

Potential verbal attacks in a television political talk show: A case of a host's questioning

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ABSTRACT

This study examined potential verbal attacks in questioning delivered by a host of a political talk show in Indonesia. It aims to describe a realization of the potential verbal attacks in questioning and identifying the patterns, which provides the resource persons with an awareness of the verbal attacks delivered by the host to respond to them appropriately. The data were taken from the host questioning items from a political talk show dialogue 'Mata Najwa' in five different political topics entitled 'Adu Kuat di Demokrat', 'Berebut Tahta di Tengah Wabah', 'Beres-Beres Kursi Menkes', 'Gaduh Tiga Periode', and 'Kritik Tanpa Intrik'. The research applied a qualitative method with a descriptive design by employing the idea of definition and verbal attack pattern, presuppositions, and the context in questioning referring to the information triggered by certain linguistic constructions of the participant's speech event. The results indicate that the host's questioning behavior during the political talk show potentially tends to result in verbal attacks. The realization of potential verbal attacks resulted in the form of interrogative sentences initiated by wh-question words, modalities, conjunctions, and auxiliary words and affirmative (statement) as a question that was getting more complex depending on the depth of information and presuppositions hidden in the host questioning. The complexity of the attack patterns used by the host affects the strategy used to break, reject, or attack the opinion or argument by countering, judging-and-criticizing, and denying the resource person's responses.

Keywords: Political talk show; program host, resource persons; verbal attacks

First Received:

1 November 2021

Revised:

12 December 2022

Accepted:

28 December 2022

Final Proof Received:

27 January 2023

Published:

31 January 2023

How to cite (in APA style):

Handayani, S. (2023). Potential verbal attacks in a television political talk show: A case of a host's questioning. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 12(3), 789-801.
<https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v12i3.53414>

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of verbal attacks occurs these days with the existence of increasingly varied communication media, both virtual and digital. A verbal attack is an aggressive act of verbally attacking the interlocutor which aims to attack the interlocutor emotionally (Elgin, 1983). Elgin further posits that the verbal attack is considered an act that can harm the interlocutor because of the emotional and psychological impact caused. It is considered verbal aggressiveness, including competence attacks,

ridicule, threats, character attacks, profanity, and maledictions (Infante & Wigley, 1986). In addition, verbal attacks are sometimes known as verbal abuse (Martin, 2015). It can be carried out and impact directly on the interlocutor, as in cases of bullying, hate speech, direct mention of names aimed at harassing, mentioning physical deficiencies, or saying dirty words. It cannot be explicitly delivered to attack the interlocutor, such as for attacking a person's opinion (Smith, 2016). Verbal attacks that are aggressive usually occur in interpersonal

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communication in non-formal situations. Implicit verbal attacks, on the other hand, occur in interpersonal interactions by attacking or breaking the opinion of the interlocutor (Martin, 2015) and occurring in public areas for the purpose of threatening the face or making the interlocutor uncomfortable. In this indirect verbal attack, presupposition plays a role in building the meaning of verbal attack, whether it means threats, threatening oaths, character assassinations, demeaning abilities, or emotionally aggressive things. Therefore, to understand whether someone's speech can be considered a verbal attack, the interlocutor must understand the presupposition underlined in the speech. The presupposition is something that underlies the speaker in assuming events (Yule, 1996). Levinson (1983) defines presupposition as a common ground embedded in the utterance that leads the participants in a speech event to take it for granted. As a consequence, the more complex the structure of the speech, the more careful the interlocutor must be in understanding the presupposition of the speech.

The complexity of the structure of speech in interpersonal interactions affects communication strategies. They are considered very important to convey the intent and purpose of the speech. Referring to the intent and purpose of the speech, the meaning of the speech will be complex according to the context of the speech that is happening (Amstrong & Fogelin, 2015; Grundy, 2008). For example, one strategy used in a conversation requires giving and defending an argument in debate and talk shows. Verbal attacks often occur in these contexts because the principles of cooperation (Grice, 1991) in conversation are often violated. Violation of this cooperative principle is proposed to a certain intention in accordance with the speaker's goals to be achieved. Thus, the meaning of implicature is needed to represent the meaning of speech so that the right speech meaning can be obtained (Amstrong & Fogelin, 2015; Thomas, 2013). The way how people used a speech to convey the purposes reached shows an indication of changes in language function that language is not only considered a communication tool (Allan, 2001) but also has broader functions such as a tool as reality form, a person's imaging, and a function of protection (Rundblad & Chen, 2015).

The function of language as a function of protection can be described in verbal interactions as emotionally harmful and classified as acts of emotional violence (Martin, 2015). This phenomenon often occurs in political debates and talk shows because, usually in political debates or political-themed talk shows, there are some specific purposes achieved, such as to convey the mission of the parties or candidates. The resource persons' speech will become varied and influence the public with the arguments presented. This phenomenon is a description of the function of language that describes

the language function as a tool to influence and legitimize how to influence and convey arguments (Foucault, 1982).

In the context of talk shows, the interactions that occur between resource persons can trigger conflicting conversations to express opinions or defend opinions on the issues raised. The function of language can develop variedly, i.e., at first, the presenter gives a question or a statement about the issue raised, the resource person answers or responds to it, and after that, the answer or response statement gets a response from others. If the answers and responses of the resource persons are considered inconsistent with the opinions of other resource persons or have not answered the host's questions, it usually triggers more serious debate or fierce conversation. In this event, verbal attacks are usually carried out by them to find answers and responses to statements that are pursued by the presenter to find the desired answers. Consequently, these events often lead to verbal attacks that sometimes trigger emotional acts and conflicts in the talk show program. Some examples of this phenomenon can be found in the talk show programs in Indonesia, i.e. talk show 'Mata Najwa' which is considered to be prohibited broadcast because of the host's questions and statements that tend to offend certain parties or the resource persons (Asworo, 2020; Ridwan & Rassat, 2020) and the Indonesia Lawyers Club which often causes conflicts between its resource persons who regarded their statements and questions considered offensive (Aldila, 2020; Khadafi, 2020).

