

## Social Drama and Constructed Reality in Elections: A Dialectic Reality Analysis of the 5th Debate of 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia

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**ABSTRACT** Normatively, debates in election is aimed to provide a platform for communicating the ideas of candidates to the voters. However, in practice what is shown in the floor and screen of debates is often more than this. Based on the communication theory of dialectic reality, this research aims to understand the social drama and the construction of reality in the dialectical reality in the 5th presidential debate of the 2024 election in Indonesia, which was shown live in the social media of Indonesian election committee (KPU), particularly its YouTube channel. This research is important to reveal how the performance displayed causes message distortion, which may shift the focus of the away from content does not reach the public. Using mix method, this research analyzes the process of conveying messages from the costume structure, the content of the debate substance, and the role of new media that displays it. The data present the display of the costumes of the three presidential candidates in the 5th debate, the substance of the debate theme and public comments on the KPU RI YouTube, and the trends of the role of new media. This research conducted the data analysis map using Voyant.tools and ytcomment.kmcat.uk/. The results of this study show that First, the costumes of the presidential candidates in the drama of the debate show have elements of representation of cultural and political values. Second, the 5th presidential debate of the 2024 candidates showed a dialectical reality in the form of a stage drama related to the substance of the debate theme (social welfare, culture, education, information technology, health, and employment) with public comments on the YouTube platform. Third, new media has a role in transforming the dialectical reality of the debate event into a social drama in YouTube comments.

**KEYWORDS** *Costume Representation; Digital Communication; Dialectical Reality; 2024 Presidential Debate; New media.*

### INTRODUCTION

The presidential debates of the 2024 election in Indonesia indicate a changing pattern of political communication in the country's dynamic political landscape. This new pattern is reflected in the reality of dialectics occurred in the 5th presidential debate of the 2024 presidential candidates. The 5th presidential debate of the 2024 presidential candidates was broadcast live (live real-time) on national television and then uploaded via the platform YouTube KPU RI, played by three presidential candidates, namely Anies Rasyid Baswedan, Prabowo Subianto, and Ganjar Pranowo. Debate

from the perspective of communication as a pattern of small group conversations on a large scale can be covered by the mass media and through the structure of popular public expression to reach opinion groups and social alliances (McLeod & Chafee, 1972). The concept of debate has substantial implications for human welfare, both rational and emotional; it is a political communication instrument to display debate strategies not only limited to delivering program visions and missions but also strategies in arguing, body gestures, emotional intelligence, and various tricks for mastering the stage (Kadri, 2020; Parandaru, 2024).

To understand the reality of dialectics, Previous research data has the following tendencies: *First*, the different campaign fashion styles in the context of participating in the presidential election on the political stage have a role in representing the candidate's self-image to increasing his electability, not only as body protection but also communicating political messages (Aryansyah, 2022; Muttaqin et al., 2020; Susetyawidianta & Geraldly, 2024). *Second*, the dynamics of the election system and the democratisation of political parties in Indonesia, political branding and the dynamics of political parties from the constitutional court to the presidency, as well as public policy ideas in winning the general election in the form of comments, functional dialectical structures of society on social media related to imaging in the 2014 election, some discuss the analysis of sentiment in the first presidential debate (Darmawan, 2015; Erlina, 2023; Jati, 2021; Susetyawidianta & Geraldly, 2024; Usmulyadi, 2015; Widayanti & Fridiyanti, 2023). *Third*, researchers who study the role of the media (media framing) in the presidential candidate campaign have a significant impact on the structure and struggle of the campaign in Indonesia, France, America, and Sweden (Defi, 2019; Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2012; Kuhn, 2018). These researchers tend to use semiotic theories, political branding, political communication, and media framing with the support of leadership style, election system, public policy process, and media system.

Then, if we look at previous research on elections and the media, it tends to reveal: *First*, about the representation of socio-

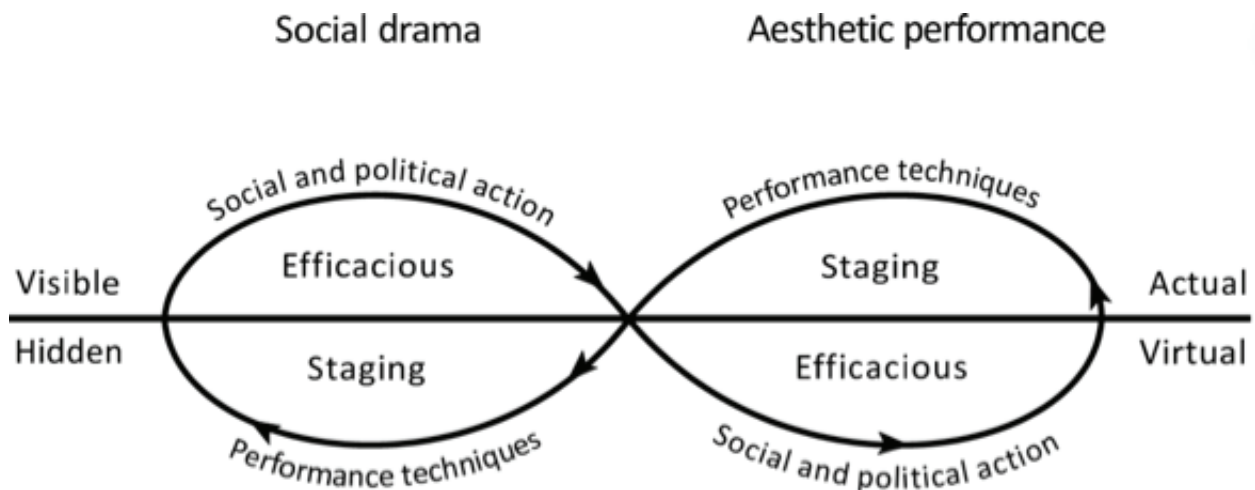
cultural values, characteristics of society and political values; military costumes are characteristics that are deliberately created so that they create their representation; the representation of Javanese kebaya depicts the social reality of women's struggles in the Javanese kretek industry (Hall, 1997; Ortega et al., 2017; Rizki et al., 2024). So, this research is relevant to the topic of discussion in this article, which leads to the representation of presidential candidate costumes. *Second*, digital platforms have been widely used, targeting users from the 90s to 2000s generations, which has significantly influenced the media production and consumption process, especially in the political world, and the case of digital technology has implications for the production and consumption process significantly (Hidayat, 2016; Ridani, 2023; Sudiby, 2022). The use of digital platforms or new media, the role of media in the regulation of regional elections, and political analysis for communities to exchange ideas in public debates, including discussions or dialectics of political debates on social media, have been reviewed by previous researchers (Arswendi, 2017; Ichسانی, 2024; Razaqa et al., 2022). There is also a discussion of the use of digital communication platforms in politics while refuting the results of research on the millennial generation's participation and interest in discussing political topics, which are still low (Judhita & Darmawan, 2018). Previous researchers only focused on the theory of semiotics and semiology, media, and digital dialectics supported by the concept of the role of social media and media in Indonesian politics. This differs from this article, which emphasises the

