PHATIC PARTICLES IN THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE DEBATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study aims to describe the phatic particles and their functions found in the debate of the presidential and vice-presidential candidates of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024. This type of research is descriptive qualitative. The data collection method used is the listening method with the basic technique of tapping, then the advanced technique is Simak Bebas Libat Cakap. After that, the data was analyzed using the distribution method with the basic technique of Sharing Direct Elements. From the analysis that has been done, ten types of phatic particles were found used in the debate of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidates of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024. Then, the function of the phatic particles found in the debate of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidates of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024 is as a substitute for words only, a substitute for words too, emphasizing or highlighting a part,as a transition in conversation or to show emphasis on new information, substitutes for the words not and isn't, emphasizes proof, emphasizes imperative sentences, confirms or reinforces a statement, strengthen the designation, emphasizing reasons, emphasizing denial, emphasizing surprise, replacing the question words why or why, emphasizing warnings, indicating something specifically, as meaning indeed or actually, softening orders, and forcing by persuading.

1. INTRODUCTION

The term phatic comes from the Greek word phatos, meaning 'to speak' (Sutami, 2005). Malinowski (1923) introduced the term phatic communion to describe a form of communication not intended to convey information, but rather to maintain social relationships between speakers. In Indonesian linguistics, Kridalaksana (2008) defines the phatic function as the function of language used to initiate, maintain, and strengthen communication between speakers and interlocutors. Thus, phatic elements can be understood as linguistic units that have a social function in communication interactions.

Phatic particles are a subcategory of functional verbs that do not syntactically alter the sentence structure but serve to indicate the speaker's attitude and social relationship to the interlocutor. These elements frequently appear in spoken language and are often used spontaneously to indicate emotional or interpersonal involvement. The flexibility of phatic particles' positions reflects their role and form in fostering fluent communication.

In the context of the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential debates of the Republic of Indonesia, phatic particles play a crucial role in maintaining dialogue continuity, strengthening assertions, and refining or sharpening the speaker's intent. For example, in the utterance "Who intervened? Right?" uttered by one of the candidates, the particle kan functions as both an affirmation and a means of establishing understanding. This phenomenon demonstrates that phatic particles not only maintain interaction but also serve as stylistic markers that reflect the candidate's character and communication strategy.

Several previous researchers have studied the phatic category. Sutami (2005) examined phatic particles in Mandarin using the technique of elision and replacement to distinguish phatic categories from interjections and interrogatives. Meanwhile, Hilmiati (2012) examined phatic forms in Sasak and found a number of phatic words, combinations, and compounds in the interactions of Sasak speakers. Both studies focused on describing phatic forms and functions in everyday linguistic contexts. This study differs in that it examines the same form, namely phatic particles, but in the context of formal and public political debates. Thus, this study fills a gap in previous research by showing how phatic particles are used in communication situations that have argumentative and persuasive purposes.

This research is limited to phatic particles because this element shows a high frequency of occurrence and flexibility in supporting smooth communication. Phatic particles also play a significant role in shaping the impression and effectiveness of speech, especially in formal contexts such as the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential debate. Therefore, focusing on phatic particles allows this research to understand the role of phatic particles in marking the structure, social function, and variations in their use in the candidates' speech.

Based on the description, this study aims to describe the form, position, and function of phatic particles used in the debate of the Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidates of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with three stages, namely (1) the data provision stage using the free listening and speaking method, (2) the data analysis stage using the distribution method with the lesap, balik, and ganti techniques, and (3) the stage of presenting the results of the data analysis using the informal presentation method. This approach is expected to be able to describe the syntactic behavior of phatic particles systematically and explain their social function in the context of Indonesian political debate communication.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The phatic category in this study is examined from a syntactic perspective. Several previous studies have examined the phatic category in various linguistic contexts, including everyday social interactions, media, and literary works. A literature review was conducted to map the trends, contributions, and limitations of previous research in order to identify the novelty of mthis research.

