A NARRATIVE STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF ASSOCIATED PRESS (AP) NEWS

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Abstract

Although there have been various stylistic studies of news, the use of narrative stylistic approach in analyzing news has not been common. The aim of this research is to analyze the stylistic domains and narrative components in the Associated Press (AP) news. It was carried out descriptive-qualitatively. Ten news were studied by using stylistic units of analysis based on model of narrative structure in Simpson (2004) and Jahn's classification of narrative components (2005). After completing the analysis, it was found that news is one category of narrative and it contains the use of six stylistic domains and nine narrative components. The six stylistic domains are textual medium, sociolinguistic code, action and event, point of view, textual medium and intertextuality. In addition, there are also occurrences of the nine narrative components: narration, focalization, narrative situation, action, story analysis, tellability, tense, time and narrative mode.

Key words: News, stylistic domains, narrative components

A. INTRODUCTION

One of the diverse factors which determines the language use is style. In their book *Style in Fiction,* Leech and Short (2007: 9) generally refer style to the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose. This means that a user's style is dissimilar to others at the moment of speaking or writing and it depends on the circumstance. It is what distinguishes one user to other users and one text type to others. Style is studied in stylistics, the study of the ways in which meaning is created through language in literature as well as in other types of text (Nørgaard et al., 2010: 1). Most researches in stylistics deal with the analysis of literary works while a range of discourse types can also be studied by using the stylistic approach.

There are various studies done by using theories in stylistics. Ufot (2014) analysed the elements of narrative discourse in Kole Omotoso's *Just Before*

Dawn. Narrative plot, narrative discourse, and chapter titles are analyzed in this study. Pelclová (2014) examined students' written stories with the focus on the applicability of Labov's narrative framework and its six categories to vernacular written narratives. Another narratology research was done by Taum (2018) who analysed narrative sequences of Panji Narratives in line with Todorov's narrative theory, especially in relation to narratology theory of equilibrium. They are different from the object of this study which is non fictional text in the form of news. Agu (2015) analyzed news reportage by using stylistic approach to study three levels of stylistic analysis (graphological, lexical, and syntactical). Pam (2012) examined features of grammar, lexis, and semantics in editorials. Badah (2017) also analysed news reportage by studying its thematic and linguistic structures. Murana & Abdul Wahab (2019) studied editorials by examining their stylistic devices. Lamichhane (2017) also conducted the analysis of stylistic features, but in news headlines. Lastly, Yuliana & Goeridno (2007) analysed news but the focus in the gender influence in reporting and reading the news. The novelty of this study is that this study uses narrative stylistic approach in analysing the news.

In this stylistic study, the focus is on the stylistic domains and the components of narrative which arrange news. There are six stylistic domains and nine narrative components. The stylistic domains noted by Simpson (2004) are textual medium, sociolinguistic code, action and event, point of view, textual medium and intertextuality. The narrative components noted by Jahn (2005) are narration, focalization, narrative situation, action, story analysis, tellability, tense, time and narrative mode.

Simpson (2004) identified six basic units of analysis in narrative description. The first unit is called *textual medium,* which refers to the physical means of communication through which a story is narrated. *Sociolinguistic code* is the next unit which comprises historical, cultural, and linguistic setting of the narrative. Sociocultural context of the story is reflected in it. The third of the six units is *characterisation 1* which contains *action* and *event.* In this domain, the relationship between character development with actions and events is shown. The use of 'thinking', 'saying', and 'doing' verbs deploys the characters' actions and events happening in the narrative. The second *characterisation* comprises *point of view* which explores the relationship between mode of narration and a character or narrator's point of view. The next unit is *textual structure* that accounts for the story's organisation. It focuses on how individual narrative is arranged in a story. *Intertextuality* is the last of the six narrative components. It accounts for the technique of 'allusion'. Allusion is the reference found in a text to media, social or cultural phenomenon.

In narratology, a narrative is analysed based on the components arranging it. Jahn (2005) classifies three broad categories of narrative components. The first of the three is narration (voice), focalization (mood), and narrative situation. The second is action, story analysis, and tellability. The last category includes tense, time, and narrative modes. The following parts will be the explaination of each subcategory of narrative components.

