

The 'Realness' Discourse of a Political Leader: A *Komunikasi Berasa* Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the communication style of the former Governor of Jakarta and presidential candidate during the 2014 Indonesian election, Joko Widodo (known as Jokowi), both as a discourse and communication model that affects trustworthiness and meaningfulness of the audiences toward the conveyed messages. This communication model is called *Komunikasi Berasa* ['sensed-communication' or 'experientially-meaningful communication'], which synergises the delivery and verification of a message through audiences' experience towards the meaning of the message. Using discursive and descriptive survey approaches, the author found out that Jokowi's *sensed-communication* is not perceived solely on *blusukan* [impromptu visits], but also on the verbal messages of his political campaigns. Media texts display more *sensed-rational* and *sensed-sensorial* discourse, whilst people see *sensed-relevance* and *sensed-beneficial* as the prominent factors in the *sensed-message* that Jokowi sent. The results of this research could be used as a reference in implementing a strategy to get audiences' trust through *Komunikasi Berasa* or *sensed-communication*.

Keywords: *Komunikasi Berasa*, the 'realness' discourse, media textual discourse, audience's perceptual discourse, Jokowi

INTRODUCTION

Let us flashback briefly to the year 2013, the time before the Indonesian legislative and presidential elections in 2014. Who deserved to be the poll and survey star at that time? For the Indonesian public, the answer was predictable: Joko Widodo a.k.a Jokowi, Jakarta Governor who was also the presidential candidate of PDI-P (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan [Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle])¹. Jokowi was indeed phenomenal. Not

only because almost all polls and surveys conducted by various survey agencies always put him at the top of the rank of who the public will choose, but also because his political career and his achievements leaped during his leadership in the government. Starting as a mayor of Solo, Central Java, which led him to be awarded as one of the world's best mayor, then becoming governor of Jakarta with various breakthroughs and achievements, to becoming a presidential candidate in a relatively short time, not many leaders and politicians had a life path as 'dramatic' as Jokowi.

The coordinator of Sigma (Sinergi Masyarakat untuk Demokrasi [Community Synergy for Democracy]), Said Salahuddin, says that Jokowi has three key advantages over his opponents: his politeness and modesty; good working performance as mayor and governor; and, his good-heartedness in facing his political opponents, by trying not to return the attacks, accusations, prejudice and slander that were addressed to him (Aziza, 2012). Meanwhile, Hanta Yuda, director Pol-Tracking Institute, says that Jokowi's advantage lies in his originality to demonstrate an authentic political approach, which was different from other leaders, such as President Yudhoyono who was full of public image engineering (Sihaloho, 2013).

Sobary (2014) stated:

Jokowi is an open book. We can read what is written on the outside, the words, the actions, the gesture, the smile, assuredly the same as what is, related to his heart, his dreams, and aspirations. He does not hide harshness, or cunning (Sinar Harapan 23/4/2014).

Jokowi's openness and modesty are what captivated the public and made him a media darling, so his electability became high. The mainstream and non-mainstream media were flocking to cover and show his activities and actions and then reviewing them in a tone which was almost 100% positive. Even in the social media such as Facebook, people did not want to be behind the mainstream media in reviewing the figure of Jokowi.

His simplicity and modesty became the centres of attraction.

However, expression and appreciation to Jokowi's modesty and simplicity were not only in the form of visual endorsement in the social media, but also in the form of terms that reflect lower class' terminologies, such as *ndeso* [typical villager look and figure -Javanese] (Kristanti, 2012; Tere, 2014), *kerempeng* [flesh-and-bone] but big brained (Sundari, 2014) or other 'modest' phrases like 'humble', 'honest', 'sincere' (Handito, 2014; Ara, 2014) and 'local-product' presidential candidate (Rosarians, 2014). With his modesty, *ndeso* look and Javanese style warmth, various psycho-war comments addressed to him were often answered by a frank '*aku rapopo*' [I'm fine -Javanese] (F. Faqih, 2014) which was at that time a popular gimmick among Indonesian people.

Attractiveness as well as the discourse about Jokowi was not solely related to his modesty and simplicity. Jokowi is also synonymous with his very popular iconic 'plaid shirt' (Teresia, 2014). His governance and bureaucracy working ethos emphasises on 'serving-oriented' (Aziza, 2013). And surely what is very phenomenal is his sudden inspection habit to monitor the performance of subordinates and visitation to residents to see directly the real problems, which is famously known as *blusukan* (Wiwoho, 2013; Dewi, 2014) thus resulting to his being perceived as a populist leader (Susilawati, 2014).

Jokowi is indeed down-to-earth. His language is lucid, with simple logic, not pretentious, making it easily understood by anyone, from the bottom to the top layer of society. His communication style is polite, not attacking others, and he calmly manages various attacks that try to assault his character. He is not short tempered, and even tends to relax with easy jokes. No wonder, the research conducted by Tjipta Lesmana on 1 September to 25 October 2013 revealed that Jokowi was the presidential candidate who has the best communication with a score of 85, followed by Jusuf Kalla (JK) with a score of 81 and Prabowo with a score of 78 (Daryono, 2013). The research assessed 11 presidential candidates from six parameters of political communica-

tion, i.e., context –how high or low a leader uses context, public appearance, delivered message, revealed nonverbal language, voice quality and sense of humour.

Although these six parameters used in the research can be quite adequate to measure the achievement of communication style of public figures (read: political leaders), they still miss the most important variable that is urgently needed in Indonesia at this time, which is: how well the prospective leaders can build public trust through communication. This is because communication has a triadic relation with commitment and trust (Zeffane et al., 2011). A communication that is able to build hope and a good first impression also gives positive influence in shaping public attitudes toward the presidential candidates (Hollbrook et al., 2001). In fact, with reliable communications, the public will be led in determining their choice on a candidate (Harder and Krosnick, 2008).