A Study of Phatis in Media and Public Communication

Dhika JR's (2023) research, "Particles as Phatic Discourse Markers in the @Kasisolusi Podcast," highlights the use of phatic particles as markers of interpersonal closeness in the context of casual communication on digital media. Using qualitative descriptive methods and free listening techniques, he found 38 discourse markers in the form of particles. This study demonstrates the function of phatic as a reinforcement of social relations in the non-formal realm. However, the

context of podcasts tends to be spontaneous and informal, in contrast to more structured and strategic political debates. Therefore, this research fills a new space by examining phatic particles in formal and institutional public communication.

Rosalina's (2019) research also examined the phatic category in interviews broadcast on Radio Ardan in Bandung using a syntactic approach. She found fourteen phatic forms, such as deh, dong, kan, lah, sih, and ya, which function in declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences. Although the results illustrate the diversity of phatic forms in broadcast interactions, this study does not explain the data analysis techniques in detail. This differentiates it from the current study, which combines the techniques of simulating, distributing, and informal presenting to demonstrate the syntactic behavior of phatic particles in formal political discourse.

Sutrisno (2019), in his study "Phatic Communication in the Talk Show Sawako No Asa," highlighted the function of phatic as a marker of interpersonal relationships and management of speaking turns in television talk shows. His research identified five main functions of phatic, such as maintaining communication, attracting attention, and ending speech. While relevant to the public context, the study did not explicitly explain data collection and analysis techniques, making its approach more descriptive in nature.

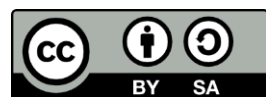## Study of Phatic in Regional and Foreign Languages

Gunawan (2020) examined the "Forms and Functions of Phatic Categories in Oral Communication in the Sungai Rokan Dialect of Malay" and identified ten phatic functions related to maintaining social harmony, such as initiating, maintaining, advising, and affirming. Despite its comprehensive analysis, this study was limited to the context of non-institutional local community communication. This study, however, places phatic within the context of formal political discourse with a broad audience.

A similar study was conducted by Hilmiati (2012) on the Sasak language, which found six phatic words, two phatic compounds, and five phatic compounds. The focus of this study was more morphological, namely describing the phatic forms used by Sasak speakers. This research provides a conceptual basis for the author to examine phatic from the perspective of its function and syntactic behavior in formal speech contexts.

In the realm of foreign languages, Hasanah (2012) examined the le particle in Mandarin through television dramas. She found that the phatic particle functions to initiate, maintain, and end conversations. However, the research method used was not explained in detail, thus lacking the validity of her data analysis. Meanwhile, Sutami (2005) in "Phatic Particles in Mandarin" outlined the differences between interjections, interrogatives, and phatic particles using the "losap" and "ganti" (replace) technique. Sutami's approach strengthens the methodological foundation of this study, particularly in analyzing the authenticity and syntactic position of phatic.

Study of the Approach and Comparison of Phatic Functions

Kulsum (2012) in her article "Iya Deh or Iya Dong: Comparing the Phatic Particles Deh and Dong in Indonesian" examines the differences in form and function of these two particles. Her research shows morphological and syntactic differences between the particles deh and dong compared to the particles -lah, -kah, and -tah. The strength of this research is the systematic description of the function and morphological characteristics of the particles, but its scope is limited to only two particles. This study expands that scope by analyzing all types of phatic

particles that appeared in the discourse of the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate.

Pratiwi and Agustina (2019) examined the phatic category in Pidi Baiq's novel, Dilan 1990, using content analysis. They found four forms of phatic: particles, words, phrases, and phatic combinations. The literary context of the study demonstrated the function of phatic as a building block in the characters' speech styles and characters. However, this written context differs from the context of direct speech, such as political debates, which demand spontaneous and persuasive linguistic strategies.

