

AN ANALYSIS OF CONNOTATIVE MEANING
OF KEYWORD IN THE SCRIPT OF BARRACK OBAMA'S RACE SPEECH

A Thesis

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ABSTRAK

Dalam skripsi ini dibahas tentang kata kunci (*keyword*) yang terdapat pada pidato Barack Obama yang berkenaan dengan ras. Kata kunci memiliki batasan-batasan yaitu mengindikasikan suatu bentuk pikiran maupun aktivitas, membangkitkan semangat, menciptakan atau menjungkir balikan pendapat/kepercayaan umum, mempengaruhi emosional pembaca/pendengar dan mempunyai frekuensi kemunculan yang cukup tinggi.

Tujuan penulisan skripsi ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi pesan-pesan Barack Obama yang disampaikan melalui makna konotatif (*connotative meaning*) dari tiap-tiap kata kunci. Analisis ini dilakukan melalui tinjauan ilmu penandaan dalam suatu wacana (*semiotics in discourse*). Selanjutnya penelitian ini menggunakan teori kata kunci oleh Raymond Williams (1983) dan teori makna konotatif oleh Roland Barthes (1975). Hubungan antara kata kunci dan makna konotatif dijabarkan melalui tahapan signifikasi (*signification order*). Kata kunci yang ada dikaitkan dengan tanda (*sign*) yang terikat dengan konteks sehingga dapat diketahui pesan dari Barack Obama yang diinterpretasikan melalui dua tahapan signifikasi, yaitu signifikasi denotatif dan signifikasi konotatif.

Penelitian membuktikan bahwa Barack Obama menggunakan metode penandaan konotatif dalam menyampaikan pesan, motivasi dan pandangannya. Setiap kata kunci memiliki pesan-pesan moral, protes, penggerak semangat semua golongan ras, baik kulit putih maupun kulit berwarna, penolakan terhadap ketidakadilan, dan diskriminasi.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a system of signs that expresses ideas, and is therefore comparable to a system of writing, the alphabet of deaf-mutes, symbolic rites, polite formulas, military signals, etc, but it is the most important of all these systems (Saussure in Danesi, 2004:8). All people have language; it can be oral language, written language or body language. Language can be words, images, sounds and gesture that have a meaning (Chandler, 2002:2).

One of the ways to express the idea is by speech. Commonly, speech has words that are called keywords. Keywords are words which are used over and over in the text and are crucial to the theme or topic under discussion. A text may have several keywords. Keywords are most often words which represent an essential or basic concept of the text, and they are often thematic (Larson, 1984:177).

This research concerns on how language is used in form of speech and find out the meanings of each keywords. To analyze it, semiotics is considerably a good approach deals with this kind of circumstances. The basic definition of semiotics is the study of signs. The most dominant contemporary models of what constitutes of sign is that proposed by a Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure argued that 'nothing is more appropriate than the study of languages to bring out the nature of the semiological problem' (Saussure, in Chandler, 2002:5). Semiotics draws heavily on linguistics concepts, partly because of Saussure's

influence, and also because linguistics is more established discipline than the study of other sign-systems. Saussure referred to language as 'the most important' of all of the system of signs (Saussure, in Chandler, 2002:5).

Semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stand for' something else. In a semiotic sense, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gesture and objects (Chandler, 2002:2). Semiotics can be applied to anything which can be seen as signifying something. Semiotics analysis can also be applied to media text including; television, cartoons, newspaper and magazines article, posters, film, music, photography and painting.

Semiotics is now closely associated with cultural studies, content analysis is well-established within the mainstream tradition of social science research. Whilst content analysis involves a quantitative approach to the analysis of the manifest 'content' of media texts, semiotics seeks to analyze media texts as structured wholes and investigates latent, connotative meanings (Chandler, 2005:6). Connotative meaning means to 'stretch' language beyond its normal 'everyday' range of meaning. These concerns engendered in criticism a preoccupation with the techniques by which literary language works, and a concern to specify and differentiate these from the modes of 'ordinary' language (Lemon and Reis in Hawkes, 2004:45).

In many texts, there will be some keywords which will acquire symbolic value. They come to carry figurative or metaphorical meaning as well as the basic meaning of the word. For example:

By his death on the **cross**, Christ destroyed the enmity, by means of the **cross** he united both races into one body and brought them back to God. He died on the **cross** to put an end to the hatred and bring us both back to God as one people. (Ephesians, 2:16)

From the example above, the word 'cross' refers to wooden cross used for crucifixion during the time of the Roman Empire. However, for Christian, it has a symbolic meaning beyond the basic meaning. Symbolically, it means 'death' and 'suffering' (Larson, 1984:181).

Based on those facts, this research is conducted to find out the keywords of Barack Obama's race speech and relate each keyword to connotative meaning on semiotic point view. By considering this phenomena, that it is worthy to study the keywords of the Barack Obama's race speech from linguistics perspective in order to dismantle the real meanings behind it.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

This research is focused on two main problems. They are as following:

1. What are the types of keywords found in Barack Obama's race speech?
2. What connotative meaning can be derived from the key words of Barack Obama's race speech?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This research is an attempt to study keyword and its connotative meaning in written text of Barack Obama's race speech. In doing this research, the keyword found in speech and the process of identifying the connotative meaning of those key words are described. Moreover, this thesis help the readers to understand the meaning of a text more through its keywords, because knowledge of meaning is important to permit us to understand the word appropriately.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusion

Every text will have certain keywords, whether in the form of word or phrase, which are crucial to the understanding of the basic concept of the text. Keyword has several criteria such as high frequency of occurrence, the word can be build a positive or negative image, the word has power or spirit, the word that can create the implicit meaning, the word that empowers people to do something, and the word can create or turn out people's belief. It also can be applied in another study like translation, and it also can be used for analyzing the style and retrieving the text.

Those keywords will acquire symbolic value such as connotative meaning. Connotative meaning is generally unstable. It varies considerably according to such factors such as culture, historical period, social class and the general life experience of the speaker. The similarity between keyword and connotative meaning is a cultural reference that is connecting these two theories.

Having analyzed the previous data, it is concluded that in his speech, Barack Obama used the sign system to convey the intended messages, views and motivations in the connotative form of keywords. As found from the data, his intended messages told about the spirit to make a perfect union, spirit to fight against the racial discrimination, the protest for morality and humanity, and the belief in God, Christianity and the truth.

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