Research Article

Representation of Indonesian Millennials in The Presidential Election in The Mass Media
(Critical Discourse Analysis Approach to an article in The Jakarta Post)

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Abstract: The present study investigates the representation of Indonesian millennials in the 2019 presidential election in the mass media. How the media portray the millennials in news media becomes the purpose of this research. Qualitative research is employed to analyze the data. The data itself is taken from a news article from the Jakarta Post, "Millennials could be key to the election if they vote." The tool used to analyze the written text is the critical analysis discourse proposed by Van Dijk (2011) and Fairclough (2005). It is found that millennials in the news article view millennials as an object. Their roles have not been explored deeply to see their potential in developing better political life. Millennials are urgently needed only for the sake of their voices and votes not their contribution to the politic itself.
Key Words: Critical Discourse Analysis; Millennials; General Election

Introduction

Language is a tool for communication used by human beings to communicate with others in daily life. Apart of language as communication tool, Saussure (2011) views language as having an important role in structuring and creating both ideology and reality of society. In everyday life, there are two ways of using language, which are direct and indirect modes. Direct mode is a spoken language which means that the language users have no mediator in using it. For instance, it is a face-to-face conversation with people. In the use of direct language, people speak usually in spontaneous settings.

On the other hand, indirect use of language means a written language that can be a bridge between the language users. The use of language in the context of written language can be varied in terms of its objectives and goals. Written language can be utilized in form of sending messages through WhatsApp, SMS, email, and other written use of languages. Another essential written language is in form of news provided by many news media like newspapers and magazines. Presently newspapers and magazines have been gradually disappearing with the growing use of online and virtual news. This situation has enforced the old and young generations to consume news through online media. Van Dijk (2011) points out that news spread by news media does not merely about informing facts and news, media also describe discourse growing amidst society. As Fairclough (2005) states that language used by media seem showing off the certain power in political context.

In this context, speaking about online news media is not merely about giving news to the public. As Saussure points out that language has its power and ideology. In this regard, Critical Discourse Analysis

(CDA) is one of the tools that can be used to analyze the relationship between language, ideology, and power (Dijk, 2011). Language is used to convince, persuade, enlighten, inform, share and promise, which means that language links to people's minds no matter what. Language and politics are inseparable because language is an essential tool in politics. Language helps people to know how language is used by people who wish to produce power, exercise power and keep the power themselves. Power is an abstract idea, but it influences human lives. Politics relate to the power in making a decision, controlling resources, the people's behavior, and values. While ideology, according to Dijk (2006), an idea is a fundamental belief acquired and sometimes changed through a relatively stable period of life.

In connection to the use of language as a tool to deliver political ideas, it is challenging to explore how online news media lifted up the perspective of millennials in seeing political issues in Indonesia. General Elections had been carried out simultaneously starting in 2019 (Nuryanti, 2015). Millennials known as the Y generation had a huge role in the 2019 general election in Indonesia.

However, many had seen the voice of millennials was likely unheard because of the domination of the older generation which considered millennials as the underdog in this election. Although their voices were dominant in terms of the population however, they were considered merely as an object rather than an active objects.

Millennials are generally the children of the Baby Boomers generation and the older X generation. Millennials are referred to as "Echo Boomers" because of the increasing number of births in the 1980s-1990s. Millennial characteristics based on regional and socioeconomic conditions experience different things, but this generation can generally be marked by an increase in the use and familiarity of using media communication and digital technology (Satria, 2018).

In the past, Indonesia carried out a simultaneous general election democracy in which the election of candidates for President and Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia and legislative elections were held simultaneously on April 17, 2019. A new thing in a democratic party is carried out by all Indonesian people to vote and participate in elections. The concept of simultaneous elections was decided by the Constitutional Court on January 23, 2014, that the implementation of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections, as well as the Legislative.

The population of millennials in Indonesia is around 34.5 to 50 percent which is based on the total population with vulnerable ages of 15-35 years. This figure shows a very significant size so that millennial voters will become an important target group in the success of the general election. Millennials use digital media to know and understand politics through social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc. so that they can shape their perceptions of politics (kompasiana.com, 2019b).

The characteristic of millennials is that there is a tendency to be rational and consciously start participating in the 2019 elections. According to Sarah Nuraini Siregar, based on the results of the LIPI survey, there is around 35 percent to 40 percent of voters in the 2019 election are dominated by the millennial generation with around 80 million of them. 185 million voters (Abdi, 2018). According to the Voxpop Center political observer Pangi S. Chaniago, the millennial generation was formed with a creative, confident, disloyal nature and does not want to be a political object. As is known, social media cannot be separated from the millennial generation, so it can influence votes in general elections (Baderi, 2018).

Millennials are known as targets of politicians to carry out strategies as target objects in voting (Media Kompas, 2018). Millennials have the potential to become political forces with their large numbers, so the votes of millennials can make a significant contribution to presidential candidates (Mochtar, 2019). The millennial distribution map focuses on some votes acquired by the millennial group, so it requires information based on the geographic map of Indonesia, and the distribution of their points, here are some of the distribution of Indonesian millennial projections.