One way to build trust through communication is to transmit credible messages, which contains not only promise, but also realistic and prospective meaning along with proofs of effort to create real works, so that the public or the audience can feel the truthfulness of the message. The message becomes more real, alive, and ‘present’ in public life, because it is very *meaningful*. In other words, the message becomes very *berasa* [‘sensed’ or ‘experientially-meaningful’]. The realness and meaningfulness of message is very important for political leaders because it is able to knit an emotional bond with the people they lead. Moreover, in a situation where politics tend to be seen as cynical and negative by most people, messages which are real and building mutual optimism through the sympathetic ways of political communication are crucial. Thus, the people will change their view and see that not all political leaders were only able to leave empty rhetoric without tangible evidence of the work that can be perceived by society.

Jokowi’s communication style, presumably, is in tune with that way. Unlike most other figures who (seems to have become

the political communication ‘tradition’ of Indonesian leaders) use more the strategy of ‘imaging through words’, with more effort spent on selling out nicely constructed promises on the media stage, Jokowi prefers the ‘imaging through facts’ by going down directly to the field, mingling with the people, removing the bulkhead of the stage, running a ‘touch diplomacy’ (Kasali, 2013), and letting people feel the pulse of his sincerity to help resolve their problems. This style of communication inherent in Jokowi is part of the characteristics and distinctions of *Komunikasi Berasa* or sensed-communication. *Komunikasi Berasa* implies humility, talking less but doing more, giving priority to work rather than empty rhetoric, and always strives to provide concrete evidence of the messages conveyed (Wijaya, 2011a). Of course, without the hassle of doing media construction, groomed behaviours, or ‘flirting’ with the media, Jokowi still became a media darling. All of his different gaits were always present in the media discourse, as well as becoming public or audience perceptual discourse. Therefore, this paper examines further exactly how the meanings of Jokowi and his experientially-meaningful or sensed messages became a discourse in the text of media and audience perception, such that it makes Jokowi more ‘real’ than other Indonesian leaders.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Every day we are bombarded with billions and even trillions of messages and meanings that flow from various sources and media. Are we able to capture and digest every meaning of the message delivered? Are all the messages ‘lodged’ in the head and heart? Do the messages produce a profound effect and cause trust? These are crucial questions in reviewing the strength of the messages that we say and how we say it.

Lenderman (2006) exemplifies that in conventional advertising and marketing, there are at least four thousand marketing messages present every day, which make consumers ‘immune’, even becoming brand atheists, because they no longer believe in

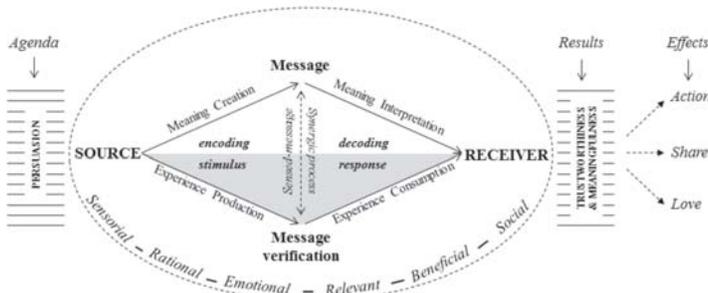


FIGURE 1. THE MODEL OF KOMUNIKASI BERASA (AN EXPERIENTIALLY-MEANINGFUL OR SENSED-COMMUNICATION)
(ADAPTED FROM WIJAYA, 2011AB; 2013A)

the brand. Although Lenderman pointed this out just in the realm of marketing communications, in fact meaningless and trust-less messages can be found in almost all communication phenomena, including the organizational communication between superiors and subordinates (Willemyns et al, 2003), the interpersonal communication (Pearce, 1974), as well as the persuasive communication (Arnold, 1988). No doubt, various strategies are pursued to gain trust, because trust is indeed the essence of persuasion. Failure of grabbing trust is an indicator of the failure of persuasion. Therefore, for credible messages to be meaningful and trustful, these must take form through *Komunikasi Berasa* or ‘sensed-communication’.

Komunikasi Berasa or *Sensed-communication*² is a communication model that synergises message delivery and message confirmation through the experience of the audience towards the message, so that it creates trustworthiness and meaningfulness (Wijaya, 2011ab; 2013a). Different from marketing strategy concept related to the experience-based economy (Pine II & Gilmore, 2011) or experience-based marketing (Schmitt, 1999; Smith & Wheeler, 2002; Lenderman, 2006; Smilansky, 2009), this *sensed-communication* model put more emphasis on the meaningfulness and trustworthiness as the effect of experience and deep impression towards meaning and proof of a message, not just the experience to a product.

A message in any form, both verbal and non-verbal, or a program form usually comes from an agenda, a motive or a certain strategy, which, in the context of persuasive communications, then the agenda, motive or strategy is also persuasive. From the source, the message is then encoded and delivered directly or through a particular medium, which is then decoded and received by receiver. In the process of delivering a message, besides doing encoding by adding meaning to the core message, the source also try to create experiences and certain impressions that are aligned with the encoded meaning. The experience and impression are a form of message verification, which is then perceived and sensed by the recipient in a decoding process.

Consistency and synergy of the encoding-decoding process in defining the core meaning of message and production-consumption of experience is evidence that the message has become *berasa* [sensed]. *Sensed-message* then gives an impact or effect, as well as communication result in the form of trustworthiness and meaningfulness to the meaning of the delivered message. Trustworthiness and meaningfulness can create commitment (Zeffane et al., 2011) and encourage the audience to take action as per agenda, motive and source strategy, such as choosing candidates or recommended products (Wijaya, 2011b). Besides that, trustworthiness and meaningfulness of the message can also encourage the audience to voluntarily share or advocate (Smith & Wheeler, 2002) the delivered message, from the source to other audiences, and, surely evokes love felt by audience for a long term.

