

# From Happy Wedding to Divorce: Marriage Terms Metaphor in Indonesian Political Coalition

Muhammad Adam<sup>1\*</sup>, Siti Hafsa<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Balikpapan, Indonesia

\*Correspondence: [adam@uniba-bpn.ac.id](mailto:adam@uniba-bpn.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

*Indonesian political multi-parties system requires political parties to build a solid coalition in anticipating any election event, at all levels; national, regional, and local. The description of the way political parties build the relationship and how candidates seek support from a party is often described metaphorically as stages of marriage. There are few studies of metaphor in political discourse in the Indonesian context, but less attention is given to the detail of the use of the specific source domain MARRIAGE. This study aims to take a deeper look at how the marriage relationship context is used to describe the conceptual metaphor of political coalition establishment. The aim of this study is to identify the mapping principle from the Source domain of MARRIAGE to the target domain POLITICAL COALITION to pinpoint the particular properties that enable characteristics in MARRIAGE to be used as the metaphorical expressions. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Deliberate Metaphor Theory of Steen, (2011) are used as the theoretical framework, with six news headlines about the political coalition from Indonesian online media news is purposively chosen as the data source.*

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## 1. Introduction

Politic is an abstract concept, and to have people understand its process, a more concrete language is needed. This is where metaphor is important in helping the political message and political news is delivered to the readers or hearers which in political concept are also voters. Chilton (2004) agrees metaphor is important in political discourse as it can be used as a mode of reasoning, whereas (Charteris-Black, 2011) agrees that metaphor is typically used in persuasive political myths and arguments because it represents a certain mental representation

In the Indonesian election system, a coalition is needed because to meet the electoral threshold on each level of election, local, provincial or national. The use of the marriage metaphor is commonly found in this context. In Indonesian political discourse, particularly related to political coalition among parties, the conceptual metaphor of MARRIAGE is POLITICAL COALITION is used to provide a concrete image of the coalition process. Kovecses (2005) affirms that in conceptual metaphor, a mapping connects the source domain frame with the target domain frame, and thus, the source domain of marriage is mapped onto the target domain of political coalition. Take for instance the word melamar (to propose) to describe the official approach from one party to another party during the early stage of establishing a political coalition.

This study is to examine the “chain of process of the political coalition that is described using marriage and wedding terms, from the initial stage until the end-stage. This study is significant to highlight the view of the politician towards the political process the see it as the marriage process. Furthermore, this study aims to map the similar properties of marriage that enable it to be used to speak about the political coalition.

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is first proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who assert that we don't speak metaphorically, but we tend to think metaphorically and define metaphor from a cognitive perspective that metaphor is understood as an experientially based mapping between a concrete source domain and an abstract target domain This view is also supported by Goatly (2007) who defines metaphor from cognitive perspective and agrees that metaphor is thinking about one entity as it were another entity.

There are two domains in conceptual metaphor (Kovecses, 2010; Suherman, 2018; Saleh, et al., 2021), first is the source domain, which is a concrete domain used to speak about another domain which is, the target domain, a more abstract domain to describe. Furthermore, Steen (2011) Deliberate Metaphor Theory is also used to explain the deliberateness of metaphorical use and affirms that a metaphor is deliberate when it is intentionally used and requires everyone involved in the communication to move attention away from the target domain to the source domain.

The contribution of cognitive view in metaphor brings an additional perspective in the social context of discourse analysis Musolf (2012) and there have been few studies on metaphor in political discourse In the Indonesian context, some of them are by Adam (2019) ; Adam & Prautomo (2021) as far as researchers' knowledge, there haven't been any previous studies that put attention on the use of marriage concepts to speak metaphorically about politics.

The significance of this study is expected to shed a light on how the political discourse that is an abstract concept metaphorically described with a more concrete concept, which is marriage, and to assert a logic behind the mapping. This will provide an implicit identification of what properties and characteristics between the source domain and the target domain that is similar and enable the comparison to take place.

## 2. Methodology

The qualitative method used in this study with Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as the framework of the study. Cameron & Low (1999) views metaphor analysis, as a qualitative research tool that allows researchers to investigate speakers' thought patterns and understandings of a given topic. The study's orientation and focus are both on the source domain and target domain. Stefanowitsch (2006) affirms that the orientation of data collection in metaphor study can be conducted in source domain-oriented, target domain-oriented, or both.

The data is purposively chosen from news headlines that use the metaphorical expressions of the marriage source domain to speak about political coalition as the target domain. Metaphor Identification Procedure –MIP (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) used during data collection by focusing on the lexeme that contains the marriage terms. Whenever those terms are used metaphorically to describe the political coalition, they will be taken and then be classified based on the stages of the marriage relationship, from an early stage of the proposal, getting married, getting a divorce to reunite. The mapping Principle (Ahrens, 2010, 2014) will be further conducted to identify the image scheme mapping. Whereas the last discussion will focus on the potential entailments that may rise.

