



AN ANALYSIS OF LOGICAL FALLACY ON JOKO WIDODO'S ARGUMENTS DURING 2019 INDONESIA PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

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Abstract

This research aimed at finding the types of logical fallacies on Indonesia presidential debates made particularly by one of the presidential candidates, Joko Widodo, during the 2019 Indonesia presidential debates. The theory of fallacy classification by Damer (2009) which introduces five categories and sixty types of fallacies was employed in this research. Of all the sixty types, only twelve of which were found. The results show that, first, fallacies that violate the rebuttal criterion became the most dominantly occurred category with the occurrence of more than a half number of all occurrences and with five types out of twelve types. Second, abusive ad hominem was the most dominant type made by Jokowi with the frequency of 21.73% and followed by the fallacy of red herring and false alternatives with the same frequency of 17.39.

Key words: Logical fallacy, arguments, presidential debate

A. INTRODUCTION

Presidential debates become the moments for the candidates to deliver their vision and mission as well as to encourage citizens to vote for them. They also become the most contributive and decisive factors in determining the winner of the election. Therefore, the candidates are highly required to say something with adequate reasons or strong arguments. An argument consists of premise(s) and conclusion(s). Once the premises fail to support or inadequately support its conclusions, the arguments of that sort are categorized as (logical) fallacy (Copi et al., 2014). Hayon (2005) states that the formulation of arguments becomes an important consideration that it can influence public emotion and perception creating desired response from the public. Since a wide segment of society with different levels of knowledge and education is specially targeted, the aspects of logic are considered less important and might be eliminated, he added. What is more important for the politicians is how to raise public emotion and achieve their

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desired goals. That is why many political statements contain fallacies or have no consistency between the premise and conclusion (Hayon 2005).

There have been some previous studies of logical fallacies on presidential debates that have been conducted (see Santoso, 2017; Hameed, 2018; Zhou, 2018). However, the studies mainly focused on the U.S presidential debates. Therefore, the researcher attempted to conduct a research related to the topic, but in different atmosphere, which is in 2019 Indonesia presidential debate. The debates in each country could be different one another because it can be influenced by a lot of factors especially the culture in the countries just like what Isolatus (2011) found in his study. His study shows that a Finnish presidential debate is different in many ways from an American presidential debate. In addition, there are numerous studies of fallacy carried out in Western countries as previously mentioned, but the research is still rarely conducted in Eastern countries and there is no yet found in Indonesia. Therefore, this study sought to find out the types of logical logical fallacies on Indonesia presidential debates made particularly by one of the presidential candidates, Joko Widodo, during the 2019 Indonesia presidential debates.

To provide answer for the research focus, there are some theories that are reviewed related to arguments and fallacy as follow:

Argument

Language and argument are related because language is used to formulate an argument. An argument must be supported by convincing claims and careful choice of wordings which do not contain fallacious statements (Rohmani, 2017). To evaluate the quality of an argument or to determine whether it is valid or not, in some cases, the argument should be reconstructed into its standard form (Damer, 2009 p .17). A standard format that exhibits the logical structure of an argument looks like as follows:

Since (premise),
 Which is a conclusion supported by (subpremise),
And (premise),
[and (implicit premise)]
Therefore, (conclusion).
(Damer, 2009 p.17)

When the argument is reconstructed into standard form, it is totally appropriate to not include any things in the original forms that are clearly irrelevant or do not have any effects if they are excluded (Damer, 2009 p.17). Sometimes, a premise or even a conclusion may be unstated but can be understood from the context. Such premise or conclusion is called *implicit premise or conclusion* and is put in the bracket to make it different from the original ones.

Damer (2009 p. 51) also explains that there are five criteria of a good argument namely (1) a well-formed structure, (2) premises that are relevant to the truth of the conclusion, (3) premises that are acceptable to a reasonable person, (4) premises that together constitute sufficient grounds for the truth of the conclusion and (5) premises that provide an effective rebuttal to all

anticipated criticisms of the argument. If one or more of the criteria above are violated, the arguments of that sort fall into logical fallacies.

