

# Political Concepts Expressed Through The Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach

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## ABSTRAK

Partai politik memberikan pengaruh yang besar terhadap ide berpolitik di Indonesia. Hal ini memunculkan asumsi terhadap kualitas serta tipe demokrasi yang hendak dicari dari sebuah ide berpolitik dalam sistem kepartaian sehingga dengan menggunakan pendekatan NSM, diharapkan dapat memberikan sebuah pencerahan terhadap semantic primitif dari sebuah ide berpolitik dalam negara demokrasi. Penyusunan jurnal ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode penelitian hukum normatif dengan pendekatan perundang-undangan, analisis dan konseptual serta bentuk pendekatan metabahasa semantic alami (NSM). Diakhir dari penulisan jurnal ini ditemukan hasil bahwa ide berpolitik dengan pendekatan NSM dapat digambarkan dalam berbagai bentuk seperti kepentingan, manfaat, warisan, pengaruh, kedudukan serta kekuasaan.

## ABSTRACT

*Political parties hold significant influence over political ideas in Indonesia. This raises questions about the quality and type of democracy that is aimed for in a party system. By utilizing the NSM approach, it is hoped that it can provide clarity on the fundamental meanings of a political idea in a democratic country. The preparation of this journal was conducted using normative legal research methods with a regulatory-legislation analysis and conceptual approach, as well as a natural semantic metalanguage (NSM) approach. Upon the completion of writing this journal, it was discovered that political ideas using the NSM approach could be explained in various forms such as interests, benefits, inheritance, influence, position, and power.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of politics is a natural human impulse that stems from the desire to establish a power structure that serves the common interests. In his reflection, Mark Haugaard elaborates on the various sociological types of political power, which include democracy, authoritarianism, and

cryptocracy.<sup>1,2</sup> Politics is the concept of transforming individual interests into the public interest. However, it is limited by the public interest itself. Cryptocracies are closely tied to the theory of behaviorism, which is a popular idea in psychology that suggests every human is motivated by the desire to increase their profits.<sup>3,4</sup> In Indonesia, political parties play a crucial role in the country's political ecosystem. Every member of a political party is expected to support the party's political interests.

The Constitution of Indonesia contains several references to political parties, such as Article 6A paragraph (2), which deals with proposed candidates for President and Vice President, Article 8(3), which concerns vacancies for the positions of President and Vice President, Article 22E paragraph (3), which states that membership in the DPR and DPRD must come from a political party, and Article 24C paragraph (1), which deals with the dissolution of political parties by the Constitutional Court. Due to the importance of political parties in Indonesia's political system, they are regarded as institutional tools for positive democracy. This is why political parties are seen as a crucial element to maintain a healthy democratic system in the country.<sup>5</sup>

Political parties are often seen as a fundamental aspect of democratic systems. According to Haryanto, political parties serve as both catalysts and predators of democracy, functioning as a system of party democracy and guided democracy. This dual role is integral to their function within democratic systems. Political parties have the power to shape the political landscape, mobilize voters, and provide a channel for political participation and representation. However, they can also undermine democratic principles if they prioritize their own interests over those of the electorate. Therefore, it is important that political parties are held accountable for their actions and adhere to democratic values to ensure the stability of the democratic system.<sup>6,7</sup> The idea that political parties act as intermediaries between predators and catalysts is not a baseless assumption. It is more of a chaotic situation that arises due to the level of involvement that political parties have with their members.

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Haugaard, 'Kleptocracy, Authoritarianism and Democracy as Ideal Types of Political Power', *Journal of Political Power*, 16.3 (2023), 345–78 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2023.2194712>>.

<sup>2</sup> Penjejalan ide kriptokrasi turut disebutkan dalam sebuah kepemimpinan di Athena, Vili Lehdonvirta mengutip tulisan Aristoteles tentang Konstitusi Athena ketika sistem pemerintahan oligarki memimpin kota kuno tersebut yang kemudian menghasilkan sebuah sistem pemerintahan yang korup dan tidak dapat dipercaya. Vili Lehdonvirta, '8 CRYPTOOCRACY: THE QUEST TO REPLACE POLITICS WITH TECHNOLOGY', in *Cloud Empires: How Digital Platforms Are Overtaking the State and How We Can Regain Control* (presented at the Cloud Empires: How Digital Platforms Are Overtaking the State and How We Can Regain Control, MIT Press, 2022), pp. 131–124 <<https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/9855588>> [accessed 11 January 2024].

