

REPRESENTING THE INCUMBENT AND THE CONTENDER IN THE 2019 INDONESIAN PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

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ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: The 2019 Indonesian presidential debates were an important part of the presidential election because it drew public interest, enabling the candidates to persuade the electorate. The debates reunited Joko Widodo, the incumbent and Prabowo Subianto, his former contender.

Methodology: The article selected the five debates during the 2019 presidential debates. The debates were analyzed with Transitivity from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), studying how process, participant and circumstance represent the presidential candidates.

Findings: The incumbent and contender, although from different parties, share similarities in their Transitivity patterns. Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto frequently employ Material, Relational and Mental processes to state their actions for governing Indonesia, describe present or future plans, and share their thoughts and hopes for the country. Being politicians, the incumbent and contender use language to construe themselves as the most suitable person to be president. The two candidates employ the pronoun 'we' to depict themselves as part of a group, be it a political party or the electorate. They also employ the pronoun 'I' to showcase their personal capability. The two candidates share patterns of Transitivity because their representation tries to persuade the electorate to vote for them.

Contributions: The present article extends research on political discourse because it studies data from Indonesia and data in the Indonesian language. The findings can serve to educate the electorate on how politicians employ language in persuasion.

Keywords: Debates, elections, Indonesia, president, transitivity.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 2019 Indonesian presidential election was important because it strengthened democracy in Indonesia. The election reunited Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto after their first encounter in the 2014 election. Both candidates presented new and different visions in their campaign. Joko Widodo, the incumbent, emphasized modernization while Prabowo Subianto, the contender, aspired for welfare. The candidates tried to convince the electorate using various texts but their debates garnered a large audience, where the viewer rating reached 57.6% (“Program debat Pilpres”, 2019). The rating confirms the interest of the electorate to learn about the candidates’ manifesto and personalities.

Debates are an instance of political discourse (Van Dijk, 1997). They have been a useful medium in electoral campaigns, providing information for the electorate (McKinney & Warner, 2013). They become a platform to share political information to a large audience in a single instance. Politicians can explain their plans for the country, and because debates are recorded and screened on television or websites, the electorate can be easily informed. Debates display candidates being candid and spontaneous, unlike other curated forms of political discourse (Benoit & Brazeal, 2002). In Indonesia, debates enable the candidates to persuade an electorate across 13000 islands to vote for them.

Because debates retain social significance in politics, their analysis has garnered substantial research. The language features of debates are often studied because the debates use language to persuade the electorate. Language features fulfil a specific function (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), and the use of certain words or phrases has an impact on the meanings conveyed. The present article analyzes these words and phrases, and its analysis is informed by Transitivity, which explains how experiences are represented. The analysis focuses on how processes, participants and circumstances portray the candidates, Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto in the 2019 Indonesian presidential debates. The former is the incumbent while the latter is the contender, and 2019 was a second encounter because they had faced one another in 2014. The article enriches research on Indonesian political discourse, as most research often studies politics in the developed world. It also probes the use of Transitivity in Indonesian, an Austronesian language. The article gives a linguistic focus to politics, and can sensitize the

electorate to the language features employed, developing their critical thinking about political discourse (Rajandran, 2019).

2.0 POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Following Van Dijk (1997), we understand political discourse contextually, as employed in events or practices with primarily political functions by professional or non-professional elected or non-elected individuals or groups. Research on political discourse often selects major politicians or political parties in the developed world although Southeast Asian politics has received some emphasis (Abdul Manan, 2019; Rajandran, 2019; Wijeyewardene, 2019). Research also explores different aspects of language in political discourse. While a gamut of research exists for political discourse, our focus is primarily debates, in line with the aim of the present article.

Benoit and Brazeal (2002) compare American presidential debates, where acclaims are more frequent than attacks or defenses. But the incumbent, Bush acclaimed more, and the contender, Dukakis attacked more. Benoit and Sheafer (2006) compare debates in Israel and the United States. Despite their different political systems, the debates are quite similar because acclaims are commonly employed, followed by attacks and at last, defenses. For Benoit and Brazeal (2002) and Benoit and Sheafer (2006), the three functions are inherent in debates as candidates persuade the electorate that they are the better option. Incumbents tend to acclaim more than attack, in comparison to contenders. This is predictable because incumbents have a record to show while contenders need to diminish this record.

Steffens and Haslam (2013) investigate the election campaign speeches of prime ministerial candidates during Australian elections. They identify the function of the personal ('I', 'me') and collective ('we', 'us') pronouns, indicating that the former may isolate candidates but the latter engages the electorate. Similarly, Salama (2014) show how the personal pronoun ('I') in speeches by Egyptian president Mubarak construes his dominant self-presentation. Savoy (2017) compares the American presidential candidates Clinton and Trump, which reveals two distinctive styles. Clinton employs more abstract concepts than Trump, who also used references to negative emotions.

