

Analysis of the Political Communication Rhetoric of President Joko Widodo in Influencing Voters' Decisions in the 2024 Presidential Election

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

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This research analyzes the rhetoric of political communication carried out by President Joko Widodo to influence audiences in the 2024 presidential election. Rhetoric as the art of speaking in front of the public aims for communicators to find tools of persuasion to the public. This research examines Jokowi's rhetoric in Ethos, Pathos, Logos in speeches and press conferences before the 2024 presidential election which can affect the preference of people's voting decisions. The method used in this research is qualitative content analysis, by analyzing the content of the communicator's message. Based on thirteen data presented, the results show that Jokowi who uses deliberative rhetoric with the analysis of Ethos, Pathos, Logos can influence voters implicitly and win one of Jokowi's favored candidates.

1. Introduction

Political communication is an important instrument in the political process. To achieve effective communication, a technique is needed to achieve this effectiveness, one of which is by using rhetoric. Rhetoric by definition can be interpreted as the ability to find the tools of persuasion available in every situation faced (Aristoteles, n.d.). Rhetoric as the art of speech is a form of communication that can be interpreted as delivering messages to influence the audience while still paying attention to the message being conveyed. (Yulian Anggini & Putra, 2022).

Aristotle as the originator of rhetoric theory divides three types of persuasive rhetoric. First, Deliberative (political) is persuasive for appeals and prohibitions, meaning that the orator invites to do something or prevents doing something. Second, Forensic (informative) contains information to defend or attack someone with a past orientation, usually used in court. Third, Demonstrative (ceremonial) is usually done to praise or denounce someone and is oriented to the present (Sulistiyani & Zainal, 2020). These three types can be used to persuade others with a deepening of rhetoric.

Rhetoric is needed in the political communication process. Aristotle also suggested that political communication gambling focuses on delivery (speech) that can influence people (audience). The model is commonly called rhetorical. This political communication model has three basic elements in speaker and audience communication: speaker, message, and audience (Pontoon & Loho, 2023). Political communication with rhetoric will be effective in influencing. The general public, it can help the political process.

President Joko Widodo as the central figure of the Indonesian government certainly has considerable influence in every speech and policy. It can be proven by President Joko Widodo's high approval rating. According to Analytical Research Data, 81.7 percent of people are satisfied with the performance carried out by President Joko Widodo and as many as 9.3 percent are very satisfied with his leadership. People tend to choose candidates for presidential and vice presidential pairs who are

the most capable of continuing President Joko Widodo's policies and programs (Analitika, 2024). In this case, the President's alignment has the potential to influence the decision of the wider community in choosing the candidate for the presidential-vice presidential pair, even though in the end the President did not openly support certain candidates, but public could capture the message expressed implicitly by President Joko Widodo.

Based on the background description above, this research focuses on the rhetoric of political communication carried out by President Joko Widodo as a form of persuasive communication to voters in the 2024 Election. This research comprehensively analyzes President Joko Widodo's various political communications with qualitative methods based on Aristotle's rhetoric theory which focuses on the elements of Ethos, Phatos, and Logos. This rhetorical triangle concept is oriented towards Ethos (personality and branding of the communicator), Pathos (emotions and character of the communicator), and Logos (rhetorical message format) (Maarif, 2015). This research will analyze Jokowi's political communication in the year leading up to the election to understand its influence on voters' decisions by examining the rhetorical triangle.

2. Method

The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative approach using content analysis techniques. Descriptive qualitative methods are generally used in the social sciences and also fields related to problems related to human behavior and roles. This can help researchers to reveal in detail the complexity behind the phenomenon (S. Hidayat, 2021). Content analysis is a systematic method for analyzing the content of messages conveyed and analyzing the behavior of communicators in open communication. This method can provide a new view to reveal implicit information as well as explicit information.

The key instrument used for this research is based on observations of a series of speeches and press conferences conducted by President Joko Widodo two years before the 2024 Election as primary data. The use of the content analysis method through a descriptive qualitative approach aims to identify patterns of political communication conveyed through speeches and press conferences of communicators that can have an impact on voter decisions, which the data revealed above that President Joko Widodo's approval rating is in line with influencing efforts.