Investigating the development of verbal attack study, it continues to grow along with the development of media and technology. Several studies have emerged focusing on linguistics in some aspects. Several aspects of linguistics have been studied on verbal attacks found in terms of the meaning of implicatures from speech that are considered to attack emotions (Islam, 2017), verbal abuse and the effect (Khan & Khan, 2014), talk show conversations seen from the analysis of argumentation theory (Van Rees, 2007), types of discourse studied (Astuti, Asharina, & Permana, 2018; Setiawaty, 2018), power relation and function of discourse (Iqbal, 2020; Thornborrow, 2007), language behavior of resource persons in a talk show (Handayani & Saefullah, 2019), vague language in talk shows (Cai-yan & Lu-ting, 2014; Handayani, Lukmana, & Gunawan, 2021), analysis of speech structure of talk show conversation (Suryati, 2016) and types of verbal abuse that vary according to the level and the way how to abuse (Evans, 2010). According to the development of research and the phenomena that occur, this study aims to determine what language behavior is used by presenters in talk shows with political discourses that have the potential to become verbal attacks seen from the presupposition and context by focusing on the speech

of host and looking at the verbal attack pattern used by the host to attack the resource persons.

METHOD

Through descriptive and interpretive methods (Elliott & Timulak, 2005) with a case study design (Mills & Gay, 2016), this qualitative study reveals the phenomenon of verbal attacks in political talk shows on television in Indonesia. It aims to explore the answers to the descriptive questions on how the verbal attacks happened and what characteristics were found to be the reasons for the verbal attacks. This study relied on a verbal attack framework formulated by Elgin (1983) that the person's utterances can potentially become a verbal attack on the interlocutor by looking at the presupposition underlining them.

The data resource of the study was the host questioning taken from the talk show program 'Mata Najwa', which was lively broadcast on one of the private television stations in Indonesia from 3 March 2020 to 17 March 2021. Data collection began with selecting the five episodes of the Mata Najwa talk show, which raised political topics and re-uploaded on the YouTube Channel. Many viewers in each episode and responses of existing viewers to the topics were taken into consideration for the data collection. The five political topics were: *Adu Kuat di Demokrat* [Battling for a Power in the Democratic Party] (Najwa, 2021a) discussed the leadership chaos in the democratic parties; *Berebut Tahta di Tengah Wabah* [Striving for a Political Position During the Pandemic] (Najwa, 2020) was about the nomination of mayors for children and the president's son-in-law; *Beres-Beres Kursi Menkes* [Reshuffling the Position of Health Minister] (Najwa, 2021b) was about the reshuffle of the minister of health before his term; *Gaduh Tiga Periode* [The Polemic of Three-Presidential Term] (Najwa, 2021c) was about the polemic of the three-term planning of presidential term; and *Kritik Tanpa Intrik* [Criticizing without a Political Intrigue] (Najwa, 2021d) was about the proposed revision of the information and electronic transactions. Data derived from the five political topics of the television talk show consisted of some names identified as the host and resource persons of the talk show. To keep neutrality and avoid subjectivity in interpreting the data analysis results, the names are initialed as, for instance, NSH, MGB, HAZ, PHD, PJK, PBG, and MPB.

Second, the host's speeches were identified and categorized into similar patterns to determine the speeches that have the potential to be a verbal attack or not to be a verbal attack. The analysis of speech categories that have the potential for verbal attacks is based on the theory of verbal attacks and verbal attack patterns proposed by Elgin (1983). In addition, the categorization of verbal attack patterns was analyzed by the "attack pattern" by applying the

pattern of a conditional sentence (if pattern) and the word 'even' to categorize the level of verbal attack from the interlocutor. However, it is also possible that verbal attacks will use modalities such as (can, could, shall, should, may, might, will, would, must, can-be/able to, should-ought to, and must-have to) and interrogative sentences begin with *wh-* questions and how (what, why, who, when, where, which and how).

The next stage is analyzing the presuppositions of the host questions. The analysis of presuppositions was based on the context developed by the host when delivering the questions and topics raised in talk shows to determine the level of verbal attacks. The presupposition of host questions was used to identify bait uttered by the host to stretch emotional pressure on the resource person toward the questions from the host. The bait that the host served was expected to be effective in pressuring the resource person to provide information according to the facts presented by the host. If the bait gave emotional effects such as anger, offense, denial, or other physical actions, then this bait was considered successful in giving a verbal attack to the resource persons in order to give an appropriate response to the verbal attack, therefore, the resource persons should ignore the baits and focus on the speech assumption underlining the attack (Elgin, 1983). Finally, to determine the pattern of verbal attacks from the host to the resource persons and the level of complexity of the sentences used, 118 host questions identified as the potential for the verbal attack were analyzed according to categories of the pattern of verbal attacks. The analysis was expected to find patterns of verbal attacks that show the aggressive nature of the host's verbal attack on the resource persons and to describe the host's strategies in exploring information from resource persons.

