoughts through language in a distinctive manner that reflects the soul and personality of the writer or language user. Figures of speech arise through the choice of words (diction), sentence structure, and the rhetorical patterns used. This suggests that the use of figures of speech not only conveys a specific meaning but also reveals the speaker's or writer's emotional tone and individuality. Figures of speech, such as metaphors, similes, hyperbole, and personification, help to emphasize ideas, evoke emotions, and add richness to communication (Padillah et al., 2016). They are a means of conveying complex or abstract concepts in a more vivid and imaginative way, often engaging the reader or listener on a deeper level.

Meanwhile, Tarigan (2009) explains that a figure of speech is a rhetorical form, meaning the use of language to express ideas in ways that aim to convince or influence the reader or listener. Figures of speech, in this sense, are deliberate deviations from ordinary language to achieve specific effects, such as persuasion, emphasis, or emotional appeal. These devices, used effectively, can make the expression of ideas more impactful and memorable. Figures of speech such as metaphors and irony, for example, serve to highlight relationships between concepts or create a stronger connection with the audience, influencing their thoughts and responses (Marpaung et al., 2022). Figures of speech function as instruments for persuasion or belief, often enhancing the meaning and emotional appeal of literary works or speeches.

Figures of speech allow writers and speakers to express complex ideas more effectively and creatively, capturing the audience's attention and making communication more engaging (Yulianda & Sunra, 2022). By using figures of speech, writers or speakers can create layers of meaning and convey subtleties that might not be possible with literal language. This is especially important in literary works, where figures of speech help to create atmosphere, convey themes, and enrich character development (Nur & Miranti, 2018). In public speaking or political rhetoric, figures of speech are often used to persuade and move the audience, enhancing the emotional impact of the message. Thus, figures of speech are essential tools in communication, adding depth, clarity, and emotional resonance to language. They enhance the power of both written and spoken expression by enabling the speaker or writer to convey not just information, but also the underlying emotions and perspectives that make the communication more effective and persuasive.

Figure of speech functions to provide a certain nuance, beauty, or influence to the reader or listener. It helps to enhance the appeal of communication, strengthen the message, and evoke specific emotions in the audience. When used appropriately and in context, it results in more effective and engaging communication. In Indonesian, figure

of speech and its usage involve both aesthetic aspects and communicative functions. Generally, figure of speech is categorized into four types:

- 1) Comparative Figure of speech, which is used to compare two things explicitly or implicitly.
 - a) Simile which compares two things explicitly using connecting words like: like, as, similar to, and others. Example: Her face shines like the moon.
 - b) Metaphor, which compares two things implicitly without connecting words. Example: She is the star of her family.
 - c) Personification, which attributes human qualities to inanimate objects. Example: The evening wind whispered softly in my ear.
 - d) Hyperbole, which expresses something in an exaggerated manner. Example: Her crying shook the heavens and the earth.
- 2) Contradictory Figure of speech, which is used to convey opposing or contradictory ideas. Examples:
 - a) Antithesis, which pairs words with opposite meanings. Example: Life and death are in the hands of God.
 - b) Paradox, which expresses something that appears contradictory but actually contains a truth. Example: He feels lonely in the midst of the crowd.
 - c) Irony, which conveys something with the opposite meaning of what is actually meant. Example: Your exam score is great, only 30!
- 3) Emphasis Figure of speech, which is used to place emphasis on a particular idea.
 - a) Pleonasm, which uses unnecessary words. Example: He went down below.
 - b) Repetition, which repeats words to emphasize something. Example: I love her, I love her, I love her.
 - c) Climax, which arranges ideas or words from simple to complex. Example: From a small village, to a big city, to the capital.
 - d) Anticlimax, which arranges ideas or words from complex to simple. Example: The president, the governor, and the people must obey the law.
- 4) Satirical Figure of speech, which is used to express criticism in a subtle or direct manner.
 - a) Cynicism: direct and often harsh satire. Example: Your work is just sleeping all the time.
 - b) Sarcasm: sharp and very harsh satire. Example: You're amazing, your laziness is unmatched.
 - c) Satire: humorously delivered criticism. Example: This advanced country can't even be managed properly.