Theory of Fallacy Classification by Damer (2009)

Damer (2009) introduces more complex types of fallacies and more comprehensive explanations of each fallacy with at least three realistic and practical examples given and its clear description. He presents five categories of fallacies namely (1) fallacies that violate the structural criterion, (2) fallacies that violate the relevance criterion, (3) fallacies that violate the acceptability criterion, (4) fallacies that violate the sufficiency criterion and (5) fallacies that violate the rebuttal criterion. Each category has 9 up to 16 types of fallacies and there are totally sixty types of fallacies in the five categories that can be seen in the following figure.

TABLE 4.1 | THEORY OF FALLACY

Structure	Relevance	Acceptability	Sufficiency	Effectiveness of Rebuttal
<i>Begging-the-Question Fallacies</i>	<i>Fallacies of Irrelevant Premise</i>	<i>Fallacies of Linguistic Confusion</i>	<i>Fallacies of Missing Evidence</i>	<i>Fallacies of Counterevidence</i>
Arguing in a Circle	Genetic Fallacy	Equivocation	Insufficient Sample	Denying the Counterevidence
Question-Begging Language	Rationalization	Ambiguity	Unrepresentative Data	Ignoring the Counterevidence
Complex Question	Drawing the Wrong Conclusion	Misleading Accent	Arguing from Ignorance	<i>Ad Hominem Fallacies</i>
Question-Begging Definition	Using the Wrong Reasons	Argument by Innuendo	Contrary-to-Fact Hypothesis	Abusive <i>Ad Hominem</i>
<i>Fallacies of Inconsistency</i>	<i>Fallacies of Irrelevant Appeal</i>	Misuse of a Vague Expression	Fallacy of Popular Wisdom	Poisoning the Well
Incompatible Premises	Appeal to Irrelevant Authority	Distinction Without a Difference	Special Pleading	Two-Wrongs Fallacy
Contradiction Between Premise and Conclusion	Appeal to Common Opinion	<i>Unwarranted Assumption Fallacies</i>	Omission of Key Evidence	<i>Fallacies of Diversion</i>
<i>Fallacies of Deductive Inference</i>	Appeal to Force or Threat	Fallacy of the Continuum	<i>Causal Fallacies</i>	Attacking a Straw Man
Denying the Antecedent	Appeal to Tradition	Fallacy of Composition	Confusion of a Necessary with a Sufficient Condition	Trivial Objections
Affirming the Consequent	Appeal to Self-Interest	Fallacy of Division	Causal Oversimplification	Red Herring
False Conversion	Manipulation of Emotions	False Alternatives	<i>Post Hoc</i> Fallacy	Resort to Humor or Ridicule
Undistributed Middle Term		Is-Ought Fallacy	Confusion of Cause and Effect	
Illicit Distribution of an End Term		Wishful Thinking	Neglect of a Common Cause	
		Misuse of a Principle	Domino Fallacy	
		Fallacy of the Mean	Gambler's Fallacy	
		Faulty Analogy		

Figure 1. theory of fallacy classification by Damer (2009)

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is descriptive research because the data in this research were analysed in the form of description and explanation. However, quantitative calculation was still used in a small number to support and strengthen the result of the descriptive analysis. This research is a kind of library research since there is no empirical or field data needed. In addition, it is based on text, so it belongs to a corpus library research. The source of data of this research is four video transcripts of Indonesia presidential debates 2019. The data are in the forms of

words, phrases, and clauses which contain logical fallacies uttered by the Joko Widodo during the presidential debates.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Finding

There are five categories of fallacies and there are totally sixty types of fallacies. After analyzing the data, it was found that Joko Widodo made a number of fallacies that belong to the five categories. Of all the sixty types of fallacies, only twelve types of fallacies were found. The frequency and percentage of the twelve types are shown in the following table.

Table 1. the types of fallacies made by Joko Widodo

Categories of fallacies	No	Types of fallacies	F	%
fallacies that violate the structural criterion	1	arguing in a circle	1	4.16
	2	question begging definition	1	4.16
fallacies that violate the relevant criterion	3	drawing the wrong conclusion	2	8.33
	4	using the wrong reason	1	4.16
fallacies that violate the acceptability criterion	5	false alternatives	4	20.83
fallacies that violate the sufficiency criterion	6	insufficient sample	1	4.16
	7	confusion of a necessary with a sufficient condition	1	4.16
fallacies that violate the rebuttal criterion	8	abusive <i>ad hominem</i>	5	20.83
	9	two-wrong fallacy	1	4.16
	10	attacking a straw man	1	4.16
	11	trivial objections	1	4.16
	12	red herring	4	16.66
Total			23	100

