

CASE OF VENGEFUL WOMAN IN NEWS TEXT: SARA MILLS' CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Alhabiib Josy Asheva¹, Aulia Zahra Tasyarasita²

^{1,2}Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Sebelas Maret

¹alhabiibjosy@student.uns.ac.id, ²tasyarasita@student.uns.ac.id

Abstrak

Perempuan masih sering kurang terwakili di media dan isi beritanya lebih menguntungkan pria. Pembahasan penggambaran perempuan di dalam berita tidak bisa dipisahkan dari nilai dan ideologi seorang jurnalis. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menguak posisi subjek, objek dan pembaca di dalam artikel, serta mengidentifikasi ideologi penulis berita yang terkandung di dalam artikel. Kajian ini menerapkan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data di penelitian berupa kosakata, frasa, atau kalimat yang merefleksikan model Sara Mills pada berita yang berjudul Indonesian Woman Sends Poisoned Satay to Ex-boyfriend, Ends up Killing Delivery Man's Son instead dilansir dari asiaone.com yang diunggah pada 4 Mei 2021. Hasil analisis data dalam artikel menunjukkan bahwa posisi subjek dalam teks berita mayoritas menggunakan frasa benda untuk merujuk pada pelaku. Terlebih lagi, penulis memosisikan Nani, seorang pelaku, sebagai objek pada analisis posisi objek. Berdasarkan posisi pembaca, penggunaan kata ganti orang ketiga sering digunakan untuk menerangkan kronologi kejadian secara objektif. Analisis ideologi menguak bahwa penulis berita tidak mempunyai tendensi untuk memarginalkan maupun membela perempuan.

Kata Kunci: Representasi Perempuan; Analisis Wacana Kritis Sara Mills; Berita Online; Sate Beracun.

Abstract

The discussion of the portrayal of women in news media cannot be separated from the values and ideology of a journalist. This paper aims at investigating the position of the subject, object, and reader, also identifying the ideology of the author on the news article. This research applied the descriptive qualitative approach. The data source of the research is in the form of vocabularies, phrases, or sentences that reflected Sara Mills' model in a news text entitled Indonesian Woman Sends Poisoned Satay to Ex-boyfriend, Ends up Killing Delivery Man's Son instead obtained from asiaone.com published in May 04, 2021. The findings of the research show that the subject position on the news text mostly used noun phrase to refer to the actor. Moreover, for the object position, the author positioned Nani, the actor, as the object. Based on reader position, the use of third person pronoun is majorly used in order to deliver the storyline objectively. The analysis of ideology of the news text revealed that the author does not have any tendency to either marginalize or defend the woman.

Keywords: Women Representation; Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis; Online News; Poisoned Satay



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INTRODUCTION

Women are frequently underrepresented in the media and its content gives more favors to men. Mills (1998) states that women are commonly referred to in different ways in media reports than men. Men are commonly referred to by their jobs or appearance, while women are frequently referred to by their relationships with others. Moreover, Fowler (1991) agrees that women are stereotyped and labeled as a marked group through stereotypical portrayals. Some of the attributes of women in these descriptions are irrationality, familial dependence, and powerlessness.

The discussion of the portrayal of women in news media cannot be separated from the values and ideology of a journalist. It is generally believed that authors and speakers of a language make linguistic choices based on ideological considerations as “language is not neutral, but a highly constructive mediator” (Fowler, 1991, p. 1). The language in news media has been studied by linguists in a range of methods, one of them is using the Critical Discourse Analysis approach.

Many experts have defined the theoretical frameworks of Critical Discourse Analysis, for instance, Socio Cognitive Approach by A. Van Dijk, Social Actors Approach by T. Van Leeuwen, Dialectical Relational Approach by Norman Fairclough, Discourse-Historical Approach by Ruth Wodak, and Feminist Stylistic by Sara Mills. Through their own definition in each approach, Critical Discourse Analysis arrives at a point that this study deals with something that is actually untold in a discourse. Furthermore, Philip and Jørgensen state that “the primary exercise is not to sort out which of the statements about the world in the research material are right and which are wrong (although a critical evaluation can be carried out at a later stage in the analysis). On the contrary, the analyst has to work with what has actually been said or written, exploring patterns in and across the statements and identifying the social consequences of different discursive representations of reality.” (as cited in Kendenan & Sumarlam, 2018, p. 208).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) using Sara Mills' approach has always focused on the women's position in the media. Therefore, Sara Mills' framework is then called as feminist stylistic which refers to a feminist perspective. By referring to a feminist perspective, Sara Mills' framework conveyed how women are stigmatized whenever they are displayed in media. In addition, media displaying women is often drawing attention to how the text is biased. Women representation is also attaching discrimination since women are portrayed as a marginalized party. Thus, feminist analysis according Sara Mills' big background purposes to attract attention and to change the way gender is portrayed (Mills, 1995).