FINDINGS

According to the data analysis, it was found that there were potential verbal attacks from the host in delivering questions to the resource persons to extract the desired information. The data from the five episodes of talk shows with different political topics in the Mata Najwa talk show program gave a rich description of host questions characteristics that have the potential to be a verbal attack. The level of verbal attack is seriously increased by looking at variations in the use of interrogative sentences with specific word questions, conjunctions, modals, and conditional sentences.

Potential Verbal Attacks

The results of the identification of the host's speeches in the five themed political episodes of the talk show program showed that there were 392 speeches found in the form of questions and statements given by the host to the resource persons. From 392 questions posed by the host to the resource persons, it found

that 110 (28.10%) were interrogative and statement sentences that were considered to have the potential to be verbal attacks, and as many as 282 (71.9%) were neutral interrogative sentences such as greeting,

asking about events that occurred, and asking for opinions. Samples of the potential verbal attack sentences and neutral languages are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1

The number of host utterances that have the potential to be a verbal attack

Speech Category	Sentence Type	Samples of Speech	Presupposition
Potential for verbal attack	Interrogative	1. <i>Apa yang berubah, MGB?</i> (What has been changed, MGB?)	1. <i>Something has changed.</i>
	Declarative and Interrogative	2. <i>Kira-kira kalau pengusaha muda di Solo tidak punya pengalaman politik sama sekali, mau maju Walikota tapi bukan anak Presiden kira-kira bisa dapat rekomendasi itu?</i> (Do you think that if a young entrepreneur in Solo has no political experience at all, if he wants to run for mayor, but he is not a son of the President, will he be able to get that recommendation?)	2. <i>There is a person who is not rich and is not the son of the President who will run for mayor.</i>
		3. <i>Kebalikannya Anda juga mencermati itu terjadi di pemerintahan?</i> (On the other hand, you also observe that it happens in government?)	3. <i>There is an action of observing events in the government.</i>
Not potential for verbal attack (neutral question)	Greeting	1. <i>Selamat malam selamat datang di Mata Najwa</i> (Good evening welcome to Mata Najwa)	
	Interrogative	2. <i>Apa pendapat Anda tentang pernyataan ini?</i> (What do you think about this statement?)	
	Informative	3. <i>Kemelut di tubuh internal partai kembali terjadi.</i> (The internal chaos of the party has occurred again)	
	Request	2. <i>Boleh tahu, Pa, komentar tentang video yang diputar barusan?</i> (May I know, sir, the comments about the video that was played just now?)	
	Command	3. <i>Silakan dijawab, tapi setelah jeda iklan berikut ini.</i> (Please answer, but after the following break!)	

One of the strategies to attack verbally is to hide the attack through presupposition (Elgin, 1983). The presupposition in question refers to information triggered by certain linguistic constructions that cannot be denied or irrefutably as the truth of the participant's speech event in a specific context (Richardson, 2007) and it is as a general view formed in the speech received by the participant in the speech event (Levinson, 1983). The representation of speech potential to be verbal attacks that occurred in this study is described in the following samples that served in two languages, Indonesian and English.

Sample 1:

*'Hampir 2 tahun sempat bilang tertarik politik, sebelumnya bilang nggak tertarik. Sekarang waktu itu tertarik tapi masih lama 20 tahun lagi. Tiba-tiba mencalonkan diri jadi Walikota. **Apa yang berubah, MGB?**'*

(‘For almost 2 years, he said he was interested in politics before, [you] said that [you] were not interested in. Now, at that time (you) were interested in but it is still 20 years away.

Suddenly [you] are running for mayor. What has changed, MGB?’ (Najwa, 2020).

The question 'What has changed, MGB' could be categorized as a question that had the potential to attack the resource person. Identifying from the presupposition, the presupposition of the question was that something had changed from MGB. In this case, the host wants to ask what had changed in MGB and why it had changed. The underlying context of the utterance was an explanation of changes (attitudes, views, behavior) based on previous facts mentioned by the host, including (1) MGB was inconsistent with his words, (2) MGB would be interested in politics after in 20 years, and (3) MGB would propose to be a mayor after in 20 years. This question was potentially a verbal attack because it was expected to threaten the face of the interlocutor (resource person) in order to make the resource person uncomfortable with the facts. As a result, the resource persons were not uncomfortable with the questions. As it is explained by Martin (2015), the verbal attacks found in interpersonal interaction in

public media were aimed at verbally attacking interlocutors to make them feel threatened, under pressure, and uncomfortable.

Sample 2:

'Kira-kira kalau pengusaha muda di Solo tidak punya pengalaman politik sama sekali, mau maju Walikota tapi bukan anak Presiden kira-kira bisa dapat rekomendasi itu?'

(*'Do you think that if a young entrepreneur in Solo has no political experience at all, [if he] wants to run for mayor but is not the son of the President, Can [he] get that recommendation?'*) (Najwa, 2020).

Sample 2 indicates that the question '*Bisa dapat rekomendasi itu?*' (*Can [he] get that recommendation?*) is containing the presupposition of getting a recommendation. According to the presupposition, this speech was potential to become a verbal attack because the context tells that there is a recommendation and is supported by the fact that the resource person is (1) the son of the president, (2) the resource person is running for mayor, and (3) there is a Solo businessman who is not the president's son who will nominate as a mayor. In this case, the host gives a denial that there cannot be any support. This host speech was expected by the host to pressure and discomfort the resource person. Smith (2016) confirmed that verbal attacks directly happened through mentioning physical weaknesses of a person, mentioning a name directly, or saying dirty (rude) words to interlocutors, and indirectly arguing against their interlocutors' opinions. Therefore, the questions raised by the host to the resource persons are identified to be potential verbal attacks.

