University Image Building through Online News Reports

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Abstract— **Currently, Indonesia is managing more than 4,397 higher education institutions (HEIs), eleven of which are pushed to meet the international standards. One of the standards is the presence of international students and international faculty staffs. These two indicators are also used by the ministry to rank the universities, with some incentives for those in the top rank. The universities then respond by inviting more foreign students and more partnerships with universities abroad. For this purpose, they publicize their achievement in their websites. The objective of this article is to examine how Indonesian HEIs present themselves to their potential students and partners through the news they published in their websites. The analysis is focused on how the positive attitudes are presented in the news reports. The data for the study were a corpus news reports published in the websites of Universitas Sebelas Maret, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and Universitas Indonesia. The theoretical framework adopted for the qualitative analysis in this study is that of appraisal (Martin & White, 2005) that develops from Martin and Rose (2003). The findings show that while all the reports seem to aim at presenting the achievement of the universities, they have different ways of doing so. Besides, the degrees of the appraisal or evaluation also vary between one university and the others. While, news report is only one of the ways to attract more students and partnerships, this study suggests that universities need an established journalist team so that they can present the positive image of universities through all the journalistic media available.**

Keywords— image building; positive attitudes; appraisal; online news reports

I. INTRODUCTION

Current society is characterized with the existence of information technology in all aspects. The rapid development of Internet has changed how business, including that of education, is managed. Websites have been a vital tool for higher education insitutions to build their positive image. Through websites, universities promote their identity and achievements, facilitate the recruitment of prospective students and provide information for current students through content. They are a major source of information and the largest communication tool between the university and internal or external audiences. Therefore, one of the university's main missions is to be strategic with its valuable and useful website content and to treat it as a critical asset.

The phenomena is also taking place in Indonesia. The internationalization program initiated by the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education has brought in some practice of commercial businesses. Referring to the ranking methodology managed by Quackuarelli Symond (QS) and Times Higher Education (THE), the Ministry is encouraging Indonesian universities to comply the system. Currently, there are more than 4.397 higher education institutions (HEI) in Indonesia. Indonesian public HEIs then try to invite as many partners as possible; especially by doing some marketing strategies. This is as what Arambasic (2009) found that on the one hand, HEIs have to attract a critical mass of customers; but on the other hand, they also have to meet the requirements of the government.

Therefore, marketing orientation for HEIs is becoming more and more essential. Marketing of higher education has actually taken place for decades, and the practices have also changed through the era (Alam, 2008; Ssesanga, 2004). All stakeholders, including the state, NGOs, foundations, and private companies, have long ago involved themselves in the marketing of education.

Education has indeed transformed into a revenue-, if not profit-, oriented business. Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) found that HEIs have adopted marketing concepts and theories that have been proved effective for business world; while Alam and Khalifa (2009) found that that motivation behind private education in Bangladesh is business-orientated. While advertisement in daily newspapers is the most popular way for marketing, HEIs in the country also publish leaflets, banners, posters, and prospectus. Advertising even takes on average more than 37% of the total budget. According to Leko-Stimac and Simic (2012), the marketing of HEIs is emphasizing on image and reputation creation and attracting new and alternative financial resources. In their practice, however, HEIs sometimes still neglect a number of marketing tools, such as web marketing, public relations officers, direct marketing aimed at potential, current and former students in order to improve the image and reputation of the institution.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

In the tradition of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), language is viewed as how it is functionally used to perform the social functions in social contexts. This perspective then recognizes three social metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions. Ideational metafunction enables language to reflect experience, interpersonal metafunction explores the roles and relationships among participants, and the textual metafunction portrays the unity of the text.

Developed from the notion of the interpersonal metafunction, Appraisal study is an attempt to describe, explore, and explain how "language is used to evaluate, to adopt stances, to construct textual personas, and to manage interpersonal positioning and relationships" (White 2001, p.1). Appraisal analyzes not only the verbal expressions but also nonverbal forms such as gestures and images (Martin, 2000; 2001). This theory especially analyzes how the participants evaluate other participants, events, or material objects. Therefore, the Appraisal model is composed of three subsystems: Attitude, Engagement and Graduation.

Attitude explores various ways of demonstrating evaluations. Expressions are regarded as those of evaluation when they attract readers or hearers to show their negative or positive assessments. Attitude comprises expressions of emotion, ethics, and aesthetics. In Appraisal study, these are coined as Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation (Martin & White, 2005; White, 2011).

Affect deals mainly with the expressions of the emotions shown either by the speakers or those other than the speakers or writers themselves. Such expressions of emotions show whether the speakers are happy or unhappy, secure or insecure, and satisfied or unsatisfied.