theory of dialectical reality and the theory of performance studies with the support of the concept of representation and new media, which are elaborated comprehensively into novelty.

Mix Method article with data collection using literature studies and material objects of the 5th presidential debate broadcast mediated via *YouTube*. Theories and concepts represent cultural and political values, dialectical reality, and the role of new media. The form of data presented is the display of the costumes of the three presidential candidates in the 5th debate, the substance of the debate theme and public comments on *YouTube* KPU RI, and trends in the role of new media. Presentation of data maps using *Voyant.tools* and *ytcomment.kmcat.uk/* which are processed from the minutes of the 5th presidential debate event in 2024 (KPU RI, 2024) and audience comments

using keywords according to indicators. Analysis using performance studies. The 5th presidential debate was chosen because it was the last debate session prepared by the General Election Commission (KPU) for the quiet period, and it had unique costumes that were the centre of attention. Therefore, the novelty of this research has not revealed the debate by observing the costume as a performance, the substance of the debate content and comments, and the role of the media function in one unit to become a dialectic.

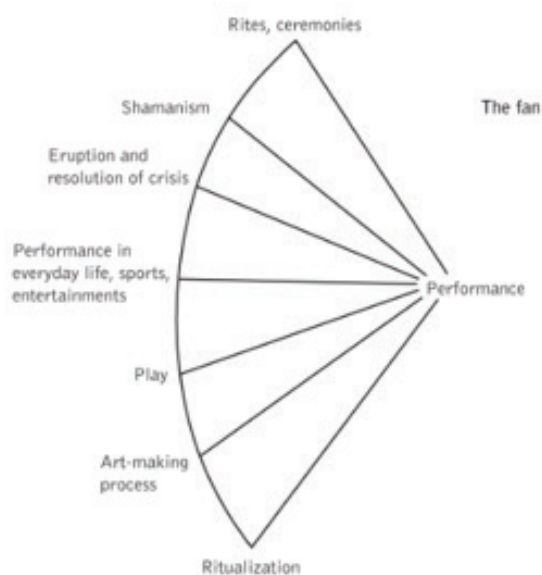
So it can be analogised by borrowing Schechner's opinion, social reality, and political action that is transformed in staging towards aesthetic performance and mediated, which are displayed virtually through *YouTube* so that it appears from something actual to virtual, becoming a process of reciprocal communication.



**Figure 1.**  
**Positive Reciprocal Relationship Between Social Drama and Aesthetic Performance**

Source:(Schechner, 2002, p. 77)

From the social reality relation scheme of the presidential debate, performance, and social drama can be seen in (Figure 1). The debate event is a visible thing in the form of social-political action. It is then visualised in performance techniques in a staging or stage and becomes according to its actual character. This performance can also be understood as an art-making process or performance in everyday life so that it can become entertainment.



**Figure 2.**  
**Performance Fan**

Source:(Schechner, 2002, p. 18)

Performance can be seen as a “structured event”, as in the performance fan, where everyday life is built from an art-making process packaged in a ceremony and becomes entertainment. The adaptation of this concept is discussed, and elements such as costumes, movements, and facial expressions contribute to the overall meaning conveyed. In the context of the presidential debate, the costumes worn by the presidential candidates can be considered an essential part of the performance, where

each visual element builds their image and political identity (Fitinline, 2022; Goffman, 1959; Turner & V, 1988). The correlation between the performance fan scheme in this article is intended to understand and analyse the reality of everyday life can transform its format in staging that has meaning from ceremony to art-making process. This is manifested in the form of a show or performance in framing. *YouTube*.

The formal object of this research is dialectics using the theory of dialectical reality. Luzar (2015) says reality as part of social construction is interpreted as a social process through actions and interactions that are continuously constructed to become a subjectively shared reality. Three elements in dialectics: 1) The concept of contradiction, recognising the existence of conflict or differences in thought or reality; 2) The concept of transformation, there is a development of ways (thought or reality) to overcome conflict; and 3) The concept of synthesis, the creation of solutions from the integration of the two previous contradictory elements Muttaqin (2024). The digital dialectic in this article is a discussion process that encourages proof and verification and the exchange of information between individuals in the KPU RI *YouTube* comment column.

Supported by the concept of representation as a form of representation and cultural practice, the meaning of language on culture is depicted through the image of a group or society. This is interpreted through the reflection of the reality of verbal and visual communication. The active process involves the production of meaning

through the use of language, images, and symbols, which produces political meaning. The discursive approach focuses on certain discourses or powers (Hall, 1997). In this context, costumes strengthen the political narrative the presidential candidate wants to convey to voters and are used as symbolic and institutional power (Hall, 1996, pp. 183–185). So that the representation of political values can be interpreted, thought about, studied, and practised.

