

Conference Paper

Analysis of Visual and Persuasive Language Used on Billboards Promoting Candidates of the 2019 Elections

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Abstract

The 2019 elections were the first occurrence involving votes for the president, Regional Representative Board (DPD), House of Representative (DPR) and Regional House of Representative (DPRD) all on the same day. In this study, the billboards used in campaigns are investigated and their linguistic aspects scrutinised. The study uses a qualitative description analysis method, involving two billboards originating from the nationalist and Islamic camps which won the general elections in 2019. The study uses two approaches in analyzing the first billboard: 1) semiotic social analysis to analyze images and symbols on billboards and 2) persuasive discourse to analyze existing taglines. The study demonstrates the presence of a dominant type of persuasive discourse that contains an invitation and affirmation. On the billboard, the researchers found that the candidates used many key figures to increase their appeal and also used the billboards to educate voters about ballot-casting,

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Published: 11 November 2020

Publishing services provided by
Knowledge E

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the IC-HEDS 2019 Conference Committee.

Keywords: general election, parties, languages, persuasive

1. Introduction

The political situation in Indonesia in 2019 has gotten tempestuous and striking to explore. In 17 April 2019 Indonesia holding of general elections for the president, the House of Representatives (DPR), the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in one day. This is the first time in the history of general elections in Indonesia. Based on website www.kpu.go.id, there are 192.8 million Indonesians registered as voters who would be using their voting rights. In the 2019 general election, 14 political parties were participating, namely: PKB, GERINDRA, PDI PERJUANGAN, GOLKAR, NASDEM, GARUDA, BERKARYA, PKS, PERINDO, PPP, PSI, PAN, HANURA, DEMOKRAT [1]. In 17 July 2019, KPU published a final vote result of the recapitulation of 2019 legislative election at the national level, as follows: 1. PDI-P 27.053.961 (19,33 percent); 2. Gerindra 17.594.839 (12,57 percent); 3. Golkar 17.229.789 (12,31 percent); 4. PKB 13.570.097 (9,69 percent); 5. Nasdem 12.661.792 (9,05 percent); 6. PKS 11.493.663 (8,21 percent);

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7. Demokrat 10.876.507 (7,77 percent); 8. PAN 9.572.623 (6,84 percent) and 9. PPP 6.323.147 (4,52 percent).

Leiliyanti (2013) said that since the independence of Indonesia in 17 August 1945 the major parties has formulated the polarisation of the Nationalist and Islamic strands which characterized the Indonesia political framework [2]. Based on the parties which won the general election in 2019, the parties are included as nationalist are: PDI-P, Gerindra, Golkar, Demokrat, Nasdem and the parties are included as Islamic are: PKB, PKS, PPP and PAN.

Aspinall (2014) investigated that the polarisation of politic in Indonesia has a role to provoke a conflict for decades, the political map in Indonesia has been difficult to escape from the flow of political discourse [3]. The essence of the politics strand was initiated or theorized by Clifford Geertz around the 1950s was only in the form of ideological similarities that were transformed into a pattern of comprehensive social integration. Geertz at the time divided the politics of flow, where there were santri, abangan, and priayi. Santri is a religious, pious and educated well. meanwhile abangan is a society that is not too devout in religion. They still believe in ancestors. Deep religious learning is not the main prospect of this religious community. Whereas the social strata of priyayi is the same as nobility.

The politic strands was sparked by Geertz is very intriguing for analyzing Indonesia's political map. Geertz (2009) conveyed that during Old Order it was very clear the politics of the flow of wrestling in Indonesia [4]. Where there are Masyumi and NU (Santri), PNI (Priayi / Abangan), PKI (Abangan). But over time starting from the Old Order, the New Order, and the Reformation there were some observers saying the politics of this flow had disappeared. The reason is that if we still believe the politic strands still works at the grass root level, we should be 'worried' about the fact that the votes of Islamic parties decreased in the 1999, 2004 and 2009 elections compared to the 1955 elections. The combined Islam parties in the 1955 elections were 43.7 percent. while the total votes of nationalist parties were 51.7 percent.

