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A Critical Discourse Analysis on Controversial Case of Death Penalty for Mental Disability in Online News

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Abstract: This research aimed to find out the linguistics aspects that were used by each media in presenting the news about the controversial case of death penalty for man with mental disability and to discover the practice discourse, linguistics aspect produced and social practice that underlie the linguistics aspects used in issuing the discourse. The data of this study was the online news that was published by Detiknews, Okenews, Sindonews.com, Tribunnews, Tempo.com, merdeka.com. The method used in this study was a qualitative research method to approach critical discourse analysis. This study applied the critical discourse analysis theory of Norman Fairclough encompassing text analysis (microstructure), discourse practice (mesostructured) and sociocultural practice (macrostructure). From the result, we found that each media has different linguistics, aspect such as in selecting the dictions or phrases due to each media has each view, ideology and general description. In social view shows that society was disappointed to the Singapore government in doing the despicable and cruel action to the disabled people who need to be protected and does not consider the law of human right.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis News Media Sociocultural Practice

1. Introduction

Language is not separated from humans in daily life. The concept of humans as social beings means that humans need to interact with others for social interest. As cited by Kridalaksana and Kentjono (2014), language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols society uses to cooperate, communicate, and identify something. Language can also be a potent medium to convey something in thought or feeling. Besides, two forms of language are appropriate for language use, namely written and spoken, based on the purpose of communication.

The written language is the form of text containing word chains or pictures. Therefore, the language must be thorough in order to be understood by the readers. It is more difficult to understand than spoken language because it is not accompanied by gestures or body language. Media is one of the languages practised in society. Understanding the media requires more precision because it has value, ideology, and interests or meanings.

According to Darma (2009), media is not a mere representation of the event; it contains the values of media that make it. This means that in delivering the information, the media includes their perspective and

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view in interpreting social reality. According to Sobur (2009), media is not only a tool to inform the news of events or social reality, but it can also establish public perception or opinion. Even the reader can be a pressure group on an idea the other party must accept. So, the media can be called a source of information that always explains the event and how the event was intended and comprehended by society. In this digital era, various media can be used, such as print media (newspapers, magazines), broadcast media (television, radio), and online media (internet, e-newspaper).

Concerning the need for information, people would instead choose media that is affordable and accessible easily, such as online media. According to Romli (2012), online media is called cybermedia, internet media, and new media, and it is served on internet websites. Recently, in online media, especially in e-news, there is a controversial case about the death penalty for drug dealers that has become a topic of discussion in the world. Drugs are a big problem of all the countries that cannot be completed. Many countries assign people who do drug abuse to get the death penalty. It is based on the fact that the drug can pose a significant danger in the future and can weaken the national defence.

Therefore, in eradicating drug crime, the countries assign the constitution to drug cases which give the death penalty. This constitution aims to give a deterrent effect and awareness to the people who will be involved in drug crime. Nevertheless, according to the United Nations, the death penalty is not appropriate with international law due to it being involved with human rights. As claimed by Morris Tidball-Binz, Gerard Quinn, Felipe Gonzalez Morales and Nils Melzer, the human rights expert of the United Nations, the death penalty for a drug crime is not by international law. They also stated that the death penalty may only be imposed for the most severe crime. As cited by The Straits Times, some experts argue that using this type of punishment to prevent drug crime is not only illegal under international law, but also it is ineffective.

The case was more controversial because the man who was punished by the death penalty was a disabled man. Nagaenthran Dharmalingam was a Malaysian who was mentally disabled and had been given the death penalty on April 27th 2022, in Singapore due to the case of the drug trade. The case attracted global attention. Most of the online news spreads the information related to this case. Each media outlet has a perspective, ideology, and general description informing the case. Therefore, the research was inspired by some previous studies, such as the research entitled Analisis Wacana Kritis Fairclough Pada Pemberitaan Selebriti Di Media Daring by Rengganis Citra Cenderamata, Nani Darmayanti. It aimed to analyse the news of Mulan Jamila, who had been hijrah and was published in four daring media outlets, namely detik.com, liputan6.com, and tempo.co, dan tribunnews.com. And Critical Discourse Analysis of Online News Headlines: A Case of the Stoneman Douglas High School Shooting by Lombardi, Daria. It aimed to understand the words chosen by the journalists.