From the description above, it can be concluded that most previous research focuses on the use of phatic particles in informal or everyday social contexts, whether in regional languages, media, or literary works. Studies that place phatic particles in the context of formal political communication are still very limited. However, in the context of the presidential and vice-presidential debate, phatic particles have the potential to play an important role in managing interpersonal relationships, demonstrating familiarity, and emphasizing the speaker's political position and stance before the public. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing the form and function of phatic particles in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential debate of the Republic of Indonesia through a syntactic approach with the distribution method.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative descriptive study. The object of this study is the phatic category. Meanwhile, the data for this study are the phatic categories uttered during the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidate debate. The locational source of this data is the General Elections Commission (KPU) YouTube channel that broadcast the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidate debate. The population of this study is all utterances in the 2024 Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidate debate containing the phatic category. The sample in this study is a portion of the utterances selected from the population using representativeness techniques.

According to Sudaryanto (2015:9), a method is a method that must be implemented or applied, while a technique is the way to implement or apply the method. Methods encompass a series of procedures designed to collect, analyze, and understand language data in the presidential and vice-presidential debates. The following explains the methods used in this study.

Data Provision Method

The data preparation stage is the basis for the data analysis stage (Mahsun, 2012:86). At this stage, the method used is the listening method. This method is carried out by listening to the use of spoken language during the presidential and vice-presidential debates of the Republic of Indonesia. In addition to free listening, advanced techniques such as recording, photography, note-taking, and typing are used in data collection. Researchers record speech using tools such as devices to capture the original context, while photography techniques document visual context such as facial expressions, gestures, or the physical environment that supports language analysis. Manual notes capture information that may not be recorded, such as spontaneous responses or additional details, to complement the existing data. After that, typing techniques are used to transcribe the recordings or notes into written text. The transcription process is carried out with the help of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which is able to convert audio recordings into text quickly

and efficiently. However, because AI-based transcription results are not always 100% accurate, researchers then perform manual corrections to ensure that all speech and context match the original data. Manual corrections aim to improve the accuracy of the transcription so that the data can be understood and interpreted correctly.

Data Analysis Stage

Bogdan & Biklen (in Moleong, 2012:248) argue that qualitative data analysis is an effort carried out by working with data, managing data, categorizing it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for and finding patterns, finding what is important and what is learned, and deciding what can be described to others. Nurkholifah et al (in Dhika JR, 2023:123) state that the distribution technique is an analysis that juxtaposes research data with linguistic theories that form the theoretical basis of the research. At this stage, the method used is the distribution method. In Sudaryanto (2015), the distribution method is a data analysis method whose determining tool is the language element itself. The basic technique of this method is Direct Element Sharing (BUL). The way this technique works is by dividing the lingual unit of data into several elements or parts. Through this technique, researchers can identify parts that fall into the phatic category in the communication activities of the Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidates of the Republic of Indonesia debate. The tool of the Direct Element Sharing (BUL) method is the researcher's lingual intuition.

Presentation Stage of Results

After analysis, the next stage is presenting the results of the data analysis. Thus, the findings of this research data are presented in a structured manner under one main subheading, namely the findings of phatic particles and their function in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Debate. When linked to existing theory, this presentation of the analysis results is in accordance with Sudaryanto's (2015:241) opinion, which is commonly referred to as the informal presentation method. The informal presentation method is a presentation method that presents data in the form of words.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data from the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential candidate debates, we found 10 types of phatic particles, namely *deh* (1 data), *dong* (4 data), *kan* (29 data), *kok* (18 data), *lah* (25 data), *loh* (14 data), *nah* (47 data), *pun* (56 data), *sih* (4 data), and *tuh* (10 data).The findings are discussed based on the highest to lowest frequency of use.

1) *Pun*

Phatic particles also *pun* 'even' were also found in 56 data and have three main functions, namely as a substitute for words *saja* 'only' (found as many as 28 data), as a substitute word also 'also' (found as many as 21 data), and as an emphasis to highlight a part (found as many as 7 data). The following data examples demonstrate the use of phatic pun.

1) D1/01.26.35   *Karena itu, langkah yang pertama adalah setiap kali ada pelanggaran dikerjakan oleh siapa **pun**, kapan **pun**, di mana **pun**, maka tegakkan aturan, tegakkan hukum, nomor satu.*

'Therefore, the first step is whenever a violation is committed by anyone, anytime, anywhere, then enforce the rules, enforce the law, number one.'

