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ENGLISH AND INDONESIAN NEWSPAPER HEADLINES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LEXICAL FEATURES

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Abstract:

This paper aims to investigate the lexical features of newspaper headlines with a case of English and Indonesian online newspaper. Data were collected from the Sydney Morning Herald as the English data and Gorontalo Post as the Indonesia data. The data were analyzed quantitatively to find out and then to describe the lexical features similarities and differences in terms of the word classes, tenses, voice, and categories. It reveals that the English and Indonesian headlines are similar in the use of nouns, active voice and verb omission. The differences are in the use of tense, conjunction, preposition and acronym.

Keywords: newspaper, headlines, lexical features, English, Indonesian

1. Introduction

A headline may be defined as the outline that begins a story of news in the opening and located above the article of a newspaper, magazine and other written news. It aims to attract the attention of the news. Generally, headlines are not long sentences. Schulz (2007) argues that headlines news language is a notice of what to suppose before reading a news story. Journalists or news writer like to do this because they want to grab attention from a news reader. The headlines have important role in attracting readers to buy a newspaper and read them. Newspaper readers usually get attracted and fascinated to read a newspaper when they look at the headlines..

Reah (1998, p.18) argues that "in order to make headlines attract the attention of the reader, headline writers may select words that carry particular strong connotation, that is, carry an emotional loading beyond their literal meaning." It can be concluded that the headlines writer or news writer tend to play with lexis which is called puns. Puns are frequently used by the news writer since they have important role in the newspaper because the heavies are more likely to conserve puns for news stories and headlines which are considered soft (Keeble, 2006). Also, Keeble argues that the language of news is tangible and non-abstract. Moreover, Reah (1998) in her book said that headlines writer had developed a vocabulary that can fulfill the

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requirements of the headlines by using words which are short but still eye-catching. Words that are usually used in headlines are sometimes rarely used outside by people in common.

The paper aims to identify and find out the linguistic features of newspaper headlines, particularly on their lexis. It also investigates the forms and structure of newspaper headlines, especially in English and Indonesian newspaper.

This research focuses on investigating the linguistic feature between English and Indonesian newspaper headlines and describes the similarities and differences of the lexis of the headlines. This research does not investigate the aspect or influence of socio-cultural background.

2. Newspaper Headlines

The news means new information. The headline is a unique kind of written text. Headlines form a very important part of a newspaper. It has the capacity to encapsulate a story, and the headlines in a particular edition give the readers the overall picture of the current news (Reah, 1998). Sometimes, the space that a headline takes up is even larger than the item underneath it (Hildick: 1969, p.44). The purpose of a headline is to get the reader to read the item underneath, to attract the readers' eye and make them interested.

Furthermore, headlines are the newspaper points that attract readers to read a story in a newspaper or other mass media. Schulz (2007) says that language of headlines news is a signpost for what to think before reading a story. The journalists usually do this in order to grab attention from readers.

Newspaper headlines have very important role since headlines could attract readers to buy a newspaper. Usually, the readers will glance at the headlines to see whether or not it is worth reading before buying a newspaper. Often, headlines are displayed at public places such as at the train station, airport, and bus station and even at the red lights where drivers stop waiting for the green light. Therefore, headlines should be eye-catching, memorable and effective in attracting people to read them. Hence, newspaper headlines are almost usually written in short words which can be quickly understood by readers and also fitted in a small space on a newspaper. Newspaper headlines become more important on a newspaper since they represent and summarize the content of the whole issue reported in a newspaper. According to Reah (1998) said that *"headline has a range of function that specifically dictates its shape, content, and structure, and it operates within a range of restrictions that limit the freedom of the writer."*

Headlines are certainly revealing of the social, cultural and even more the national representations circulating in a society at a particular time. Taiwo (2007) states "Newspaper headlines are a rich source of information about the field of cultural reference and they can be sometimes difficult to understand especially when the reader cannot recognize the field, allusions, issues and cultural references necessary to decode the content. The reader must understand enough about what has been going on recently in the setting of the news, i.e., the reality that is assumed to be widespread in the society at that particular time".