<sup>3</sup> George Graham, 'Behaviorism', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, Spring 2023 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2023) <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2023/entries/behaviorism/>> [accessed 11 January 2024].

<sup>4</sup> Gede Rama Agus Sandiasa, Gede Indra Pramana, and Ni Wayan Radita Novi Puspitasari, 2003, 'PERAN GENERASI MILENIAL DALAM PARTISIPASI POLITIK DI INDONESIA DALAM BINGKAI BEHAVIORALISME', *Jurnal Nawala Politika*, 2(2), h. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Isakh Benyamin Manubulu and Komang Pradnya Sudibya, 'ANALISIS KONTEKSTUALITAS KOMUNIKASI POLITIK PEMILIHAN UMUM PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA TAHUN 2019 DARI PERSPEKTIF HUKUM TATA NEGARA', *Kertha Negara: Journal Ilmu Hukum*, 2018, 1-20%8 2018-11–02.

<sup>6</sup> Haryanto, *Partai politik suatu tinjauan umum disusun oleh Haryanto*, Ed.1, cet.1 (Yogyakarta: Yogyakarta Liberti 1984, 2014) <<https://balaiyanpus.jogjaprovo.go.id/opac/detail-opac?id=59279>> [accessed 11 January 2024].

<sup>7</sup> Mengutip pandangan Schattschneider bahwa partai politik menciptakan demokrasi dan demokrasi modern diselamatkan oleh Partai Politik dalam Haryanto, 'Partai Politik dalam Demokrasi: Katalistator atau Predator?', *Jurnal Kementerian Sekretariat Negara*, 37, 2014, h. 139.

Political party leaders often give instructions to their cadres, which is a sign of a change in the quality of democracy in the country. However, in reality, political parties not only serve as an institutional tool for democracy but also as an institution that represents the beliefs of the many volunteers and members of society. Mistakes in understanding party behavior were evident before the 2024 General Election (PEMILU 24). This was highlighted by Megawati Soekarnoputri's intervention, which alluded to President Joko Widodo.<sup>8</sup> Budiman and Tamburian analyzed Megawati's brand image. They assessed her policies as representing the interests of the people<sup>9</sup>. Meanwhile, Dini Safitri viewed Megawati as a symbolic leader<sup>10</sup>. Government organs were provided with interventions by the Regional Head to support the party's vision and mission.<sup>11</sup> Due to intervention by the General Chair of the Party, the bottom-up scheme could not be implemented<sup>12</sup>. According to Lily Romly, party traditions that fail to respect differences of opinion often lead to party elites having the primary role in shaping party policies.<sup>13</sup> The issue of authoritarianism among Indonesia's party elites has sparked concerns regarding the efficacy of democracy within the country's political system. This matter highlights the crucial significance of comprehending political ideologies and their implications.

Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) is an approach introduced by Anna Wierzbicka, a lecturer at the Australian National University.<sup>14</sup> NSM is used to understand the primitive meaning of a word, where primitive refers to the initial meaning of the 'first meaning' of a word that does not easily change even if cultural changes occur.<sup>15,16</sup> The term 'politics' in Indonesia goes beyond its legal interpretation in the 1945 Constitution, Law 2 of 2008 concerning Political Parties ("UU 2/08") and Law 2/2011 concerning Amendments to Law 2/2008 concerning Political Parties ("UU 2/11"). It includes various complex lexical items that are essential in understanding how politics is expressed

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<sup>8</sup> Usep Saeful Kamal and Sadri Sadri, 'Komunikasi Politik Megawati Soekarnoputri Terhadap Kepemimpinan Jokowi Dalam Pemberitaan Metro TV', *AL IMARAH: JURNAL PEMERINTAHAN DAN POLITIK ISLAM*, 8.1 (2023), 21–32 <<https://doi.org/10.29300/imr.v8i1.8080>>.

<sup>9</sup> Jofanny Budiman and H.H. Daniel Tamburian, 'Komunikasi Politik Megawati Dalam Membangun Brand Image Partai', *Koneksi*, 2.2 (2019), 401–8 <<https://doi.org/10.24912/kn.v2i2.3916>>.

<sup>10</sup> Dini Safitri, 'Woman and Political Communication: Megawati Dan Pemimpin Simbolik', *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 9.1 (2014), 49–58.

