The Interpersonal Meaning of Indonesian Newspapers In Presidential Election 2014 (A Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach)

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Abstract—This research examined the interpersonal meaning of the editorial of The Jakarta Post entitled Endorsing Jokowi and the editorial of The Jakarta Globe entitled The Political Process and Press Neutrality. This research comprehends the status, affects, and contact of the two editorials in order to realize the similarities and differences of the two media. This research was a qualitative study applying descriptive comparative method based on Systemic Functional Linguistics approach. Furthermore, this research applied total sampling technique hence all clauses in the texts were analyzed through the elements of lexicogrammar (mood structure, mood system, transitivity, theme, polarity, modality, lexis system, clause system, and nominal group), text structure, and genre. There are some key findings found in this thesis. First, the status between the writers and readers of the two editorials is equal. It is indicated through the use of dominant indicative declarative clause functioning as proposition. However, The Jakarta Post has more persuasive language and closer relation than The Jakarta Globe. It is realized through the use of proposal clause, modality, attitudinal lexis, and addressee. Second, the affect of the two writers toward the readers is positive. The affect of The Jakarta Globe toward the issue and two candidates is positive. Conversely, the affect of The Jakarta Post toward the issue and certain candidate is negative. It is realized from the use of polarity, attitudinal lexis, and descriptive lexis containing evaluation and judgment. Third, the contact of both writers toward the text is involved with high familiar and readable language. It is realized through the dominant simplex nominal group, topical unmarked theme, and repetition. Finally, it can be said that nowadays certain media in Indonesia is not balance in delivering their views. Moreover, certain media openly declares its stance in endorsing certain candidate. Thus the media has function as a means of driving public opinion rather than source of information.

Keywords: SFL, interpersonal meaning, editorial text, media, Indonesia presidential election

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesian presidential election of 2014, the role of mass media as the sources of information and social control is moved. It is because the political purposes of mass media owners who actively have a role as the winning team of certain candidate influences the published news. It aims to gain public opinion in accordance with media owners’ political objectivities. Thus, the endorsement of mass media to a particular party or candidate makes the news not balance. (Amirullah, 2014). This condition is contrary to the roles of press as stated in Press Law number 40, 1999, article 6 that the role of mass media is to fulfil the right of Indonesian people to obtain information.

The objective of this research is to recognize how interpersonal meaning of editorial in The Jakarta Post and The Jakarta Globe concerning with media stance in Indonesian presidential election 2014. Interpersonal meaning portrays the participants’ way in maintaining social relationship with the addressee in order to achieve his communicative purposes (Haig, 2010). This research aims to figure out the status, affect, and contact of the two editorials. The research scrutinizes the status between the writer and readers whether equal or unequal. Besides, the research examines the author’s judgment to the readers, issue, and people whether positive or negative. The research also observes the contact between participants whether involved or uninvolved and familiar or unfamiliar. It also aims to find out the similarities and differences interpersonal meaning in the editorials of The Jakarta Post and Jakarta Globe. Thus, the stance of The Jakarta Post and The Jakarta Globe can be found.

The editorial is chosen because editorial is where the media shows their attitude toward certain issue (Faqih, 2011). Therefore, the editorial represents the ideology of media. The editorials published on The Jakarta Post’s and The Jakarta Globe’s official websites on 3 July and 4 July 2014 are selected because both editorials describe its attitude toward Indonesia presidential election. The Jakarta Post is chosen because this media is an English language prestigious independent media with extensive national and international influence in Indonesia (Tarranta, 2008). Meanwhile, Sujanto and Sjarifuddin (2012) states that The Jakarta Globe is also chosen for the use of English language, also because the owner, John Riyadi mentioned that The Jakarta Globe would keep its independency along presidential election.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Systemic Functional Linguistics

Halliday & Hasan (1985) characterizes Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) by the terms: systemic and functional. With the term ‘systemic’, this theory views language as a network of choice system by which a language or any other semiotic system is interpreted as networks of interlocking options. This means that the meanings relate each other to perform meaning as a whole. Meanwhile, with the term ‘functional’, this theory views how language which is used to reach a specific goal. In other words, SFL is a theory of language system which concerns with the language function to achieve a goal in a particular context for a particular function.

