CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

There are a lot of things that happen in this world; those concerning crimes, wars, political situations, economic matters, sports and entertainment events. In order to know those various pieces of information, one of the ways people do is by reading a newspaper.

When we read a newspaper to find out some news, the first thing we do is look at the headlines. From the headlines we can figure out what the news will be about, or else, we become curious about the news.

In making a headline for a piece of news, a news writer makes the most use of language. Language itself is a means of communication for human beings in giving information to others. The information can be defined as concepts, facts, opinions, or other information.

Some people play with language and respond to language play. And they get pleasure and enjoyment from it. People play with language when they manipulate the language; they break the rule of the language. The language play gives enjoyment for those who do it and others (Crystal, 1998: 105).

People, consciously or unconsciously, come across language play every day. People who always read newspapers every day, for instance, will find language play in the headlines and the news. There are a lot of newspaper headlines which consist of language play to attract the readers to read the news.

The news writers will make their newspaper headlines as interestingly as possible. They sometimes use language play in writing newspaper headlines for the purpose of catching the readers' attention. According to Crystal (1998:101), the language play in newspaper headlines is often used in the readers' favorite sections, such as sports and entertainment.

In making the headlines which consist of language play, the writers manipulate literally, which means that they "… take some linguistic feature – such as a word, a phrase, a sentence, a part of word, a group of sounds, a series of letters – and make it do things it does not normally do" (Crystal,1998: 1).

The language play in the newspaper headlines is effective if the readers know the rules of the language and know which part of the language rules that are being broken. The readers who have learned a foreign language, which in this case is English, and have achieved a higher level of education are more likely to understand the language play in the newspaper headlines.

> The language play in the newspaper headline is to catch the readers' attention – and apparently one of the best ways of doing this (in addition to using the conventional methods of increasing the size of the type, summarizing the content of the piece in a succinct, telegraphic style) is to introduce an element of language play. (Crystal, 1998:101)

We must have a certain level of language competence in order to understand the language play in the newspaper headlines because the language in the headlines are sometimes the language which we rarely hear or which we have even never heard before.

The writers need the readers' language ability and knowledge in understanding the newspaper headlines (Crystal, 1998:104). And in understanding the language play we need to have some background knowledge to spot the language play and to know the purpose of the language play used in the headlines. When we expect news by reading the newspaper, the headlines which consist of language play are bonus for us which give us enjoyment of news imagination by reading the headlines (Crystal, 1998:105).

In doing language play the news writers generalize the readers' education and background knowledge in understanding the newspaper headlines which consist of language play. The news writers disregard the sex, age, social background, or level of intelligence. The writers demand the readers to understand the newspaper headlines (Crystal, 1998:9).

I am interested in analyzing The Jakarta Post newspaper headlines because The Jakarta Post is in English and there is a lot of language play of various types in the headlines.

Therefore, the topic of my thesis is language play of the newspaper headlines in <u>The Jakarta Post</u>. I choose this topic because I would like to find out the language play used in newspaper headlines and the role of the readers' background knowledge in understanding the language play and the article content. I choose language play because I notice that almost everyone plays with language, whether consciously or unconsciously. When we have a conversation or write something sometimes, we play with language. The reason why we do language play might be on purpose or just for fun, and we get pleasure from playing with language.

The significance of my thesis is to find out the use of language play in newspaper headlines and to show some good newspaper headlines which attract the readers to read the news. I intend to analyze the language play of newspaper headlines based on linguistic theories. I use the theory of Pragmatics, Morphology, Semantics and Graphology as the approaches, and I also use the theory of language play in my thesis.

Statement of the Problem

In this thesis I would like to analyze the following problems:

1. What kind of language play is used?

2. How does the readers' background knowledge help them relate the language play and the article content?

3. What is the significance of language play in relation to the article content?

Purpose of the Study

This thesis is done to show:

1. The kind of language play in the newspaper headlines.

2. The readers' background knowledge which help them relate the language play and the article content.

3. The significance of language play in relation to the article content.

Method of Research

I use seven steps in gathering the data. First, I find and collect some newspaper headlines in The Jakarta Post. Second, I choose some newspaper headlines which consist of language play. Third, I find out the part of each newspaper headline in which the language play occurs. Fourth, I analyze the kind of language play in the headlines. Fifth, I find out the background knowledge which helps interpret the language play in the headlines. Sixth, I find out the significance of language play in relation to the article content. Last, I draw conclusion based on the analysis.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter I is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, Organization of the Thesis. Chapter II contains the theories which are used to analyze the thesis. Chapter III is the analysis of the data. Chapter IV is the conclusion of the thesis. The next part is the Bibliography, which consists of the

references used and the last is the Appendices, which consist of the list of data, table of data and the newspaper articles.