Hence, in this present study, the researcher intends to discuss the case of Nagaenthran Dharmalingam, a Malaysian who was punished with the death penalty by the Singapore Government, as informed in some online news media such as merdeka.com, DetikNews, OkeNews, Sindonews.com, Tribunnews, Tempo.com. This research will use the critical discourse analysis focused on the content of the case news based on the three dimensions of discourse: Microstructure, Mesostructured and Macrostructure by Norman Fairclough.

2. Research Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative. Djajudarma (2006) stated that qualitative methodology is a technique that produces the data descriptively in the spoken or written text that develops or exists in society. It also maps the data into a theoretical approach of critical discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough. The Fairclough approach in analysing the text finds out the three dimensions of discourse: (1) textual analysis / microstructural is a dimension to analyse linguistically in considering the word chosen, diction, semantics and syntax. (2) discourse practice (mesostructure) is the dimension correlated with the production and consumption process of the text. This means that discourse practice is used to interpret the text, encompassing how the text was produced, distributed, and consumed by society. (3) sociocultural practice (macrostructural) is a dimension that is related to the context that exists outside the text (Eriyanto, 2003). In line with Fairclough (1995), the dimension of sociocultural or macrostructural can be called explanation, which means that it is used to analyse socio-cultural practices that consist of situational, institutional and social.

The data of this study is the online news that is published by DetikNews, OkeNews, Sindonews.com, Tribunnews, Tempo.com, and merdeka.com related to the case of Nagaenthran Dharmalingam, a Malaysian

who punished with the death penalty by the Singapore Government due to do a drug trade. The researcher used a read-and-note method to collect the data. Therefore, the data collection steps are as follows: (1) The researcher reads the text to find and mark the news that informs Nagaenthran Dharmalingam's case. (2) Note what the research found in the news text. (3) Analysing the text will mark the data result to the theory of Norman Fairclough's discourse dimension

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Microstructure Dimension

Based on the various tools of language used by the media in informing the case of the death penalty for disabled people, 2 tools mark the theme of representation: diction or vocabulary selection and grammatical units. Interestingly, each news item has a choice of word and phrase selection. The researcher found differences in the selection of diction in the news headlines. In data (1), keterbelakangan (backwardness) is the tardiness of development, and in data (2), berkebutuhan (needs) is something that always needs to be considered. In data (4), cacat (disabled) is the deficiency that causes the quality to be imperfect. Moreover, according to data (5), tunagrahita lacks thought power.

Table 1- News Headlines data of Nagaenthran K Dharmalingam

Media	Data	News Headline
Designers	1	Singapura Eksekusi Mati Pria Berkebutuhan Khusus Asal Malaysia karena Narkoba (Singapore Executes Man with Special Needs from Malaysia for Drugs)
Oke News	2	Singapura Eksekusi Mati Warga Malaysia Ber-IQ Rendah Atas Tuduhan Narkoba (Singapore Executes Death of Malaysian with Low IQ Over Drug Charges)
Sindonews.com	3	Singapura Eksekusi Pria Malaysia Penderita Cacat Mental Terpidana Kasus Narkoba (Singapore Executes Malaysian Man with Mental Disabilities Convicted of Drug Cases)
tribunnews	4	Nagaenthran, Tunagrahita Asal Malaysia, Dihukum Mati di Singapura karena Kasus Narkoba (Nagaenthran, mental retardation from Malaysia, sentenced to death in Singapore for drug cases)
Tempo.com	5	Pengadilan Singapura Menolak Banding Vonis Eksekusi Mati Warga Malaysia (Singapore Court Rejects Malaysia's Execution Sentence Appeal)
Merdeka.com	6	Singapura Eksekusi Mati Pria dengan Keterbelakangan Mental Terkait Kasus Narkoba (Singapore Executes Man with Mental Retarding Related to Drug Cases)

Hence, there are different things to consider when selecting phrases in news headlines. Nevertheless, all of the phrases are used to describe Malaysian "Nagaethran Dharmalingam. In the data (1) titled "Singapura Eksekusi Mati Pria dengan Keterbelakangan Mental Terkait Kasus Narkoba", the author chooses the phrase "the mentally disabled man". Based on that phrase in the headline shows that it includes the expression of euphemism. In the data (2) titled "Singapura Eksekusi Mati Pria Berkebutuhan Khusus Asal Malaysia karena Narkoba ", the media selected the phrase "a man with special needs". This phrase is categorised as a euphemism, but the word special needs indicates that the word is more polite than the phrase in the data (1). In the data (3) titled "Singapura Eksekusi Mati Warga Malaysia Ber-IQ Rendah Atas Tuduhan Narkoba", the media employed the phrase "a man with low IQ". In the data (4) titled "Singapura Eksekusi Pria Malaysia Penderita Cacat Mental Terpidana Kasus Narkoba", the phrase "a Malaysian man with mental disability convicted" was selected by the author. That phrase is indicated by the expression of dysphemism. The differences prove that each media has a view, ideology and general description in presenting the news.

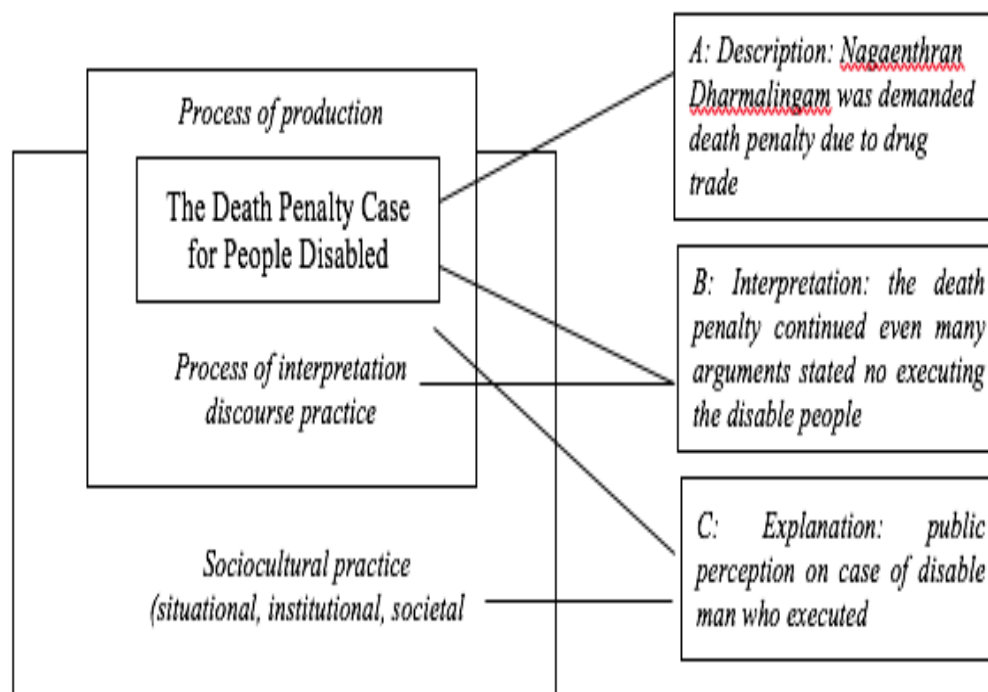


Fig. 1 - The framework of Fairclough's theoretical analysis in the news of the death penalty for mental disability.

3.1.1 Mesostructured Dimension (Discourse Practice)

In analysing the dimension of mesostructured, it is interpreted as the process of discourse, such as the process of distributing, using the discourse, profile of the media, procedure, and the way the media produces the discourse.

Detik.com is a web news site based on the internet. It was built in May 1998, but in August 2011, it was acquired by Chairul Tanjung. Detik.com never has a print-out edition; it only has an online publication. This site serves the information related to the news and entertainment. This site not only informs Indonesian events but also sometimes happens internationally. Detiknews.com, in presenting the case of Nagaenthran Dharmalingam, uses short and easy words for the reader to understand.

Oke News is an online news portal officially launched in March 2007. It was built by PT Media Nusantara Citra (MNC), which also manages some businesses in other media, such as television, print media and radio. Oke News is a portal that informs people about things in general, such as politics, national and international events, economics, lifestyle, celebrities, sports, technology, etc. The language employed in this news site is comprehensive and easy to understand.

Sindonews.com is a news site officially established in July 2012 to manage Media Nusantara Citra (MNC). Sindonews is a publication media that integrated all of MNC media, such as print media (Sindonews et al.), Radio (MNC et al.), Online Media (Okezone.com) and television like iNews, RCTI, MNCTV, GTV and MNC Channels. This news site presents information about national and international news, metropolitan, regional, economics, business, sports, football, automotive and technology. The language in this portal can be classified as solid and transparent.

Tribune News is a media managed by PT Tribune Digital Daring (a group of regional newspapers). Nevertheless, in March 2012, this site was changed, and the name of the site became Tribun Network. This name change was launched as a new news portal that complements the local website managed by the Tribun Network. This site presented national and international news related to politics, sports, economics, business, and the lifestyle of artists. The site news presentation is written in a language that is easy to understand.