Beech and Suhartono (2019) relating to religion, and in particular the role of the majority religion and its adherents in the public domain, have always been key dynamics within Indonesian politics [5]. Especially for Indonesia which common as the biggest muslim population in the world with the percentage of 85% population. These elections will continue to be influenced by this issue. The dramatic experiences of the 2017 election of Jakarta's Governor suggest this issue has growing traction as a vote mover. In late 2016, Indonesian Christian Governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or well known as Ahok faced demands he be jailed for blasphemy, crippled his campaign and

being jailed. On 2 December 2016, about 800,000 Muslim demonstrations spooked the political elite or well known as Aksi 212 and was labelled "Defending Islam Acts". This demonstration has begun since Ahok made a speech in September 2016 had insulted Islam. As the result of the demonstration, Ahok who at the time was running for re-election, had gotten the numbers of polling decrease significantly.

Belch (2009) confirmed that billboards are one of the campaign tools used to promote candidates who will advance to the seat of government of the Republic of Indonesia [6]. During the campaign period began for six months, the billboards for presidential and legislative candidates spread all over the public roads and crowd centers. This is a visual consumption for commuters either intentionally or accidentally seeing the billboards. We can see and feel the atmosphere of competition from billboards that stretch and display many presidential and legislative candidates. From the billboards, we can find out the candidates who advertise themselves to the public to obtain the sympathy. As the result it can increasing the amount of voters.

Wright (2016) stated that language is an effective way for communicating and conveying our intention toward the other people [7]. Language is not only about direct speech. However, there are many factors which has a role to form a meaning in communication such as through text and visual language. This analysis will explore the importance of tracing the meaning of billboards consisting of images and writing, as the result we can find the utilization for using the politic rhetoric on the billboard. When combined and analysed, it will find meaning in depth. Discussing political branding in billboards which indirectly can penetrate unconsciousness for commuters who see it. Departing from the importance of the linguistic role to dismantle and dissect the meaning, this analysis will use two approaches, namely: social semiotic to analysis on image toward billboard and persuasive discourse to analysis the meaning behind tagline on billboard.

Social semiotics is a theory which has been developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen from the Systemic Functional Linguistic theory of Halliday (1996) [8]. Social semiotics focuses on the concept of visual grammar that makes audiences see visual images deeply and systematically. In the visual image, we can find meaning from the combined representation that is formed.

In discourse analysis, Fairclough (2013) outlines three things that are being focuses of discourse analysis: (1) Components of linguistic in text; (2) The process that correlates between the production and consumption activities in a text and (3) The scope of social practice which spreadly and involves communicative events [9]. Based on this description, it can be concluded that the main purpose of discourse analysis is to explore

the correlation between the using of social practice and language. Whereas the focus of discourse analysis refers to the preservation of social order and social change.

Owen (2017) explains that persuasion aims to penetrate the unconscious mind. It is the main goal of advertisers in conveying the information to make the people has a same perception with the topic that has been conveyed on the billboard [10]. When we are trying for influencing the minds, it is necessary to build public trust toward the product or brand which has being advertised. Therefore, in persuasion activities, it is necessary to build trust through conformity and agreement that has been created by the advertisers, as the result the people who see the advertisement will voluntarily accept those idea.

Utari (2012) classify the characteristics of the language which is used in the persuasion discourse on advertisement into: (1) clause which contains advice; (2) the form of words which contents are affirmation; (3) the form of clause which contents are mandatory; (4) using of wise words (5) using of foreign language terms and (6) using of local language terms [11]. This paper aims to scrutinize the using of language both of visual and written language on billboard the candidate of legislative.

2. Methods

The writer using the method of analysis descriptive qualitative for scrutinize the research in order to find out the depth meaning behind the image and tagline which deployed on the billboard. Writer also categorize and chose the billboard both from nasionalist and Islam parties which won the general election in 2019. In order the short of length for analysing the research, the writer already chose one billboard from nasionalist and one billboard from Islam strands.

3. Results

Based on taglines which exists on the billboards, here the result of the types of persuasive discourse. We can see that the dominant of persuasive discourse is warning with the total of clause/ words are 3 and followed by affirmation with the total of clause/ words are 2. Meanwhile the other types of persuasive discourse did not exist on the billboards can be seen in Graph 1 below.

