

# Representation of Language Awareness in Jokowi's Terms

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**Abstract**—The era of information and communication technology has many challenges faced by many people, including the language awareness of Indonesian users. Lack of awareness of respecting the language of the nation itself is a big problem. It should be noted, the use of the Indonesian language now does not govern the rules of Indonesian. It is an indicator that the Indonesian has experienced a decline in language awareness. This can be seen in a variety of language opportunities, for example at the speech. Speech should be delivered with the use of good and correct language. Therefore, awareness of the Indonesian language becomes a serious topic of interest by the language users and especially government officials to provide understanding and model. The government officials have a responsibility to provide Indonesian language awareness for the community. This awareness indicates that individuals should have positive attitudes and behaviors deals with the use of language correctly.

**Keywords**—Jokowi's terms, language awareness

## I. INTRODUCTION

The development of global information and communication technology have affected human life significantly. This includes the existence of a language as a means of communication. Each technological advances have a positive and also a negative influence on a language. The global flow of information and communication is impossible to avoid, but it must be admitted and anticipated to face the current of globalization.

During 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election, there are two Javanese terminologies that have become so popular and go in the political sphere of Indonesia, namely *sontoloyo* and *genderuwo*. These two words have made the national political stage commotion and viral on social media. Previously, the terms have ever uttered by some public figures such as Amien Rais talked about the word "*pemimpin sontoloyo*" (2008). Also, the head of BIN (State of Intelligence Agency) Syamsir Siregar mentioned "*menteri sontoloyo*" in the same year. However, this is not become remarkable thing when it is spoken by Jokowi. This reinforces the statement of Bourdieu, Thompson, Raymond, and Adamson [2] in *Language and Symbolic Power* that the meaning of words is not only understood based on the meaning from dictionaries, but this

depends on who says the words. The word *sontoloyo* is said by Joko Widodo, the current President of Indonesia.

Various linguistic policies have been applied, but they do not seem to have satisfactory results. This happens in Bahasa Indonesia. Although, there is an obligation to use a standard Indonesian language as a model, this indeed makes the majority of the community go away from it. Even, the impression that arises is not the growing of awareness of the use of a standard Indonesian as a single model offered by the government [7]. The government, without realizing on the application of the policies, it turns out that various forms of linguistic hegemony do not make the control of various national elements to be uniform and united. However, it blows to national fragmentation become increasingly gaping. The fact shows the concept of Indonesian as a united language is not achieved, but it is just an empty slogan that has been removed from its original reference symbol [7]. This paper will try to describe the representation of language awareness by Jokowi the current president of Indonesia and its implication.

The term language awareness (LA) is not easy to define. One of the essential underlying reasons for this is that work on LA is rooted in a wide array of fields of study, including linguistics, psychology, and education, to name but a few [6].

The word awareness derives from the word 'aware' which means knowing that something exists, or having knowledge or experience of a particular thing. The second meaning of this word is: having special interest in or experience of something and so knowing what is happening in that subject at the present time [9]. Then, the word awareness means knowledge that something exists, or understanding of a situation or subject at the present time based on information or experience. Awareness can also be interpreted as a condition of a person who has complete control of internal and external impulses so that awareness is synonymous with awareness.

Language awareness (LA) refers to a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life [3]. This can be said that language awareness is the attitude of a person both personally and collectively responsible, giving rise to a sense of belonging to a language (<https://news.detik.com/opini/d-1533054/kesadaran-language->)

LA has two distinctive characteristics, they are: (1) it studies language in a larger social, cultural and ideological

framework by particular study, and (2) LA is an attribute gained learners' motivated attention to a language in [9]. The first characteristic will be used in this paper, since this will try analyze the language awareness by Jokowi as the feature of the language in social cultural and the ideological framework.

