

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a background of the study which contains the reason why the study is conducted. This chapter also provides statement of the problem, aims of study, limitation of the study and research method. In the last part of this chapter, there is clarification of terms to explain some key points of the study.

1.1 Background

Media and politics are two things which cannot be separated. Media expose the activities of political figures which are influential in policy making and implementation (Tiung and Hasim, 2009). Those activities have the high value of news. On the other hand, political figures, for example president, indeed need media as the bridge to inform the public about his/her actions and success stories during the presidency.

In practice, media bias in reporting events is difficult to be erased, even when the media are under detailed examination (Anand, Tela, Galtovic, 2007). The absence of media consumers' access to verify the event can be a factor which enables media to maintain their power to report certain event in angles they prefer to choose. Furthermore, Rogers (2004:5 in Paltridge, 2006) argued that "the language use constructs social world." To explain further, the power can be a vehicle for media to media consumers' mind to agree with the media view

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through the news texts they produce. In Indonesia, in the more specific context of democratic country where the media are the fourth pillar of sustaining democracy (Panyarachun, 2008), media can also interpret and report the event into news in different perspectives. For instance is the statement of *“This is the sixth or seventh year that my salary has not been raised.”* This is the statement from Indonesian president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, during the leaders meeting of the Indonesian Military (TNI) and the National Police on January 21st 2011. This statement becomes controversial and leads to the issue of president salary increase. There are a lot of newspapers in Indonesia which put this issue during several days in the headline, including The Jakarta Post.

One of the ways to explore how media present particular issue is by using Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) developed by Wodak (2001). In this study, DHA is used to reveal how the issue of president salary increase in The Jakarta Post is discursively constructed through the historical context of the issue, the theory of media, and strategies of DHA.

The studies by using DHA have been conducted variously in the last ten years. By applying DHA in handbooks, bulletins, and memoranda, Ricento (2003) found that there are various interpretations of “Americanism” such as the national unity, continuity of American values, homogenization, etc. Furthermore, Tekin (2008) explored the construction of Turkey's possible EU membership in French scholars’ texts and talks. The study suggested that French speakers are involved in the process of identity formation of European versus Non-European. Apart from Tekin study, Lawton (2008) investigated the ideology and dominant arguments

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which construct “English Only” discourse in United States in political speeches, online discussion, and public opinion surveys. The result of the study found three connected ideologies which are Hispanophobia, monolingualism, and assimilationism.

The previous studies of DHA generally examine discursive construction in multiple genres. Meanwhile, the present study focuses on a newspaper genre to examine the discursive construction of president salary increase.

1.2 Statement of the problems

The study is conducted to answer the question “How is the president salary increase is discursively constructed?”. This general question is explored in three specific questions as follows:

- a. How are social actors in the news about president salary increase referred to linguistically?
- b. What are the predications attributed to social actors in the news about president salary increase?
- c. What arguments are used to justify the president salary increase?

1.3 Aims of the study

Based on the formulated questions above, the study is aimed at:

- a. identifying how social actors in the news about president salary increase are referred to linguistically.

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- b. exploring the predications are attributed to social actors in the news about president salary increase.
- c. investigating arguments which are used to justify president salary increase.

1.4 Limitation of the study

The object of investigation of the study is the texts taken from The Jakarta Post online newspaper. Those texts are texts in the news which related to the issue of president salary increase in the headline feature. Other texts which also report the issue of president salary increase such as reader forum, opinion, and comment are excluded because those texts' genres are structurally different. Those texts come from the readers of the newspaper so it will influence the different interpretation process of how The Jakarta Post presents particular issue.

1.5 Research method

The study employs the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis to analyze the data. Among the diverse approaches of CDA which are used to explore social phenomena, this study applies the framework of Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) as proposed by Wodak (2001).

The data, in the form of news texts, are taken from the official website of The Jakarta Post newspaper at www.thejakartapost.com. There are 5 news selected from the website. After that, the news are arranged by the order of publishing date and type of columns. Then, those news texts are copied to Ms.Word 2007. The Jakarta Post is chosen as the object of the study because of its credibility as an English nationwide newspaper in Indonesia which won the first Suprayogi, 2012

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place winning in the public relations printed materials category among newspapers with circulations under fifty thousand copies daily (www.thejakartapost.com).

There are three steps of analysis employed in this study. The first is the analysis of nominations which will identify the people or groups who are involved in the issue of president salary increase and their linguistic references. The second one is the analysis of predication which will identify traits, characteristics, qualities and features of the social actors. The third one is the analysis of argumentation which will identify topos and fallacies of the issue.

1.8. Clarification of Term

- a. Discursive Construction.** Discursive construction in this study refers to the way how certain discourse is constructed through genres where the communicative events are embedded to the text.
- b. President Salary Increase.** President salary increase refers to the news which are presented as the reaction of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's speech during the leaders meeting of the Indonesian Military (TNI) and the National Police at Balai Samudra at 21st of January 2011.
- c. Discourse-Historical Approach.** Discourse-Historical Approach is one of the approaches of Critical Discourse Analysis proposed by Ruth Wodak which focuses on field of politics and fits linguistic and argumentative theories in the model of discourse (Wodak and Meyer, 2004).

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d. The Jakarta Post Online Newspaper. The Jakarta Post is a Indonesian nationwide English newspaper established in 1983 and owned by independent private company called PT Bina Media Tenggara (www.thejakartapost.com).



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