Narration is related to "who speaks" in a narrative. Regarding to the narrator's relationship to the story, the narrator in a narrative can be divided into

homodiegetic or heterodiegetic narrator. Homodiegetic narrator is one who plays a role as a character in the story. On the contrary, the heterodiegetic narrator means that the narrator does not present as a character in the story. The second subcomponent, focalization, reveals "who sees" the narrative. Focalization can be generally defined as the selection and restriction of narrative information relative to somebody's perception, knowledge, and point of view. It centers on the idea that a specific story is seen from whose perspective. Genette (1980) in Jahn (2005: N3.2.1.) distinguishes three major types of focalization: zero (unrestricted), internal (restricted to 'inside views', that is, views into or from within a character's mind), and external (restricted to 'outside views'). The third subcategory, narrative situation, refers to a more complex arrangements of narrative features. Jahn (2005: N3) reviews Stanzel's model of narrative situation. In the discussion of narrative situation, concepts such as first-person, authorial, and figural narrative are examined. The basic definition of a first-person narrative is those narratives which are told by a narrator who is also present as a character in the story. Narrating *I* is also the experiencing *I* on the level of action. On the contrary, authorial narrative refers to a narrative in which the narrator is absent from the story. The last type, figural narrative, means that a story is presented as if seeing it through the eyes of a character.

The second category includes action, story analysis, and tellability. Action can be simply defined as a sequence of acts and events (Jahn, 2005: N.4.1.). This definition strengthens the statement that a news is a narrative since it consists of sequences of acts and events. Abbott (2008) in Nørgaard et al. (2010: 120) mentions that one will not have a narrative without the existence of events or actions. The second subcategory is story analysis. It examines the chronological scale and coherence of the action sequence. This is closely related to the previous component, action. In the story analysis, the actions and events in the story are examined. This group pays particular attention to a sequence of acts and events which build up a narrative. Factors which make the story worth telling are considered as well. In addition, a story is required to be useful, informative, and interesting. Baroni (2014) noted that a text's tellability is dependent on whether it is significant or surprising and worthy of being reported in specific contexts, thus conferring a "point" on the story.

The last component comprises tense, time, and narrative modes. Tense and time deal with time and duration in the story. These are used in relation with the current point of time when the narrator delivers the story. In addition, Sanders & van Krieken (2018) noted that the time line in news narratives runs from the narrated events that took place in the past into the here-and-now of the journalistic narrating. Jahn (2005: N5.1.) generally divided a narrative into the narrative past and narrative present. The subcomponent narrative modes refer to ways by which narrative representation can be presented. In relation to tense and time, narrative mode is generally divided into scene and summary. It is defined that the mode scene (scenic presentation) is a mode which presents a continuous stream of action events in a detailed way (Jahn, 2005: N5.3.1.) while summary mode shows that a narrator delivers the story with a more thematically focused and orderly method.

This study focused on the analysis of news. The news was taken from The Associated Press (AP) News web page which was chosen for its popularity and reliability in reporting events happening in the world. According to 2020 Guide by thepopularlist.com and makeuse.com (updated on December 2019), this news portal is ranked number one and is noted as the most credible and trustworthy news agency.

The formulation of the research problem was stated as the following, "What components of narrative are used in news?". The analysis was limited to the analysis of stylistic domains which are used in constructing narratives in the writing of news in Associated Press (AP) news website. In addition, narrative components were also analyzed.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was carried out descriptive-qualitatively. It was categorised as a qualitative type due to the fact that the data were not presented by using statistic calculation. Dornyei (2007: 24) summarised that qualitative research involes nun-numerical data which are analysed primarily by non-statistical methods. This research were done in the scope of narrative stylistics to discover the stylistic domains and narrative components in news.

The data of this study were obtained in these following procedures. The first step was browsing the Associated Press (AP) news website. Ten recently updated news about COVID-19 were selected. After that, the selected news were saved in Microsoft Word file format. In the next procedure, the data were sorted out into the table of indicators which contains the categories of stylistic domains and narrative components that are used.