1.3. Social Media

According to Nasrullah (2015), social media is an internet-based platform that allows users to represent themselves, interact, collaborate, share, and communicate with others, forming virtual social connections. It encompasses three key social aspects: recognition (cognition), communication (communication), and cooperation (cooperation). Nasrullah (2015) categorizes social media into six main types. First, Social Networking Media, the most popular type, allows users to build social connections by forming friendship networks with both familiar individuals and new contacts, with platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn as examples (Houghton & Joinson, 2010). Second, Online Journals (Blogs), which enable users to upload their daily activities, share links, and engage in discussions (Faizi et al., 2013). Third, Simple Online Journals, such as microblogging platforms like Twitter (now X), where users can publish their opinions or activities. Fourth, Media Sharing, which allows users to share various types of media such as videos, images, and documents, with platforms like YouTube and Flickr. Fifth, Social Bookmarking, which helps users organize, store, manage, and search for specific online information. Lastly, Collaborative Content Media or Wiki, platforms where users collaboratively create content, similar to a dictionary or encyclopedia, offering definitions, historical context, and references.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method. According to Sugiyono (2020), qualitative research is a research method used to study objects in their natural conditions, where the researcher plays a key role as the instrument. The data in this study consists of the figure of speech of netizens through comments on social media platforms Facebook and X. The research instrument is the researcher themselves, who is responsible for collecting and analyzing the data. The data sources include primary data in the form of written language on social media and secondary data from reference books, journals, and the internet. Data collection techniques involve the observation technique and the selection of utterances, which are then classified using a data table. The data analysis technique uses orthographic matching and referential matching techniques.

3. Results and Discussion

After conducting research on the forms of hate speech on social media, the researcher found a number of data related to hate speech during the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential election. The data was then analyzed to obtain the desired research results, followed by a discussion of the data obtained.

Based on the data presentation, the figure of speech used by netizens on social media, particularly on Twitter and Facebook, during the 2024 presidential election, can

be classified into several types. The data reveals 30 types of figures of speech obtained from two social media platforms, X and Facebook, during the 2024 presidential election from January to April 2024. After the data classification stage, the next step was to analyze the data using a semantic study of figure of speech.

The percentage of the data can be seen in the diagram below. From the 100 data points analyzed, these contained various figure of speech, including metaphor, euphemism, sarcasm, irony, hyperbole, cynicism, repetition, simile, and personification. Based on the percentages and data on the use of figure of speech in netizens' comments on social media, sample data were selected to be discussed in detail through the X and Facebook platforms.

Table 1. Classification of data based on figure of speech

No	Social Media Posts	Data	Figure of Speech
1.	<u>X</u> @mpoklela7 (10/01/2024)	Skakmat kick Andy Rekam jejak dosa wan abud bin sengkuni yg dilakukan berulang". Dasar badut munafikun urat malunya udah pedot 🤡	Metaphor, Eufemism, dan Sarcasm
2	<u>X</u> @narkosun (12/01/2024)	Boleh ya kampanye terus di hari aktif. Apa sudah cuti selama masa kampanye? Dia ngomongin elit Jakarta ga jelas, lagi ngomongin diri sendiri? 😏😏😏 #AsalBukan Prabowo	Irony, Cynicism, and Rhetoric.
3	<u>Facebook</u> Soraya Perucca (29/04/2024)	ANIS MEMANG BODOOHH	Sarcasm

Based on the data classification presentation through the X and Facebook platforms above, it can be seen that the sentences in the first table use figure of speeches consisting of three forms: first, metaphor, with the use of the word "badut" (clown) to describe someone who is considered unserious or pretends. The word "badut" is used as a metaphor to depict someone who is seen as dishonest or embarrassing. Second, euphemism, found in the phrase "urat malunya udah pedot" literally "the vein of their shame is torn", which describes someone who has lost all sense of shame. Third, sarcasm, with the use of the phrase "Dasar badut munafikun" literally "What a hypocritical clown", which is a clear example of sarcasm, as it aims to insult and belittle someone in a harsh manner.