## 3. Result

The summary of the finding is presented in Table 1 where each stage of a marriage can be presented, from early-stage, getting married, divorce, and reunited. Six headlines collected represent each stage of marriage as metaphorical expressions to describe the political coalition.

### 3.1. The Metaphorical Expressions of POLITICAL COALITION IS A MARRIAGE

At the early stage, the word PDKT (the acronym of *pendekatan*, which means *approaching*) is used. In the next stage, *melamar* (to propose) is used. In the Islamic marriage process, before marriage, there is a mandatory "mahr" submitted by the groom to the bride, and it is used to describe the political donation given to secure a candidacy. Whereas at the stage of marriage, *bersanding* (sitting side by side in the aisle) is found, and also the use of mahr.

The political coalition sometimes breaks, and this is metaphorically expressed with the word *cerai* (divorce), this is when the political party in coalition has cut the political tie. In Islamic marriage law, the divorced couple is still possible to be reunited, and the word *rujuk* (reunite) is used to describe metaphorically the condition when two parties who have politically cut ties to each other, be back into coalition.

The summary of the data of each stage is presented in table 1 :

**Table 1.** Summary of Data Finding .

Data Number	Stage of Relationship	Metaphorical Expressions
	Pre-Marriage Stage	
1	Approaching	<i>PDKT ke Anies dan PKS, Nasdem Cari Celah untuk Pilpres 2024?</i>

2	Proposing	Anies's approach to PKS, Nasdem tries to find a gap for the 2024 presidential election. <i>12 Kandidat Cagub-Cawagub Kepri Melamar ke Golkar</i> 12 Kepri governor-vice governor candidates propose Golkar
3	Mahr	<i>Golkar Tegaskan Tak Ada Mahar Politik Untuk Maju Pilkada Serentak 2020</i> Golkar asserts no political mahr to run for the 2020 regional election.
Wedding Reception Stage		
4	Sit side by side (bride and groom)	<i>Mesra sama Puan, Prabowo Sulit Bersanding dengan Anies Baswedan</i> Friendly with Puan, Prabowo is most unlikely to sit side by side with Anies Baswedan.
After marriage		
5	Divorce	<i>Gerindra dan PKS Resmi Cerai</i> Gerindra and PKS are officially divorced
6	Reunite	<i>Megawati Ajak Prabowo Rujuk.</i> Megawati asks Prabowo to reunite

The complete chain of marriage process has the same characteristics as the series of the political coalition process. Starts from the approaching stage by the political party, the decision to build a political coalition, the breaking of that build coalition, until the reunion after the breaking all fits with the stages of marriage. It is, therefore, make marriage can perfectly be used as the source domain of political coalition

#### a. Pre-marriage and Marriage Stage

Conceptually, before marriage, a couple will have a preliminary stage to know each other, one of the words to describe this process is the acronym PDKT –*pendekatan* (lit. approaching), which describe how a (commonly) man tries to start a relationship with a woman before a courtship. This early stage is used in headline 1 to describe how political party Nasdem is trying to build a political relationship with Anies (the current Jakarta Governor) and with another political party, PKS.

Headline 1

*PDKT ke Anies dan PKS, Nasdem Cari Celah untuk Pilpres 2024?*(Vivanews, 2019)

Anies's approach to PKS, Nasdem tries to find a gap for the 2024 presidential election.

The PDKT process conceptually describes a continuous effort to gain trust to be able to build a stronger relationship and implied an early start of the process. By using the word PDKT, Nasdem is described as a political party that tries to build a relationship to prepare for the incoming 2024 presidential election. When this process is successful and the relationship is built, the next stage to prepare for marriage is a proposal, as seen in headline 2 below, the word *melamar* (to propose) is used. What is worth-examined is the entailment that comes from the one who is put as the subject, in this case, Nasdem. This will be discussed in the next section.

Headline 2 describes an incumbent pair is seeking political support from a political party to be able to run for a provincial election. This is done to meet the requirements in submitting the candidate to run for mayor election.

Headline 2:

*12 Kandidat Cagub-Cawagub Kepri Melamar ke Golkar.* (Pinang.batamos, 2019)

12 Kepri governor-vice governor candidates propose Golkar

The proposal comes from twelve governor-vice governors Golkar political party. Propose here refers to submitting all the supporting documents needed to be admitted as the official candidate for Governor's election from the party. It

can be interpreted that all candidates are in the position to ask for acceptance from Gerindra as how the marriage proposal is.