2) D1/01.14.58   *Waktunya Bapak merespon nanti setelah mendengarkan jawaban atau **pun** tanggapan dari paslon nomor urut 1.*
'It's time for you to respond after hearing the answer or response from candidate pair number 1.'

3) D1/02.11.56   *Masalah yang dianggap pelanggaran etika, sudah diambil tindakan dan keputusan, ya. Waktu itu oleh pihak yang diberi wewenang, kemudian sudah ada tindakan, dan tindakan **pun** itu masih diperdebatkan, karena yang bersangkutan masih memproses.*
'The problem that was considered a violation of ethics, has been taken action and decision, yes. At that time by the authorized party, then there was action, and the action is still being debated, because the person concerned is still processing.'

Phatic was also found the most (56 data) because of its dominant role in strengthening the assertion or adding important information in the sentence. This is in accordance with the explanation of Kridalaksana's theory (2008:118) which states that phatic particles also have a function to highlight the constituents that they follow. The phatic particle in example (1) functions as a substitute for words only. The phatic particle in example (2) functions as a substitute for words too. Meanwhile, the phatic particle in example (3) functions to highlight the action part.

2) *Nah*

Nah is the second phatic particle that is often used in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate. This phatic particle was found in 47 data.Its function isas a transition in conversation or to show emphasis on new information. The use of the particle well can be seen in the following data examples.

4) D1/01.15.32   ***Nah**, jadi caranya bagaimana?*
'Now, so how do you do it?'

5) D3/02.02.23   ***Nah**, pertanyaan yang ingin saya sampaikan kepada Bapak adalah apa hubungan antara standar etika seorang pemimpin negara dengan kemampuannya dalam menjaga pertahanan, keamanan, dan kedaulatan negara?*
'Now, the question I would like to ask you is what is the relationship between the ethical standards of a state leader and his ability to maintain the country's defense, security, and sovereignty?'

In the context of debate, the particle nah is very effective in attracting attention or directing the audience to important points in the conversation. This function is in line with Kridalaksana's theory (2008:118) which states that now serves as a transition marker to ask the interlocutor or audience to divert their attention to something else that will be conveyed.In examples (5) and (6), the phatic particle both functions as a transition or asks the person you are speaking to shift their attention to something else.

3) *Kan*

The phatic particle kan was found in 29 data. There are four functions of phatic in the 2024 RI Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate. The phatic particle which functions as a substitute for the word instead was found in 6 data. The phatic particle which functions as a substitute for the word has not been found in 1 data. The phatic particle which functions to emphasize proof was found in 21 data. An example of the use of the phatic particle can be seen in the following data.

　6) D3/02.07.41　　*Saya boleh berpendapat, **kan**?*
　　　　　　　　　　'I can have an opinion, right?'
　7) D2/02.20.23　　***Kan** kalau persen kaitannya dengan PDB.*
　　　　　　　　　　'Yes if the percentage is related to GDP.'
　8) D2/01.56.00　　*Saya **kan** Walikota Pak.*
　　　　　　　　　　'I'm the mayor, sir.'

The function of kan as phatic is in accordance with the opinion of Kridalaksana (2008:114) who stated that this particle, when it is at the beginning or end of a sentence, often has the meaning of an abbreviation of the word not or not. On the other hand, when it is in the middle of a sentence, this particle tends to be used to emphasize proof or provide rebuttal.In example number (6), it functions as a substitute for the word, right? In addition, in example (7) functions as a substitute for the word yet. In contrast to example (8), the function is to emphasize the proof.

4) *Lah*

The particle was found in 25 pieces of data in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and VicePresidential debate. Based on the analysis, there are three main functions of the phatic particle that were discovered, namelyemphasizing imperative sentences found as many as 6 data,confirm or reinforce a statement found as much as 1 data, and as pstrengthening the term found as many as 18 data**.**An example of the use of particles can be seen in the following data.