Important to highlight is that the more synergised or aligned and immediate the delivery and the confirmation of the message, the more it becomes *sensed*. Nonetheless, pending evidence does not mean a message is not *sensed*, because in certain communication situations, (technically) immediacy and simultaneity in the message delivery and verification is not that easy to realise. Therefore, the *sensed-communication* model emphasises more on the synergy between the message and message verification, or the meaning and experience towards the message, its

consistency, alignment, rather than its promptness and simultaneity of the confirmation. In other words, the message should match between what is spoken and actions. Regarding time simultaneity precision, its only effects are on the sensing value and trustworthiness effect, as well as its meaningfulness which obviously is “the faster the better”.

Meanwhile, factors that indicate the level of a *sensed-message* can be examined from various dimensions (Wijaya, 2013a), namely: *keberasaan indrawi* [‘sensed-sensorial’], *keberasaan emosional* [‘sensed-emotional’], *keberasaan rasional* [‘sensed-rational’], *keberasaan relevansional* [‘sensed-relevance’], *keberasaan benefisial* [‘sensed-beneficial’], and *keberasaan sosial* [‘sensed-social’].

Sensed-Sensorial. A message is more trustworthy when it is accompanied by ‘physical’ proof that it can be reached through the real sensorial experience. Therefore, the message becomes more apparent as the evidence can be seen, heard, touched, kissed or tasted in accordance with the encoded meaning within the message. The evidence here may be direct or indirect through a particular medium. Although evidence through media is prone to be manipulated, but the audience can filter it based on which one is reliable and not, to enjoy the meaning and message’s evidence through sensorial sensation. Thus, the indicators of a *sensed-sensorial* are the sensibility of a message and message evidence: how real a message and the evidence can be seen, viewed, heard, touched, smelled or tasted (depending on the message form), not to mention messages through the media.

Sensed-Emotional. Through affective experience, audiences feel the delivered message is more real and proven true. Affective experience here means the response and positive evaluation from public feeling towards the message and delivered message’s evidence. There is a saying that the mouth can lie, eye can deceive, ear can deny, but the heart cannot. Therefore, conscience honesty that involves the deepest and most sensitive feelings is an important factor in the *sensed-communication*. Sensitivity in defining the meaning of message and experiencing the real evidence

is needed for the energy of empathy's 'imagination' to work maximally. Thus, *sensed-communication* can be examined from several important indicators, such as: how strong public or audience's feeling positively related to the message and delivered message proof; how positive audience's feeling in appreciating the message proof's facts; how honest the audience's heart is in speaking acknowledgment of the meaning and message evidence; how empathetic and sensitive audience's feeling is in putting themselves as communicators to feel the sincerity, honesty and even implicit lies in the message and message evidence; and, how deep the public or audience's trust and confidence is towards a given meaning and message evidence.

Sensed-Rational. The truth in a message will become more *sensed* when the meaning makes sense. In other words, what is presented and proven will be better when the audience's cognition can receive it well. In this case, a message or grafted meaning within a communicative action should be able to appreciate and consider audience's logic into account, because the audience is not passive (Alasuutari, 1999; Hall, 2006; Schiappa, 2008) and not inanimate objects that do not have the mind to evaluate whether a message can be trusted or not. Thus, it is important to maximise the cognitive experience of the audience toward the delivered message so that it will be more *sensed* and produces high trustworthiness effects. The indicators of *sensed rational* are: how logical or reasonable a message and delivered message evidence is, the headmost hints of the message's evidence, and how realistic a promise or a claim in a message and its predictive causality of truth is.

Sensed-Relevance. A message, however factual the meaning is and however real the evidence is, would be less *sensed* by the audience if the message is not relevant to the interests and conditions of the audience. Therefore, the meaning and message evidence must be in accordance with audiences' need, problem, want, expectations, and even dreams so that the message is more *sensed* for the audience to accept. Message and the proof also

must be relevant with the socio-cultural and psychological background of audiences. Consequently, the *sensed-relevance* indicator can be examined from: how much it is aligned with the needs, desires, hopes, dreams and obsession of the audiences; and, how much the source understand the background, condition and problems that are faced by the audience (reflected in the content and message evidence), both personally and collectively.

Sensed-Beneficial. Humans tend to pursue profit or benefits to define their happiness (Scott, 2014). Not surprisingly, in Uses and Gratification theory, audiences tend to look for and respond to media content that is favourable to them (McQuail, 2010).

Although communication is not a panacea, it is often considered as the solution to many problems (Mulyana, 2007). Consequently, in *sensed-communication*, messages whose meaning and evidence is less or not beneficial, or does not provide any solutions, will become less *sensed* by the audience as well, although sensorial, affective and cognitive experience have successfully given concrete evidence. Matters which are sensed beneficially include intangible benefits such as serenity, clarity, certainty of the future, happiness, and so on. Conclusively then, the indicators of *sensed-beneficial* include direct or indirect benefits of the message and the evidence of the delivered message, tangible and intangible benefits, how a message provides solution, and how message evidence responds to the problem of audiences.

Sensed-Social. When the message evidence is felt and experienced by other audiences, then the feeling of the *sensed-message* becomes much stronger. Defining the meaning and having experience in the decoding process are no longer exclusively possessed by an individual, but becomes inclusive and collective. In fact, the same meaning and experience between people in one community or public audience is not just making the message become more *sensed*, but also more credible. Thus, it can be said that the indicators of *sensed-social* are: how inclusive the message and message evidence is felt by public or a community, social environment and society in general; how often the message and

the message evidence is present in social media and be the subject of public discourse; and, how much is the desire caused by the message and message evidence, thus triggering voluntary message dissemination and message evidence among audiences.