The next marriage term used metaphorically related to the political coalition is “mahar” (mahr). In Islamic marriage law, Goodarzi (2018) describes mahr as “a monetary gift promised by the groom to the bride at the time of marriage. Mahr has been widely used as the metaphor for the number of funds submitted by a candidate to a political party to secure political support to run for an election.

Headline 3:

*Golkar Tegaskan Tak Ada Mahar Politik Untuk Maju Pilkada Serentak 2020.*(Prastiwi, 2020)

Golkar asserts no political mahr to run for the 2020 regional election.

In this stance, mahr is used metaphorically and carries a derogatory sense, as opposed to its literal use, which is a mandatory part of prenuptial agreements in Islamic marriage (Goodarzi, 2018). As seen in headline 3, the metaphorical use of mahr implied conduct to avoid. Golkar strongly denies that there is no such “mahr” to be able to secure the political support from the party to any candidates who want to run for local election,.

In the next stage of the marriage, the groom and the bride will be sitting together on the aisle. This is commonly described in Indonesian word as “*bersanding*” (bride and groom sitting side by side). On its conceptual use, the word refers to the wedding day procession. In describing political coalition, this word is often used metaphorically to refer to a pair of the candidate, as seen in headline 6 below :

Headline 4:

*Mesra sama Puan, Prabowo Sulit Bersanding dengan Anies Baswedan.*(JPNN, 2020)

Friendly with Puan, Prabowo is most unlikely to sit side by side with Anies Baswedan.

In the Indonesian context, *mesra* (friendly) associates with the friendly and close relationship of courtship or marriage. There are three political figures mentioned in headline 4 above, the first one is Puan Maharani, the next one is Prabowo Subianto and the third is Anies Baswedan. Puan Maharani’s party is PDI-P, whereas Prabowo is the chairman of Gerindra. The headline above is discussing the projection of the incoming 2024 presidential election, and projecting that Anies Baswedan is mostly unlikely will become the running mate of Prabowo Subianto, the word *bersanding* is used.

## **b. Divorce and Reunite Stage**

The use of marriage terms as a metaphor for a political coalition is not only at the pre-marriage and marriage stage, but also, it continues to the stage where the relationship is broken. When the political parties coalition has reached the end, the terms of the divorce are used. In headline 5 below, the word divorce is used to describe the end of the coalition between Gerindra and PKS.

Headline 5:

*Gerindra dan PKS Resmi Cerai.* (Tim Merdeka, 2020)

Gerindra and PKS are officially divorced.

Then, after the breaking of the coalition of the political parties, there will be a big chance that they will reconnect and rebuild the coalition. This also still uses a marriage term as a metaphor for that coalition rebuilt. The term is also from the Islamic marriage law, i.e: *rujuk* (reunion). It is used as metaphorical expressions to describe a political party that used to be in the same coalition, they are politically separated and rebuild a new coalition.

Headline 6:

*Megawati Ajak Prabowo Rujuk.* (InisiatifNews, 2019)

Megawati asks Prabowo to reunite

In headline 6, the word *rujuk* (reunite) is used to describe the rebuild of a political coalition between two main figures in the Indonesian political landscape. Megawati Sokernoputri of PDI-P and Prabowo Subianto of Gerindra. When using the word *rujuk*, it entails that the two of them were in one tie before, but separated. In this context, It refers back to the 2009 election when Megawati Soekarnoputri was the presidential candidate and Prabowo Subianto is her running

mate. After the 2009 election, the two are not politically in the coalition, thus, this entails that after the 2009 election, the pair have been divorced.

### 3.2. The Mapping Principle and Partial mapping

Ahrens (2002) asserts that the particular source domain can be used to speak about the target domain since it has similar characteristics or elements, and further defines mapping principle (MP) as image-schemas that map for a certain conceptual metaphor, including the underlying reason why a particular target has selected a particular source domain. Table 2 provides the mapping of the source domain to the target domain.

**Table 2:** The mapping of Source domain to target domain

SOURCE DOMAIN: MARRIAGE	TARGET DOMAIN: POLITICAL COALITION
Pre-Marriage <i>PDKT</i> (Approaching) <i>Melamar</i> (to propose)	Approaching the political party/figure Officially offer coalition
The Wedding <i>Mahr</i> (a monetary gift by the groom to the bride) <i>Bersanding</i> (Sit side by side on aisle)	Fund from the candidate for political support Running mate for election
Divorce and Reunite <i>Cerai</i> (Divorce) <i>Rujuk</i> (Reunite)	The discontinue of political coalition The reconciliation after a divorce.