2.1. Headlines Language

As has been said above that headlines have a unique form and usually very short since they have limited space in the newspaper. Also, headlines select certain words which are ambiguous and rarely used in order to make it attractive to the readers. Thus, headlines writer usually make headlines very short and fit it in a provided space. Reah (1998) in her book said that headlines writer had developed a vocabulary that can fulfill the requirements of the headlines by using words which are short but still eye-catching. Words that are usually used in headlines are sometimes rarely used outside by people in common. The headlines writer sometimes take some words that people know such as words from a movie, book titles or TV programs that make the headlines more attractive. Every culture will have a different range of familiar expression and phrases and sayings from books, TV, etc., i.e., English headlines might use a love book title which has the same story with the headlines to be written. Other headlines writer will also use the language based on where they live. Since the headlines have the main role in a story on a newspaper in order to attract people to read, the writer usually uses words that have literal or strong meaning. According to Reah (1998, p.18) says that "in order to make headlines attract the attention of the reader, headline writers may select words that carry particular strong connotation, that is, carry an emotional loading beyond their literal meaning." This can be said that the headlines writer or news writer in general play with words and this is called puns. Puns are always used by the writer as they are very important in the newspaper and also the heavies are more likely to reserve puns for soft news stories and headlines (Keeble, 2006). Also, Keeble in his book states that news language is concrete and non-abstract.

2.2. Newspaper Headlines Complexity

There are a few types of research in newspaper headlines that observed the complexity of the headlines writing such as ellipses, noun/verb phrase, lexical and syntactical items, textual analysis or writing style and ideology and social impact influence.

2.2.1. Ellipses

A study of the subject ellipses of Chinese news headlines found that ellipses are used more frequently in Chinese headlines especially in Hong Kong and Macau newspapers. This is different compared to English news headlines which do not use ellipses frequently. In addition, it is assumed that in Hong Kong newspapers, readers have more knowledge of pragmatic compared to the Macau newspaper readers (Chin and Tsou, 2000).

De Lange (2008) in his headlines study of article omission in headlines and child language observed the omission of the article in Dutch, Italian and German. The results of the study found that there are both cross-linguistic differences as well as clear and interesting similarities between the patterns of article omission in the various groups of speakers. It is argued that the observed differences and similarities offer evidence for the claim that both children and adults omit articles because of the processing cost necessary to retrieve articles from the article set. The more difficult the selection process, the more processing resources are required for the selection of an article judgments on whether or not articles can be omitted in a variety of linguistic contexts in headlines in their language.

2.2.2. Lexical and syntactical items

The study of newspaper headlines about lexical feature was investigated by Chin which is observing the lexical items of Chinese news headlines compared to Hong Kong and Taiwan. He found that Chinese news headlines constitute an entirely different genre. The findings of his study of the Chinese, Hong Kong, and Taiwan headlines are in content words. The geographical names are dominant in. The distribution is a contrast to most contemporary Chinese writing. The comparison of the headlines from Hong Kong and Taiwan shows that they have critical differences in the distribution of the cultural compatibility. According to Chin, the differences among Chinese, Hong Kong, and Taiwan are due to their socio-cultural differences. In addition, he concluded that Hong Kong headlines are more outward looking compared to Taiwan because Taiwan news headlines are more domestically oriented.

Moreover, Khodabandeh (2007) in her study of headlines complexity between English and Persian found the similarities and differences. She analyzed the variability of syntactical and lexical features and concluded that the headlines of English and Persian are similar in using dynamic verbs, active voice, short words, declarative sentences, finite clauses and simple sentences. The differences between English and Persian headlines are in the use of tense forms, headlines types, modification and words omission.

2.2.3. Clauses and Noun Phrase

The complexity of headlines has also been investigated by Brisau (as cited in Khodabandeh: 2007). He investigated and measured the complexity of headlines. In terms of clauses, Brisau found 264 examples out of 3000 headlines which contained two or more clauses. He concluded that in headlines, more complex structure than two very simple clauses linked together rarely appeared. Also, it is clear that headlines use simple and limited words and make the meaning unclear as what Reah (1998, p.15) states that "…headlines are of limited use in giving a clear overview on the news of the day, or the relative importance of the items". Maestre (1998) also investigated the complexity of headlines in terms of the noun phrase in Times newspaper. She explored the complexity of the headlines as well as distinguished between noun phrase in nominal and verbal headlines types. She found that the differences between nominal and verbal headlines showed that how much complexity is responsive to a stylistic and situational aspect of the context of the situation.