<sup>11</sup> Andi Aco Agus and others, 'INTERVENSI PARPOL, POLITIK UANG DAN KORUPSI: TANTANGAN KEBIJAKAN PUBLIK SETELAH PILKADA LANGSUNG', *Jurnal Tomalebbi*, 9.2 (2022), 83–91.

<sup>12</sup> Mochamad Atami Ridwan and Fatkhuri Fatkhuri, 'Dinamika Personalisasi Partai Politik Dalam Rekrutmen Bakal Calon Walikota Solo 2020 (Studi Kasus Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDI-P))', *JPW (Jurnal Politik Walisongo)*, 5.1 (2023), 1–16 <<https://doi.org/10.21580/jpw.v5i1.16789>>.

<sup>13</sup> Lili Romli, 'REFORMASI PARTAI POLITIK DAN SISTEM KEPARTAIAN DI INDONESIA | Romli | Jurnal Politika Dinamika Masalah Politik Dalam Negeri Dan Hubungan Internasional', *Jurnal Politika*, 2.2 (2016), 199–271 <<https://doi.org/10.22212/jp.v2i2.292>>.

<sup>14</sup> Rostina Taib and Mulyadi Mulyadi, 'The Interjection of Ômma in the Acehnese Language: A Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach', *Studies in English Language and Education*, 9.3 (2022), 1319. <<https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v9i3.24688>>.

<sup>15</sup> Bandingkan dengan tulisan Cliff Goddard, 'Jesus! Vs. Christ! In Australian English: Semantics, Secondary Interjections and Corpus Analysis', in *Yearbook of Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics 2014: New Empirical and Theoretical Paradigms*, ed. by Jesús Romero-Trillo, Yearbook of Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2014), pp. 55–77 <[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-06007-1\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-06007-1_4)>.

<sup>16</sup> Cliff Goddard, 'The Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach', in *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Analysis*, ed. by Bernd Heine and Heiko Narrog (Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 0 <<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199544004.013.0018>>.

in the party system and representative democracy of Indonesia. According to Cavanagh et al., NSM is a crucial element of thinking<sup>17</sup> Cavanagh et al. define NSM as a fundamental thought unit.

Therefore, NSM is presented as a study of meaning.<sup>18</sup> Effective communication is crucial for any successful conversation. To achieve this, both parties must be able to understand the contextual meaning. It is important to ensure that your message is being interpreted correctly and that the intended meaning is conveyed. By understanding the context, you can avoid misunderstandings and improve the overall quality of communication.<sup>19,20</sup> This enables individuals to use the same words with different meanings, and the shared understanding arises from their interaction.<sup>21,22</sup> The article titled "**Political Concepts Expressed Through The Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach**" confidently delves into the fundamental meaning of politics in Indonesia, within the context of party democracy. The system of party democracy has undergone several transformations over time, and the article aims to explore these various forms and their implications. This journal article delves into two key problem formulations related to Natural Semantic Metalanguage. The first formulation explores the concept of Natural Semantic Metalanguage and seeks to provide a clear understanding of its meaning and significance. The second problem formulation is centered around the use of Natural Semantic Metalanguage to understand the meaning of Political Ideas. Through a thorough examination of these two problem formulations, this journal aims to offer a comprehensive analysis of the Natural Semantic Metalanguage approach and its potential applications in understanding complex concepts related to politics and beyond.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Each article in this book uses studies sourced from primary literature, namely:

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<sup>17</sup> R. F. Cavanagh, Y. Asano-Cavanagh, and W. P. Fisher Jr, 'Natural Semantic Metalanguage as an Approach to Measuring Meaning', *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1379.1 (2019), 012019 <<https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1379/1/012019>>.

<sup>18</sup> Fitri Nilam Noviafni and Jufrizal Jufrizal, 'The Meanings of Word "Didan" In Dari Language: An Analysis of Natural Semantic Metalanguage', *English Language and Literature*, 11.1 (2022), 42–51 <<https://doi.org/10.24036/ell.v11i1.116355>>.

<sup>19</sup> Cavanagh, et al, *Natural Semantic Metalanguage...*, *Op.cit*, h. 3. Lihat juga Fitri Nilam Noviafni dan Jufrizal Jufrizal, *The Meaning...*, *ibid*, h. 42. Bandingkan dengan Cliff Goddard, *The Oxford Handbook...*, *op.cit* dan linguistik kontemporer Bernd Heine dalam Bernd Heine and Heiko Narrog, *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Analysis* (Oxford University Press, 2009) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199544004.001.0001>>.