Figure 1. Quotes of netizen comments that use figures of speech

A different example of comments from netizens, using figure of speeches, was found by the researcher on the social media platform X, consisting of 3 forms of figure of speech: Irony, Cynicism, and Rhetoric. The irony style is found in the sentence “Boleh ya kampanye terus di hari aktif. Apa sudah cuti selama masa kampanye?” because, in reality, the netizen is mocking that campaigns should not be conducted during workdays or that one should take leave during the campaign period. The cynicism style is found in the sentence “Dia ngomongin elit Jakarta ga jelas, lagi ngomongin diri sendiri?” showing cynicism by mocking that the person in question is actually talking about themselves while criticizing the Jakarta elites. The rhetorical figure of speech is present in the entire sentence, which consists of a rhetorical question that does not require an answer, intended to create a sense of irony directed at the person.

In table number three, there is a form of comment using the figure of speech found by the researcher on the social media platform Facebook, which is in the form of sarcasm. This is clearly evident in the sentence “ANIS MEMANG BODOHH”; in this sentence, the account owner uses harsh words and mocks to convey a specific message. In this context, the word “Bodoh” is used as a form of mockery towards Anies Baswedan. The researcher took three data samples for further analysis. The three data samples, which were taken from the social media platforms X and Facebook, are representative of the more dominant data.

Table 2. Classification of netizens' speech forms based on figure of speech

No	Social Media Posts	Data	Figure of Speech
1	X @wullung2003 (9/01/2024)	Ganjel otak bokep kaga bisa liat prestasi militer kita di dunia. Klw saya terpilih saya akan bangun sistim pertahanan rudal Patriot atau S400.	Metaphor, Hyperbole, Paronomasia, and Sarcasm.
2	X @Chavesz08 (9/01/2024)	Ganjel kebanyakan nonton <i>film</i> bokep jadi isi otak sisa 5%. 95% nya Cuma <i>film</i> bokep doank isi nya VIRALKANN N!!! Woiiii @aniesbaswedan!! Utang 12 M dr tahun 2015 woooliiii..!! Dan satu persatu Allah buka aib si sengkuni omon2... Gaaassss..!!!!	Irony, Metaphor, Exclamation, and Repetition.
3	Facebook Maria Adriana Amalin (27 /04/2024)	Jangan lupa bawa camilan yg banyaaakkk...!! Lg dikumpulin berkas bukti2nya.. Raisa Tjokrodinata @RaisaTjokrodinats Anis iblis pengikutnya dongok2	Sarcasm and Euphemism.

Based on the data presentation above, the sentence in the first table represents a form of speech using figures of speech found by the researcher on the X social media platform, consisting of four types of figures of speech: metaphor, which is found in the sentence “Ganjel otak bokep kaga bisa lia prestasi militer kita di dunia.” In this sentence, “Ganjel otak bokep” is a metaphor describing how someone’s mind is blocked or disturbed by pornography content, preventing them from recognizing military achievements. Then, the use of hyperbole in the sentence “Ganjel kebanyakan nonton film bokep jadi isi otak sisa 5%, 95% nya cuma film bokep doank isi nya,” where the statement that 95% of the brain is only filled with films is an example of hyperbole, exaggerating the reality for dramatic effect. Next, the use of paronomasia in the word “ganjel,” which is a play on the word “Ganjar.” Lastly, there is the use of sarcasm, as there is a sarcastic tone throughout the sentence, implying that someone who watches too many pornographic films cannot appreciate military achievements and has an unproductive mind. These figures of speech are used to deliver sharp and dramatic criticism, as well as to emphasize and express the researcher’s disapproval of certain behaviors.

In Table 2 above, there are forms of speech from netizens using figures of speech through the X social media platform, including irony, metaphor, exclamation, and repetition. The figure of speech irony is found in the sentence “jangan lupa bawa cemilan yang banyakkk..!!” (don’t forget to bring lots of snacks..!!). This sentence may literally suggest bringing snacks, but in this context, it could be a sarcastic remark or mockery

related to a serious situation. The sentence aims to convey something with a meaning opposite to reality or deliver a subtle critique.

Next, the use of the metaphor in the sentence “Allah buka aib si sengkuni omon2...” The phrase “si sengkuni omon2” is a metaphor used to refer to someone perceived as evil or treacherous. Then, the figure of speech exclamation, which involves the use of exclamatory words for emphasis, is clearly seen in several sentences: “VIRALKAN!!!”, “Woiiii @aniesbaswedan!!!”, “woooooiii...!! Dan satu persatu Allah buka aib si sengkuni omon2... Gaaassss..!!!!”, and “Jangan lupa bawa camilan yg banyaaakkk..!!”.