In communication science, social media is considered part of new media. New media uses the internet, technology-based online media, and social media with flexible characters, potentially interactive, and can function privately and publicly. One of them is *YouTube*, a platform of new media that functions as a means of mass communication. It offers the appeal of spreading information through video streaming and moving images (Indrawan & Ilmar, 2020; Levy, 2001). New media refers to information dissemination channels that utilise internet technology, both privately and publicly, with various digital features (Hakim & Putro, 2022). The strength of new media lies in the mastery of technology, which has the potential to bring change to society. Its role can be a channel for information, supervision, education, and entertainment, and it does not rule out the possibility of becoming a feedback medium in communication.

Therefore, performance studies theory becomes a tool to analyse the debate as a “social drama” and needs to pay attention to “aesthetic performance” through costumes and new media carrying dynamic social reality into a novelty that other

researchers have never used in analysing it. The academic concern is, how the representation of costumes revealing reality in the form of debate substance and the role of media into a dialectic in the performance of the 5th Presidential Candidate debate is studied comprehensively? This question is a standing point in this analysis divided from the discussion’s subtitle. Three things show the urgency of this problem being discussed because it differs from previous research studies, which are research gaps. Costumes serve to understand the visual language of structured forms, meanings, and hidden meanings. So, this article has three aims: *First*, it will explain the representation of costumes used by presidential candidates. *Second*, it reveals the reality of the debate content’s substance and the audience’s comments about the event. *Third*, explain the role of new media (*YouTube*) as a digital communication channel. The benefit is to see how the communication process, in this case, the delivery of the presidential candidate’s message, carries the value in his performance transformed through a performance as if on a stage with the reality of dialectics on *YouTube* as a channel for transforming his social drama.

## DISCUSSION

In the 5th presidential debate, the performance drama appeared like a stage play that impacted the audience, especially voters for the 2024 presidential election. Social reality is transformed into a social drama into an important topic related to aesthetic performance mediated on a stage (Schechner, 2002). The performance

displayed determines the electability of the candidate. However, not only that, Meliala (2020) states that there are several key elements in the strategy for determining the victory of the presidential election, namely: *First*, the proposed public program or policy; *Second*, the social image of the candidate, including culture, religion, norms, psychographics, behaviour, and the reality of life; *Third*, the emotional feelings that are aroused, for example by showing an understanding of the suffering of the people; *Fourth*, the candidate's image such as speech, behaviour, intellectual, and charisma; *Fifth*, current events in the form of issues that arise during the campaign until election day; and *Sixth*, epistemic issues in the form of specific election issues that arouse voters' curiosity. Likewise, what happened in the conditions of the presidential candidate debate performance that occurred required a strategy for candidate electability with voter curiosity.

To achieve a presidential election victory, each candidate must have a different political strategy and appearance or performance. The communication perspective is related to the process of delivering messages; the media as a communicator conveys messages through actors/figures involved with the theme of the content of the message, and the communicant captures the substance of the debate itself, namely the audience in its representation, which is a dialectic of the communication process that takes place in this discussion. Starting from the representation of the costumes of the 2024 presidential candidates at the 5th debate, the substance of the debate theme content

discussed, to the role of new media as a digital communication channel in transforming the reality of the dialectic of the debate event drama into a social drama on the platform *YouTube* (KPU RI). To understand the three discussion points more deeply, here is the analysis data presentation.

### **Representation of Costumes Used by Presidential Candidates in the 5th Debate in 2024**

The representation referred to in this context carries or carries cultural values. However, many other exhibited values represent something that emphasises the importance of meaning and language in producing an exchange of meaning in a cultural context (Hermawan, 2007; Yulianto, 2022). Likewise, what is seen in the representation of costumes in the 5th presidential debate is interesting because it has uniqueness. This subsection discusses the structure of the costume, the literal meaning visually, and the hidden meaning represented by the use of costumes in the context of the debate. As an element in the performance, it has a structure that adheres to the elements and principles of the costume that can be seen and described. According to Astuti (2021, p. 19), costume design has seven elements: line, direction, shape, size, texture, value and colour and six principles: harmony, proportion, balance, rhythm, centre of attention, and unity. These elements and structures then show the form and structure of the costume that can be visually seen and represented from the data displayed in Figure 3-5, which contains the costumes of the three presidential candidates or actors involved.



**Figure 3.**  
**Anies Baswedan's Costume at the 5th Presidential Debate**

Source: Researcher Processing

The costume structure of the clothes worn by Anies (Figure 3) is in the form of a black suit, white shirt, purple tie, black *peci*, and black-rimmed glasses. The literal meaning visually can be interpreted as PSL (Complete Civil Wear), using a suit, white shirt, purple tie, and *peci*, an official attribute that officials usually use for state events. Contextually, what Anies did became a common practice because this debate event was held to elect a candidate for national leader, namely the presidential candidate. This costume represents Anies' neat, formal, and religious characteristics. When viewed from a performance studies perspective, Anies' performance technique is carried out to show the audience that the ideal leader has an appearance that is represented formally and neatly and upholds religious values shown from the use of his *peci*. In a performance scene, the character of the characterisation usually uses visual element attributes appropriate to the context. Anies did this precisely according to the context of the debate event he played. The *peci* is commonly used by nationalist leaders and religious symbols in Indonesia.

Anies' *Peci* symbolic meaning is strong in the cultural identity of the Islamic religion; this is based on the view of the theory of cultural value representation; *peci* enters the realm of symbolic thinking to symbolise a nationalist and religious leader who was often used by Bung Karno (Kertamukti, 2013). Anies, with his formal suit (jacket, shirt, and tie), intends to build a political identity through competence and assertiveness in facing national issues. Anies adapts symbolic power in his costume, namely using the path of meaning from the costume represented officially at formal events as a custom of a costume symbolised by national leaders or world leaders. The representation of the meaning of the costume politically is an image, symbol, sign, and other costume design elements used in interpreting the political context, such as influencing public opinion and building political identity (Mitchell, 2002). The hidden meaning implied by such performance shows the personality and character of the costume user, who is straightforward, idealistic, following the context, and is portrayed as an intellectual, religious, and polite leader.