This research samples the subject's political communication two years before the General Election in 2024. The object of this research data collection is to search the literature, observe, and utilize written documentation, archives, news, recorded speeches, and press conferences which are considered to have strong potential to persuade people's voting decisions in accordance with what President Joko Widodo wants implicitly. By using the content analysis technique, it can facilitate the author in using rhetorical theory.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Results

Political Communication as an instrument of democracy is carried out by political actors who can potentially influence individual political preferences in making choices in elections. Based on the background above, getting data that the high level of public trust and satisfaction with President Joko Widodo can be utilized to win the hearts of the public. One of the things that is done to achieve this target is to carry out rhetoric and communicate with the public about the political situation ahead of the 2024 Election. Although Jokowi is no longer running as a candidate in the 2024 presidential election, his influence will remain large as a political actor (T. Hidayat, 2023). That way, Jokowi's political communication can be analyzed using Aristotle's rhetoric theory.

Aristotle in his book, explains that rhetoric is a blend of logic and the ethical branch of political science, partly similar to dialectics and partly similar to the introduction of politics. (Mozefani et al., 2020). According to the author, President Joko Widodo knows and practices rhetoric in every speech. Thus, each subject's speech is qualified with meaning as a form of the art of speaking. Jokowi is not only good at playing words but also has gestures and facial expressions that are not rigid so that the public can easily capture the contents of Jokowi's message.

Rhetoric is an in-depth theory that focuses on persuasive matters including rhetorical arguments, essentially how energy is transmitted with words, and analyzes how people receive and respond (Ichwan et al., 2023). Thus, this research will analyze the political communication carried out by President Joko Widodo that has the potential to influence people's voting decisions using the theory of the rhetorical triangle, namely Ethos, Pathos, and Logos (Triumvirate). According to Aristotle, there are two meanings of persuasion: inartistic proofs are essential evidence that is not created by the communicator, such as documents and witness testimony. Artistic proofs are internal evidence made by the communicator, in the form of logic or logos, namely arguments in speech. Ethical or ethos is the communicator's in an ethical manner that is visible and Emotional or pathos is the feelings that are depicted (Arindita & Hartanto, 2018).

Ethos

Ethos refers to the character, intelligence, and desire or goodwill perceived by the communicator. According to Aristotle, Ethos has a strong influence by showing achievement, track record, example, and proficiency in self-branding (Syahrir, n.d.). We trust communicators because of the appeal of credibility, meaning the characterization of a person. Joko Widodo the 7th President of the Republic of Indonesia has great influence, supported by a high approval rating that reached 79.5% before the election according to data from the Indikator Politik Indonesia survey institute (Indikator Politik, 2024).



Figure 1. President Joko Widodo's Performance Satisfaction Survey (28 January – 4 February 2024)
(Indikator Politik, 2024)

In exerting his influence, President Joko Widodo can use his authority to convince others. Jokowi utilizes various opportunities for speeches and press conferences to carry out political communication rhetoric activities.



Figure 2. President Joko Widodo’s Speech at 8th Anniversary of the Perindo Party, November 22, 2022

“Saya ini dua kali walikota, di Solo menang. Kemudian ditarik ke Jakarta Gubernur sekalai menang. Kemudian dua kali di Pemilu Presiden menang. Mohon maaf pak Prabowo. Kelihatannya setelah ini jatahnya pak Prabowo.”

On one occasion Jokowi proudly wanted to show that he had credibility. In the Ethos analysis, Jokowi tries to convince the public that he has done many things to reach his current position. It can be argued that In every political competition, he has the ability to win the game, as evidenced by his statistically 100% win rate. Rhetorically, Jokowi tries to display his influence as someone who has a firm and populist character so that people are fascinated. Through the sentence above Jokowi implies that his position as President has a desire to continue the legacy through Mr. Prabowo.



Figure 3. President Joko Widodo's Speech at PAN Ramadan Gathering, April 3, 2023

“Apalagi kalau datang ke saya, dalam membangun koalisi semuanya udah disetujui Presiden. Loh urusannya apa saya, gada urusannya. Ya kalo saya ditanya saya jawab, bapak setuju tidak pak Prabowo jadi capresnya. Ya kalo ditanya ya saya jawab, kalo saya setuju ya saya setuju. kalo engak ya endak. Kalo setuju, setuju! Mantap gitu. Kalo ga ditanya saya diem-diem aja.”

