Interpersonal Meaning Analysis of Indonesian Politicians’ Instagram Captions

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate interpersonal meaning of Instagram caption produced by Indonesian politicians. Instagram is a social networking site media which enables the users to upload photos and videos where they could write a caption under their post. Instagram caption becomes language that express the users’ emotions, showcase their feelings and is utilized to engage the users for many purposes including political interest. As Indonesia 2019 general election is coming near, this study then seeks to find interpersonal meaning of Instagram caption that Indonesian politicians might have used for this purpose. The subject of this study is 4 Indonesian politicians who were declared as the Indonesia presidential and vice presidential candidates of the 2019 General Election. The data used are 20 captions of Instagram derived from their Instagram accounts. This study employed Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) analysis proposed by Halliday in which focusing on how language produces a meaning. The result indicates the followings: first, Indonesian politicians prefer to use short sentences and simple grammar; second, from transitivity analysis, subjects that have meaning as actor is dominantly utilized; third, through the analysis of modality, Indonesian politicians notably apply positive modal verbs and first person pronouns; fourth, declarative statement of speech function is prevalent to give information to the followers (reader).

Keywords: discourse analysis, interpersonal meaning, SFG analysis, Instagram, caption, Indonesian politicians

I. INTRODUCTION

In the past 10 years, social media becomes everyone’s favorite. People usually use social media to communicate to other people around the world. Moreover, they also use social media to find new information or even to entertain themselves. Social media is a social networking that has a lot of facilities for people to create or share information, opinions, career interest or other expressions [1]. One of the most popular social media in the world is Instagram. Instagram is a prominent platform which enables users to share their photos and videos through newsfeed and story. It becomes famous since it allows the users to connect the uploaded photos and videos to other social media [2]. Research by Oreskovic stated that Instagram has reached 400 million users for the last 8 years [3]. Therefore, this mobile can exceed Facebook revenues by pocketing $2.81 billion in 2017 [4]. In their websites, Instagram argues that it is “home for visual storytelling for everyone and anyone with a creative passion” [5]. It allows the users to upload photos or videos and render the thought on caption so that other users are able to see or give some comments.

Caption is some sentences for clarifying the photos which are usually used to represent what users’ intention. Instagram caption turns to be an extensive thing because the users want to render information or messages about what the users’ feel and do [6]. In other words, caption can be also called as the language of emotion. Based on the interview conducted to Instagram users, Instagram users tend to need some time to think about what they want write on the caption because it is so meaningful and represent their thoughts and feelings. Isti, as an active Instagram user, stated that “I usually spend at least 15-20 minutes to write the caption; it can be more if I have no idea what should I write”. Moreover, the reason why Instagram users spare their time to write caption because there has been a limitation of words in writing Instagram caption. Instagram users are asked to write a caption for no more than 2,200 characters that challenge them to write the caption creatively and still represent their photo, thought and feeling.

In Instagram caption, the contents are very multiform because it is produced by different users with different ages, background, gender and purposes. Instagram users usually use this social media for selling products, teaching and sharing daily or even political issues. It is in line with Marwick’s statement...
that Instagram’ post facilitates the users to share ideas and give response related to political and gender issues in the uploaded videos or photos [7].

Given the fact that Instagram could be used for various purposes and is very popular in Indonesia with active users amount to around 56 million, many public figures including Indonesian politicians are considering this social media platform as an active means of expressing themselves [8]. They use it not only to share their daily life as other common users do, but also to engage with other users for their political interest. Since the 2019 Indonesian presidential election will be held soon, people try to scrutinize the candidates through all aspects including their social media life. Thus, Indonesian politicians becomes centre of attention; they are being observed directly (from their contribution towards the country) and indirectly (from their attitude and lifestyle through the social media) by Indonesian citizen. Therefore, it is interesting to observe Indonesian politician through what they write in Instagram caption because their posting in Instagram could represent their attitude towards other people as well as might reflecting their ideas or their stance on a particular issue.

From the linguistics point of view, this phenomenon might as well be assessed by means of discourse analysis as the communication on Instagram is visually de-contextualized. However, despite so, on Instagram just like verbal cues, non-verbal cues are also common through only the posted photos or videos without any text. Verbal cues would include any cues used in communication that involves linguistic features and non-verbal cues would be ones that do not involve linguistic-related properties. As mentioned previously, Instagram users can caption their posts to provide explanations or to express their feelings by text. These serve as verbal cues. According to Gee, there are four important characteristics in discourse analysis theory when analyzing verbal cues (words, phrases or sentences uttered or written in order a person to understand), including a caption of Instagram post [9]. Thus, the theory stresses on the importance of understanding the implicit and explicit meanings. Due to the meanings, a reader will give feedback or comments based on their understanding. This way, there will be positive communication taken place.