Sara Mills' approach tries to explore an actor's position in the text. In this case, the actor's position can be displayed through the choice of subject-object position and active-passive voice. By those choices, it will be clearly known who becomes the subject of storytelling and who becomes the object of storytelling. Moreover, after the position is clearly visible, it will lead to how the structure of the text and how the meaning is treated in the text as a whole (Hariyana et al., 2020). Sara Mills' Feminist Stylistic also involves both readers and writers' position in the text. The point of this idea is that the readers will identify which position they will place themselves according to the narration of the text.

The reader's position concept occurs in two ways, through the hierarchical truth raised within a discourse and the cultural code. The truth within the text makes the readers attach himself to the character and the situation that the characters face. Furthermore, the cultural code directs the readers' moral value when interpreting a text (Hariyana et al.,

2020). Besides, Haryana also adds that Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis model acknowledges the way gender relations are represented. Writer's authority to reflect his/her ideology through the text is absolute. Therefore, Sara Mills' approach serves the analysis of how texts are attacked by the ideology of the writers. The more detailed Sara Mills' CDA model can be observed below.

In the subject-object position stage, Sara Mills' model aims at exposing the tendency shown in a discourse by positioning the position of social factors, position of ideas, and events in the text (Feramayasari & Wiedarti 2020). This will reveal a particular actor as the subject of an event or a particular event. As a result, an actor with a higher position has the authority to determine the reality of the structure of the text that will be presented in society. The actor can also interfere with how he/she is portrayed and how other parties are portrayed.

Sara Mills' model does not only involve actors in the text in her model. Otherwise, she also introduced how the position of the reader is seen in the text. This idea obviously declines the point of view that states that this is only a matter of the writer's side so that the reader's view can be ignored. Reader position aims at recognizing and communicating with the readers by using pronouns such as I, you, we, and they.

In accordance with the reader position, the narrator could attempt to draw sympathy from the readers once negotiations between the writer and the reader are resulted in the text. Feramayasari and Wiedarti (2020) explains that the news does not only contain the creativity of journalists and the readers are not just a target by the media. So, the news results in a negotiation that involves the journalist as a writer and a reader. Thus, the reader is not only the one who just accepts the text, but also participates in transactions in the text.

Reader position requires two steps to be done in the analysis. The first is direct position and the second one is indirect position. Direct position, or known as meditation, deals with the decision of the readers to put themselves in which character in the text to interpret them. However, indirect position or the cultural code concerns with how the readers find the cultural code or conditions when learning the text. The code will help the readers to lead to the preferences that are good for them.

In addition, Bloor and Bloor (as cited in Darweesh & Abdullah, 2016) explains that ideology is a set of ideas that creates belief systems. Therefore, ideology requires a cognitive component that has an ability to properly account for the individual or group's conception of beliefs and beliefs systems. The beliefs systems are then spread by the members of a group of social actors. Thus, any cognitive representations in the social dimension are structured by particular ideology as it is underlying discourse and action of social groups.

As ideologies set a belief system for any social group, it is clear that ideology is seen as an vital aspect when establishing a discourse, because, as stated above, it underlies a discourse and action of social groups. In Critical Discourse Analysis, ideology is seen as a tool that constructs and maintains the true meanings that lie behind texts. Hence, Critical Discourse Analysis, through any models introduced by experts, is set up to reveal an ideological position that preserves identity, message, and goal that operate behind the texts.

Based on the foregoing explanation, it is interesting to analyze that there are not many studies in the field of online news that are comparable to this one. This research focuses on the feminism discourse and how women are represented in the text. Women

are typically portrayed in the text as the weak and the victims, a marginalized group in comparison to men. On the other hand, women strive for equality with men.