Sample 3:

HAZ: *'Saya langsung aja masalahnya kan statement 'tidak'. Kadang sering berbeda dengan cuaca. Jadi statement pagi hari sorenya berubah. Kemudian juga ada masalah soal memang PJK tidak berminat, tetapi nanti persoalannya kemudian ada satu mengamandemen lalu melekatkan bahwa harus ada GBHN. GBHN itu harus jangka panjang'.*

(*'I am directly facing the problem with the statement 'not'. Sometimes it is often different like the weather. So, the statement in the morning is changed in the afternoon. Then, there is a problem that PJK is not interested in, but the problem is that there is one amendment later and then attaches that there must be a GBHN (Garis-garis Besar Haluan Negara) (Guidelines of State Policy)'.*

NSH: *'PHD, Anda mencermati itu Anda mencermati yang seperti tadi dikatakan HAZ bahwa sempat berkata sesuatu kemudian*

ternyata kebalikannya Anda juga mencermati itu terjadi di pemerintahan?'

(*'PHD, you pay attention to that. You observe what HAZ said earlier, that (president) had said something and then it turned out to be the opposite. You also pay attention that it happened in the government?'*) (Najwa, 2021c).

Sample 3 was an example of a statement sentence containing the meaning of a question. In this sentence, the meaning of the question is, 'Have you also observed that this happens in the government?' This question presupposes that 'something happens in the government.' With the context given, namely the previous HAZ statement, the question will have the potential to be a verbal attack that there is something inconsistent in the government and an inconsistent statement from the leadership (president). In this regard, the program's host threatened the resource person to make sure that the opinions shared were directed to create opinions indicating an inconsistency in the government's decision-making process. The host verbally attacked the resource persons' characteristics and physical conditions indirectly by identifying their skills in showing facts and in managing their emotions in stating ideas and opinions. Related to the condition, Infante and Wigley (1986) stated that verbal attacks were aimed at attacking the interlocutors' competencies considered to be uncomfortable for their conditions.

Based on the analysis of the samples above, presupposition and context are very important in forming attack patterns. This presupposition and context serve as bait that needs to be observed by the interlocutor. If the interlocutor accepted the bait and he/she gave a reactive reaction and experienced an emotional attack, the verbal attack is considered successful.

Patterns of Verbal Attacks Used by the Host

Analysis of data indicated that two different strategies used by the host to ask for information from the resource persons are asking questions with interrogative sentences and asking questions with statements as a question (affirmative) to explore the information. An interrogative sentence is a sentence that is marked by question words what, how, why, how much, when, what, which, how or other question words according to the information requested, and it is ended with a question mark (?) to indicate increasing intonation when spoken verbally. It is generally used to ask for information about something, someone, an event, or a process from the interlocutor (Alwi, 2003). Furthermore, it usually needs a verbal answer in the form of a confession, explanation, reason, or opinion from the interlocutor (Chaer, 2009). According to their nature, interrogative sentences are divided into two different

categories, closed questions and open questions (Huddleston & Pullum, 2005). Closed questions ask for answers briefly between yes or no answers. While open-ended questions ask for answers in accordance with the requested information marked by the question word used in the sentence. Different from interrogative sentences, declarative sentences contain informative elements, namely expressing something and ending with a period (.) to indicate a descending tone when conveyed verbally. Referring to the form, declarative sentences can be active sentences or passive voice and can also be in the form of inversion (Alwi, 2003). It is not necessary to give a verbal response or action to the sentence, however, sometimes comments are needed from the interlocutor to respond to the information conveyed (Chaer, 2009).

The classification of data of the potential to become verbal attacks (28.10%) indicated that the host more dominantly used interrogative sentences compared with statement sentences containing the meaning of questions in giving verbal attacks to resource persons. The host used an interrogative sentence that began with question words, modalities, and conjunctions in order to get the information from the resource persons. The interrogative sentence used by the host were initiated by question words such as *'apakah'*, *'bagaimana'*, *'kenapa'*, *'mengapa'*, *'seberapa besar'*, and *'seberapa banyak'* (*whether, how, why, how much, and how many*), modal such as *'mungkin'* and *'dapatkah'* (*maybe and can it be*), conjunctions as *'tapi'*, *'bahkan'*, and *'jadi'* (*but, even, and so*), and conditional words: *'kalau'* (*if, just in case*) and statement sentences that contain question meanings in questioning the resource persons. In the case of interrogative sentences, the question word *'apakah'* (*does/do/did*) was a question word that was often used to start an interrogative sentence from the host. However, the question words *'mengapa'* (*why*), *'seberapa banyak'* (*how much*), *'seberapa sering'* (*how many*), and *'pernahkah'* (*have... ever*) occupied the same lowest percentage of 0.90%. Compared to the two question words, the question words *'kenapa'* (*why*) and *'bagaimana'* (*how*) have the same percentage of 11.81%, it means that this sentence appeared frequently and had the same frequency level used by the host in asking the information of the resource persons. Meanwhile, in terms of conjunction, the word *'jadi'* (*so*) was the conjunction that was very often used to initiate a question from the host to the resource persons (13.63%) higher than the conjunction *'tetapi'* (*but*) (10.90%). In addition, modality did not dominate the interrogative sentence of the host. The modality could be considered infrequently to initiate host queries (1.81%). In line with the data, the varied questions used by the host to seek answers from resource persons by using different types of questions tend to be complex. The complexity of the interrogative sentences used by the host raised a

different pattern of questions with verbal attacks that tend to increase as well.

