

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction to the study which covers background of the study, formulation of the problems comprising thesis statements and research questions, purposes of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of terms, and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The 2014 Indonesian presidential election was perhaps one of the most competitive elections in Indonesian history. Both candidates, Joko Widodo (better known by his nickname, Jokowi) and Prabowo Subianto, were confident that they could win the presidency. In fact, two weeks before the official result was announced by the General Elections Commission (KPU), both Jokowi and Prabowo had publically claimed victory. Their claims of victory were based on quick counts by several pollsters. Both argued that their claims were supported by credible quick counts by reputable pollsters. The dual claims of victory and different quick count results continued to be the source of heated debates. Moreover, instead of facilitating peace, the existence of news media seems to add fuel to the debates.

Media are used to inform and enlighten people. However, what happened during the election proves van Dijk's (1988, p. 11) claim that "the media are not neutral, common-sensed, or rational mediator of social events, but essentially help reproduce formulated ideologies". Moreover, it also shows that just like other valuable and scarce social resources, such as force, wealth, income, knowledge, or status, public discourse, such as mass media, and other important discourses are controlled by powerful people or institutions (van Dijk, 1995).

Van Dijk (1995) further explained that powerful groups or institutions can gain control of discourse genres and properties, such as setting, participants, topics, choice of language, and styles. Among these powerful and privileged groups are politicians working in collaboration with the media, which themselves belong to powerful institutions. It appears that politicians are already aware of the importance of control of discourse in mobilizing public support they need to win elections.

A clear manifestation of discourse control is selection of discourse properties mentioned above. The media, as pointed out by van Dijk (1997, p. 25), may select certain lexical items, topics, and other discourse properties not only due to official criteria of decorum, but also due to the fact that the selected discourse properties can “effectively emphasize or de-emphasize political attitudes and opinions, garner support, manipulate public opinion, manufacture political consent, or legitimate political power”. This explains why a single reality may be represented and viewed differently in different media texts, as is the case for the issue of different quick count results discussed in this study.

Based on the way the issue is represented and viewed, the media during the 2014 presidential election seem to be divided into pro-Prabowo and pro-Jokowi media. The media’s stance on the issue may be reflected, among others, in the way they represent each presidential candidate. Intuitively, pro-Jokowi media will most likely portray Jokowi as a positive figure. On the contrary, negative representations of Jokowi will be readily visible in pro-Prabowo media.

Such political bias perpetuated in the media can create false polarization, confusion, and even conflicts, which may split the nation. Unfortunately, the people to whom the biased discourses are imposed usually do not realize that they are being manipulated. This is probably because the media oftentimes use certain strategies that can naturalize and legitimize their discourses. In line with this, van Dijk (1997, as cited in Rahimi&Riasati, 2011, p. 108) argued that “in order to inculcate certain ideologies, discourses are made to appear common-sense and apolitical”. Thus,

drawing on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the present study is aimed at exposing the underlying ideologies in the news articles on disputed quick count results during the 2014 Indonesian presidential election published by two polarized news websites, Okezone and Tempo. Further, this study also attempts to explore how the articles manipulate the readers' opinions and attitudes towards the issue of different quick count results.

Since ideologies, opinions, and attitudes are both social and cognitive aspects, this study heavily relies on van Dijk's (2009) sociocognitive approach to CDA. This approach is used to analyze four aspects of discourse, namely context, macrostructures, local meanings, and formal structures.

1.2 Formulation of Problems

It has been stated in the background of the study that this study is aimed at exposing underlying ideologies and manipulative strategies in news articles on disputed quick count results during the 2014 Indonesian presidential election. In order to achieve the aims, this study uses van Dijk's sociocognitive approach. By applying the approach, it is expected that this study can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between the conceptual triangle of society, cognition, and discourse, ideology, and public opinion.

More specifically, the problems are formulated in the following research questions:

1. What is the underlying ideology of each news website (Okezone and Tempo) with regard to the issue of different quick count results?
2. What strategies are used by each news website to manipulate the readers' opinions and attitudes towards the issue?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

There are two objectives of this study. First, it aims to reveal the underlying ideologies of the news websites. Second, it attempts to explore how the analyses of

context, macrostructures, local meanings, and formal structures can be used to unmask the manipulative strategies used by the news websites to naturalize and legitimize their discourses. The results of the study will show to what extent the news articles dictate or manipulate the readers' opinions and attitudes towards the issue of disputed quick count results.

