THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF CHILD MOLESTATION: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF TRANSITIVITY IN THE JAKARTA POST

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| ***Article Info*** | **Abstract** |
| ***Article History***  *Received:*  *Revised:*  *Published:* | *This study used the Critical Discourse analysis of Fairclough that focused on analyzing the discursive construction of child molestation by using the transitivity process. The objectives of the study were to describe the transitivity patterns of child molestation online news in the Jakarta Post, to analyze how the transitivity pattern constructed to the child molestation online news in the Jakarta Post and to analyze why the child molestation online news discursively constructed as the pattern of transitivity in the Jakarta Post. Furthermore, the study used qualitative method of content analysis to analyze the data. The data acquired from the clauses in 5 news text in the Jakarta Post. It found that the prominent processes of transitivity in the news text were verbal process and material process. The total of verbal process in online news is 57 with the percentage 43.8%. Meanwhile, for material process had the total 48 (36.9%) which only had 6.9% difference from verbal process. Some verbs that indicated to the verbal process in the news text were such as: reported, told accused, said, and announced etc. Meanwhile, the verbs of material process that mostly appeared from text were molested, abused, arrested, etc. It was known that the writer of online news tried to reveal the chronological of molestation cases based on the information that have been gotten from police, witness and victims. The case of child molestation tends to focus on the occurrences of the children and it is known that the perpetrator as the subject of the occurrences. By knowing the result of each process, the researcher could obtain the perspectives towards the socio-culture issues in child molestation. The ideology of online news were minors are considered to have limited legal ability and protection, women are not always as the victim of sexual abuse, the perpetrator was the person who has the essential position in school or Pesantern, and the children’s psychological impacts towards the occurrences of molestation.* |
| ***Keywords***  *Child Molestation, Critical Discourse Analysis, Transitivity Process, The Jakarta Post* |
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**INTRODUCTION**

The lightning-fast advancement of communication technology is inextricably linked to the easiness with which individuals can independently obtain information. Because of advances in technology, the transmission of communication, which used to take a considerable amount of time, is now extraordinarily rapid and gives the impression of occurring almost instantly. Language is a tool of communication. In addition, language is an arbitrary system of verbal symbols used by members of a language community to communicate and interact based on their own culture. According to Harimurti (1993), a language is a system of arbitrary auditory symbols used by social group members to collaborate, communicate, and identify themselves.

Meanwhile, according to Burton (in Maryandani, 2016), the media plays a major influence in the lives of individuals. Due to the constantly disseminates information, media is one of the most influential actors in the process of developing a group's language.

Furthermore, the media of Indonesia reported the news of sexual abuse by framing the society’s perspective. The cases of sexual abuse or violence also has been concerned by the researchers in Indonesia, such as Dylan Aldianza Ramadhan & Charina Putri Besila (The Phenomenon of Sexual Violence among Adolescents), and another is in the journal of Agustina Haryani Putri & Tadkiroatun Musfiroh (Analysis of Sexual Violence Causing Women to Commit Suicide).

Although there are numerous studies on sexual abuse in society, some researcher are still unconcerned about the cases of sexual abuse against the children. The researchers tend to concerned in the case of sexual abuse against adult such as a violence of women, rape and physical harassment. The issue of child molestation could be as an apprehensive topic that must be reported by the online news. The alleged act of sexual abuse against minors occurred a long time ago. The concept of child molestation refers to a singular act of sexual abuse against a child. Typically, the term child molestation refers to minors under the age of 12. Sexual abuse inflicted on children results in protracted trauma, depression, insomnia, a high risk of contracting the disease, pregnancy, and a propensity to commit such acts as an adult. Generally, minors have more privacy which makes them not to express what occurred to them. Therefore, they are less likely to convey molestation explicitly when they experience it.

Transitivity analysis can reveal how the perpetrators are depicted, how the victims are portrayed, and how the responsibility for the crime is attributed. The Jakarta Post often reported child molestation cases and constructed the text using passive voice, which can obscure the agency of the perpetrator and place the focus on the victim. For example, the headline "Child Molested in School Playground," focuses on the victim (the child) and the action (molested), with little emphasis on the perpetrator. This can create a sense of victimization and helplessness, reinforcing stereotypes of children as passive and vulnerable.

In reporting the news, reporter must pay attention to the phrases or clauses in the writing since it can affect the people’s perception or ideologies that contain in the news. The analysis of news texts based on critical discourse analysis can demonstrate transitivity theory as an effective tool for critical discourse analysis. In general, countries with different ideologies and interests use the media to spread different values and judgments regarding the same event, thereby implying their different ideologies.

