

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the Study

Vagueness is a natural language phenomena. Vague language becomes a central feature of daily language in use, both spoken and written. Vagueness relates to language meaning relates to language use at the pragmatic level of social communication. According to Joan Cutting (2007) Implicitness can be expressed with VL and other language features; VL can express implicit meaning but it can be taken at its face value. It means that the use of vagueness in language is common, and it clearly relates with the meaning which is dependent on the context, based on unspoken assumptions and unstated meaning.

Many proofs have been found by some researchers about the use of vagueness in language. In 1990, researchers came to see Vague Language as a central aspect of the communicative competence of the native speaker of English. Channing (1994) affirms that an expression or word is vague if :

- (a)It can be contrasted with another word or expression which appears to render the same proposition.
- (b) It is purposely and unabashedly vague.
- (c) If the meaning arises from intrinsic uncertainty.

Joan Cutting (2007) found the phenomena of vagueness in different genre : Poetry and Public Relation, Offices in UK and North American, British Courtrooms, Math Classroom and healthcare context. One of the articles wrote about how language used in Maths classrooms where language is supposed to be

formal and clear in meaning. However, in the classroom activity, vague language can still be found. Vague Language in Mathematics Classrooms', reminds us that mathematics is typically characterized as a precise and exact discipline, and that for students there are intrinsic and extrinsic penalties associated with 'wrong' or even hesitant responses to questioning. The analyses of the transcripts of talk in mathematics classrooms from primary school to university undergraduate, focusing on 'hedges' such as 'about', 'maybe' and 'I think', and teachers' linguistic strategies associated with 'politeness' (Brown and Levinson 1987) such as use of indirect speech acts, cited in Vague Language Explored (Cutting : 2007).

Cutting summarized and categorized her findings on vagueness in some areas like Poetry and Public Relation, Offices in UK and North American, British Courtrooms, Math Classroom and healthcare contexts to be :

- a. Vague nouns, examples : things, stuff, thing
- b. Vague categories, examples : and things like that, that stuff, that things.
- c. Vague approximators, examples : about..., sevenish in the morning, more than a half hour.
- d. Vague hedges of uncertainty, examples : I think..., I guess
- e. Vague quantifiers, examples : such as "many", "some", "all".

Vagueness appears in a field where language is used as the tool of communication. The phenomena of Vagueness appears in politics as well. Not only as the tool of communication, Vagueness is also used to show the language power. Politics is a struggle for power in order to put certain political, economic

and social ideas into practice. In this process, language plays a crucial role, for every political action is prepared, accompanied, influenced and played by language.

According to Wilson (2001), “linguistic options for representing the world are clearly, then, central issues in political discourse; utterances within the context of political output are rarely isolated grammatical cases”.

In line with Wilson, Edelman (2001) also notes that the functions of political discourse is to present proposals concerning actions and policies that ought, should, or must be pursued as well as what future realities must be prevented and what future realities are desirable.

Political discourse usually offers some information, deals, reconciliation, decision and regulations which covered in a form of language from an influential person in a community. The social status of language users, thus providing simple labels which evoke social stereotypes that go far beyond language itself. For instance, listening to a given variety, acts as a trigger or a stimulus that evokes attitudes or prejudices or stereo types about the community to which the speaker is thought to belong. The form of language used in political discourse is acknowledged as a political message by the hearer.

Most politicians speak vaguely (indirectly), as stated by Zheng (2000:2) it is well enough to say that political language is the tricky and the twisted tongue used of language. A politician hides himself behind these skills to attract other rival politician's face in order to improve his. Moreover, in political language vagueness occurs most often in the area of (party) political external

communication in which politicians communicate directly with the general public in order to convince them of their programs or ideas (cf. Strauss, 1986).

The idea of language used in Political is specific. The political language however never seems clear and direct. In this sense discourse is not an expression of the "real views" of those who use it; rather, it is an expression of what is regarded as needed, prudent, useful, or appropriate to cope with the actions and language of others. It therefore changes with the situation (Edelman : 2001).

