

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1 Background

Modern era has shown that nowadays, a war can rely on the power of the media rather than physical strength. U.S. government and the Pentagon, for example, are the most successful in performing public relations campaigns in modern political history in the use of media to mobilize support for war. The U.S. war against Iraq, according to Kellner (1995: 199), was a war that produced by the interaction between the Bush administration, the Pentagon, and the media that use a variety of images and discourses about the crisis, and moves the approval and support for U.S. military intervention.

Huntington (2003: 476) explains that the world public opinion rejected U.S. attack on Iraq in Gulf War I. Western military efforts, according to Huntington, gained little support from non-Western societies. More than 50% of non-Western societies disapproved the plan. Only 25% expressed their support. Thus, efforts to reverse public opinion towards “supporting the war”, in the view of the U.S. government, was a strategy that must be done urgently.

Kellner (1995) has made an interesting analysis of how the media has been “manipulated” to legitimize the war. In his quite critical analysis, he considers that the war against Iraq is a text that is generated by the Bush administration and the Pentagon. It uses a variety of media imagery and discourse about the crisis to move the approval and support for U.S. military intervention. Kellner (1995: 199)

also notices that since the beginning, various news headlines followed the policies of the Bush administration and the Pentagon. Major media in the U.S. are commercial media. They gain through a competitive advantage. As a result, television, newspaper, and magazine headlines, do not want to lose customers, so they are very careful against public opinion and the opinion of the government officials. Major media also put the official government source for a wide range of stories, particularly in times of crisis. Therefore, they tend to be the mouthpiece of U.S. government policies and actions.

Mainstream media in the U.S. has become “stooges” of U.S. government. When the Bush administration sent large numbers of troops into Iraq, mainstream media supported this action and became a funnel to drive support for U.S. policy. For a few weeks, there was just a little noise rejection heard in mainstream media. News, commentaries, and discussions, especially on television, are very flattering military solution to the crisis, as a propaganda vehicle for the U.S. military. There were no significant television debate about the consequences of harmful and massive responses of U.S. military over the invasion of Iraq, or the interests and policies carried out by the military invasion. Criticism of U.S. policy was widely disappearing from major media by proclaiming the crisis, and only slightly deviate from the analysis shown that the issues presented by the Bush administration.

The Bush administration controls the media discourse, partly through misinformation and propaganda, and partly through the press control system of collective resources (pool system). In the days of the first “Gulf crisis”, for

example, what the Bush administration did in misinformation campaigns was very successful with the aim to control and to manipulate a variety of sources that justify military deployment in Saudi Arabia on August 8, 1990. During the first days of the crisis, the U.S. government often stated that the Iraqi forces were moving on the border of Saudi Arabia with the intention of invading the oil-rich kingdom. This is very misleading information. The subsequent studies revealed that Iraq had no desire to invade Saudi Arabia and did not have a large number of troops, which threaten the Saudi border (See Kellner: 1995, 201-202).

The focus of Iran's nuclear program includes the construction of the Bushehr nuclear power plant in the country's southwest coast. The Shah had been offered a contract to Kraftwerk Union (a subsidiary of Siemens) belongs to West Germany to build two nuclear reactors with a capacity of 1,200 megawatts at that location. At the outbreak of the 1979 revolution in Iran, the first reactor has completed 90% with 60% of the equipment has been installed. The second reactor is only 50 % in completion. The program was discontinued after the revolution due to internal instability in Iran and Germany's refusal to complete the project. Under U.S. pressure, Kraftmerk Union refused to rebuild the Bushehr project when Iran restarted its nuclear program after the Iran - Iraq war. Germany also refused to send reactors components and documentation techniques that the payment has been completed by Iran. Various subsequent of Iranian efforts to obtain nuclear technology assistance to the programs of other Western companies in Argentina, Italy, and Czechoslovakia were failed because of U.S. pressure.