Transitivity is a common method of analysis in political discourse. Wang (2010) explains how President Obama mostly utilizes Material process to indicate government achievements in the past, present and future. Sharififar and Rahimi (2015) compare Obama's and Rouhani's United Nations speeches. Despite their political distinction, the two presidents utilize more Material process to present their activities. They also utilize the pronoun 'we' to

imply consensus among their listeners. Zhang (2017) shows how Clinton and Trump, despite their partisan stance, employ Material, Relational and Mental processes to elaborate on their aspirations. Material process describes actions to be realized, Relational process describes plans and Mental process displays hopes and thoughts.

Southeast Asian politics has garnered some research. Abdul Manan (2019) considers female politicians in Malaysian media articles. The media employ Material process in relation to these politicians but their actions often involve non-human entities, limiting their scope to bring about changes for the electorate. Wijeyewardene (2019) examines politicians in Thai media articles. Again, the media employ Material process to refer to the politicians but their actions are undesirable, which justifies a military coup. Rajandran (2019) studies speeches about the economy in Malaysia. The government introduces Material process to disclose its contribution to realize economic plans and Relational process to disclose the advantages of these plans.

These earlier studies did not consider political discourse in Indonesia although research in this area is developing. Focusing on the 2014 Indonesian presidential debates, Faradi (2017) analyzes the use of Modality, where the presidential and vice-presidential candidates employ high value modalities to introduce their aspirations. Faradi (2017) implies how the prevalence of Modality could have helped Joko Widodo secure victory in 2014. Using the debates again, Setiawan, Darma Laksana, Mahyuni, and Udayana (2018), discover that Joko Widodo prefers Material, Mental, Behavioural and Existential process but Prabowo Subianto prefers Relational process. Because the presidential candidates of the 2014 and 2019 debates did not change, Suhardijanto and Sinar (2019) compare how the two candidates evaluate their plans. Joko Widodo changes his focus from diplomacy, management of government and marine resources in 2014 to human rights and public welfare in 2019 but Prabowo retained his focus on defense, international politics and public empowerment. For Yuliawati, Tuckyta, Sujatna, and Suganda (2019), between the two candidates, Joko Widodo's speeches were dense with nouns but Prabowo Subianto's speeches were dense with verbs.

Political debates seem to have a persuasive function (Benoit & Brazeal, 2002; Benoit & Sheafer, 2006; McKinney & Warner, 2013). Persuasion is infused in the language features of candidates and motivates how arguments are represented. The representation can influence how the electorate views a candidate, his/her campaign and his/her party. Hence, the study of language can reveal how debates could persuade the electorate. Debates are crucial in a democratic system and understanding their persuasive function could contribute to an informed electorate that is critical of language features encountered.

However, studies on Indonesian political discourse remain limited, and studies on debates are interesting because debates are a noteworthy event during the election. The present article can complement existing research by Faradi (2017), Setiawan et al. (2018), Suhardijanto and Sinar (2019) and Yuliawati et al. (2019). It helps to provide an understanding of the language features of these debates. Earlier studies have a proclivity to employ concepts from Systemic Functional Linguistics and the present article operationalizes Transitivity to study the 2019 presidential debates.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The article selected the debates of the 2019 Indonesian presidential election. They were organized by the Indonesian General Election Commission, as mandated by Law No.7/2017 Article 275. The debates were held during the campaign period from 17 January to 13 April 2019 and involved five rounds. They involved two presidential debates, two presidential and vice-presidential debates, and one vice-presidential debate. The debates covered different topics regarding national and international concerns. The question and answer format was utilized, where moderators decided the turns and speaking time. The article only selected the four debates involving the presidential candidates, because their plans would determine the future of Indonesia, and once in office, the president can implement his plans. Their debates were analyzed with Transitivity.

Transitivity is a concept from Systemic Functional Linguistics, which Halliday (1994) developed. It studies experiential meaning to understand the clause as representing human experience. Transitivity construes the world of experience through process, participant and circumstance in a clause (Halliday, 1994, p. 106). While process encodes an event through the verbal group, participant means human or non-human entities, and it is realized by the nominal group (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Circumstance is realized by the adverbial group or prepositional phrase, and it answers what, when, where, who, why and how (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). There are six types of processes: Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioural and Existential (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Material process encodes action, Mental process encodes cognition, emotion, desideration and perception, and Relational process encodes description. Verbal process encodes any act of communication, Behavioural process encodes states of physiology and psychology, and Existential process states the presence of entities. Every process has its own set of participants but circumstance is generic. Table 1 shows an overview of Transitivity, as in Halliday and Matthiessen (2014).