B. Interpersonal Meaning

Halliday & Hasan (1985) states that interpersonal meaning realizes the meaning constructed from the interaction between participants in a social interaction. A social interaction is a form of action from the doer to others. The relationship between the speaker or writer and listener or reader can be realized in the form of clause as exchange, whether proposition (giving and demanding information) or proposal (giving and demanding good and services). Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) explains that interpersonal meaning has a relation with the attitude and viewpoint of the speaker or writer and the way he/she maintains social relationships with the addressee in order to achieve his/her communicative purpose. Matthiessen (in Martin, 1992) states that interpersonal is the realization of tenor. Furthermore, Santosa (2003) states that in the level of lexis, tenor can be realized through lexis system, namely descriptive and attitudinal lexis. In clause level, tenor can be seen through MOOD system, mood structure, modality, lexicogrammar (mood structure, MOOD system, transitivity system, thematic structure, polarity, modality, lexis system, clause system, and nominal group), text structure and genre of the two editorials representing the affect, contact and status.

C. Editorial

Editorial is one of writing product in newspaper, magazine, or other journalistic publications discussing issues that attract public attention. The issues discussing in editorial are politics, social, culture, and economy. Editorial has role to help the readers make sense out the news and draw conclusion about topic of important to contemporary society (Gamble and Gable, 1989). Besides, editorial delivers opinion of certain media toward certain phenomenon. Thus, the editorial represents the stance or attitude of the newspaper. Furthermore, editorial give much information, analysis, and recommendation which helps the readers to decides their position about certain issue. Therefore, editorial has several roles and impact in society. Editorial can stimulate anger, satisfaction, sympathy, empathy, sadness, happiness, and other feelings so that editorial could lead the reader to follow the writer’s point of view (Rivers & Mc Intyre, 1994).

III. METHODS

A. Materials

The source of data for this research are the editorials entitled “Endorsing Jokowi” published by The Jakarta Post on 4 July 2014 and “The Political Process and Press Neutrality” published by Jakarta Globe on 3 July 2014. Those editorials were chosen since the main topic of both editorials is media endorsement in presidential election. In addition, the interval publishing date of both editorials is not too far.

The primary data in this research are the lexicogrammar (mood structure, MOOD system, transitivity system, thematic structure, polarity, modality, lexis system, clause system, and nominal group), text structure and genre of the two editorials representing the affect, contact and status.

B. Design

This study belongs to a qualitative research employing descriptive and comparative method for the use of data in the form of words, sentences rather than numbers (Sutopo, 2006; Moleong, 2004). This research describes linguistic phenomenon representing the interpersonal meaning in editorial of The Jakarta Post and The Jakarta Globe. Furthermore, this research also applies comparative method since the researcher compares the two editorials. It is similar with Miles and Huberman statement in Tjahyani (2006) that comparative method is a method which makes comparison between two sets of things, person, and role of activities which were known to differ in some other respects.

In collecting the data, total sampling technique was used. Thus, there were no specific criteria in obtaining the sample/data since the whole sample or clauses in the two speeches were examined to realize the interpersonal meaning.

As the approach, this research applies interpersonal meaning theory as one of the frame of Systemic Functional Linguistics. The research scrutinizes the interpersonal meaning of editorials which is realized by the status, affect, and contact.

C. Procedure

Spradley (in Santosa, 2012) suggested four stages of content analysis, namely domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and finding cultural values. Thus, the procedure of data analysis in this research is as follows.

1) Applying Domain Analysis

In the domain analysis, the linguistics resources
(Mood structure, MOOD system, modality, polarity, lexis, transitivity, theme, clause, nominal group system) text structure and genre are examined based on the social culture of the editorials. As the product of journalistic, the two editorials are categorized based on media domain (text from The Jakarta Post and The Jakarta Globe). Then, the texts are classified through its sub domain / text structure. As it belongs to exposition/discussion genre, the text structure comprises with title, thesis/general statements, arguments, and recommendation/conclusion.

2) Applying Taxonomic Analysis

Taxonomic analysis is used to classifying the data based on categories. It aims to get more detail classification of the data chosen through domain analysis. For instance, the mood structure in domain analysis then classified through the giving information (GI), demanding information (DI), giving good and services (GGS), and demanding services (DS). In the same way, the modality in domain analysis then classified through modulation (obligation and inclination) and modalization (probability and usuality) in taxonomy analysis. Then, this kind of analysis is simultaneously applied to all data based on categories. The taxonomy analysis determines the classification according to categories: mood structure, modality, polarity, transitivity, theme system, lexis system, and clause system.

3) Applying Componential Analysis

This analysis combines the two texts including the text structure also the lexicogrammar analysis. The analysis of mood structure, modality, transitivity, lexis system, thematic structure, clause system, and nominal group are connected to find the pattern and interpret the realization of interpersonal meaning conveying status, affect, and contact. Finally, componential analysis is to cover the similarities and differences among the editorials.

