

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Iran's nuclear issue has appeared as a controversial issue in several countries around the world. Iran's nuclear program was started in 2002 when several team of Russian technicians began to construct Iran's first nuclear reactor at Bushehr. In the same year, United States of America under the authority of President George Bush declared their disagreement of the project considering the harmful effects caused by it. Then in 2003, IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency), as a UN nuclear agency and that is responsible to watch nuclear programs in every country in the world, gave several chances for Iran to prove the program is not associated with atomic weapons program.

In this regard, IAEA concluded there was no evidence related to weapons program. In 2011, there was a huge explosion associated with a major missile-testing site near Tehran, and hence Iran's nuclear issue becomes a debatable issue around the world. On the other side, media covered consecutively about it. As a means of communication, media holds a dominance of news that is reported and published to public. In this case, media has a power in producing text and shaping readers' opinion. Van Dijk (1995, p. 10) stated that media power is generally symbolic and persuasive on its relation with its potential to control minds of readers or viewers. In short, media has a role or power in the production of news.

Therefore, as media is claimed to have power in text production of news, it will definitely have also power in influencing the public through the news articles. Power is closely related to ideology. Ideology is a set of political beliefs (Oxford Learner's pocket Dictionary: fourth edition, 2011). On its relation to the media, ideology could also be understood as the way of thinking of the media. Ideology then works and is applied through news reports provided by the media. Every media has their own rules and ways to deliver a news report to the readers, and so that ideology is attached to it. In other words, ideology is "therefore conceptualized as a mental schema consisting of various categories such as identity/membership, task, goal, norms, positions, all of which define and shape the ideology of a group" (Min, 1997). According to this explanation, ideology is set and constructed in the news publication and is also as the way of thinking of the media to view Iran's nuclear issue.

Related to Iran's nuclear issue, it shows that some media oppose the issue while others support it. At this point, the news covering Iran's nuclear issue also either support or oppose about it. Therefore, by seeing this phenomenon, the writer intends to conduct his research by using critical discourse analysis. In this regard, the writer is interested in finding the ideological construction through news articles in two newspaper websites, the New York Times and Al Jazeera. These two newspapers are selected as the sources of data regarding their domain and background. This means that Iran's nuclear issue has become an international and debatable issue. Hence, on its relation, the writer attempts to observe the issue by comparing New York Times' point of view, that also represents western's

frame in portraying it, and Al Jazeera's point of view as the basis of Middle-East news networks.

In analyzing the ideological construction appeared under some news articles, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is commonly used as an approach for this kind of study. CDA theories have been developed and applied by several researchers such as Van Dijk's and Fairclough's. These two theories attempt to reveal what is beyond the text and how the ideology works in the text. Some of researchers apply this CDA theory in order to reveal the ideology built in the text by relating textual aspects, contextual aspects, and social context.

There are several studies that apply Critical Discourse Analysis approach to analyze media. A study written by Peter M. Matu and Hendrik Johannes Lubbe published in *Journal of Language and Politics* (2007, p. 109) entitled *Investigating Language and Ideology: A presentation of the ideological square and transitivity in the editorials of three Kenyan newspapers* concerned more to the approaches of ideological square from Critical Discourse Analysis and transitivity of Systemic Functional Grammar. By using these kinds of approaches, the researchers aimed to find out how the editorials columns in newspapers constructed ideology.

Vikhi Septia Purnama Putra (2010) conducted a research entitled *The Construction of Pornography Concept in Jawa Pos News Articles about The Proposed Law against Pornography (RUU APP) from 2006 to 2007* that concerned more with the three dimensional conception of discourse developed by Fairclough. Those are the discourse involving social conditions, the discourse involving process of production in which a text is a product and also process of

interpretation, and the last one is the text that constitutes the product of the former two levels.

The other thesis was conducted by Andri Firdayanti entitled *Framing Analysis of News Articles on Mudflow Incident in Sidoarjo in Jawa Pos and Kompas* which was written in 2008. She focused on the Theory of Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki consisting news schemes, script identification, and theme identification.

Based on these references, the writer aims to discover an ideological construction under the issue of Iran's nuclear plant through the New York Times and Al Jazeera. Although there were previous studies about critical discourse analysis, this study aims to give more detailed analysis about two articles obtained from The New York Times and Al Jazeera on its relation with Iran's nuclear issue. At this point, the writer used Van Dijk's theory that observes the text on its relation to sociocognitive context. In other words, Van Dijk's theory observes text as the final result of the social background and context built in the frame of the journalist and the media itself. Therefore, it is very important to identify, analyze, and finally comprehend how a media constructs certain ideology of certain issue in the news articles. By noticing this purpose, the readers are expected to be more critical and skeptical in reading either the text or beyond the text.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the background of study above, this study concerns on finding an ideological construction built in the New York Times and Al Jazeera associated to

Iran's nuclear issue in several news articles. Therefore, the statement of the problem is as follow:

How do the news articles in the New York Times and Al Jazeera construct the ideology of Iran's nuclear issue?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of problem, this study aims to discover the ideological construction built in the New York Times and Al Jazeera about Iran's nuclear issue.

1.4 Significance of the Study

By conducting this study, the writer hopes to be able to contribute the next comprehensive research conducted by students or lecturers of linguistics department, and is able to contribute to the study of Discourse Analysis, particularly the study of Critical Discourse Analysis. Besides, the writer hopes that this study would enrich the reader's knowledge about how a media can construct ideology and influence reader's way of thinking.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW