

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of research, research questions, purpose of the research, significance of the research, and definition of key terms.

### **1.1. Background of Research**

In order to communicate, people use language. It is an important tool in society because it is needed by individuals to communicate with each others. By using language, different people are united in a society. Readers can hardly imagine a society without language, where they cannot convey messages. In our daily lives, language is not only communicated verbally, but also non-verbally. It means that language is in spoken and written forms. Those forms are called as text.

Text is a semantic unit, so it means that text is meaningful. It is said that text refers to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole and is best regarded as a semantic unit (Halliday and Hasan, 1976 : 1-2). Text, in its spoken and written form, is the product of language and is part of the society, thereby all linguistic phenomena are social. This concern of spoken and written form and the contexts of their use is drawn in the systemic study of language in use, known as Systemic Functional Linguistics which is proposed by Michael Halliday.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory of language that is socially oriented. SFL is very useful because it sees language as meaningful behaviour thus considers language as a process of making meanings. There are

three strands of meaning or metafunctions in SFL known as Ideational meaning, Interpersonal meaning, and Textual meaning. However, Interpersonal and Textual meanings are not discussed in this paper since the focus of the research is on the Ideational meaning which is realized in the system of Transitivity.

In the system of Transitivity, there are three semantic categories which explain in a general way how phenomena of the real world are represented as linguistic structures. They are 'Processes' which are verbs, 'Participant' which are nouns, and 'Circumstances' which are prepositional phrase. The focus of the research will be on the Process and Participant types. They are Material, Mental, Behavioural, Verbal, Relational, Existential, and Meteorological processes, along with the participant roles. The analysis of transitivity can be conducted on text which is the realization of discourse.

Discourse is the use of language in the society. Here, the researcher uses the definition of discourse from Norman Fairclough's perspective. He states that discourse is use of language seen as a form of social practice (1995 : 7). In a simple way, it can be said that text is the product of interaction, whereas discourse is the process of interaction in society.

This process of interaction in society is studied through discourse analysis. Pertinent to the previous definition of discourse by Fairclough, discourse analysis is the study of how the product of language (text) works within sociocultural practice. This view of discourse as language use as a form of social practice is emphasized in Critical Discourse Analysis.

In Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), language has contribution to the production of social reality. Van Dijk (1993 : 249) states that CDA focuses on relations between discourse, power, dominance, and social inequality and how discourse produces and maintains these relations of dominance and inequality. CDA also has the ability to expose hidden ideologies which are reflected in every day discourse through dominance and power. The dominance and power are always used by the ruling groups. The ruling groups are often seen in political texts. For example, it could be a speech by a president since everyone knows that president is the head of a country, or in the articles in newspaper when laws are made by the house of representatives. Therefore, the researcher will use the framework of CDA by Norman Fairclough in this paper because the researcher thinks that this framework is the appropriate one in conducting the experiential values analysis on types of process and participant on texts' clauses since the analyzed texts are political ones. Political texts can be found in public media, such as newspaper.

The press should ideally provide a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events presented in a context which gives them meaning. As newspapers are also carriers of public expression, the press should provide opportunities for comments and criticism. Newspapers have a responsibility to inform and enable people to make judgments about topical issues. That is why it is very important to have a press free of vested interests in order to allow readers to form their own opinions (Gerbner, 1977 : 79).

The New York Times (NYT) is an American daily newspaper, founded and published in New York City since September 18, 1851. Its political stance is

known by American people as left-leaning, or simply said, it is a liberal newspaper.

The previous researches about transitivity were done by some researchers:

1. Hanh Thu Nguyen (2012) entitled “Transitivity Analysis of Heroic Mother by Hoa Pham.” The research shows how functional linguistics analyzes the text that enables a better understanding of the main character, it identifies and explains how the main character’s personality is portrayed and represented through language used in Hoa Pham’s Heroic Mother.
2. Asad Mehmood (2014) entitled “Transitivity Analysis: Representation of Love in Wilde’s the Nightingale and the Rose.” The research shows how the actions are performed through the use of material processes. It gets a clearer idea from the verbal processes that describe the actions as well as revealing the situations and conditions. Furthermore this impact is strengthened by the relational processes. The physical actions are highlighted through these processes with giving an outer view of the world portrayed in the story.
3. Silvi Salsabil (2014) entitled “A Transitivity Analysis of English Text in Bahasa Inggris When English Rings the Bell.” The research analyzes process types, participant functions, and circumstantial elements of transitivity analysis that revealed in the textbook.
4. Nancy Anashia (2016) entitled “Transitivity Analysis of Newspaper Headlines on Terrorism Attack in Kenya: A Case Study of Westgate Mall, Nairobi.” The research shows that material and relational processes dominate the other processes, which indicates that the whole process of

terrorism is concerned with actions and events. It reveals the linguistic features that contribute to the construction of negative image of the Al-Shabaab.

By presenting the research of transitivity Process and Participant and political bias construction in The New York Times' editorial in this present study, it will create a good finding which is different from the others. It is because the researcher does not only investigate transitivity system as a part of Systemic Functional Linguistics theory, but also relates the result of transitivity analysis to another study, that is Critical Discourse Analysis. These two attractive collaborations are viewed as an appropriate combination since both of them are closely related each other in case the two studies consider language as a means of social practice. Furthermore, this research is also intended to develop the analysis from Nancy Anashia (2016) that is by applying analysis from Halliday in which it provides six types of transitivity process applied will explore more the linguistics feature to reveal the political bias of the newspapers. Later on, it is hoped that the findings will be able to prove that linguistic choices in Process and Participant types of transitivity have an important role in revealing the political bias of The New York Times. Therefore, the researcher decided to choose the title: *A Transitivity Analysis: The Political Bias of The New York Times' Editorial As a Response to Donald Trump's Tweet.*

## **1.2. Research Questions**

This research focuses on the questions as follows:

1. What processes and participants are available in The New York Times' editorial?
2. How do processes and participants reveal political bias in The New York Times' editorial?

### **1.3.Purpose of the Research**

According to statement of problem, the purposes of this research are:

1. To find out processes and participants available in The New York Times' editorial.
2. To analyze the political bias in The New York Times' editorial.

### **1.4.Significance of the Research**

By conducting this research, the researcher hopes that it will give the advantages both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the two fields of study: Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis. Furthermore, this research hopefully can make other researchers exploring interrelated theory of two collaborative studies. Practically, the researcher hopes that this research will help the readers to understand about the kinds of transitivity process and participant and how the transitivity process and participant can be used to reveal the political bias of the newspapers.

### **1.5.Definition of Key Terms**

The key terms of this study are:

1. **CDA:** The term CDA used in this study refers to the relation of the text with the context. As van Dijk (1993) stated that CDA focuses on relations between discourse, power, dominance, and social inequality and how

discourse produces and maintains these relations of dominance and inequality.

2. **SFL:** The term SFL used in this study refers to language as a process of making meanings. As Gerot and Wignell(1994) stated that there are three types of meaning or metafunction made by language at a time, first is ideational meanings; second is interpersonal meanings; and third is textual meanings.
3. **Transitivity:** The term transitivity used in this study refers to a theory which analyzes Process types: Non-Relational Processes which consist of Material, Mental, Behavioural, and Verbal Processes and Relational Processes which consist of Relational, Existential and Meteorological Processes. As Gerot and Wignell (1994) stated Non-Relational Processes are Material, Mental, Behavioural, and Verbal Processes and Relational Processes are Relational, Existential, and Meteorological Processes.
4. **Political bias:** The term political bias used in this study refers to the hidden messages of politics of The New York Times' article in informing news about Trump.
5. **Trump's tweet:** The term Trump's tweet used in this study refers to Trump's statement on his Tweeter account at 7:49 AM on January 3, 2018, replying Kim Jong-un's speech about nuclear button.
6. **Response:** The term response used in this study refers to the news of The New York Times' article published on January 3, 2018 after Trump tweeted. The news entitled *The 'Nuclear Button' explained: For Starters, There's No Button.* It is a response of clarification to Trump's tweet that

he has a much bigger and more powerful nuclear button than Kim Jong-un's.



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