Vagueness as an epistemic phenomenon – speakers have only inexact knowledge of the language they speak (Bussmann 1998, etc.). As stated by Brown and Levinson (1987), being vague is a kind of meta-strategy which state for conducting off-record Face Threatening Acts. Moreover, Edelman (2001) states that Because associations and meanings vary with situations, it is a common practice in political maneuvering to place people mentally in those situations that will evoke the reactions that benefit a politician or political party: to make audiences think about other countries as threats.

It means, language in political discourse tends to be vague specifically to be used as a weapon to win the audiences and to defeat or threat their enemy. Therefore, this language is the conscious use of language in a devious way to control the others' Pragmatically speaking, linguistic manipulation is based on the use of indirect speech acts, which are focused on prelocutionary effects of what is said. Therefore being vague and providing as many people as possible with interpretative clues for one's communicative acts which fit into their world view as well as in one's own political program is a highly complex and demanding task for a politician which he can only solve by using form and content of his

communicative acts in relation to a diffuse speech-situation. If an instance of textual vagueness occurs in political communication various groups of the audience should come to different interpretations of a text with recourse to different aspects of it. It is assumed that the performance of vague expressions in political language can be different than the other language discourse, as language is an important tool in politics.

It used to be the case, when thinking about politics and political discourse, that political speeches were considered to be the most salient genre (Chilton, 2004). Many speeches have become famous throughout the centuries, for example 'I Have a Dream', delivered on 28 August 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial, Washington, DC by Dr Martin Luther King, Jr or 'Blood, Sweat and Tears', one of the most famous calls-to-arms in history, delivered on 13 May 1940 by Sir Winston Churchill. The other one which is very famous is the speech delivered by George Walter Bush Jr after the attack from Afghanistan in September 2001, which is titled "A great nation has been moved to defend a great nation". Then Bush started his steps as the President who strongly fought against the terrorist in Iraq. (Eidemuller : 2008)

In his presidential period, George W Bush Jr has been the phenomena for the whole world because of his brave strategies to attack the Terrorist. In his speeches, American people especially and the whole people around the world had been confused by his unclear statements and decisions. Adapting how language is performed commonly in political discourse, Bush has been identified to use vagueness in his speeches. Many source of media, strongly criticize him

and finally exposed all the circumstances around him to bring him out of the Presidential duties.

The role as the father of America – who protects the country- Bush was disappointing his men (Americans) with his statements. Not only the American people, Bush was successfully got the predicate of “Vague and Illusory” from the Islamic Hamas Movement because of his statement : “ It was time for a new Palestinian statehood ”. The speaker of the movement told that Bush gave a vague promises by saying “time” since he did not mention the exact timetable and the Capital of the New statehood in his statement at the time he mentioned it. This statement is pragmatically vague if we refer to the context and the intention of Bush to deliver the speech about new statehood for Palestinian is to promote and persuade them politically. Bush kept his words unidentified clearly by the hearer, for those who did not understand language politically, this speech will work. However, semantically, the mention about “time” is also vague. Time refers to hour, day, month, year, decade, etc which is classified as vague noun. Time – as mentioned by Bush - doesn't refer to any of those definition above. (www.news.xinhuanet.com : accessed on 4 April 2014).

The other example of vagueness, in his speech “Freedom in Iraq and Middle East: Address at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy” in Washington, D.C. November 6, 2003, Bush expressed an uncertainty in his speech by stated that “Representative governments in the Middle East will reflect their own cultures. They will not, and should not, look like us. Democratic nations may be constitutional monarchies, federal republics, or parliamentary systems.” In the speech, Bush hedged the commitment he

asserted about Democratic. The use of “ may be “ here is to protect or to shield the idea about Democratic system in America or the other thought, Bush was not sure about American Democratic system at the time (pragmatically vague). However, the expression maybe shows uncertainty,doubtful. May be is signed to offer a choice (semantically) . The phenomena of vague language in this speech commonly performs and relates to government matters as opposed to the affairs of an individual or organization. They give insight into the political views of the speaker and may either sway listeners in their favor or not.

