

THE ART OF GOVERNING: JOKO WIDODO'S DINING TABLE DIPLOMACY

Sandi Jaya Saputra

Journalism Department, Faculty of Communication Science
Universitas Padjadjaran
Bandung, Indonesia
sandijayasaputra@gmail.com

Andika Vinianto Adiputra

Journalism Department, Faculty of Communication Science
Universitas Padjadjaran
Bandung, Indonesia
andikavinianto@yahoo.com

Abstract— The current political strains are diverse, with strategies being undertaken to smooth political careers and self-image in front of the mass media. The goal is to attract the interest of the voters. These strategies are also applied by Joko Widodo, the seventh President of Indonesia, also known as Jokowi. His leadership reminds us of the figure of Soekarno, specifically the appearance of Jokowi in the mass media.

Jokowi's appearance reminds us of the figure of President Soekarno. He is so relaxed, intimate, close to the people and always seem to appear confident in front of the mass media. Those characteristics also reminds us of the figure of Jokowi. Among the various activities held by Jokowi, the most that attracts attention is his way of receiving guests at the Presidential Palace. The activity is to dine together, whether during breakfast or lunch, where guests are treated to a variety of cuisines and drinks with the taste of Indonesian flavor. This becomes interesting, because it is done with Indonesian political figures, which signifies a political diplomacy that is done at a dining table.

This research aims to determine the identity representation of Jokowi when exercising diplomatic relations at the dining table. This research will use Roland Barthes's semiotic methodology. Analysis begins with the first layer of denotation that interprets the surface of reality, and then to dissect the deepest elements of a visual, the researcher goes on to the second and third layers of connotation and myth.

Keywords— *Photo Journalism, Dining Table, Jokowi, Semiotic, Diplomacy*

I. INTRODUCTION

In this research, the authors examined photographs of Jokowi with two highly respected political figures in Indonesia, Prabowo Subianto, who is the Chairman of Gerakan Indonesia Raya Party (Gerindra), taken on Thursday, November 18, 2016. The second figure is Surya Paloh, Chairman of Nasional Demokrat Party (Nasdem), taken on Tuesday, November 22, 2016, while dining at the Presidential Palace. These figures are chosen as part of this research because they are regarded as important individuals in the eyes of Indonesian citizens.

It is highly unlikely to discuss the 2014 Indonesian Presidential Election without mentioning these two individuals

in Prabowo Subianto and Surya Paloh. This encounter also affirms that both have good relationships. These meetings and banquets with political figures are common, according to President Joko Widodo in the National Coordination Meeting of the Public Service Agency (BLU) at the Presidential Palace, Jakarta. According to him, these meeting has always been closed to the public, so that the excessive coverage of the President is understood.

The term food or culinary is not foreign to Jokowi. Jokowi is famous for his hands-on attitude or also known as 'blusukan' to oversee firsthand the government programs that are taking place. On those 'blusukan' moments, Jokowi would occasionally stop by a culinary establishment, such as the Warung Tegal Ma'djen in Pulomas, East Jakarta, and the Tuku Coffee Shop (Kompas, 2-9-2017).

The owners of culinary establishments that have been visited by Jokowi, are left with a good impression, in terms of pride and economic benefits, by popularizing their establishments.

Dining with local menus are becoming popular again. This is only about eating and drinking, but also a form of support for the efforts of citizens and local products (ibid). Jokowi emphasizes the importance of local nuanced food from various perspectives, both in everyday life where Jokowi visits culinary establishments or the local culinary menu transformed into a "practical politics" approach.

The visual concept that will be thoroughly researched is a photo of the 7th President of Republic of Indonesia, Jokowi who is dining together in the Veranda Talk area of the Presidential Palace, Jakarta. The background of this encounter is caused by a demonstration conducted by the public on November 4, 2016, to demand the active Governor of DKI Jakarta at that time, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, also known as Ahok, to step down from his position, regarding the case of religious blasphemy. After the demonstration, the president immediately held bilateral meetings with religious figures, the military and police officers, and political party leaders, to calm the heated atmosphere aimed at ensuring the security of Indonesia ahead of the 2017 Election of Head Region (PILKADA).

Initially, the President invited the General Chairman of Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan Party (PDI-P), Megawati

Sukarnoputri. "I also asked the President to hold a meeting between the chairman of the political parties. For example, yesterday I met the Chairman of the Golkar Party. Then maybe in a couple of days I will meet with representatives of party supporters of the president. That is my request towards the president." said Megawati. From her request, the president decided to invite the Chairman of the Gerindra party, Prabowo Subianto, and consequently invited the Chairman of the Nasdem Party, Surya Paloh. Until then, the president had only invited 7 elite political parties, so that the remaining three general chairman of political parties have not been met / invited by Jokowi namely Chairman of the Democratic Party Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) Sohibul Iman, and Chairman of the Party Hanura (Hati Nurani Rakyat), Chairudin Ismail.