Tempo.com is an update on Tempo magazine, first published in March 1971. In 2001, this site presented daily media in print (newspaper). In the online media, tempo. co was known as tempointeraktif.com. PT built tempo.com. Grafit Pers. The information on this site is about national and international politics. Tempo.com

news presentation is served efficiently and concisely. The brevity is proved based on the number of words from newstempo.com, which is no more than a thousand words. The choice of words employed by tempo.com tends to be as it is and does not corner any side.

Merdeka.com is a news site that is gathered in Kapanlagi Youniverse of PT kreatif Media Karya and PT kapanlagi Networks. Christian established this news site in February 2012. This site aims to publish content other sites can bring, namely feature and in-depth news.

3.1.2 Macrostructure Dimension (Sociocultural Practice)

This dimension is related to the socio-cultural practice based on the social context that inferences the media news. The macrostructural dimension consists of the situational, institutional, and social levels. The situational level includes how the discourse is produced and the social context of the discourse. The institutional level includes internal or external institutions' interference in the discourse. The level of society relates to macro situations such as the political, economic, and sociocultural systems.

In the news of Nagaethran Dharmalingam, it was found that the level of the situation began when the Singapore government claimed that the disabled man was executed in a drug trade case and rejected an appeal from his family. The execution is based on the Singaporean drug statute. This punishment draws international attention due to the punishment of disabled men who ought to be safe. According to the Law of International Human Rights, executing people with mental retardation is prohibited. As cited by Dr. Sudha Rani, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Institute of Mental Health, Dharmalingam has a score of 69. It indicates that he has an intellectual disability.

As defined by The American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR), Mental retardation is a disability characterised by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behaviour as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills. It means that people with intellectual disability do not have conceptual reasoning. It proves that Nagaethran Dharmalingam brought the drug or heroin only strapped to his thigh. However, based on the Singapore statute, the court still gave the death penalty to that man. ^[1] ^[2]

At the institutional level, many people, like a group of PBB experts, British famous entrepreneur Richard Branson, a representative of Uni Europa and Others, stand to defend the Nagaethran Dharmalingam Case by convincing the Singapore government that he truly has an intellectual disability and he needs to give spare life. Nevertheless, it is because the Singapore government has power that they still give punishments, namely execution or the death penalty, to him as the drug statute in Singapore.

On the social level related to the case, many people had social perspectives such as they mentioned the action of the Singapore government is a despicable act and cruel act that contradicts a new trend related to the abolition of the death penalty in international law and does not consider the law of human rights. Many people depicted the execution as a tragic miscarriage of justice". That is the evidence of public disappointment.

Based on the study's results, the researcher concludes that critical discourse analysis emphasises discourse as a form of interaction through critical discourse analysis language used in social practice. By using the Critical Discourse Analysis theory of Norman Fairclough, it can be seen in the analysis text that there are differences in language selection based on each media's view, ideology and general description in presenting the news of "Nagaethran Dharmalingam," the intellectual disability man who got death penalty on his case of the drug trade. The differences in the phrases refer to descriptions of Nagaethran Dharmalingam; even though these have differences in phrases, they have the same meaning.

The media produced in this discourse were detiknews.com, okenews.com, tribunnews.com, sindonews.com, tempo.com and merdeka.com. These media had comprehensive language and were easy to understand. The social view presents that society was disappointed in the Singapore government for doing despicable and cruel actions to the disabled people who need to be protected and does not consider the law of human right

4. Conclusion

The following was determined using the data analysis presented in the result. First, the approach of learning by doing pupils' performance on standardised oral communication tests often rises in tandem with their exposure to and practice of such activities. In addition, the students' attitudes regarding the CAR teaching and

learning activity were also gleaned. It is safe to say that kids prefer experiential learning methods. Evidence of this includes their contributions to class debates and presentations and their improved pronunciation, fluency, and self-assurance in front of an audience.

Additionally, the student's understanding of the material was greatly enhanced by the use of the active learning technique. The findings indicated that incorporating an action learning technique into the classroom might enhance students' linguistic competence. The qualitative data showed that students' performance on Post-Test I was higher than on the Pre-Test and that their performance on Post-Test II had been higher than on Post-Test I. It was also evident from the qualitative data that the students were engaged and enthusiastic about the learning process.

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