Moreover, A linguistic analysis of political discourse in general, and of political speeches in particular, can be most successful when it relates the details of linguistic behaviour to political behaviour. According to Beard : 2000, a political speech is not necessary a success because of correctness of truth, rather it may be a matter of presenting valid arguments. A political speech can change the mass mind. The language that used in a speech is usually filled with emotion, which can stimulate people or even rise some actions from public.

Bush, as the president of America in his term had performed his power positively to influence others. He wanted to show his political capital to perform a positive face by saying “Those who would lead a new Palestine should adopt peaceful means to achieve the rights of their people and create the reformed institutions of a stable democracy” in his political speech in Whitehall Palace, London,England,November 19, 2003. He was actually attacking the current palestinian rulers at that time, whose regime was claimed as the part of terrorist network. Bush, vaguely refered “those” to the people (countries) which are obsessed to lead palestine. Bush put himself and his country in “neutral” area so

then whoever the “those” referred to, will not be directly attacked by him. He did not clearly tell a name or a country, as his purpose was to show public that he supports and fights for Palestine freedom. This fact is supported by the theory that vague language softens expressions so that they do not appear too direct or unduly authoritative or assertive” (cited in Cutting, 2007). However, semantically, the word “those” is also vague. Who are “those” refer to in the speech, are they human (leaders of countries) or countries (governmental system) - this is performed unclearly.

The pronoun ‘those’, it can be differentiated with the noun vague classification. As those refer to some people (human) or the subject here, it will be appropriate to say that ‘those’ is classified as vague reference- since the hearers did not know who the ‘those’ in the speech was. The difference which has brought by President Bush in his speech, delivered a message of the development of vagueness in language. He performed the form of vagueness differently from the classifications that Joan Cutting found in 2007.

President George W. Bush Jr is one of many famous politicians in the world. With his language style in political speeches, he proved that he deserved to be honored by his people and frightened by his enemy. Many of American people and people around the world praised his political actions including the speeches which showed a bravery. However, many critics brought him down. George W. Bush Jr’s language used in political speeches become an interesting subject to be analyzed since he raised many critics or compliments about those.

2. The Problems of The Study

Based on the background above, the problems are formulated as the following :

1. What Vague statements are delivered by President George Walter Bush Jr in his Political speeches?
2. How the vague statements are delivered by President George Walter Bush Jr in his political speeches?
3. Why vague statements are delivered by President George Walter Bush Jr in his political speeches

3. The Objective of the Study

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

1. To identify the vague statements which delivered by President George Walter Bush Jr in his Political Speeches.
2. To identify how President George Walter Bush Jr delivered vague statements in his Political Speeches.
3. To identify why President George Walter Bush Jr delivered vague statements in his Political Speeches.

4. The Scope of The Study

This thesis will discuss about the use of vagueness in President George Walter Bush. The focus of the thesis will be on the political speeches that the President George Walter Bush delivered in his presidential period when he was claimed as the controvecial President in 2001 - 2008. these years of period is

administered because those were the year when Bush received strong critics and rejection from the public.

5. The Significances of The study

The valuable input can enrich the study on the development of language analysis especially in discourse analysis. It is hoped that the findings will contribute valuable ideas to the theoretical and practical aspects.

- 1) Practically the findings can be made as a guideline for public speakers or politicians in the process of delivering speech in a public. It is very useful to be careful with the language choice during speech is given, avoid the unclear meaning which can be spreaded as negative rumours in public.
- 2) Theoretically the findings will be useful to add more horizon in Pragmatics and sociolinguistics studies. These findings will be an idea for other reasearchers to investigate the language used in social context and its function in the society.