In the banquet, the president wants to consolidate to reaffirm the reinforcement of pluralism, the spirit of pluralism, mutual respect, and mutual love between nations, that is needed both for the present and for the future, then the second is that he wants to re-establish the ideology of Pancasila towards the Indonesian people and to guard it not only the task of the government but also the duties of the community and religious leaders in it including the products issued by the House of Representatives (DPR-RI). The third is that the president wants to generate power to prevent the growth of radicalism in Indonesia today.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of representation occupies a new position in cultural studies. The main issue in representation is how the reality or object is displayed. According to John Fiske (in Eriyanto, 2006) there are at least three processes in presenting objects, events, ideas, groups or individuals. At the first level are events marked as reality. In the language of images, this is generally associated with aspects such as clothing, environment, speech and expression.

On the second level, is when we see something as reality and how that reality is depicted. What is used here is technically a device, such as words and sentences. At the third level, is how events are organized into biologically accepted conventions. In this case, it shows how the representational codes are linked and organized into social coherence like the social class, or the dominant belief that exists in society.

It can be seen from how to wear attributes and to how to communicate non-verbally. Thus, the use of semiotic analysis methods in this study is expected to help the authors to reveal the signs of self-representation of the process of Joko Widodo's Dining Diplomacy.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative research method by using semiotic analysis from Roland Barthes to find the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth regarding Joko Widodo's Dining Diplomacy Representation. Semiotics is used in this study because it has the ability to examine the curve of text in more detail and feel the subtle vibrations of hidden signals

(Nugroho in Sobur 2002: 5) and able to provide a more comprehensive analytical framework (Berger, 2000:vii).

Semiotics is defined as the study of signs and the way the signs work. The focus of semiotics is how producers of the media create signs and how the audience understands those signs (Littlejohn, 1996: 327). Semiotic analysis with this qualitative approach provides a considerable opportunity for the creation of alternative interpretations of the myth in Joko Widodo's dining diplomacy. Using semiotic analysis, researchers were asked to pay attention to the coherence of meaning between parts of the signs and coherence of signs within the context.

By observing the signs contained in a message, we can identify the emotion and cognition expression of the message creator, either denotatively, connotatively, even mythologically. Barthes is a semiotic figure who develops a systematic model in analyzing the meaning of signs. The semiotic model of Barthes emphasizes the idea of order within signs (order of signification), consisting of denotation, connotation, and myth.

In explaining these stages, Barthes argues that every object or event always signifies something more than a literary meaning and the object is always trapped in a representational system which in turn contributes to its meaning. It lies in the use of a camera's point of view, pose, lighting, and so forth.

In his book "Image, Music, Text" Barthes (1977: 21) suggests there are six elements that can raise connotations in photographs. These six elements are Trick effect, Pose, Object, Photogenia, Aestheticism and Syntax.

IV. DISCUSSION



Photo 1

**Prabowo and Jokowi, Thursday, 18 November 2016
Denotation**

In this photo, Jokowi and Prabowo is seen at a simple banquet. Four menus of food is served with rice in the middle. The drinks served are only a bottle of mineral water on each portion, reflecting a modest banquet between Jokowi and Prabowo. When viewed from the portion provided, it seems Jokowi and Prabowo not only dining alone, because there are two portions of food on the other side of the table that has not been occupied.

In terms of how they are dressed, Jokowi and Prabowo are wearing different clothes. Jokowi is wearing a batik, coupled

¹www.tribunnews.com

with a confident smile on his face, while Prabowo is wearing a white shirt with a slightly smile.

Photographers take pictures by simply placing Jokowi and Prabowo alone, because both are political figures. Moreover, the photographer makes the 'window' as the background and makes the two characters as the foreground.

Connotation

A. Trick Effect (Manipulate photos)

Photo manipulation techniques are not visible on this photo. This is because the two objects look natural when dining together. In addition, the media has depicted the relationship between Jokowi and Prabowo to have a good re-established relationship after the period of the 2015-2019 Presidential Election

B. Pose

The pose in this photo shows Prabowo and Jokowi dining together and by displaying a pleasant mood. Jokowi smiles broadly and Prabowo smiles with a look that looks firm and seems to be thinking of something. In this photo, it shows that Jokowi express his warm welcome to Prabowo's arrival to the Palace which is visible from his smile. However, Prabowo in this photo looks like having another purpose with his arrival to the Palace.

C. Object

The photo shows two objects, namely Jokowi and Prabowo. Photographers frame them as the main focus because they want to show the condition or atmosphere of the meeting between Jokowi and Prabowo.

D. Photogenia (Photo Technique)

The photo technique taken is to provide focus techniques towards two objects, namely Jokowi and Prabowo, to show the actual meaning of the photo. Through shooting techniques, the reader is already able to guess the meaning of this photo itself. Photographers convey the meaning of the message of the competition between them before it has been dampened over time. It appears that both have shown through a smile that indicates that both have competed in a healthy way.

E. Aestheticism (Composition)

Photo is seen from how the faces and the conditions of both of them had stiffened during the last presidential election campaign, and in this photograph shows that they have completed the 'game' in a healthy manner.

F. Syntax

In this photo the syntax shown by the photographer tells the reader to pay attention to the two objects. Among the elements, the meaning of the connotation of photos of Jokowi and Prabowo show a tension that they are trying to reduce, by presenting themselves publicly in a casual way.

