

## Semantic Relations of the Word *Betrayal* in the Context of Indonesian Social and Political Life

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### Abstract

The current and future appearance of a word with the same form has the potential to experience a shift in meaning. This shift in meaning cannot be separated from historical, social and political elements. A study that can reveal the meaning of a word is semantics. In this case, the word that will be the focus of discussion is the word betrayal. Therefore, the aim of this research is that the author will explore the meaning of the word betrayal which emerged from 1965 to 1965. 2023. Collecting language data in this research uses listening, recording and note-taking techniques. Thus, the appropriate method used for this research is qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. The research results show that the word betrayal has experienced a shift in meaning. The meaning of the word betrayal that emerged in 1965 is considered extreme and has a negative image in society. However, the word betrayal has now become commonplace in the world of politics and society has accepted this. So, the meaning of the word betrayal varies greatly depending on the group's point of view, historical events and modern political life.

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## INTRODUCTION

The current and future appearance of a word with the same form has the potential to experience a shift in meaning. There is a shift in meaning that leads to good to bad taste values or vice versa. This shift in meaning is caused by several influencing factors, such as the nature of the language, the language user, and the context. In this case, the development of meaning includes everything about meaning that develops, changes and shifts (Djajasudarma, 1999). So, the meaning of a word is certainly not only seen as lexical and grammatical. However, it is necessary to look at the speaker, speaker and context. A study that can reveal the meaning of a word is semantics.

In analyzing a meaning, an analytical knife is needed to dissect it, namely semantics. Lexically, semantics is the science of the intricacies and shifts in the meaning of words (Kemendikbud, 2019). According to Parera (2004), semantics is the science of meaning. Apart from that, semantics also plays a role in determining clauses in sentences (Nantu et al., 2023). Thus, semantics covers many areas of study related to language. These fields help in obtaining meanings in the context of the speaker, listener, writer, and reader (Bachari, 2017). Therefore, there needs to be strict boundaries to differentiate semantic studies from pragmatics.

The difference between semantics and pragmatics lies in the context. Semantics is context-free, while pragmatics is context-bound (Subroto, 2011). Thus, context plays an important role in pragmatic studies. Context greatly determines the meaning associated with the analysis of language use (Bachari, 2018). In essence, both studies both talk about the meaning of a form of speech. Semantics is no longer a peripheral object, but rather an object on a par with other fields of linguistic study (Chaer, 2003).

For example, a word that has been widely discussed is the word radicalism. This word now has a negative meaning because it is often used as an anarchist, fanatic and terrorist issue. These issues are strongly associated with carrying the name of religion so that there is an impression that Islam is close to radicalism groups. In this

way, people are led to understand that the meaning of this word tends to be extreme, destructive and bad. In fact, when compared and related to historical events at that time, the true form of radicalism was wanting change for independence. So, the word radical had a very positive value for the fighters at that time.

So, semantics is a branch of linguistics that traces the meaning and significance of words (Verhaar, 2006). The meaning of a word can be seen based on two things, namely lexical and grammatical meaning. In addition, semantic elements can be developed into signs and symbols (Djajasudarma, 2009). Thus, changes in new vocabulary will affect changes in categories and lexical meaning (Pratikno, 2014). However, semantic studies are not limited to that because they can be related to much broader matters. Semantics explains that the language system as a form and not a substance can be simplified and explained as syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships (Darwin et al., 2021).

For this research, the word that will be the focus of discussion is the word betrayal. In the context of the social and political life of the Indonesian nation, the word betrayal has complex and different meanings. An example is what this nation experienced in the '65s, namely the G30S PKI. This incident was linked to the issue of betrayal of Pancasila. So, the word betrayal is always associated with the PKI rebellion so that the image and meaning of betrayal is attached negatively to PKI people. In fact, this word was used as a compound word in the film *Pengkhianatan G30S/PKI*.

