

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background Of The Studies

As technology evolves, the way people communicate constantly evolving, as well. Crystal (2001) states the advent of the internet has revolutionized communication in many ways; it changed the way people communicate and created new platforms with far-reaching social impact. We use language on internet is becoming so different from our previous linguistic behaviour that it might genuinely be described as revolutionary. The most fundamental influence arises out of the electronic character of the channel. Crystal (2006) explained that a set of characters on a keyboard determines productive linguistic capacity; and the size and configuration of the screen determines receptive linguistic capacity.

The multilingual Internet raises a number of practical and scholarly questions, ranging from the distinctive features of email or chat in languages with specific font-related requirements, to code-switching in bilingual or multilingual online communication, to the effects of the English language and global “netspeak” (Crystal, 2001) on CMC in local languages. Linguistics research has shown that spoken languages vary in their structures, meanings and usage.

Twitter is one of computer-mediated communication (CMC). It is an online social networking and microblogging service that enables users to send and read short 140 characters text messages, called “*tweets*”. Registered users can read and post tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Users are able to access

Twitter through the website interface, SMS, or mobile device app. Twitter was created in March 2006. The service rapidly gained worldwide popularity, with 500 million registered users in 2012, who posted 340 million tweets per day. An online media, Online News Point reports, in 2013 Twitter was one of the ten most-visited websites, and has been described as “the SMS of the internet”. Twitter was pivotal during the 2008 presidential election when U.S. President Barack Obama became the first candidate to use it successfully. It seems that the way Obama communicates with Americans through Twitter is adopted by politicians and presidents in many countries. SBY is one of the president who joins Twitter and gains followers up to 4.93 millions.

It has been several years social media have become a fact of life for civil society worldwide, involving many users, such as regular citizens, activists, nongovernmental organizations, telecommunications firms, software providers, governments. This raises an obvious question for me : How does the ubiquity of social media affect a president and how do people respond to it ?

Since the rise of the internet has changed the way people communicate, there is also a new form of communication between president and the citizens. In the past decades, before the existing of social media, citizens communicate with their president only if they meet in a special occasion or have privilege access. But now, by the existing of social media, citizens are able to communicate with the president through internet as long as they have internet connection and social media account. Therefore, I am interested to examine this phenomena by focusing on the language style used by president SBY and his followers on Twitter as a new kind

of communication between president and citizens. According to Trudgill (2002), style, as a part of language variation, is different variation of a language used by a person in different situation and need. It similar to what Holmes (2008) stated that people's styles of speech and written communication reflect and express not only aspects of their identity such as their ethnicity, age, gender, and social background, they also indicate the contexts and purpose in which language is being used.

It is quite probable that the choice of one linguistic form rather than another is a useful clue to non-linguistic information. Crystal and Davy (1969) said that the style can show someone's characteristic or someone's uniqueness. Our speech provides clues to others about who we are, where we come from, and perhaps what kind of social experiences we have had. Certain social factors, such as who you are talking to, the social context of the talk, the function and topic of the discussion, turn out to be important in accounting for language choice in many different kinds of speech community. Traugott and Pratt (1980) claimed that style talks about a very distinctive way how a person uses his or her own language consistently to express his or her ideas in order to be different from others.

According to Holmes (2008) the members of each community have their distinctive linguistic repertoires. In other words, in every community there is a range of varieties from which people select according to the context they are involved in. In monolingual communities, these factors take the form of different styles and dialects. Moreover, no one speaks the same way all the time in this entire world for he/she constantly uses the language he/she speaks for a wider variety of purposes. Every person does not speak the same language varieties or repertoires

all the time, indeed. People adjust the language variety with their environment or with whom they are talking to. This is similar to Bell's claim (1976, p.110), there is no individual who speaks only one code. In short, there is practically no monolingual, one who uses only one code while communicating with others. Gleason (1980) argues that as we listen to a person speaking our native language, we hear not only what is said, but also certain thing about the speaker, if he is an acquaintance, we recognize him, if not we identify him as male or female and perhaps obtain some ideas of his age, his education and his social background. our speech provides clues to others about who we are, where we come from, and perhaps what kind of social experiences we have had.

Crystal and Davy (1969) said, "Similar to conversation in daily situation, each person uses different style to speak in speech communication." (p. 9). It means that nobody speaks the same style even though he or she speaks in the same language. Style talks about a very distinctive way how a person uses his or her own language consistently to express his or her ideas, in order to be different from others. Holmes (2008) explains, the way people talk in court, in school, at business meetings and at graduation ceremonies reflects and constitutes the formality of those contexts and the social roles people take in them. We use more relaxed language at home with those we know well. The way people write letters, emails, text messages, and blog entries similarly indicates awareness of the different audiences of these diferent genres.