2.2.4. Tense

Furthermore, research on two different newspaper headlines in Indonesia Tiono (2006), which was investigating the tense of newspaper headlines, found that in Jakarta Post and Indonesian Daily news, the news writers use a simple present form which is to emphasize the event and its effect on the society. Those to newspapers also used the simple future form by deleting the verb and using to Infinitive that aims to create a question of what will happen

to the readers. The verb deletion is used to create a free interpretation to the readers before they read the story.

Similar condition inevitably occurs in the mass media in Indonesia. This becomes the main concern of this research which will look at English and Indonesian newspaper headlines and examine the differences in lexical and syntactical choice in headlines writing style. There is not sufficient research on the syntactical and lexical features of newspaper headlines described above. Thus, as explained in this literature review, several contrastive types of research on newspaper headlines have raised the question of whether or not similar features and style can be found in different cultures and languages. Therefore, given the inconclusive findings so far, this study will explore and investigate the application and the form of the syntactical and lexical features in newspaper headlines both in English and Indonesian, aiming to uncover to what extent these two languages are comparable in these domains.

3. Method

This research is conducted using a qualitative method which explains the similarities and differences of lexical features between English and Indonesian newspaper headlines.

3.1. Source of Data

The data consist of 600 headlines both from English and Indonesian newspaper headlines taken from online source on the internet. Sydney Morning Herald will be the source for English headlines taken from its online website (www.smh.com.au), while Gorontalo Post (hargo.co.id) newspaper will be the source for the Indonesian newspaper headlines taken from its daily newspaper printout.

The research analysis is emphasized on the lexical features of both headlines. It explores the systematic comparison of the similarities and differences between English and Indonesian headlines corpora. The research also will describe and analyze the structure of the headlines in terms of their categories, construction, and word classes.

3.2. The technique of Data Collection

The data is gained by exploring and browsing the resources of two newspapers in English and Indonesia. The period of time is from July to October 2010. The headlines are taken randomly five each from English and Indonesian newspaper per day during the period of time designated.

3.3. The technique of Data Analysis

The data are analyzed quantitatively to find out and then to describe the linguistic features of the similarities and differences in lexis of English and Indonesian newspaper headlines. The analysis of the study is emphasizing the lexical features of both headlines. It looks at the orderly evaluation of the similarities and differences between English and Indonesian headlines corpora. The data is also described and analyzed in their structure of the headlines in terms of their word classes, tenses, voice, and categories.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Findings

The lexical features analyzed in this study are included noun, verb, adjective, preposition, adverb, conjunctions, and pronoun both in English and Indonesian headlines in order to determine the frequency of their occurrence. According to Geldern (2002), lexical categories carry meaning and often words, with similar (synonym) or opposite meaning (antonym) can be found. Quirk et al. (1972) state that lexicology, in its most general sense, is synonymous with vocabulary and its technical sense; it deals with the analysis of words.

4.1.1. Nouns

The noun is a word that can occur as a subject or object of a verb or can be the object of a preposition. An adjective can also modify a noun and used with determiners. In traditional grammar, nouns are defined as a person, place or thing.

Hamilton puts hopes in big Benn's hands Big centre shows strong homemaker Pengawas proyek Rp 19,5 M ditahan (project supervisor of Rp.15 M is put in custody) Korupsi akibat pengawasan minim (Corruption due to low supervision)

4.1.1.1. Proper Noun

Proper nouns are specific names of people, places, days, months, and other specific things (Williams, 2005).

Indonesia seeking more trade with Russia China express air resumes half of its flights November, Gorontalo ketambahan listrik 150 KV (Gorontalo to have more electricity supply 150 KV in November) Warga Wonosari Pertanyakan PNPM (Wonosari's villagers questioning PNPM)

4.1.1.2. Common Nouns

Common nouns signify a general class of words used in naming (Williams, 2005).

Crash claims car-lock king Big fish back in old pond Waduk Toheti harus Didukung (*Toheti dam must be supported*) Harga Ayam kampung tinggi, permintaan seret (*farmed chicken gets more expensive, demand gets higher*)

4.1.1.3. Acronyms and Abbreviations

Words formed from the initial letters of a fixed phrase or title, are also popular and often equally short-lived (Malmkjar 2002).

<u>S. Korean auto parts maker wins us\$178mln order from BMW</u> <u>Afghanistan to improve literacy rate to 50% by 2015: un</u>

DPK kembangkan program biogas (DPK develops biogas program) Telkomsel alokasikan dana Rp 26 miliar untuk program CSR (Telkomsel allocate Rp.26M for CSR program)

The abbreviation is a reduced version of words, phrase or sentence (Crystal, 1992)

Afghan pres. Urges modernisation of jamhooriat hospital Afghan charges stalled Hague war crimes case KPK sita jaguar putri gubernur sumut (KPK seized the Jaguar of Sumut governor's daughter) Aleg Ngotot bentuk Pansus Agropotombulu (Legislative members formed Agropotombulu Pansus)

4.1.2. Verbs

The verb is an important lexical category. In English, a verb carries markers of grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, person, number and mood and refers to an action. On the other hand, in Indonesian, a verb does not carry grammatical aspect. There is no verb change in tense or person. It is marked by adverb in order to convey an action which happens today, yesterday and tomorrow. In English, the verb is changed based on the time and person while in Indonesia the verbs are still the same form for all subjects. Adverb has an important role to determine the tense of action in Indonesian.

4.1.2.1. Tense and Aspects

Tenses which are used in English as follows: The simple present tense is often used to refer to an event that happens in the present.

<u>Air controllers face punishment over school student incident</u> <u>Sludge plant suspect walks free</u>

The simple past tense is used to refer to an action or event that happens in the past.

<u>Remembering a life devoted to bringing babies into the world</u> Simple future tense is used to refer to an action that happens in the future.

Dirty coal station 'will be closed'

Poll: Will Hooker top Bubka?

To infinitive is also used to refer to the future action

Race ace to fly apace again in air space over Hunter Pakistan's oil & gas dev't co plans to drill eleven new wells

In the Indonesian language, the verb does not conjugate with the subject like in English. For example, I read a newspaper (saya membaca Koran) she reads a newspaper (dia membaca Koran). However, to indicate past, present, future or progressive action, adverbs of time are added, but the verbs do not change along with it.

The simple present tense is used to refer to event or action that happens in the present. Adverb of time is not added in the present action.

Masyarakat Apresiasi Dekab (*Community appreciate local parliament*)

The future tense is used to refer to an action that happened in the future.

Komnas HAM akan lakukan investigasi (Komnas HAM to do investigation)

Aspect refers to how the time of action of the verb is regarded such as whether it is complete, in progress or show duration (Crystal, 2004). However, there is no example found in both English and Indonesian headlines corpora.

Furthermore, there are many headlines which are unmarked for tense. They do not have a finite form of *be* or verb both in English and Indonesian headlines.

Ellis back in the picture for Pickers title shot Disiplin pegawai penting (Discipline for civil employees is important)

4.1.2.2. Voice

There are two types of voices both in English and Indonesia. They are called active and passive voice.

In English headlines, the verb be is always omitted.

<u>Scores dead and injured in Java train crash</u> Dishutamben dituding keluarkan ijin ganda (*Dishutamben alleged to have issued double permits*) The voice in this study is considered to examine the frequency of its occurrence in both English and Indonesian headlines.

4.1.3. Deletion in the Headlines

Words can be found in almost headlines in different languages. Omission becomes the major features of headlines. According to Turner in Khodabandeh (2007) states "determiners and the verb to be are almost universally omitted in headlines". It is due to space save that closed and some open words in headlines are often omitted into short in headlines.