Further data analysis indicated that the host developed the question for the resource persons by combining or varying the question words, conjunctions, and modals to form new and more complex attack patterns. There are at least 33 variations of verbal attack patterns used by the host in asking for information from the *apakah* (*what*) (4 varieties), *'kalau'* (*if*) (9 varieties), *'tapi'* (*but*) (8 varieties) and *'jadi'* (*so*) (7 varieties). The description of variations of verbal attack patterns is revealed in the following discussion.

The Pattern of Verbal Attack –Interrogative Sentence with 'kenapa (why)'

Indonesian Language Dictionary known as *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI, 2021) identifies that *'kenapa'* (*why*) is a *'pronomina'* (*pronoun*), a class of words that includes pointing words, pronouns, and question words and marking words in non-formal variety. It is a word used to express questions for asking a cause or reason instead of *'mengapa'* (*why*) in standard words. In this study, it was found that the word *'kenapa'* (*why*) can be varied with several words such as *'harus'* (*must*), *'tidak'* (*not*), and *'apa'* (*what*). The representation of each variation example is described in the following sample descriptions. The variation of the verbal attack pattern of *'kenapa'* (*why*) is indicated in Table 2.

In addition, the examples of the analysis of verbal attacks *'kenapa'* (*why*) are clearly described in the following two samples, Sample 4 and Sample 5.

Sample 4:

'...Kenapa PJK merasa perlu mengeluarkan statement lagi setelah sebelumnya sudah sempat bilang tidak terpikir, tidak berminat untuk ketiga periode... tiga periode.'

'... Why did PJK feel it was important to issue the statement again after previously having said that (He) had not thought about it, not interested in the three periods... three periods.' (Najwa, 2021c).

The pattern of the interrogative sentence in sample 4 is *'Why...?'* The presupposition of this sentence is that there is a new statement issued. While the context of the sentence is to explain the reason. Therefore, based on the presupposition and context built into the sentence, the host asked for the reason. Because **there is no interest before**, the resource persons were pressured to remember the fact and answer the question honestly why the statement must be restated if there were no other reasons to give the statement. In this case, based on the presupposition, the question *'why...?'* did not only ask about the reason (KBBI, 2021) but also showed inconsistency in the resource persons' statements.

Table 2

The variation of verbal attack pattern of kenapa (why)

Question word/conjunction	Pattern	Sample of sentences
<i>Kenapa (why)</i>	1. <i>Kenapa?</i> (Why?)	1. <i>Kenapa?</i> (Why?)
	2. <i>Kenapa harus....?</i> (Why must...?)	2. <i>Kenapa harus sekarang?</i> (Why must be now?)
	3. <i>Kenapa tidak...?</i> (Why not...?)	3. <i>Kenapa tidak menunggu ayah handa selesai menjabat?</i> (Why do you not wait for your father to finish serving?)
	4. <i>Kenapa...?</i> (Why...?)	4. <i>Kenapa Pak Jokowi merasa perlu mengeluarkan statement lagi setelah sebelumnya sudah sempat bilang tidak, terpikir tidak berminat untuk tiga periode?</i> (... Why did PJK feel it was important to issue the statement again after previously having said that (He) had not thought about it, not interested in the three periods... three periods?)
	5. <i>Kenapa...ada apa?</i> (Why...what happens?)	5. <i>Kalau demokrat partai terbuka, kenapa tidak kader yang non muslim juga bisa jadi</i> (If the party of democrat is open party, why can't non-Muslim cadres also be a candidate?)

Sample 5:

'Dan ketika memutuskan sekarang, Kenapa harus sekarang? Kenapa tidak menunggu ayah handa selesai menjabat presiden?'

(‘And when it is decided now, why is it now? Why does not wait for your father to finish serving as president?’) (Najwa, 2020).

Sample 5 was a variety of verbal attacks from an interrogative sentence that begins with the word ‘why’, which was varied with the word ‘tidak’ (not). If it was compared to the interrogative sentence in Sample 4, Sample 5 has a stronger affirmation by adding the word ‘not.’ The presupposition of the sentence is waiting to finish serving as president, and the context of the question is asking for an explanation of the reasons why the decision has to be made now. Thus, the word ‘why not’ contained the meaning of a compulsion to explain the reasons for the events that the previous host has emphasized.

This case had almost the same characteristics as the verbal attack pattern with the word ‘why should’ (Elgin, 1983). These two sentences became an emphasis asking for information by limiting events that had been emphasized.

The Pattern of Verbal Attack – Interrogative Sentence with ‘Apakah’ (what/whether/be)

The patterns developed by the host indicated that the host had a good ability to create questions to ask for information from the resource persons. One of the things used in asking questions is that the host provided information boundaries by using words such as ‘or’ functioning as a conjunction to express a choice, ‘if’ functioning as a conditional word to provide an overview of a possibility, and ‘even’ serving it to provide an emphasis on something (Elgin, 1983). The interrogative sentences initiated by the word ‘*apakah*’ showing patterns of verbal attacks are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

The Pattern of Verbal attack – interrogative sentence with ‘apakah’ (what/whether/be)

Question word/conjunction	Pattern	Sample of sentence
<i>Apakah (What/if...)</i>	<i>Apakah...?</i> (What...)	<i>Apakah pertimbangan itu?</i> (What is that consideration?)
	<i>Apakah... atau...?</i> (Is...or...?)	<i>Apakah berupa dorongan atau mungkin malah perintah?</i> (Is it an encouragement or maybe even an order?)
	<i>Apakah... jika...?</i> <i>if....?</i>	<i>Apakah jika menolak divaksin bisa dipidana ini bisa nyampe tanya kita?</i> If they refuse to be vaccinated can cause them to be punished, can our questions be accepted?
<i>Apakah memang...?</i> <i>be/modal even...?</i>	<i>Apakah memang tidak pernah dibahas bagaimana publik akan melihat, merespon ada dua anak presiden dua-duanya maju mencalonkan diri?</i> (Has it even never been discussed how the public will see, in response to the two sons of the president, both of whom are running for candidates?)	