RESEARCH METHOD

This is a combination of textual and audience research. In addition to meeting the research objectives, this is also because a study of media text only has representation problems (Karatani, 2003) related to the dominant reading on encoding/ decoding process (Hall, 2006). Even the media often displays wrong representation because media only presents *what text means* (Schiappa, 2008). In addition, the meaning more or less affects the reader such that the public discourse becomes alienated and representative 'truth' becomes neglected. Therefore, instead of just focusing on what representation (media text) *did* to the audience, Schiappa stresses that it is important to know as well what the audience *do* or think related to discourse subject representation. Thus, combining the media discourse and public discourse (through audience's perception) makes the explored main issue become more comprehensive and can prevent or minimise the media-public discourse which alienate each other, which potentially castrate the representative 'truth'.

To know how *sensed* and 'real' is Jokowi's message and meaning in the text, then the approach used is a discursive approach by analysing knowledge in the text that represents the discourse subject. Foucault (2002) says there is no meaning outside the discourse, and discourse always forms knowledge. Discourse, according to Foucault, never simply consists of one statement, one text, one action or one source, which means that the discourse is not a single meaning. Therefore, the author collects and analyses a wide variety of media texts related to the discourse subject, that contains *episteme* (which according to Foucault is the state of knowledge at a time, present in a variety of text) and discursive formations, which for Foucault is an object, style or

same pattern, with a particular strategy in which various discursive events refer to (Cousins & Hussain, 1984). In this research, the discursive formations construct knowledge with *episteme* of Jokowi's *sensed-message*. A total of 35 articles from various media and online sources that are relevant and significant were collected and analyzed with reference to the subjects of the *Komunikasi Berasa* or *Sensed-communication* dimensions.

Meanwhile, to 'read' the public statistical perception discourse, the author conducted a descriptive survey of 100 respondents in Jakarta in March-April 2014 (before the open presidential election campaign), using purposive sampling method. Respondent criteria were determined according to the research purpose, namely Jokowi supporters or people who were clearly concerned about the figure and gait of the former Jakarta governor. The dimensions of *sensed-communication* that were examined include the *sensed-sensorial*, *sensed-emotional*, *sensed-rational*, *sensed-relevance*, *sensed-beneficial* and *sensed-social*. The survey method used in the audience-based research associated to textual criticism of media or popular culture was in tune with what is called as a *corrective analysis* (Goodnight, 1987) in "*modes of argument*" (p. 62). According to Goodnight, argument in *corrective analysis* tries to 'match' the text and public by asking and questioning the public or audience response.

FINDINGS

Various knowledge which is relevant to the discourse subject of *sensed-communication*, came out in various media outlets. For example, in the news of *Tribun* (2/5/2014) entitled *KSPSI: Yang Lain Masih Janji, Jokowi Sudah Beri Bukti*, [KSPI: Others Still Promise, Jokowi Gives Evidence], highlighted the statement of the president of KSPSI (Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia [Confederation of All Indonesian Workers Union]), Andi Gani Nena Wea, who said that Jokowi already proved that he is in favour of and will fight for society, especially labour, which can be seen from Program Jakarta Sehat [Jakarta Health Pro-

gram] (known as KJS) and Program Jakarta Pintar [Jakarta Smart Program] (known as KJP) (Malau, 2014). Here, the statements that imply discourse *episteme* are “evidence of standing on labour’s side” and “can be seen with KJS and KJP programs”, which form discursive formation regarding *sensed-beneficial*, *sensorial* and *sensed-relevance*. The word “standing on” refers to *relevance* meaning, while the word “can be seen” indicates *sensorial* meaning and KJS-KJP program is *beneficial* evidence for workers as one of Jokowi’s audience segment communication. Using news strategy, knowledge was built by *Tribun* as a media institution and Andi Gani as speaker representing KSPI (labour). Similarly, Jokowi states that KJS-KJP is a concrete evidence of the fulfilment of his promise (Safutra, 2013).

Another institution, BPBD (Badan Penanggulangan Bencana Daerah [Regional Disaster Management Agency]) of Jakarta, declared that flood points decreased from 75 to 35 during the leadership era of Jakarta Governor Joko Widodo (Sihaloho, 2014). This discourse that emerged through *Beritasatu* (14/1/2014) media coverage was strengthened by another speaker, Ari Junaedi, a political observer from the University of Indonesia, who counteracted the counter-discourse of Jokowi’s political opponents by revealing that the data and facts on the field should be seen as seriousness and consistency from Jokowi-Ahok [the nickname of the vice governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama] in fighting for (the benefit of) citizens of Indonesia’s capital. *Sensed-rational*, which has a prospective nature is constructed by the statement “should be seen as seriousness and consistency” and statistical knowledge “decreased from 75 to 35 flood points”. Similarly, the *sensed-rational* was also built by the Ministry of Public Works Agency through *Tempo* (19/6/2013) which claimed that 40% of the river, macro and micro channel, as well as conduit in Jakarta have been dredged, until the seventh month of the leadership of Jakarta Governor Joko Widodo (Pertwi, 2013).

In the context of the presidential election, Jokowi’s *sensed-rational* appeared in *Suara Pembaruan* (14/5/2014) which originally

comes from *Antara* news agency. Jokowi argued that Indonesia as a maritime nation should have a "sea highway" in which large vessels can use to transport a wide variety of commodities from one island to another (Antaraneews, 2014a). Regarding the concept of mental revolution, Jokowi said that it can build people with good mental attitude and working culture so it can create nation's productivity. With that, nation's competitiveness would increase, because it is useless to have such enormous resources without any productivity and competitiveness (Antaraneews, 2014b). In this second discourse, the message has not yet been proven, but it built a logic that has a potential to result to a *sensed-message*. Unlike in the Jakarta Governor candidacy, Jokowi and Ahok as partners built a *sensed-rational* by showing evidence of their seriousness in running the draft programs, such as KJS, KJP and row houses design.