The data were first classified into each category of stylistic domains and narrative components. The data were put into one table containing six stylistic domains (textual medium, sociolinguistic code, characterisation 1: action and event, characterisation 2: point of view, textual structure, and intertextuality) and another table containing nine narrative components (narration, focalization, narrative situation, action, story analysis, tellability, tense, time, and narrative mode). After the data classification was completed, the data were analysed based on the theory in narrative stylistics adapted from Ufot (2014) who analysed the elements of narrative discourse. In addition to that, the components of narrative summarised by Jahn (2015) were also used in the analysis of data. Then, the results of data analysis were interpreted by describing it qualitatively. The results were presented and discussed based on the theories and related studies. Based on the findings of the research, a conclusion was drawn.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
1. Research Finding

After completing the analysis of the data, it was found that all narratives used news as the textual medium in narrating the stories related to COVID-19 pandemic. That news present the use of terms which are related to health and medical field. There are fourteen health-related terms noted by the researcher. The term *pandemic* which means "(of a disease) prevalent over a whole country

or the world" is the most frequently used term in the selected news. For instance, the term is used in the following datum:

> In New York, where more than 21,000 people have died during the **pandemic**, a large crowd in Brooklyn tossed water bottles at officers and torched a police van Friday outside the Barclays Center. (Datum 1)

By paying attention to the use of 'thinking', 'saying', and 'doing' verbs, the actions and events of a narrative are shown. Based on the analysis, the selected news display the use of the 'thinking', 'saying', and 'doing' verbs to deliver the narratives to the readers. This is shown in the following data:

> The church in the U.S. **is taking** a more pragmatic approach, allowing the use of individual spoons. (Datum 6)
> He **said** they still need to fine tune with the tower's management how to protect employees and visitors and to maintain social distancing. (Datum 7)

The narratives are narrated from the point of view of a third-person narrator. This is shown by the use of speech presentation in delivering the news. The most frequent type of speech presentation to be used was Direct Speech, for instance:

> "If you were out protesting last night, you probably need to go get a COVID test this week," Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said Saturday evening. (Datum 1)

For the textual structure, the narratives are arranged chronologically. In other words, there was no use of flashback, flashforward, or other time shift devices. However, in one datum that is datum 3, there are 8 sub-headlines which indicate several individual narratives in it.

For the sixth stylistic domain, intertextuality, it was found that allusion occurs in one out of ten lead paragraphs of the news. Allusion is usually used in the newspaper headlines, but in the collected data it was found in the lead paragraph of the news 7: *You may need a face mask to see Mona Lisa.* It has a reference to Mona Lisa painting in Louvre Museum, Paris.

This paragraph presents the finding of the narrative component's analysis. It was found that the narrators in all news are a heterodiegetic narrator. It was shown from the incipits of the data where the story-related action sentences are third-person sentences. It can be seen in the following sentences from datum 9:

> (Datum 9) At a small farmhouse outside Colombia's capital city, **Marlene Beltran picks up** a ruler and crayons. **She turns on** the radio, sits down at a creaky wooden table and helps her 5-year-old brother with a lesson on how to make paper cubes and decorate them with drawings that tell a story.

The third-person narrator reports the narrative without involving him/herself in the story. Since the narrator is heterodiegetic (one who is not

present as a character in the story), it can be understood that the focalization is external. All narratives are told from an outsider's view since it is a news that is being reported. The analysis' result shows that the narrative situation of the stories is all in the same type which is authorial narrative. It can be seen that there is no experiencing and narrating *I* since the narratives are told by a narrator who is absent from the story which involves other people.