　9) D5/02.32.00　　*Berikan **lah** kepada para mahasiswa kita proporsi yang benar.*
　　　　　　　　　　'Give our students the correct proportions.'
　10) D4/01.37.55　　***Lah** kalau hutan negara ndak boleh ada penduduk di situ.*
　　　　　　　　　　'Well if it's a state forest, no people can live there.'
　11) D5/01.01.45　　*Maka, pada tahap berikutnya, baru **lah** kemudian kita memberikan Fasilitas Kesehatan sampai ke desa-desa, seperti tadi saya sampaikan satu desa satu faskes satu Nakes.*
　　　　　　　　　　'So, in the next stage, we will provide health facilities to the villages, as I said earlier, one village, one health facility, one health worker.'

In debates, phatic particles are predominantly used as reinforcers. Mention or give an emphasis effect to words or phrases that are considered important. Example number (9) shows the function of the phatic particle -lah to emphasize imperative sentences. This is in line with Kridalaksana's theory (2008:117), which states that the particle is used to strengthen imperative sentences to make them more assertive and persuasive. The phatic particle in example number (10) functions to emphasize the speaker's argument or response. Lah puts

pressure on the speaker's statement so that it sounds more convincing and strong. Meanwhile, the phatic in example number (11) functions as a strengthening mention.

5) *Kok*

The kok particle was found in 18 data in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate. Based on the analysis, there are four main functions of the phatic particle.The kok particle which functions to emphasize the reason was found in 4 data. The kok particle which functions to emphasize the denial was found in 2 data. The kok particle which functions to emphasize the surprise was found in 9 data. The kok particle which functions as a substitute for the question word why or why was found in 3 data.Here is an example of the use of the phatic particle in a debate.

12) D1/1:51:51   *Maka Mas Anies, soal oposisi tidak oposisi, soal kepentingan saja* **kok***.*
'So Mr. Anies, the issue of opposition is not opposition, it's just a matter of interests.'

13) *D1/2:44:12*   *Loh* **kok** *dibilang, saya tidak tegas.*
'Why do you say that I am not firm?'

14) *D3/1:08:18*   *Saya,* **kok***, banyak setuju dengan Pak Ganjar, ya.*
'I actually agree with Mr Ganjar a lot.'

15) *D2/01.59.01*   **Kok** *tidak berani 7.*
'How come don't dare 7.'

Example number (12) shows the function of the particle kok to emphasize the reason.The existence of a corollary emphasizes that the arguments presented by the speaker are based on certain reasons.Example number (13) shows the function of the particle kok to emphasize denial.CExample number (14) shows the function of the particle kok to emphasize surprise. Meanwhile, example number (15) shows the function of the particle kok as a substitute for the question word why/why.The presence of kok at the beginning of a sentence effectively conveys a question that expresses curiosity or criticism of a situation.This finding is in line with research by Pratiwi and Agustina (2019) which found that the phatic function of kok is to emphasize reasons and as a substitute for the question word why.This is also in accordance with Kridalaksana's theory (2008:117) which explains that the phatic particle can function as a question word why or why when used at the beginning of a sentence. In addition, the shuttlecock is also effective in highlighting denial, surprise, and reasons which are important communication strategies in the context of debate.

6) *Loh*

The particle loh was found in 14 pieces of data in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate. Based on the analysis, this phatic particle has four functions.. First, phatic, which functions as an emphasis on denial was found in 2 data. Second, phatic loh which function to emphasize a statement was found in 10 data. Third, phatic, which function to emphasize a warning was found in 1 data. Fourth, phatic, which function to emphasize surprise was found in 1 data.Here is an example of the use of phatic particles.

16) D1/02.43.59   **Loh** *kok dibilang, saya tidak tegas.*
'Oh why is it said, I am not firm.'

17) D2/01.42.37   *Ini saya baru bicara masalah nikel **loh**, Pak.*
                        'I was just talking about the nickel issue, sir.'
18) D2/02.20.23   *Hati-hati **loh**, rakyat tuh sensitif kalau pajak dinaikkan karena kita*
                        sudah berkali-kali nawarkan task-amnesti juga.
                        'Be careful, people are sensitive when taxes are raised because we
                        have offered task amnesty many times.'
19) D4/02.33.18   *Masa Cawapresnya enggak paham, aneh **loh**!*
                        'How come the vice presidential candidate doesn't understand?
                        That's weird!'

