

**FIGHT AMONG POLITICAL ACTORS ON PRINTED MEDIA
AS PART OF GENERAL ELECTION
HELD TO VOTE FOR REGENT OF BANGLI REGENCY IN 2010**

Ni Made Ras Amanda Gelgel
Faculty of Social and Political Sciences
Udayana University
email: rasamanda13@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In the era of after reformation, Indonesia has developed rapidly enough in political sector and mass media freedom. In the local level such as in Bangli Regency, Bali Province, the fight among political actors on the printed mass media took place when the general election to vote for the regent was held. The general election which was held to vote for the regent was full of dynamism in which the candidates fought against one another on the longer mass media. The problems of the present study are as follows: (1) what was the fight among political actors on the printed media when the general election was held to vote the regent of Bangli Regency in 2010 like?; (2) the factors leading to it?; and (3) what was the impact and meaning of the fight among the political actors on the printed media? The theories used in the present study were the theory of discourse of relation of knowledge and power, the theory of the impact of media such as the agenda setting, the theory of framing, the theory of media text analysis, the theory of hegemony, and the theory of capital. The research method used was the qualitative approach with critical paradigm.

The forms of the fight among political actors took place in the arenas of news articles, advertorials, advertisements, and paid articles. The fight taking place in these arenas started from the fight for the self-image of the actors to the political issue. The factors leading to it was political factor, economic factor, and mass media. The fight among the political actors affected political sector, economic sector, and cultural sector. The fight among the political actors on the printed media contained pragmatic meaning of the media and political actors, the image, popular life style, and change of political culture in Bangli.

Keywords: printed media, politics, general election, political communication, political actors.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of after reformation, every sector of life changed and developed in Indonesia in general and political sector and freedom of mass media in particular. These two sectors developed and met each other within the context of political communication through mass media. The fight among the political actors when the general elections were held to vote for the national and local leaders took place in the national and local levels. In Bali such a fight also took place. The data prepared by Kompas showed that in Bali there were more deviations than those in the other parts of Indonesia. Media were assumed to play an important role in transmitting and stimulating political problems (Negrine, 1996). The openness and freedom in expressing opinions had been a global trend; the political fraud was easily adopted as the national issue by the media (Firmanzah, 2007: 45).

In the present study, the general election held to vote for the regent in Bangli in 2010 was chosen as the object of the study for several reasons. The first reason was that there were many candidates; the second reason was that there were conflicts before, after and when the general election was held to vote for the regent in Bangli; the third reason was that reelection was held at several voting places; and the last reason was that the time during which the fight among the political actors took place became extended. The general election held to vote for the regent in Bali were attended by five pairs of candidates of the regent and deputy regent. This showed that there was a high political participation. Therefore, it was interesting to further explore what was the fight among the political actors on the printed media in relation to the general election held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency in 2010 like; what factors contributing to the fight among the political actors and what were the impact and meaning of the fight among the political actors on the printed media in relation to the general election held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency in 2010. Theoretically, this present study would enrich the cultural studies in general and political communication and the use of printed media in particular. Practically, this present study would help overcome and avoid the conflicts frequently taking place in relation to practical politics.

The theories used in the present study were the theory of discourse of relation of knowledge and power proposed by Foucault, the theory of the impact of media such as

the theory of Agenda Setting proposed by Dominic, the theory of framing, the theory of media text analysis proposed by Shoemaker and Reese, the theory of Hegemony proposed by Antonio Gramsci, and the theory of Capital proposed by Blourdieu. They were used eclectically and helped one another in analyzing the problems.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in the present study was the qualitative approach with a critical paradigm. Based on the theories and literature review, the object of the present study is the fight among the political actors on the printed media when the general election was held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency in 2010. Therefore, the research method used was the method of critical discourse analysis with framing analysis. The instrument used was an interview guide. The data were collected using the technique of in-depth interview and documentary study. The in-depth interview was intended to obtain wide information from the key informants.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The fight among the political actors on the printed media in relation to the general election held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency in 2010 can be described as follows. First, the arena in the printed media where the fight among the political actors took place could be divided into four forms. The political actors fought through the discourse of political issues and image. As stated by Bourdieu (in Ritzer, 2004: 252) that every candidate used discourses as one of the arenas to acquire power.

The forms of the fight among the political actors on the printed media could be divided into four; they are news articles, paid news articles, advertorial articles, and advertisements. Each area had its advantages and disadvantages. The news articles tended to be used as the arena where the political actors argued about the political issues, and the political actors who were involved in it were the pair of candidates IB Brahmaputra – Wayan Winurjaya (Brahmawijaya) and the pair of candidates I Made Gianyar – Sedana Artha (GITA). They argued that the general election should be repeated. Brahmawijaya showed that there were many indicators of deviations when the general election was held. However, such an issue was opposed by GITA who claimed that Brahmawijaya

intimidated the Panwaslu (the Supervisory Committee of General Election) and KPUD (the Local Committee of General Election) Bangli.

Advertisement was one of the other forms, which was used by the pair of candidates GITA. They showed the issue that they affiliated with PDIP. In addition, they claimed that they were cultured and highly educated. The political issue adopted through the advertisement was making Bali Shanti (Bali Peaceful) and voting from the heart.

