

THE USE OF PERSONAL PRONOUN AS A RHETORICAL STRATEGY IN SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO'S PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH TEXT AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Rosyida Ekawati

*English Department - Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences
University of Trunojoyo Madura, Indonesia
idasunyigono@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This paper concerns with the Indonesian presidential speech in international forum. It examines the use of personal pronoun in political discourse of president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's in United Nations forum, especially at the General Debate of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. It was his last chance as the president to deliver his presidential speech at the UN forum. It is descriptive qualitative to deal with the complexities of meanings in social contexts. In collecting data, the writer uses document method, by reading and re-reading the text, selecting and collecting the data, classifying the personal pronoun, and coding the data. In analyzing data, procedures are finding the types of the personal pronoun used in the speech, describing and explaining the personal pronoun used, and drawing the conclusion based on the data analysis. From the perspective of personal pronoun, the speech text is analyzed to establish how the president associates with and dissociates from actions taken by himself or his officers and Indonesian people at different times and spaces. It can be understood that by locating personal pronoun for certain intended references, the president tries to distinguish and emphasize his action from others. The president also tries to seek his domination on an extraordinary effort to solve the problem in order to convince the audience.

Key words: Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, personal pronoun, president, speech, United Nations

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian presidents often deliver their English speeches in international forums held in Indonesia or abroad. In this matter, if the events are held in Indonesia, the president is the host of the events attended by the representatives of other countries. Hosting fellow presidents, prime ministers or other country representatives, the president often plays his role to please and welcome distinguished guests through his remarks or speeches. In reverse, if the presidents deliver their speeches abroad, they are guests or visitors. Likewise, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the sixth president of the Republic of Indonesia and first directly-elected president, during his presidency, he used to attend and play an active role in regional or international forums, either in Indonesia or abroad. In those forums, the role of President Yudhoyono was acknowledged. For the evidences, President Yudhoyono was appointed as a chairman of the committee in the UN General Assembly. Stated in United Nations website, specifically for the website of its Secretary-General, (<http://www.un.org/sg/management/bios/Yudhoyono.shtml>), Yudhoyono was also a recipient of several international awards. In 2011, the United Nations named him as the Global Champion for Disaster Risk Reduction. In 2010, he received the Gold Standard Award and was named Asia's Top Political Communicator by Public Affairs Asia, based in Hong Kong; and in the same year, he received the Global Home Tree Award. He was also the recipient of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Award.

Delivering presidential speech is one of the practices of political discourse. Van Dijk (1997: 12) defines political discourse in his article entitled *What is Political Discourse Analysis* is the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as presidents and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels. The United Nations (UN) forum is an international

forum where the members are from various countries, developed and developing countries. From that, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's speech in UN forum is considered to be a political stance as at the same time he is not only as the individual but the official representative of Indonesia.

This paper concerns with the Indonesian presidential speech in international forum. Studies on presidential speech are varied and from various points of view. The presidential speech has recently become a linguistic concern. It may be the president is considered the most qualified representative of his countries, whose words representing the nation's ethos and soul (Adetunji, 2006: 178). The speech is prepared, accompanied, influenced, and played by language. The language used in the speech involves the simultaneous signaling of purposes, aims, and wishes along with the message itself. Beard (2000: 35) argues that making speeches is a vital part of the politician's role in announcing policy and persuading people to agree with. In ideal political situations, language is one of the ammunitions employed by politicians to bring down the other part and construct a positive face for themselves. Then, how president Yudhoyono posits himself in front of the international audience through the choice of personal pronoun in his presidential speech.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pronoun

Pronouns are used in place of nouns (Azar, 1999: 132). They are used first and foremost as a way for the speaker or writer to avoid being repetitive, by not having to repeat the same words again and again. A singular pronoun is used to refer to a singular noun and a plural pronoun is used to refer to a plural noun.

The personal pronouns are used to refer to people or things that the speaker is talking to, or talking about and they can be used as a way for him to refer to himself. There are subject pronoun, object pronoun, possessive pronouns, possessive adjective, and reflexive pronoun. Subject pronouns are used as subjects of the sentences, such as I, You, She, He, It, We, They. Object pronouns are me, you, her, him, it, us, them. Possessive pronouns are mine, yours, hers, his, its, ours, yours, theirs. Possessive adjectives are my, your, her, his, its, our, their. Reflexive pronouns are myself, yourself, himself, herself, yourselves, ourselves, themselves.