In debates, the phatic particle loh is more dominantly used to emphasize statements, as seen in example number (17).The use of the tablet provides confirmation of the fact that the speaker conveys.Second, the phatic loh is used to emphasize denial, as seen in example number (16). Next, the phatic particle is used to emphasize a warning, as seen in example number (18). Lastly, the phatic particle loh is used to emphasize surprise, as seen in example (19).

7) *Tuh*

The phatic particle was found in 10 data in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate. Based on the analysis, this particle has two main functions.It is the phatic particle that functionsto indicate something specifically or to emphasize somethingfound as many as 2 data. Meanwhile, the phatic particle which functions to emphasize the evidence was found as many as 8 data.
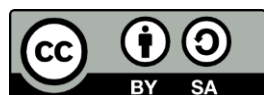
    20) D2/02.20.23   *Saya ingin tanya, 23% **tuh** dari apa?*
                            'I want to ask, 23% is from what?'
    21) D2/01.43.21   *Dulu-dulu, diplomat-diplomat kita **tuh** bagus.*
                            'In the past, our diplomats that's it good.'

Phatic is a new finding that has not been included in existing linguistic theories or references, including in Kridalaksana's book (2008) or other studies found in the literature review. In Kridalaksana's theory, other phatic particles such as *kok*, *loh*, and *lah* are explained in detail, but don't include them. Therefore, this finding enriches linguistic studies, especially in understanding phatic particles in formal contexts such as debates. From the results of the analysis, it can be seen that the phatic particle is more dominantly used to emphasize evidence, as seen in example number (21). Meanwhile, phatic is also used to emphasize something specifically, as in example number (20).

8) *Sih*

The phatic particle was found in 4 data in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate. Based on the analysis, this particle has one main function, namely to provide the meaning of indeed or actually. This is in line with Kridalaksana's theory (2008:118) which explains that the particle does function as a marker of the meaning of indeed or actually and can be used to emphasize reasons. Here is an example of the use of the particle in a debate.

    22) D2/02.20.23   *Iya, Mas Gibran yang terhormat, apa **sih** perbedaan antara*
                            penerimaan pajak dan task rasio?

'Yes, Dear Mr. Gibran, what is the difference between tax revenue and task ratio?'

| 23) D2/01.56.38 | *Nah, itu semua Kalau Anda tanya, "Gimana **sih** cara membuat peraturan?" Ya gampang sesederhana itu aja.* |
| | 'Well, that's all If you ask, "How do you make rules?" Well, it's as easy as that.' |

In debates, the particle is used in a limited way because of its informal nature and is more often found in casual conversations. However, this phatic still appears as part of a communication strategy to convey arguments in a lighter tone but still emphasizes the meaning that is to be emphasized. This finding strengthens Kridalaksana's view (2008:118) that provides an affirmation effect on something that is considered to be or actually important. Examples (22) and (23) show how this particle is used to clarify the speaker's intention in asking questions or providing certain emphasis in a sentence.

9) *Dong*

The phatic particle dong was found in 4 data in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate. Based on the analysis, this particle has two main functions, namely to soften commands and emphasize statements. This finding is in line with Kridalaksana's theory (2008:116), which states that the dong particle can be used to soften commands or invitations, as well as to emphasize the mistakes or disagreements of the interlocutor. The following is an example of the use of the dong particle in the debate.

24) D1/00.57.10	*Libatkan **dong** kami, agar kami bisa mendapatkan akses yang sama.*
	'Please involve us, so we can get equal access.'
25) D5/02.09.34	*Ya, kali ini pasti setuju **dong**.*
	'Yes, this time I definitely agree.'