Table 1: Transitivity (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014)

Process	Participant		Circumstance
Material	Actor	Recipient	Extent
	Goal	Client	Location
	Scope	Attribute	Manner
Mental	Senser		Cause
	Phenomena		Contingency
Relational	Token	Attribute	Accompaniment
	Value		Role
	Carrier		Matter
Verbal	Sayer	Target	Angle
	Receiver	Verbiage	
Behavioural	Behaver		
	Behavior		
Existential	Existent		

Although Transitivity was developed for English, it is adaptable to other languages (Abdul Manan, 2019; Rajandran, 2019; Wijeyewardene, 2019) because process, participant and circumstance are experiential meanings existing in language but their realizations may differ (Matthiessen, Teruya, & Lam, 2010). Sinar (2003) has adapted the concepts of Transitivity for the clause in Indonesian. Similar to English, the clause in Indonesian has process (verbal group), participant (nominal group) and circumstance (adverbial group or prepositional phrase). Sinar (2003) postulates the presence of the same six processes in Indonesian, namely Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioural and Existential. Wiratno (2018) enriches Sinar (2003), providing examples of the processes, as seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Process in Indonesian (Wiratno, 2018)

Process	Examples
Material	<i>mengambil</i> (take), <i>menciptakan</i> (create), <i>jatuh</i> (fall), <i>berkunjung</i> (visit)
Mental	<i>melihat</i> (see), <i>merasa</i> (feel), <i>suka</i> (like), <i>takut</i> (afraid), <i>berpikir</i> (think), <i>membayangkan</i> (imagine), <i>menginginkan</i> (want), <i>berharap</i> (wish)
Relational	intensive verbs such as <i>menjadi</i> (become), <i>merasa</i> (feel), <i>bermakna</i> (mean), possessive verbs such as <i>mempunyai</i> (have), <i>memiliki</i> (own), <i>milik</i> (belong to), circumstantial verbs such as <i>mengisi</i> (take up), <i>berharga</i> (cost)
Verbal	<i>menanyakan</i> (ask), <i>menceritakan</i> (tell), <i>mengatakan</i> (say), <i>memerintahkan</i> (order), <i>mengumumkan</i> (announce)
Behavioural	<i>mendengarkan</i> (listen to), <i>memandangi</i> (look at), <i>menertawakan</i> (laugh at)
Existential	<i>ada</i> (there), <i>terdapat</i> (occur)

Through an analysis of Transitivity, the article examines how the two presidential candidates presented their ideas to the electorate. The analysis adopted a qualitative design. First, the four debates were downloaded as Mp4 video files and were converted into Mp3 audio files. Then, the recordings were transcribed as sentences in Microsoft Word files and the sentences were divided into clauses. Next, each clause was labeled, as in Examples 1-2. The labeling identified the process first because the process is central to Transitivity (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), and later the available participant(s) and circumstance(s). This labeling provided data, which are presented during the analysis. Lastly, the clauses were translated from Indonesian into English, which a native user verified.

Example 1:

Kita telah membagikan 5 juta sertifikat kepada rakyat (*Joko Widodo, Debate 1*)

[We have distributed 5 million certificates to the people]

Kita	telah membagikan	5 juta sertifikat	kepada rakyat
Actor	Process: Material	Goal	Recipient

Example 2:

Kita bisa menggunakan kelapa sawit untuk biodiesel dan biofuel (*Prabowo Subianto, Debate 2*)

[We can use palm oil for biodiesel and biofuel]

Kita	bisa menggunakan	kelapa sawit	untuk biodiesel dan biofuel
Actor	Process: Material	Goal	Purpose

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

Although Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto represent different parties and compete against one another, the two candidates frequently use Material, Relational and Mental processes in their debates. The other processes are employed but Verbal, Behavioural and Existential processes are noticeably infrequent. Table 3 lists the percentage of process for the candidates. The analysis first explains the patterns of Transitivity for the incumbent, Joko Widodo and later his contender, Prabowo Subianto.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage of process

Process	Joko Widodo		Prabowo Subianto	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Material	230	33.4 %	254	32.6 %
Relational	210	30.4 %	255	33 %
Mental	146	21.2 %	167	21.4 %
Existential	57	8 %	35	5 %
Verbal	55	7 %	68	8 %
Behavioral	0	0	0	0

4.1 The Incumbent: Joko Widodo

In 2019, the incumbent Joko Widodo had experience and achievements after leading the country for 4.5 years. Material, Relational, and Mental processes are frequently employed by Joko Widodo. The dominance of Material process is similar to other speeches by politicians (Wang, 2010) because they want to persuade the electorate of their past, present or future experience and achievements. For Material clauses, the verbs realizing the process are transitive verbs which require an object as complement. These verbs indicate action completed or to be completed, for example *melakukan* (carry out/do), *membagikan* (distribute),

membentuk (form), *memberikan* (give), *mengerjakan/kerjakan* (do), *membuka* (open), *berikan* (give), *dibangun* (built), *dikerjakan* (did/done), *dikelola* (managed), *mengeluarkan* (release), *menyambungkan* (connect) and *terjaga* (protected).