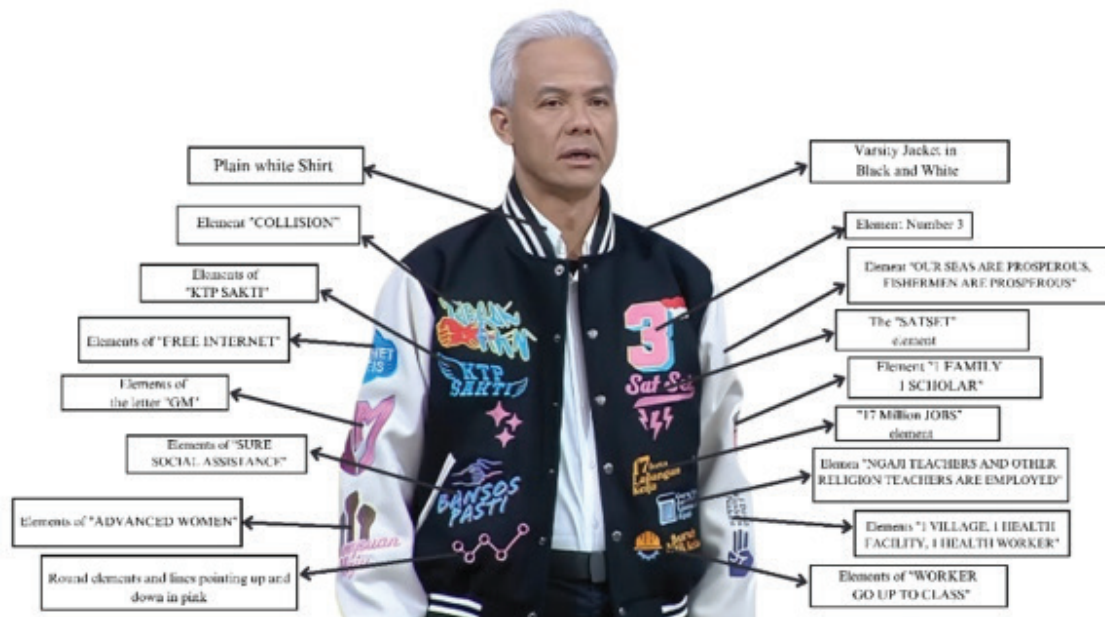
**Figure 4.**  
**Prabowo Subianto's Costume at the 5th Presidential Debate**

*Source: Researcher Processing*

In the costume structure (Figure 4), Prabowo wears a simple plain shirt with two pockets (on the right and left chest) in blue. The costume Prabowo wore, namely his plain sky-blue shirt, visually represents a casual, formal style. Anyone from all walks of life or levels of society can wear this simple costume. The touch of colour that is not striking to steal the audience's attention is the couple's choice for simplicity. Several institutions or agencies with natural sky-blue colours widely wear such costumes. The colour of the clothes used by Prabowo-Gibran from the beginning of the campaign until the 5th debate event with sky blue clothes philosophically means peace, openness, calm, consistency, reliability, reflection and wisdom. The hope is that the user of this colour represents the meaning of sky blue colour. In addition, the intention behind the use of the shirt in the context of the debate contains the meaning that Prabowo is expected to be able to build a political identity in the form of an individual who has strength, stability, discipline, and military experience. The hope is to become a firm leader who adapts institutional power, prioritises simplicity, is popular and can protect all levels of society. However, the

political identity represented contradicts the campaign that carries the political identity of "Gemoy", which tends to be funny, adorable, tickling, and brings laughter. This is supported by research stating that such a political strategy can disguise the background (Wirawan, 2023). From this, it seems that Prabowo has a paradox all this time, where his role as a presidential candidate with a military background who is considered a frightening figure turns out to be humorous and has empathy and concern for the community. The military is usually on standby for work anytime and anywhere, which shows Prabowo as a candidate for a leader who is ready to work (Kristianti, 2024). This simplicity contains many meanings, becoming a "framing" in itself to disguise his military and create a balance with his running mate, who has a background of "relaxed" young people for the sake of "Brand Image" balance in society. The desire to attract constituents from all walks of life has reaped results with the proof of victory in getting the most votes during the Presidential Election. This is different from the next candidate, Ganjar, who will have the following visual representation of the costume.





**Figure 5.**  
**Ganjar Pranowo's Costume at the 5th Presidential Debate**

Source: *Researcher Processing*

Costume structure (Figure 5) Ganjar wore a varsity jacket costume known as a baseball jacket commonly worn by young people and previously worn by students at Harvard University. The condition of costume is a combination of black on the body and white on the arms and equipped with various emblems or campaign signs, namely the number three (candidate number), "Our Sea is Glorious, Fishermen are Prosperous"; "1 Family 1 Graduate"; "17 Jobs"; "Quran Teachers and Teachers of Other Religions are Paid"; "1 Village, 1 Health Facility, 1 Health Worker"; "Workers Move Up a Class"; "Collision"; "KTP Sakti"; "Social Assistance is Certain"; "Advanced Women". This costume wants to show that Ganjar is cool, has a youthful soul, and is easygoing. The visible form and structure are intended to be an effective or powerful social and political action (efficacious). This shows the campaign attributes played in the debate performance through the costume worn. Ganjar wears a varsity jacket with its emblems, representing

the impression of young people (Gen Z). The varsity jacket is made by UMKM (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises), representing cultural and Indonesian values using local products. Wisnuwardani (2024) conveys that this wardrobe directly represents cultural values that focus on promoting local Indonesian UMKM products. As a result, the three costumes have hidden meanings from the culture that are embraced, followed, and believed in so that they can be represented according to the character, culture, and target of the campaign.

In terms of political representation, Ganjar uses his costume to communicate a message that reflects his political identity to influence public opinion in an easy-to-remember way in the form of visualization (Shanti, 2024). So that the political representation (symbolic power and institutional power) hidden from the costumes of the three presidential candidates is visible. The hidden agenda in this performance is to show and approach Gen Z to gain constituent votes through a

visual campaign regarding his work program. This can be seen in the emblem, designed attractively and uniquely. Data shows that with the demographic bonus, new voters are dominated by Gen Z and millennials, who are potential strong targets for winning the presidential candidate's vote. However, the campaign strategy, which ideally has a relatively high chance of winning, is not following predictions. Many things and factors behind a political event are mediated in a performance scene on a live broadcast or packaged in a full live *YouTube*.