The selected narratives show a high degree of tellability since each news presents a point which is related to COVID-19 pandemic. Each story presents a useful and informative story. In terms of the use of tense, there are narrative present, narrative past, and tense shift in the stories. According to the analysis, it was found that three data use narrative past and four data use narrative present. In addition, three out of ten data use tense shift in the story. The following data show the use of the narrative tense:

> (Datum 1) The massive protests sweeping across U.S. cities following the police killing of a black man in Minnesota **have sent** shudders through the health community and elevated fears that the huge crowds will lead to a new surge in cases of the coronavirus. (Narrative present)
> Minnesota's governor **said** too many protesters weren't socially distancing or wearing masks after heeding the call earlier in the week. (Narrative past)
>
> (Datum 3) Muslims in some parts of Indonesia **attended** Friday prayers as mosques closed by the coronavirus for weeks were allowed to start reopening in the world's most populous Muslim nation. (Narrative past)
>
> (Datum 8) Hamilton, who served with bomb disposal teams in Afghanistan and Iraq, **is working** with 10 children in a schoolyard in Manchester, England. (Narrative present)

The time analysis reveals that all stories are written in a chronological order with supporting details including past and future events as background information. In other words, there is no time shift. In addition, the mode of narration that is used in the ten news is summary mode. By using this mode, the narrator delivers the story with a more thematically focused and orderly method. Each news is written with specific topic related to COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Discussion

a. Stylistic domains in the Associated Press (AP) news

Based on the finding of the research, the stories related to the COVID-19 pandemic are narrated by using news as the medium. Common media to deliver narratives are novel, film, drama, music, and cartoon strip. In fact, they can also be narrated through other media such as spoken verbal interaction, faction book and news. In this analysis, the result reveals that the medium of narratives is news. News can be categorized as narrative since it refers to anything that tells or presents a story. The story of COVID-

19 pandemic contains signs that represent the narration. This is supported by Prince (1982: 26) who mentions that its date, duration, and spatial context are the signs representing a narration. The narration of COVID-19 pandemic is delivered by using news as the medium. A different kind of medium was analyzed by Ufot (2014). He analyzed *Just Before Dawn*, a faction book, where most of the characters and incidents in the book are real and the narrative is conceived and written as a novel.

Another domain is sociolinguistic code that is seen from the use of registers which denote the background of the story. In the collected data, there is use of medical-related terms which are common in reporting news related to COVID-19 pandemic. By considering Lee (2001) who noted that register "associated with the organisation of situation or immediate context", it can be understood that the news uses specific terms which are associated to the phenomenon of COVID-19. These terms reveal the linguistic background: the narratives are related to health and medical field. There is no certain dialect or accent being used in the news since it is in the form of news that uses language which differs greatly from the language of fiction and scientific documents and is particular in press and media.

The next stylistic domain deals with the actions and events in the narrative. To denote actions and events in the news, the writers use "thinking", "saying", and "doing" verbs. It is like what Simpson (2004) states that the use of verbs shapes our everyday experience. In addition, a narrative is not a narrative without actions and events (Abbott, 2008 in Nørgaard et al., 2010: 120).

Based on the finding of analysis, narrators in the selected news are a third-person narrator. This is the commonly used type in the writing of news since the narrator is a third-person who reports the events objectively. Sisakht (2014) summarized that point of view signifies the way a story is told. She noted that in a third-person narration, the story contains many happenings and characters narrated by the narrator without using pronoun *I* to refer to him/herself. In the case of news that were analyzed, the reporter/writer of the news reported the story as a person who is not present in the story.

Related to textual structure of a narrative that deals with the way a story is organized and examines whether a story has any time shift device, the result of the analysis shows that the news was arranged chronologically. The result is different from the textual structure of a faction book analyzed by Ufot (2014). The book, *Just Before Dawn*, is dominated by back-and-forth movement between the past and the present as well as the present and the future.

Out of ten news, one news contains the use of allusion in the lead paragraph. It is usually one of devices used in the making of newspaper headlines as it is noted by Mozūraitytė (2015). However, this study's finding shows that the news does not present the use of allusion in the headlines. It is only used in one out of ten lead paragraphs. This is different from what Mozūraitytė (2015) found where allusion is one of the devices used in the

making of the news headlines. Moreover, Nikitina, Lebedinskaya & Plakhova (2018) also noted that allusion is a feature of intertextuality in newspaper which has various sources highlighting all areas of activities such as culture, politics, and health.

b. Narrative Components in the Associated Press (AP) news

The analysis' finding reveals that all news is delivered by a heterodiegetic narrator, a narrator who is not present as a character in the story. This is because the narrators, in this case the news writers, report the events happening from 'different nature' of their world as compared to the world of the action. It can be noted that the narrator of the news stories is a narrator outside the story. It is based on Al-Alami's (2019) statement that a point of view is the narrator's position in the description of characters and events.