Meanwhile, efforts to bring the *sensed-sensorial* and *sensed-emotional* were done by Jokowi on Labour Day or May Day. As *Suara* (1/5/2014) reported, when the other candidate, Prabowo, chose to have sympathy by hysteria for Labour Day celebration in the stadium Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Jakarta, crammed with tens of thousands of workers from KSPI (Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Indonesia [Union Confederation of Indonesian Workers]), Jokowi sought sympathy in a more gentle approach by visiting ill workers (Laisila, 2014). "Fellow workers choose to concert partying, when sick brothers (labour) exist. Not only one or two, but many," Jokowi said after visiting two workers in a rented labour house at Rorotan region, Cilincing, North Jakarta (Laisila & Santosa, 2014). Contrasting 'hysteria' and 'concert partying' facts with 'ill labours' is a publicity strategy which created discursive formation regarding *sensed-emotional*. As for the facts "come" and "visit", it was a text strategy that created *sensed-sensorial* by the audience, in this case the visited ill workers.

However, the statements in media text were not only creating a discursive formation about Jokowi's *sensed message*. Some texts were counter-opinion, as shown by *Republika*. In addition to the

opinion of Yayat Supriatna, a city planning observer who said Jakarta Governor Jokowi has not yet provided evidence to solve the capital's problem (Sasongko, 2014), *Republika* (17/4/2014) also presented a political communication expert from Paramadina University, Hendrio Satrio, who highlighted that the communication style of Jokowi, which is visiting people, shaking hands while being photographed, were no longer the current trend, and that the communication should focus on a vision-mission statement delivery (M. Faqih, 2014).

According to Foucault, meaning and representative knowledge are produced through interplay discourse between the *presence* and the *absence* (Hall et al., 2013). Hence, it is interesting to question, such as: why did *Republika* often show counter-opinion to Jokowi's *sensed-message*? 'Who' is *Republika*? 'Who' are Hendrio and Yayat? What 'messages' were they sending behind the texts? It is as important as the question: why (based on author's observation) did *Tribun* and *Tempo* actively point out the positive discourse related to the *episteme* of Jokowi's *sensed-message*? 'Who' are *Tribun* and *Tempo*? Regardless of various possible answers that can be considered to represent *absence*, both pro as well as counter-discourse apparatus has shaped the knowledge of Jokowi's *sensed-message*, although with distinct discursive formation.

Meanwhile, responding to the counter-opinion on Jokowi, Jumhur Hidayat, the declarator originator of ARM (Aliansi Rakyat Merdeka [Independence People Alliance]) argued not to compare Jokowi with the expected 'ideal', but with the previous track record to see the upcoming 'trend'. If something was improved, it means he succeeded, and if something got worse, it means he failed (Beritasatu, 2014). Jumhur then elaborated on Jokowi's 'working reference' to reflect the 'trend': the KJS-KJP success, relocation of people living in illegal houses along the river banks to row-houses or simple flats, revitalisation of dam, and improvement of an on-going mass rapid transportation project. Retrospect on the track record, then what Jokowi provides as solutions will become more realistic.

About the concept of mental revolution, Jokowi said that mental revolution is urgently needed to address Indonesia's problems and challenges in the international arena later on, because no matter how rich a country is, when the human resources is unprepared, it would be a serious social disaster (Manafe, 2014). Similar to this is the idea of 'sea toll' or 'maritime highway' to address the economic gap between islands, considering that Indonesia is a maritime country (Antaranews, 2014a). Moreover, energy and food are things that should be strengthened (Daulay, 2014).

TABLE 1. DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS

	SEX (%) [*]	AGE (%) [*]	JOB (%) [*]	REASON TO LIKE JOKOWI (%) [*]
Male	41			
Female	59			
15-20		33		
21-25		28		
26-30		22		
31+		17		
Employee			34	
Student/College Student			58	
Others			08	
Achievements				24
Character				37
Physical appearance				17
Speaking style				15
Media exposures				07

Note: *Percentage of the data is the result of rounding up or down

Although all of these are not tangible yet, but the message (read: vision-mission) of Jokowi can be assumed as a *sensed-communication*: reasonably *makes sense*, people *believe* it would be materialised (due to track record capability), *felt 'close'* because these were relevant for the audience, and *felt important* because it is beneficial and fits with what society needs. This feeling refers to Jokowi's previous success (although in a smaller scope, the city and province) in developing human resources quality (through KJS-KJP programs) and improving physical infrastructure. In addition, Jokowi also uses *blusukan* as a medium of his

vision-mission delivery in which the issue presented depends on the location (Fajar, 2014), which shows Jokowi's effort to make the message become more *sensed* based on context or location.

However, was Jokowi's *sensed-communication* message in the media discourse really felt by the audience? Does *what the text means* and *what texts (representations) 'do' to people (audience)* equal to *what people 'do' with text (representation)* (Schiappa, 2008)? To get an overview about what Jakartans perceived of Jokowi's *sensed-communication*, the author randomly distributed 100 sheets of questionnaire, but only 98 answer sheets were considered valid and processed, while the remaining two sheets were found damaged and incomplete.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Dimensions	SD* (%)**	D* (%)**	N* (%)**	A* (%)**	SA* (%)**	Mean***
Sensed-Sensorial	0	02	15	55	28	4.18
Sensed-Emotional	0	0	8	48	44	4.52
Sensed-Rational	0	0	11	53	36	4.38
Sensed-Relevance	0	0	0	11	89	4.93
Sensed-Beneficial	0	0	0	38	62	4.82
Sensed-Social	0	0	5	51	44	4.27

Note: *SD (Strongly Disagree), D (Disagree), N (Neutral/ Do not Know), A (Agree), SA (Strongly Agree), **Percentage of the data is the result of rounding up or down, ***Scale 1 (SD) to 5 (SA). The details of survey statements for each dimension are described in appendix Table A1.