In a report to the U.S. Congress in 2003, Sharon Squassoni, a specialist in the field of national security at the Congressional Research Staff, asked the IAEA to inspect Iran over its nuclear program and to give sanctions on Iran. IAEA Reports further indicated that the argument for giving sanction to Iran was quite reasonable, because Iran has programmed a nuclear reactor to make nuclear weapons. Iran continues to argue that its enrichment activity is not for nuclear weapons, but rather for their future energy needs. Nevertheless, although Iran has consistently denied by providing scientific arguments, the decision to continue its uranium enrichment program has resulted in a prolonged crisis between the IAEA, Iran, the European Trio (Germany, France, and the UK), and the United States.

United States demands that Iran suspend their uranium enrichment. They also threaten a military invasion if Iran remains to continue their nuclear program. U.S. has made a decision to attack Iran, although there is so much resistance from various countries around the world. In fact, the people in U.S. also continue to refuse military invasion as a solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis. With the mastery of information flow, the dominant media in the U.S. distribute information regarding U.S. government policies to gain support for the war. In the end, the issues regarding the Iranian nuclear crisis in the media will be dominated by the views of the dominant Western media. It is interesting to look at how the other side, the Iranian media, frames the news in Iran's nuclear program of Iran. This is the focus of this study.

I.2 Statements of Study

This study examines how the official media of Iranian government, that is the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) represents Iranian nuclear policy. The statements of the study are then formulated into the following questions.

1. How is the Iran's nuclear program depicted in the official media of Iran?
2. What is the ideology of the official Iranian media toward Iran's nuclear program?
3. What are the functions of the ideology in pursuing political interests?

I.3 Aims of Study

In general, this study seeks to answer the question of how is the discourse about Iran's nuclear program depicted in the media in Iran. The study also seeks to expose the ideological representation of Iranian media policies toward Iran's nuclear program, with attention to two linguistic elements, i.e. naming (naming choices) and lexical choices (lexical choices). Then find the functions of the ideology and how that ideology for the use of political interests.

I.4 Methods of Study

This study is a qualitative study. According to Moleong (2010: 6), a qualitative study is aims to understand a phenomenon by using certain methods. Data source that is used in this study covers all IRIB texts news related to Iran's

nuclear program, in particular, that show the views on social actors involved in the discourse.

This study traced the source of the data to sort out the texts that specifically place the parties to review the placement of Iran and other parties in the discourse. The texts are then separated and used as research data.

This study employs analytical framework from Theo van Leeuwen (2008). Van Leeuwen built a model that generally describes how actors featured in news texts. Van Leeuwen is very sensitive to the possibility of marginalization or exclusion (an individual or a group) in the news texts.

According to van Leeuwen (2008), two things must be considered when we examine the social actors in the news. First, the exclusion of social actors in the news texts is hidden or eliminated, and the strategy that is used. Exclusion or removal of actors can protect subjects or other actors in a process of reporting.

Secondly, it is inclusion. It is how an actor (an individual or a group) is included and described in the news. Although the actor is not removed, the process of marginalization of particular individuals or groups can still be done. Van Leeuwen gives a series of discourse strategies that can be used in a way that affects the meaning into the hands of readers.

I.5 Operational Definitions

Actor : “The doer of the action” (Halliday 1994).

CDA : “Critical Discourse Analysis, a method to uncover the ideology of the discourse” (Paltridge 2000).

Representation : “an image to form in human mind” (Hornby 2000).

Ideology : “a particular framework of knowledge tied to social power and may be manifested in language” (Pennycook 2001).

I.6 Organization of Report

The paper is organized into five chapters. Chapter I contains background, statements of the problem, aims of the study, reason for choosing the topic, research method, data collection, data analysis, clarifications of the key terms and organization of the paper. Chapter II contains theoretical review, which serve as a basis for investigating the research problem. Chapter III includes aims of the present study, procedure, population and sample, sample size, steps of data collection, limitation of the present study, analytical framework, and data analysis. Chapter IV reports findings and discussions. Chapter V contains my interpretation toward the result of my research in a form of conclusion and the implication or suggestion in accordance with its research.