This research is urgently needed to provide a different approach on women represented in the discourse. The data to be used is an online news portal article. This article describes the characteristics of women who commit crimes in retaliation for previous mistreatment. This analysis is conducted using Sara Mills' theory of Critical Discourse Analysis to determine the perspectives of readers and authors.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research applied the descriptive qualitative approach. Fraenkel et al.(2012) proposed that descriptive qualitative research aimed at analyzing problems that should entail an interconnected analysis ranging from relationships, activities, situations, or material that further ought to be described and explained thoroughly. The objectives of the research are to investigate the position of the subject, object, and reader on the article, also to identify the ideology of the author on the article. The data source of the research is in the form of vocabularies, phrases, or sentences that reflected Sara Mills' model in a news text entitled *Indonesian Woman Sends Poisoned Satay to Ex-boyfriend, Ends up Killing Delivery Man's Son instead* obtained from asiaone.com published in May 04, 2021. The techniques done by the researcher are; first, the sources that explain Critical Discourse Analysis set up by Sara Mills are studied comprehensively. Second, the news text was read carefully and detailedly. Third, the news text was analyzed using Critical Discourse Analysis Feminist Stylistic model set up by Sara Mills. According to Sara Mills (1995), she manifested that her critical discourse analysis framework is in charge to examine women's position in a text since she believes that women have frequently been in the wrong position. Further, this model also targets to uncloak the position of the actors displayed to refer to who acts as the subject and who becomes the object of the story. In summary, the feminist stylistic analysis attempts to leak the undiscovered things that can be pivotal in the negotiation between the author and the reader in configuring each's point of view toward a discourse. The analysis started from identifying subject and object position. The last step was analyzing the reader position and ideology position of the author.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As previously mentioned, Sara Mills' critical discourse focuses more on the study of feminism. Sara Mills' feminist approach focuses on how women are portrayed in the news media. Based on the concept of how the position of actors is shown in the text, the researchers found how the author of the news put the actors as subjects and as objects on the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Subject Position

From the title of the news, "*Indonesian woman sends poisoned satay to ex-boyfriend, ends up killing delivery man's son instead*", the actor is represented as the subject "Indonesian woman" by showing the gender and the nationality. Since the data is taken from one of the portal news of Singapore, the author wanted to highlight that the actor in the news is a woman, specifically from Indonesia.

It is shown on the data that regarding the subject position, the author of the news article wrote the subject in the form of a noun phrase or pronoun. For example, in the

clause “*a vengeful 25-year-old in Indonesia recently tried to kill her ex-boyfriend...*” the subject of the clause is a vengeful 25-year-old in Indonesia. The subject refers to a woman in Indonesia which has stated in the title and the author added more information about the actor by showing her age and adding an adjective vengeful. According to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d), vengeful is desiring to hurt someone, often violently, in order to punish that person for having hurt oneself. This could mean that the author wanted to emphasize that the actor did a harmful action as an act of revenge because she has been hurt by another person.

The author also used the pronoun “she” to refer to the actor in the clause “*she bought a packet of chicken satay and sprinkled some cyanide into the accompanying sauce*”. This clause is formed in an active voice, therefore, the subject of the clause performs an action. As the subject, *she*, the actor, performed some actions which are *bought* and *sprinkled* toward the object *a packet of chicken satay* and *some cyanide*. This idea is also used in another clause of “*she will face the death penalty or life imprisonment*”. It means that there is a possibility of the actor having received the death penalty or life imprisonment as a result of her action.

Another way in positioning the actor as the subject is by addressing the actor as “the young woman” in clause “*The young woman then approached a delivery man*”. The author wrote this clause in an active form so that the subject is the one who has done some actions. In this clause, the subject *the young woman* performed an action *approached* toward the object *a delivery man*.

Based on the analysis above, the author did not directly show the actor in the form of proper nouns as the subject in most of the clauses. However, the author mostly delivered the subject position in the form of noun phrases, such as *Indonesian woman*, *a vengeful 25-year-old in Indonesia*, and *the young woman*. By delivering the subject position in noun phrases, it can be meant that the author wanted to emphasize that the actor is a woman and that what makes the actor looks degraded.

Analysis of Object Position

Object position placed the actor as the one who received the action by the subject. The data showing object position can be seen in this sentence; “*The woman, identified as Nani Aprilliani, was arrested on April 30 for premeditated murder..*” in this sentence, Nani Aprilliani received the action by the subject which may be the police and it’s always defined by subject. Another object position can be seen in this sentence, “*Nani was found to have purchased potassium cyanide, meant for use in rat poison, three months prior to the incident from an e-commerce platform.*” The sentence shows that Nani becomes the direct object who is expressed as an agent or doer as it is formed as a passive voice.

“*Nani will be charged with premeditated murder.*” In this sentence Nani also becomes the direct object who received an action by someone else and it’s always defined by subject. The other sentence contains a direct object as in “*The police are also on the hunt for an accomplice who allegedly encouraged her to carry out the act of revenge.*” the direct object in the second clause is *her*. This sentence is formed in an active voice so that the object *her* which refers to Nani becomes the one who received an action by the subject. It indicates that the police may have suspected someone who is considered influencing Nani to do the action.

Analysis of Reader Position

Through the results of the analysis that has been carried out by researchers, the researchers found that in the position of the author and reader of the news, the author positioned himself in a higher position through the mention of the subject "a vengeful 25-year-old" that is, indirectly, the author reproduces the meaning of certain bad behavior toward the woman or the actor.