Over time, the word betrayal has recently become increasingly associated with political events leading up to the presidential election. For example, Anies committed political betrayal because he did not choose AHY (Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono) as his representative. This was reported on *kompas.com* with the title "7 Points of SBY's Disappointment over Anies' Betrayal". So, the meaning of the word betrayal has shifted to become commonplace in society's opinion. Therefore, this research aims to explore and explain the use of the word betrayal in the context of Indonesian social and political life from the

past to the present. Apart from that, the author wants to know the semantic relationship of the word betrayal in the context of Indonesian social and political life. Of course, this must take into account various points of view and historical backgrounds.

## METHODOLOGY

The data source used in this research comes from an online national newspaper, namely *kompas.com*. Apart from that, the author also uses YouTube as a primary data source to get more accurate speech. Based on these data sources, data collection was carried out using the observation method. So, the author pays close attention to the speech and texts related to the phenomenon of the emergence of the word betrayal in Indonesian social and political life. In this way, the data obtained focuses increasingly on semantic topics and theories about meaning relations.

The theoretical approach used in this research is part of an interdisciplinary study. Interdisciplinary studies are an approach that involves several other scientific disciplines (Senat ITB, 2018). The interdisciplinary studies in this research cover the fields of language, social and political fields. By involving several fields of study, active and constructive discussion interactions will occur. However, of these three fields, the focus of this research study is the field of linguistics because it interprets a word based on aspects of semantic relations.

After the data has been collected and classified properly, the next thing that must be done is data analysis. In this research, the data analysis used was a qualitative descriptive method. This method is very suitable for studying the meaning of a language which is related to social and political conditions. So, the qualitative descriptive method is a data analysis technique that analyzes data completely and comprehensively in order to obtain a general picture of the meaning of the word betrayal which is associated with social and political issues (Sugiyono, 2016). In addition, this method also

correlates the author's interpretation of the phenomenon of the word's appearance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Indonesian political events are currently experiencing a trend of intensive discussion. This is due to the closeness of the general election which will elect the president and representatives of the people. With this phenomenon, many unique statements were conveyed by politicians throughout the political year leading up to 2024, thus having an impact on many different interpretations in society. If you pay attention to some of the diction used by politicians, there are choices of words that seem offensive, giving negative labels to their political opponents. The choice of words in question is political betrayal which can be seen in the following YouTube broadcast.

*Kompas.com* reported on the issue of betrayal entitled "The Issue of the Anies-Cak Imin Duet and the Allegation of Betrayal by Surya Paloh". This issue made headlines in national news due to the dismantling of the vice presidential candidates which seemed forced, thereby sacrificing coalition partners who had been building for a long time. Thus, political betrayal often refers to the actions of politicians who betray the political commitments they have made to their political party or coalition. Apart from that, the term traitor is synonymously applied to those who disobey.

The phenomenon of political betrayal has unwittingly become a public concern today. Various groups have highlighted this issue with various interpretations, namely pro, con, and even normal. In Indonesian politics, betrayal is often associated with internal conflicts within political parties, for example, party members switching to another party or supporting candidates from other parties. This is often considered an action that undermines people's trust in the political system. In this way, they have disavowed and betrayed their original party. However, this is a common occurrence in the Indonesian political system, so many countries consider politics in Indonesia strange.

Betrayal in politics can also refer to the loss of a person's political credibility due to actions or decisions that are considered contrary to the political platform he or she adheres to. Recently, what has been happening a lot is related to the presidential election in Indonesia, so the word betrayal is often associated with the actions of politicians. An example that still sticks in our minds is the presidential candidacy of Anies, who will be paired with AHY. However, in the end AHY failed to pair up and was replaced by Muhaimin. Such a phenomenon certainly requires linguistic studies that can specifically reveal the meaning of the word betrayal.

Then, from this political event, a lot of speculation emerged until the term political traitor emerged. This term was applied to Anies and Muhaimin because they were both tempted by political offers. Anies, who had promised and would choose his companion, AHY, then turned away so that the AHY camp considered Anies to be a traitor and not trustworthy. On the other hand, Muhaimin also did the same thing, who instead accepted Anies' offer as his representative. In fact, Muhaimin was in the Prabowo coalition camp so he was labeled a traitor to the coalition. Understanding of the current issue of political betrayal must be straightened out so that people can understand it clearly so that there will be no hostility.