On another occasion, Jokowi showed that he has a big influence in determining the presidential candidate. Although the message conveyed in the speech is implicit, it can be understood that Jokowi as President is often asked for blessings by political parties to increase the electability of the candidates carried. This means that Jokowi has high credibility and trust.



Figure 4. President Joko Widodo's Press Conference in Batu Bara, February 7, 2024

“Saya ingin menegaskan kembali pernyataan saya sebelumnya, bahwa Presiden memang diperbolehkan undang undang untuk kampanye dan juga sudah pernah saya tunjukan bunyi aturannya. Tapi jika pertanyaannya saya akan kampanye? Saya jawab, tidak. Saya tidak akan berkampanye.”

Approaching the 2024 presidential election, Jokowi through his speech wanted to show that the President could still be trusted by calling on related parties to be neutral. In his statement, the President also emphasized that he was still committed to neutrality by indicating that he would not participate in the campaign. However, this message is explicit.

Pathos

Pathos is an attempt to influence the emotions displayed by the communicator. with style and language that can arouse passion in the audience. The communicator's ability to adjust the social atmosphere with the audience so that rhetoric is achieved (Agustin et al., 2022). Jokowi on several occasions, often takes the Pathos approach. If observed, because Jokowi originally came from among the people, It can be seen that pathos dominates each of his speeches.



Figure 5. President Joko Widodo's Speech at Rakernas Relawan Projo, October 14, 2023

“Saya ini repot, kalo diundang relawan gak datang. Nanti yang disampaikan, pak Jokowi itu lupa setelah jadi Presiden yang diundang ga dateng. Tapi kalo saya dateng, kita ini memiliki 2.300 organ relawan yang gede, yang sedeng, yang kecil. Kalo minta didatangi semua tidak mungkin. Tapi seingat saya di Projo sudah lebih dari 10 kali saya datang.”

Through Jokowi's statement in the Rakernas of Projo supporters, he said that he would attend every Projo event even though it coincided with an event. The priority shown by Jokowi to attend the Rakernas Projo can evoke emotions of affection in his audience. Jokowi expects his audience to feel empathy by sharing the same emotion with him.



Figure 6. President Joko Widodo's Speech at Golkar Party's 59th Anniversary, November 7, 2023

“Jika menang jangan jumawa, jika kalah jangan murka. Setelah berkompetisi saya setuju jadi pak Prabowo bersatu kembali, rukun kembali. Ini adalah pertandingan antar keluarga sendiri, antar sesama anak bangsa yang sama-sama ingin membangun Indonesia.”

Jokowi gave praise and positive messages to the Gerindra Party and Prabowo with the aim of gaining sympathy. Like a nurturing presence, Jokowi fosters comfort, security, and community spirit among the audience. In his last sentence, he wants to build Indonesia together, which can be interpreted as him being interested in working with all parties after the 2024 presidential election.



Figure 7. Meeting between President Joko Widodo and Prabowo at Warung Bakso Magelang, January 29, 2024

“Ya ini tadi baru saja dengan Pak Prabowo meresmikan Ghra Utama di Akademi Militer Magelang, setelah itu makan bakso, baksonya enak. Ngobrolin bakso kepala muda tahu goreng. Menunya sama.”

In addition to sentences, Jokowi, through his actions full of symbolic meaning, shows implicit support for Mr. Prabowo. At the end of his sentence, when asked by reporters at a meatball stall, Jokowi said, "Menunya sama." This could implicitly mean that he wants the public to be the same. he sees. The word same can also mean the same feeling with Mr. Prabowo and the audience. With frequent activities together, it can be interpreted that Jokowi supports Prabowo in the 2024 presidential election but implicitly.



Figure 8. President Joko Widodo's Speech at Gerindra Party's 15th Anniversary, February 6, 2024

“Partai Gerindra potensial menjadi yang teratas dan elektabilitas Pak Prabowo potensial menjadi yang tertinggi. Dan kami ucapkan terima kasih dan apresiasi yang setinggi tingginya atas dukungannya pada pemerintahan yang saya pimpin, dukungan partai Gerindra sangat membantu pemerintah dalam melakukan agenda agenda besar bangsa.”

Jokowi often utters words of praise to colleagues and those who help him. Praise a sentence that can evoke emotional feelings. Jokowi hopes that this praise can provide an emotional bond with the Gerindra Party and Prabowo. In the last presidential election, Prabowo was his political opponent; however, in this year's presidential election, they became allies. Jokowi wants to validate Prabowo to take trust with him through praise.