Finally, the use of the figure of speech repetition can be found in the sentences “woooooiii...!”, “banyaaakk..!!”, and “Gaaassss..!!!!”. The repetition of letters serves to emphasize and add a dramatic effect. All of these figures of speech are used to express strong emotions, capture the reader’s attention, and emphasize the feelings or opinions being conveyed. Regarding the use of sarcasm in netizens’ speech on the Facebook platform, the figure of speech sarcasm is found in the sentence “Anies iblis pengikutnya dongok2”. This sentence uses sarcasm as a sharp, mocking statement aimed at criticizing someone.

Table 3. Classification of netizens’ speech forms based on figure of speech

NO	Social Media Post	Data	Figure of Speech
1.	X @gerakgerak24 (7/01/2024)	Paslon 02 dan rezim Jokowi makin kalap culas dan panik. Kl kalah, mereka semua masuk penjara!! #Kecurangan Pemilu #Benamkan Prabowo Gibran #Asal Bukan Prabowo# Asal Bukan 02 #Pilpres 2024	Hiperbola, Metafora
2	X @m_nurfatoni (9/01/2024)	Capres berkata goblok seperti ini tak pantas dipilih #Goblok	Ironi
3	Facebook @Pesan Kopi Bang (29/04/2024)	Anis jgn sampe di kasih kursi 🤔🤔	Sinisme

Based on the data presented above, the sentences in the first table exemplify speech employing language styles identified by researchers on the X social media platform. These styles consist of three forms, including hyperbole, as seen in the phrase “makin kalap dan culas” (increasingly reckless and deceitful), which uses exaggerated language to depict an extremely dramatic situation. Additionally, metaphor is employed in the expression “Jokowi’s Regime,” which represents President Jokowi’s government as a unified entity.



Figure 2. Hate speech on Twitter or X

In Table 2, the speech of netizens found by the researcher on the X social media platform uses the figure of speech irony. This use of irony is evident in the sentence “goblok seperti ini tak pantas di pilih” (someone this stupid does not deserve to be chosen). Essentially, this sentence is a statement with the opposite meaning of what is literally being said. The word “goblok” (stupid) is a strong insult, indicating that the person being called “goblok” is deemed entirely unworthy of being selected. The use of pleonasm is also apparent here, though not overly clear in this sentence, the repetition of the word “goblok,” even within a hashtag, can be seen as an excessive emphasis. This sentence is an intentional insult meant to provoke an emotional reaction or anger from a specific group.

The use of cynicism is also found by the researcher on the Facebook social media platform. The expression “Anis jgn sampe di kasih kursi 😂😂” (Anis, don’t let him be given a seat 😂😂) carries a cynical tone. The use of emojis here strengthens the cynical or mocking attitude toward Anis, expressing a desire for Anis not to be given a certain position or power. Cynicism is a figure of speech used to express mockery, disbelief, or a skeptical attitude in a sarcastic and ironic manner.

3.1. Hate Speech on Social Media: Public Misunderstanding and the Protection of Anonymity

In current digital era, social media has become a primary platform for sharing information, communicating, and expressing opinions. However, alongside the increasing popularity of social media, there is also a serious challenge that needs to be addressed: the emergence of hate speech. Hate speech refers to expressions or statements that demean, discriminate against, or incite hatred toward individuals or groups based on specific characteristics such as race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation (Hietanen & Eddebo, 2022). The rise of hate speech on social media not only impacts the victims directly but also creates a hostile and intolerant online environment. This phenomenon can be understood through two main factors: public misunderstanding of social media use and the protection provided by anonymity.

3.2. Public Misunderstanding of Social Media Use

One of the main reasons why hate speech emerges on social media is the general public's lack of understanding of how to use these platforms responsibly. Many social media users are not fully aware of the impact of the words or posts they share. Several factors contribute to this misunderstanding, including a lack of awareness about online communication ethics, a lack of digital literacy, and misconceptions about the boundaries of freedom of expression in the online world (Han Luo & Cui, 2021).

In the real world, people tend to be more careful with their words, especially when speaking to strangers or in formal situations. However, on social media, those boundaries are often blurred. Users feel that what they say online will not have direct consequences on their everyday lives, which leads them to feel freer in expressing their thoughts and opinions without considering the potential social impact (Muhammed T & Mathew, 2022). Many social media users, particularly younger ones, often post or comment without understanding that their remarks can offend others, harm specific groups, or even damage someone's reputation.