In Indonesian, affixes can dictate the meaning of the verbs. The examples above display the affix *me-kan*, as in *melakukan* and *mengeluarkan*. These verbs convey the active participation of the Actor in active clauses. In Extracts 1-2, Joko Widodo makes his party the cause of the activities, and their benefits could not be enjoyed if Indonesians do not vote for him. Other examples display the affix *ter-* or *di-*, as in *terhubung* and *dikelola*. They are common in passive clauses, and the Actor can be absent. When the verb has the suffix *di-*, the Goal is more important than the Actor, who can be preceded by the preposition *oleh* (by). In Extract 3, the Actor is placed at the end of the clause because Joko Widodo wants to focus on infrastructure. Most Material process are preceded by adverbs of time, such as *masih* (still), *telah* (have) and *akan* (will), as in Extracts 1-3. The adverbs signal activities that have been done, in progress or to be done. Joko Widodo has a long-term plan for Indonesia, and his evidence of past activities is given as the basis of continuing related or similar activities in the future.

The most frequent Actor in Material clauses are the inclusive first person plural pronoun *kita* (we) and the exclusive first person plural pronoun *kami* (we). Both pronouns imply a different group. *Kita* is ambiguous and its meaning can shift because it can refer to Joko Widodo or people in government. It may also imply Joko Widodo and Indonesian citizens. The ambiguity of *kita* helps Joko Widodo promote the actions of his government, which seem to work on behalf of citizens. It could reflect a democratic spirit because citizens are made to feel part of the government. In contrast, *kami* is limited to Joko Widodo and his vice-president candidate, Ma'ruf Amin, or Joko Widodo and his government. Being the incumbent, he shows improvements in various aspects during his presidency. He also uses the first person single pronoun *saya* (I) because the debates are a chance for Joko Widodo to promote his personal capability as president.

Extract 1:

Kami akan menggabungkan fungsi-fungsi legislasi (*Debate 1*)

[We will combine the legislative functions]

Kami	akan menggabungkan	fungsi-fungsi legislasi
Actor	Process: Material	Goal

Extract 2:

Kami juga akan mengeluarkan Kartu Pra Kerja (*Debate 5*)

[We will also release 'Kartu Pra-Kerja']

Kami	juga	akan mengeluarkan	Kartu Pra Kerja
Actor	Adverbial	Process: Material	Goal

Extract 3:

Mayoritas airport komersil, pelabuhan-pelabuhan komersil masih dikelola oleh PELINDO (*Debate 4*)

[The majority of commercial airports, commercial ports are still managed by PELINDO]

Mayoritas airport komersil, pelabuhan-pelabuhan komersil	masih dikelola	oleh PELINDO
Goal	Process: Material	Actor

Relational clauses enable Joko Widodo to describe the details of his plans. The verbs realizing the process are *adalah* (be), *merupakan* (be), *menjadi* (become), *memiliki* (own) and *punya* (have). Extracts 4-5 describe a vision and people with disabilities. The descriptions are not realized yet but can become a reality through the candidate. However, the presence of verbs is not always required because Indonesian can display description even if the verbs are absent, as in Extract 6.

Extract 4:

Visi kami adalah Indonesia Maju (*Debate 1*)

[Our vision is Indonesia Maju]

Visi kami	adalah	Indonesia Maju
Token	Process: Relational	Value

Extract 5:

Kaum disabilitas menjadi setara (*Debate 1*)

[People with disabilities become equal]

Kaum disabilitas	menjadi	setara
Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute

Extract 6:

Kami berbeda dengan Pak Prabowo dan Pak Sandi (*Debate 1*)

[We are different from Mr.Prabowo and Mr.Sandi]

Kami	berbeda	dengan Pak Prabowo dan Pak Sandi
Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute

Joko Widodo utilizes verbs of cognition and desideration in Mental clauses, which display his thoughts and hopes for the country. Among the typical cognitive verbs encountered in the debates are *kira* (think) and *meyakini* (convinced about), and the desiderative verbs are *harapkan* (expect) and *percaya* (believe). The content of his thoughts and hopes, the Phenomenon, is realized in a new clause, projected by these verbs, as in Extracts 7-9. He postulates about the economy in Extracts 7-8 although it is based on facts. The facts seem like personal opinions because the Sensor is *saya* (I). He shares his opinions to indicate his personal interest in developing the economy. In Extract 9, his desire for new growth reveals one of his plans to the electorate. Other Sensors of Mental clauses are pronouns such as *kita* (we), *kami* (we), names such as *Pak Prabowo* (Mr. Prabowo), and nouns such as *pemerintahan kami* (our government). Joko Widodo reflects on ‘Pak Prabowo’ a few times to strengthen his own claim or to weaken his contender’s claim.