From the table above, it is visible that there are five categories of fallacies. Each category actually has about 10 to 16 types of fallacies. However, only a small number of the types were found. The last category appeared with the highest number of types of fallacies. There are five types out of twelve namely, (1) abusive *ad hominem*, (2) two-wrong fallacy, (3) attacking a straw man, (4) trivial objections and (5) red herring. In the first, second and fourth category, there were only two types found. They are arguing in a circle and question begging definition, drawing the wrong conclusion and using the wrong reason, and insufficient sample and confusion of a necessary with a sufficient condition respectively. Furthermore, the second category, fallacies that violate the acceptability criterion, appeared with the least types of fallacies, that is only one; false alternatives.

With regard to the type occurrences, the fallacy of abusive *ad hominem* and false alternative appeared with the highest frequency of 5 occurrences (16.66%) for each. They are followed by the fallacy of red herring that appears as the second highest frequency of 4 occurrences (16.66%). Then, the fallacy of

drawing the wrong conclusion came up with the less frequency of only 2 occurrences (8.33%). Interestingly, the rest (the fallacy of arguing in a circle, question begging definition, using the wrong reason, insufficient sample, confusion of a necessary with a sufficient condition, two-wrong fallacy, attacking a straw man and trivial objection) appeared with the least frequency of only 1 occurrence (4.16%).

2. Discussion

In terms of category, the fallacies made by Jokowi were dominated by the category of fallacies that violate the rebuttal criterion. The number of occurrence is a half of the total occurrences of all five categories and there are five types of fallacies out of twelve types found. According to Damer (2007: 193), this category of fallacy is committed if an arguer does not include in his argument an effective rebuttal to all anticipated serious criticisms coming from the counterargument arguments. Therefore, it indicates that Jokowi tended to not provide effective rebuttals to the criticisms from his opponent. One of the causes why it could happen is because of his inability or unwillingness to effectively respond to the counterarguments.

In terms of the types of fallacies, the fallacy of abusive *ad hominem* appeared as the most dominant one made by Jokowi with. According to Damer (2007: 199), the fallacy of abusive *ad hominem* is used by an arguer as a means of ignoring, discrediting or blunting the force of a counterargument by attacking the opponent's personality, rather than the arguments. Therefore, the dominant use of abusive *ad hominem* in Jokowi's arguments indicates that Jokowi tends to attack his opponent in abusive personal way. Santoso (2017) who studied logical fallacies in 2016 U.S presidential debates, found that *ad hominem* is one of the most dominantly occurred fallacies made by the presidential candidates. Similarly, (Zhou, 2018) who studied logical fallacies in political discourse also found *ad hominem* as one of the common fallacies. Therefore, there is a relevance or similarity between this research and the previous ones.

Furthermore, the second most dominant fallacy made by Jokowi is red herring. This type of fallacy occurs when an arguer attempts to deliberately draw the attention away from the real issue to another issue as a result of the inability or unwillingness to respond to his opponent's arguments or criticisms (Damer, 2007: 208). Therefore, the high frequency of this fallacy signifies that Jokowi often tried to convert the focus of the issue to other issues.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The results of fallacy analysis on the arguments of Jokowi showed that he made a number of fallacies during the debates, yet the number is not significant. There were twelve types found out of sixty types. They are (1) arguing in a circle, (2) question begging definition, (3) drawing the wrong conclusion, (4) using the wrong reason, (5) false alternatives, (6) insufficient sample, (7) confusion of a necessary with a sufficient condition, (8) abusive *ad hominem*, (9) two-wrong fallacy, (10) attacking a straw man, (11) trivial objections and (12) red herring.

The fallacy of abusive ad hominem became the most frequently occurred one and followed by the fallacy of red herring and false alternatives.

The studies of logical fallacies on presidential debates are currently still limited. There were only few studies found and most of them were about American presidential debates. Moreover, the recent studies mostly focused on finding the types of fallacies. Therefore, future research regarding the topic on other debates, and deeper researches that can associate the presence of fallacies to the pursuit of human interests and irrational desires are highly recommended.

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