Meanwhile, when viewed from the complexity of the meaning built, these three varieties of verbal attack patterns are considered to have different complexities of meanings. The complexity of

meanings is indicated in three samples of verbal attacks, Samples 6, 7, and 8 consecutively presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Samples of verbal attacks in Indonesian utterances and their English translation

Samples	Indonesian Utterances	English Translation
[6]	<i>'MGB maju ini keputusan murni keputusan personal terjun politik atau ada andil Ayahanda? Apakah berupa dorongan atau mungkin malah perintah?'</i> (Najwa, 2020).	(‘MGB is going forward to come to politics, this is a purely personal decision to go into politics, or is there a father's contribution? Is it in the form of encouragement or maybe even in the form of order?’) (Najwa, 2020).
[7]	<i>'Ada rencana untuk mewajibkan karena misalnya ada pertanyaan Apakah jika menolak divaksin bisa dipidana?'</i> (Najwa, 2021b).	(‘There is a plan to make it mandatory because, for example, there is a question whether refusing to be vaccinated can be punished?’) (Najwa, 2021b).
[8]	<i>'Apakah memang tidak pernah dibahas Bagaimana publik akan melihat merespon ada dua anak presiden dua-duanya maju mencalonkan diri di kontestasi padahal Ayahanda masih menjabat presiden tidak pernah dibahas itu?'</i> (Najwa, 2020).	(‘Had it never been discussed? How will the public see that in response to the two sons of the president, both of whom are running as the candidates, even though your father serves as president, this has never been discussed?’) (Najwa, 2020).

Analyzing the host's questions, they could be indicated to be verbal attacks based on the assumption that there is encouragement or orders from the father [6], refusing the vaccine will be punished [7], and even if it is not being discussed [8]. According to the characteristics of the presupposition, it is categorized into the structural presupposition. Structural presuppositions identified have a specific structure that is analyzed to be true in its presupposition so that a certain structure can interpret the information uttered by the speaker as presupposed to be true (Yule, 1996). Therefore, the host was considered offensive by the fact that the source person is the son of the current president and will run for mayor. Meanwhile, there was an issue developing in society that there is encouragement from the family to run for office. The indication of verbal attack was rising when the host added the word ‘*memang*’ (even) in the question [8]. ‘*Memang*’ (even) in the question showed the host's doubts about the prior resource person's statement and considered it to be a second bait after the previous bait [6]. Presupposition [8] may imply that (1) there is no possibility that there was no support by the father because both had a close relationship and were in the same political party, (2) if there was no support from the father, then the question was arising whether both of them have not a good relationship. Thus, with this explanation, the host's question could be able to blame the resource person because of these facts, and the word ‘*memang*’ (even) can confirm the feedback given. Elgin (1983) explains that the presupposition that is accompanied by the word ‘even’ will feel stronger and not easily recognizable, so the interlocutor usually will feel offended, angry, or hurt by the utterance received

The Verbal Attack Patterns Beginning with the Conditional Word ‘*Kalau*’(if)

The data shows that there are 9 varieties of verbal attack patterns beginning with the conditional word ‘*kalau*’ (if). The word ‘*kalau*’ (if) can be interpreted as a conjunction to mark meaningful terms and conditional conditions (KBBI, 2021). The word

‘*kalau*’ (if) which is categorized as a conditional type, usually appears in more than one variable; and has a higher complexity of meaning, as indicated in Samples 9 and 10.

Sample 9:

*'Iya bapak penjahit tidak terlibat politik tadi bapak bilang Naif **kalau** dibilang calon boneka berarti masanya tadi PBG katakana di seluruh Indonesia itu dari mana?'*

(‘Yes, Mr. Tailor is not involved in politics. You said that you are naïve if you say that you are a mannequin candidate. It means that PBG said that the mass is all over Indonesia. Where did they come from?’) (Najwa, 2020).

Sample 9 had two variables of the sentence, namely, if it is said to be a mannequin candidate and it means that PBG said that the masses are all over Indonesia, where did they come from? The presupposition of this sentence was that there was a prospective mannequin candidate whose masses are all over Indonesia. This pattern provides an attack by providing a conclusion of the prior statement by using the word ‘mean.’ Therefore, this sentence has two bait attacks; namely, there are prospective puppets and masses throughout Indonesia.

Sample 10:

*'**Kalau** kita lihat hasil survei sekarang justru survei MPB itu tinggi sebagai calon Presiden ...**bahkan** Anda pun tidak mau begitu ya.'*

(‘If we look at the results of the current survey, MPB’s survey was high as a presidential candidate ... even you don't want to be like that, do you.’) (Najwa, 2021c).

Similar to Sample 9, Sample 10 shows two mutually reinforcing variables. The word ‘*jika*’ (if) would further emphasize a presupposition when added to the word ‘*bahkan*’ (even) (Elgin, 1983). This can be seen from the presupposition that MPB’s survey was high and there was a feeling of disapproval. The host gave the fact that the survey

results showed a high rate of return and someone (interlocutor) did not want to admit that the results were high. In addition, the word *'bahkan'* (even) gives a stronger attack if it is accompanied by a strong intonation emphasis when it is uttered.