In this case, the mass media is very interested in building public opinion about the meaning of betrayal. In essence, the word betrayal has become popular ahead of the 2024 presidential election. This word is often directed at political opponents to reduce their electoral standing and public trust. This means that, if you pay close attention, the word betrayal has become commonplace in the world of politics. In fact, this word has a social impact and is of concern to the wider community. However, in reality, it is not only Anies and Muhaimin who have committed political betrayal, but almost all politicians and political parties. What is most surprising to the public right now is Gibran's desire to become Prabowo's vice presidential candidate. In fact, Gibran himself is an active cadre of PDIP (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan) and the party

already has its own candidate. However, he turned away and never let go of himself as a PDIP cadre.

In this way, Prabowo's coalition party politicians are busy taking advantage of this momentum as an opportunity to provide support to Gibran. Meanwhile, politicians from the PDIP party and the AMIN (Anies and Muhaimin) coalition gave Gibran the stigma of a traitor. For example, one of the West Java PDIP cadres, Aprianto Wijaya, thinks that Gibran has no political ethics. Meanwhile, Amien Rais said that what Gibran did was no longer betrayal, but the peak of betrayal. However, Gibran does not mind being labeled a traitor. Due to this treatment, political opponents need to create some kind of resistance by producing a counter discourse (Romadlan et al., 2021). Thus, society now understands this and does not consider the issue of betrayal in the world of politics strange.

Seeing the development of the current political situation, the mass media must be careful in conveying this news. Therefore, their role is very much needed in gathering correct information. The mass media does not actually focus on favoring one group, but must dare to be objective in conveying news, especially those that are full of political interests. Apart from that, the mass media must be able to enlighten the public regarding the term political betrayal. With the presence of mass media that can maintain the neutrality of reporting, the public will receive healthy political learning and education.

In semantics, reporting the results of analysis of similarities and differences in signs and meanings is divided into two, namely (1) reporting the results of analysis of similarities and differences in signs and meanings between the media and the responder; (2) report the results of the analysis of similarities and differences between respondents (Saifullah, 2019). This means that the response between the media and responders does not always correlate with the response between responders in reporting something. So, meaning is between stimulus and response (Ginting & Ginting, 2019). Apart from that, interpreting words requires accompanying constituents to make the concept clearer.

Based on semantic studies, the meaning of words can be known lexically and grammatically (Pratikno, 2014). Lexically, the word betrayal means 'a way of betraying or an act of betrayal'. Lexical meaning can also be interpreted as dictionary meaning (Pratikno, 2023). Meanwhile, if traced grammatically, the word pengkhianatan consists of two forms, namely the affix *pe(N)-an* and the basic word *khianat*. In other words, changing the form of a word will affect its grammatical meaning (Pratikno, 2022). To find out the meaning of these two formations, they will be explained below.

1. *pe(N)-an*
  - a. 'place' = *pemandian, pengadilan*
  - b. 'tool' = *penglihatan, pendengaran, penciuman*
  - c. 'method' = *pengiriman, pengolahan, pemasaran*.
2. *khianat* = 'acts contrary to promises act of disloyalty'

If you pay attention to the meaning, the word betrayal is related to promises and loyalty. This means that the word betrayal has a negative connotation and taste value because it is contrary to its substance, namely being unfaithful and breaking promises. Meanwhile, the grammatical meaning of the affix *pe-an* that is most suitable for the formation of betrayal is the third meaning, namely 'way' so that the meaning becomes 'way to break a promise'. Then, when related to current political events, the meaning of the word betrayal is in conflict with its true meaning. Society now considers the issue of betrayal in politics to be normal.