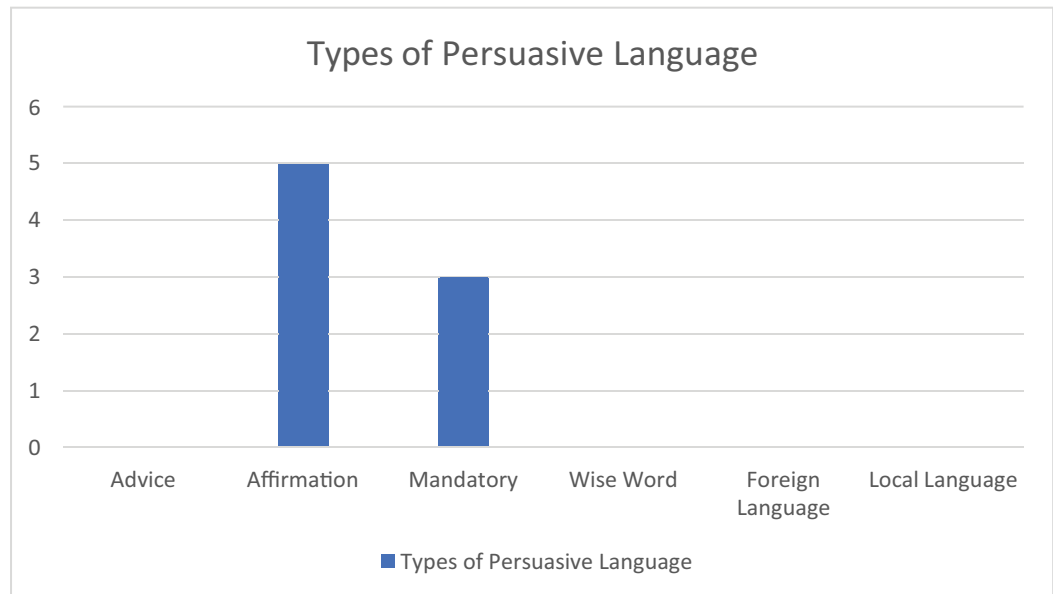


Figure 1: Types of Persuasive Language Graph

4. Discussion

4.1. Billboard 1

On the Picture 1, we can see the background colour of billboard are the red and white which is the official colour of flag in Indonesia. On upper right corner there is an image of Jokowi-Ma'ruf who wearing a white shirt with the tagline "Indonesia maju" (advanced Indonesia), it is the official tagline of the campaign Jokowi- Ma'ruf. we can see that the tagline refers to the affirmation from Jokowi-Ma'ruf who directly expresses their vision and mission for the progress of Indonesia. and there is also number 1 which become their ordering number in general election in 2019. On the upper left corner there is also an image of Megawati Sukarnoputri who is the main figure of the PDI-P which has been accompanied by an image of Sukarno who is the founding father of Indonesia.

Then on the lower right side there is an image of Risa Mariska, a candidate of legislative who wearing a white veil that does not completely cover her head, the white colour on the background of the billboard looks the same as Risa's veil. White is symbolized as a colour which are sacred and clean. On the lower left corner there is an example of a ballot which showed Risa's name and her ordering number on general election which has been accompanied by the tagline "Ingat ...!!! (remember) 17 April, 2019 " in red colour, it indicates a mandatory toward the people for remembering the date of the general election because it was followed by an exclamation mark. It is also the tagline "coblos nomor 2" (choose number 2), which became an affirmation to the



Figure 2: Risa Mariska Billboard

people for choosing Risa. On the bottom side, Risa also raises an academic degree that is bachelor of law and her constituency. From the billboard above, we can see that Risa had deployed a lot of figures to attract the attention of the public. In addition, there are indications that she lacks of her confidence.

Johnson (2018) argued that the candidates on political campaign will be deploy some or many figures who are famous in order to improve their popularity in the society [12]. The presence of respected figures in the community will be able to improve the good image that will be attached to the legislative candidates in billboards. This is different

from legislative candidates who are widely known by the public and do not really need other figures to boost their popularity.

Whereas on the billboard, Risa uses a type of persuasive discourse of mandatory and affirmation which are commonly found on the advertisement. According to Williams (2019) the using of mandatory and affirmation which indicated the strong persuasive on the advertisement which combined between the order and convey an information clearly due to the advertiser want to create a strong persuasive to the society [13]. The using of the white veil indicated that Risa wanted to show a religious figure in herself. Gökarıksel (2018) said that although veil cannot be represented the Islam image fully, but the using of veil on the politic campaign especially in the area which dominated by the Moslem, can be showed as the figure who become the part of the Moslem whether s/he is Moslem or not [14]. According on her official Facebook, she declared that she is a Moslem. In the general election in 2019, Risa was declared victorious as a House of Representative (DPR) legislative candidate for Bekasi and Depok.

