A Semiotic Analysis of Political News Featured in   Indonesian Newspapers

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This study aims to evaluate the application of semiotics in Indonesian news articles relating to the election campaign of Governor and Deputy Governor Candidates in South Sulawesi during the 2013-2018 periods. The data is analysed through a semiotic analysis method established by Roland Barthes, known as the two-stage theory. The results showed that the application of semiotics in newspaper articles relating to the election campaign only highlighted the struggle of political actors by providing imagery to build public attention by participating in media coverage to be elected as future leaders. The interpretation of the campaign language in broadcasted news texts is done through the text modification. It makes the changes in political campaign news does not shown clearly. The news only contains power-based political actions of the political actors.

Keywords: *semiotics, political news, newspapers.*

Introduction

The written communication process depends on the language used. This includes the elements of form, meaning, function, and value. Each element is interconnected by a particular type of discourse. The use of language in certain forms, meanings, functions, and values becomes characteristic to distinguish one discourse of communication from others. For example, written literary discourse differs from newspaper/news discourse based on the use of language relating to the four elements. Language is often used in the form of persuading, influencing, arguing, refuting, defending, and reacting to others. In addition, language is also understood as something that is expressed consciously and iscontrolled rather thanan unconscious or uncontrolled form of communication.

When using journalistic language, it is recommended to use denotative words. The development of journalistic language and the use of literary language is known as literary journalism. Literary journalism uses a lot of symbolic language (semiotics) behind denotative meaning. This is possible because both journalists and the reading community have high levels of intellect and intelligence (Muhammadiah, 2017).

Journalists often write the news in a journalistic language style that is suitable with the character (style) of their writing. News writing in mass media adapts journalism language to the news type. For example, for investigative news writing, journalists usually use reportage language, whereas for articles focused on characters or light writing, they use the language of journalistic features (Muhammadiah, 2018).

Every communication event goes through various processes. Effendy (1994) distinguished the communication process into two stages below.

1. **Primary communication process.** The primary communication process conveys one's thoughts and/or feelings to others through symbols as the media. Symbols function as primary media in the communication process and are verbal messages (language), and nonverbal messages (gestures, gestures, images, colours, etc.). Through this communication process, one can directly interpret communicators' thoughts and / or feelings to the communicant.

2. **Secondary communication process. The** secondary communication process delivers messages by the communicator to the communicant through tools or means as a secondary medium after using the symbol as the first medium. A communicator uses the second medium to communicate because the communicant, as a target, is located in a relatively distant place or many places. Letters, telephones, telexes, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, films, etc. are the second media that are often used in communication. The media of the secondary communication process can be classified as mass media (newspapers, television, radio, etc.) and non-mass media (telephone, letters, megaphones, etc.).

Discourse is not merely understood as a series of words or propositions in a text, but as something that produces ideas, concepts, and effects. The ideas of speakers are influenced by certain socio-cultural contexts, including group political culture to influence the way of thinking and acting (Shehab and Somb, 2020). The differences in ways of thinking and acting in the interaction process creates controls and controlled parties.

Eriyanto (2001, pp. 65-66) stated that power strategies were taking place everywhere. The arrangements, rules, and regulatory systems have powerful people to make the power work. Power does not come from outside, but it determines the structure, rules, and relationships from within. Many factors cause a person to become a ruler and to be ruled, through knowledge, economics, politics, and social factors. The form of power struggle can be seen in the political discourse of mass media and the use of symbolic language (semiotics).

Journalistic language has a function to become an embodiment of two types of language, namely, ideational function and a textual function or referential function, namely, a discourse to presents the facts (Halliday, 1972). Problems may arise regarding how to construct journalistic language to describe the facts. This problem is called textual rhetoric, it is the uniqueness of language users as a tool to construct texts (Leech, 1993). In other words, this principle also applies to journalistic language (Suroso, 2001, pp. 4-5).