The three presidential candidates use their performance techniques while on the debate stage (staging), which the audience can see in real-time. The representation of the costumes of the three presidential candidates at the 5th presidential debate is an aesthetic performance in the form of a performance technique on stage (staging), which can be seen visually and actually. Literally wanting to show consistency, soldier characteristics, an impression of peace, and openness. On the other hand, they are paired with young people who have the tagline "*santuy*" to adapt to each other.

When talking about performance, behind the visible, efficacious staging and actual performances, there is a hidden side to the costume performance of the three presidential candidates. The hidden meaning possessed by the three candidates cannot be separated from cultural and political representation. Representation of cultural values is the process by which the culture of a group or society is interpreted through various mediums, such as language, symbols, and social practices, including costume

(Hall, 1996, p. 5). Cultural representation of costumes emphasises the meaning produced by the elements of costume design (shape and colour) towards a culture to connect the presidential candidate with a particular national or group identity (traditional norms, traditions, and beliefs). According to Schechner (2002), a performance can be seen as a "structured event" where structures such as costumes, movements, and facial expressions contribute to the overall meaning conveyed. In the context of the presidential debate, the costumes worn by the presidential candidates can be considered an important part of the performance, where each visual element builds their political image and identity. In general, performance drama is often referred to as a play. The term play is equated with a story widely used in wayang, so the wayang play is the wayang itself. The play in padelangan is quite close to "*Pathet*", which is closely related to the chapters in the structure of the performance, the order of the performance, and the accompaniment accompanying the performance as a supporter of harmony in the overall wayang performance in general (Wikandaru et al., 2018, p. 124). A play means a story that is dramatized and written to be performed by the players in front of the audience. Likewise, what happened in the presidential candidate's performance showed a play in a drama story. The definition of lakon in puppetry is adjusted to the context of the discussion, where there are three categories of understanding based on the main characters presented (*lakone sopo*), the storyline presented (*lakone kepriye*), and referring to the repertoire of stories presented (*lakone opo*) (Sunardi et al., 2016). So this view is adapted to see the

social drama scene from the costumes and other performance elements as part of the presidential candidate's play, which displays the substance of the content in the form of the storyline of the repertoire of stories played by the presidential candidate characters.

Costumes from the perspective of the drama performance (*lakon*) of the 5th presidential debate in 2024 consist of three categories. The first is *lakone sopo*, the answer is Anies, Prabowo, and Ganjar. The second is *lakone kepriye*, using various costumes with their characteristics, each presidential candidate provides a storyline represented in cultural and political values. The third is *lakone opo*, so the repertoire of stories presented is the role of each costume in supporting the presidential debate strategy. So that the representation of costumes (culture and politics) can form a social drama through the perspectives of the three categories above. With the play's characterisation, the question is, who is the mastermind behind all this? From the events above, we can see further the context of what is being discussed in the play. The context of the dialectic substance is a separate proposal for further research. However, the substance of the content of this debate fills the complexity of the discussion as the content of the message conveyed by the candidates follows.

### **Content Substance of the Debate and Audience Comments for the 5th Presidential Debate Event in 2024**

The dialectical reality in debate events is shown as if it appears in a social drama in performance studies. This reality is intertwined with the debate's content and

audience, forming a dialectic. Dialectics, according to Hegel (2020), is a "reciprocal process" and has 3 stages, namely: 1) Thesis; 2) Giving birth to antithesis as its opposite; and 3) Synthesis that will reconcile thesis and antithesis. In the issue of communication dialectics, Bourdieu (1977, p. 164) emphasized that it will always be a human experience that arises due to the construction of reality (*doxa*), namely habits in social life-orthodox and heterodox beliefs. To unravel the complexity of social practices while "reconciling" these beliefs, Bourdieu put forward a concept in the form of (HABITUS x CAPITAL) + ARENA = PRACTICE in explaining social practices (Krisdinanto, 2023). In essence, explaining social practices in the products of dynamics related to habitus and capital that are inherent in social actors and take place in a social space, namely the arena. In this case, the presidential debate arena becomes a campaign arena to display the goal of garnering votes, which is transformed into a "social drama" played by presidential candidates and shown to the public. These scenes can be interpreted naturally as inseparable from the character of the characters' habits.

Next, we enter the content of the message if we look at the coding of the data on the minutes of the substance of the debate theme and collaborate with comments from the public in the comments column on the KPU RI YouTube at the 5th presidential candidate debate, the following data appears. In Figure 6-11, the three presidential candidates conveyed the debate theme with the leading discussion indicators (most) consisting of the themes of social welfare, culture,

education, information technology, health, and employment. Visual representation is a representation of comments and minutes of

the debate with words that often appear in each theme and topic of the 5th presidential candidate debate.



**Figure 6.**  
**Dialectical Reality 1 Substance of the Theme of Welfare and Community**  
**Comments**

*Source: Researcher Processing with voyant.tools & ytcomment.kmcat.uk/*

In (Figure 6) shows the dominant results of audience comments on *YouTube* KPU RI at the 5th presidential debate in 2024. Audience comments dominating the debate on the welfare theme are visualized with dominant words such as salary, teachers and lecturers, workers, people’s welfare, and corruption. It turns out that the audience pays more attention to this. The words that often appear show that the conditions represented in the comments do not discuss the debate for how to get there (welfare). How to see and move towards welfare is not visible in the debate discussion, which should discuss welfare goals more. It occurs in a debate that shows several factors, such as emotional attitudes between presidential

candidates, that cause noisy communication. This means that the welfare goals are not discussed in depth but are just bickering. In theory, what Bourdieu put forward regarding habitus multiplied by capital plus the arena equals practice has not been internalised in each actor when performing in the debate. Habits x capital (cultural/education/financial/etc.) + portfolio (candidate’s flight hours) = a practice (good debate performance in delivering work programs/vision and missions and expressions of prospective national leaders should have and be able to control themselves in a social practice that has been carried out as a portfolio and becomes the acquisition of their flight hours (milestone of life).