This pathos tries to equalize perspectives and tastes, this is a way of using pathos so that someone can believe what someone is talking about. Emotional bonds that feel the same can facilitate one's persuasion. Jokowi with his speech proved to be able to melt his audience. The sense of common fate that Jokowi often raises, so that he can easily get into other people's emotions.

Logos

Logos is logical evidence used by communicators of arguments, rationalizations, and discourses (Maraya, 2021). Logos is logical and has data that can strengthen the communicator's argument. Convince someone through logic and data. Logical appeals use reasoning by using real evidence or facts. Jokowi on various occasions, often uses data and statements that contain logic to strengthen his speech.



Figure 9. President Joko Widodo's speech at the National Conference (Musra), May 14, 2023

“Dan bapak ibu dan saudara-saudara sekalian yang saya hormati. Peluang kita menjadi negara maju itu ada dalam 13 tahun kedepan. Ini disampaikan oleh para pakar, dalam negeri maupun luar. Kesempatan kita itu hanya ada di 13 tahun kedepan ini. Karena bonus demografi kita, akan muncul di tahun 30an. Dan dalam sejarah peradaban negara-negara yang saya lihat, memang kesempatannya hanya sekali dalam sejarah. Sebab peradaban bangsa. Begitu kita kleru memilih pemimpin yang tepat untuk 13 tahun kedepan, hilanglah kesempatan untuk menjadi negara maju.”

Jokowi tried to convince his supporters by giving a speech using data accompanied by analogies. In this speech, he used many analogies and examples from other countries. Jokowi tries to build the logic of the audience's thinking to match what he thinks.



Figure 10. President Joko Widodo's Press Conference on Kompas.TV, October 25, 2023

“Yaitukan masyarakat yang menilai dan apa, dalam pemilihanpun, baik itu di Pilkada, Pilihan Walikota Pemilihan Bupati Pemilihan Gubernur Pemilihan Presiden itu semua yang memilih itu rakyat, yang menentukan rakyat, yang mencoblos rakyat, bukan kita bukan elit bukan partai, itulah demokrasi.”

In addition to presenting data, Logos can also focus on building logical thinking. The logic of thinking that Jokowi is trying to build is related to the concept of democracy because previously he was rumored to be a political dynasty, he tried to dismiss the accusation by playing logic.



Figure 11. President Joko Widodo's Press Conference on Lanud Halim Perdanakusuma, Januari 24, 2024

“Hainikan hak demokrasi hak politik setiap orang, setiap Menteri sama saja yang paling penting, Presiden itu boleh loh kampanye. Boleh loh memihak. Boleh. Tapi yang paling penting waktu

kampanye tidak boleh menggunakan fasilitas negara. Kita ini kan pejabat public sekaligus pejabat politik. Masa ini gaboleh, berpolitik gaboleh.”

In this speech, which was controversial in various media, Jokowi explained his knowledge regarding his democratic rights and public officials, a brief explanation but in essence, Jokowi wanted to give a message that the President and public officials could participate in campaigning. This explanation is still a conjecture that plays with logic. While the explanation of the data and laws referred to by Jokowi is explained in his next speech. When viewed visually, it can be interpreted that Jokowi's partisanship at Halim Perdanakusuma Airport refers to the figure of Prabowo who is behind him.



Figure 12. President Joko Widodo's Press Conference at Istana Negara Jakarta, Januari 27, 2024

“Undang-Undang No 7 Tahun 2017 jelas menyampaikan di Pasal 299, bahwa Presiden dan Wakil Presiden mempunyai hak melaksanakan kampanye. Tapi yang saya sampaikan ketentuan oleh Undang-Undang pemilu, jangan ditarik kemana-mana ya. Kemudian juga Pasal 281 juga jelas bahwa kampanye pemilu yang mengikuti sertakan Presiden dan Wakil Presiden harus memenuhi ketentuan, tidak menggunakan fasilitas dalam jabatan kecuali fasilitas pengamanan dan menjalani cuti dilar tanggung negara.”

This press conference was Jokowi's response to his previous remarks. He explained with evidence, even using props in the form of paper with the law in question. This explanation is proof that Jokowi is seriously responding to the issues about him. As a President, maintaining a high approval rating requires clarifying all controversies and presenting the facts.



