

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

People need language to communicate in daily life, despite the fact that not all of them can fluently communicate each other if they can not get the true meaning of their interlocutors. Nowadays, speakers prefer to use metaphors to make their words more interesting. For example, when someone says “he got a green light”, and the listener feels confused cause there is no traffic light there. However, the speaker has another intention behind his words, yet the listener can not instantly catch the true meaning . In order to synchronize the real meaning of a communication between speaker and listener, semantics plays an important role.

In linguistics, semantics is known as a study of meaning through language. The influence of semantics can be seen in political sphere, mass media, or more simply in daily conversations. There are many kinds of semantics which relate to our daily language, one of them is euphemism.

The word euphemism may sound unfamiliar for some people, but in fact people use it constantly either consciously or planned. People mostly replace the inappropriate words with the better ones of their by using euphemism in order to make a harmonious communication. Euphemism technique consists of replacing words which referring to something offensive or indelicate to

make it sound more pleasant to be acceptable ones (Leech, 1981:45). For example, people are recommended not to say word 'epilepsy' directly in front of formal forums, it is more polite to say 'falling sickness'. From that example, euphemism is aimed to change something distasteful to be said to the polite words.

Generally, politics is one of the fields where the use of euphemism highly increases. It is due to politician intends to lead the society better by camouflaging the grim reality things by using euphemism technique. By using euphemism, people can see that their leaders or representatives are the good and characterless figures. People think the words that are used by their politicians always prim words, even though it is contrary with the realities. Allan and Burridge (2006:96), Euphemistic use in political language responds to the politicians' need that their self-image be appreciated and approved of in the community, that is, to the desire of maintaining their *positive* face. Whether owing to pressures from the political parties they represent, or on account of the need to appear sensitive and considerate, the fact remains that verbal politeness plays an important role in the politician's strategy to win people's favor. The more people believe them, the more the politicians can take the advantages from it, such as increasing of their reputation, and it will be affecting to their electability in the election.

In an attempt to convey the purpose of political ideas, as well as delivered about certain things, ordinarily politicians use speech that usually contains euphemism.

Since the function of euphemism can reduce the unpleasantness of term or notion, it is common that announcements of governments through speech that generally contain political substance will often resort them to understate the facts and maintain the dignity of the governments. For example, if a politician saying “over the top” to his rival, it means his rival just won a minimum number of votes in the election.

Actually, euphemism takes much in self-imaging of every politician. Some researchers had tried to find out the function of euphemism in the political speech. Abidi (2015) in his study of Euphemism in Tony Blair’s political discourse in the Iraqi war, concluded that euphemism was doing face work. It was mitigate face threatening acts for both of speaker and the recipient along with smoothly passing on the speaker’s ideology.

Furthermore, a comparative study of euphemism and dysphemism in English and Arabic in Political Discourse by Mugair (2014), concluded that euphemism play a quite essential role in demystifying the connotation of political discourse when serving political purpose.

As the complement of the researchers above, Fernandez (2014) in his study of Euphemism and political discourse in the British regional press, found that euphemism play an important role in the self-promotion for variety of purpose, such as avoidance of expressions that can be perceived to marginalize socially disadvantaged groups, polite criticism, even to hide unsettling topics.

From the three previous inspiring researchers, it can be concluded that to get the political purpose, politicians commonly use euphemism in their speech or discourse to replacing direct expressions by obscure the vague ones.

At two years ago, Cameron delivered a speech devoted to the radical group ISIS. The speech was delivered by him as the Prime Minister of UK at that time in terms of creating a conducive atmosphere for the people who feel threatened by the actions of ISIS. The using of euphemism in politicians speech in an incident like ISIS attacks can be supported by the theory of Burrige (2004:4) who says that, by referring to topics like a war or killing euphemistically, those topics might appear tolerable. Euphemisms create an excuse for such social actions and lead humans to perceive them with a respect.

B. The problems of the study

Based on the background of the study, some problems were formulated as the following:

1. What types of euphemism were used by David Cameron in his political speech on ISIS attacks?
2. Why was the most dominant type of euphemism in David Cameron political speech on ISIS attacks was chosen?

C. The objectives of the study

Related to the problem of study, the objectives of the study were:

1. To find out the types of euphemism used by David Cameron in his political speech on ISIS attacks.
2. To describe the reason of the most dominant types of euphemism used by David Cameron in his political speech on ISIS attacks.

D. The scope of the study

The scope of the study was the use of euphemism in David Cameron's political speech of the ISIS attacks. This study was limited to analyze the types and reason of using euphemism on four of David Cameron's political speeches on ISIS attacks in United Kingdom's official government website (August 2015-February 2016).

E. The significances of the study

The findings of this study are expected to offer contribution theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically, this study enriches reference of studying meaning from euphemism as semantics knowledge, especially in political issues studies.
2. Practically, for the researcher who are interested in doing further study on euphemism in order to be a reference or a comparison.