The language of journalism in political field of newspapers in Indonesia is examined by semiotics science. As a result of democratic reforms, Indonesian has more freedom to use their right to express opinions, including through the mass media. In fact, societal elements consider the mass media as an effective tool to deliver messages to public. Therefore, various elements of society and authorities send messages to the public via the mass media through words that contain meaning, not only denotative but also connotative (Harsono, 2020).

There are various studies related to language, thought, ideology, and printed mass media in Indonesia. Anderson (1966, 1984) examined the influence of Dutch and Javanese languages and cultures in the development of the modern Indonesian political language which highlights the tension of populist Indonesia and feudal Indonesia. Naina (1982) examines the behaviour of Indonesian press towards government policy as manifested in editorials. Hooker (1990) examined the old and new order discourse models. Eryanto (2001) examined the texts in mass media using framing theory (Wiedarti, 2005).

To the best of author's knowledge, the previous studies did not specifically formulate the characteristics (ideals) of journalistic language based on the corpus of press language data manifested in words, sentences, and discourse (Sugihartatia, 2020). The news that emerged in the early 1980s showed that Indonesian language in mass media deviated from standard Indonesian language. Wahyono (1995) found the language of journalists in Semarang and Yogyakarta has deviance in grammatical, lexical (vocabulary selection), and orthographic or spelling aspects (Wiedarti, 2005).

This study intends to examine various political languages used in the election campaign of the Governor and Deputy Governor candidates in South Sulawesi during the 2013-2018 period. This will be achieved by examining news texts, advertisements, and photos published in the newspapers. The researchers will use Roland Barthes's grand theory of semiotics known as the two-stage meaning theory.

Problem Formulation

Various problems can be traced and discovered through the use of semiotics in journalism language, especially in the political sphere used by newspapers in Indonesia. However, this research is limited to specific problems. Therefore, referring to the above background, this research paper focuses on how semiotics is used in the news texts of the election campaign of

Governor and Deputy Governor candidates in South Sulawesi for during the 2013-2018 period in Indonesian newspapers?

Research Objective

The research aims to analyse the use of semiotics in the news texts of the election campaign of Governor and Deputy Governor candidates in South Sulawesi for the 2013-2018 period in Indonesian newspapers .

Research Benefits

1. This research will provide theoretical knowledge to understand and classify the use of semiotics in news texts of election campaign of Governor and Deputy Governor Candidates in South Sulawesi for 2013-2018 periods at newspapers in Indonesia.
2. This research will provide input for the community and can be used as a measure to understand the quality of print media campaign news and can also be used as a reference in designing future campaign activities; and
3. Politicians cannot be separated from political activities that use language as an introduction to a message. Therefore, this research provides a useful reference (guidelines) in political activities, such as the submission of political statements, especially when conducting campaigns.

Theory Description

Semiotics Theory of Roland Barthes

Based on various semiotic figures and their theories, there are nine types of semiotic development (Pateda, 2001,pp. 33). They are (1) analytic semiotics, (2) descriptive semiotics, (3) zoosemiotics or faunal semiotics, (4) cultural semiotics, (5) narrative semiotics, (6) natural semiotics, (7) normative semiotics, (8) social semiotics, and (9) structural semiotics.

Barthes also identifies another labelling aspect of a "myth" in a society. "Myth" lies at the second level of designation. After the sign-signifier-signified system is formed, it will become a new marker that has a second sign and creating a new sign. When a sign that has a connotative meaning and develops into a denotation meaning, the denotation meaning will become a myth. For example, a shady and dense banyan tree has the connotation of being "sacred" because it is considered to become the place of spirits. This "sacred" connotation can be developed into a general assumption attached to the banyan tree symbol so that a sacred banyan tree is no longer a connotation, but turns into a denotation at the second level of meaning. At this stage, the "sacred banyan tree" is finally considered a myth.