However, Taylor has different perception towards discourse analysis as compared to Gee. Taylor suggests that there are 11 approaches that should be analyzed when investigating a written discourse [10]. Taylor lists the 11 approaches as in; a linguistic approach to discourse, predictability and well-formedness, phonotactics, grammaticality, intuitions about discourse sequences, predictability, predictability and idealization, structure controls meaning, canonical discourse and idealization, analogies and conclusions.

In regards to the explanations above, this study aims to find out interpersonal meaning of Instagram caption produced by Indonesian politicians. To achieve this purpose, the following questions are posed: (1) how is configuration of interpersonal meaning elements in caption on Instagram produced by Indonesian politicians?; (2) what are speech functions realized the caption on Instagram produced by Indonesian politicians?.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the case of Instagram caption, interpersonal meaning of a discourse analysis might best suited for the context of this study. Interpersonal meanings focus on the interactivity of the language, and concern the ways in which the people act upon one another through language. In either spoken texts or written texts, an interlocutor expects to tell listeners/ readers via text. This means that each text has a relationship between providers of information and recipients of information. To understand this text discourse, functional grammar in which was mainly developed by Halliday could be employed. It is a theory of language centered on the notion of function. Halliday proposed that language has three meta-functions, the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual [11]. The interpersonal function plays the role of setting up and maintaining social relations, and indicates the roles of the participants in communication. People use language to interact with people for some purposes: they may want to influence other attitudes or behavior, or to provide information that others do not know, or to explain their own attitudes or behavior, or to get them to take some actions, and so on [12], [13]. Halliday pointed out that the interpersonal meaning can be expressed by mood, modality and key [11]. Later, he added pronoun system, attitudinal modifier and rhythmic features of words.

There have been several research studies concerning the use of social media by public figures and its discourse analysis. For instances, Olusanya has observed interpersonal meta-function analysis of some selected political advertisements in some Nigerian newspaper [14]. This study aimed to determine the use of written language in the political advertisement. The data was taken from three Nigerian newspapers. Then, the data were analyzed based on interpersonal meaning proposed by Halliday. The result indicated that declarative clauses dominate in this advertisement to offer convincing promises and information to the readers; imperative clauses come next to give the suggestion to the readers. Then only “will” as modal operator that found in this advertisement to express high value of certainty.

On the other hand, Davies conducted study of self-representation of Instagram caption produced by famous bloggers [15]. This research aimed to find out how self-representation of Instagram blogger was formed related to consumerism and capitalist beliefs.
By conducting a discourse analysis of 10 commercially successful Instagram bloggers, it is found that Instagram bloggers can build their attractiveness in the social media because they have self-representation as consumers who purchase and promote the products they use.

Based on the previous related studies above, the similarity of Olusanya’s and this study is both of them analyze the data based on interpersonal meaning proposed by Halliday. On the other hand, the difference is the object of the study that being investigated. Olusanya’s research uses political advertisements in some Nigerian newspaper but this study used caption on Instagram. Related to the second previous study, both of the studies used caption of Instagram as the data, however, it is being analyzed differently. Davis’s study focuses on self-representation while this research pursues interpersonal meaning behind the Instagram caption. In other words, their yet no study about interpersonal meaning analysis of Instagram caption produced by politicians especially in Indonesia settings.

III. METHODS

This is a descriptive qualitative research as the aim of the study is to describe the sentences produced in an Instagram caption and how the interpersonal meanings are realized in the sentences. This study then employed discourse analysis as the research design. It aimed to investigate interpersonal relationship that can be found through interpersonal meanings derived from Instagram caption. This study used caption on Instagram produced by 4 Indonesian politicians since caption on Instagram could be utilized to draws the users’ emotions or feelings. The subjects of this study focus on 4 politicians who were declared as Indonesia presidential and vice-presidential candidates for the presidential election in 2019. They are Joko Widodo (@jokowi), Ma’aruf Amin (@khmarufamin), Prabowo Subianto (@prabowo) and Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno (@sandiuno). They are being the subject of this study because they were the focus of citizens’ attention in the past few years. The data used are 20 captions of Instagram derived from those 4 Indonesian politician Instagram accounts.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There are some interesting findings that can be found from the data. From 20 captions derived from 4 politicians Instagram account, there were found 41 sentences. All the sentences were analyzed by using SFG analysis focus on interpersonal meaning – mood element and speech functions. After analyzing the data based on SFG, the researcher finds two elements of interpersonal meanings realized in caption on Instagram produced by Indonesian politicians. The data are presented by using integrated analysis. It means combining multiple data into a group. The integrated analysis that the researcher conducted through this analysis highlight the following: data, context, configuration of element of interpersonal meaning and function. Then, the investigation on the fulfillment of interpersonal meaning of the written text analyzed in this study is conducted from the following four perspectives:

A. Analysis of Mood

When people interact with others, they use language clearly to convey the unlimited purposes; they may want to order, apologize, confirm, invite, reject, describe and so on. According to Halliday, most of the fundamental purposes in any exchange are giving (and taking) or demanding (and being given) a commodity of some kind [11]. Halliday classified two kinds of commodity, which he termed as “information” and “goods-service” and then four speech roles can be identified. Generally speaking, statements are most naturally expressed by declarative clauses, questions by interrogative clauses and commands by imperative. There also exist exceptions in certain context. For example, some interrogative sentences can also be used to give command with different intonation. In Functional Grammar, the subject and finite make up the mood and the subject-finite positioning in a clause realizes different speech functions, which plays a vital role in carrying out the interpersonal meaning of the clause as exchange and serves a reflection of social role and identity [16].

In the context of Indonesian politician Instagram captions analyzed in this study, based on the mood element analysis of all 20 captions most captions are constructed using declarative statement such as:

Caption 5. Participated in celebrating National Teacher’s Day 2018 at the Pakansari Stadium, Bogor, this morning.

| Participated | In | celebrating National Teacher’s Day 2018 | at the Pakansari Stadium, Bogor | this morning.
|--------------|----|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Did          | Participate | Finit | Predicat | Pr ep | Complement | Adjunct: circumstantial
| Fini te      | Predica tor | Pr ep | Complement | Adjunct: circumstantial
| OD           | RESIDUE | | | |

The caption is written on December 1st, 2018 by @jokowi. He wrote this caption to explain the event in his uploaded photo. This caption is aimed to his 14.1 million followers on Instagram. This clause is recognized as elliptical declarative mood type. It can be seen by the position of omitted subject (I) which supposed to be written before the finite (did). Mood and residue elements are being observed in this clause. Mood consists of finite “did”. Meanwhile residue consists of predicator “participate”, complement “celebrating National Teacher’s Day 2018” and adjunct “at the Pakansari Stadium, Bogor, this morning”.

The clause above is elliptical declarative clauses, the speech function is to state the giving of
information. The addressee is the writer of the caption, addressing to his followers in Instagram. It means that the author is the sender of information and the one who receives information is the Instagram follower. This is related to Halliday & Matthiessen statement that a text or conversation generally consists of two subjects, namely the sender and recipient of information [17]. The interpersonal meaning in the caption is the writer would try to inform that he participated in celebrating Teachers’ Day. The word “did” indicates that the event held in the past. This clause also represents meaning that celebrating national day is also parts of his job as president of Indonesia. This declarative mood statement also could be found on the following caption:

Caption 11. We have the same goals and aspirations to achieve prosperous Indonesia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subj ect</th>
<th>Fin ite</th>
<th>Comple ment</th>
<th>Predic ator</th>
<th>Residue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>the same goals</td>
<td>to achieve</td>
<td>Prosper ous Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T o</td>
<td>A dd</td>
<td>Compl e ment</td>
<td>Predic ator</td>
<td>Compl e ment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Caption 11 above was written by @prabowo in November 29th, 2018. This caption is addressed to his 2.2 millions of followers. This is categorized as declarative mood types because it declares information about the same goals and aspirations to his followers. Mood element exists in caption is “we” as a subject and “have” as a finite. Moreover, the residue element consists of complement, adjunct and predicat or. Interpersonal meaning in the caption appears to give information to the reader that “we” refer to PPP Muktamar Jakarta, Prabowo and Sandiaga Uno (Prabowo’s running mate) “have” the same vision to create prosperous Indonesia. This caption might also function to give information that they can called as one unity to achieve their goal.