Extract 7:

Saya ingat kita masih impor 3.5 juta ton jagung di 2014 (*Debate 2*)

[I remember that we still imported 3.5 million tons of corn in 2014]

Saya	ingat	kita masih impor 3.5 juta ton jagung di 2014
Sensor	Process: Mental	Phenomenon: Projection

Extract 8:

Saya kira ada banyak sekali ladang-ladang minyak kita yang belum tereksplor

Dengan baik (*Debate 2*)

[I think that there are many of our oil fields that have not been explored well]

Saya	kira	ada banyak sekali ladang-ladang minyak kita yang belum tereksplor dengan baik
Sensor	Process: Mental	Phenomenon: Projection

Extract 9:

Saya ingin ada titik-titik pertumbuhan ekonomi baru di luar Jawa (*Debate 5*)

I want to have new economic growth spots outside Java]

Saya	ingin	ada titik-titik pertumbuhan ekonomi baru di luar Jawa
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon: Projection

Existential clauses introduce existing programs, achievements or conditions under Joko Widodo. The words *ada* (there) and *terjadi* (happen) indicate the process. The cause is not mentioned, but the consequence is the Existent, for example the ‘nine female ministers’ in Extract 10. The electorate can infer that their appointment is due to Joko Widodo or he would not mention it.

Extract 10:

Ada sembilan menteri perempuan yang menempati tempat-tempat strategis (*Debate 1*)

[There are nine female ministers who occupy strategic positions]

Ada	sembilan menteri perempuan yang menempati tempat-tempat strategis
Process: Existential	Existent

For Verbal clauses, Joko Widodo often utilizes the verbs *mengatakan* (say) and *sampaikan* (say, tell). The verb *mengatakan* requires a Sayer and most of the time, the content is realized in a new clause, projected by this verb, as in Extract 11. The verb *sampaikan* is followed by a Recipient of the content, as in Extract 12. Extracts 11-12 enable Joko Widodo to mention his contender, and to rebut claims made. The rebuttal is required because it establishes the incumbent’s credibility. Other verbs realizing Verbal process are *perintahkan* (command, order), *laporkan* (report) and *diberitahu* (told, informed). Extract 13 shows the power the president has because he can order the army. It shows his experience in managing Indonesia, which Prabowo Subianto does not have.

Among the Sayers in Verbal clauses, the first person single pronoun *saya* (I) is frequently used because it lets Joko Widodo share his opinions. Another participant is the Receiver, identified by prepositions such as *kepada* (to) and *ke* (to), for instance *ke aparat hukum* (to law enforcement agencies), *kepada Menhan dan Panglima* (to the Minister of

Defense and the Commander in Chief). The Receiver indicates who is referred to as certain plans impact a specific group or individual.

Extract 11:

Pak Prabowo pernah mengatakan bahwa korupsi di Indonesia sudah stadium empat
(Debate 1)

[Mr. Prabowo once said that corruption in Indonesia is already at stage four]

Pak Prabowo	pernah mengatakan	bahwa korupsi di Indonesia sudah stadium empat
Sayer	Process: Verbal	Reported

Extract 12:

Saya perlu sampaikan kepada Pak Prabowo bahwa korupsi kita di tahun '98 itu negara kita terkorup di Asia
(Debate 1)

[I need to tell Mr. Prabowo that our corruption in 1998 was the worst in Asia]

Saya	perlu sampaikan	kepada Pak Prabowo	bahwa korupsi kita di tahun '98 itu negara kita terkorup di Asia
Sayer	Process: Verbal	Receiver	Reported

Extract 13:

Saya perintahkan kepada Menhan dan Panglima untuk membangun divisi tiga
(Debate 4)

[I ordered the Minister of Defense and Commander in Chief to develop division three]

Saya	perintahkan	kepada Menhan dan Panglima	untuk membangun divisi tiga
Sayer	Process: Verbal	Receiver	Reported

Circumstances are also noted, primarily those of Location, such as in Extracts 14 and 15. The temporal location states when the activities were achieved. They permit Joko Widodo to promote his achievements during his presidency, which establishes his tenure as one filled with useful activities in each year.

Extract 14:

Kita telah bubarkan 23 lembaga yang ada di dalam pemerintahan 4.5 tahun ini (*Debate 4*)

[We have dissolved 23 institutions during these 4.5 years in government]

Kita	telah bubarkan	23 lembaga yang ada	di dalam pemerintahan 4.5 tahun ini
Actor	Process: Material	Goal	Circumstance: Extent

Extract 15:

Produksi beras kita adalah 33 juta ton beras di tahun 2018 kemarin (*Debate 2*)

[Our rice production was 33 million tons in 2018]

Produksi beras kita	adalah	33 juta ton beras	di tahun 2018 kemarin
Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute	Circumstance: Location

4.2 The Contender: Prabowo Subianto

Prabowo Subianto, the contender, tries to persuade the electorate by giving a vision of what to expect in the future (Zhang, 2017) because he has not yet come to power. Like Joko Widodo, Prabowo Subianto frequently utilizes Material, Relational and Mental processes. However, their use serves a different purpose. In Material clauses, Prabowo prefers verbs such as *perbaiki* (fix, improve), *tambah* (add), *mengalir* (flow), *mengamankan* (secure), *menegakkan* (uphold), *ciptakan* (create) and *tingkatkan* (increase, improve, enhance). These verbs signify an improvement, as in Extracts 16-17. Their use implies a deficiency in the present government, but it can be removed if a new government is elected. Extracts 16-17 indicate that Prabowo Subianto can perform actions to improve Indonesia if he is the president.

The Actors are realized by various nouns and pronouns, namely *kita* (we), *kami* (we), *mereka* (they), *negara* (country), *saya* (I) and *Bapak* (Mister). The collective pronouns *kita* (we) and *kami* (we) mean different people. Prabowo Subianto employs *kita* to mean Indonesians because he has not formed the government. The pronoun makes him seem inclusive, as if everyone has a say in his plans for the country. In contrast, *kami* is the duo of Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno, his vice-president candidate. It shows their unity to work for a common aim. Alternatively, *kami* is Prabowo Subianto and his coalition of four political

parties. It erases distinction among the parties, who act as one organization. Moreover, Prabowo Subianto employs *saya* (I) as Actor to designate his plans if elected. These are predictions because the plans cannot be realized until he is the president. Interestingly, Joko Widodo is also an Actor who Prabowo Subianto mentions. The former's actions are criticized, and the latter presents himself as a better alternative.

Extract 16:

(Kita) tingkatkan kualitas hidup buruh dan guru honorer (*Debate 5*)

[(We) improve the quality of life of laborers and non-permanent teachers]

(Kita)	tingkatkan	kualitas hidup buruh dan guru honorer
Actor	Process: Material	Goal

Extract 17:

Saya akan perbaiki kualitas hidup semua birokrat (*Debate 1*)

[I will improve the quality of life of all bureaucrats]

Saya	akan perbaiki	kualitas hidup semua birokrat
Actor	Process: Material	Goal

Like Joko Widodo, Prabowo Subianto utilizes the verbs *adalah* (be), *memiliki* (own), *merupakan* (be) and *punya* (have) in Relational clauses. These verbs are optional in Indonesian and can be removed. In Extracts 18-19, Prabowo Subianto describes his supporters and vision. Relational clauses enable him to provide descriptions about his plans, and the state of the country.

Extract 18:

Pendukung kita yang paling keras adalah emak-emak di seluruh Indonesia
(*Debate 1*)

[Our strongest supporters are the mothers around Indonesia]

Pendukung kita yang paling keras	adalah	emak-emak di seluruh Indonesia
Token	Process: Relational	Value

Extract 19:

Visi kami kami beri nama Indonesia Menang (*Debate 1*)

[We name our vision Indonesia Wins]

Visi kami	kami	beri nama	Indonesia Menang
Token	Assigner	Process: Relational	Value

Regarding Mental clauses, Prabowo Subianto prefers verbs such as *ingin* (want to), *menghargai* (appreciate), *kira* (think), *mengerti* (understand) and *faham* (understand). These are verbs of cognition and desideration, respectively seen in Extracts 20-21. Prabowo Subianto may utilize cognitive verbs to demonstrate his thoughts about problems facing the country and their solution in Extract 20. But he does employ desiderative verbs because in Extract 21, he can be grateful to the previous government. He shows his ability to recognize developments, and he does not need to start from a blank slate if elected.

For Mental clauses, the Sensors are *kami* (we), *kita* (we), *saya* (I) and *mereka* (they). The third person plural pronoun *mereka* (they) refers to the electorate. The other participant of Mental clauses, the Phenomenon, is realized by nominal groups or projected clauses such as *terorisme* (terrorism) in Extract 20 and *niat Pak Jokowi dalam memimpin pembangunan infrastruktur* (Mr. Jokowi's intention in leading infrastructure development) in Extract 21. The Phenomenon divulges Prabowo Subianto's opinions. His opinions are insights about his understanding of the problems facing Indonesia.

Extract 20:

Saya faham terorisme (*Debate 4*)

[I understand terrorism]

Saya	faham	terorisme
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon

Extract 21:

Saya menghargai niat Pak Jokowi dalam memimpin pembangunan infrastruktur
(Debate 2)

[I appreciate Mr. Jokowi's intention in leading infrastructure development]

Saya	menghargai	niat Pak Jokowi dalam memimpin pembangunan infrastruktur.
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon

Prabowo Subianto frequently uses verbs such as *mempersoalkan* (question), *bicara* (discuss) and *mengatakan* (say) in Verbal clauses. These verbs indicate his communication with other groups or individuals. In Extract 22, he speaks on behalf of farmers, who are the Sayer. He becomes their voice in politics, implying that he cares for their interests. In Extract 23, he is open to discussion because the Sayer is *kita* (we). He does not seem autocratic, bent on imposing his own way in politics. Verbal clauses portray Prabowo Subianto having a consultative style. Unlike Joko Widodo, who has experience in being president, Prabowo Subianto has to establish his credibility to the people. The Receivers of Verbal clauses are realized by prepositional phrases, such as *kepada Bapak* (to you, Mister), *ke rakyat* (to people). While the former indicates him speaking to Joko Widodo as the debates happen, the latter implies his plans targeting the electorate, who are the beneficiaries if he is elected.