Judgment is concerned with ethical evaluation towards behaviors of other participants. The evaluation refers to the social norms and morality. In other words, this aspect of attitude looks at how participants pass judgment on others' behaviors. Martin and Rose (2003: 30) categorized judgment into personal and moral judgments. Personal judgment is then subcategorizes into admiration and criticisms, while moral judgment is further subcategorized into praise and condemnation. Furthermore, Martin and White (2005: 53) distinguished judgment into two major groups of social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem is an evaluation of a person's behavior based on norms or ethics based on limits commonly referred to as 'appropriate' or 'inappropriate' in a particular environment. Social esteem engages admiration and criticism with regard to things without legal implications. Social esteem consists of three parts: normality (how unusual/extraordinary someone is), capacity (how capable someone is), and tenacity (how resolute someone is) (Martin and White 2005: 54). Meanwhile, social sanctions are associated with formal rules or regulation. Social sanctions evaluate human behavior based on the rules of law, customs and religion or laws and laws within a society. Social sanction is then subcategorized into veracity (whether whether or not the person is honest) and propriety (whether or not the person is polite).

Appreciation is concerned with the aesthetic quality of material objects or events. The system of Appreciation has three variables: reaction, composition, and valuation. Reaction is deals with how the objects or events attract the speakers' attention, Composition shows how the speakers perceive the proportionality and the complexity of the objects or events, while Valuation deals with their social significance (Martin & Rose, 2003).

Research on Appraisal has so far been conducted in languages used mass media societies. Molek-Kozakowska (2013examined the mass media in the UK, Priyanto (2014) examined the evaluative contents of headlines of KOMPAS, one of the largest daily newspapers in Indonesia. Santosa (2007) and Santosa et al. (2010, 2013) examined the ideology of Indonesian news. The focus of the study has been around covert evaluation (Coffin & O'Halloran, 2006), sentiment evaluation (Fletcher & Patrick, 2006), and the ontogenesis of Appraisal of children (Painter, 2003).

III.   METHOD

Internationalization program of Indonesian universities has become increasingly attractive lately, as indicated by efforts to adopt ways of managing commercial business into higher education management. Colleges are competing to display the best

profiles, including through English language news texts. It aims to make a positive impression so that it will attract potential partners. In connection with this, this study exploits appraisal theory to explore the construction of the language of the news text on the pages of three universities in Indonesia. To achieve this goal, this study was guided through research questions as follows:

a) What topics do the universities' English news reports raise? and
b) What appraisal efforts are used in the the universities' English news reports?

The data for this study was a corpus of English news reports collected from the news pages of the websites of three Indonesian universities: namely Universitas Sebelas Maret, Universitas Indonesia, and Universitas Gadjah Mada University. For the reason of space and time, the analysis covers the news reports published in February 2019

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The corpus for this study comprises 23 news texts: 3 from Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS), 5 from Universitas Indonesia, 15 articles from Universitas Gadjah Mada. This next part of this article will subsequently present the findings in terms of the topic of the news reports and the way the news reports are exploited to create the positive image of the universities.

The efforts of image building were identifed through the construction of the language in the reports, with the help of appraisal theory (Martin & White 2005). The analysis of the linguistics will discover the attitude presented in the reports. This attitude aspect includes feeling (affect), assessment of a party (judgment), and an assessment of a product or service (appreciation).

A. *Topics of News*

The most common topic coverd in the universities reports is that of the outstanding events organized in each university. UNS chose to publicize their achievement of building a new confucius temple at the campus complex. UI presented only one article on their international collaborative research, while UGM presented five articles on the topic of their international conferences and pubic lectures by international scholars.

Another topic discussed is the achievement of their students and alumnae. UNS published two reports on this topic, UI published only one of the five reports, while UGM published two reports on this topic. The topic that UI and UGM wrote more is about the achievement of the institution and the scholar. UI write three articles, talking about accreditation, their international rank, and their opening dentistry class. Meanwhile, UGM preferred to write about their international rank and the achievement of their scholars for being the pioneers of 3D printing.

B. *Efforts of Image Construction*

The results of the analysis show two patterns. The first pattern involved the presence or absence of attitude: mediated and unmediated evaluation. While the second pattern is about whether the evaluation is inscribed or evoked through the facts presented in the news.

Mediated Evaluation
The mediated evaluation is usually presented through direct or indirect quotations from source persons. This way of evaluation is potential to generate greater positive image, especially when the evaluation comes from people other than leadership of the universities.

(1) "Although the number of Confucian students is not as many as the other religions, I appreciate the UNS' commitment to provide a Confucian temple in the campus," **Aji Chandra said** as one of the administrators in MAKIN Surakarta.

(2) **The Industry Minister said** what had been done by Faculty of Engineering UGM was research related to Industry 4.0. Hence, the government would boost good innovations to be made through fiscal incentives. He emphasised however that the scale and levels of research need to be increased.

(3) "Through these labs we hope practices done here can be the bridge to the real world," **said Bob Azam**.