Moreover, many social media users do not distinguish between constructive criticism and hate speech. They often view freedom of speech as an absolute right to voice their opinions without limits. However, freedom of speech does not mean the freedom to attack or belittle others. A shallow understanding of this concept leads many individuals to feel entitled to spread harmful content, either directly or indirectly.

Another key issue is the lack of understanding about the long-term effects of hate speech. Many people assume that their posts or comments on social media will only be seen by their friends or followers. However, as social media algorithms promote controversial content, hate speech can quickly spread to a much larger audience, even involving parties who weren't initially part of the discussion. This spread of harmful information can further polarize society and increase tensions between different groups.

3.3. The Protection of Anonymity on Social Media

Another aspect that enables the spread of hate speech on social media is anonymity. On many social media platforms, users can create profiles or accounts without using their real identities. This provides individuals with a sense of security, allowing them to express their opinions or emotions without the fear of being recognized or held accountable for what they say.

Anonymity offers users a great deal of freedom to express themselves without worrying about immediate social consequences. On the one hand, this freedom allows individuals to openly discuss sensitive or controversial topics (Muhammed T & Mathew, 2022). On the other hand, it is often misused to spread hatred, defamation, and false information. Without the fear of direct consequences, individuals feel freer to insult, threaten, or spread hatred toward others.

Anonymity also makes it easier for trolls or fake accounts to disseminate hate speech without facing any repercussions. Because they can use pseudonyms or unverifiable accounts, they believe their identity will remain hidden, even if they send hateful or discriminatory messages. In many cases, these anonymous accounts enable people to feel they have no moral or ethical limitations when communicating. They feel free to launch verbal attacks without fear of punishment or legal consequences.

Additionally, many individuals use fake identities to hide behind the screen, shielding their true identities to avoid accountability. In such cases, anonymous accounts act as a protective barrier, giving individuals a sense of security to vent their hatred without fear of wider consequences. This phenomenon is further exacerbated by the fact that social media algorithms often amplify provocative or controversial content, meaning that posts filled with hate or attacks often receive more attention and spread faster.

3.4. The Impact of Hate Speech on Society

The impact of hate speech is not limited to the individuals who are the direct targets, but also affects society as a whole. The spread of hate speech can worsen social polarization, create divisions within communities, and increase tensions between different groups. This can lead to physical violence, more overt discrimination, and even social or political fragmentation.

Furthermore, widespread hate speech on social media can have severe psychological effects on the victims. Those who are the targets of insults or hatred often feel isolated, fearful, or anxious. Victims of hate speech may also feel socially marginalized or humiliated, which can impact their mental health (Hietanen & Eddebo,

2022). In extreme cases, victims may develop deep psychological trauma due to continuous verbal attacks.

For society as a whole, the widespread dissemination of hate speech can damage the climate of tolerance and mutual understanding. When hate speech is allowed to proliferate without sufficient oversight, it can create an environment that is unwelcoming to vulnerable groups, thereby hindering efforts to build an inclusive and peaceful society.

3.5. Solutions and Efforts to Reduce Hate Speech

To reduce the prevalence of hate speech on social media, several solutions can be implemented. One important approach is to increase digital literacy among social media users. The public needs to be better educated about the ethics of online communication and the impact of the words they post or share (Chetty & Alathur, 2018). Education on how to identify and avoid hate speech should be integrated into school curricula so that younger generations can become more responsible in using digital platforms.

In addition, social media platforms must take stronger action to combat hate speech. This includes tightening content moderation policies and using smarter algorithms to detect and remove harmful content. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have started improving their efforts to moderate content, but much more needs to be done to ensure that the digital space remains safe for all users. On the other hand, social media users must also take more responsibility for what they upload and share. Social media should not be a place to attack or belittle others but rather a platform for sharing valuable information and fostering constructive discussions. Using social media wisely and empathetically will help create a healthier digital space.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research findings, the figure of speech used in statements and comments on social media during the 2024 Presidential Election are a vibrant tapestry of expressive devices, reflecting the dynamic nature of political communication in the digital realm. Out of 100 hate speech statements analyzed, the researcher uncovered 30 different figurative figures of speeches woven into the discourse. The most prominent style was sarcasm, which made its appearance 50 times, serving as the sharp-edged sword through which netizens cut through the noise of political debate, using mockery and biting criticism to express their disapproval. Next came hyperbole, with 30 instances, stretching the truth to its limits, blowing it up like a balloon in order to inject emotional weight and intensity into the conversation. Irony appeared 20 times, often as a subtle whisper, where the words spoken were like a hidden dagger, delivering a message opposite to their surface meaning, wrapped in a layer of contradiction. Finally, rhetorical figures were found 10 times, acting as powerful amplifiers of emotion, stirring the