Focalization analysis shows that the focalizers are an external fixed focalizer. This means that the narrative is delivered from the perspective of outside view, i.e. someone who neutrally report the narrative without the inside view to the characters' minds. Since the narrator is heterodiegetic (one who is not present as a character in the story), the focalization is external. This is supported by Nieragden (2002) who mentions that external focalization is always heterodiegetic.

Narrative situation deals with the concepts such as first-person, authorial, and figural narrative. It was found that the data's narrative situation is authorial narrative, which refers to a narrative in which the narrator is absent from the story. Based on the analysis on the narration and focalization, it can be understood that narrative situation of the news is authorial narrative since the narrator does not act as narrating *I* in the story.

Action and story analysis deal with the text's primary story line. The finding of the research reveals that each news delivers different topic which is related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Similar to the third stylistic domain, characterization 1: action and event, the primary story line is marked by action verbs in sentences. These actions and events are vital part of each narrative. One will not have a narrative without the existence of actions and events (Abbott, 2008 in Nørgaard et al., 2010: 120).

The result of analysis on the news' tellability show that each story has a point which is being delivered and reported to the readers. This notes the tellability of a text. It is supported by Baroni (2014) who said that a text's tellability is dependent on whether it is significant or surprising and worthy of being reported in specific contexts, thus conferring a "point" on the story.

As stated by Jahn (N5.1.1.), a text's use of tenses relates to and depends on the current point in time of the narrator's speech act. Thus, the discourse's now and the stories now are different. Discourse's now is the current point in time in discourse time (the narrator's *now*) while story's now is the current point in time in story time (usually a character's *now*). In this

research, there are three data which experienced tense shift from narrative present to narrative past. The rest of the data used narrative past and narrative present. The shift in tense may signal a backward or forward movement in narrative time. This is supported by Sanders & van Krieken (2018) who said that "shifts from present tense to past tense may signal a move forward in narrative time, to a viewpoint in the future relative to the narrative now-point, rather than backward". Furthermore, time analysis's finding shows that the news is all arranged following the natural order of narrative. It can be understood that all news is told chronologically. This is similar to the fifth domain of stylistic, textual structure which deals with the arrangement of individual narrative in the story (chronological/anachronical order).

The last narrative component is narrative mode. The analysis' result reveals that the narrative mode used in the selected news is summary mode. The use of this mode means that the stories related to COVID-19 pandemic are delivered and reported in a more thematically focused and orderly method. This is in line with statement by Bonheim (1982) that by using the summary mode, the sequence of action events is condensed by the narrator to become more thematically focus.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Narrative stylistics is particularly used in analysing narrative fiction. However, it can also be applied to the study of nonfiction text such as news. Based on the results of analysis of the ten Associated Press (AP) news, it can be concluded that news is categorized as one type of narrative since it tells and presents a story about real events happening in the world. This can be proven by the use of six stylistic domains and nine narrative components in the writing of the news. The six stylistic domains occurred and analyzed in the news were textual medium, sociolinguistic code, action and event, point of view, textual medium and intertextuality. In addition, there are also occurrences of the nine narrative components: narration, focalization, narrative situation, action, story analysis, tellability, tense, time and narrative mode.

This study which mainly studied stylistic domains and narrative components in ten news still has a number of restrictions. This study only analyzed the domains and components of narrative in news from one news website. Thus, to obtain a more comprehensive study result, deeper research in many other news sources and other type of text is necessary. Moreover, it is suggested that the future researcher will study the narrative component in this type of text from different approach or will study other types of text such as biography, autobiography, or speech to be compared with this research in order to obtain better understanding about narrative stylistic analysis of non-fiction texts in the future.

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