<sup>20</sup> Fitri Nilam Noviafni dan Jufrizal Jufrizal, *The Meaning...*, *ibid*, dijelaskan bahwa terjadi sebuah hubungan resiprokal antara manusia ketika sedang berkomunikasi, bentuk hubungan resiprokal ini ialah '*talking and understanding*'.

<sup>21</sup> Isakh Benyamin Manubulu, Hildegardis Ina Tona, and Yohana Ati Bui, 'Pergeseran Nilai Pada Tradisi Kumpul Keluarga dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat di Pulau Timor', *Journal of Education Sciences: Fondation & Application*, 2.2 (2023), 1–30 <<https://doi.org/10.161985/jesfa.v2i2.61>>. Dijelaskan bahwa hubungan resiprokal adalah hubungan yang timbul dari rasa saling pengertian untuk mencapai sebuah tujuan bersama.

<sup>22</sup> Ini memiliki kemiripan dengan sebuah prinsip penafsiran yang disebutkan dengan epiktolisme hukum dimana kehadirannya mengesampingkan penilaian terhadap kualitas legislasi yang dianggap tidak sempurna oleh karena keterbatasan pemahaman dari para pembentuk hukumnya melainkan lebih dari sebuah cara untuk memahami seni dalam bertafsir. Dengan kata lain, pembentukan hukum yang tidak sempurna tidak lagi akan berfokus pada penilaian terhadap norma kosong, kabur dan konflik akan tetapi dianggap sebagai sebuah strategi dari pembentuk hukum dalam merumuskan sebuah peraturan. Lihat dalam Isakh Benyamin Manubulu, *Pelebagaan Mahkamah Partai Politik di Indonesia (Pengantar Epiktolisme Hukum)*, 1st edn (Kupang: Tangguh Denara Jaya, 2022).; Isakh Manubulu and Randy Neonbeni, *BAHAN AJAR HUKUM LAUT INTERNASIONAL* (Kupang: Tangguh Denara Jaya, 2023).

- 2.1 Goddard, C. (2009). *The Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach*. In B. Heine & H. Narrog (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Analysis* (p. 0). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199544004.013.0018>

Anna Wierzbicka was analyzed more deeply by Cliff Goddard in his article entitled "Whorf meets Wierzbicka: variation and universals in language and thinking" regarding the comparison between the concept of "universal linguistics". The analysis provided by Cliff offers a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of the meaning of NSM, which is further elaborated by Anna. However, despite the valuable insights presented by both, there are certain limitations in their ideas. Specifically, neither Cliff nor Anna can clearly explain the distinct characteristics and key components that are essential to NSM, thereby leaving some gaps in our understanding of this complex phenomenon.

- 2.2 Goddard, C. (2014). *Jesus! vs. Christ! in Australian English: Semantics, Secondary Interjections and Corpus Analysis*. In J. Romero-Trillo (Ed.), *Yearbook of Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics 2014: New Empirical and Theoretical Paradigms* (pp. 55–77). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-06007-1\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-06007-1_4)

This article serves as a source of inspiration for many local writers in Indonesia, as it urges them to employ the NSM approach to discern the universal meaning of a word. Through his writing, Cliff provides concrete illustrations of how words can be used to portray an unexpected situation. It is noteworthy that the two sentences in question convey identical meanings.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This article was produced utilizing a normative legal research methodology and qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. The employed methods encompassed a statutory approach, a case approach, a sociometric approach, and a natural semantic metalanguage approach. Primary legal materials utilized include the 1945 Constitution, Law 2/08 JO, Law 2/11 concerning Political Parties, and Law 7/17 concerning Elections. The secondary legal material was analyzed through the natural Semantic metalanguage approach by Anna Wierzbicka, which was further explored by Cliff Goddard in his article titled "Whorf meets Wierzbicka: variations and universals in language and thinking" which compares the concept of "universal linguistics" from Lee Whorf (1897-1941) and Anna Wierzbicka (1938)<sup>23</sup>. Additional research sources included the Oxford Law Dictionary, Stanford Journal of Law, and various other information.

### 4. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 The Brief Concept of Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM)

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<sup>23</sup> Cliff Goddard, 'Whorf Meets Wierzbicka: Variation and Universals in Language and Thinking', *Language Sciences*, 25.4 (2003), 393–432 <[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0388-0001\(03\)00002-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0388-0001(03)00002-0)>.