The data analysis techniques used for this research paper is Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. Kurniawan (2001, p. 82) stated that the world was full of signs, but not all signs have the pure simplicity of letters, traffic signs, or military uniforms, they are infinitely more complex. Barthes' semiotic analysis is famous for its two-stage sign (order of signification) as shown in Figure 1.
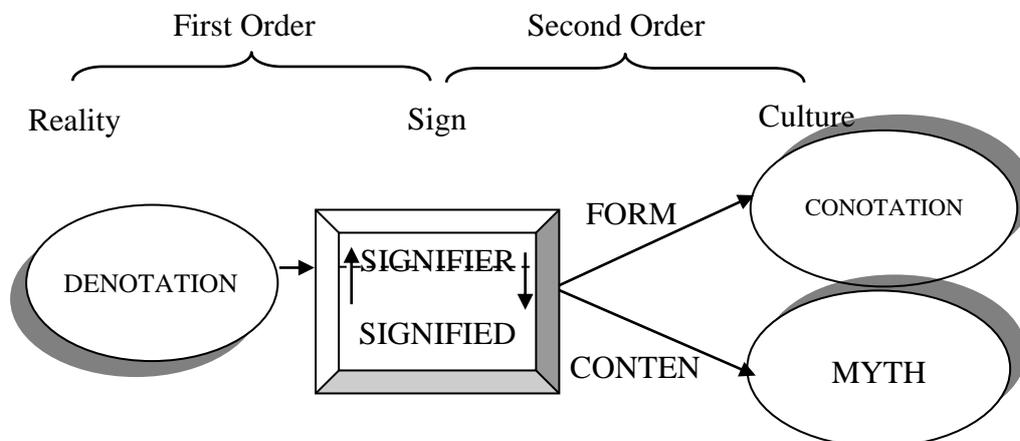

Figure 1. Sign Order (Fiske, 1990 in Sobur, 2004, p. 127).

Barthes describes the first stage of identification as the relationship between the signifier and signified in a sign external to reality. This is the stage of denotation called the most real meaning of sign. Barthes defines the second stage of significance as connotation. This illustrates the interaction when the sign meets the feelings and emotions of the reader and the values of their culture. This happens when meaning moves towards being subjective or at least intersubjective and occurs when the interpretant is influenced equally by interpreters and objects or signs. Therefore, it can be seen that that the approach taken by Saussure is directly correlative to the first stage of significance in Barthes' study.

The second ways that Barthes uses signs in his work in the second stage of this approach is through myths as described in his work, "Mythologies" (reference). Myth is a way of thinking about a culture or a way to conceptualise or understand something. Barthes asserted that the main work of the myth is to naturalise history. This demonstrates that myth is a product of social class that attains dominance through certain histories. It means the circulation of myth must carry its own history, but its operation as a myth makes it attempt to deny it, showing its meaning as natural, and not historical or social. Another aspect stressed by Barthes is his concept of dynamism. Myths can change and adapt quickly to meet the needs of changes and cultural values where the myths become part of culture (Sobur, 2004).

Myth comes from Greek word "mutos" which means story, and particularly refers to untrue or artificial stories that have no historical truth. However, such stories are still needed so that humans can understand the environment and themselves. Roland Barthes defines myth as a

new type of speech. This sentiment is expressed in the statement that "arbitrary and unmotivated second-level sign systems have function to distort, deform, naturalise, and distort" (Naga, 2012).

Barthes stated that the form of myth contains motivation. Myth was created by selecting various possible concepts that will be used based on a first-rate semiotic system. Analysis of myth is believed to be the best way to find ideological content in a text by examining the contained connotations. This is the best way to uncover mythology in the text. Mythology is a coherent unity of myths to present incarnations of meanings within ideology. Ideology is something abstract. The ideology is expressed through myths to be understood.

Myth can turn into mythology and can be related to other myths. This view is expressed by Susilo (Sobur, 2004,p. 128) that a myth is a vehicle for an ideology manifestation. It can be sequenced to become a mythology that plays an important role in cultural units. The presence of myth is often followed by metonymy and index because myth works metonymically to make a sign. This encourages us to construct other parts of concepts in a chain to make up the myth, just as metonymy encourages us to construct the whole, even though metonymy only describes one part of whole. Both myths and metonymy are powerful forms of communication because both are indices that are not prominent or hidden. The next stage Barthes mentions is the third way of labelling with symbols, namely, the meaning of an object to designate something else based on convention and usage.

