

# Rhetorical Analysis of Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto at the 2019 Presidential Election Open Debate

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**Abstract:** The discourse on the rhetoric of the presidential candidates became one of the most discussed topics in the 2019 presidential election. As in the 2014 presidential election, Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto were considered to have very different rhetorical styles. Joko Widodo has a relaxed rhetorical style while Prabowo Subianto has a firmer rhetorical style. The problem is the discourse and study of the presidential rhetoric focusing more on aspects of delivery and style. Rhetoric is even more meaningful as a speaking skill. Even though the rhetoric discourse is actually more than that. There are many aspects that are also related, starting from the preparation stage to the delivery. This article is written based on research that was carried out with the aim of obtaining a comprehensive description of the rhetoric of Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto in the 2019 Presidential Election Debate. The rhetorical analysis was carried out not only on the application of ethos, pathos and logos but also the application of five canons of rhetoric by both presidential candidates.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

A piece of the 2014 presidential election history occurred again in 2019. Joko Widodo again faced Prabowo Subianto in the president's open debate. Ricky and Rejeki's research (2014) states that at the 2014 open debate, Prabowo Subianto was seen as having superior rhetorical abilities compared to Joko Widodo. The same research results concluded that Prabowo's ethos looked hard, firm, authoritative, while Jokowi looked simple, worked hard, and was patient. Pathos from Prabowo emphasized the data he got from the KPK chairman, while Jokowi used his experience of 'blusukan' to attract emotions or attention from his audience. The logos from Prabowo still use the opinion of the chairman of the KPK regarding the leakage of state wealth (Ricky and Rejeki, 2014).

More or less the same assessment was given by many observers about the style of the two presidential candidates in the presidential election 2019. Various views on presidential rhetoric, seem to oversimplify the rhetoric simply as a speech delivery technique, or style of speech. True rhetoric is not just a technique of delivering speeches. Logically a person will not be

able to deliver a speech well if he does not master various other knowledge, ranging from art, culture, economy, politics, language and even statistics.

So that it is not excessive if YB Manguwijaya (in Rachmat, 2000) says,

We usually think of rhetoric as negative, as if rhetoric was only the art of propaganda, with good words that sounded but doubted the truth of the contents. Though the original meaning of rhetoric is far more profound, namely the expansion of the highest talents of man, namely ratio and taste through language as the ability to communicate in the field of thought. To be victorious lords in the battle of minds. Then the rhetoric becomes the subject of the axis for the emancipation of man to be the master and mother "

Starting from the description above, a study conducted with the aim of obtaining a comprehensive description of the presidential rhetoric in open debate will provide a different perspective and provide deeper insight into the presidential figure by not being trapped in the style of speaking but also giving an overall picture about the presidential figure is important to do to provide enrichment for the study of Rhetoric as a branch of science in the discipline of communication.

## 2 THEORITICAL

Much research has been done on the rhetoric of presidential candidates. However, these studies focus more on the application of ethos, pathos and logos than just presidential candidates. Some of them are the research of Widyawardhani (2016) entitled *Rhetorical Analysis in President Donald Trump's Inaugural Speech*; Savoy's research (2018) with the title *Analysis of the Style and The Rhetoric of the 2016 US Presidential Primaries*. And the research of Ricky and Rejeki (2014) entitled *Comparison of Prabowo Subianto's and Joko Widodo's Rhetoric in 2014 Presidential Candidate Debate* (2014 *Presidential Candidate Debate Study Study on Economic Development and Social Welfare*).

Cicero (in Burke, 2016) describes that in a rhetorical activity there are at least five aspects (five canons) that must be considered, namely:

- (1) *invention: the generating or discovering of linguistic material to be used later;*
- (2) *disposition: the ordering of selected parts of that material for the best persuasive effect;*
- (3) *stylization: giving attention to (i) the clarity of grammar, (ii) the appropriateness of discourse, and (iii) the persuasive nature of style figures, namely schemes and tropes;*
- (4) *memorization: the cognitive acquisition of structured techniques for remembering ordered materials/arguments; and*
- (5) *delivery: the oral delivery of language with a focus on pitch, duration, voice, etc. and paralinguistic aspects such as bodily movement, stance, gestures and facial expression.*

For Cicero, ethos pathos and logos taught by Aristotle, who is also his teacher, are only part of the first stage, namely invention. Aristotle is one of the more pragmatic figures of rhetoric in setting limits on rhetoric. Aristotle said that rhetoric is a scientific discipline that addresses "all the available means of persuasion".