Based on the explanation, it can be seen that millennials have an essential role in the life of Indonesian politics. However, it is important to analyze how news media portrayed this generation in the last 2019 general election. The use of critical discourse analysis to analyze news provided in media becomes interesting to carry out. This present study would like to investigate how online news media represented

millennials in the 2019 general election. However, many had seen the voice of millennials was likely unheard because of the domination of the older generation which considered millennials as the underdog in this election.

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Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is to study the connection between language, ideology, and power; is an interdisciplinary approach used to study discourse that sees language as a form of social practice and focuses on the way both social and political domination are produced by text and talk (Van Dijk, 2011). CDA has become an approach to investigate language, discourse, and communication of text and talk. Besides, CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are set, reconstructed, and rebelled in a text and talk of social and political context (Van Dijk, 2011).

Van Dijk (2011) defines CDA as a process of deciphering a text in social reality done by someone who has a specific aim to get what he or she is desired. Therefore, it can be said that critical discourse analysis is applied to criticize the relationship between language and social-political news. There are some characteristics of critical discourse analysis, they are action, context, history, power, and ideology. Action is viewing discourse in two ways: discourse aims to impact, debate, persuade, et cetera, and discourse is something that is shown consciously or controlled.

Context relates to how discourse is made and understood in a certain context like someone communicating with whom and why, who the audiences are, what the situation is, through what medium, and the relationship between the participants is. In contrast, history is always the time or event of the discourse. Power is something natural and neutral which is a form of power struggle. The last is an ideology that is seen as a reflection of ideas in people's life. Another linguist of CDA is Norman Fairclough, who developed a three-dimensional framework to study discourse. His framework has the objective to concatenate the three dimensions into another analysis of languages in a text, such as an analysis of the discourse practice that contains text production, distribution, and consumption, and an analysis of discourse events. In other words, Fairclough mix the micro, macro, and macro-level of interpretation.

Millennials in Indonesia

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Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. Litosseliti (2010) views that qualitative research involves both structures and patterns in analyzing data without considering how many peculiar characteristics are needed. While descriptive research, according to Kothari (2004) idea is consisting of a survey and fact-finding. Using the descriptive qualitative method means that the researcher has no control over the data as well as the variable. The researcher uses the three-dimensional framework by Norman Fairclough in analyzing the data of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The data are the written texts taken from The Jakarta Post online newspaper. The title of the article is "Millennials could be key to election, if they vote." This article was taken from the link https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/01/29/millennials-could-be-key-election-if-they-vote.html

To collect the data, the researcher used some steps, including finding the script from The Jakarta Post. The second step was to read the article and the last step was to analyze the texts used the theoretical framework by Norman Fairclough & Van Dijk at micro level. In presenting as well as analyzing the data, the researcher used the qualitative data analysis theory from Miles and Huberman (1994). This kind of analysis has three steps in the process. They are data reduction, data display or data representation, and conclusion drawing and verification. 1. In the first step, which is data reduction, the data that has been obtained by observation is selected by the researchers in the set of classifications to be analyzed. The analysis is to find what the micro-level are in the article. 2. In the data display or representation, the researcher presented the data analysis. 3. Finally, in the last step, which is conclusion drawing and verification, the researcher concludes the result of the analysis by using the researcher's own words.

Results and Discussion

Results

There are two results found in the Jakarta Post:
1. Representational text in sub-sentences: vocabulary unit
2. Representational text in sub-sentences: grammar unit

Discussion
1. Representational Text in sub-sentences: vocabulary unit

The following is data obtained from The Jakarta Post article which represents millennials in the vocabulary unit extract. A number of vocabularies appear when mentioned or associated with millennials including, political party's target, disinterested, raises the question, to exercise their vote, assiduous, players, spectators, less lofty, social media, and so on.

Data 1:

Making up nearly half of the electorate, Indonesia's millennials are at the top of <u>every political party's target</u> group list for this year's election.

The first vocabulary related to millennials is "political party's target." The millennial generation is represented as a group that has become a bone of contention and the target of political parties that competed in the 2019 presidential election. It is logical if political parties win over this millennial generation group. The millennial generation is generally voters aged 17 to 38 years, in 2019. When viewed from the permanent voter list which is around 185 million, voters who are 17 to 38 years old are around 55 percent of the number. Of course, this is a large number more than 50%. Candidates for presidential and legislative elections are concerned about their existence and always try to attract the attention of millennial generation voters.

Data 2:

But the younger generation's general disinterest in politics, coupled with a <u>raises the question of</u> whether candidates

The text above describes millennials emerge an enigmatic problem. This generation is considered to have no political choices that can be easily mapped. They are a generation that is not grouped in terms of political alliances. So many surveys show that the big question is where their votes will go to in 2019 general election.

Data 3:

….and political parties will be able to get millennials to exercise their right to vote at all come election day in April. As a test in <u>exercising their right to vote</u>.

