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Irwan Prayitno and the Mass Media: A Transitivity Analysis of News Reporting in Padang Ekspres

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A B S T R A C T

This article attempts to analyze the transitivity pattern in the media discourse analysis of Irwan Prayitno's reportage in Padang Ekspres. The study was conducted using a qualitative approach. Data were collected using documentation techniques and analyzed using the transitivity features on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. The research findings show that there are four types of processes in the media discourse of Irwan Prayitno's reportage in Padang Ekspres: material processes (50.8%), behavioral processes (22.1%), verbal processes (20.4%), and mental processes (6.7 %). The dominance of material processes in Irwan Prayitno's reportage as a political figure reflects an effort to represent him as a leader who focuses on real work and action. This representation pattern also strengthens the existence of mutualistic relations between mass media and politics in electoral politics and other kinds of mass mobilization.

I. INTRODUCTION

Transitivity analysis in political discourse and mass media derives from Eggins's argumentation explaining the theory's effectiveness to unveil the mass media's ideology in the form of language use (Eggin, 2004). As one of the dimensions of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory proposed by M.A.K Halliday, the transitivity analysis's critical spirit triggers reviewers' interest to use it as a tool for analysis.

From a political point of view, mass media are empowered as instruments to construct reality (Hamad, 2004) (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) (Sobur, 2012). They are used by certain groups to strengthen particular power over other parties. The power is internalized intensely and remarkably in individuals and communities. In that manner, the representation of an individual's image is created to dominate and achieve a positive perception.

There are only a few numbers of transitivity analysis studies related to the representation of political figures in the mass media such as Zhang

(2017), Suaparto (2018), Agbo et all (2019), etc. However, linguists who study transitivity analysis majorly highlighted their analysis of linguistic data in speech texts. In contrast, the transitivity analysis of political figures' image representation in mass media is considered limited.

Among the phenomenal world's political figures, Donald Trump is a leader whose speeches are widely studied using transitivity analysis. The studies of Zhang (Zhang, 2017) (2017), (Yujie & Fengjie, 2018), Hidayat (2018), Yuliana et al., (2018) show that material processes dominate the clauses used by Donald Trump. Following the type of clauses he constructed, transitivity analysis concludes that Donald Trump is the type of leader who prioritizes action and concrete action. Apart from the study's findings, Fengjie (2019) found the relational process to be the dominant type. This finding suggests that Donald Trump, through his speech, identified himself in many positive ways.

The domination of the material process in the texts of speech by world political figures is also confirmed through the many kinds of research.

First, Alvi & Baseer (2011) and Oktifarti (2014) researched Barack Obama's speech. Second, Naz et al. analyzed the Benazir Bhutto's speech (2012). Third, Kondowe observed the speech of Bingu wa Mutharika (2014). Finally, (Agbo et al., 2019) studied Buhari's speech text. The result of the researches explained how world leaders represent their actions through clauses in their speech texts.

In Indonesia, many political figures become objects of transitivity analysis. Firstly, Harwiyati & Siagian (2016) studied Joko Widodo's speech text in Beijing that shows the relational process's dominance. Secondly, Nurfaedah (2017) on the political speeches of Hatta Rajasa. Lastly, Widodo et al. (2018) and Mulyani (2018) observed Basuki Tjahaja Purnama's (Ahok) campaign speech. These researches consistently proved that the material processes appear dominantly.

In contrast to the aspect of quantity, a transitivity analysis of political figures representation in the mass media was obtained in the studies conducted by Mohammed & Banda (2016) and Suparto (2018). Mohammed and Banda (2016) examined Nelson Mandela's repetition on the Al-Jazeera website found the dominance of a material process that included actions and events in which Mandela was positioned as the main agent and actor. Suparto (2018) reviewed Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok)'s description on two different media found that there were variations in the use of participants, processes, and circumstances in creating the perspective of the reader.

These studies reflect the insignificant equilibrium analysis of the transitivity text of political figures speech as well as the representation of political figures in the mass media. This situation raises a gap analysis that allows a new dimension of subject and the locus of study to be observed.

In the research subject aspect, a transitivity analysis of political figures representation in the mass media is necessary to be conducted to present a new perspective. In the era that Tannen & Trester (2012) and Aitchison & Lewis (2004) called 'new media', political discourse is massively fulfilling the major topic on the mass media. The analysis of the political figure's speech text is different from the analysis of the figure's representation in mass media. By writing the text of a speech, a political

figure creates his representation as he expects society will interpret him, whereas a broadcasting system mediates image representation on mass media. Furthermore, this reality conveys complexity in the production of discourse and reproduction of meaning among the audience.

In terms of locus of the research, the transitivity analysis of political figures representation is dominated by a discourse related to international and national political figures. The political figures are reported under similar social and political circumstances. It means that the media tend to represent the figures in a similar and identical style. As a result, it is understood that the findings between one study and another study are insignificantly different. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a study on a local scope with a different political and social context to present distinction.

Considering the importance of analyzing a political figure representation on mass media, researchers conducted a study of transitivity analysis on the discourse of Irwan Prayitno's reportage (IP) in Padang Ekspres. IP is considered as an inspirational and visionary leader. In the political field, IP was voted by the people as members of the Indonesian Parliament for three consecutive periods (1999-2004, 2004-2009, 2009-2014). Amid his third period of becoming a member of the Indonesian Parliament (in 2010), IP was promoted as a candidate for governor of West Sumatra and succeeded in winning the political contestation. He was even re-elected as governor of West Sumatra for the next period (2015-2020).

IP, who is also known as an academician, listed himself as a leader with prestigious records and achievements that he has achieved in his leadership journey. On August 15, 2014, Padang Ekspres released 137 awards achieved by the West Sumatra Province during the first four years of IP's leadership. Following the list of achievements, many appreciation and congratulatory messages were also included in the same edition.

Irwan Prayitno's successful political journey is the reflection of the public's trust addressed to him. The trust he achieved is the product of his political strategies, through the reporting on mass media. Compared to the previous studies, the objects of the research are most likely national figures

domiciliated. Therefore, this research reveals how a provincial leader in Sumatera achieved people's trust for periods. The transitivity analysis of the discourse on IP's reportage in Padang Ekspres will reveal the media's pattern to represent IP as a political figure. Deriving from Schramm (1975) postulates and Nimmo (1993) about the social and political functions of mass media, it can be assumed that Padang Ekspres is an IP self-construction instrument among readers. In this context, a language with a high degree of flexibility is used to deliver information to construct meaning as desired by discourse producers (Halliday, 1994) (Eriyanto, 2002) can be studied and expressed.

II. METHODS

This study applied a qualitative descriptive approach (Neuman, 2007) (Sukmadinata, 2007) (Moleong, 2005) (Sugiyono, 2012) that employs qualitative research procedures and present data by providing a clear concept of mass media constructing Irwan Prayitno's leadership style. The qualitative method prioritizes the depth of understanding of interactions between concepts that are studied empirically and descriptively by describing data in the form of words as a sign system that provides a more comprehensive understanding (Muhadjir, 2000).

To describe the characteristics of Irwan Prayitno's leadership constructed by the mass media, the researchers took data in the form of Irwan Prayitno's reportage from August to November 2015. This period was chosen due to various political events related to the gubernatorial election of West Sumatra. Therefore, these political events are expected to provide various and dynamic discourse.

For the research steps' trustworthiness, the data source is divided proportionally into primary and secondary sources. The primary source is any reportage that puts Irwan Prayitno as the main topic of the news. The selection of primary sources is related to the reportage's intentions and tendencies that will be built schematically through sentences and paragraphs. Secondary sources are other news topics related to IP as a leader. Topics can be in the form of issues related to West Sumatra provincial government, community activities involving the West Sumatra provincial government, etc.

The data in this research were collected using documentation and observation techniques (Arikunto, 2006). The documentation technique is used to collect news reports and classify them into some group. Besides, observation techniques are used in reading the news texts that have been collected. To be specific, this technique is defined by Sudaryanto as a non-participate observation technique, where researchers observe and examine the text as a single data source that cannot establish two-way active communication patterns (Mahsun, 2005) (Kesuma, 2007) (Sudaryanto, 2015). The headlines that contain IP's representation are documented by using the note-taking technique.

Data analysis was carried out qualitatively following the principle of critical discourse. Geertz (1983) elaborates qualitative analysis uncovers meaning that refers to knowledge in its function as the driving force of individuals in social life. Meaning is very important for qualitative analysis because a qualitative analysis reflects what problems are experienced, how to interpret people's behavior, and how to structure the social world. Thus, according to Spradley (1980), qualitative analysis is inseparable from the context of events that can be identified based on the location of events, behavior, and community activities.

Referring to the data analysis stage proposed by Alwasilah (2002), the data analysis stage in the qualitative method does not require the completion of data collection. The stage of analysis is allowed to begin if the researchers have collected the initial data. Based on this, the qualitative data in this study were analyzed with the following steps: (1) writing a memo during the study; (2) coding data; (3) searching for themes and categories; (4) discussing data; (5) drawing conclusions.

Following the analytical framework used, the analysis refers to the features of transitivity in systemic functional linguistics proposed by Halliday (1994). The transitivity system that can reveal human social experience in linguistic representation by Halliday is called 'process'. Halliday (1994) further divides the process into six types: material, verbal, mental, behavioral, relational, and existential. The six types of processes will be identified and described in the analysis process.

III. RESULT

Based on observations made on the data, four types of processes are found, each of which will be described as follows.

Material Processes

A material process is a process that is closely related to physical and material activities. This process is in the form of activities and events. Activities have an actor-process-goal constituent, while events have an actor-process constituent. The material process is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Material Processes 1

<i>Irwan</i>	<i>Menyerahkan</i>	<i>Bantuan</i>
<i>Subj</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>Obj</i>
Actor	Process:doing	Goal
<i>Irwan</i>	<i>Handing</i>	<i>Donations</i>
<i>kepada</i>	<i>masyarakat setempat</i>	
<i>Prep</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Loc</i>
<i>to</i>	<i>local community</i>	

The clause in table 1 contains a material process of doing something. There are three participants in this clause. The first participant was *Irwan*, who committed an act through the word *give*. *Irwan*, the participant in the material process clause above, functions as an active actor. The second participant is *the donations* that are also the target of the process. The second participant functions as a goal. The third participant is *the local community* that functions as a recipient, who receives the actor's items. Another material process can be seen in table 2.

Tabel 2. Material Processes 2

<i>Dia</i>	<i>mantap</i>	<i>melepaskan</i>
<i>Pro</i>	<i>Adv</i>	<i>V</i>
Actor	Circumstance: Quality	Process: doing
<i>He</i>	<i>Confidentially</i>	<i>Left</i>
<i>jabatan nya</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>partai</i>
<i>Obj</i>	<i>Pos</i>	<i>Prep N</i>
Goal	Circumstance: location	
<i>His position</i>	<i>in the party</i>	

The clause in table 2 has a similar construction to the clause in Table 1. It contains the material process of doing. The clause has two participants and two circumstances. The first participant is 'he' that refers to IP. *He* participates as an active actor in action. The second participant is *his position*, which serves as a goal. The clause has a circumstance of quality marked by the use of the word *confidentially* that

illustrates the actor's confidence level in carrying out the act. The second circumstance is *in the party*, which functions as a location to specify where the actor is doing the action (process).

Behavioral Processes

Behavioral processes are associated with behavior and psychological attitudes. This process is divided into verbal behavior and mental behavior. The process of verbal behavior has a participant called behavior, messages, and recipients, whereas the process of mental behavior has behavior, messages, and phenomena. The behavioral process can be seen in the following table:

Table 3. Behavioral Processes

<i>Irwan</i>	<i>selalu</i>	<i>memperhatikan</i>
<i>Subj</i>	<i>Adv</i>	<i>V</i>
behavior	circumstance: time	Process: behavioral
<i>Irwan</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>concerns about</i>
<i>pendidikan anak-anak</i>	<i>nya</i>	
<i>Obj</i>	<i>N(Plural)</i>	<i>Pos</i>
Phenomenon		
<i>his children's education</i>		

The clause in table 3 above contains behavioral processes in the form of mental behavior. The clause has two participants and one circumstance. The first participant is *Irwan*, who carried out physiological and psychological mental behavior. *Irwan's* participants in the behavioral process clause function as behavior. The second participant is *his children's education*. The second participant functions as a phenomenon, which is the target of the first participant's behavior. The circumstance in the clause is *always* that states the range and time of behavior carried out by the behavior.

Verbal Processes

A Verbal process is a process of saying. This process has sayer, receiver, and verbiage participants. The verbal process can be seen in the following table:

Table 4. Verbal Processes

<i>Irwan</i>	<i>mengatakan</i>
<i>Subj</i>	<i>V</i>
Sayer	Process: verbal
<i>Irwan</i>	<i>Said</i>
<i>kerja nya bahkan tak mengenal waktu</i>	
<i>N</i>	<i>Pos Adv Neg V N</i>
Verbiage	
<i>his work is a tireless work</i>	

The clause containing the behavioral process in table 4 above consists of 2 participants. The first participant is *Irwan*, who does the activity of saying. The first participant functions as sayer who performs a verbal process. The second participant is *his work is a tireless work* to function as verbiage. It is the content that is said by the sayer.

Mental Processes

A Mental process is a process that is closely related to sensing. This process has a senser –process-phenomenon constituent. The mental process has two participants. A senser is the first participant who has a sense of seeing, feeling, and thinking, whereas a phenomenon is the second participant in the form of something that can be sensed. The process is divided into affection, perception, and cognition. The mental processes can be seen in the following table:

Table 5. Mental Processes

<i>Irwan Prayitno</i>	<i>turut merasa terharu</i>
Subj	Adv V Adj
Senser	Process: mental, affection
<i>Irwan Prayitno</i>	<i>felt touched</i>
<hr/>	
<i>terhadap perjuangan Bagindo Aziz Chan</i>	
Prep Obj N(Pos)	
Phenomenon: fact	
<i>by Bagindo Aziz Chan's struggle</i>	

The clause in table 5 above contains a mental process in the form of affections. The clause has two participants. The first participant in the clause is *Irwan*. That *Irwan* is the one who feels consciously makes it a senser in the clause. The second participant, which is the phenomenon that is sensed, is *by Bagindo Aziz Chan's Struggle*.

IV. DISCUSSION

Of the six types of processes proposed by Halliday, four types of processes are found in the transitivity analysis of IP reportage discourse in Padang Ekspres. below recaps the percentage of each process spread over 59 research subject clauses.

Table 6. describes the dominance of the material process in the data. Thirty clauses (50,8%) are found to convey the material process. Behavioral and verbal processes occur 13 clauses (22,1%) and 12 clauses (20,4%) respectively. Mental processes are only found in 4 clauses (6,7%),

while relational and existential processes are absent in the data. Based on the experimental analysis postulate proposed by Halliday (1985), the process's distribution illustrates the experience of discourse producers, which is manifested in the form of linguistic representation. At a further level, these experiences are reflected and transformed to construct a new reality depending on the interests and power relations desired and possessed by discourse producers.

Table 6. Percentage of Transitivity Analysis of IP's Reportage in Padang Ekspres

No	Processes	Number	Percentage
1	Material	30	50.8%
2	Behavioral	13	22.1%
3	Verbal	12	20.4%
4	Mental	4	6.7%
5	Relational	0	0%
6	Existential	0	0%
Total		59	100%

IP representation is dominated by the material process that belongs to the meaning category of 'doing'. It reflects discourse producers' efforts to portray IP as an individual and political figure that prioritize concrete actions in his leadership. Data that indicate material processes such as *handing, working, making, educating, prioritizing, visiting, implementing, inviting*, and so on, aim to depict the concrete working steps that have been taken by IP. Each material process in the clause has its context, emphasizing that IP has worked comprehensively in various dimensions and sectors. On the contrary, the category of 'happening', another category in the material process, is not found in the data. The absence of intransitivity in IP representation explains that IP's leadership always involves other participants in his actions. This explanation leads to the interpretation of IP's work style that stresses the spirit of mutual assistance and intensive communication with people.