4.2. Billboard 2

On the Picture 2, we can see that almost 80% of the billboards contain pictures of ballots due to they want to be more focused on the value of information than persuasive. While at the bottom left side, we can see the figure of a legislative candidate who wearing a cap for showing Islamic identity accompanied by the title of Hajj and Bachelor of Economics in his name. The tagline 'green ballots' indicates a green warning for PKB party as well as a ballot colour for DPRD. Tagline "*Surat Suara Warna Hijau*" (the green ballot) also indicated as an affirmation for the voters to choose Ustuchri on the green ballot. Meanwhile the tagline '*Ingat*' !!! (remember) it showed a mandatory. "

17 April 2019 *Nyoblos* " indicates an affirmation about the time of election which accompanied by a red mark and an exclamation point. On the lower left side is the words '1 PKB' which is the PKB serial number in the election. Then in the tagline "*Satukan Indonesia* " which uses green for 'one' and 'white' for 'Indonesia' is the vision and mission of PKB and it is also indicated as a mandatory. The green meaning of the word 'satu' indicates that PKB is able to become a party that unites Indonesia. The tagline '*kerja nyata bukan retorika*' (Real work not rhetoric) in the word '*bukan*' has colored in red which indicates as an affirmation of his self-image. On the lower left corner, Ustuchri also gave information about his current position including as the members of the DPRD of Bekasi City, chairman of PKB branch board for the region of Bekasi, head of the Islamic boarding school in Bekasi.



Figure 3: Ahmad Ushtuchri Billboard

Fowler (2018) informed that figures who are well known in the community will be able to show themselves strongly [15]. Especially in a political campaign, candidates who are incumbent will more easily describe some of the achievements that has been gained by themselves, in order to attract the sympathy of the public to re-elect him as the legislative candidates. These information on the billboard also reflects that Ustuchri is a respected figure especially in religious. Ustuchri also shows that he is an important and religious figure and well known in the Bekasi through the tittle of "H" (Hajj) in front of his name. based on Johansson (2019), the using of hajj on someone's first name indicates that he has performed the Hajj which is a pilgrim to Mecca and the Hajj is not easy to conducting due to considering the time, money and energy that will be spent during the Hajj process [16]. Therefore, people who have performed the Hajj will embed their Hajj title in their names, as the result they have enough influence in society. The use of the title of hajj in political campaign advertisements is commonly used by legislative

and presidential candidates in Muslim-majority countries in order to be able to bring religious identity to the public.

The dominant of an affirmation on billboard can be proven that he is prioritizing information on how to vote, because there are five ballots at the same time in the general elections in 2019 which are feared to make voters confused and wrong to vote. Calfano (2018) stated that it is commonly things if the legislative candidates during the campaign confidently to deploy themselves on the billboard due to the society had already known them. In the general election in 2019, Ustuchri was declared victorious and returned to serve as the Regional House of Representative (DPRD) for Bekasi [17]

5. Conclusion

Linguistic can be answered issues which has been developed in the general election in 2019. Language is not only about written text but also included on the visual. On the billboard of candidates of legislative, we can know the meaning behind it through the analysis both of images and taglines. In this research, the writers uses two billboards from nationalist strands which represented by PDI-P and Islamic strands which represented from PKB. The writer has found that the billboard from PDI-P candidate did not show fully about their nationalist. It has been proven from Risa who wore hijab as an identity for muslim woman although it did not fully covered her head. Meanwhile, Ustuchri fully showed his identity as Muslim beside he is one of Muslim figure in Bekasi. Both of the billboard using the dominant of affirmation and mandatory for persuade and attract the voters. Risa has deployed many figures on her billboard such as Jokowi-Ma'ruf as the candidate of president and vice president and also Megawati as the leader of PDI-P and Soekarno as the founding father of Indonesia. It represents that Risa wants to increase her identity through the key figures. Whereas, Ustuchri shows his confident through his billboard which the dominant to convey the information about the ways to choose on the ballot well. Ustuchri not only put his image in the small size but also described his position during the campaign. From the analysis above, we know that billboard is not only to advertise something but also it represents about the identity and ideology behind it. From the persuasive languages, we can know that both of billboard 1 and 2 has the dominant types of an affirmation as persuasive languages. It shows that the billboard has a strong tagline and message which conveyed to the voters.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to convey the gratitude for the lecturers who give the contribution during write this research and also thankful to all the reviewers who gave their effort to make this paper in an appropriate condition to be published.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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