#### A. Level of Awareness

There are some levels of awareness, these are:

- 1) *pre-reflective awareness (awareness of something)*,
- 2) *reflective awareness (conscious action)*, and
- 3) *self-reflective awareness (self-aware)* [5]

However, this level does not mean to be understood as a series of consciousness, which appears in sequence. Those levels actually appear simultaneously. When there is an object of consciousness in front of people, their consciousness is built and directed at that object. Briefly, ego does not play a role in this matter.

#### B. Domains of Language Awareness

There are five domains of LA, these are: affective, social, power, cognitive and performance [4]

##### 1) The affective Domain

LA concern on attitudes and emotions. In this case LA is seen as a device to promote tolerance and understanding towards the different varieties of English and other languages.

##### 2) The Social Domain

LA focuses on the role of language in effective communication and interaction. This is a particularly strong motivation for LA work in multicultural contexts: social harmonization.

##### 3) The Power Domain

LA work prepared students to the ways in which language can be used as an instrument of manipulation. This means that LA is intended to warn people to the potential for language to be used as an instrument for manipulation. Thus it is possible to develop students' linguistic sensitivity and awareness, and to empower them in their own use of language.

##### 4) The Cognitive Domain

LA focuses on language pattern. The main goal is to promote LA in the teaching and learning of all subjects across the school curriculum and to know it's promising as a subject in its own right that could bridge the gap between native language and foreign language instruction.

This does not entail a return to traditional grammar teaching, then, because here we are also looking at language in use, at functions, at genres, and also at language learning processes.

##### 5) The Performance Domain

LA concerns on the hope that increased awareness will have a positive impact on learners' command of the language.

## II. METHODS

The data for this article are taken from several news online. Those are: Tribunnews.com, detik.com, Kompas.co.id, and Liputan6.com. The data are written in Indonesian language. The writer selected to examine some quotations of Jokowi statement related to his response on his opponent party. The quotations were selected as the unit of analysis of this article for a reason. This has become trending topic both in social media and in the political area. As Jokowi is the president of Indonesia, then all of his attitude, his language will become the sources of pattern for the community.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After observing those online news, the writer found three Javanese terms, they are: *sontoloyo*, *genderuwo* and *tabok*. Related to this, the writer wants to identify the language used by Jokowi and the reflection of his language awareness. Then it is observed its pedagogical implication.

Jokowi said the words: *sontoloyo* and *genderuwo* when responding to the behavior of political elites recently. He considers that it is harmful since this will create an uneducated system of democracy. For some reasons, Jokowi who usually never concern about the various political attacks from his opponents, now he reacts so that the two words appeared.

As a human being, Jokowi understands that 'the opposing party' has attacked him too much. He felt that whatever he has done was considered to be wrong. Building public infrastructure, such as roads, highways, visiting earthquake victims in Palu, dividing land certificates into residents, organizing the opening of Asian Games (ASIAN Games 2018) are all considered wrong. Even, when no rain falls in some places, so that those experiencing drought, it also considered as Jokowi's fault (Tribunnews.com.11/19/2018)

At first Jokowi reminded the public to be careful because there were many "sontoloyo" politicians. "So, before the election, there are many "unhealthy" ways used by politicians," Jokowi said further after attending the Trade Expo at ICE, BSD, Tangerang, (Detik.com uploaded on Wednesday 24/10/2018). Obviously, Jokowi's statement was aimed at his political opponents. As a result, various responses emerged, both pro and contra. For the Javanese, the two words are familiar.

From literature tracking, the word "sontoloyo", according to M Subhan SD (Kompas 10/27/2018) it can be found in the article "Islam Sontoloyo" written by Bung Karno in Pandji Masyarakat Magazine with Bung Karno's autocritical content that many Muslims have a narrow perspective, only in the level of "skin", not "soul". "Let us not to think of ourselves as believers, but let us realize. That many of us in Islam are still Islamist," wrote Bung Karno at the end of his article.