The survey revealed that the majority of respondents were students/college students with relatively young age, while the proportion of respondents by sex is relatively balanced between men and women with a tendency that women has a bigger number. Meanwhile, 37% of the respondents liked Jokowi because of his nature or character which is prominent (simpler, humble, sincere, low profile, and calm in facing problems). Megawati (as chairwoman of PDI-P) admits the reason she chose Jokowi to be the presidential candidate of PDI-P was because the former mayor of Solo is the typical hard-worker who works sincerely to develop, having a simple personality and sincere behaviour (Bakoel, 2014). Massive media coverage (7%) apparently is not a significant rea-

son for respondents to like Jokowi, although, obviously, the media image has a contribution in shaping public's perceptions about Jokowi.

The public perception related to the factors that indicate Jokowi's programs are *sensed* by the audience, can be seen in the table 2.

From the data above, it appears that the highest value that indicates Jokowi's *sensed-communication* from the audience perspective is *sensed-relevance*, 4.93 of the highest score of 5.00 while the lowest value was *sensed-sensorial* appealing with a score of 4.18. This suggests that the issues raised in Jokowi's political communication messages are very relevant to the needs, desires, hopes and dreams of his audiences, in this case are Jakartans, who are the respondents in this research. The slogan "New Jakarta" that was brought up during his campaign for the governor election was very insightful, because it touched Jakartans who seemed weary of years of Jakarta's problems without almost any changes. Digging deeper on the issues of health and free education, flood management through dam revitalisation, decent houses for the poor, as well as public transportation solutions to overcome congestion are really in line with the needs and expectations of Jakartans.

Nevertheless, not all respondents has yet experienced Jokowi's program directly, so that the *sensed-sensorial* score is relatively low. This is understandable because the realisation of the current programs such as KJS, KJP, row houses and cheap flats for evicted residents is prioritised for the poor. Mostly students/ college students and employees, who are relatively non-targets of the program, the respondents of course felt less 'touching' by the programs on their lives. Realisations of the program are likely only have been watched or heard through the media or people's talks, based on Ryan's recognition (20 y.o.), a student in a private university in Jakarta, one of the respondents: "I have never been to Pluit Dam, Marunda, Ria Rio... all I just read the news and watch it on television" (Interview, April 6, 2014). The effect would be

different if respondents experienced or enjoyed directly.

Meanwhile, regarding Jokowi's *sensed-communication*, not everybody agreed on the same level to the statements in the questionnaire. Data shows that only *sensed-relevance* and *sensed-beneficial* have the highest percentage of approval. The percentage of ignorance (neutral) of the respondents is relatively high in *sensed-sensorial* and *sensed-rational* dimensions. In fact, *sensed-sensorial* has 2% of disapproval which indicates consistency of responses to the questionnaire. As explained above, it makes sense since respondents have never seen or directly witnessed hard evidence of Jokowi's program at all, considering that respondents were mostly students/ college students and middle-up class employees, while the realisation of Jokowi's current-programs put higher priority to 'touch' the lower class (Aziza, 2013; Kasali, 2013; Safutra, 2013; Pertiwi, 2013; Beritasatu, 2014; Laisila, 2014).

Another interesting finding of this research is that while textual analysis shows *sensed-rational* and *sensed-sensorial* are quite prominent, audience analysis shows *sensed-rational* has lower value (4.38) compared to *sensed-emotional* (4.52), and *sensed-sensorial* scores are the lowest. There are two possibilities causing these differences. First, audience's perceptual discourse refers to the text and the discursive practices that are different from the analysed media texts in this research, as stated by Foucault (Hall et al., 2013) that discourse does not consist of single text or just from one source. Second, the public's 'emotional bonding' is just too strong related to their fondness of Jokowi's character, as shown in table 1. The strength of 'emotional bonding' then ignores the 'logics' of *sensed-communication* which was already built in the text. In other words, audiences *already like* Jokowi, without needing any logical proof. They emotionally sensed Jokowi's message much more than rational.

DISCUSSION

In practice, *sensed-communication* tends to show low-profile and 'down-to-earth' or 'humble' communication style. This is because

in the *sensed-communication*, ‘energy of words’, which plays in the defined meaning area is shared with ‘energy of facts’ which tends to play in the realm of experience, so that the messages (both verbal and nonverbal) are not monopolizing the communication field. There is *evidence* that controls the message content and meaning through the experience created by the source and perceived by message receiver.

Although previous studies show that the stage of the presidential election contestants or legislators tends to be a high-profile communication due to massive campaign that tends to make getting voters easier (Pasek, 2011) as well as to invite media publications (Kahn, 1991), but in reality, low-profile communication style picked by Jokowi can also grab media attention, on the relatively same track with another presidential candidate, Prabowo. This is proven by the popularity and electability level of Jokowi reflected in the results of survey agencies’ polls (and strengthened by the real presidential election of 2014 in which 53.15% of voters voted for Jokowi).

The profile of communication style can also be seen from the gestures. If we examine more the gestures of these two presidential candidates in the media when they made a speech or talked to the press, it appears that Prabowo’s face always looks up, symbolising his high profile, while Jokowi’s face tends to look down. Not only that, the index finger of Prabowo (who comes from a military background and business conglomerate family) is often pointing up: showing his bossy leadership style; likes to give order (read: commanding); and, is (could be) an authoritarian. While Jokowi (who comes from a civil background and middle-class entrepreneur family), with hands like giving direction, signalled his leadership style that tends to be managerial, caring, and loves to give direction, instead of simply commanding without willingness to know the real problems.

Of course, with Prabowo’s style that tends to be high-profile, the audience will become more easily drawn to define the message meaning with dominant ‘energy of words’ and forget the

sensed-message which is more driven by ‘energy of facts’. Thus, message trustworthiness and meaningfulness as mandated by *sensed-communication* would be difficult to achieve. Because of less *sensed*, then the audience is less believing. Even if they believe, it is short-term and deceptive, so that at any time it can diminish when the audience’s experience and impression find that the facts are different from what is delivered.

This phenomenon is mostly experienced by Indonesian leaders. In *Sinar Harapan* (23/4/2014), Sobary said: “... all politicians in Jakarta, the established ones, groomed with upscale style that is not in line with people’s style in general. Jokowi shows the opposite; he represents the common people’s face and it makes him idolised”.

A survey conducted by Founding Father House on 11 April to 14 May 2014 in 34 provinces also showed that majority of respondents like the type of humble leaders, which means that *blusukan*, preferred ala Jokowi style, is more favourable for the people at the moment (Aisha, 2014). McRae (2013) acknowledged that Jokowi’s strengths are “his skills as a communicator and his strong journalistic appeal, which would negate the media resources of some of his rivals” (p. 297). Not surprisingly, Jokowi had high electability and became a media darling. Because Jokowi is different (from other Indonesian leaders, mostly, at this time), and the ‘difference’, of course, has high news value and market value.

Meanwhile, as a low-profile leader, Jokowi is actually not alone or unique. In other parts of the world, we know the charm of humility of Jose Mujica, president of Uruguay. Since elected in 2009, Mujica donated 90 percent of his salary to charity, and instead of staying in a magnificent palace, he and his wife opted to live in his ramshackle farm (Lim, 2015). However, unlike Jokowi’s background from a poor family and small business practitioner who struggled to survive for success, Mujica is known as a guerrilla fighter in the 1960s and ’70s, shot multiple times, and spent 14 harsh years in isolated jail imprisonment. Because

of that background, the style of Jokowi tends to prefer the 'hard work' rather than 'hard talk' to convey political messages.

If Mujica focuses on revamping the country that is newly freed from the shackles of a repressive military regime, then Jokowi is inclined at revamping the country that is burdened with corruption. Not surprisingly, the humanitarian messages which reject inequality and excessive materialism dominate Mujica's communications. In fact, as a former fighter under a repressive regime, Mujica is sometimes considered to be still carrying his past. "In addition to doing little to alleviate inequality in concrete ways, he's also always saying he's a fighter, he's a fighter," said Mauricio Rabuffetti, a Uruguayan journalist, as reported by Fairbanks (2015). "So his failure here is something that's very hard to understand—and hard to forgive." This is in contrast to Jokowi who often tried to make peace with the past through a discourse of reconciliation while focusing on the completion of development issues, especially the territorial disparities.

Jokowi is also compared to Nelson Mandela, South African president (1994-1999), known as an anti-apartheid revolutionary. Although both have a low-profile figure, but each has their own style and focus, due to the different conditions and problems in their respective countries. Zelda la Grange, Mandela's personal assistant recognized that "Mandela's 'exceptionalism' was because he inspired people to forgive, to reconcile, to be selfless and tolerant and to maintain dignity no matter what the circumstances" (Williams, 2013). As an anti-apartheid fighter, Mandela certainly learned a lot from the conditions when his country was under the rule of the apartheid regime so that the values of humanity and universal spirituality tend to color his leadership. Meanwhile, Jokowi is in a different situation, in which Indonesia is not encumbered with a frontal disaster of a racial issue as powerful as in South Africa. The major disaster in Indonesia is corruption, which led to underdevelopment of the nation, both physically and mentally. Corruption in Indonesia has been endemic to all fields from the politics, law, economics to

communication (Wijaya, 2013b). Politicians mostly just give empty promises in political communication without evidence and real work, opening the area of corruption in almost every corner of life of the state administration. Thus, Jokowi with his communication style that is more *berasa* ('sensed' or 'experientially-meaningful'), which prioritizes works rather than words, gives a fresh breeze in the world of political communication in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Jokowi's *sensed-communication* style is revealed from the meaning and knowledge that are intertwined in the media texts. A more prominent *rational* message is sensed, known from knowledge in a narrative that indicates the 'hard work' of texts to create logical meaning in order to get audience's trust. Likewise with *sensed-sensorial* that exists within coded messages with (implicit) proofs to make the audiences not ignore the real result achieved by Jokowi.

However, the audience's perceptual discourse showed somewhat different results. From survey results, it appears that *sensed-emotional* factor was more prominent than rational, and *sensed-sensorial* occupy the lowest score. This means, '*what the text means*' and '*what texts (want to) 'do' to audience*' apparently is not in line with the '*what audiences 'do' with text (media discourse)*'.

Audiences see *sensed-relevance* factor and Jokowi's beneficial message in media texts even 'speak' more to them. In other words, what Jokowi offered through messages in media texts so far has been very relevant and useful to the audience. Jokowi's messages are also quite '*in-line*' with the audience's heart, proven by the high value of *sensed-emotional*, and makes sense enough to cause *sensed-rational*. However, real evidence and the results of his work are less directly perceived and experienced by the audiences, so the *sensed-sensorial* is relatively low. Audiences also found less (in amount) other audiences who participate to acknowledge and validate Jokowi's messages, so it is not strong enough to form *sensed-social*.