Barthes also proposed another aspect of the "myth" label that marks a society. Myth lies in second level of signification. After a sign-signifier-signified system was formed, the sign will become a new marker which then has a second sign to create a new sign. A sign with a connotative meaning then develops into a denotative meaning. The denotative meaning will become a myth. For example, a shady and dense banyan tree has the connotation of being "sacred" because it is considered as the place of spirits. This "sacred" connotation is developed into a general assumption that banyan tree is a symbol sacred place. At this stage, "sacred banyan tree" is finally considered as a myth.

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Barthes said that the signifier is the text, whereas the signified is the context of the sign. The signs analysis can be distinguished in two stages. First, the sign can be seen as the background of (1) the signifier and (2) the signified. This stage looks at sign denotatively. This denotation phase only analyses the sign language. This comprehension of language can enter into second stage to examine the sign connotatively. At this stage, the cultural context has played a role in the study. The rose sign of two rosebuds on one stalk is interpreted

denotatively. One who examine the context will says the roses will bloom together a in stalk. Alternatively, the meaning can be connotative that the rose will bloom and becoming the symbol of desired eternal love. Is it not illustrated in our culture that flowers are a symbol of love? On this basis, we can arrive at a deeper sign (sign) that the desire for love is eternal like a flower that continues to bloom at all times. The combination of denotative and connotative meaning will bring us to a myth, that power of love is eternal and can overcome everything.

Semiotics Analysis

Semiotic analysis is a research method to interpret the meaning of a communication or a message, both implicit (written) and explicit (unwritten). The intended meaning starts from partial to comprehensive meaning so that the motive of the communicator can be known. The semiotic method was developed to interpret the symbol of communication so that it can be seen how the communicator constructs the message for certain purposes.

The interpretation of symbols can use denotative values, connotative or ideological values (or mythology in Roland Barthes terms), and culture. Semiotics analysis can explore the signs and meanings applied to a text, the news, pictures, and advertisements. The analysis results of a series of signs will describe the concept of thought conveyed by communicator, and series of signs are interpreted into an answer for ideological question and cultural values behind a text.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that scope of semiotic analysis is divided into four elements below.
1. Macrostructure is the global meaning of a text that can be observed from topic / theme of a text: (a) thematic (themes / topics put forward in a text) and (b) syntax (how the form and order of sentences are selected).
2. Superstructure is the framework of a text. How to create a text that consists of the following parts: introduction, content, conclusion, and conclusion.
3. Microstructure is the local meaning of a text with semantic character (the meaning to be emphasised in a text), and rhetorical (how and in what way the emphasis is done). Microstructure can be observed from the choice of words, sentences, and styles used by a text. The validity of semiotics research can be reviewed from involvement and perseverance.
   a. Involvement means how much the researcher is involved in a researched object and how much research experience matches with the manuscript analysed. Sufficient involvement and experience can be expected and interpretation is supported by strong data and arguments.
   b. Perseverance means to estimate all aspects in the process of text translation. Attention is given to all aspects and contexts of a text (see Berger, 2005). The interpretation can be conducted based on the perspective of psychology, sociology, material, culture

and others. Successful interpretation is determined by perseverance in seeking meaning from various perspectives.

   i. Triangulation checks the validity of data compared to other texts, comparing interpretations with other interpretations.

   ii. Comparing text with other similar text, whether the interpretation is same or not. If it's different, why?

   iii. Comparing the results of interpretation with other people's interpretations. This establishes whether the interpretation is the same or not. If the interpretation is different, why?

   iv. Looking for comparative explanations. Are there other possible explanations? How many new explanations are supported by data?

4. Thick description means how detailed the text is analysed. The more detailed the description of relevant analysis the better the quality of study.