1.4 Scope of the Study

In general, van Dijk's sociocognitive approach can be used to analyze macro, meso, and micro levels of discourse. At the macro level, critical discourse (CD) analysts focus on the macrostructures (the global meaning or topic) of discourse. At the meso level, CD analysts investigate the context of discourse, for examples who or which institution produced a text and who the target audience is. Meanwhile, at the micro level, there are two main discourse properties that can be analyzed, namely local meanings and formal structures. However, since these two properties consist of smaller elements which can take a long time to analyze one by one, the present study only focuses on some of them. Thus, the analysis of local meanings only covers the examination of the choice and use of words, repeated use of words and overlexicalization, implications, presuppositions, and levels of description. As for the analysis of formal structures, it is limited to the examination of argumentative structures, syntactic structures, and rhetorical moves.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The present study is expected to provide theoretical frameworks for future studies especially those attempting to reveal underlying ideologies in the media. In addition, it is expected that the use of sociocognitive approach to critical discourse analysis in this study can provide more comprehensive understanding of how the media naturalize and legitimize discourses in order to get public opinions and attitudes on their sides. Most importantly, in line with one of the biggest goals of CDA, the results of the present study on discourse, society, and cognition are expected to benefit

society to whom those texts are imposed. It is hoped that by exposing the extent to which media coverage on the issue of quick count results is responsible for the dispute among Indonesian people during the 2014 presidential election, this study can expand reader's critical thinking abilities when confronted with such destructive discourses in the future.

1.6 Clarification of the Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, it is important to clarify the key terms used in this study.

a. Context

Van Dijk (2008) believes that the notion of context is "of crucial importance in understanding how discourse is embedded in society". However, it should be stressed that the word context in van Dijk's approach is used to refer to context models.

b. Context Models

Context model is a notion used to define context in sociocognitive approach. The notion is used due to high influence of the psychological theoretical notion of mental model, that is, "a mental representation of an object in episodic memory" (Van Dijk 2007, p. 289).

c. Critical Discourse Analysis

According to Van Dijk (as cited in Horváth, 2009, p. 45) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is "obviously not a homogenous model, nor a school or a

paradigm, but at most a shared perspective on doing linguistics, semiotic or discourse analysis". Thus, CDA cannot be considered as a method or field of study but rather a number of separate approaches to discourse study. These varied approaches, however, have the same goal, that is to say to investigate how power and ideologies are reflected in language.

d. Discourse

For Van Dijk, discourse is a term used to refer to complex social events or practices. It can take many different forms, such as “textbooks, political propaganda, laws and regulations, meetings, job interviews, literature and comics, and so on” (Van Dijk 1984).

e. Formal Structures

Formal structures refer to the structures of text or talk. They include, among other things, syntactic structures, propositional structures, rhetorical figures, and paralinguistic aspects, like intonation, turn-taking, and pauses.

f. Ideology

There is no agreed-upon definition of ideology. However, in sociocognitive approach, ideology can be defined as “the basic frameworks for organizing the social cognitions shared by members of social groups, organizations or institutions” (van Dijk, 1995, p. 17).

g. Local Meanings

Van Dijk (2009, p. 69) stated that local meanings cover the meaning of words, the structures and nature of propositions, and coherence and other relations between propositions, such as implications, presuppositions, level of description, degrees of granularity, and so on.

h. Macrostructures

To put it simply, macrostructures are “what discourses are (globally) about” (Van Dijk, 2009). The macrostructures of texts can be obtained by summarizing the texts, by means of macropropositions.

i. Mental Representation

A mental representation is a cognitive aspect, including, among other things, an opinion and knowledge.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This paper consists of five chapters with specific function and organization elaborated as follows:

a. CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION:

This chapter consists of background of the study, formulation of problems (including thesis statements and research questions), purposes of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the paper.

b. CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS:

This chapter presents relevant theories, ideas, and issues in which the principles and justifications of the research are grounded. It provides findings of previous research and other supporting information relevant to the present study.

c. CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This chapter describes approaches and procedures, research design, data collection and data analysis all manifested in the research.

d. CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS:

This chapter provides results of data analysis and the discussions.

e. CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

This chapter provides conclusions drawn from the research findings. In addition, suggestions for future research are also included in this chapter.