Anna Wierzbicka introduced the concept of NSM as a way to identify the universal meaning of a word.<sup>24</sup> NSM stands for Natural Semantic Metalanguage Theory,<sup>25</sup> which aims to use a single criterion to simplify the meaning of a word.<sup>26</sup> The communicator's subjectivity is taken into account, so the meaning of a word can vary depending on the context of communication.<sup>27</sup> NSM follows a pattern of narrowing down the context of meaning and manipulating language,<sup>28</sup> similar to the role and reference grammar theory developed by William A. Foley and Robert van Valin, Jr. in the 1980s.<sup>29</sup> This approach aims to find the true meaning of a word. Khrisnantara and Nengah identified three concepts in NSM theory that are relevant to lexical meaning: original meaning, incompositional polysemy, and universal syntax.<sup>30</sup> Cliff Goddard described NSM as the fundamental lexicon-semantic primes of a word.<sup>31</sup> This means that the use of a word can produce contextual meaning depending on the topic. Therefore, the NSM approach aims to find a universal meaning that can be accepted for the use of a word.

It is interesting to note that NSM (Natural Semantic Metalanguage) has a unique approach that differs from other word interpretation methods such as molecular semantics, semantic templates, RRG, or other types of lexical interpretation, as it is only specific to words that arise from language contact, also known as "lexical interference". This approach is continuously practiced to achieve language integration. Additionally, using polysemy analysis<sup>32</sup> is one way to prove the existence of NSM. To understand the semantic core of a word, it is necessary to examine the meaning relationships between words.<sup>33</sup> In Indonesia, the NSM approach is used to examine the forms of word interference that arise as a result of language contact. For example, the word "cut" in Dengka<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> 'Nsm-Approach.Net – A Resource Base of Publications Using the Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach. 1,100+ Detailed Notices, and Counting!' <<https://nsm-approach.net/>> [accessed 17 January 2024].

<sup>25</sup> I. Gde Yudhi Argangga Khrisnantara and I. Nengah Sudipa, 'STRUKTUR SEMANTIK VERBA "MEMBAWA" BAHASA OSING BANYUWANGI', *LINGUA: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya*, 19.2 (2022), 107–12 <<https://doi.org/10.30957/lingua.v19i2.610>>.

<sup>26</sup> Khrisnantara, I.G.Y.A., *Struktur Semantik Verba...*, *ibid*, h. 108. Dijelaskan bahwa NSM digunakan untuk mendefinisikan kata-kata kompleks dalam sebuah makna yang lebih primitif.

<sup>27</sup> Maftukhin Ariefian, Salsabilla Syifa Syahirah, and Herpindo Herpindo, 'PEMAKNAAN LEKSIKON KEKERABATAN PADA BAHASA JAWA YANG TELAH TERINTEGRASI KE DALAM BAHASA INDONESIA: KAJIAN NATURAL SEMANTIC METALANGUAGE', *MABASAN*, 17.2 (2023), 299–326 <<https://doi.org/10.62107/mab.v17i2.788>>.

<sup>28</sup> Fenomena lain yang turut menjadi perhatian ialah interferensi bahasa yang muncul akibat kontak bahasa, dimana kemudian sebuah kata digunakan secara lebih dominan yang berujung pada integrasi bahasa. NSM mengkaji secara mendalam arti dasar dari sebuah kata. Hal ini juga berkenaan dengan manipulasi bahasa dalam Miftahulkhairah Anwar and others, 'The Analysis Model of Impolite Indonesian Language Use', *Linguistics and Culture Review*, 5.S3 (2021), 1426–41 <<https://doi.org/10.21744/lingcure.v5nS3.1840>>.

<sup>29</sup> Ribayatul Adawiyah, 'Verba Tindakan Nosi 'Membawa' Bahasa Bima: Kajian Metabahasa Semantik Alami', *MABASAN*, 15.2 (2021), 273—290-273—290 <<https://doi.org/10.62107/mab.v15i2.461>>.

<sup>30</sup> Khrisnantara, I.G.Y.A dan Nengah, I., *Struktur Semantik Verba...*, *op.cit*, h. 109.

<sup>31</sup> Goddard, (2009), *The Natural Semantic...*, *op.cit*, h.461.

<sup>32</sup> Sebuah studi relasi antar kata yang menghasilkan makna ganda.