Muhammadiah (2015) states that newspapers function as a medium for information, education, entertainment, community aspirations, social control, and language training. The language usage in news the text of a newspaper can be analysed both from the shape and structure, written briefly and dynamically with aim to attract, impressing, and inviting reader curiosity.

Political Semiotics in News Text

The discussion of the study results are based on the theory of semiotics interpretated by Roland Barthes which is known as the two-stage theory. However, its emphasis on the discussion of language semiotics is related to politics (political semiotics).

Fajar Newspaper

Fajar newspaper reflects clearly the political aspects. It gives a coherent narrative to the reader through common language. Machiavelli (1987) states that the main purpose of politics is to get a high bid to position in central area (Runi, 2018). This was reflected by the Fajar newspaper to identify the meaningful discourse for every reported issues of South Sulawesi Election campaign. That happens because the use of common language can attract the closeness (psychological) aspects of the reader.

An example is one of news article published in the Fajar newspaper on January 14, 2013 which featured inclusion of words from Bugis language spoken by Syahrul, namely '*aja musalaika*' or 'don't leave me'. The nature of speech in this news shows that there is an element of closeness to influence the reader because of the cultural nature and the political elements of election campaign of Governor and Deputy Governor candidates in South Sulawesi for the 2013-2018 period.

Nimmo (2001) identifies the attributes of political semiotics as the image of the voter in verbal communication aspects. The voters are not only aware of the issue, they are formulating the image of political attributes and the personal style of a candidate. This is achieved by forming an image of political campaign action, but also the perspective brought by media (Fajar newspaper) about the issues, candidates, and campaigns. There are two key points. Firstly, the growing potential of the importance of campaign communication for the choices made by voters. Secondly, the newspaper (Fajar) acts as a catalyst for campaign communication to formulate beliefs, values, and expectations about the politics of election campaign of Governor and Deputy Governor candidates in South Sulawesi for the period of 2013-2018.

Tribun Timur Newspaper

The textual interpretation of the news articles highlighted by the East Tribun newspaper indicated the events and news from a political point of view, more specifically, the point of view of the government. The election campaign of Governor and Deputy Governor candidates in South Sulawesi are concerned with the lifestyle of government officials. DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach (1989) stated that such matter is an effort to consolidate the political field which engages in language of media (newspapers) for the sake of authority (power).

The politics played by authorities (Governor and Deputy Governor candidates) always aims to secure power. The power security was manifested in Tribun Timur newspaper as detention, establishment, and confirmation of power through speech (language) in news articles. Sobur (2006) mentions that such matter as the existence of language has the power to control meaning amidst of social interaction in mass media.

An example of this is published in Tribune Timur on January 5, 2013. The article intentionally inserted an interesting sentence in form of "campaign enlivened by presence of Fiman and Sean, the Indonesian Idol artists." This statement invoked hope that the news has added value for politicians' campaign.

Tribune Timur newspaper reflects a reality by determining the image of Governor and Deputy Governor candidates that will appear in public minds. This can influence the pronunciation, grammar, syntax, and modification of vocabulary, and finally the development of speech, language, and meaning.

Rakyat Sulsel Newspaper

The news text content analysis of the Rakyat Sulsel newspaper showed that the meaning of the news text still uses an ineffective, nonstandard approach to language and tends to have an element of waste. The political viewpoint does not have a specific explanation in this matter.

However, this level uses of elements of inertia and ineffectiveness. Nugroho (1999) stated it as deconstruction of ideas that have not been able to display media texts properly, critically, analytically and have not presented knowledge as a product for public benefit.

The example can be seen in an article of the Rakyat Sulsel newspaper published on January 8, 2013. There was a sentence that seemed to force the political election campaign in South Sulawesi. Sayang Governor and Deputy Governor Candidates said that "there is no regent who makes the street up to mountain ..." (reference missing).