Examining the marriage as the source domain of metaphor reveals that almost all elements and stages in marriage schema also exist in political coalition schema, except that the broom and the bride are not specifically mapped; this will be discussed in the next section. Also, the particular use of deliberate metaphor that takes the reader's attention away from the target domain will be discussed.

Landau, Robinson, & Meier (2013), p.6 argue that "conceptual mappings are partial that not all elements from source domain are projected to the target domain" and add that there are elements to highlight when the other elements are downplayed. These downplayed elements will occur as entailments as Kovecses (2003) agrees that entailment is one of the components that interact with other components in the composition of metaphor. It is also true in the metaphorical use of marriage terms in a political coalition, where not all properties can be mapped. As a consequence, there will be unintended entailment.

The use of the wedding schema to speak about political coalition will of course leave an entailment of who is the bride and who is the groom. For instance in the headline 1:

*PDKT ke Anies dan PKS, Nasdem Cari Celah untuk Pilpres 2024?*

Anies's approach to PKS, Nasdem tries to find a gap for the 2024 presidential election.

In the literal use, PDKT (approach) is always associated with the man who approaches another woman. When Nasdem is said to do the approaching, it will entail that Nasdem is the aggressive one that approaching Anies and PKS. Also, the entailment can be interpreted from headline 2, by using the word "propose".

*12 Kandidat Cagub-Cawagub Kepri Melamar ke Golkar*

12 Kepri governor-vice governor candidate propose Golkar

There will be an entailment on who is the bride and who is the groom. Commonly, the most possible scenario is that Golkar is the groom, but this may be perceived differently in a different culture. In a culture where the bride is proposing versus the groom is proposing, the entailment will be different. Unintended entailment also occurs from headline 3, and this even creates a negative entailment by using the word mahr in the political context.

*Golkar Tegaskan Tak Ada Mahar Politik Untuk Maju Pilkada Serentak 2020.*(Prastiwi, 2020)

Golkar asserts no political mahr to run for the 2020 regional election.

There are two implications of using mahr as a metaphor above. First, the metaphorical use of mahr has a different implicature to its literal use, where the literal one implied something as mandatory and must be done, whereas the metaphorical use implied something that should be avoided and carry a negative connotation. As a consequence, it is

deteriorating in meaning when it is used metaphorically. Second, using mahr in political discourse can trigger an unintended entailment. As in its conceptual meaning, the submission of mahr is a mandatory requirement. Therefore, when it is used metaphorically as submission of political funds from a candidate to secure political support from a party, it may entail that this is a mandatory requirement.

Lastly, the deliberateness of metaphor use is shown by the continuous use of the series of stages of marriage used to describe political coalition. (Steen, 2013) agrees the use of metaphor is deliberate when its source domain concept requires setting up a source domain referent in the representation of the utterance. When this happens, the source domain referent is in our attention as an element of what the utterance is about (Steen, 2011).

In Indonesian political discourse, (Adam, 2021) discusses how the Islamic terms metaphor is used deliberately in political discourse. In particular to the use of the metaphor of PDKT, will divert readers' attention away from the political process. The same also the novel use of *mahar* (mahr), *cerai* (divorce), and *rujuk* (reunite), there will be continuous attention to the process of marriage itself, which is different from the use of a conventional metaphor.

As asserted by Knowles & Rosamund (2006) that metaphor people use not only to express what people think and feel about something but also to explain what a particular thing is like to deliver a message more creatively. The use of marriage terms as metaphor to speak about Indonesian political coalition are not only describe an abstract concept creatively, but also can reflect what speaker/writer think about the topic.

#### 4. Conclusion

Marriage terms from all stages are used to describe a political process metaphorically since it has a similar schema, i.e: marriage and the political coalition should be built on mutual trust and mutual interest, it needs a series of approaching process to be able to agree on the marriage, need a commitment to maintaining the relationship and it may also be broken when one party break a commitment. Yet, it can be fixed and the two parties can be reunited. The logic behind courtship and marriage fits with the process of the political coalition is because the nature of the coalition-building process, which requires a step-by-step approach, needs a strong commitment from mutual parties. Nevertheless, it may also fail.

Nevertheless, One important thing also from the study is the unintended meaning of deterioration and unintended entailment, such as in the use of mahr. Although the use of marriage as the source domain of metaphor provides a more concrete description of how the political parties work together for mutual intentions in building coalitions, the implication for the unintended entailments can not be avoided. Further study should be conducted diachronically on the use of the marriage metaphor in the political coalition. The researcher assumes, that the use is increasingly high after the reformation era when the election at the national and regional level has been regulated as a direct election. Also, the use of metaphorical expressions from Islamic marriage law, such as mahr and rujuk (reunite) is worth-explored, from the perspective of, what parties/figures are discussed or used the metaphor and whether or not it is related to their audience/voters.

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