Therefore, Jokowi must have other discursive sensory-formation strategies to prove what he said is ‘really real’. For example, it can be done with more exposure of his real works, as it is, without any media manipulation, and build a relevant context to the message content to strengthen the effects of the *sensed-sensorial*. Jokowi should choose to deliver his message in a place or context that is *in line* with the message’s core meaning. In addition, to improve *sensed-social* in his messages, Jokowi should also display more honest testimony of people who have experienced or felt the direct evidence of the truthfulness of his message, allowing the media to expose wider the communities of people who have felt the tangible results of his work, and strengthen the role of social media and *buzzer* to create the word-of-mouth effects about the evidence of the message as well as his real works.

IMPLICATION

In the situation where most of Indonesian leaders prefer to be ‘noisy’ with rhetoric without showing the result of real work, or, in other words, NATO (no-action-talk-only), *Komunikasi Berasa* or *sensed-communication* can be a suitable model applied by leaders to gain the trust of the people. Jokowi has proven it. With the spirit of ‘energy of facts’ rather than ‘energy of words’, Jokowi shows that he is more work-oriented than a lot of talk with no results.

Moreover, the reluctance of previous Indonesian leaders to be present in the midst of society makes them less *sensed*, not ‘real’, even as they are seemingly less concerned about their people. Not so with Jokowi. His habit of doing *blusukan*, besides making his existence more *sensed*, is also to feel directly the problems faced by the community. And apparently, this *sensed-communication* way is favoured by the people of Indonesia at this time, because it provides a fresh perspective on Indonesia’s democracy that has long ignored the existence and the important role of people in the daily management of the state, instead of simply

scooping up their votes during the elections and then they are 'forgotten'.

Among all these, undeniably is the important role of information technology, which gave birth to social media, in making *sensed-communication* increasingly relevant. Social media stimulate the political and social system to become more transparent and horizontal, as the public space opens wider, likewise the active participation of the society develops. Consequently the sense of caring, as well as criticisms of the community, is channelled. With this condition, the communication that rely solely on the 'imaging through words', 'empty' discourses, or manipulation of facts (that commonly happens in authoritarian and corrupted countries) would not be influential anymore, because people can immediately verify all of the messages, even spread them out through social media, making the message's credibility eroded, and the public trust lost. *Sensed-communication*, which contains a powerful 'energy of facts', which synergises the meaning and the proof of a message, which produces a meaningful experience, makes not only what is said but also who says to be very 'real'. This is what happened for Jokowi.

This research, in addition to discussing the discourse of *Komunikasi Berasa* or *sensed-communication* in the political context so that it can enrich the political communication theories, also contributes in answering doubts about mixed method of textual analysis and audience analysis, as well as combining critical-constructivist (with reflective reasoning) and positivist (with objective reasoning) paradigms. Therefore, this research is expected to inspire other researchers not to be trapped in the essentialism of methodological paradigm, and creatively develop new strategies in research to answer the substantial questions, as well as presenting the diversity and richness of truth.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ This research was conducted before the presidential election, and now Jokowi is Indonesia's 7th president.
- ² Author still uses simplified term of 'sensed-communication' to translate *komunikasi berasa* because there are no words in English that express the exact same meaning. So to get a closer idea of the meaning of the word, then probably the translation of *berasa* is 'sensed'. Less simple term is 'experientially-meaningful communication'. It becomes even more difficult to translate the dimensions of 'sensed-communication' which refers to 'having the feeling of the message'. So the word 'having the feeling of the message' may be interpreted (though not entirely accurate) and simplified as 'sensed-message'. Thus, based on *berasa* definition by the author, Merriam-Webster definitions of 'sensed' are the closest as explained by the next sentences: 1. a meaning conveyed or intended; 2. the faculty of perceiving by means of sense organs; 3. conscious awareness or rationality; 4. consensus; 5. capacity for effective application of the powers of the mind as a basis for action or response

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APPENDIX TABLE A1. DESCRIPTIONS OF RESPONDENT STATEMENTS

DIMENSIONS	STATEMENTS	NOTE
<i>Sensed-Sensorial</i>	I saw by myself the real result of the program that Jokowi promised for Jakartans I experienced proof of Jokowi's program promised for Jakartans	Score 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree
	I heard, watched and read (through media) that the programs promised to Jakartans were really realized	
<i>Sensed-Emotional</i>	I can now feel the evidence of Jokowi's speech I can now feel that Jokowi's speech is true I can now feel that Jokowi does not represent NATO (no-action-talk-only) I can now feel Jokowi's program must have fit or even exceeding the promise	
<i>Sensed-Rational</i>	I can now feel that words and promises of Jokowi are trustworthy Words and promises of Jokowi's program make sense and able to be materialized Words and promises of Jokowi's program are not exaggerated because it has been planned and carefully thought. Words and promises of Jokowi's program are already visible from the beginning since they prove it with KJS/KJP design and row houses	
<i>Sensed-Relevance</i>	Words and promises of Jokowi's program are highly relevant to my need Words and promises of Jokowi's program are highly relevant to my desire, hope and dream Words and promises of Jokowi's program are highly relevant to my condition Words and promises of Jokowi's program are highly relevant to the needs, desires and expectations of public in general	
<i>Sensed-Beneficial</i>	Words and promises of Jokowi's program are showing very beneficial result Words and promises of Jokowi's program has given positive impact Words and promises of Jokowi's program are able to solve problems Words and promises of Jokowi's program give peace, clarity, and assurance of the future	
<i>Sensed-Social</i>	The evidence of words and promises of Jokowi program are also perceived and experienced by my friends or family I see a lot of community members who have enjoyed the result of Jokowi's program in Jakarta and/or Solo In social media, lots of people who admit and spread the result of Jokowi's program as the evidence of his words and promises I was motivated to spread the realization or evidence of the words and promises of Jokowi's program	

Note: the original statements in Bahasa Indonesia when it was distributed to the respondents