For people outside of Java, the two terms is something strange. Furthermore, when the community has not stopped commenting on the word *sontoloyo*, Jokowi once again produced the word *genderuwo*. This was spoken at the certificate distribution event in Tegal, Central Java. Jokowi

reminded the public to maintain unity. Also, he instructed that the people should not easily be influenced by politicians who like to frighten or what he calls a *genderuwo* politician.

The question arises, what exactly is the meaning of *sontoloyo*. Many people do not know the meaning of the word. Literally, based on Wikipedia, *sontoloyo* is the name for a work owner as a duck or duck herder or also referred to as a Duck Angon Builder (*tukang angon bebek*: Java). A *sontoloyo* usually shunts hundreds of ducks by moving to the rice harvest season in the paddy fields to graze ducks. This definition refers more to one's profession (Javanese; *angon bebek*), a profession that does not require special skills.

What Jokowi meant was not the same as the literal meaning as written on Wikipedia. In Javanese, *sontoloyo* is the form of swear or invective referring to people who are considered annoying. The person cursed was considered inconsequential, stupid, as long as he plotted, ridiculous and so on. The point is that the *sontoloyo* meaning is related to bad or negative things.

When people are still having debating about *sontoloyo*, Jokowi used the word *genderuwo*. In wikipedia, *genderuwo* as a Javanese myth is a kind of genie, a living being resembling a large muscular ape with reddish black skin, its body covered in thick hair that grows all over the body. Simply, this is very scary. Like *Sontoloyo*, the word *genderuwo* meant by Jokowi is certainly not the same as the meaning based to wikipedia's definition.

For some people, it is not difficult to understand the meaning of *genderuwo* and to whom it is intended. Javanese mythology defines *genderuwo* is a scary or frightening figure that is associated with frightening places, old buildings, empty houses and so on. Javanese parents usually use the term *genderuwo* to frighten children in order not to play in those places, or not going out at night alone. "Watch out for *genderuwo*," warned the Javanese parents to their children.

In 2019 political contestation of presidential election, attacking opponents verbally is common thing. Jokowi's two words *sontoloyo* and *genderuwo* are certainly aimed at his political opponents who continue to attack him. If *sontoloyo* is addressed to political opponents who are considered 'originating' (in Javanese language: *asal njeplak*) to talk everything without supporting by valid data, ridiculous, stupid and so on, then the word *genderuwo* is aimed at political opponents who like to frighten people by raising issues - creepy negative tissue.

In a sociolinguistic perspective, every era of leadership is believed to present linguistic discourse which is different from other leadership eras. Jokowi, who was born from a Javanese family, grew up and lived in a thick Javanese culture (Solo) has introduced terms in Javanese that could only be fully understood by Javanese. The terms *sontoloyo* and *genderuwo* are carried in the political arena as a tool to counter political opponents ahead of the presidential election. Jokowi has applied these two distinct terms may it the only way or he is unable to find the right vocabulary in Indonesian to describe his political opponents who constantly attack.

Recently, in a different occasion, Jokowi said the word *tabok* to people who had accused him of being a member of the PKI (the Indonesian Communist Party). *Tabok* is also a typical Javanese vocabulary (Detik.com 11/10/2018). Many times, on various occasions, President Jokowi had explained that he and his family were clean from PKI elements, even when PKI rebelled in 1965, he was only 4 years old child. However, until now the claim still given to him. So, what does the word *tabok* mean? Based on the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) *tabok* means hitting (head and so on) with the palm, slapping.

Essentially, when the word - *tabok* compared to the previous words *sontoloyo* and *genderuwo*, the meaning of the word *tabok* is harder. The two previous terms still consist of humorous elements, while the word *tabok* contains aspects of physical violence. This may indicate that Jokowi was very angry when he is accused as being a member of PKI. Because, PKI is a prohibited party in Indonesia. It can be imagined if someone is really proved to be a member of the PKI, moreover a leader, then his entire career will run out. The Communist Party is considered to be against the Pancasila, so it deserves to be destroyed. Joko Santoso (Kompas, 2/9/2015) this practice is called accusation language. Therefore, Jokowi's anger is very understandable. The statement illustrates that Jokowi's anger has reached the top.

