

**INDONESIA GOVERNMENT'S PREVENTION OF COVID-19:
CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS STUDY**

Intan Siti Nugraha
English Linguistics, Universitas Padjadjaran
intan19004@mail.unpad.ac.id

Rosaria Mita Amalia
Universitas Padjadjaran
rosaria.mita.amalia@unpad.ac.id

Abstract: COVID-19 information is massively reported by media and social network focus not only on the spreading and infection but also on the government's prevention in handling the pandemic. Thus this study, under Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) and by using Appraisal System as a tool for textual analysis, is aimed to gain insight and understanding regarding how Indonesia government's prevention of COVID-19 in the beginning of pandemic crisis are presented in media, specifically *The Jakarta Post*. The result shows to some extents. Firstly Appraisal System used in the text analysis level presents that the news report published by *The Jakarta Post* is overridden by the voice placing the government as the target of negative JUDGMENT. Secondly, Appraisal System analysis leads to explanatory critique of the news text regarding reader positioning. The lack of representations of other choice positively or neutrally on the text strongly give the dynamic-negative meaning to the target audience..

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Appraisal System, Reader Positioning.*

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared SARS-CoV-2 virus (known as COVID-19) outbreak as a severe global threat, a pandemic on 11th of March 2020. In Indonesia, the President Joko Widodo confirmed the first COVID-19 case in his territory on 2nd March 2020 and confirmed first death cases of 4 positive patients on 6th March 2020. Since then, until the end of March, the cases were increased rapidly. As of 26 March, on WHO first Situation Report, the Government of Indonesia reported a total of 893 confirmed cases with 78 deaths and 35 recoveries from across 27 provinces (WHO, 2020a). This COVID-19 information massively reported by media and social network focus not only on the spreading and infection but also on the government's prevention in handling the pandemic.

Those media and social network provide information that shapes the general public's discourse, especially news report which provides a means of social critiques. Social critiques can be explored by showing how influential texts such as news reports may influence and shape the valuational viewpoints of their readers, and the micro-to-macro analytical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (e.g. Fairclough, 2001). Since the important goal of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is to reveal the way in which language of a text positions readers to view and evaluate social and political reality in particular ways. CDA readers positioning analysis can be seen from the dynamic reader positioning. The readers may be dynamically positioned as a result of textual patterning. The textual patterning can be analyzed by using Appraisal System as under the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). It is used

as a tool to perform a systematic analysis of dynamic reader positioning (Coffin & O'Halloran, 2005; Simpson, 2010).

In this study, thus, Appraisal System was used systematically to trace the build-up of reader positioning through evaluative meaning of a text and to show how such meaning positions readers to evaluate seemingly neutral sentences in a new report text and affect to particular interpretation led by the author's stance.

Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough)

Fairclough (1995) created a framework for the analysis of discourse as social practice which contains a range of different concepts that are interconnected in a complex three-dimensional model. Fairclough's central framework is that discourse is in a dialectical relationship with other social dimensions in which reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations (including power relations), and at the same time is also shaped by other social practices and structures. Thus, discourse is seen as both constitutive and constituted.

Fairclough's approach is a text-oriented form of discourse analysis which stresses the importance of doing systematic analyses of spoken and written language. This approach also covers three traditions of discourse analysis: (1) Detailed textual analysis within the field of linguistics; (2) Macro-sociological analysis of social practice; and (3) The micro-sociological, interpretative tradition within sociology (including ethnomethodology and conversation analysis).

In discourse analysis, there are two important dimensions of discourse. They are the communicative event (an instance of language use) and the order of discourse (the configuration of discourses and genres). Communicative event consists three dimensions: (1) language is a text; (2) language is a discursive practice; and (3) language is a social practice. These are the three-dimensional model in an analysis for empirical research of communication and society. The analysis should focus on (1) the linguistic features of the text (text), (2) processes relating to the production and consumption of the text (discursive practice); and (3) the wider social practice to which the communicative event belongs (social practice).

From the three-dimension of discourse above, therefore, the analysis of a communicative event includes: (1) analysis of the discourses and genres which is discursive practice level; (2) analysis of the linguistic structure which is text level; (3) considerations about whether the discursive practice reproduces or, instead, restructures the existing order of discourse and about what consequences this has for the broader social practice which is social practice level of analysis. The main purpose of critical discourse analysis is to explore the links between language use and social practice while the focus is the role of discursive practices in the maintenance of the social order and in social change (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Fairclough, 1995)

Appraisal System

Appraisal system is under the notion of SFL, particularly the development of interpersonal meanings. It concerns with social relationship of tenor. When people talk, they negotiate not only their relation with others but also emotions, judgments and valuation towards something/someone or phenomenon through their linguistics choice called appraisal.

Martin & White (2005) defines appraisal as semantic resource used to negotiate emotions, judgments and valuations, alongside resource for amplifying and engaging with these evaluations. In other words, appraisal system is a systematic linguistic theory of emotion in text. It is used by speakers to express their emotion, judgment and valuation.

The key functions of appraisal system in language are to express the speaker's or writers' opinion and, in doing so to reflect the value system of that person and their community; to construct and maintain relations between the speakers or writers and hearers or readers; and to organize the discourse. In addition, they also state that instead of examining the clause level of interpersonal system such as mood and modality, appraisal system examines evaluative lexis expressing the speakers' or writers' opinion on good or bad parameter. It determines how speakers or writers should express themselves in relation to their interlocutor or audience and the topic they talk.

Evaluative lexis can be a word of any word-classes, a word group/phrase, or even a clause. It is not limited on adjective as our simply thought. In other words, emotions, judgments, valuation and those resources can be encoded with a single word, a group of words/phrase, or even a clause. According to Martin and White (2005), appraisal theory concerns on three points: (1) the way speakers/writers approve and disapprove; (2) the way text can produce feeling, values and the linguistic mechanism share emotions, taste and normative; and (3) the way speakers/writers construe their particular authorial identities or personae. In addition, Martin and Rose (2007) state that appraisal theory is concerned with evaluation-the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned". In conclusion, appraisal is a theory that concerns with evaluation of certain thing or phenomena. Then, the tenor either the speakers or the writers use the language to show their feelings based on their evaluations. Through Appraisal, the relationship between speaker and the listener or writers and reader is also shown. Appraisal System proposes three linguistic resources to express emotions: attitude, engagement, and graduation.

1. Engagement Subsystem

Engagement subsystem deals with the interpersonal negation of the source of attitudes. It responds to a social dialogic perspective developed by White (2000, 2003). It comprises semantic resources for positioning speakers' voice to another voice. According to Martin and White (2005), engagement is "direct towards identifying the particular dialogic positioning associated with given meanings and towards describing what is at stake when one meaning rather than another is employed."

There are two regions of engagement. Those are monogloss and heterogloss. Monogloss deals with 'bare-assertion' in which there is no reference to another voice (Martin & White, 2005). In contrast, heterogloss deals with the reference to another voice. Heterogloss is determined by dialogic perspective, whether it is dialogic construction or dialogic expansion.

2. Graduation Subsystem

The second subsystem of appraisal system is graduation. It concerns with the fact that the value of attitudes can be raised or lowered in the discourse, semantics of sealing. It deals with "grading phenomena whereby feelings are amplified and categories blurred" (Martin & White, 2005). It measures the strength and the weakness of a feeling. In addition, Martin and White (2005) define the graduation value concerns on two scalability systems: grading intensity or amount (force) and grading the preciseness (focus) of

something. There are two types of graduation: Force and Focus. If we make a message of the text more or less intense, we are modifying the force of the message. In other words, when we sharpen or blur the message, we are modifying the focus of the message.

3. Attitudinal Subsystem

Attitudinal subsystem covers feelings. According to Martin & White (2005), attitude is “concerned with our feelings, including emotional reactions, judgments of behavior and evaluation of things”. There are three categories of attitude: affect, judgment and appreciation. It depends on different values—emotional, ethical and aesthetic. Affect is based on emotion while judgment is based on ethics. Appreciation is based on aesthetic. Martin and White (2005: p35-36) state:

Attitude is divided into three regions of feeling, ‘affect’, ‘judgment’, and ‘appreciation’. Affect deals with resources for construing emotional reactions; Judgment is concerned with resources for assessing behavior according to various normative principles; Appreciation looks at resources for construing the value of things, including natural phenomena and semiosis.

Since attitudinal subsystem is linguistic elements that realize speakers’ or writers’ attitudes, each region of them are labeled into two types whether it is positive or negative. In addition, the negative feeling is differentiated from the negation of positive feeling and vice versa. This is because the two are different, although on certain contexts they may seem similar. For example sad (which is a negative attitude) is differentiated from happy (which is a negated positive attitude) since to name a simple fact, a person can be not happy without being sad (Martin & White, 2005). The region of attitudinal; subsystem are figured along with its classification.

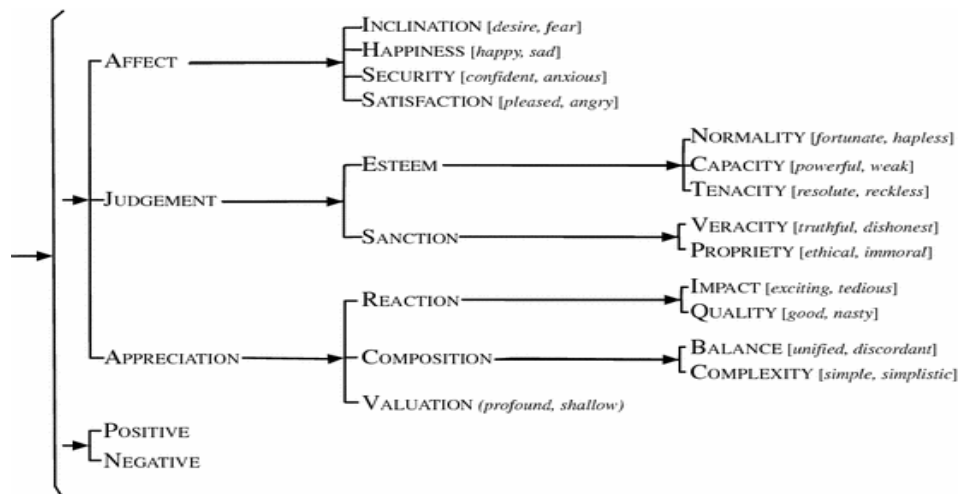


Figure 1. The region of attitudinal subsystem (Martin & White, 2005)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data were collated from eight news articles published in *The Jakarta Post* on March, the month of the beginning dissemination of COVID-19 in Indonesia. The purpose of analyzing the articles published on March is to depict the picture of the representation of Indonesia Government’s preparation on handling COVID-19 which had finally set foot in Indonesia by *The Jakarta Post*. Each article was purposely selected based on significance and relevancy of its content to the topic of this study, Indonesia Government’s prevention and preparation of

handling COVID-19 represented by *The Jakarta Post*. *The Jakarta Post* was chosen because it is the largest and daily English language newspaper in Indonesia (Alfajri, 2018) which its main target reader is educated Indonesians and foreigners. The data were analyzed by using Appraisal System (Martin & White, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2007) to explore the discourse semantic resources used by *The Jakarta Post* in reporting Indonesia Government handling COVID-19 and to investigate the dynamic reader positioning. Appraisal System is a useful tool for critical discourse analysis (CDA) in identifying how positioning is built up as reader progresses through a text (Coffin & O'Halloran, 2005). Appraisal System is concerned with interpersonal function of discourse to get clues on the authors' attitudes that are negotiated in a text, with the strength of feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and the readers are aligned (Hutiu, 2019; Deocampo, 2015; Coffin & O'Halloran, 2005). In other words, the author/text producer uses the resources of appraisal, evaluative lexical, to negotiate social relationship, to tell the readers/listeners how they feel about things or people and their evaluation of people characters or things' characteristics.

With those keys analysis of Appraisal System to identify and analyze evaluation within language through semantic resources (Martin & Rose, 2005) it becomes possible to examine the stance of *The Jakarta Post* as construed in the articles published and how it positions readers to interpret the news report text. In this study, thus, Appraisal System was used systematically to trace the build-up of reader positioning through evaluative meaning of a text and to show how such meaning positions readers to evaluate seemingly neutral sentences in a new report text and affect to particular interpretation led by the author's stance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the Appraisal Analysis, it can be seen the evaluative meaning built-up through the news texts published by *The Jakarta Post*. The text analysis and will be presented before the explanatory critique, description and interpretation stage of CDA defined by Fairclough's model (1995). The Appraisal analysis which describes the texts and goes some way to grounding this analysis in terms of context of the target readership, it can be drawn the effect working with the description and interpretation stages of CDA and furthermore to the stage of explanation in which critiques the relationship between the texts and the context occurs (Jorgense & Philips, 2002; Fairclough, 1995).

Text Analysis

The result the news report text analyzed from the perspective of JUDGMENT, GRADUATION and AFFECT is presented in this section. The samples of representative Appraisal Analysis applied are presented systematically.

1. “[UPDATED] Explainer: How bad is the COVID-19 situation in Indonesia?”

The sentence above is the title of one article published on 8th march 2020 in *The Jakarta Post*. Beyond the attitudinal resources, the title of the news employs heteroglossic ENGAGEMENT through explanatory question as mean opening the proposition to the answer. However, the presence negative JUDGMENT inscribed on *how bad* is meant of presenting JUDGMENT that leads to the answer predicted and inscribed in the JUDGMENT on the question itself.

2. “After weeks of claiming to have zero cases of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), a claim that **befuddled** many and led to **suspicion** that the country is either **unable** to detect cases or **covering** them up, the country finally announced that citizens within its borders had also contracted the virus.”

There are many direct JUDGMENTS on the sentence above addressed to the Government. First, a claim made by government about having zero cases of COVID-19 is judge negatively by a direct JUDGMENT inscribed by *befuddled*. It refers to the government’s deeply perplexed act of claiming. The author uses it as a critique on how the government’s action which results to *suspicion*. The suspicion of the claim prompts the reader to judge government action as socially irresponsible. It is supported by the next direct negative JUDGMENT on *unable* and *covering them up*. The government ability to detect cases is clearly and negatively inscribed on *unable* and furthermore it is followed by the socially-irresponsible action inscribed on *covering the up*. The action *covering them up* refers to the action of hiding fact or lie about the cases to public.

3. “The country announced two more cases linked to the first two patients on Friday. Details about these new patients are still sketchy. The government has been extra cautious in providing information on the cases. One of the first two confirmed patients claimed to have suffered mentally after her private information had been disclosed by the authorities and later exposed by the mainstream media and Internet users”

GRADUATION is employed with the inscribed AFFECT of *cautious* through the sub-modifying adverb *extra* to add emphasis to the AFFECT. Insecurity AFFECT of government’s action is inscribed with regard to the adjective *cautious*. Furthermore, it is then followed by the AFFECT of disinclination (*suffered* mentally) resulted from irresponsible action done by government. The author implicitly creates the condition for the reader to make a particular JUDGMENT about what the government had done (disclosed the information and made the media exposed it) with the two first cases which is claimed to have suffered mentally. Thus, the author has left the JUDGMENT as indirect in the text.

4. “The ministry said on March 5 that it had tested samples from 388 suspected patients, including 188 from the World Dream cruise ship. It is *unclear*, however, how many suspected patients are currently being treated in hospitals across the country.”

The author attributes The Health Ministry to the acknowledgment which refers to the samples of 388 suspected patients. It is seen on the ENGAGEMENT on the box. It places the author to be distance with the statement. In addition, the negative appreciation of AFFECT is deployed by the adjective *unclear* about the exact number of suspected patients who were being treated in the hospital across the country.

5. “Indonesia does not have an independent centers for disease control and prevention. The Health Ministry is now leading the management of the health crisis, with its secretary, Achmad Yurianto, being recently appointed as its sole spokesman.”

The use of monoglossic ENGAGEMENT indicates that there is no other proposition about Indonesia which does not have an independent center for disease control and prevention and it absolutely declared. There is no other alternatives but the Health Ministry itself who leads the management for crisis.

6. “Some experts, including those leading the fight against the bird flu outbreak between 2006 and 2010, have called for the creation of a special committee similar to the now-defunct National Commission for Avian Influenza to lead the battle against the virus. The ministry, however, insisted that such an agency was not needed.”

The author employs heteroglossic ENGAGEMENT in word *however* to expand the possibility for another view point against the Ministry’s decision who didn’t need the agency leading the fight against the outbreak.

7. “The country once had a national committee for zoonosis tasked with handling virus outbreaks. It was **disbanded** by President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo in 2016.”

A contradiction is established through the AFFECT which in this occasion leads to implicit signals of indirect JUDGMENT. The disinclination is likely to prompt readers to judge Jokowi’s action as mistake without giving further information what Jokowi would do after disbanding the committee for handling virus outbreak.

8. “The government claimed to have used a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and a gene sequencing analysis to test specimens from suspected patients as per WHO standards”

The author deploys *claimed*, dialogic expansion of ENGAGEMENT as one possibility among other possibilities that the government had used PCR which met WHO standards or other possibilities which invite alternatives from anyone beside the government’s claim.

9. “Why has Indonesia only recorded *few* cases?”

Question form as ENGAGEMENT inclusively involves GRADUATION and AFFECT of appreciation in which the author opens up the dialogic space and entertains the possibility for other alternatives propositions for the answer. The GRADUATION inscribed on word *only* gives force on the appreciation *few* cases. However, the author directly provides the answer right after the question, by the following sentences:

10. “Some scientists believe that the government might have **under-reported** cases, saying that, given the large number of visitors not only from China but also from other affected countries, it is **hard** to believe that Indonesia only had four cases. They have called on the government to be more transparent in the handling of the outbreak by involving more scientists in its work.”

The author deploys heteroglossic ENGAGEMENT through the acknowledgement of scientists. By attributing a view point to scientists through the use *believe*, the author represents it as one of many potential truth since it is explicitly grounded in the individual subjecthood of one speakers (Ross & Caldwell, 2020) answering the question which author put about the few cases in Indonesia. The possibility acknowledged by the scientists as the answer contains another resource of attribute, *might*, entailed to the JUDGMENT which inscribes the government doing dishonesty, negative veracity, by using *under-reported*.

Another ENGAGEMENT of acknowledgment involving AFFECT and GRADUATION commonly used in news report texts (Coffin & O’Halloran, 2005) in the excerpt above leads to indirect JUDGMENT in the text. The value of AFFECT is negatively inscribed by the emphasis of GRADUATION *only*, force intensity scale of amount. It is likely to makes the readers to be less inclined to pass the JUDGMENT on the next sentence. The GRADUATION sharpens the author’s intensity level on the ENAGEMENT *hard to believe*.

Appraisal-informed explanatory critique

The Appraisal analysis which describes the texts and goes some way to grounding this analysis in terms of context of the target readership, it can be drawn the effect working with the description and interpretation stages of CDA and furthermore to the stage of explanation in which critiques the relationship between the texts and the context occurs (Jorgense & Philips, 2002). Fairclough and Chouliarki (1999) said that explanatory critique takes the general form of showing a problem which may be cognitive misrepresentation. Thus, in this section, the explanatory of cognitive problem from misrepresentation will be elaborated.

The ENGAGEMENT used representing expert voices are dominantly negative and there is lack of positive and neutral opposing expert voice which might set out potentially positive representation of government’s preparation on handling COVID-19 on the UPDATED news report text, reviewing COVID-19 situation in Indonesia handled by government. The credible status of expert presented as scientists who are considered to acknowledge the outbreak and its nature as disease points out ‘the evaluation of the Sayer as reliable’ (Coffin & O’Halloran, 2005). This can propagates to increase the evaluation in the projected proposition (projected evaluation). It would be more dynamic if the text be more balanced by providing a neutral or positive expert voice. In fact, the placement of expert voice who represent negatively the government in handling COVID-19 in Indonesia in the end of the text, alongside the negative voices of Indonesia government efforts of prevention the outbreak strongly give the dynamic-negative meaning to the target audience. Indeed, even the positive voice occur, it is still less competing with the negative effects construed by the negative voice of the experts since the positive ones come from the government itself as a claim which instantiates another possibility. Thus, the major cognitive problem with the news report text published by *The Jakarta Post* is that there is lack of representations of other choice positively or neutrally – which has to do with the dynamic reader positioning (Coffin & O’Halloran, 2005).

CONCLUSION

Under the study of Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis and by using Appraisal System this study is aimed to trace the build-up of reader positioning through evaluative meaning of a text and to show how such meaning positions readers to evaluate seemingly neutral sentences in a new report text and affect to particular interpretation led by the author’s stance. The result shows to some extents. Firstly Appraisal System used in the text analysis level presents that the news report published by *The Jakarta Post* in the beginning of pandemic in Indonesia uses variety of Appraisal resources. In addition the text is overridden by the voice placing the government as the target of negative JUDGMENT. Secondly, Appraisal System analysis leads to explanatory critique of the news text regarding reader positioning. The lack of representations of other choice positively or neutrally on the text strongly give the dynamic-negative meaning to the target audience.

Appendix. Appraisal System Coding

<i>italic</i>	AFFECT
bold	JUDGMENT
box	ENGAGEMENT

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