Seputar Indonesia (Sindo) Newspapers

The news text content analysis of the Sindo newspaper tends to show a logical causal relationship between the promise of a candidate for governor and consequences if the promise is not fulfilled. Anto (2001) states that the language of the media is not just a communication tool to convey facts, information, and opinions, but rather illustrates the reality that determines certain images to be implanted in public. Sindo newspaper was published on January 8, 2013 to show the news on political election campaign in South Sulawesi. Governor and Deputy Governor Candidates said that "there is no regent who makes the street up to mountain ..."

The semiotics views of the Sindo newspaper reflects the use of refinement, blurring, or even the coarsening of facts. The campaign interpretation has a symbolic nature that community awareness 'brainstorming' was done to accept reality through campaigns that hide the bitter reality itself. In short, the Sindo newspaper has a symbolic element that not only operates through language, but also occurs in language content itself, that is, what is said, delivered, or exemplified by South Sulawesi Governor and Deputy Governor candidates throughout the campaign.

Tempo Newspaper

The news text content analysis of the Tempo newspaper, found the use of short sentences and the use of imaginative words were used to generate interest in reading to the public in order to follow the political campaign path of South Sulawesi Governor and Deputy Governor candidates throughout the election. Suroso's view (2001) referred to this matter as a political vocabulary that appears to be euphemistic (polite) which to raised minds of public with crucial meanings. An example can be seen in the news column published on January 17, 2013 with the title "Ali Ngabalin Calling Governor and Deputy Governor Candidates Not Election of Ustads Leaders."

The situation of the South Sulawesi Governor and Deputy Governor candidates political campaign showed that language users find difficult to distinguish the meaning of words that have real meanings and meanings of words that have other meanings. This indication showed that the Tempo newspaper has a mastery of language and euphemism to stabilise self-image.

With legitimate clarification, Governor and Deputy Governor candidates try to rationalise the language usage in public interest. Nevertheless, politicians who have mutual interests have never agreed on use of the vocabulary used in politics.

Kompas Newspaper

The news text content analysis of the Kompas newspaper showed a phrase that evokes the imagination of the reader, so that the reader's interest automatically arises. Anto (2001) stated that language in the media is not just a communication tool to convey facts, information, and opinions but rather illustrates the reality that determines certain images or images that are intended to be embedded in public. An example can be seen in the news column published on January 6, 2013 entitled "The Pair of Governor and Deputy Governor Candidates Election of South Sulawesi Numbered 1, Ilham Arief Sirajuddin-Azis Qahhar Mudzakar (IA), Has its Own Charm for People of East Luwu."

The semiotics of the Kompas newspaper reflects the use of refinement, blurring, or even the coarsening of facts. The campaign is interpreted as something that has a symbolic meaning for generating community awareness to accept reality through a campaign that hides the reality of bitterness itself. In short, the Kompas newspaper has a symbolic meaning that not only operates through language, but also occurs in language content itself, that is, what is said, delivered, or exemplified by South Sulawesi Governor and Deputy Governor campaign.

Republika Newspaper

The news text content analysis of the Republika newspaper showed that news text has an interesting, varied, and fresh language which is characterised, concise, straightforward, logical, dynamic, democratic, and populist. Sobur (2006) explained such matter as the existence of language that has the power to control meaning amidst of social interaction in mass media.

This means that semiotic political views assume that the Republika Newspaper has a plus with symbolic ownership which not only operates through language, but also occurs in language content itself. It was said, conveyed, or expressed in the South Sulawesi Governor and Deputy Governor campaign. An example can be seen in the news column published on January 7, 2013 that stated "put aside once political egos, it's time to pay attention to people."

Conclusion

This research explores the application of semiotics in seven newspapers in Indonesia published between January 5, 2013 to February 5, 2013 or during the election period of Regional Head General Election of Governor and Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi. It can be concluded that the application of semiotics in news articles in seven newspapers

containing the campaign news for South Sulawesi province candidates for 2013-2018 Governor and Deputy Governor election that only highlighted the battle of political actors. The prominence of photos or imagery is used to build public attention by participating in colouring the media coverage in order to become the choice of leaders in future. The language and interpretation in news articles only modifies the text which does not present the actual reality and only contains political power based on political actors.

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