

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 The Background of the Study**

When conveying messages through spoken or written language, very often language users do it metaphorically or incongruently. This is to say that metaphor has become so basic to our lives that we, consciously or unconsciously, speak or write in a metaphorical fashion. Surely, this will affect on the listeners or the readers' understanding in comprehending the messages. By this, metaphor will result in the complexity of the information. Halliday (1994:349) believes that the factor that perhaps tends most to determine the extent of metaphor in the grammar of a text is whether that text is spoken or written; speech and writing are rather different in their patterns of metaphoric usage.

While written and spoken texts have their own complexity namely lexical density (LD) and grammatical intricacy (GI), metaphor comes to be an influential factor to trigger the LD and GI of a text. A written text tends to be lexically dense but has low grammatical intricacy, on the other hand a spoken language is grammatically intricate but lexically sparse (Halliday 1985). The present study is interested in the spoken mode, specifically in a presidential debate, and puts Halliday 's interpersonal metaphor as an influential factor contributed to the ratio of the LD and GI of the text.

The preliminary data taken from the presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney support the above elaboration. When Bob Schieffer, the moderator opened the discussion by referring to the concerns about what happened in Libya in which four Americans were dead including an American ambassador, the two candidates responded by utilizing interpersonal metaphors of modality. Mitt Romney, who was given the first chance said, “*I think// we know now// by terrorists of some kind against our people there//, four people (were) dead.*”// to the congruent coding “*We will know// by some terrorists of some kind against our people there//, four people were dead.*”// Meanwhile Barack Obama also responded by employing metaphor of modality, “*I think// it’s important to step back and think about// what happened in Libya.*”// to the congruent coding “*it will be important to step back and think about// what happened in Libya.*”// To clarify, words in underlined are content carrying words. Both use clause *I think* which is categorized as metaphor of modality to give the prominence to their angle; to present what they believe to be true. ). In terms of the values of modality, the clause *I think*, which refers to certainty, has medium value. The congruent codings utilize modal *will* due to the fact that this kind of interpersonal metaphor involves the area of modality (Halliday 1994). Compared to the congruent codings, the metaphors of modality that the candidates used affect the ratio of GI and LD which is presented in the below tables.

**Table 1.1 The Preliminary Data**

	Mitt Romney's metaphor of modality: medium	Mitt Romney's congruent form	Barack Obama's congruent form	Barack Obama's metaphor of modality: medium
No. of clauses	4	3	3	2
No. of sentences	1	1	1	1
GI	4	3	3	2
No. of content carrying lexical items	10	8	6	5
No. of lexical items	17	17	15	14
LD	58.82%	47.05%	40%	35.71%

The above data show that the ratio of GI in the metaphors of modality are always higher than those of the congruent codings due to the increase of clause complexes. Interestingly, the same goes for the ratio of LD which is always higher in the metaphorical codings than the congruent ones. This is because both the number content carrying lexical items and the number of all lexical items increase. However, this is still preliminary data, therefore the possibilities that the ratio of GI and LD can be various each other must not be neglected. This brief data signifies that the debate shares the features of spoken and written languages in terms of GI and LD which are affected by the interpersonal metaphor.

Metaphor can be both rankshift downgrading (experiential metaphor) and upgrading (interpersonal metaphor). While languages of science, academic and technology belongs to the former due to the objectivity they

must provide, languages of diplomacy, politics and bureaucracy, which are some rather subjective tend to follow the latter (Halliday 2004).

The previous presidential debate of the USA's president candidacy between the incumbent president, Barack Obama and the Republican nominee, Mitt Romney in October, 2012 has always been a fascinating subject to behold; it allowed the citizens of America to appraise which candidate had all it took to be the leader of the country through the displayed eloquence, in addition to its enchantment as a trigger for ratings as it was televised, the the debate also tempted some experts to express their ideas about how both candidates attacked and defended through words they said. George Lakoff, professor of linguistics at Berkeley analyzed the debate and concerned with the performance, stating six basics that debaters should do. Specifically, the debaters should

1. state your moral values. Contrast them with your opponents,
2. project empathy and enthusiasm. Connect,
3. communicate clearly and simply,
4. be authentic. Say what you just believe,
5. project trust, and
6. present an authentic view of yourself that the public can identify with and be proud of.

Warner and Mc Kinney (2013) analyzes the effect of viewing a presidential campaign debate on political polarization. They analyzed the presidential debates and vice presidential in 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012 and concluded that viewing the debates increased political polarization, to name only a view.

In addition to those above facts, the presidential debates have surely become important commodities especially in the field of journalism and politics. Jamieson and Birdsell (1988 : 8) state that the debates that did occur were closely followed by voters who bought thousands copies of the more famous speeches and read newspapers packed with detailed accounts of local contests. It is surprising to note that there is relatively little research on presidential primary debates. However, what research is available suggests that primary debates are capable of influencing voters. (Benoit et al 2002 : 7). All the above reasons are the trigger to conduct the present study.

### **1.2 The Problems of the Study.**

The problems of the study are formulated in questions as the following

1. What types of interpersonal metaphor are used in the text of presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney?
2. How does interpersonal metaphor have impacts on GI and LD in the text of presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney with reference to congruent coding?
3. In what ways does interpersonal metaphor have impacts on GI and LD in the text of presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney?

### **1.3 The Objectives of the Study.**

In line with the problems of the study, the objectives of the study are



1. to identify types of interpersonal metaphor used in the text of presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney
2. to describe the impacts of interpersonal metaphor on GI and LD in the text of presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney with reference to congruent coding
3. to explain the ways interpersonal metaphor has impacts on GI and LD in the text of presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney

#### **1.4 The Scope of the Study.**

The present study applies the Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and the analysis is aimed at investigating the impacts of metaphor on the GI and LD in the text of the last presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney which took place on October 22, 2012 in Boca Raton.

#### **1.5 The Significance of the Study.**

The findings are expected to be worthwhile theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the findings will broaden horizons in the application of the Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) with reference to spoken languages. Practically, the findings can be utilized for the literature to conduct further researches in more various contexts.