The Pattern of Verbal Attack-Conjunction 'tapi' (but)

Conjunctions are needed when the sentence structure demands connecting two or more words, phrases, or clauses to be in the one-unit sentence. They have a function to correlate two equivalent sentences (coordinate) or unequal sentence (sub-ordinative) elements according to the main clause and its derivatives (Alwi, 2003). There are several types of conjunction and functions in Indonesian such as the function of conditional (*'jika', 'jikalau', 'kalau', 'bila'*), the function of contradiction (*'tapi', 'tetapi', 'melainkan'*), cause and effect function (*'sehingga', 'jadi', 'maka(nya)'*). In line with the data, there are nine different varieties of verbal attacks used by the host to extract information from the resource persons in this study, i.e. *tapi...? tapi...pun...? tapi...atau...? tapi...apakah...? tapi...bagaimana...? tapi bukankah..., tapi..., kan gitu?, tapi kalau...? (but...?, but...even...?, but...or...?, but...is...?, but...how...?, but isn't it..., but..., isn't it?, but if...?)*. This attack pattern has a high complexity because the host usually gives a question signal that limits the information, which is then followed by throwing the consequences of the signal. The signals were statements from the resource person, which the host then used to extract the series of host questions. Sample 11 shows a description of the attack pattern with signals and the consequences of those signals.

Sample 11:

"Tapi ketika pernyataan awal presiden disampaikan itu kan justru pernyataan itu banyak yang kemudian merasa loh, Bagaimana enggan menyampaikan kritik, kaya takut menyampaikan kritik".

(‘But when the initial president’s statement was delivered, even many of them felt that how reluctant they were to convey criticism, they were afraid to express criticism.’) (Najwa, 2021d).

Sample 11 was a series of rebuttals from the statements of the previous resource persons. There were indications that the host did not agree with the statement from the resource person when it was seen from the presupposition, there was a reluctance or fear to convey criticism. In this case, the host took the signal from the resource person's statement to be the bait for an attack and made a question with a rebuttal of *'tetapi'* (but). In this case, the word *'tetapi'* (but) was used to threaten the resource persons that there were contradictive facts stated by them. The

conjunction *'tetapi'* (but) signified that the speaker wanted to put an emphasis on and strengthen the verbal attacks. Elgin (1983) reiterated that the complexity of the verbal attacks was getting more dominant when patterns of the verbal attacks were getting increasingly complex through the use of words such as ‘but’, ‘even’ or other conjunctions and modalities such as ‘may’, ‘could’, and ‘would’.

The Pattern of Verbal Attack – Conjunction 'jadi' (so)

As the verbal attack pattern by using the conjunction *tetapi* (but), the verbal attack pattern using the conjunction *'jadi'* (so) took the bait from the other person (the resource person) as a signal or bait to do the attack. In this study, there are 7 patterns of verbal attack that appear used by the host to extract the questions to the resource persons such as *jadi..., nama? jadi...bagaimana...? jadi...begitu? jadi...atau...? jadi...? Jadi...apakah...? jadi...kalau...? (so..., name? so... how...? so... so? so...or...? so...? so... ..what, so...if...?)*. In these patterns of verbal attack, the host could take a summary or conclusion from what was stated by the resource persons, and then they are used as the basis for asking the next question, as shown in Sample 12, or provided facts of events as a reference for asking questions as Sample 13.

Sample 12.

"Kampanye perdana. Jadi berarti Bawaslu ngarang ngarang saja ketika memberikan Anda teguran begitu?"

(“First campaign. So, it means that *Bawaslu* just made things up when giving you a warning, did it?”) (Najwa, 2020).

Sample 12 shows that the host took a summary of the statements of the previous resource person who said the initial campaign to provide feedback to the resource persons and then made a conclusion question using the word *'jadi'* (so). The context of the sentence is asking for an explanation from the resource persons, and the presupposition contained in this sentence is that *Bawaslu* (Board for election supervision) made things up as a warning. Hence, the host created a verbal attack by concluding what had been stated by the resource persons to initiate it as an attack bait by making a variety of patterns (Elgin, 1983).

Sample 13.

'... Jadi ada yang bilang ini calon boneka aja nih PBG, kalo ada yang bilang begitu bagaimana jawaban PBG?'

‘...So, some people say he is only a mannequin candidate, PBG. If someone says something like the statement, how will PBG's answer?’ Najwa, 2020).

In contrast to Sample 12, Sample 13 provided an overview of the host's questions that provided feedback to informants by using facts taken from the incident that someone said that PBG was only a candidate for a mannequin candidate. Considering the presupposition and attack patterns added by the word '*tetapi*' (but), the host's questioning had a greater potential to be a verbal attack because the word was expected to be able to provide facts and refute what had been stated by the resource person. Therefore, the purpose of the host is to provide bait that hid in the presupposition of the question considered effectively affected the resource person feeling uncomfortable. It is relevant to Elgin (1983) clarifying that the technique of presenting verbal attacks could be done by putting them in the presupposition of the speakers' utterances. Therefore, the interlocutors had to understand the speakers' assumptions to give meanings and respond to the verbal attacks by double baiting them in the form of complex sentences.

The Pattern of Verbal Attack-Statement as a Question

Speech act is a form of language use that includes asking questions, making statements, issuing commands, or uttering exclamations that can be performed both in verbal or written language (Huddleston & Pullum, 2005). In the process, the speaker will choose a speech role that will be used to express his thoughts and provide opportunities for the addressee to respond to the speech role that is spoken, including offers, statements, commands, and questions. Each speech role has a different response, both in positive (+) and negative (-) responses (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). However, the data in this study indicated that the patterns of verbal attacks were not only carried out by the host by using interrogative sentences but also using statements of declarative sentences meant to ask for the answers. To find out whether this statement was considered to have a function of a question sentence or as a statement that was not required to be answered, it was needed by the resource persons to understand the meaning of the sentence by correlating the accompanying statement and be sensitive to the verbal intonation signal uttered by the in providing statements and supporting statements of the sentence. Sample 14 is an example of this verbal attack pattern.