audience without expecting a direct reply, like a stirring orator whose words echo in the mind long after they have been spoken.

From these findings, it can be concluded that the use of figurative language in social media statements is a reflection of the complex emotional landscape, ranging from fiery anger and sharp critiques to strategic maneuvers aimed at shaping public opinion. The use of sarcastic and ironic language is particularly prevalent, as these figures of speech have the power to captivate the audience, cutting through the noise and leaving a lasting impact. This study reveals that social media is not just a platform for communication but a battleground for political opinion, where figures of speech are wielded as strategic tools to express views, construct narratives, and shape the perception of presidential candidates and the issues at hand.

References

1. Journals

- Chetty, N., & Alathur, S. (2018). Hate Speech Review in The Context of Online Social Networks. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 40, 108–118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2018.05.003>
- Faizi, R., Afia, A. El, & Chiheb, R. (2013). Exploring the Potential Benefits of Using Social Media in Education. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 3(4), 50–53. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijep.v3i4.2836>
- Han Luo, M. C., & Cui, Y. (2021). Spread of Misinformation in Social Networks: Analysis Based on Weibo Tweets. *Security and Communication Networks*, 1, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2021/7999760>
- Hietanen, M., & Eddebo, J. (2022). Towards a Definition of Hate Speech—With a Focus on Online Contexts. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 47(4), 440–458. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01968599221124>
- Houghton, D. J., & Joinson, A. N. (2010). Privacy, Social Network Sites, and Social Relations. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 28(1), 79–94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15228831003770775>
- Marpaung, N., Madina, M., & Sipahutar, A. F. Y. (2022). Figurative Language Used in The Greatest Showman Soundtrack Lyrics. *Jurnal Basataka*, 5(2), 430–438. <https://doi.org/10.36277/basataka.v5i2.199>
- Muhammed T, S., & Mathew, S. K. (2022). The Disaster of Misinformation: A Review of Research in Social Media. *International Journal of Data Science and Analytics*, 13, 271–285. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41060-022-00311-6>
- Padillah, E. N., Firmawan, H., & Purwaningsih, E. (2016). Simile, Hyperbole,

Personification and Metaphor Used in Gayle Forman's *If I Stay*. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 4(1), 69–78.

<https://ejournal.gunadarma.ac.id/index.php/sastra/article/view/1567>

Yulianda, N., & Sunra, L. (2022). An Analysis of Figurative Languages Used in William Shakespeare's Sonnets. *Eliterate: Journal of English Linguistics and Literature Studies*, 1(3), 21–32. <https://ojs.unm.ac.id/Eliterate/article/view/36335>

2. Proceedings

Nur, M. R. O., & Miranti, R. R. (2018). The Analysis of Figurative Language Used in "Still I Rise" Poem by Maya Angelou. *Proceeding ISETH: International Summit on Science, Technology, and Humanity*, 19–29.

<https://proceedings.ums.ac.id/index.php/iseth/article/view/2277>

3. Books

Aminuddin, A. (2003). *Semantik: Pengantar Studi Tentang Makna* (3rd ed.). Sinar Baru Algesindo.

Keraf, G. (2004). *Diksi dan Gaya Bahasa*. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Kridalaksana, H. (2008). *Kamus Linguistik* (4th ed.). PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Nasrullah, R. (2015). *Media Sosial: Perspektif Komunikasi, Budaya dan Sosioteknologi*. Simbiosis Rekatama Media.

Sugiyono, S. (2020). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D* (2nd ed.). Alfabeta.

Tarigan, H. G. (1985). *Pengajaran semantik*. Angkasa.

Tarigan, H. G. (2009). *Pengajaran Gaya Bahasa*. Angkasa.