

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, research method, clarification of terms, and organization of the study.

### 1.1 Background

Many media consider conflicts as one of the interesting issues to be reported. This can be seen from the fact that issues of conflict often times are shown in many media's news headlines. Conflicts in a war between some parties are the example of the most reported issues in media. Furthermore, it is observed that in terms of news, war is better than peace, violence is better than non-violence (Young, 1991).

The relationship between media and conflict is interrelated. Conflict has important roles in media, and vice versa; media can also have some important roles in conflict. With the way they present news, media can either escalate or de-escalate a conflict happening in society (Kempf, 2001).

Media can facilitate better clarification related to a conflict. By presenting news about a conflict or confirming the parties involved in the conflict, media at least contribute to make things clearer. According to Reuben (2005) as cited in Verbeke & Euwema (2009, p. 140), constructive coverage of conflicts by media can contribute to better communication between parties, and provide some problem-solving behaviors.

However, intentionally or not, through presenting the conflict from only one party's perspective or commenting the conflict, media can also lead to conflict escalation. This may make conflicting parties distorted. Furthermore, this also can trigger an intervention from third party to the conflict.

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An example of third party intervention in the conflict can be seen in Syrian civil war. Syrian civil war, a war between Syria government and its citizen, is interfered by some countries including Iran. As reported in many international media, Iran supplied weapons and military technology to Syria government. Iran also trained Syria army to be more ready in fighting against the opposition group and sent 4.000 troops to aid Syrian President, Bashar Al Assad(Svensson, 2013). Furthermore, Iran is said to support Syria government due to a religious issue. Iran and Bashar Al-Assad are said to be the followers of *Syiah* (a sect in Islam). They have the same goal which is to fight against the followers of *Sunni* (a sect in Islam which is in contrast with *Syiah*)(Bilal, 2012).

Regarding that fact, this study was conducted to investigate how the conflict of Syrian civil war is reported by Iran media. One of the approaches that can be used to investigate this issue is discourse historical approach (DHA) proposed by Reisigl &Wodak (2001). By employing discourse historical approach, this study explores how discursive strategies are used by Iran media in presenting news about Syrian civil war. Discursive strategies in DHA are defined as the systematic ways of using language at different levels of linguistic organization and complexity. The strategies consist of five strategies: nomination strategy, predication strategy, argumentation strategy, perspectivization strategy, and mitigation strategy. However, this study focuses only on nomination and predication strategies.

Studies on DHA had been conducted with different focuses and objects. There are some studies focusing only on some selected discursive strategies offered by DHA: Valk(2003) focused on referential and argumentation strategies while Wodak(2010) investigated only the argumentation strategies. Related to the object of the study, different discourses have been the object of some studies conducted by using DHA. On political discourse, DHA was used to identify discursive properties as the indicator of particular parties' dominance (Ricento, 2003; Valk, 2003; Tekin, 2008). On managerial discourse, DHA was used to reveal the construction of new

type worker in respect to gender in current management literature (Kelan, 2008). On media discourse, DHA was employed to see how topoi help to reveal the political objectives conveying USA liberal values via films and TV (Wodak, 2010). Though using the same approach, those previous studies have different focuses and scopes.

Among those previous studies, none of them aims at investigating media discourse which is related to the third party intervention of a war. Thus, the present study aims at examining how Syrian civil war is reported in a media of Iran, which is said to be the third party in the war.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This study was conducted to answer these following questions:

1. How are social actors of Syrian civil war represented through nomination strategies?
2. How are social actors of Syrian civil war represented through predication strategies?

## **1.3 Aims of the Study**

This study was aimed at:

1. Investigating the nomination strategies used by IRIB in representing social actors of Syrian civil war.
2. Investigating the predication strategies employed by IRIB in representing social actors of Syrian civil war.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study was expected to explore how the knowledge of Syrian civil war is shared in a country (Iran) which has been interfering the war. Furthermore, this study was expected to enrich the data to any further research on DHA.

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## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

Eight articles from Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) were taken as the object of investigation in this study. Those texts are news articles reporting Syrian civil war. The scope of the study was narrowed to find out the nomination and predication strategies used by IRIB in presenting news about Syrian civil war.

## **1.6 Clarification of Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding, some of important terms are clarified as follows:

### **a. Discourse historical approach (DHA)**

DHA is one of the approaches of critical discourse analysis (CDA). DHA synchronizes text analysis with knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive events are embedded (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001).

### **b. Nomination strategy**

Nomination strategy is a strategy in using linguistic devices to refer to persons, places, or events (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001).

### **c. Predication strategy**

Predication strategy is a strategy in attaching persons, animals, or objects with some qualities or characteristics (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). This strategy is aimed at representing social actors more or less positively or negatively.

### **d. Syrian civil war**

Syrian civil war is a war between Syrian government and its civilian. It has been occurring since March 2011. This armed conflict began when there was a clash between Syria government and their civilian who demanded Syria President, Bashar Al-Assad, to resign from his position. Since this conflict has been a never ending war, there were third parties interfering this conflict. Some parties support Syria government, the others support Syria civilian.

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#### **e. Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB)**

IRIB is a giant [Iranian corporation](#) of [radio](#) and [television](#). The corporation was launched in 1966. Then, The English radio's Internet site was launched in July 2003. (<http://www.wikipedia.com>)

### **1.7 Organization of the Paper**

This study is organized in five chapters. Chapter I contains background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper. Chapter II briefly provides the theory related to this study. Chapter III discusses the process of data collection, the source of the data, and the explanation on how the data were analyzed. The results of the analysis will be presented in chapter IV. This chapter answers problems of this study. Furthermore, there will be discussion on the significance of the results. Finally, the conclusion of this study will be provided in Chapter V. This chapter also gives some suggestions for further research related to this study.

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