Internet linguistics is a sub-domain of linguistics advocated by David Crystal. It studies new language styles and forms that have arisen under the

influence of the internet and other new media. Variably dubbed a ‘language variety’ or even a ‘new linguistic medium’, ‘netspeak’ is divided into sub-varieties that are related to different communication modes (2001, p.239). For instance, the ‘language of e-mails’ comprises ‘functionally distinct elements’ that are ‘central for the identification of e-mail as a linguistic variety’, such as headers, signatures, greetings and responsive quotations, as well as ‘more local points of stylistic significance’, for instance, spelling variation (Crystal 2001: 94, 122). Likewise, the ‘language of chat groups’ focuses on the ‘curious mixture of informal letter and essay’ that is deemed to be typical of asynchronous messaging, and the ‘highly colloquial constructions and non-standard usage’ that characterize chat messages (Crystal 2001: 148, 165).

April, 13 2013 is the date when Soesilo Bambang Yudhoyono made his twitter account @SBYudhoyono and wrote his first tweet. He is an Indonesian politician and retired from army general officer since he has been president of Indonesia in 2004. He ran for re-election in 2009 and won with an outright majority of the votes in the first round of balloting. He is widely known in Indonesia by initials "SBY". The name of SBY Twitter account is @SBYudhoyono, managed by SBY himself and his staff.

I choose SBY and his followers as the objects of this research because I want to reveal non-linguistic information reflected from the communication between president and citizens in a virtual community. Every person, in a particular group or region obviously has an idiolect of his or her own. As Brown and Miller (1980) say, someone born of English-speaking parents in Germany, who learns the

one language from his family and the other from his playmates, possesses two idiolects. Human beings are not static. Their thinking, choice, and behaviour vary according to need and situation. As they adapt their behavior according to the situation, they adapt their language.

When participants share more than one variety, then other factors will contribute to the appropriate choice. Social distance, status relationship, setting, dimension of formality, and function (goal of interaction) are factors that possibly influence the choice. Stylistic variation is an essential part of linguistic features that can vary from one person to another. Linguistic style is a matter of what is appropriate. For example, a speaker uses 'thank you for your consideration' in the formal situation, on the other side, in more informal correspondence, the same speaker may use 'thanks for your time'. According to Traugott and Pratt's (1980) "Style results from a tendency of a speaker or writer to consistently choose certain structures over others in the language.

There have been a number of valuable studies of language style. Wulansari (2004), examines *Gus Dur's speech styles in Jaya Suprana's show of the Television Pendidikan Indonesia Station*. Another study is done by Nirmalasari (2006), she analyzes *Language Style Used by Hairdresser in Johnny Andrean Salon*. Nurhikmawati (2008), studies about *The Language Style Used In The Simcard Product Advertisement Headlines*. Those studies present evidence on the selection of words and styles are influenced by social factors. Wulansari found that Gus Dur's personality as an easy going person has influenced his preferences to use consultative and casual styles instead of formal style. The study done by

Nirmalasari found that hairdressers in Johny Andrean Salon use formal style for new customers or customers who they do not know well and use casual style for customers who they know well. Informal style is used in the simcard advertisement because the target consumers is adolescent. However, none of these studies provides the study of style in a social media. Thus, I am interested in investigating the influence of Twitter as a social media on the style used by president and the followers.

### **1.2 Statement of The Problem**

Based on the background of the study, I focus on the social dimensions to answer the following questions:

1. What are the typical of language function used by SBY and his followers?
2. What are SBY language style used in Twitter?
3. What are SBY Twitter followers' language styles?

### **1.3 Objectives of The Study**

According to the statement of the problem, I determine that the objectives of this study are to fulfill the following reasons :

1. To know the typical language function used by SBY
2. To know the language style used by SBY
3. To know the language style used by SBY followers

### **1.4 Significance of The Study**

I hope that the result of the study can contribute to enrich the readers' understanding about language style on the internet, emphasizing on Twitter. It can hopefully useful for other English department students that are interest in the

Sociolinguistics, especially those who learn language variation. In general, it may also give benefit to common people, especially internet participants and social media users in order to know how social dimensions influence the choices of words on social media, especially twitter. Overall, I hope that by reading this research, people will realize the language style reflects social factors.

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

In order to avoid misunderstanding, it is necessary to define the important terms that are frequently used in this study:

1. Idiolect :

Refers to Linguistic system of an individual – one's personal dialect  
(Crystal : 1969)

2. Language style :

The form of language used by a speaker and it is characterized by degrees of formality (Joos : 1976).

3. Language variety :

A broad term which includes different accents, different linguistic styles, different dialects, and even different languages which contrast with each other for social reasons (Holmes: 2008)

4. Non-linguistic information :

Information reflects from linguistic choices, such as ethnicity, age, gender, social background, social contexts, purpose of speech, one's characteristics, one's feeling toward the speaker, etc (Crystal: 1969 , Holmes: 2008)

5. Twitter :



A microblogging website of real-time information network that connects people to the latest stories, ideas, opinions, and news (About, 2014)

6. Virtual community :

A community of people sharing common interests, ideas, and feelings over the internet (oxforddictionaries.com)