**Figure 7.**  
**Dialectical Reality 2 Substance Theme Culture and Community Comments**

Source: Researcher Processing with *voyant.tools* & *ytcomment.kmcat.uk/*

The results of the audience's comments dominating the 5th presidential debate in 2024 on the KPU RI *YouTube* focused on the theme of culture (Figure 7). This theme is visualized with dominant comment words: the Constitution, diplomacy, culture, cultural exchange, and social heritage. However, in the audience's comments, the cultural elements that should have been discussed were not discussed or were not prominent. Where there are 7 elements of culture, according to Koentjaraningrat (1985), namely language system, knowledge system, social system, life equipment and technology

system, livelihood system, religious system, and art system; these seven elements did not appear in the audience's comments because the substance of the cultural discussion in the debate did not focus on its vision and mission. Even in the debate discussion, no one discussed how to explore culture; for example, film and musical works (art) did not appear. As a result, the audience did not capture what could be derived to carry out the work program, so the audience less understood the success of this culture, which impacted negative perceptions of the three 2024 presidential candidates.



**Figure 8.**  
**Dialectical Reality 3 Substances of Education Themes and Community Comments**

Source: Researcher Processing with [voyant.tools](https://voyant.tools) & [ytcomment.kmcat.uk/](https://ytcomment.kmcat.uk/)

(Figure 8) above shows the results of the dominant comments of the audience at the 5th presidential debate event in 2024 on the KPU RI YouTube, which discussed the substance of the education theme. The education theme is visualised with dominant comments in the form of education, state, teachers, lecturers, schools, and insurance. The answers of the three presidential candidates that caused the comments above, namely related to the education program, reviewing the education system, leaks in the allocation of education funds, uneven education funds, encouraging the certification process of education personnel, and freeing teachers from

administrative issues. However, it was not explained what the intent and form were to be created or implemented, such as the need to clarify the education construction, the system offered, and how to handle education problems. Meanwhile, if referring to the opening of the 1945 Constitution, paragraph 4 is to educate the nation's life, the urgency of education in the opening of the 1945 Constitution is clear. However, the concept of educating the nation's life proposed by the three presidential candidates was still not discussed in detail. This creates unclear information for the audience regarding what to do and how to do those goals.



**Figure 9.**  
**Dialectical Reality 4 Substance Theme of Information Technology and Community Comments**

Source: Researcher Processing with [voyant.tools](https://voyant.tools) & [ytcomment.kmcat.uk/](https://ytcomment.kmcat.uk/)

The results were obtained (Figure 9) at the 5th presidential debate event in 2024 on YouTube KPU RI, namely comments based on the theme of the information technology debate. Comments on technology, the internet, gadgets, factories, information, and brands are words that often appear in audience comments in the context of technological developments in Indonesia. However, there is a lack of content that provides an understanding to the audience regarding the importance of information

technology for the nation's welfare. This is a global geopolitical issue that must be adapted in Indonesia for the nation's progress and the nation's competitiveness. The focus of the audience and comments become negative feedback because they do not understand the importance of information technology if it is appropriately implemented to improve people's welfare.







**Figure 11.**  
**Dialectical Reality 6 Substances of Employment Themes and Community Comments**

Source: Researcher Processing with *voyant.tools* & *ytcomment.kmcat.uk/*

In the context of the employment theme (Figure 11), the dominant words that emerged were budget, disability, disease, lifestyle, unemployment, preventive measures, and health data related to insurance or BPJS for social justice for all Indonesian people. However, employment insurance is a recurring *cliché* problem in this nation. Then, the main discussion of the theme of “employment” became the reality of the audience’s dialectic, which questioned Ganjar’s understanding of responding to the problem of access, the disabled

community, and solutions for workers with families to continue their education. From the substance of the theme reviewed, the debate’s vision, mission, and goals, namely conveying messages, have not been conveyed through the substance of his work program. The process of conveying the message is less effective, so there is much noise. So, it is necessary to see the role of the media as a channel in packaging messages, which can be understood in the following sub-discussions.

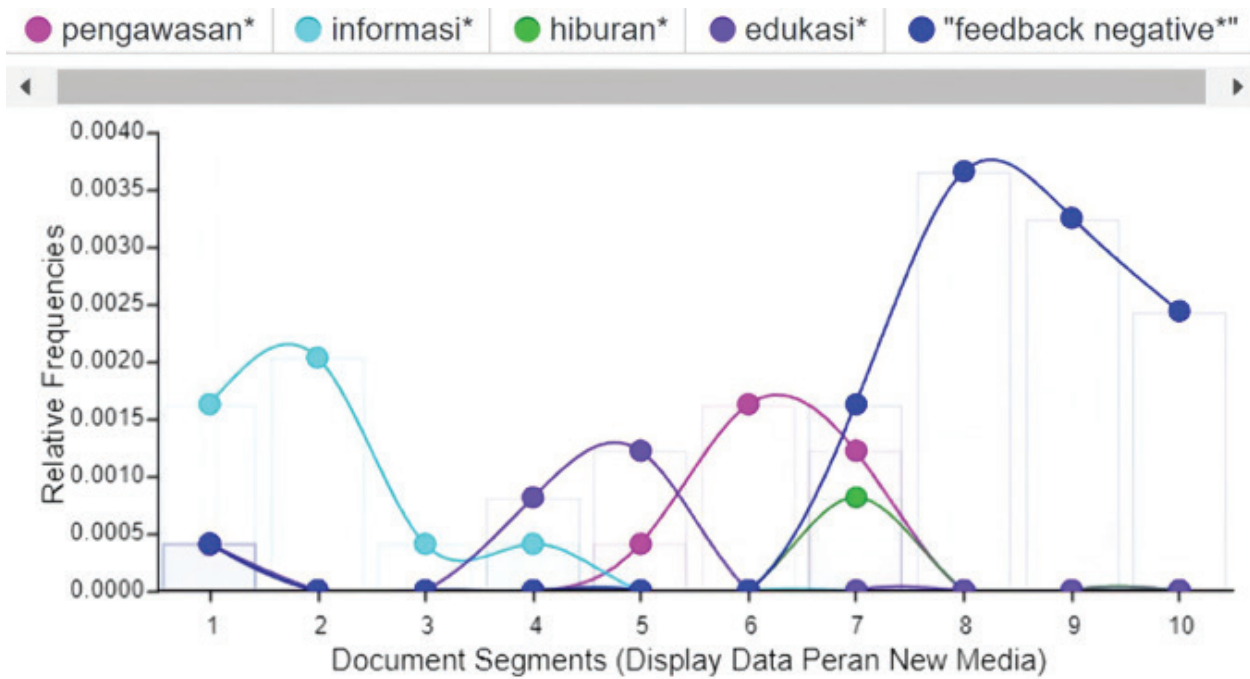
## **The Role of New Media (YouTube) as a Digital Communication Channel for the 5th Presidential Debate in 2024**