Excerpts (1) and (3) are examples of direct quotations to show the attitude of the source persons. Aji Chandra's evaluation was presented in a news report on the ground breaking of a confucian temple at Universitas Sebelas Maret. Aji was quoted due to his position as the Chair of Confucian Community Groups in Surakarta. Meanwhile, Bob Azam was quoted in a news at UGM's website, presenting the inauguration of a new laboratory at Faculty of Engineering. Bob Azam was one of the managers of

Toyota, an outstanding car manufacture company. Excerpt (2) is an example of how indirect quotation is exploited to show a positive evaluation to UGM, especially Faculty of Engineering.

There are some instances where the evaluations come from leaderships of the universities. Below are some excerpts of such mediated evaluations.

(4) In his speech, **Rector of UNS, Prof. Ravik Karsidi** said that the existence of the temple shows the inclusive attitude of UNS. After the establishment of the temple, **Karsidi** also hoped that UNS would be a role model for other universities to emulate the UNS commitment as a Guardian of Pluralism. **According to him**, there has not been any state university in Indonesia, except UNS, which is able to provide the complete six worship places for the students.

(5) "Before joining this championship, all the things are all well-prepared so it increases the spirit of UNS Karate Team to give all their best," **she said**, Thursday (1/31/2019).

Unmediated Evaluation
While news reporters are supposed not to take any stance, they many times give evaluation directly, without mentioning any source person of the evaluation. This technique of presenting the evaluation occur in the websites of all the universities. Below are some examples.

(6) UNS **Wins** in Karate National Championship

(7) In the 11th UIN Suka Cup, **UNS achieved five medals**, one gold medal, one silver medal, and three bronze medals. The gold medal **was successfully obtained by Kata Male Team** which consists of Cukat Ainun Jiwo, Bayu Kusuma Jati, and Yogi Pranata.

Meanwhile, **Yogi Pranata achieved silver medal** from the category of Male Kumite under 21 – 78 kilograms (Kgs). On the other hand, **the bronze medals came from the category of Senior Female Kumite** under 68 kgs by Aprilia Yustiana, Male Kata by Bayu Kusuma Jati, and Female Kumite under 21 – 53 kgs by Ristie Yuni Astuti.

Exerpt (6) is a title of a news at UNS' website. It directly gives a positive judgment of capacity. Meanwhile, excerpt (7) is a section of the news report. These show how the news reporter presents a positive evaluation.

Invoked Evaluation
Invoked evaluation refer to that when the attitude is presented in such a way that does not exploit any attitudinal lexis. Below are some examples.

(8) Recently, said Rector, Google and IBM announced their intention to recruit **someone with good skills although they did not have university degrees**.

(9) 4ICU uniRank is a directory site for international higher education that reviews and ranks universities based on their websites. **It covers over 13,000 universities in 200 countries.**

Excerpt (8) is an example of an invoked negative affect of UGM's rector. By mentioning that Google and IBM would recruit people without any university degrees, he was showing his feeling of insecurity. He was worried whether his graduates would have good skills or not, or whether his graduates would qualify to join Google and IBM or not. The rector, however, did not explicitely express his insecurity. Excerpt (9) shows how the news reporter tried to give a positive evaluation to UGM who had performed best at 4ICU uniRank. This is done by mentioning the coverage of the ranking.

Inscribed Evaluation
While news reports are supposed to present facts, many instances show that evaluation is bluntly presented with the use of explicit attitudinal lexis. More than that, even the news reporters sometimes tried to present their direct evaluation. Excerpt (6) above is an example how the news reporter present the evaluation right from the beginning. This is continued in the body of the news text, which quoted only one source person. In other words, the evaluation in that news report mostly comes from the source person. Excerpt (7) is a section of that news report. Below are some more examples of inscribed evaluation.

(10) Three Ministers Receive Herman Johannes Award

(11) This collaboration is one of UI Vocational's actions as the flag carrier of vocational education in Indonesia, which has become a pioneer in producing graduates who are able to compete in national and international industries.

(12) Creat[ing] Advanced Laptop Bag, UNS Wins Award in Thailand

(13) By this **innovative** product, they could **achieve a bronze medal** and a special award from World Invention Intellectual Property Association (WIIPA) from the category of Necessary of Life.

Excerpt (10) is a news title at UGM's website. While the evaluation is attributed to the ministers, not to UGM, it still gives a positive value to UGM because the awarding was conducated at that campus. Excerpt (11) is taken from a news report at UI's website. Here, it is clear that the evaluation is presented directly, positioning UI as the *flag carrier of vocational education in Indonesia,* becoming *the pioneer in producing graduates who are able to compete in national and international industries.*

V. CONCLUSION

As elaborated earlier, news reports have been exploited to construct a positive image of universities. This short study was focused on how the positive image construction was presented. It turns out that the news reporters use both mediated and unmediated ways. Likewise, the evaluation is also presented both inscribed through the attitudinal lexis or invoked through facts or events presented in the news reports.

Further study is required to explore the graduation of the attitude. A deeper analysis on graduation will reveal the strength of each technique of giving evaluation through news reports, especially in the efforts of constructing the positive image of the institutions.

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