Figure 13. President Joko Widodo's press conference in response to the issue of politicization of social assistance, February 2, 2024

“Ada kenaikan harga beras di seluruh negara, bukan hanya di Indonesia. Kedua kita ingin meningkatkan daya beli rakyat. Dan itu sudah dilakukan bantuan pangan beras sudah sejak September. BLT itu karena sudah ada elnino kemarau Panjang. Ini juga untuk memperkuat daya beli masyarakat, sehingga diperlukan. Dan itu semuanya sekali lagi, itukan sudah melalui mekanisme persetujuan di DPR, APBN itu, jangan dipikir hanya keputusan kita sendiri. Tidak seperti itu dalam mekanisme kenegaraan kita, pemerintahan kita.”

Jokowi also uses defensive techniques when there is bad news about him. He tries to explain the sequence of events that occurred along with the mechanism. He tried to build trust again by explaining that social assistance is not a political tool. But purely from the state.

3.2. Discussion

President Joko Widodo, as a political actor, has important authority in every policy. Anything he says can potentially persuade the Indonesian people. Jokowi utilizes speeches and press conferences at various events to conduct political rhetoric to influence voters' decisions in the 2024 presidential election. Evidenced by the 14 data presented by the author, related to Jokowi's political communication rhetoric in influencing audiences to vote for presidential candidates in accordance with the implied message.

In general, Jokowi uses a type of deliberative rhetoric, so words are intended to control the minds of others to match what he expects. As evidenced in the data revealed by the author, Jokowi generally did not express his desire to explicitly support one of the candidates. But in practice, on various occasions, he did things that actually supported the candidate who was holding his son, namely, Prabowo-Gibran. As seen in the first data, when Jokowi made a speech at the 8th Anniversary of the Perindo Party, on November 22, 2022, he said directly that the next president would be Prabowo. During President Joko Widodo's press conference at Halim Perdanakusuma Air Base, on January 24, 2024, he said that the president can campaign but behind him is one of the candidates Prabowo. It is evident that Jokowi is implicitly supporting the Prabowo-Gibran candidate for the 2024 presidential election through his speeches, public communication, and actions. This support is indicated by his implied sentences and actions that favor Prabowo.

If you look at the data that has been presented, Jokowi provides implied communication by persuading the audience to follow his choice. It can also be seen when he gets criticism related to the presidential election issue. He will immediately respond and perform defensive rhetorical techniques. Jokowi does not want public trust in him to decline, with ethos, pathos, and logos rhetorical techniques he uses words as the main force. As shown in pictures 10, 12, and 13, Jokowi attempts to utilize logical arguments and evidence to address issues.

The purpose of rhetoric as a tool of persuasion for the audience is effectively utilized by Jokowi. In rhetoric theory with various persuasion tools, Jokowi succeeded in achieving his goals. The 2024 presidential election has three candidates, but the President's role as a political actor is still trying to strive for his policies to continue by implicitly supporting one of the candidates Prabowo-Gibran could be considered as candidates who have the support of the President. It seems that the 2024 presidential election was won by candidates who were endorsed by President Joko Widodo. According to the results of the KPU Decree NO 360 YEAR 2024 on the Results of the General Election of the President and Vice President, won by Candidate Pair number 2 H. Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka with 96,214,691 votes (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 2024).

4. Conclusion

Based on the data and discussion above, it can be concluded that political communication rhetoric is very influential in the 2024 presidential election. President Joko Widodo managed to use rhetoric neatly to influence voters' decisions. With Ethos, Jokowi was able to instill his credibility as an influential President. With Pathos, Jokowi succeeded in captivating the emotions of influential stakeholders in order to win their hearts. With Logos, Jokowi provides a comprehensive understanding of the issues related to him and provides factual evidence to support his opinion to be accepted by the public.

Ethos, Pathos, and Logos carried out by Jokowi are generally carried out implicitly, but the power of his rhetoric is still felt to influence voters' decisions in the 2024 presidential election. The rhetorical purpose of Jokowi's political communication in support of the Prabowo-Gibran candidate was implicitly aimed at achieving victory. With a high approval rating and Jokowi's remarks in various media, Jokowi is an Indonesian politician with a 100% win rate, not only when he is a candidate but also when he supports.

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