## 3 METHOD

This research is a media text research, in this case the text in the form of Open Debate coverage in the 2019 Presidential Election which was broadcast on national television. The data source used is a video recording of the Presidential Debate that was downloaded from Youtube. Data collection techniques were carried out through qualitative content analysis by observing the application of five canons of rhetoric by both presidential candidates. Besides analyzing video

debates, in order to complete the required data, researchers also conducted an analysis of media coverage about the events of the presidential candidate debate. Research data analysis was carried out using descriptive data analysis. Arikunto (1993: 209) states that descriptive data analysis can be done by grouping data into two, namely qualitative data in the form of words or sentences and quantitative data in the form of numbers. To increase the level of reliability of the data, the validity / authenticity test was carried out using the theory of triangulation.

## 4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analyzing a rhetorical activity such as the open debate of presidential candidates who draw high attention from the public certainly cannot simply put rhetoric as an activity of speaking in public. Related to this, Burke (Burke, 2016: 1) said that, "rhetoric, a branch of linguistics concerning speech quality, writing style and persuasive discourse, is not a simple sub-discipline to define." Although it still emphasizes the quality of speech, style writing and discourse on persuasion, Burke acknowledges that rhetoric is not an easily defined science. Conducting public speaking, actually requires behind the scenes activities that are not simple. Especially when it comes to rhetorical activities in an open presidential debate.

The style of speech, intonation, posture that appears in an open debate is only the peak of the series of preparatory icebergs that surrounds the event. With reference to Cicero's thought which mentions at least five canons that are important to note in a rhetorical activity, this paper will further describe these five stages by directly collaborating with data obtained based on news text analysis and data obtained from analysis debate video.

### Showing Work Results vs. Correcting Work Errors: Material War of Two Presidential Candidates

The first stage of the five canons of rhetoric is the invention: the generating or discovering of linguistic materials to be used later (in Burke, 2016: 2). At this stage, the two presidential candidates seemed to be well prepared. The National Campaign Team (TKN) Joko Widodo (Jokowi) formed a special team to prepare everything needed to support the success of the candidates. Arigi (2019) in the news he wrote, stated that there were eleven figures from various backgrounds, such as former presenters, politicians, and creative industry activists who helped

Jokowi prepare for his appearance in an open debate. They were given various tasks ranging from reviewing the debating rules of the General Election Commission (KPU), preparing the debate material, to polishing the speaking style of the pairs of candidates for president and vice president.

Regarding the material prepared, in his statement delivered before the fifth debate, Jokowi said that he did not need special preparation because all material was based on what he had done. "Yes, we will convey only the practices later, without theories, I will answer all questions,"

Meanwhile in the Prabowo stronghold, the National Winning Agency (BPN) has also prepared candidates it supports by involving national figures who also come from various backgrounds. BPN's Material and Debate Director Sudirman Said said, "Being a challenger must come up with a better offer to be attractive. We call it the repair room. "

The statement from Jokowi and Sudirman Said about how the material was arranged and prepared is an illustration of the second stage of the five canons of rhetoric, disposition. Cicero (in Burke, 2016) said that disposition is the ordering of selected parts of that material for the best persuasive effect.

In line with the common theme of the material presented, namely the results of work and system improvements, in the course of the debate, the two candidates were consistent to be on each of the themes raised. Jokowi raised the vision of Indonesia Maju (Going forward) in the first debate while Prabowo raised the vision of Indonesia Menang (Winning). With the vision of Indonesia going Forward, Jokowi outlined his commitment to solving human rights and indiscriminate law enforcement. While with the vision of Indonesia Winning, Prabowo explained that so far the development indicators in Indonesia are still in the middle. For this reason, it is necessary to improve law enforcement and human rights by ensuring the welfare of law enforcers so that corruptors are not easily bribed. Therefore the State must control economic resources so that it can realize security for all and prosperity for all. Not far from the first debate, the statements of the two presidential candidates in the fifth debate also showed consistency on the main themes of the material raised. Joko Widodo showed a variety of results of his work, while Prabowo made many statements saying that the ongoing development had gone wrong because it caused the country's wealth to flow overseas so it had to be repaired.