Example number (24) shows which functions to soften commands. Meanwhile, example number (25) shows which functions to emphasize statements.The use of the particle dong in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate is relatively rare because the debate tends to demand a formal and assertive communication style. However, the phatic particle still appears as a communication strategy to adjust the tone of voice to be more relaxed or to emphasize something. The functions of the dong particle found in this study are in line with the findings of Kulsum (2012:48-50), who identified three main functions of dong, namely to soften commands, prohibitions, or invitations; emphasize previous statements or words; and emphasize questions.

10) *Deh*

The phatic particle deh was found in one data in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidate debate. Based on the analysis, the phatic particle functions to emphasize cooperation by persuading, giving approval, or simply focusing in conversation. The use of the particle gives a relaxed and not too formal impression. Thus, the speaker can convey proposals or suggestions in a way that does not appear pushy, but still emphasizes the importance of the ideas put forward. The following is an example of the use of the particle.

| 26) D5/02.09.30 | *Dan kami berusul bantuannya ganti aja **deh** bantuan kesejahteraan.* |
| | 'And we suggest that the aid be replaced with welfare aid.' |

Use of the particle in debatesonly one data found. It is included in the category of very rarely used because formal situations prefer strong and direct arguments. This finding is in line with Kulsum's theory (2012:48-50) which identifies six functions of the particle,among them are as confirmation of statements containing agreement and disagreement, confirming statements containing guarantees, confirming statements in the form of expressions of congratulations and hopes, confirming statements in the form of praise, confirming previous statements, and confirming previous words.

Overall, the use of phatic particles reflects the way users keep the flow of communication smooth, interactive, and effective in communicating. The particles that are used more often are the particles *pun, nah, kan, kok, loh*, and *tuh*. This is because these phatic particles have a more flexible function, such as strengthening assertions, directing the audience to important things, strengthening things that are assumed to be mutually known, emphasizing statements, expressing surprise, and emphasizing surprise. Meanwhile, the particles *sih, deh*, and *dong* are rarely used because they are less suitable for debate situations that require clarity and accuracy in communication.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the phatic categories in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential debate, it can be concluded that there are ten types of phatic particles, namely *pun, nah, kan, lah, kok, loh, tuh, sih, dong,* and *deh*. Of these ten particles, the most dominant ones used are *pun* (56 data points) and *nah* (47 data points), while more informal particles such as *dong* and *deh* appear very rarely.

The analysis shows that the phatic category has a strategic function in debate. The particle pun acts as a substitute for the words *saja* or *juga*, and highlights important information; *nah* marks transitions or attracts the audience's attention; *kan* is used to emphasize proof or replace the words *bukan/bukankah*; *lah* serves to strengthen statements or imperative sentences; *kok* and *loh* emphasize reasons, denial, surprise, or warnings; *tuh* is used to emphasize or indicate specifics; *sih* emphasizes the meaning of *memang* or *benar*; *dong* softens commands or emphasizes statements; while *deh* serves to emphasize agreement or persuade. These findings are consistent with Kridalaksana's (2008) theory regarding phatic functions, while also indicating new findings, such as the use of the particle *tuh*, which has not been widely discussed in previous literature.

This research also shows that the phatic category not only appears in informal varieties, but is widely used in formal contexts, such as political debates, due to speaker habits and its function to influence other speakers to act according to the meaning stated in the sentence. This confirms that phatic particles have an important role in building discourse cohesion, emphasizing arguments, and adjusting the tone of speech to be more persuasive and interactive.

The limitations of this study include: 1) the data source only comes from the KPU YouTube channel, so it does not represent the entire context of political communication, and 2) the analysis focuses on the use of phatic categories without discussing pragmatic factors in depth.

The implications of this research indicate that understanding the phatic category is important for the analysis of formal political communication, especially in identifying the language strategies

used by speakers to strengthen arguments, influence audiences, and maintain the smooth flow of debate interactions.

Further research is recommended to: 1) expand data sources from various types of political discourse, 2) examine the influence of the use of phatic categories on audience perception or communication effectiveness, and 3) incorporate pragmatic analysis to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the role of phatic particles in formal and informal communication contexts.

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