New US\$500 mln Colombo cargo terminal planned in Sri Lanka Nurse's alleged killer sent to trial Imam Sudjarwo segera bintang tiga (*Imam Sudjarwo will become medal 3*)

It can be seen from the examples above that to be are omitted in English headlines. To be are also omitted in Indonesian headlines. The examples are given to find out the frequency of the occurrence of words omission in both two languages.

4.1.4. Word Syllable of Headlines

Generally, monosyllabic verbs and nouns are often used in headlines to substitute longer expression such as ex for former, o.k for accepting. This is made in order to find out the similarity and differences between English and Indonesian headlines.

Ex-Wife 'started blaze.' Perampok necis gondol perhiasan Rp 650 milyar (Robber smoothly stole jewelry valued Rp 650 billion)

4.2. Data Analysis and Discussion

The analysis of data was conducted to investigate the similarities and differences of the lexical features between English and Indonesian headlines. The analysis is of the lexical features was conducted at some level which is presented and tabulated in the following sections.

4.2.1. Part of Speech in Sample Headlines

In part of speech, there are ten parts of words that are classified: noun, verb, articles, adjective, adverb, numeral, article, conjunction, pronoun, and preposition.

The analysis is conducted by investigating the frequency of the different parts of speech in both sample headlines which are shown in the following table.

Novriyanto Napu NEWSPAPER HEADLINES LEXICAL FEATURES: A CASE FROM THE ENGLISH AND INDONESIAN CORPORA

Table 4.1: Frequency of different parts of speech in English and Indonesian headlines						
Part of Speech	English		Indonesian			
	Ν	%	Ν	%		
Conjunction	22	1.23	16	1.23		
Preposition	258	17.35	182	14.03		
Noun	912	61.33	832	64.14		
Verb	295	19.83	267	20.58		
Total	1487	100	1297	100		

 Total
 1487
 100
 1297
 100

 It can be seen that the English sample of headlines has more part of speech than Indonesian headlines. In order to see through the frequency of different parts of speech between both

samples, they are disseminated into the following sections.

4.2.2. Noun

The noun is one type of part of speech which consists of several kinds such as proper and common nouns. It can be seen from the table above that noun in Indonesian headlines outnumbered 64.14% than the English headlines 61.33%. The following is the analysis of features of nouns kinds such as proper and common noun in order to examine their occurrence frequency.

Nouns	Eng	lish	Indonesian		
	Ν	%	Ν	%	
Proper noun	191	20.94	240	29.59	
Common noun	685	75.10	507	62.51	
Abbreviation	15	1.64	21	2.58	
Acronym	21	2.30	43	5.30	
Total	912	100	811	100	

Table 4.2: The frequency of nouns in English and Indonesian headlines samples

As can be seen in the table that proper nouns and acronyms are more in the Indonesian headlines corpora about 29.59% and 5.30% respectively compared to the English headlines corpora.

4.2.3. Verbs

Verbs are one of the most used words in headlines. In table 4.1 shows that verbs occurred 19.83% and 20.58% respectively in the English and Indonesian headlines samples. In this part, the features of verbs used in headlines of both languages will be analyzed.

4.2.3.1. Tense and Aspect Forms

The tenses and their aspects are analyzed in order to find out the frequency of occurrence in both headlines.

Novriyanto Napu NEWSPAPER HEADLINES LEXICAL FEATURES: A CASE FROM THE ENGLISH AND INDONESIAN CORPORA

Tense forms	Eng	glish	Indonesian		
	Ν	%	Ν	%	
Present	226	77.93	378	96	
Past	28	9.65	6	1.56	
Future	36	12.41	9	2.29	
Present progressive	-		-		
Present perfect	-		-		
Total	290	100	393	100	

It is seen that Indonesian headlines contain more present tense in almost samples about 96%.

4.2.3.2. Voice

The following table shows the distribution of active and passive forms in both English and Indonesian headlines samples.

Voice En	English		Indonesian		
	%	Ν	%		
Active	179	74.27	191	79.58	
Passive	62	25.72	49	20.41	
Total	241	100	240	100	

Table 4 4. The frequency of active and passive voice in English and Indonesian headlines

It can be seen that both English and Indonesian headlines contain more active verbs construction about 74.27% and 79.58%. Passive patterns were used about 25.72% and 20.41% in English and Indonesian headlines respectively.

