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Analysis of Euphemism on Obama's Speech about The State of American Democracy

Meisyani Gustri Fadila[*]
English Language and Literature Department, Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang

Corresponding author's email: meisyanigustrifadila00@gmail.com

Abstract
A euphemism is a word that can be used to transform an offensive or harsh phrase that may be mentioned or uttered in a political context into a pleasant expression that can be more acceptable to anyone who hears it, or in other words, a phrase that the listener can also accept. Then, this research aimed to analyze the types of euphemism in political context on Obama's speech about "the state of American democracy". Since the data were in the form of text, the research was of the descriptive variety. Based on Obama's address, the data would be descriptively examined. For this study, which sought to describe several euphemisms used in Obama's address about American democracy, a descriptive methodology was applicable. The data was then gathered by the researcher using Obama's speech's transcript. The data showed that from 9 types of euphemism, metaphor was the most found in the speech.

Keywords: euphemism; political context; Obama's speech

INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of human communication. People use a proper language to share information. In political situation, people use a rule of language to deliver political message to public community. The rule that government uses is euphemism. Euphemism is the avoidance of terms that readers or listeners could find offensive, indecent, or otherwise upsetting, and the subjects being euphemized are frequently taboo. Those who define a euphemism as "a word or phrase that replaces a taboo word or serves to avoid frightening or unpleasant subjects" (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993: 304). A euphemism, according to The Oxford Companion to the English Language (1992), is a word or phrase used to politely replace another that is deemed to be too filthy, too painful, or offensive to religious sensibilities. In addition, according to Rawson (1981:3), a euphemism is "described as mild agreeable or roundabout word used in place of coarse, painful, or offensive one.

Furthermore, Neaman and Silver (1983: 5) assert that euphemisms are a technique used to cover up inappropriate or unpleasant language by employing more polite alternatives. In accordance to the definition given above, the researcher has come to the conclusion that a euphemism is a word that can be used to transform an offensive or harsh phrase that may be mentioned or uttered in a political context into a pleasant expression that can be more acceptable to anyone who hears it, or in other words, a phrase that the listener can also accept. Then, euphemism types were categorized into thirteen categories by Allan & Buridge (1991), which are: metaphor, hyperbole, circumlocution, abbreviation, acronym, omission, clipping, remodeling, reduplication, general-for-specific (synecdoche), metonymy, and idiom. Because the focus of this study is about politic aspects, the researcher intends to analyse political issue which is The State of American Democracy. This issue is also talked by Obama at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on Friday, September 7, 2018. As the result, the researcher decide to analyse it based on the categories of euphemism from Allan and Buridge's theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Euphemism

According to Allan and Burridge (2012), an euphemism is a group of words or phrases used to describe something unpleasant in a different way. This lopsided term might be untouchable, fearsome, disagreeable, or for some other explanation have an excess of negative significance to execute the open goal of the speaker on a given event joyfully. Euphemisms are used to avoid embarrassment for the speaker, the listener, and/or a third party. With the use of code word, one can keep away from the alarming, disappointing, or
other language that has unfortunate underlying meanings or articulations.

Someone thinks about using polite language when communicating so that his speech does not cause conflict. According to Setiawaty & Wahyudi (2018), Sutarman (2013) defines euphemisms as expressions in the form of words or phrases that are regarded as more subtle, polite, and safe to replace other expressions that are regarded as impolite or believed to bring harm. As a result, euphemisms have the potential to cover up a negative reality. Fromkin (1997) defines euphemisms as words or phrases used to avoid unpleasant topics. Sex, body parts, the natural function of the human body, and religion are discussed in the phrase or sentence. Due to their sensitive nature, the expressions used in place of these phrases cover unpleasant or taboo responses. In the mean time, as per Wardhaugh (1986), doublespeaks are words that assist somebody with killing a discussion about
terrible things to discuss, like demise, joblessness, and wrongdoing (Supit,et. al., 2019).

Euphemisms transform negative expressions into positive ones to benefit the audience. Be that as it may, this procedure can likewise bring on some issues and turn into a disagreeable articulation. There are other meanings that the reader or listener may not understand that you should not use in order to be accepted by the listener. Everyone who needs clarity should avoid using euphemistic language at all costs

(Peters, 2017). Euphemisms replace negative expressions as if they had no hidden meaning, even though listeners may interpret these expressions as having a positive meaning.

Euphemism in Politics

How a leader interacts with his community reflects his desire to effectively lead the community and uphold his reputation. Language plays a variety of roles in communication and serves a variety of purposes. Along these lines, speakers candeliver a discourse to acquire compassion from audience members. By softening sentences, politicians use euphemisms to accomplish their objectives. It is used by bureaucrats and political elites to convey power interests. In practice, political leaders attempt to conceal the truth and divert public attention. Utilizing such articulations, they look to control individuals' perspective on the world and the transmission of data (Zhao and Dong, 2010).

Types of Euphemism

Euphemism types were categorized into nine categories by Allan & Buridge (1991), which are: metaphor, hyperbole, circumlocution, abbreviation, acronym, omission, clipping, remodeling, and general-for-specific (synecdoche).

1. Metaphor

The use of metaphor to clearly describe something by comparing it to other things that share the same characteristics. For instance, —We will keep up this drumbeat of those assignments against degenerate very rich people in the days ahead. The word drumbeat has the significance of serious approvals given to the culprits.

2. Hyperbole

A form of exaggerated language is hyperbole. Similar to the phrase "And our ally, Israel, can defend itself with overwhelming force, as well as the unshakable support of the United States of America," the underlined word indicates the strength of an invincible nation.

3. Circumlocution

The use of multiple words that are longer and indirect is known as circumlocution. For instance, "And our economy was faltering in the three months before I took office, creating just 50,000 jobs a month." We are presently averaging 700,000 new occupations a month in the beyond 90 days. In this sentence, the speaker by implication states his progress in giving position to regular people.

4. Abbreviation

This doublespeak is a word that is changed over into a few letters. Take, for instance, the line "Mr. President, you did not mention SWIFT in your announced sanctions.""where "Mr" is a contraction of the word "Sir".

5. Acronym

The abbreviation is a term that is a blend of letters, syllables, or other pieces composed or expressed into single word. For instance —This will empower NATO's high-preparation powers to send and — when and where they're expected to secure our NATO Partners on the eastern limits of Europe. The North Atlantic Treaty Organizationis spelled NATO.

6. Omission

Some expressions, like the letters in a word, are not included in this format. This tactic works for someone with the same upbringing. For instance, the speaker writes F, and the reader is aware that "fuck" is the meaning of the letter.

7. Clipping

A word that has been cut becomes shorter than its original form. For instance "planes" is

a cut-out of airplanes.

8. Remodeling

This type changes the way words, phrases, or other expressions are used, and it can happen in any context. Like "Bitch" supplanted "Beach" to camouflage the unforgiving words.

9. General-to-specific

General words that become explicit words. One more meaning of a general word that has a particular meaning(only part of it) For instance, Indonesia won 31 gold decorations at the 2018 Ocean Games. Several Indonesian athletes who won gold medals at the 2018 Asian Games are referred to as "Indonesia."