Myth

The photo above creates a myth of harmony that exists from a pair of rivals. It is known by the people of Indonesia,

that Jokowi and Prabowo had been rivals (probably until now) since the 2014 Presidential Election. Throughout the campaign period of the 2014 Presidential Election, the people of Indonesia were split into two groups namely Jokowi supporters and supporters of Prabowo. Both groups were never in harmony, involved in libel and defamation between both groups.

However, the relationship between Jokowi and Prabowo is improving. It can be seen from a photo above. They had a meeting and lunch together in 2016. For Jokowi, conducting meetings and banquets with political figures is a common practice, for example with Prabowo. This is to create a good image in the eyes of the public regarding the harmony between Jokowi and Prabowo in order to maintain the unity of the Indonesian society. In addition, the purpose is to remove the stigma of society that perceives Jokowi and Prabowo as a pair of rivals.



Photo 2
Jokowi and Surya Paloh, Tuesday, 22 November 2016

Denotation

In this photo, two people are talking while dining with an equally serious expression and hands supporting the jaw. These two men are known as Joko Widodo who is the 7th President of Indonesia and Surya Paloh, Chairman of the Nasional Demokrat Party (Nasdem). In front of him there is a dish of food, juice, crackers, and flowers.

Connotation

A. Trick Effect

Photo manipulation techniques seem natural, there is no meaningful manipulation of photo-taking techniques between Jokowi and Surya Paloh. Photographers use a meaningful opportunity to capture the moment with the perfect composition between the two political figures.

B. Pose

He pose in this photo shows that Jokowi and Surya Paloh are dining together on the terrace of the presidential palace. In this photo, it is visible that the poses of Jokowi and Surya Paloh are portraying a serious discussion, seen from the serious look on both their faces. Jokowi's motivation on inviting Surya Paloh is almost the same as other Indonesian figures, which is to discuss how the continuation of Indonesia's fate in the hands of Jokowi as the President of Indonesia.

C. Object

²www.tempo.co.id

There are three objects in this photo namely Jokowi, Surya Paloh and food on the table. But the main focus in this photo is the expression of Jokowi and Surya Paloh. Body language generated from this photo creates a meaning of discussing significant and important issues, seen from their facial expression and the way they clenched hands to the headrests of the two figures.

D. Photogenia

Photographers who took this photo, took them with a focus technique towards three objects, namely Jokowi, Surya Paloh, and food that is on the table. The photographer's point is to take this technique, because it provides an explanation without using the caption that Jokowi and Surya Paloh are discussing on the Presidential Palace's while dining.

E. Aestheticism (composition)

The composition in this photo shows the composition of the rule of third. Point of interest in this photo is Jokowi and Surya Ploh, This photo is done outdoors and held in different location comparedn with photo of Jokowi and Prabowo. Jokowi in this case wants to show a "relaxing" situation by exploring the surroundings.

F. Syntax

In this photo, the syntax shown by the photographer tells the reader to pay attention to the two objects. In the connotation element, in this photo there is something important and urgent, but remains attractive and "crunchy" to be understood by the audience.

Myth

From the elements of denotation and connotation in this photo, it appears that there is something very urgent to discussl about. This is evident from the gestures of both figures. Something urgent and important is presented with simplicity and casual, hoping that this banquet is a common practie but it contains something important.

V. CONCLUSION

Jokowi's modest banquet is always a reflection of his simplicity, which has become his trademark since being the mayor of Solo and the governor of DKI Jakarta. It is also visible from several aspects, including the clothes worn by both, and the type of food that is served. In addition, Jokowi also held banquets with several other political figures, such as Megawati Soekarnoputri, Surya Paloh, Prabowo, etc. This indirectly confirms that President Jokowi is trying to embrace various political groups, because of the previous widespread

issue of disharmony between President Jokowi with several political groups.

This can be seen from the gestures of politicians analyzed above, gestures that signifies political stability. In this case, gestures are an importantly factor in the discussion of this research, because the analysis is a representation of photographs produced by photographers in a mass media. Furthermore, the gesture determines the perception of the public, because it determines an action of communication (Knoblauch, 2013, p.302).

This assures that Jokowi is seen as a hospitable President, protective and able to reduce political turmoil. A home and dining table is a way to show intimacy. In Indonesian culture, a house in general in terms of architecture, always consist of a guest room. The guest room is interpreted as a space between the host and the guest, because the space is separated from the family room. The dining table is generally placed in the family room, so if the guest is allowed to enter a room other than the living room, then the guest is meant as a guest who is familiar and can be meant as part of the family.

From the above explanation, it is clearly seen that "Joko Widodo's Dining Table Diplomacy" is a powerful political strategy to reduce the "chaos" of national politics. The image wanted to be built is with good intentions, marked by Jokowi and the political figures that are intimately intertwined in a culturally architecture space, which is the family room. Therefore, communication can only succeed if the messages are encoded and formatted in a way suitable for human perception and information processing (Schulz, 2014, p.92).

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