4.2.4. The omission of Verb 'be'

As has been stated above that the verb 'be' omission is the most common feature found in headlines. The following table shows the frequency of occurrence of the verb 'be' omission in both English and Indonesian headlines samples.

Table 4.5: The frequency of the verb be offission in the freadmites samples						
The omission of the verb "be"	English		Indonesian			
	Ν	%	Ν	%		
'be' as a linking verb	98	100	-	0		
Total	98	100	0	100		

Table 4.5. The frequency of the york 'be' omission in the headlines samples

In the table above indicates that the omission of verb 'b' as a linking verb is only found in English headlines corpora 100%

4.2.5. The omission of Word "say"

In headlines, the word "say" is usually omitted and replaced by a colon (Baddock, 1988 cited in Khodabandeh, 2007).

The following table shows the frequency of occurrence of the "say" omission in both headlines samples.

The omission of "say."	Eng	lish	Indonesian	
	Ν	%	Ν	%
Use of "say"	3	15.78	-	0
Use of colon	16	84.21	2	100
Total	19	100	2	100

Table 4.6: The frequency of the omission of the word "say" in the headlines samples

It can be seen from the table above that the use of a colon is preferred in both English (84.21%) and Indonesian (100%) headlines samples.

4.2.6. Headlines Length

In this part, the length of headlines was calculated in terms of the average words in both headlines.

Table 4.7: The headlines length of both samples					
Length of words in headlines	English		Indonesian		
	Ν	Mean	Ν	Mean	
Number of the whole words	2603	9.77	1949	6.49	
Number of headlines	300	8.67	300		

Table 4.7: The headlines length of both samples

The mean lengths of both English and Indonesian headlines are 8.67 and 6.49 respectively.

5. Conclusion

Some conclusions of quantitative similarities and differences between English and Indonesian headlines are found and described as follow:

- The dominant use of nouns. Both English and Indonesian headlines have more nouns compared to another part of speech about 64.28% and 72.41%.
- The dominant use of active voice. English headlines have 76.31%, and Indonesian headlines have 84.14%. Both headlines are more likely to prefer the use of active than passive voice construction.
- The use of the present tense. The Indonesian headlines had about 96.87%, and the English samples had 67.85%.
- The omission of the verb "be." The verb 'be' as a linking verb is mostly used in both headlines the number of verbs omitted in English corpora is 89.18%, while the Indonesian headlines are 100 %.

Furthermore, the differences between the two languages in headlines are as the following:

• The use of tense. Adverbs of time are used to indicate the time of an action. The verb form does not agree with the subject like in English.

- The use of a conjunction. English has more conjunction 2.1% more than Indonesian headlines 1.59%.
- There were more prepositions in English headlines 12.27% than Indonesian headlines 5.57%.
- There were more acronyms in Indonesian headlines corpora 8.42% than English ones 2.77%.

To sum up, the English and Indonesian headlines are similar in the use of nouns, active voice and verb omission. The differences are in the use of tense, conjunction, preposition and acronym.

5.1. Implications of the Comparison of English and Indonesian Headlines

The findings of this comparison bring out some implications in the pedagogical aspect and also the teaching of English for special purposes especially in journalistic teaching. Both teachers and learners can benefit from this analysis of English and Indonesian headlines. The teacher can use this as the additional information and in order to be aware and also understand the similarities as well as the differences between the two languages in headlines. In ESL/EFL class, the teacher can use the findings as a material in the class especially in a reading newspaper of the related languages and give them the overview of the features of the similarities and differences. By recognizing and understanding the lexical features of headlines, learners can avoid a misunderstanding in reading headlines and become familiar with the language style.

The teachers and learners of the two languages will be more aware and recognize the features of the headlines of both languages English and Indonesian in terms of lexical aspects such as the use of nouns and verbs or words omissions. Furthermore, this analysis also benefits those who are working with translation especially English and Indonesian. They will be aware of the different and similar features of the headlines such as the verb omission when they are translating (Khodabandeh, 2007).

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