METHOD

Type of this research was descriptive since the data were in the form of text. The data would be analysed descriptively based on Obama's speech. Descriptive method was appropriate for this research which was aimed at describing types of euphemism on Obama's speech about American democracy. According to Cresswell (2013), the descriptive research tries to describe, explain, and interpret conditions of present. The purpose of the descriptive research is to examine a phenomenon that occurs at a specific place and time. Then, the researcher collected the data from the Obama's speech   transcript
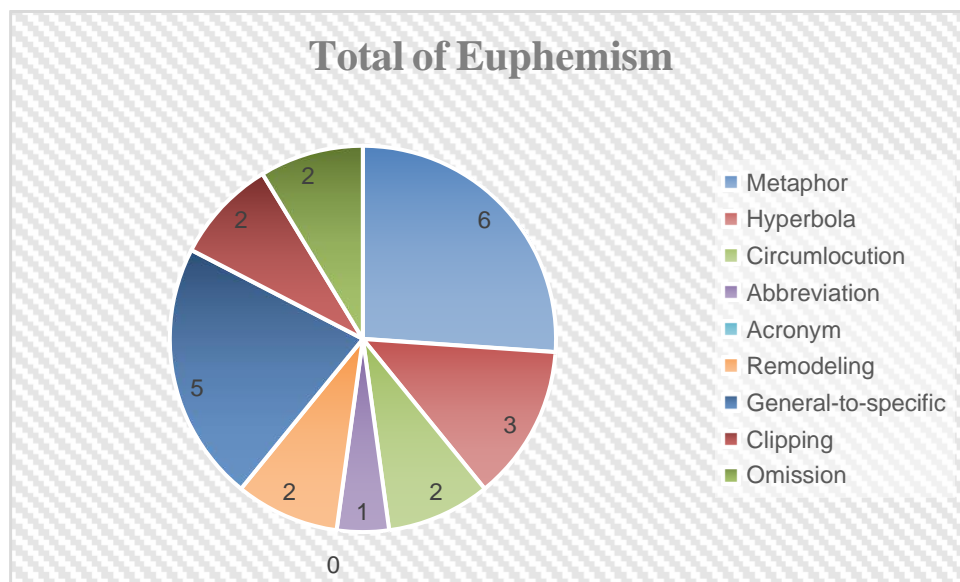
FINDINGS

Based on the data of Obama's speech, the researcher found that most of types of euphemism appeared on it was metaphor. The detail of the data finding could be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Results of the study.

Types of Euphemism	Total of Euphemism
Metaphor	6
Hyperbola	3
Circumlocution	2
Abbreviation	1
Acronym	0
Remodeling	2
General-to-specific	5
Clipping	2
Omission	2

In the phrase "President Trump is a *symptom, not the cause* of division in America today, and emphasized that only voters can change the present", the using metaphor word "symptom". He wanted to say that Presidents Trumpt was the one who changed the American democracy after the election happened. Then, another phrase also found the metaphor word, which is "We have been through *much darker times than these*, and somehow each generation of Americans carried us through to the other side". Dark time in this phrase means that American has through many situation in democracy. They even felt the hard times in their life such as relationship with friends, family, jobless and uncomfortable environment. These situations were referred by Obama's speech about the darker times than these. Then, it was proved that the most types of euphemism in Obama's speech is metaphor and the comparison for all types of euphemism could be seen in the chart below.

Total of Euphemism

DISCUSSION

The data showed that metaphor was the most type of euphemism arising in Obama's speech with 6 sentences. This data came up with the true proving by theory of Allan and Burridge (1991) that says euphemism is a term used to replace inappropriate

expressions in order to avoid embarrassment to the person being spoken to or a third party (the listener). Then, in a political situation, euphemisms serve a number of purposes, including avoiding negative issues, renaming things, discussing unpleasant topics, neutralizing unpleasantness, and labeling unpleasant jobs.

Additionally, the point use of metaphors in political section is to help the listeners understand about crucial topic in the government also political sector. This point is supported by the fact that this kind of euphemism can be used to avoid awkward situations when interacting with others. The phenomenon of euphemism will manifest itself on its own when it is associated with offensive communication or rejection. Euphemism is a way of speaking in public or in person to make the listener feel more at ease, to avoid giving the impression of harsh or offensive speech, to improve the conversation, and to avoid making unfavorable remarks.

As the result of analysis, the aim of this study had proved by the data that euphemism also effected on political area with some types of euphemism. However, the total euphemism in public speaking about political topic such as president's speech in this occasion was Obama proved that metaphors was the most one. Then, this type would be recommend for the leader in the government to use it for telling or informingthe crucial news about the country and it should also be understandable.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to investigate the types of euphemism based on Allan and Bridge' theory that appeared in Obama's Speech on American Democracy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on Friday, September 7, 2018. The data showed that from 9 types of euphemism, metaphor was the most found in the speech.

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