In this text, the author mostly used the pronouns *her*, *she*, and *he*. Pronoun *her* is a singular feminine third-person pronoun. The pronoun *her* is used by the author to refer to Nani Aprilliani as the object position. Moreover, the pronoun *she* is mostly used in this article. It is used to substitute Nani Aprilliani as the subject position. The pronoun *he* is a masculine third-person and singular pronoun. It is used by the author in telling the chronology of the story to substitute the victim's name.

By using the third-person singular pronouns, the readers can get the complete storyline of the article from both perspectives which can be seen from two sides of subject and object position. Since the readers are positioned as outsiders in the storyline, this article employed a third-person objective to make the narration seem unbiased. By doing so, the storyline of the article will be delivered objectively.

Analysis of Ideology

Based on the grammatical feature, the author seems fair when delivering the storyline from both perspectives. The pronoun *she* and *her* to represent feminine third-person and singular pronouns. In this case, the author tried to tell the readers a complete story from Nani Aprilliani perspectives as a subject who has the authority to deliver her thoughts and as an object who cannot. Furthermore, the author mostly wrote the name of the victim rather than *he* as a masculine third-person. It means that the author intended to emphasize the victim's perspectives as his family becomes the wrong target of the murder.

Another aspect to reveal the ideological position is to identify the use of adjective words employed in the text. However, in the very beginning of the text, the author delivered a proverb to represent the action done by the doer. "*Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned*" this proverb does really hit the meaning that represents the action yet the story of the actor's life. Cited from nosweatshakespeare.com, the proverb means that there is no greater anger than that of a woman who has been rejected in love. Thus, the phrase covers a motive that leads Nani to do her action.

The text also contains an adjective vengeful which is according to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d), vengeful means desiring to hurt someone, often violently, in order to punish that person for having hurt oneself. The use of this adjective after the proverb that contains a word *woman* describes Nani that desired to take revenge on her ex-boyfriend. The use of adjective intends to portray the author's judgement about Nani's revenge. The last aspect is based on the use of active and passive voice. The researcher found that active voice is the most used form when the author delivered the series of the events both from the two sides' perspectives. In this case, the author put both Bandiman and Nani as subjects in order to tell the complete story from two perspectives to the readers. However, the use of passive voice is mostly directed to Nani as she is going to receive what she has done to Bandiman's family.

Discussion

Several studies that discuss Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis have been carried out, mainly with objects that discuss women. A research conducted by Andriana

and Manaf (2022) focused on the critical discourse in the novel *Berkisar Merah* by Ahmad Tohari with approach by Sara Mills. In the research, it is found that women are always excluded and treated poorly, and they are never given the chance to defend themselves. Another research conducted by Ahsin et al. (2022) which emphasized in analyzing the position of the subject-object and the position of the writer and reader in the news on sexual harassment in the media *cnnindonesia.com* in November 2021. The results showed that Sara Mills' analysis leads to the study of feminism, and can reveal how big the role of the perpetrator in the sexual harassment. That news discourse shows the author's alignment with the victim.

Research on critical discourse analysis using the Sara Mills model has also been conducted by Nurhasanah et al. (2022). In their research, it is examined how the news text becomes biased in presenting women and how the marginalization of women is formed in weakening the position of women.

Different to those studies, this research showed other results that can provide new insights of analysis using Sara Mills approach model. In this research, the results are found that by looking from the analysis of subject position the author wanted to emphasize that the actor is a woman and that what makes the actor looks degraded. Based on the analysis of object position, the author wanted to show that there is someone who is considered influencing the actor to do the action.

According to the reader position, the author wrote this article by employing a third-person objective to make the narration seem unbiased. By doing so, the storyline of the article will be delivered objectively. In addition, the author delivered the series of the events both from the two sides' perspectives by looking at the analysis of ideology.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research using Sara Mills' CDA model in analyzing women representation in a news text entitled *Indonesian woman sends poisoned satay to ex-boyfriend, ends up killing delivery man's son instead* written in *asiaone.com*, it can be concluded that the subject position on the article is mostly used noun phrase to refer to the actor. Moreover, for the object position, the author positioned Nani, the actor, as the object. Regarding the reader's position, it can be seen that the use of third-person pronouns which are 'her', 'she', and 'he' are found to be used in the article. By using those pronouns, both perspectives can be seen from two sides of subject and object position, thus, the storyline of the article will be delivered objectively. As the results of the analysis of ideology, it is revealed that the author did not have any tendency to either marginalize or defend the woman.

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