Let us look at on the moment at last days of President Soeharto when his power began to be breakable by various opposition forces, He said the word *gebuk* to his political opponents. Inevitably, his comments also shocked the political world not only domestically, but also abroad. Because, Pak Harto was used to be calm in speaking and rarely makes rude words. Soeharto seems to have been unable to hold back emotions when his government began to disturb by people everywhere.

Apparently every leader produces a unique vocabulary according to the environment of the community and the socio-cultural background of the leader. We may still remember when Gus Dur became president (20 October 1999-23 July 2001) and Amien Rais as Chair of the MPR, who both came from large religious (Islamic) organizations, special terms with religious content also appeared profoundly, such as *istighosah*, *jihad*, *bughat*, *islah*, *bahtsul masail*, *tausyiah* and others. These terms can not be separated from the social and cultural background of Gus Dur who was born and grew up in an Islamic boarding school environment, and daily works as a cleric (*kyai*). Community members who are not familiar with Islamic boarding schools can be confused in understanding these terms. By Artha (2002: 42) Gus Dur is said to foster a *religiopolitical* climate, which can be interpreted as the rise of legitimacy in the use of religious symbols and religious excuses for political purposes. Because the discourse arises in a verbal form, Gus Dur is more precisely called building a climate of "religiopolitical politics", namely the phenomenon of language containing religious values used in the political arena, so that there are three components, namely religion, politics and language together in the container of political discourse.

In addition, it seems not to be outdone by Gus Dur, in his appeal to the political elites and nation holders in order to create a cool political climate, the PBNU as the largest mass organization in Indonesia is also actively producing typical Islamic boarding school terms, such as *taushiyah* (advice), *tawasuth* (middle road), *tawazun* (balanced), and *tasamuh* (tolerant) (Kompas, 31/3/2001).

If Gus Dur, whose background is in Islamic boarding schools with a strong Islamic tradition, fosters the phenomenon of "religiopolitical linguistics", then Jokowi, whose social and cultural background is thick (Solo), unwittingly he has developed what is called as an "ethnopoliticalinguistics", namely the phenomenon of certain ethnic languages used in the political arena.

The emergence of such phenomena illustrates that society has a very loose space for expression an ongoing democratization in Indonesia. On the one hand, the writer feels anxious when the competition of political elites can worsen the atmosphere of life of the nation and state. On the other hand, this can be observed the emergence of interesting linguistic phenomena. Since, language is not only serve as a means of communication as its essential function, but also as a tool for the struggle of political elites. Marsudi et al. (2013) explained that for leaders, language can be used as a tool to preserve their power. Furthermore, they added that to control the mind of the people, they need a communication tool that could reach all levels of society. In political language, the language of the leaders can be used to persuade and to take certain actions to achieve the goals and personal interests of the leaders. As said by Anwar [1] that political language can achieve high elusiveness, that is, it can cover terrible into pleasant, bad become good, and threats are expressed smoothly and civilized.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Information, ideas, opinions, political attitudes, imagination and policy choices are all delivered through language. Academically, such phenomena can develop diachronic linguistic studies more freely. Apart from mass

media, public figures in this case the president is the effective language producers. The style of elite language is usually imitated by followers, and at least it can become a field of discussion from various points of view.

The question is it an effective way to use such terms to build strength in political setting? To answer this, linguists and political science can conduct research simultaneously. Diachronic language studies can bring together linguistic disciplines with other disciplines not only theoretically in the realm, but practically in the field. Along with advances and increasingly complex community dynamics, the meeting of two or more different disciplines to see the same problem is not something new. *Ethnopoliticalinguistic* phenomena offers to be contemplated by experts and enthusiasts of diachronic language studies to build a society with polite language in this country.

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