

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background, identification, limitation and formulation of the problem as well as the objective, method, benefit and systematic organization of the research.

### 1.1. Background of the Problem

Language makes human are able to do communication from simple everyday interaction to complex idea and thought expression by using a wide range of sound, sign and symbols. It facilitates business, governance, innovation and education which are vitally significant for a functioning society. Being the most important tool in communication, the existence of language should not be undermined since it would not be successful if the message is not received well across the board. Despite language has allow exchange of accurate information during communication that permit fantastic innovation, exchange of deceptive and self-serving misinformation is also interesting for people when the opportunity arises (Walker et al, 2021).

Harmful deception is when it is used when communicating to the public. Corporations and politicians are both well known to do mishaps which deceive and mislead general population. The approach is to cover anything seen as unfavorable with other words or phrases. In local government agencies, phrase *sub-standard housing* and *economically nonaffluent* are used to replace *slum* and *poor people*; advertisement uses *genuine imitation leather* instead of just *synthetic leather* (Lutz, 1989). Those are examples of a concept called doublespeak. It is the language that makes what is said and reality incompatible (Walker et al, 2021).

Other more dangerous examples are *protective reaction strikes* for *bombings*, *resources control programs* for *poisoning the vegetation and water supply*, *preemptive counterattack* for *first strike* and *termination with extreme prejudice* for *killing a suspected spy without trial* used in Vietnam war discourse (Lutz, 1989). It is considered dangerous because it is used in political language,

which affects public policy and power. Lutz argues that direction of a nation is defined for people by elected leaders through language in which its corruption, at least in democracy, can lead to corruption in political system and sense of national purpose while emphasizing that the public cannot have sufficient knowledge and understanding to make important decisions if leaders do not speak clearly.

One of the examples of doublespeak in action is during 2018 midterm election in the United States. The Republican Party won Presidency and majority seat in Senate in 2016 general election and has agenda to win more seats in the House of the Representative. Politico, a political media organization whose audience is mainly moderate, held an interview for then running Vice President Mike Pence in St. Regis Hotel, Washington DC. The interview is in part of a series named “Politico Playbook” and discusses a broad range of topics from anti-Semitism attack in Pittsburg, immigration, midterm election, the creation of the United States Space Force and media landscape.

Because swing states and moderate voters have great impact in election result, it is not surprising for both Republican and Democratic parties to spend a lot of time and attention campaigning for this group. Interestingly, the Vice President uses a lot of euphemistic expressions in doublespeak to mask the unpleasant things, at least according to him, at his favor. Whether downplaying the important or oversaturate the less important.

It is important to note that language has a great power in both communication and miscommunication and when politicians are using it for deception such as the interview, public, in this context American, should have sufficient knowledge and understanding because they make important decisions, in this context is the midterm election. Researching this interview would be useful for Indonesian public since deception is also done by Indonesian politicians while information about American politics is more increasingly accessible for some Indonesian.

## **1.2. Identification of the Problem**

Beside exchanging accurate information which is vital for certain aspect to function for benefit of society, language can also be used for deceiving and

misinforming self-servingly. Deception can be dangerous if it is done when communicating with the public. Doublespeak, including euphemism, is one of the means to deceive, especially when there are unpleasant association that is wanted to be masked.

### **1.3. Limitation of the Problem**

In analyzing the interview of at that time Vice President Mike Pence conducted by Politico, this term paper only uses euphemism kind of doublespeak and circumlocution, understatement and overstatement types of euphemism.

### **1.4. Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the limitation of the problem above, research problems in this term paper are as follows:

1. What are the utterances that contain the euphemism kind of doublespeak in the Interview of Mike Pence at “Politico Playbook Live”?
2. How are those utterances able to sway thought of the audience who watch or catch up the Interview of Mike Pence at “Politico Playbook Live”?

### **1.5. Objective of the Research**

Based on the formulation of the problem subchapter above, objectives of this term paper would be stated as:

1. Identifying utterances that contain the euphemism kind of doublespeak in the Interview of Mike Pence at “Politico Playbook Live”.
2. Exposing how the euphemism kind of doublespeak in those utterances are able to sway thought of the audience who watch or catch up the Interview of Mike Pence at “Politico Playbook Live”.

### **1.6. Method of the Research**

Referring to Bogdan and Biklen (2007, p.5), research that does not take form of numbers, but words or pictures instead is called qualitative research in which its descriptive data include interview transcripts, fieldnotes, photographs, videotapes,

personal documents, memos, and other official records. Bogdan and Biklen also state that it is very important for written words in both recoding data and disseminating the findings. The research of this term paper is considered qualitative since it takes form of words.

The transcription of the interview is referred from the White House Archive on April 26, 2021. It is professionally transcribed and uploaded on official government website; hence its legitimacy would not be disputed. Bogdan and Biklen (2007, p. 64) would classify this data as primary document source which are produced to keep records and disseminate by organizational employee.

The research of this term paper has data collection process that takes few steps which could be described as determining whether the research of this term paper is feasible by watching the video recording of the interview before obtaining its transcription to find relevant data. Then, both video recording and transcription are watched and read to find missing data and omit wrong data.

### **1.7. Benefit of the Research**

There are a lot of benefit of this term paper that will be earned once the research is completed that would be classified as theoretical and practical. The theoretical benefits are to provide information about doublespeak in the interview and to be a resource that would be useful in future research conducts while the practical benefits is to provide an example on how elected official uses language to sway thought of his audience.

### **1.8. Systematic Organization of the Research**

Reporting of the research of this term paper would be concise if it is constructed in a systematic manner that is:

## **CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains background, formulation and limitation of the problem and purpose, benefit and systematic organization of the research.

**CHAPTER 2 : FRAMEWORK OF THE THEORIES**

This chapter has theoretical framework that contains theories that are going to be used in this research and previous research study that contains previously conducted researches that are related with the research that is going to be conducted.

**CHAPTER 3 : DOUBLESPEAK BY EUPHEMISM IN MIKE PENCE INTERVIEW AT “POLITICO PLAYBOOK LIVE”**

This chapter discusses about the analysis of the interview as the result of the research.

**CHAPTER 4 : CONCLUSION**

This chapter contains conclusion and suggestion of the research that would be completed. Conclusion would be drawn from the objective result of the research; while suggestion is given for anyone who would use this term paper.

**ENCLOSURES : ATTACHMENTS**

Enclosures are given in the end of this term paper after references which are appendixes for scheme of the research, poster of the research, curriculum vitae, TOEIC result, presentation slides and control book.