4) Finding Cultural Values

Finding cultural values is conducted to take the conclusion of the research by linking the domain, taxonomic, and componential analysis. The representation of the pattern then elaborated with the previous researches.

IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

A. Result

1) Status

Martin (1992) defines status as a relative position of participants in a culture’s social hierarchy, whether it is equal or unequal. Poynton in Martin(1992) states that the key principle in classifying status is the reciprocity of choice among the participants.

| Table 4.1 The Analysis of Status of the two editorials |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Editorial | Text Structure | Mood | Modality |
| | | Ptn | PsI | Modalization | Modulation |
| Title | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| General statement | 32 | - | - | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| Argument I | 6 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Argument II | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Argument III | 3 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Argument IV | 3 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Con./Rec. | 5 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | - |
| **Total** | **52** | **-** | **8** | **5** | **7** | **6** | **1** |
| Title | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Thesis I | 7 | - | - | 3 | - | 1 | - |
| Argument | 6 | - | - | 3 | - | - | - |
| Thesis II | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Argument | 13 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Con./Rec. | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| **Total** | **31** | **-** | **6** | **6** | **1** | **1** |

Ptn. : Proposition  
Psl. : Proposal  
GI : giving information  
DI : demanding information  
GGS : giving good and services  
DGS : demanding good and services  
Prb. : probability  
UsI. : usuality  
Icl. : Inclination  
Obl. : obligation  
Con. : conclusion  
Rec. : recommendation

Table 4.1 shows that the two editorials apply dominant declarative indicative clause as proposition exchanging information. Besides, the two editorial are also dominated with modalization rather that modulation. The Jakarta Post maintains has closer relation than The Jakarta Globe realized through the use of some proposal, modalities, and interpersonal theme.

2) Affect

Affect refers to the deeper of emotional charge in the relationship between participants (Martin, 1992). Poynton in Martin classifies affect into two types: positive and negative.

| Table 4.2 the analysis of affect of the two editorials |
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The Jakarta Post more massively delivers its attitude process while delivering its opinions. Furthermore, the comparison of descriptive lexis and attitudinal lexis of both texts, The Jakarta Post’s descriptive lexis: attitudinal lexis (2:1) The Jakarta Globe descriptive lexis: attitudinal lexis (3:1), proves that the writer of The Jakarta Post more massively delivers its attitude than the writer of The Jakarta Globe. In term of polarity, The Jakarta Post also applies more negative polarity in conveying its idea.

3) Contact

Contact evaluates the familiarity and readability of language used in a text to measure whether the text is well understood or not (Santosa, 2003). Besides, it concerns on the involved and uninvolved contact of the participants depending on the frequency and the range of interaction.

Table 4.3 The Analysis of Contact of the two editorials
In term of the clause system, The Jakarta Post employs dominant simplex clauses, followed by complex clauses, and minor clauses while The Jakarta Globe uses dominant complex clauses, followed by minor clauses and simplex clause. Besides, the two media dominantly employ congruent lexis, simplex nominal group and topical unmarked theme.

B. Discussion

Based on the result above, it can be said that the status of the two editorials is equal. It is realized through the use of dominant declarative clause functioning as proposition. It shows that the writer places himself as the resources of information while the readers are placed as the observers who have their right to agree or disagree with the writer’s statements (Santosa, 2003). The equal status is also supported by the use of genre which does not give any recommendation in conclusion part. In conclusion part, these editorials focus on stating their political stance. However, The Jakarta Post tends to convince the readers that The Post’s endorsement to certain candidate is the best decision in facing crucial condition. Furthermore, The Jakarta Post has closer relation toward the readers than The Jakarta Globe. It is because The Jakarta Post applies some modalities, interpersonal theme, proposal clause, addressee, and attitudinal lexis. Thus, The Jakarta Post is more persuasive in conveying its ideas.

In term of affect, the two media give positive judgments toward the readers. It is proved by the positive polarity, positive attitudinal lexis and positive addresses tended to the readers. Furthermore, toward the issue of being neutral in presidential election, The Jakarta Post shows negative judgment though the Jakarta Globe delivers positive judgment. The negative judgments of The Jakarta Post are represented on the use of negative polarity, negative attitudinal lexis and descriptive lexis containing negative value. Besides, the positive judgments of The Jakarta Globe are portrayed in the use of positive polarity and positive attitudinal lexis supporting the issue. Furthermore, toward two candidates of election, these two media have different affect. The Jakarta Post conveys negative judgments to certain candidate while The Jakarta Globe delivers positive judgments to all candidates. The Jakarta Post delivers its assessment by comparing the credibility of the two candidates based on moral consideration. He applies many negative polarity and descriptive lexes containing negative value (such as human right, reformation, new order) toward certain candidate. Even though he explicitly compares both candidates, he does not mention the name of the negative judged-candidate. It might be caused The Jakarta Post does not want to deliver his judgment incisively. On the other hand, The Jakarta Globe focuses on appreciating the two candidates without giving any comparison. Here, The Jakarta Globe’s writer applies positive polarity and attitudinal lexis in evaluating the credibility of them. In addition, the writer of The Jakarta Post dominantly uses relational process in order to make his assessment to be more factual. Besides, the writer of The Jakarta Globe prefers to deliver his assessment through behavioral process in order to influence readers’ mental affection.

In term of contact, the two writers contain high familiarity and readability language. It is because the readers are medium-high educated people who master English, either Indonesian people or expatriate. The two writers apply dominant simplex nominal group, congruent lexis, and textual theme. These aspects make the readers comprehend the text easily. It is also supported by some repetitions in order to make the editorial more cohesive and readable. The two writers also employ minor clause in order to inform the readers about certain information relating to the editorial such as date, time, tag, and news categories. Conversely, in the clause system, the writer of The Jakarta Post prefers to apply simplex clause while The Jakarta Globe employs complex clause. Here, the clause system of both editorials does not give significant influence because those clause systems contribute the easy way for comprehending the text. In addition, The Jakarta Post’s writer applies comparing people in term of tracking participant in order to identification. The Jakarta Post only mentions “Joko Widodo” once without stating the name of his rival. Furthermore, the two writers are involved in its text. The two editorials frequently use pronoun “we” to state their attitude in the presidential election. In addition, the writer of The Jakarta Post dominantly uses attitudinal lexis in evaluating the credibility of them. In contrast, The Jakarta Globe focuses on appreciating the two candidates without giving any comparison. Here, The Jakarta Globe delivers positive judgment incisively. On the other hand, The Jakarta Globe prefers to deliver his assessment through behavioral process in order to influence readers’ viewpoint. Here, the writer explains The Jakarta Post’s credibility in order to support the Post’s endorsement. He also gives description of
Indonesian “chaotic” situation prior the election date. In arguments, the writer tends to be more objective by applying dominant descriptive lexis while applying many negative polarities to emphasize his statement. Furthermore, in conclusion, the writer concludes his arguments and states the Post’s stance in president election 2014. He gives his emphasis through mental affection “believe” twice.

Besides, the writer of The Jakarta Globe employs minor clause in order to exchange the information of his concern “The Political Process and Press Neutrality”. He applies descriptive lexes in order to inform the main issue objectively. By recognizing the title, it can be seen that The Jakarta Globe focuses on informing two main issues, the political process (one-round election process) and press neutrality (neutral media stance in election 2014). In each thesis, the writer delivers his ideas in simple way. These are followed by the arguments supporting the issue. In conclusion part, the writer states the Globe’s stance in election 2014 and welcomes the winner of the presidential election.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be said that the status of the two editorials is equal. It is proved by the use of dominant declarative clause functioning as proposition. The equal status is also supported by the use of genre which does not give any recommendation in conclusion part. Besides, The Jakarta Post has closer relation toward the readers than The Jakarta Globe. It is because The Jakarta Post applies some modalities, interpersonal theme, proposal clause, addresssee, and attitudinal lexis. Thus, The Jakarta Post is more persuasive in conveying its ideas.

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According to those results, it can be concluded that the two media explicitly state their political stance in presidential election. The Jakarta Post explicitly states the endorsement to Joko Widodo while The Jakarta Globe states its neutrality in presidential election. It means that the editorial represents the official opinion of newspaper on an issue (Medubi, 2007). The two media explain the consideration by giving assessment to the issue and candidates. They focus on giving information without giving recommendation in conclusion part. However, The Jakarta Post is more persuasive than The Jakarta Globe. It is realized through the use of some modalities, interpersonal theme, proposal clause functioning as media’s advises and promise, various addresses, possessive pronoun our, and discussion genre. In addition, The Jakarta Post sounds unbalanced in giving evaluation toward certain candidate because The Jakarta Post states all the assessments to Jokowi positively, while to Prabowo Subiyanto negatively. This condition proves that nowadays the writer of certain media produces unbalance news.

In brief, this study needs to be improved through appraisal system, and other meta-functions aspects (ideational meaning and textual meaning) to obtain the deeper analysis. The analyses of various journalistic products (hard news, opinion text, and feature) are also important to discover the holistic ideology of the two newspapers.

REFERENCES