Advertorial was the next form, which was used by the pair of candidates Wayan Arsada-Lasmawan (ALAS). Advertorial was used by ALAS to construct self image and their political programs. In the local people's opinion, they constructed the image that they were educated, highly appreciated the Balinese culture, close to the former regent of Bangli, Arnawa. In addition, they also constructed the image that they were simple and popular among the local people. ALAS constructed hegemony through advertorial. Gramsci stated that power should be understood as relation. ALAS was able to dominate the information transmitted to the subordinate classes so they accepted the ideas and political interests of the ruling group through advertorial.

The next form was that the fight among the political actors took place through paid news articles, which were mostly used by the pair of candidates Brahmawijaya as a means of their political communication. They also constructed their positive image through paid news articles.

From the forms of the fight among the political actors described above, the factors contributing to the fight among the political actors could be identified. There were three dominant factors which contributed to the general election held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency in 2010. They are economic factor, political factor, and mass media. The economic strength or capital was recorded as the most dominant factor leading to the fight among the political actors on the printed media. The paid news caused the costs needed by the political actors to communicate their political programs on the mass media to be high. At this point, the printed media were frequently motivated to obtain more benefit, meaning that the power of the market or the interests of the capitalist dominated the fight among the political actors on the mass media.

The political factor which contributed to the fight among the political actors was the political ideology of the pairs of candidates and their political parties and

communication strategies. Every pair of candidate had different capital. The capital strength became the consideration of the political strategy used by the political actors. The fight over the combination of capitals which was stated by Bourdieu in Richardson (1986) took place when the general election was held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency in 2010. The capital which changed its form also took place when the general election to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency was held. Among the three capitals stated by Bourdieu (1986), the economic capital mostly affected the fight among the political actors on the printed media. In other words, the economic capital dominated the social and cultural capitals.

The next factor contributing to the fight among the political actors was the media themselves. The media could be divided into two; they are the media staff and the media ideology. Shoemaker and Reese (1996: 76) stated that personal values would determine how a journalist made news. The interaction in which the political actor and media used each other was a common thing when a general election was held. Such an interaction had already been a routine when the campaign was held for a general election, including the general election which was held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency. The media routines which would charge expensively for news, advertorials and political advertisements could not be separated from the media's sources of funds.

The fight among the political actors could not be separated from every societal aspect. Such a fight widely affected and was meaningful not only to the political sector only. The fight among the political actors on the printed media also affected the economic sector and cultural sector. It also affected the system of political communication which used the printed magazine as a form of communication between the political actors and their constituents.

Its impact on the economic sector was that the general election was used as a means of obtaining as much benefit as possible. The media prepared space for the political actors to campaign their political programs. The space could be in the forms of advertisements and advertorials. In practice, it turned out that when the general election was held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency in 2010, the media prepared other spaces for the political actors such as paid news or popularly termed as the trading of news plotting. The price of one plot was different from that of another plot, depending on

the number of pages and the column length. The price ranged from Rp. 10 million to 16 million for every publication.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The increase in the use of the printed media as the arena where the political actors fought against one another depended on the economic strength of the political actors. The reason was that the fight among the political actors when the general election was held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency cost a lot. The political cost which was high enough was made higher by the cost needed to use the media to communicate the political messages of the political actors. Politically, this contributed to the high cost politics, which economically affected the political actors and the printed media. The political actors were expected to have sufficient capital; otherwise, they could not fight against one another. The hegemony of the economic strength in the fight among the political actors when the general election was held to vote for the regent of Bangli Regency on the printed media could dominate the knowledge which was developing in the community. According to Foucault, power is closely related to knowledge. Knowledge supports power, and power supports knowledge (Foucault, 1980: 98). Therefore, if the media cooperated with the political actors for the sake of economic and political interests, then the readers and constituents would be the final expectation. It was expected that the constituents would be the active and critical readers. They were expected to be able to choose and read that there were practical and pragmatic interests of the political actors in every article issued on the media. This was necessarily done in order to avoid the media from making the readers get ignorant through the subjective and dependent news.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In this opportunity, the writer would like to thank the three supervisors: Prof. Dr. I Gde Parimatha, MA, Prof. Dr. I Wayan Ardika, MA, Prof. Dr. I Nyoman Darma Putra, M.Litt. Thanks are also expressed to all the staff of the Doctorate Program of Cultural Studies, School of Postgraduate Studies, Udayana University.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Firmanzah. 2007. *Marketing Politik*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor.

Foucault, Michael. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews* (C.H. Gordon, ed).
Harvester: Brighton.

Negrine, R. 1996. *The Communication of Politics*. London: Sage Publication.

Richardson, J.E (ed). 1986. *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of
Educative*. Greenwood Press.

Ritzer, George, Douglas J. Goddman. 2004. *Teori Sosiologi Modern* (terjemahan).
Jakarta: L Kencana.

Shoemaker, Pamela and Stephen Reese. 1996. *Mediating The Message, Theories of
Influences of Mass Media Content*. USA: Longman Publishers.