Extract 22:

Petani minta jangan impor beras *(Debate 4)*

[Farmers ask to not import rice]

Petani	minta	jangan impor beras
Sayer	Process: Verbal	Reported

Extract 23:

Kita akan bicara tentang ideologi, pemerintahan, pertahanan keamanan dan hubungan internasional *(Debate 4)*

[We will talk about ideology, government, security defense and international relations]

Kita	akan bicara	tentang ideologi, pemerintahan, pertahanan keamanan dan hubungan internasional
Sayer	Process: Verbal	Verbiage

Existential process is infrequent in Prabowo Subianto's debates. The Existent in Extract 24 is a serious claim, but the cause is not identified. The Existential process enables him to make a claim and imply that its cause is somebody else. He does not blame anyone for how and why corruption happened, because it could be litigious.

Extract 24:

Terjadi kebocoran-kebocoran kekayaan (*Debate 2*)

[Wealth leaks occur]

Terjadi	kebocoran-kebocoran kekayaan
Process: Existential	Existent

Prabowo Subianto utilizes circumstances of Manner and Location. In Extract 25, Manner confirms his style of governance, which implies Joko Widodo was not strict in law enforcement. In Extract 26, Location gives a temporal location, where the loss of 4000 trillion is emphasized by its yearly recurrence.

Extract 25:

Law enforcement, penegakan hukum, harus dilaksanakan dengan tegas terhadap perusahaan-perusahaan yang tidak melaksanakan ketentuan-ketentuan (*Debate 2*)

[Law enforcement must be applied strictly to companies that do not follow the rules]

Law enforcement, penegakan hukum	harus dilaksanakan	dengan tegas	terhadap perusahaan-perusahaan yang tidak melaksanakan ketentuan-ketentuan
Scope	Process: Material	Circumstance: Manner	Recipient

Extract 26:

KPK sendiri mengatakan bahwa kita seharusnya menerima 4000 triliun tiap tahun
(Debate 5)

[KPK itself says that we should have received 4000 trillion every year]

KPK sendiri	mengatakan	bahwa kita seharusnya menerima 4000 triliun	tiap tahun
Sayer	Process: Verbal	Reported	Circumstance: Location

5.0 DISCUSSION

The analysis shows three processes dominating the 2019 Indonesian presidential debates, which are Material, Relational and Mental processes. Both Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto employ these three processes to state their actions for governing Indonesia, describe present or future plans, and share their thoughts and hopes for the country. Being politicians, the incumbent and contender use language to construe themselves as the most suitable person to be president. Our findings are similar to Sharififar and Rahimi (2015) and Wang (2010). They also find that the presidents of Iran and the United States employ a significant number of Material process to promote the achievements and improvements of their government. Our findings also concur with Zhang (2017), where Material, Relational and Mental processes dominate speeches by Clinton and Trump.

Although Indonesia, Iran and the United States are democracies, their political systems display their own characteristics and their sociohistorical factors vastly differ. Despite the variation in context, the processes chosen by politicians are similar in Indonesia, Iran and the United States. This could be an indication that debates as a genre may display consistencies in Transitivity patterns across contexts. Previous research studied texts in English and the present article studied texts in Indonesian but their Transitivity patterns are similar. The similarity could imply that debates commonly utilize Material, Relational and Mental processes across languages. Whatever the language, the concept of Material, Relational and Mental process can be articulated although their realization changes among languages. The context may change, in terms of political system, parties and electorate, and the language may change as the context changes but politicians often provide actions, descriptions, and thoughts and hopes. As Van Dijk (1997) states, politics is discursive. Hence, discourse constitutes politics, and politics cannot be easily done if discourse is not utilized. The utilization of discourse would introduce

processes that promote politicians and their plans (Abdul Manan, 2019; Rajandran, 2019; Wijeyewardene, 2019). The sense of promotion is retained even if the context and language change.

Regarding the participants in the processes, Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto prefer the inclusive first person plural pronoun *kita* (we), exclusive first person plural pronoun *kami* (we) and the first person single pronoun *saya* (I). The collective pronouns *kami* and *kita* are frequent because the candidates depict themselves as part of a group, be it a political party or the electorate (Steffens & Haslam, 2013). The candidates act on behalf of the group, and do not seem selfish. The group does not have boundaries, be it class, ethnic, regional or religious. Considering Indonesia's diversity, the sense of unity in a group is important because Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto intend to work for all Indonesians. Being in a group, everyone has a collective responsibility for the development of Indonesia. Moreover, *saya* is seen as the candidates need to showcase their personal capability. The electorate is voting for the person, and he must seem able to lead the country. Where suitable, the candidates use *kami* and *kita*, and *saya* to achieve their aim of persuading the electorate.