Subject pronouns replace nouns that are the subject of their clause. In the 3rd person, subject pronouns are often used to avoid repetition of the subject's name. Object pronouns are used to replace nouns that are the direct or indirect object of a clause. Possessive adjectives are not pronouns, but rather determiners. It is useful to learn them at the same time as pronouns, however, because they are similar in form to the possessive pronouns. Possessive adjectives function as adjectives, so they appear before the noun they modify. They do not replace a noun as pronouns do. Possessive pronouns replace possessive nouns as either the subject or the object of a clause. Because the noun being replaced does not appear in the sentence, it must be clear from the context. Reflexive pronouns refer back to the subject of the clause because the subject of the action is also the direct or indirect object.

Rhetorical Strategies

Rhetoric is primarily concerned with persuasion, the ability of a speaker/writer to influence and persuade an audience. Classically, rhetoric has three dimensions: logos, ethos and pathos. Ethos deals with the speaker's capability to display a personal character which makes his speech credible and trustworthy. Pathos is concerned with the speaker's power of stirring and arousing the emotions of the audience; and in logos lies the power to provide truth by means of persuasive and rational argument (Beer and De Landtsheer, 2004).

In addition, the political leaders in their speeches have the intent to convince the readers based on their ideological underpinnings and orientation. They do this through the selection of some rhetorical tools that directly appeal to the emotions of their audience (Kennan, 2001). It also includes tone, diction, details, imagery, figurative language, humor, syntax, and anything used to deliberately create effect.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper is descriptive qualitative to deal with the complexities of meanings in social contexts. Qualitative research concerns with the collection, analysis and interpretation of data in order to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest (Gay et al., 2006). Because the primary goal of qualitative research is understanding, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Source of the data is Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's presidential speech text at the General Debate of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, 24 September 2014. In collecting data, the writer uses document method. The steps of collecting data are as follows: (1) reading and re-reading the transcript, (2) selecting and collecting the data, (3) classifying the types of personal pronoun, (4) coding the data. In analyzing data, procedures are as follows: (1) finding the types of the personal pronoun used in the speech, (2) describing and explaining the personal pronoun, (3) drawing the conclusion based on the data analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This paper discusses on personal pronoun I and its inflections, we and its inflections, and they and its inflections. The discussion of the representative examples are provided to make clearer understanding of the use of personal pronoun in SBY's presidential speech text..

The Use of Personal Pronoun I and Its Inflections

The pronoun I is actually not a substitution of the speaker's name. It is the way for him to refer to himself. In political speeches, I can be used by the speaker to convey his opinion, in order to make the speech more subjective. It shows the authority of the speaker and it can be used to show compassion with the audience and to narrate a story (Bramley 2001:27).

- (1) It is a great honor for *me* to stand once again before this august body - the last time that *I* do so during *my* two terms as President of Indonesia.
- (2) For those who made it, and those who are yet to make it, *I* learn one best lesson: the most important driver of change lies in GOVERNANCE – not just good governance, but SMART governance

Example (1) shows his personal feeling in standing and delivering his speech in front of UN members, and his compassion to the audience. From example (2), it is understood that the use of I also indicates his personal opinion toward the idea of governance.

The use of personal pronoun I can indicate his personal involvement as in (3). The disadvantage is that it is obvious whom to put the blame on when something goes wrong. It can also be seen as an attempt of the individual speaker to place himself above or outside the shared responsibility of his colleagues (Beard 2000:45).

- (3) *I* could not agree more with the chosen theme of this session "Delivering and Implementing a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda". The theme which is very much in line with work of the High-level Panel, *I* was privileged to co-chair.

The mainly encouraging reason for a politician to use the pronoun I in his speech is to appear as a good and responsible, to portray him/herself in a positive way and emphasize his/her personal qualities. Examples of personal qualities that politicians want to express include being someone with principles, moral, power and who is not afraid to take action when necessary (Bramley 2001:28)

- (4) In saying this, *I* am neither a Utopian nor a blind idealist in understanding International relations. But *I* do believe that with strong commitment and political will, we can make the impossible possible.

From (4) above, I emphasizes his personal qualities that he is a qualified person in building a good international relationship. In this utterance, the president also tries to convince that by doing some good deeds, everything can be achieved.

The Use of Personal Pronoun We and Its Inflections

The essential meaning of *we* is collective identity or group membership. To achieve different effects, the politician often produces variety of contexts of using *we*. *We* can be used to state an institutional identity (Sacks, 1992). It is achieved when a person speaks on behalf of, or as a representative of, an institution. In other words, the speaker takes on the participation status of a representative of a particular institution (Goffman 1974, 1981).

- (5) *Our* hard work over the years have produced achievements which include breakthroughs in combating poverty, increasing school enrollment, and improving public health. These achievements are encouraging, and in some instances, inspiring.

Our in (5) refers to not only the speaker but also the Indonesian government/citizen. *Our* suggests that others are involved and making others also have responsibilities of the shared policies. The achievement of combating poverty and other policies are not only the decision of the president but also the government under his lead.

The use of personal pronoun *we* and its inflections could be inclusion or exclusion. Inclusive use refers to the speaker and the addressee(s), while exclusive use refers to the speaker and another individual or group who are not addressees (Scheibmen, 2004).

- (6) As *we* set forth a new global agenda for development, I believe *we* can draw on years of trial and error to become more acutely aware of the promise and pitfalls of development – of what *we* want and what *we* do not want.
- (7) Yet, the importance of *our* work lies beyond the issue of development, as *we* are now also confronted with yet another major problem. *We* are witnessing a worrying deterioration in the relations between the major powers. None of *us*, certainly not the United Nations, can afford to bury *our* head in the sand about this grim development.

From the examples (6) and (7) above, *we* inclusive refers to the the president as the speaker and the audience as the addressees. It also as a team, not the president as individual. All the policies set by the UN become the responsibility of all members which are addressed by the use of first personal pronoun *we*. *We* as a team can achieve every planning instead of as individual. The use of personal pronoun *we* in example (8) below is the example of the use of exclusive *we*.

- (8) Moreover, Southeast Asia is on the verge of becoming a true Community. And *we* regard this as the apex of strategic trust, which *we* believe can be replicated everywhere. As much as *we* believe that a culture of peace that ASEAN has practiced can grow in other parts of the world.

We does not refer to the addressee or the audience of the event, but refers to others who are outside the group in the event. *We* refers to the Southeast Asia members as one community. The community has produced the policies that they believe can be applied in other countries outside the community member countries.

The Use of Personal Pronoun They and Its Inflections

Personal pronoun *they* as the third person plural refers to others excluding the speaker and the audience. In political context the use of personal pronoun *they* can distinguish the speaker's group with the other.

- (9) *They* must begin to turn trust deficit into a new strategic trust, not just between *them* but also with the emerging powers and with all nations of the United Nations.

They and *them* in the example (9) above refer to the other people or group, outside the group. Particularly in this context, *they* refers to countries and people in conflict such as Iraq, Syria, Palestinians in Gaza, Rusia, and the West. SBY is distancing himself and the UN members from that kind of policy. It seems, he evaluates the countries in negative ways, then as the speaker, he also provides his personal opinion on how those countries must start their strategies to overcome any problems they faced. Giving his personal opinion can indicate his authority.

Aside from distancing himself, the use of they and its inflections are also sometimes neutral. They refers to general that means does not refer to the specific other.

- (10) And with smart governance, nations can go beyond *their* potentials and leap frog over others ahead of *them*.
- (11) But humanity as a whole have NOT achieved ALL the MDG targets. Successes are uneven : *they* differ between regions, *they* differ within regions, and *they* even differ within countries.
- (12) Together, *they* are all drivers of regional affairs, and masters of *their* own destiny.

In (10), they refers to unspecified nations in the world, means any nations. Meanwhile in example (11), they as definite pronoun refers to the previous antecedent mention. So, they here as the pronoun of successes. They in (12) is a bit different from others. They refers to all nations of Southeast Asia Nations where SBY as the president of Indonesia is also the member of the association. SBY apparently posits himself as other in this association and prefers to posit as a member of the UN in viewing other groups.

CONCLUSIONS

Personal pronouns used in SBY's presidential speech are I, we, and they with their inflections. Personal pronoun I is used when he wants to expose his personal qualities, his authority, and his personal involvement. The personal pronoun we inclusive is used to state the collective identity and responsibilities between the speaker and the audience. We exclusive is used to state SBY's identity together with other people or group outside the audience. The third person plural pronoun, they, is used when referring to others. SBY takes distance of the use of they in term of responsibility and policy. But, they can refer to general people or group with unspecified people. The most interesting is when SBY stands in front of the audience of UN members, they is used as otherness to ASEAN although he is a member of it.

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