The transformation of social reality into a growing and interesting phenomenon is reviewed. Using media technology makes it easier, faster, more practical, and cheaper for people to obtain information, education, and entertainment. Agreeing with Varenia & Phalguna (2022), these changes and developments provide the public with the convenience of accessing information from anywhere and anytime in real-time using a smartphone or the internet. This article emphasises using *YouTube* as a digital communication channel (new media) and a medium for social drama scenes in debate events. *YouTube*, as a means of public discussion, makes digital dialectics occur when the audience interacts with content, proves and verifies information, and reaches conclusions through the process of argumentation and exchange of ideas.

In politics, *YouTube* increases the speed of execution, quality, and political impact while reducing risk and competition. Using *YouTube* allows politicians to interact by building conversations, starting discussions, and more (Levin, 2020). However, interactions on this platform are not entirely peaceful due to differences of opinion that give rise to debate. However, politicians often use *YouTube* to facilitate themselves in attracting support, providing understanding,

persuading, and interactively moving audiences (Ciampa et al., 2020).

Media has an important role in community life. Based on Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 40 Tentang Pers (1999) article three (3), media has four (4) roles as a medium for information, education, entertainment, and social control (supervision). CloudHost (2021) provides an understanding of the 4 roles of new media: *First*, media as information offers timely facts and opinions related to an event that is informative, objective, subjective, primary, and secondary; *Second*, media as education is a means of providing educational information and trying to educate people directly or indirectly using content; *Third*, media acts as a provider of pleasure by providing shows in the form of fun content (songs, films, cartoons, etc.); and *Fourth*, media as a supervisor functions to observe society closely, continuously, and provide warnings about actions that threaten the mass audience that is likely to occur in the future. Of the 4 roles of the media, it turns out that there are some that this opinion has not accommodated. The author found one qualification of the role of new media when viewed from the communication element, namely feedback. The following is the presentation of the data:



**Figure 12.**  
Trends Role of New media (Education, Information, Supervision, Entertainment, and Negative feedback) on the Comments of the 5th Presidential Debate 2024 on YouTube KPU RI

Source: Researcher Processing with voyant.tools

In (Figure 12) the first trend of the role of new media as supervision shows the ratio, percentage or portion calculated using specific frequencies and segments. The indicator trends are securing, warning, threatening, and preventing. The relative frequencies are at 0.0005 in the Segment five (5) document, rising to between 0.0015-0.0020 in the Segment six (6) document, then decreasing between 0.0010-0.0015 in the Segment seven (7) document. This means that there is no supervision in the other segment documents. If we look at democratic life, the role of the media is one of the pillars of democracy, namely supervising (watchdog) the government in the concept of Montesquieu's *Trias Politica* (legislative, executive, and judiciary) (AJI, 2013, p. 11). The role of the media as a watchdog is not far from its meaning as social control in providing criticism, assessment, and suggestions to the authorities, law enforcers,

and the community (Zubaidi et al., 2020). These roles are essential to increase the political participation of the community. The graph (Figure 12) shows that the role of supervision began to increase in Segments five to seven. This means that discussions related to supervision indicators only appear at certain times. Therefore, the role of new media as supervision did not last from the beginning to the end of the comments on the 5th debate event. This shows that the role of new media supervision in democratic life and social control has not been implemented.

The trend of new media's role as information has indicators of facts, opinions, objective, subjective, primary, secondary, and informative. It turns out that the frequency of the information role of the graph looks to be decreasing, meaning that the audience in the segmentation comments has several words that match the indicator, which is also decreasing. Relative frequencies appear

quite high between 0.0020-0.0025, then experience a significant decrease per each segment document. So, it can be interpreted that the audience initially provided informative comments, both opinion-facts and objective-subjectives, which decreased until they did not have informative discussion topics. Therefore, the role of information only lasted from Segments 1-5, even though there were still 10 Segment documents. The information received will go through a confrontation between the thesis proposed (proof) and the development of antithesis (checking) until the creation of synthesis (reciprocity) (Subekti, 2021). So that the digital dialectic process in the 5th debate event on *YouTube*, which is considered to foster a sceptical and critical attitude of the Indonesian people towards the information presented, is analyzed in the discussion related to the reality of this dialectic

The trend of new media roles is entertainment, with an indicator of fun or pleasure. The entertainment role graph (Figure 12) only increased once with 0.0010 in the Segment seven (7) document, then levelled off and did not show any entertaining or joyful comments. This means that the discussion segmentation with the entertainment indicator is only a little and is fleeting in the middle of the segment document, with the frequency of the number of words “fun” soaring. However, this did not last long because no more audiences commented on the 5th debate event with the indicator of fun or pleasure. Thus, it can be interpreted that the role of new media entertainment does not play a big role.