B. Analysis of Pronoun System

As generally known, personal pronouns have a variety of functions in political speech, which can be interpreted from the aspect of social and political roles. They can achieve different interactive effects and reflect the speaker’s perception of the relationship between the listener and himself. This study reveals that Instagram captions produced by Indonesian politicians contain subject that consists of meaning as existential (3%), carrier (12.1%), sensor (21.2%), actor (33.3%), token (15.2%), and behaver (15.2%). The result indicates that subjects have meaning as actor is the most dominantly used. The percentage of this subject is 33.3%. Actor means someone who does the action in the discourse [18]. For instance, caption 7 (see Appendix) states that KH Ma’ruf Amin is the actor who attend the event. The most actors used in the subject indicates that Indonesia politicians represent themselves as the one who do the activities related to the photos uploaded in the Instagram. The candidates seems trying to prove their capacity and strengths by showing that they are the doer and the executor. Moreover, from all the caption analyzed in this study, it can be noticed that “I” is the most frequently used personal pronoun (6 times out of 20 captions, together with its possessive form “my”). Using first-person pronouns can help the candidates to shorten the distance between them and their followers/ readers. In this regard, the candidates hope that the people will be more confident to accept and support them.

C. Analysis of Modality

Modality generally expresses a speaker’s attitudes, or “moods” [19]. By using modal words/phrases, the interlocutor can decide his/her own positioning in communication with a listener/reader [20]. As a result, it can be said that interlocutors can produce various levels of interactivity by the choice of text forms, as well as vocabulary in the various social contexts. Interlocutors can determine their position when communicating using modality [20]. In other words, modality helps the interlocutors to convey ideas varied by choosing the right modal auxiliaries in accordance with the context he/she wants. Through the analysis of modality, it is found that Indonesia politicians made their followers easily understand and accept their written caption with the use of simple modality in the caption. The modality such as “will, could and can” determines their intention in the future and positive politeness to the followers.

Halliday views that through modality the speaker takes up a position and signals the status and validity of his/ her own judgments [11]. If the commodity being exchanged is information, the clauses are labelled as proposition and modality expressions are termed as modelization which refers to the validity of proposition in terms of probability and usuality. If the commodity is goods and service, modality expressions are defined as proposals and are termed as modulation which reflects how confident the speaker can be in the eventual success of the exchange in terms of obligation and inclination. There are a large number of ways to realize modality, including modal auxiliary, adverbs, intonation and mental-process verbs

This research found that modality used in the caption produced by the Indonesian politician is as follow: will (7.4%), could (2.4%), can (2.4%), and polarity consists of is not (4.9%) suggesting that “will” is used most frequently. This modality (will) mainly employed to provide information about what
would exactly happen in the future and refers to the intention of the candidates’ administration will look like based on their belief and perception.

D. Analysis of Tense Shift

Halliday contends that the basic function of the finite is to indicate the validity of the proposition [11]. This can be done in two ways. One is by reference of modality, implying the judgment and attitude of the speaker. The other one is by reference to the time of speaking, which is termed as tense. By relating it to the here and now reality of the speech event, the tense makes it possible to negotiate about the validity of the proposition. Halliday summarized 3 primary tenses: past, present, future [11]. In this study, the elements of finite consist of tense which is present (43.9%), past (39%) and future (17.1%). Finite tense especially simple present is mostly used by Indonesia politicians to write the captions.

Indonesian politicians express their opinions about the current social, political, cultural and economic situation of Indonesia by using simple tense to make reader easily understand the text. They also laid out their current reforms and steps to prove what they do denote their goal as future president of Indonesia. On the other hand, Indonesia politicians used past tense in order to show what they have done in the past which can demonstrate their good deeds and capability as a best-suited figures for the country. For the use of future tense, the candidates try to relate the current situation with their vision and mission as candidates of Indonesia president and how they could improve the situation in the future. In this way, the politicians appear to be hoping not only to provide their information and campaign but also trying to gain support from their follower and make put trust on them.

Additionally, in the side of speech function, the clauses in the captions consisted of statement (73.7%) with different functions such as making of information (42.87%), making of confirmation (4.08%), sharing of opinions (28.58%), and making of declaration (4.08%). There is also 15.8% acknowledgment clause existed in Instagram caption of Indonesian politicians. Moreover, there are also clauses for interrogative statements or questions (2.6%) and contradictions (7.9%). Based on those findings, once again, speech function dominantly used by Indonesian politicians in writing captions on Instagram is declarative statement which has a function to give information to the followers (reader). Second, from transitivity analysis, the result indicates that subjects which have meaning as actor is the most dominantly used in the caption. In other words, Indonesia politicians represent themselves as the one who do the activities related to the photos/videos uploaded on the Instagram. Third, through the analysis of modality, Indonesian politicians used simple modal and first-person pronouns which made the audience more easily to understand and accept their statement. The candidates also laid out their current reforms plans and steps to prove what they do denote their goal as future president of Indonesia. They also used simple modality such as will, could and can in order to show their perspectives about national issues and also their future plan. Moreover, they also used first-person pronouns as one of the ways to shorten the gap between the writer and the reader. Thus, they seem to be hoping that it can influence citizens’ view to support them. Fourth, in all the captions analyzed, the caption mostly used simple present tense to present current situation in Indonesia. The captions mostly discuss about their thoughts about problems in Indonesia, citizen, government policy, family issues and so forth.