<sup>33</sup> Zulfatun Anisah, 'POLISEMI PADA WACANA HUMOR INDONESIA LAWAK KLUB', *Al Hikmah: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 6.2 (2016), h.152-153. <<https://doi.org/10.36835/hjsk.v6i2.2804>>.

<sup>34</sup> Sebuah wilayah di Pulau Rote, dulunya disebut sebagai 'Nusak Dengka' sebuah kerajaan yang diakui pada masa Pemerintahan Belanda Isakh Benyamin Manubulu, *506 Tahun Jejak Otonomi di Pulau Rote, Jilid 1. Tersesat dalam Pemahaman Nusak*, Tangguh Denara Jaya (Kupang: Tangguh Denara Jaya, 2023) <<https://repository.tangguhdenarajaya.com/publications/563090/506-tahun-jejak-otonomi-di-pulau-rote-jilid-1-tersepat-dalam-pemahaman-nusak>>.

is called "soe, ga'e, ete, fa'a,"<sup>35</sup> and the action verb "hurt" contains various meanings, namely 'uta', 'tati', 'mbau', 'donggi'.<sup>36</sup> The analysis of the linguistic correlation between 'kukuru'u' and 'lu'u' uses the presupposed meaning of 'presupposed meaning', which both contain the meaning of sitting and not doing something.<sup>37</sup> The term 'damage' in Balinese is expressed as 'uwug', 'remuk', 'benyah', 'lidek', 'dekdek'<sup>38</sup>, and the meaning of the word 'eat' in Manggarai is conveyed through words like 'hang', 'lampong', 'jumik', and 'mboros'.<sup>39</sup> These intertwined words are universal and describe certain situations. However, the word "cutting" in Dengka does not have a universal term but is based on empirical experience. This term has developed into various words such as 'so'e', 'ga'e', 'ete', and 'fa'a'.

Anna Wierzbicha proposes the concept of universal humanity to explain the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM), which is a universal linguistic system. According to her, the story of Babel represents more than just the fall of humanity's arrogance in building a tower to the heavens; it also serves as an illustration of a strong linguistic system. The NSM approach enables effective communication without the need for maximum use of a natural language. This is achieved through the correlation between a series of words that produce a standardized meaning, which can be compared to other languages and is free from semantic ambiguity. The NSM approach can also be applied to understand the meaning of 'politics' in democratic practice in Indonesia. Despite being used in various contexts related to democracy, the term 'politics' remains ambiguous and is accepted as a given by the system of party democracy and representative democracy adopted in the Indonesian government. The lack of proper understanding of the term by politicians gives rise to political movements such as authoritarianism in the party space. This analysis leads to the conclusion that NSM or MSA is a primitive symbolic approach to the meaning of a word, which allows a word to be represented in various forms depending on the context of the communication taking place.

#### 4.2 Political Ideas in the Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach

It is crucial to have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the fundamental meaning of any word, as this facilitates the construction of relevant and meaningful sentences. For instance, the concept of politics is a fascinating topic to explore, given that it has undergone a significant transformation in meaning over time. Previously, politics was understood as a reciprocal

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<sup>35</sup> Efron Erwin Yohanes Loe, 'Verba Memotong Bahasa Rote Dialek Dengka: Kajian Meta Semantik Alami (Msa)', *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 1.2 (2015), 403–12 <<https://doi.org/10.22225/jr.1.2.44.403-412>>.

<sup>36</sup> Efron Erwin Yohanis Loe, 'VERBA "MELUKAI" DALAM BAHASA ROTE DIALEK DENGKA: KAJIAN META SEMANTIK ALAMI (MSA)', *SASDAYA: Gadjah Mada Journal of Humanities*, 1.2 (2017), 219–34 <<https://doi.org/10.22146/sasdayajournal.27783>>.

<sup>37</sup> Haniva Yunita Leo, 'PENGUNAAN ANTCONC DALAM ANALISIS MAKNA KUKURU'U DAN LU'U SEBAGAI PADANAN STAY AT HOME DALAM BAHASA MELAYU KUPANG', *Jurnal Lingo*, 2.2 (2020), 142–58. Dijelaskan bahwa makna *kukuru'u* dan *lu'u* berdasarkan analisis kolokasi korpus bahasa melayu kupang bermakna aktifitas yang dilakukan dengan cara duduk dan dilakukan dalam sebuah bangunan.

<sup>38</sup> Ni Wayan Swarniti, 'The Meaning of The Verb "Destroy" in the Balinese Language: A Natural Semantic Meta Language Approach', *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, english, 25.3 (2021), 292–98.