### **Busyness on the Back Stage: Rows of Experts for Jokowi and Prabowo Subianto**

The next three stages of the five canons of rhetoric are memorization, which is a structured cognitive technique for remembering the arrangement of material and arguments, oral delivery with a focus on tone, duration, sound, etc. and paralinguistic aspects such as body movements, eye gaze, gestures and facial expressions (Burke, 2016). These stages are closely related to what has been interpreted as public speaking. How do candidates, remember, convey and then present themselves on stage.

To prepare for this stage, each team involves many experts to help the candidates perform optimally. There are 11 experts in the Jokowi National Campaign Team and 8 experts in the Prabowo National Winning Agency. A number of former television presenters can be found in the ranks of expert Jokowi. One of them is Tina Talisa, who serves as Deputy Director for Women's Voters in the National Campaign Team (TKN). Tina was also involved in preparing Jokowi's appearance during the 2014 presidential election. In this 2019 debate, Tina was tasked with polishing Jokowi and his deputies mainly on the content of the debate material and the method of delivery. "Because the purpose of the debate certainly gives the public an opportunity to hear the substance and also how to deliver the substance itself," Tina Talisa told Tempo, Tuesday, January 8, 2019.

In addition to Tina Talisa there are still a series of names of former presenters such as Meutya Hafidz and Putra Nababan who are also tasked with polishing the speaking style of the candidates. "Polishing is not only done in terms of content but appearance because we know the time available in the debate is short, gimmick then marketing gimmick," said Jokowi-Ma'ruf National Campaign Team Advisor M Romahurmuziy (Prastiwi, 2019).

If Jokowi's National Campaign Team involves many former TV presenters, the Prabowo National Winning Agency prefers to consult with former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), as well as several other figures such as Amien Rais. According to SBY, Prabowo and Sandiaga must attract the sympathy and hearts of the people during the debate. This is because, voters are not people in the debate, but they are Indonesian people who are not in the debate room.

### **Show Time: Defend and Attack**

Based on observations during the first and last debates, it appears that Joko Widodo used a lot of

tools to explain the material he delivered. The memorization phase is carried out by Jokowi by preparing notes including using three kinds of magic cards which are the mainstay of the program, namely Pre-Work Cards, Smart Indonesia Cards and Grocery Cards. Meanwhile, Prabowo uses more memories and relies on rhetorical words.

The choice of memorization style that is assisted by visual media makes Jokowi have a considerable variety of material and data when compared to Prabowo who is auditory or relies on words and memory. One of the indications is seen in the issue of leakage of state finances which Prabowo often repeated on several occasions.

On the other hand, although Prabowo appeared to lack knowledge of the data, Prabowo showed a more confident style than Jokowi. Standing body attitude, with a full suit, hand gestures on the stand, hand gestures honoring military style, showed a positive paralinguistic from Prabowo. On the other hand, although Jokowi has data and visual aids that appear to be well prepared and try to display a relaxed style, Jokowi often shows paralinguistic expressions of anxiety or tension. For example, during the debate Jokowi often played cufflinks on the long-sleeved white shirt he wore, several times rubbing his face and so on. Thus from the paralinguistic aspect, Jokowi showed a more defensive attitude while Prabowo's body position was better prepared to attack.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Rhetoric activity is not a simple activity as a mere public speaking activity, but a series of activities that require careful preparation, including preparation of material, to the delivery. This is at least proved in the 2019 presidential election open debates involving many experts and preparation of both the material and its presentation.

If described using the five canons of rhetoric, the rhetoric of the two candidates has different characteristics. The two main themes that tend to contradict give a fairly thick color at the five stages of rhetoric used. Jokowi who carries the vision of Indonesia Forward, always strives to bring a relaxed style that relies on data and visual aids. But in terms of paralinguistic, behind the relaxed style that is

trying to be displayed, Jokowi also often brings up movements that show that he is not confident, for example, often playing or fixing his cuffs. While Prabowo, although he seemed to lack knowledge of the data and only relied on auditory skills, seemed to always appear with a gesture that signaled high self-confidence.

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