The trend of new media's role in education has three indicators in the form of educational programs, education, and mass awareness. The relative frequencies graph is at a number close to 0.0010 in the Segment four document, then increases in the Segment five (5) document with relative frequencies close to 0.0015. This means that constructive things are only in two segments during the debate. This shows that each segment's audience comments in this indicator are up and down. Thus, each audience has comments with several words according to the changing indicators and varied comments, sometimes containing many educational comments, sometimes only a few words. So, the media's role in education has not been consistently actualized.

The role of new media in communication is negative feedback. In this case, the feedback the public gives through the KPU RI *YouTube* comments is in the form of negative comments, such as insults, non-constructive criticism, spam messages, and negative jokes. (Figure 12) shows in real terms how the graph of the role of negative feedback has the highest spike in relative frequencies between 0.0035 and 0.0040, the highest number among the other four media roles. It is located in the duration of the 7th to 10th Segment document and the highest peak in Segment eight (8). The spike was influenced by the many negative messages from the public, but it turned out to contain spam messages. This is believed to be due to communication factors, such as communicators (debate participants) who are not competent in discussing the substance of the debate. Not

being competent here means a lot of noise (emotional, tolerant attitude, wanting to bring each other down), making the public (communicant) receive unclear messages. Of course, when receiving a message that is not clear or on target, it will eventually cause unclear (negative) feedback. Therefore, it is very important to see the overall role of new media in order to understand the reality of the dialectic that transforms into social drama. The communication process that occurred during the debate caused a negative reaction from the audience because the presidential candidate actors had an impulsive dialogue in the social drama scene mediated through the debate on *YouTube*.

The performance of the 5th presidential debate event in 2024 was transformed in the form of cultural and political costume representations and the dialectical reality between the substance of the debate and public comments. Comments from the Indonesian public in the form of negative feedback that is not constructive through digital communication channels, namely platforms such as *YouTube*, become a performance like a stage play that brings up social drama that does not display maturity in democracy and politics. Agree with Prayoga (2022), saying that *YouTube* is an expressive digital communication channel without limits from its users, which is hidden behind an account. This shows a lack of maturity in political ethics, communication, and literacy on social media because it does not have transparency of account identity. The social drama that occurs in the form of an exchange of ideas or comments about costumes and the content

of the presidential debate according to the themes discussed, namely social welfare, culture, education, information technology, health, and employment, is not constructive. Although communicating through social media, namely *YouTube*, it should also heed social media ethics by commenting wisely and maturely.

## CONCLUSION

The debate leads to the achievement of understanding agreement and accuracy-appropriateness of reduced perception as the main point of the debate. The reality of dialectics becomes a real condition of the interconnected communication process; the pros and cons between the content of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis woven into a series of scientific arguments become an important issue in this article. So, the debate on the reality of dialectics is ideally able to educate the nation and foster people who are faithful, pious, and noble. The dialectic is represented by the form of the costume structure, its literal meaning, and the hidden meaning of the performance in the context of the debate. The conclusion does not show the substance of the content according to the clear vision, mission, and program. So that it does not achieve the goal of conveying the contents of the message the actors communicate to the audience.

The movement of the media industry focuses on the 2024 presidential election period, forming a social construction, both visually, verbally, and textually. Visually, the representation of costumes can be seen with the naked eye through visual elements. These elements include emblems, writing, images,

colours, attributes, and types of clothing (coats, shirts, and jackets) that represent cultural and political costumes. Cultural representation: The three candidates' costumes represent a culture that connects them to a group (religion, customs, norms, and traditions) or national identity. In political representation, costumes build political narratives and identities desired by each presidential candidate, such as symbolic and institutional power. In this case, the conclusion is that Ganjar is the most dominant in political representation through emblems on varsity jackets to convey campaign messages visually.

Ideally, in political participation, the media has the role of information, education, supervision, and entertainment. However, in the 5th debate, *YouTube* played a role as a "drama" container that accommodates the role of negative feedback. This illustrates that *YouTube* not only plays a role as a place to share videos but also as an "arena" for the exchange of opinions and the formation of social, cultural, and political discourse. This also shows the existence of a digital dialectic in the role of *YouTube* as new media in political participation. In this study, the role of new media is seen as a forum for debate events, both in the representation of costumes and the correlation of the substance of the debate theme with public comments.

The dialectical reality of the 5th presidential debate event looks like a stage play (performance). The events structured on the stage play like in a theatre performance; content or narrative is displayed besides costumes. The substance of the debate is in the form of a debate theme, namely social

welfare, culture, education, information technology, health, and employment. Social drama occurs when the three presidential candidates give answers related to the substance, where the public responds with pros, cons, and even no comment. This then shows the reality of dialectics or the reality of the process of an issue. It turns out that not all debate theme issues are commented on by the public. This study looks at the dialectic starting from the thesis stage (presidential candidates' answers related to the substance of the theme) and stops at the antithesis stage (comments on pros and cons from the public). It is hoped that this dialectic will reach the synthesis stage (joint solution).

New media has the role of a digital communication channel that transforms social drama. This role is located on the platform *YouTube* as a channel between debate events, where the three presidential candidates act as actors or communicators in conveying messages of the vision and mission of the substance of the debate content to the public or communicants. Where ideally, digital media acts as a supervisor, but in the 5th *YouTube* debate of the 2024 presidential candidates, it has become a place for people to exchange opinions and social discourses by paying attention to communication ethics and needing to improve digital literacy. The exchange of ideas in the form of support, satire, opinions, and suggestions for the three candidate candidates and the organizers of the presidential debate event shows a change in the role of the media in increasing political participation.

If initially the media played a role as a supervisor, now it has changed its role

as a channel that transforms social reality into a performance into a “social drama”. Therefore, further research is needed related to the perspective of communication science that raises political communication by considering the achievement of the substance of the message that can be accepted by the community so that communication runs effectively. In addition, it is necessary to see how the theory of performance studies can be used as a complete social reality from various elements, including scenarios and behind the events, which can be reviewed with dramaturgy theory by subsequent researchers. So, further research in conveying messages, including news mechanisms, is more comprehensive, integral, holistic, and systematic when displaying a message in new media. This can also be a reference for the maturity of society in democracy and media use.

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