<sup>39</sup> Tobias Gunas, Sebastianus Menggo, and Yosefina Helenora Jem, 'The Verbs with the Notion of Eating in Manggarai Language: Natural Semantic Metalanguage Analysis', *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 7.2 (2021), 191–200 <<https://doi.org/10.22225/jr.7.2.3826.191-200>>.

relationship,<sup>40,41</sup> but it has now evolved into an organizational structure that shows a clear hierarchy of superior-subordinate relationships.<sup>42</sup> In a previous article, the implications of subordinate relations were analyzed in the context of politics, and it was concluded that such an understanding can lead to the growth of authoritarianism. This, in turn, can undermine and discredit the value of democracy, which is built on the principles of equality and freedom. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the meaning of politics is crucial for anyone who wishes to engage in discussions and debates about this topic, and for those who want to promote and uphold democratic values.

Indonesia's legal system considers politics as the primary means to occupy a strategic position in the government. This strategic position is highly coveted, and many political parties employ various methods to eliminate their opponents or parties that do not align with their political vision. As a result, the presence of political parties adds a layer of complexity to the meaning of politics. On the one hand, political parties can help implement democracy in a more focused manner by representing different interests and viewpoints. However, competition among political parties can also create tension and division within society, leading to political polarization and conflict.

This analysis raises an important question about the meaning of politics in a democratic country. Does politics solely serve as a means to gain power and influence, or does it also serve as a platform to advance the collective interests of the people? Furthermore, how can political parties balance the desire to win elections with the need to promote unity and cooperation among citizens? These are critical questions that require thoughtful consideration and dialogue among all members of society. Various interpretations of politics have been advanced by legal scholars, among them Budiman, who views politics as a 'sign of equality' where 'similarity' pertains to our curiosity about 'who we are?' (our true identity) and 'what we want to become?' (our aspirations). Budiman argues that politics is a means of expressing individual identity. Likewise, Manneke describes cultural identity as a unique attribute of the Indonesian nation.<sup>43</sup> Ahmad Muhajir and Febriyantika Wulandari have a different perspective on political ideas compared to Yuki Fukuoka. While Fukuoka's analysis claims that the political shift in Indonesia towards liberal democracy was a mistake, Ahmad and Febriyantika believe that the consolidation of an illiberal democratic system, in the form of oligarchic democracy, is currently being implemented in Indonesia.<sup>44</sup> This phenomenon

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<sup>40</sup> Isakh B. Manubulu, Randy V. Neonbeni, and Anak Agung Gede Agung Indra Prathama, 'Dikotomi Pendekatan Keadilan Restoratif Pada Lembaga Kejaksaan Dan Kepolisian Republik Indonesia', *Jurnal Restorative Justice*, 7.2 (2023), 209–30 <<https://doi.org/10.35724/jrj.v7i2.5778>>.

<sup>41</sup> Manubulu, Tona, and Bui, *Pergeseran Nilai Tradisi...*, *Loc.cit.* lebih diperdalam terkait analisis hubungan resiprokal.

<sup>42</sup> Isakh Benyamin Manubulu and Ni Luh Gede Astriyani, 'KRITIK KELEMAHAN KONFIGURASI Pandangan Ekonsentris Pada Protocol Additional To The Geneva Conventions 1949', *Kertha Semaya: Journal Ilmu Hukum*, 10.8 (2022), h.1886 <<https://doi.org/10.24843/KS.2022.v10.i08.p14>>. Dijelaskan terkait dengan sebuah hubungan dalam struktur organisasi dimana terdapat petinggi dan bawahan.

<sup>43</sup> Manneke Budiman, 'Jatidiri Budaya Dalam Proses National Building di Indonesia, Mengubah Kendala Menjadi Aset', *Jurnal Wacana*, 1.1 (1999), h.12.