Compared to other studies on political discourse from Indonesia, the present article covered the 2019 presidential debates and its analysis was grounded in Transitivity. Setiawan et al. (2018) discover different Transitivity patterns between the two candidates in the 2014 election but the present article reveals that Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto share similarities in the choice of process, participant and circumstance in the 2019 election. Both candidates converge in their language features in an endeavor to persuade the Indonesian electorate of their suitability to govern the country. The convergence is perhaps because Prabowo Subianto reproduces the features employed by Joko Widodo, to sound more like the winner and to minimize the distinction in their language. Alternatively, both candidates could have converged with one another because being speakers of Indonesian, they have access to a shared repertoire of language features. Convergence in process does not mean using the same words or phrases. Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto could state their actions, describe plans, and share their thoughts and hopes using various verbs that belong to the same process.

Moreover, the debates by Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto employ similar processes, participants and circumstances because the debates have a common function. The two candidates intend to persuade the Indonesian electorate about their suitability to be president (Faradi, 2017; Setiawan et al., 2018; Suhardijanto & Sinar, 2019; Yuliawati et al., 2019). While various factors certainly influence persuasion, language is one factor. The choice of process, participant and circumstance conveys active candidates who can bring desirable

development to Indonesia. This main argument is articulated by different clauses and their specific processes, participants and circumstances. But their aim is shared, namely to create a positive perception of the candidates in the minds of the electorate. Perception is complex and beyond the scope of the present article but the persuasive function of debates have been argued to encourage a certain perception of candidates (Abdul Manan, 2019; Wijeyewardene, 2019).

Although Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto faced one another in the 2019 presidential debates, the representation of the two candidates demonstrates more similarities than dissimilarities. Their preference for processes, participants and circumstances are shared because the two of them display themselves are the most suitable person to be president. These language features are perhaps constants in political discourse (Benoit & Sheaffer, 2006). Language is employed to represent their actions, descriptions, and thoughts and hopes which benefits everyone in Indonesia. Hence, the representation of the two candidates emphasizes their positive traits but deemphasizes their negative traits, a typical finding in studies on political discourse (Van Dijk, 1997; Rajandran, 2019).

But Joko Widodo can articulate his credibility, unlike Prabowo Subianto, because he is the present president. Instead, Prabowo Subianto tries to discredit Joko Widodo's presidency. As Benoit and Brazeal (2002) and Benoit and Sheaffer (2006) also find, the incumbent Joko Widodo acclaims his achievements but the contender Prabowo Subianto attacks these achievements. Enriching Benoit and Brazeal (2002) and Benoit and Sheaffer (2006), where acclaims are more common than attacks and defenses in political debates, the present article has shown that Material, Relational and Mental processes are more common than Verbal, Existential and Behavioural processes in political debates. The processes could be used to acclaim, defend or attack (Benoit & Brazeal, 2002; Benoit & Sheaffer, 2006), and the correspondence of a process to a function can be explored in future research.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The present article conducted a Transitivity analysis of the 2019 Indonesian presidential debates. The two candidates share patterns of Transitivity because the representation tries to persuade the electorate to vote for them. Joko Widodo won the election and is presently serving his second term as the president of Indonesia, and the influence of his discourse during the debates must not be discounted. The present article extends research on political discourse because it studies data from Indonesia and data in the Indonesian language. The findings can serve to educate the electorate on how politicians employ language in persuasion. Sensitizing the electorate to the power of language improves their critical thinking ability. They should be

able to compare the discourse heard and the reality seen around them. The comparison may inspire the electorate to demand transparency in discourse, and for reality to match the statements in the discourse of politicians. An active electorate is required for any functioning democracy (Rajandran, 2019), as part of the checks and balances to ensure that government is working in their interests.

While Faradi (2017) analyzed Modality, and Setiawan et al. (2018) and the present article analyzed Transitivity, future research can explore the debates using other concepts from Systemic Functional Linguistics. Among the concepts are Appraisal and Theme, which respectively unearth how the candidates evaluate and organize their arguments in the debates. Future research can compare the presidential debates of 2014 and 2019 because the candidates are the same. It can chart how Transitivity and other patterns change from 2014 to 2019. Moreover, other texts can be analyzed, such as advertisements, manifestos and speeches during elections. There is ample research on political discourse in English, particularly with European and North American data. Research with data from Indonesia and in the Indonesian language provides an understanding of the discursive contours of politics in Indonesia and it enriches the study of political discourse. Such research provides a perspective on politics from a developing country, and it may encounter established or novel features of discourse. Hence, there are promising avenues for studies on political discourse from Indonesia.

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