REFERENCES


Translation: There are more than 74 thousand villages throughout Indonesia. And the name of the village is always in my mind and heart. Why? Because I myself come from the village. I want the government to focus on building villages. Even villages have been the main stars of development for the past four years.


Translation: Shop for batik at Setono Wholesale Market in Pekalongan, Central Java, before attending the Maulid of the Prophet Muhammad tonight.

Caption: KH Ma'ruf Amin Menghadiri Peresmian Rumah Aspirasi #01JokowiAmin di JalanProklamasi

Translation: KH Ma'ruf Amin Attends the Inauguration of Aspiration House # 01JokowiAmin on JalanProklamasi

Caption: KH Ma'ruf Amin diapit putri tertuanya Ny Hj Siti Ma'rifah Ma'ruf Amin (kiri) dan istri beliau Ny Hj. WuriEstuHandayani (kanan) di Pantai Solong Banyuwangi, dan yang menjadi latar belakang adalah Rumah Adat Osing Banyuwangi

Translation: KH Ma'ruf Amin was flanked by his eldest daughter Mrs. Hj. Siti Ma'rifah Ma'ruf Amin (left of the red veil) and his wife Mrs. Hj. WuriEstuHandayani (right) on SolongBanyuwangi Beach, and the background is the BanyuwangiOsing Traditional House.
Caption: KH Ma'ruf Amin menyampaikan kuliah umum tentang Islam Wasatiyyah dan Ekonomi Berkeadilan di S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Singapura.

Translation: KH Ma'ruf Amin delivered a public lecture on Wasatiyyah Islam and the Equitable Economy at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) Singapore.

Caption: KH Ma'ruf Amin menghadiri Manaqib Kubro dengan Abah Aos di Bandung.

Translation: KH Ma'ruf Amin attended Manaqib Kubro with Abah Aos in Bandung.

Prabowo (Caption 11-15)

Caption: Deklarasi dukungan dari PPP Muktamar Jakarta kepada @sandino. Kami memiliki tujuan dan cita-cita yang sama untuk mewujudkan Indonesia adil makmur.

Translation: Declaration of support from PPP Muktamar Jakarta to me and @sanduno. We have the same goals and aspirations to achieve prosperous Indonesia.

Caption: 1965 Yearbook, American International School of Zurich, Grade 8.

Caption: Bersama kader muda Gerakan Indonesia Raya

Translation: Together with young generation of Gerakan Indonesia Raya.

Caption: Turut berduka cita atas jatuhnya pesawat Lion Air JT-610, Jakarta-Pangkal Pinang. Semoga semua amal ibadahnya diterima oleh Allah SWT, dan keluarga yang ditinggalkan diberikan kekuatan. Aamiin YRA.

Translation: Deep condolences for the fall of the Lion Air JT-610, Jakarta-Pangkal Pinang plane. Hopefully all of the worship will be received by Allah SWT, and the family left behind will be given strength. Amen.

Sandiaga Uno (Caption 16-20)
Caption: Selamat ulang tahun untuk istriku, @nurasiauno yang ke-49. Terimakasih sudah mendampingiku di kala susah maupun senang. Aku doakan kamu semakin awet muda, selalu diberi kesehatan, umur panjang, dan selalu berada dalam perlindungan Allah Subhanahu waTa'ala.

Translation: Happy 49th birthday to my wife, @nurasiauno. Thank you for being with me when it's hard or happy. I wish you more youthful, always given health, long life, and always be in the protection of Allah SubhanahuwaTa'ala.

Caption: Selamat pagi, Wonosobo!

Translation: Good morning, Wonosobo!


Translation: It was an honor for me to be invited as the 5th time speaker of the Indonesia Economic Forum (IEF). A forum attended by important figures from the government and business world.

Caption: Ini bukan tentang kekuasaan. Ini bukan tentang jabatan. Ini tentang perjuangan untuk mewujudkan Indonesia yang adil dan makmur.

Translation: This is not about power. This is not about position. It's about the struggle to create a fair and prosperous Indonesia.