In connection with the pattern of millennial choice which is considered unstable, it is also mentioned that the millennial generation makes the 2019 election a testing ground for them in exercising their right to vote. The vocabulary used is to exercise their right to vote. This vocabulary is aimed at novice voters from the millennial circle. They are considered to have not been trained in formulating their political choices. This portrait then illustrates that millennials are not yet stable in terms of politics.

Data 4:

Sandiaga Uno has been assisting in attending events for young people and encouraging them to take part in the political process. Maintain (assiduous) "Millennials have to become players, not just spectators," Mr. Sandiaga said at the Indonesia Millennial Summit 2019 in Jakarta last week. Become the main players, not just spectators(to become players, not just spectators)

The word "assiduous" represents that the role of the millennial generation in the political context is important to be taken seriously and cared for. They need to be encouraged to be active in politics because their role contributes to the direction of the nation's struggle. The meaning of the word assiduous in the Oxford Dictionary is "working very hard and taking great care that everything is done as well as it can be." This means that many parties are paying serious attention to this millennial generation group.

Be the main players, not just spectators (to become players, not just spectators) At the third point, the millennial generation in the context of general elections tends to dislike political promises that are far-fetched, and less lofty. Millennials tend to think more pragmatically and practically. Millennials don't like campaigns that are too exaggerated, this generation likes to use practical language, not empty promises. They also don't like exaggerated imagery, millennials like something authentic. Unexpected surprises become something of great value for generations

Data 5:

For (millennials), political news in Indonesia is quite heavy, complicated, and boring. Heavy, complicated, boring "Their three main topics of conversation are sports, music, and film, (followed by) technology

At the vocabulary level above is that millennials are represented as people who love to talk about sports, film music, and technology (sports, music, and film, (followed by) technology). And they are considered less interested in intensively talking about politics. The Alvara Research Center survey (2014) states that internet consumption of the population aged 15 to 34 years is much higher than the older age group. This shows that this generation's dependence on the internet is very high. This research also mentioned that the 15-24-year-old generation prefers topics of conversation related to music and movies, sports, and technology. While those aged between 25 to 34 years like a more varied topic of conversation.

Data 6:

> ....*politicians should focus on a less lofty goal: gaining the generation's favorite. Realistic goals (less lofty)*

The younger generation who are part of the millennial generation is often considered the generation that is least concerned with political issues. Data from EACEA (2012) states that relatively few of this generation are willing to join political parties. They also tend to choose to be citizens who do not participate in exercising their voting rights in elections. This generation often experiences disconnection from its community and is not interested in political processes and issues. They also have a low level of trust in politicians and are cynical about various political institutions and governments.

Data 7:

> *"Because millennials are so active on social media, it's important for politicians not to get on their bad side, as that can quickly create a lot of hostility," he said. Actively using social media (so active on social media) "Nowadays, most young people dream of becoming successful entrepreneurs, so Sandiaga has an advantage there.*

Social media is an online media that can connect users to interact, share information, and create content. That's why the term content creator emerged, a person who creates content on social media in the form of videos, photos, or writing. Social media has a great influence on a person's life because this platform is able to provide interactive interactions between two people who are far apart.

Data 8:

> *Meanwhile, Jokowi tries to get closer to them by attending music events, wearing sneakers and T-shirts, and trying to show that there is no distance between them and the President," he said, referring to the president by his nickname. and t-shirts (wearing sneakers and T-shirts)*

Then clothing attributes such as sandals and sneakers become symbols that represent the easy generation. Therefore, political figures like Jokowi, for example, in several campaign sessions and visits use these attributes as part of attracting the sympathy of millennials.

2. **Representational Text in sub-sentences: grammar unit**

Grammatical data collected from the article as follow:

a. *Indonesia's millennials are at the top of every political party's target group list for this year's election.*
Using "to be" as an affirmation of a condition.

b. *Sandiaga Uno has been assisting in attending events at young people and encouraging them to take part in the political process.*
Using millennials as object sentences

c. *"Their three main topics of conversation are sports, music and film, (followed by)technology*

d. *Politicians should focus on a less lofty goal: gaining the generation's favourite.* Using millennials as objects

e. *Meanwhile, Jokowi tries to get closer to them by attending music events, wearing sneakers and T-shirts and trying to show that there is no distance between them and the President,"* Using millennials as objects

From the grammatical aspect above, it can be seen that there are two clear divisions. When it comes to millennial characters, the author uses "to be" which indicates a firm and fixed condition. Meanwhile, when viewed from the perspective of politicians, millennials are always placed as objects. Millennials should be encouraged, nurtured, seen, and pulled into situations that politicians want.

Conclusions

Millennials are dominant in terms of demographic concepts, however, in the political role, the candidates merely view them as an object not as an active factor to proceed with the successful political agenda. Their votes significantly become the target of the political parties in Indonesia as well as candidates who run for the presidency, however, millennials are likely uneducated in terms of political roles. In this case, there is a weak power of millennials although they have abundant voices.

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