IP representations in the form of clauses that contain behavioral and verbal processes are at relatively high equilibrium. The illocutionary and perlocutionary analysis of the clauses aims to escalate IP's characteristic as a committed leader who works productively. The behavioral process dominated by mental behavior does not reflect IP as a figure with passive leadership who only feels or

senses anything without further action. Otherwise, mental sensing is still manifested in the form of behavior. In other words, these mental behaviors are always followed by actions. Therefore, IP's impression as a hardworking leader remains irreducible regardless of clauses describing the mental situation. An identical strategy is also found in verbal processes. Not only the mental process, but the verbal process also supports maintaining IP's representation through clauses. IP representation as a sayer-political figure is dominantly expressed in compound sentences. Thus, IP speech content is all about the past event and his hard work as a leader. In other words, the verbiage in the verbal process strengthens IP as a political figure. The mental process that is found on a relatively small percentage reflects discourse producers' efforts to avoid the representation of IP as a sentimental and emotional leader. Therefore, the IP representation's mental processes are majorly transformed into behavioral processes by the discourse producer. The representation of IP reflected through the behavioral processes in the reporting can be considered powerful in communicating political messages. However, this phenomenon proves that media language today has transformed (Aitchison & Lewis: 2004)

This study's findings are in line with the representation of political figures, both created by the figures themselves and the media, which tends to be dominated by their portrait as real workers and actors. As a figure struggling to win public sympathy, the representation is very urgent and significant in sustaining their leadership careers. Therefore, the discourse of political figures associated with interests and power relations, in various mediums and instruments, is believed to have a similar pattern and strategy.

This research also answers the research purposes of the transitivity analysis in the mass media with the different subjects of the research. It is also in line with the arguments of Schramm (1975), Nimmo (1993), Sobur (2002), and Heryanto (2015). In the authorities' hands, mass media will always be used as a political instrument and a device to strengthen power. A political transaction happens in mass media that Schramm (1975) called *to sell goods for us*. The media promotes a political figure to the public to get a concrete response in support in many

electoral agendas and other mass mobilization activities. The media builds a symbiotic relationship with political figures to meet each other's needs and interests. In this case, this relationship can be related to global media's ideology as the new missionaries of global capitalism.

In the locus of the research, this study shows that the representation of political figures is dominated by clauses containing material processes. This domination applies not only at the global and national level but also at a local level. Political events, including those at the local level, cannot be separated from various human life dimensions, including mass media. This complex situation is called *transpolitica* by Piliang (Piliang, 2015). In the development of linguistic today and possibly in the next few years, the discourse of political figures on all scales will always involve the mass media's language. In this situation, political contestation focuses not only on the realm of ideas and thoughts but also on the war of rhetoric (Black, 2011). As a result, it is assumed that the study of political discourse in the mass media will always be a popular and debatable issue (Fetzer & Lauerbach, 2007).

However, this finding proves that discourse is powerful in creating a political image and the public's trust that benefits the figures. Since this research object is an individual political figure, the result is not yet able to represent all similar phenomena. Some external factors, such as society's cultural and social condition, might affect the different results.

V. CONCLUSION

This study's findings have successfully answered the absence of transitivity analysis of the political figures from the subject and locus aspects. Nevertheless, this study allows linguistic scholars and researchers to develop research on transitive analysis in various aspects. The data found by the researchers are highly heterogeneous, which means that there are many themes and contexts related to IP. In other words, the data can be used and processed by other researchers in the future who are interested in examining IP from other perspectives such as social and political aspects, government policy, and West Sumatra development. Additionally, this study's results can be used as a

reference for further research to explore the role of the media in political contestation in West Sumatra. However, it is undeniable that research related to the media and press is one of the most notably popular studies among researchers from various disciplines in recent years. To conclude, further research is highly recommended to contribute to research on media and the press.

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