<sup>44</sup> Ahmad Muhajir and Febriyantika Wulandari, 'Demokrasi Oligarkis Dan Resesi Demokrasi Di Indonesia Pasca-Suharto: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah Politik', *Warisan: Journal of History and Cultural Heritage*, 4.1 (2023), 1–10 <<https://doi.org/10.34007/warisan.v4i1.1876>>.



leads to a new interpretation of politics, which is no longer about identity, but rather the implementation of primordial democracy.<sup>45</sup>

The presence of a political party has a profound influence on the concept of politics due to the organizational structure that necessitates clear roles for each member. This broadens the definition of politics beyond the mere representation of interests, consolidation of power, quantification of influence, or the overthrow of power that does not align with the will of the people. In the Indonesian context, the organizational system of political parties will be a significant factor in the 2024 General Election. This is attributable to the shift in support by President Joko Widodo from his party, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), to Prabowo Sugianto, his political adversary in the 2019 Presidential election.<sup>46</sup> In response to Joko Widodo's political behavior, which was considered to be a threat to the party's interests, Megawati Soekarnoputri, who holds the position of General Chair of the PDI-P Central Leadership Council ("DPP"), took action. The move sparked discussions and concerns among party members and observers about the level of authoritarianism within the PDI-P. It remains unclear what specific actions were taken by Megawati Soekarnoputri and how they affected the party's internal dynamics.<sup>47,48</sup> Megawati's insights on a significant phenomenon underscore the critical role of grassroots culture in safeguarding and advancing democracy.

She highlights that culture can be a potent weapon in protecting people when an authoritarian regime takes charge of a country. Megawati empathizes with the difficulties and despair that people face under such circumstances. To counteract this, she stresses the need for a leader who can connect with the people, trust them, and be committed to the grassroots philosophy to gather strength and uphold democracy. According to Megawati, the grassroots philosophy is the foundation of democracy's promotion and protection, and it embodies the concept of 'strength' in politics. Her pragmatic and effective approach is vital in ensuring democracy's security against authoritarianism. By emphasizing the importance of grassroots culture, Megawati's approach aims to fortify democracy and make it resilient in the long run. Her visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to the grassroots philosophy set a new standard for promoting democracy, making it sustainable and effective in every situation. Megawati recognizes the significance of democracy and believes that it is the people who can make it robust.<sup>49</sup>

The NSM approach helps to understand the true meaning of political ideas. Legal experts who view politics as "interests" align with the NSM approach. However, politics is not limited to just

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<sup>45</sup> Demokrasi primordial mengacu pada sistem regenerasi kepemimpinan yang berdasarkan pada ikatan genealogis.

<sup>46</sup> Manubulu and Sudibya, *Analisis Kontekstualitas...*, *Op.cit*, h. 3.

<sup>47</sup> 'Megawati Sebut Kultur Otoriter Lahirkan Nepotisme', *Republika Online*, 2023 <<https://republika.co.id/share/s40alu436>> [accessed 21 January 2024].

<sup>48</sup> 'Megawati Jelaskan Filosofi Akar Rumput Saat Hadapi Rezim Otoriter' <<https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20240110114031-32-1047585/megawati-jelaskan-filosofi-akar-rumput-saat-hadapi-rezim-otoriter>> [accessed 21 January 2024].

<sup>49</sup> Muhammad Hafiz, 'The Concept of the Influence of Political Change on the Development of Islamic Education', *HISTORICAL: Journal of History and Social Sciences*, 2.4 (2023), h.190.<<https://doi.org/10.58355/historical.v2i4.92>>, Dijelaskan bahwa politik merupakan pengaruh, kedudukan dan kekuasaan. Lihat juga politik transaksional sebagai sebuah upaya untuk mendukung keberlanjutan kepemimpinan sesuai dengan konsolidasi demokrasi tipe illiberal dalam Arinta Eka Putri and others, 'Problematika Pendanaan Partai Politik Dan Munculnya Politik Transaksional Dengan Kajian Epistemologi?', *Gudang Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu*, 1.6 (2023), h.240 <<https://doi.org/10.59435/gjmi.v1i6.192>>.

"interests" but also encompasses democratic behavior related to power, position, culture, leadership, sustainability, benefits, influence, and relationships. The NSM approach provides clarity about politics through a semantic allegory.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Examining politics from different perspectives can provide unique insights. By using the NSM approach, the complex definition of politics can be simplified to help political parties better understand its meaning and reduce disappointment from political behavior. This can create a system that ensures sustainable democracy, rather than just embodying it. However, there is currently debate surrounding illiberal, authoritarian democracy and its role in the upcoming 2024 elections. Despite this, it is important to recognize that this phenomenon is a response from a democratic society. The text discusses politics from different perspectives and how the NSM approach can simplify its meaning to reduce disappointment. The simplified definition can help ensure the sustainability of democracy. The text also mentions the phenomenon of illiberal, authoritarian democracy as a response from a democratic society ahead of the 2024 elections.

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