The relationship of meaning in semantic studies concerns issues of similarity (synonymy), opposite meaning (antonymy), duplication of meaning (polysemy and ambiguity), scope of meaning (hyponymy), neglect of meaning (homonymy), abnormality of meaning (homonymy), and excess meaning (redundancy) (S. Febry, 2020). Some of these meaning relationships have the potential to enrich insight into the meaning of vocabulary in a language. In addition, the use of homonymy meaning

relations includes basic words, foreign formations, and slang (Sukardi et al., 2018). Added to this is the relationship with the field of meaning. The field of meaning will differ from one culture to another (Saifullah, 2018). However, based on several types of meaning relationships, what is relevant for this research is the abnormality and excess meaning of the word betrayal.

Betrayal in Indonesia's struggle for independence has also occurred in the past. If we look back at Indonesian political history, betrayal is often associated with rebellions and coups. Indonesian political history is full of examples of political betrayal, such as rebellions against legitimate governments or military coups that overthrow elected governments. A famous example is the 1965 coup involving the betrayal of the G30SPKI which attempted to change the country's ideology to communist. Apart from that, the PKI's atrocities against Islamic students, ulama and the army also symbolize betrayal because of their deviant ideological differences (Fernando, 2021).

If explored more deeply, the use of the word betrayal at that time was synonymous with something that was considered evil. Therefore, there is a negative label on people who are accused of being communists. They are considered rebels and even criminals who have injured most of the Indonesian people because of their cruelty. Even though only a handful of individuals were involved in the evil conspiracy because they betrayed the state, all their supporters were considered the same. So, the meaning of betrayal at that time was also described as an act of crime, threats and conspiracy. In this way, public perception of the communist issue is getting worse.

In the history of Indonesian independence, there are also examples of betrayal of the national struggle carried out by individuals or groups who were considered detrimental or betrayed the country because they collaborated with the colonialists. Thus, this constitutes a betrayal of the Indonesian homeland and nation. So, it can be concluded that betrayal has a bad impact on the government, nation and country and cannot

be forgiven. In fact, this will result in criminal charges for the perpetrators because it disturbs various parties. Not only that, but social punishment is also always attached negatively to them.

In its development, various acts of betrayal were often carried out by politicians and used as attacks on their political opponents (Sibaweh & Rusadi, 2021). Of course, this gives a negative impression to the traitor and creates a good image for those who are betrayed. Such treatment is very unfortunate because it can cause divisions between supporters in society (Nugraha & Ardi, 2022). The issue of betrayal in the social and political context in Indonesia is often a topic of debate and controversy. The interpretation of betrayal can vary greatly depending on the individual or group's point of view. In addition, it often relies on real events that occurred in Indonesian history or modern political life.

The word betrayal is often used in the context of social conflict for political purposes. This conflict occurs because individuals or groups blame each other for actions that are considered to be overturning shared values or goals. Semantically, there was a shift in the meaning of the word betrayal, namely in the 65's, the word had a negative connotation and was labeled as bad by society because the perpetrator had carried out sadistic massacres of 7 Army generals. However, now the word betrayal has shifted its meaning to become more neutral because it is considered normal in the world of politics. This is more due to transactional politics, not due to political ideological battles that lead to physical violence, let alone deaths.

## CONCLUSION

Analysis regarding the word betrayal has similarities with the word radicalism because there is a shift in the meaning of both words. This means that there is a change in the meaning of past and present that is captured by society. However, there are also differences in the meaning of these two words. The difference is that the word radicalism had a positive meaning at that time, namely during the Indonesian

struggle for independence. However, now the meaning of the word radicalism has changed to a negative one because of the influence of opinion towards Islamic religious sentiments. Meanwhile, the opposite happens with the word betrayal. In the past, the word betrayal had a bad taste because it was associated with the historical events of the G30SPKI rebellion in 1965.

However, nowadays the word betrayal is often used as an attack by political opponents. For example, politicians are carrying out the uninstallation of vice presidents ahead of 2024. They are considered inconsistent and betraying their coalition friends because they prefer more promising offers. Indeed, in politics there is no free lunch. This means that any form of political contract that will be agreed on must have an offer and consequences. Thus, people are now starting to get used to and understand the term political traitor.

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