Sample 14:

"MGB maju ini keputusan murni keputusan personal terjun politik atau ada andil ayahanda?"

("MGB is deciding to go forward to the politics, this is a purely personal decision to go into politics or there is your father's contribution.") Najwa, 2020).

Sample 14 was a statement sentence that contains the question meaning '*apakah*' (what/be). Then, the sentence had the pattern '*Apakah MGB maju ini keputusan murni keputusan personal terjun politik atau ada andil ayahanda?*' (MGB is deciding to go forward to politics, is this a purely personal decision to go into politics or is there your father's contribution'). The presupposition of this sentence was that (1) there is a pure decision to enter politics, (2) there is a decision that is not purely political, or (3) there is a contribution from your father. While the context of this sentence was asking for confirmation about the decision to enter politics. In line with the presuppositions and context, it was the potential for a verbal attack because the resource person had to answer the confusing choices. In the case of Sample 14, the presenter's statement was a question even though the sentence pattern used was a declarative sentence for the resource person expected to be responded both in terms of an answer or deny response from the interlocutor. To give the response appropriately, therefore, the resource person has to understand the meaning of the host's questions by recognizing the intonation or signal word marking. As Elgin (1983) explains that the intonation of the utterance, such as stressing particular words, can be an indication of a verbal attack besides the presupposition underlining.

DISCUSSION

Verbal attacks in political talk shows in public spaces are considered essential. Results of the study indicated that the questions raised by the host of the Mata Najwa talk show had a high potency to become verbal attacks in obtaining the desired information. The potential verbal attacks made by the host to the resource person were identified into two different forms of interrogative sentences, i.e., the interrogative sentences initiated by question words (Alwi, 2009) and the statements containing the meaning of questions as the trigger of attacks (Chaer, 2009). The triggers influenced the way of the resource person in responding to the questions raised by the host and triggered uncomfortable feelings and higher degrees of emotion. Different patterns of questioning were used as strategies by the host to provide facts and to strengthen attacks. With the context of interaction underlining the host's questions which triggered emotions of the resource person. Therefore, the host's questions were considered as attacks containing implied meanings (Infante & Wigley, 1986). The implied meaning is the speaker's intended meaning (Griffiths, 2006; Grundy, 2008; Thomas, 2013; Yule, 1996). From the analysis of the host's questions which potentially have verbal attacks, the implied meanings made based on the presuppositions appeared to be getting more complex, identified from the increasing complexities of the sentence patterns used by the

host. The sentence patterns' complexity was indicated by composing the sentences from simple sentences to more complex sentences to emphasize on sentence meanings by adding words or clauses (Elgin, 1983).

Based on the cases in the Mata Najwa talk show program, the hosts used four categories of verbal attack in asking questions to the resource persons: blocking and diverting, countering, judging and criticizing, and denial (Evans, 2010). Research results revealed that political discourse presented by talk show participants was oriented differently depending on the represented political party and communication goals that were going to achieve. The political discourse resulted from the political talk show participants referring to the social orientation and status of their social relationships among the participants. This idea was relevant to what is stated by Karjakin (2009) that political discourse is a form of institutional discourse since they are oriented to social orientation to form a framework of social status role-relation. Therefore, political discourse participants had their own communication norms that must be carried out. Indeed, political talk shows presents argumentation in public space. Therefore, verbal attacks were considered a strategy to bring the opponents down by providing relevant facts to influence the audience. Politicians created a variety of attack patterns by selecting invective words or satire, mentioning direct names, and using a high tone in questioning as forms of attacking strategies intended for downgrading the opponents by suppressing their emotions, criticizing their ideas, and breaking their opinions. Verbal attacks are even considered to be one of the tactics to discredit opponents in political debates (Yenikayev, 2021) by triggering their opponents' emotional and psychological states toward the interlocutors (Sedov, 2005). As the consequence, verbal attacks against other participants, both hosts and resource persons and resource persons to other informants, become very serious when the interlocutors were attacked in personal terms, threatened, or humiliated in their competencies. This way of attacking opponents and responding to verbal attacks in public space is a phenomenon that must be carefully observed since it does not only present how to use language in political discourse to defend oneself, defend opinions, and achieve personal or party goals, but also influence the participants' behavior in public communication.

CONCLUSION

In relation to the data analysis and interpretation, the conclusion of the study reveals that the host's speeches on the political talk show potentially tend to result in verbal attacks. The host used verbal attacks as a strategy to explore the desired information and opinion. To respond appropriately to the verbal attacks given by the host, the resource persons are

expected to be sensitive and able to recognize the presupposition and bait of attacks given by the host. Two types of verbal attacks are found in the host speeches delivered to the resource persons. The first is interrogative sentences, and the other one is statement sentences containing the meaning of questions. In interrogative sentences, at least 33 variations of verbal attack patterns found in this study were developed from five main patterns derived from question words, conjunctions, and modals. Each pattern has its own characteristics and limitations. The complexity of the pattern of verbal attacks is influenced by the depth of information and presuppositions hidden in the host questioning. The more complex the information is extracted, the more complex the verbal attack pattern used. In addition, the attack pattern used by the host against the resource person affects the strategy used to break, reject, or attack the opinion of the resource person by blocking and diverting, countering, judging and criticizing, and denying the resource persons' responses.

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