But unfortunately, in the research of child molestation in online news, there are only a few researchers that focused on critical discourse analysis in the context of transitivity. Transitivity shows how language is used to describe "doings" and "happenings" and connects to how languages are used to articulate perceptions of the world. Online News comprises clauses explaining phenomena because the reader must grasp the components of the transitivity system in order to comprehend the News's meaning. The system of transitivity specifies the various categories of processes and is comprised of the process itself, its participants (e.g., actor, goal, beneficiary), and its attendant circumstances (Plemenitas, 2004: 27). Teo stated in Ruddick (2007, p. 25) that 'Transitivity is a component of Halliday's SFL, can show the attribution of agency to participants in texts, and he added that it is an analytical instrument that emphasizes agency and highlights "who does what to whom." White (2006: 3) stated that grammatical decisions regarding whether individuals are depicted as agents or as affected/acted upon may contribute to prejudice in opinion. Consequently, the effect of the degree of agency given may influence the amount of blame attributed to one actor as opposed to another.

Media online news reporting child molestation can make survivors and perpetrators have a significant impact on public understanding of child molestation as a social problem, its causes, and its solutions. Research shows that the majority of the public learns about child molesters from the media (Babatsikos, 2010; Goldman & Grimbeek, 2015). Studies on child molestation news also can indicate not just the sort of information the media provide about child molestation, but also its quality and potential impact on the general public, survivors, perpetrators, linked individuals, authorities, child protection services, and public policies.

The news regarding child molestation might therefore serve as a source of perspective for readers, particularly those from all societies around the world. Even when the writing is not excessively prejudiced, the reader may be unaware of the writer's position on a given fact. Some of the facts are merely presented from a perspective that is often addressed to the intended audience. Thus, language is no longer viewed as a reflection of reality, but as the source of reality itself. The way in which words or diction are used in the media will have an effect on the meaning or messages that are conveyed to the reader. To fill the gap, this research analyzes critical discourse analysis in the context of transitivity, especially for the perpetrator and the victims in the context of child molestation in school environment. This critical discourse analysis of the transitivity patterns are used in reporting on child molestation in The Jakarta Post.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The researcher used qualitative data by analyzing a transitivity theory in some clauses in the Jakarta Post online news related child molestation cases. In the other hand, qualitative research focuses on a variety of methodologies and takes an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject. This implies that qualitative researchers investigate phenomena in their natural environments while attempting to explain phenomena in terms of the meanings that individuals assign to them. A variety of empirical materials, including case studies, personal experiences, introspective, life stories, interviews, observational, historical, interactive, and visual texts, that describe common and troubling events and meanings in people's lives are studied in qualitative research (Lincoln and Denzin, 2005). The data sources were taken from the Jakarta Post online news. The topics of online news were child molestation in the environment of school. The researcher took the data based on the past three year’s news. The cases of child molestation were including of the high issues that happened in past three years in Indonesia. In choosing the data, the researcher used some keywords for instances; “child sexual abuse”, “child molestation in Indonesia”, and “child sexual abuse at school environment in Indonesia”.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

**Research Findings**

The data were all analyzed by the clauses that derived from the online news. There were 128 clauses that contained the process of transitivity and there were 5 text online news that analyzed by the researcher. The following were the finding of transitivity process that could construct the critical discourse analysis of online news regarding to the child molestation. The result of transitivity analysis depicted in the table below:

Table 4.1 The Table Distribution of Transitivity Process

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| News Text | The Headline News | Types of Process | | | | | | The Amount of Clauses |
| Ver | Mat | Rel | Ment | Behav | Exist |  |
| 1 | Head of Banten Islamic boarding school arrested for allegedly molesting students. | 10 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| 2 | Islamic school owner in Central Java arrested for allegedly molesting student. | 7 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 |
| 3 | Man arrested for alleged child molestation in North Jakarta | 16 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 29 |
| 4 | Police arrest teacher accused of raping 12 students in West Java | 10 | 10 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 23 |
| 5 | Surabaya court sentences ex-principal to 'light' 10 months for child sexual abuse. | 14 | 15 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 35 |
| The total of process (%) | | 57  (43.8%) | 48  (36.9%) | 13  (10%) | 11  (8.46%) | 0 | 1  (0.76%) | **130** |

Table 4.1, showed there are six type of process in transitivity from 5 news texts. They were Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioral, Verbal and Existential. The transitivity process in a clause refers to activities, sayings, feelings, existential, relationships, and other written elements. From the data analysis, there are 130 type of process in news text and the most prominent type of process was verbal. From the result of data analysis, there were some total of frequency and percentage in transitivity process. The verbal process in transitivity showed the total process in online news is 57 with the percentage 43.8%. Meanwhile, for material process has the total 48 (36.9%) which only have 6.9% difference from verbal process. The following processes are Relational 13 (10%) and Mental 11 (8.46%) which has 1.54% difference. Furthermore, Existential process is 1 (0.76%) which have the least total percentage of all. Meanwhile, the Behavioral process is the process that doesn’t have any total from the clause of news text.

From the result of transitivity analysis above, it could find the discursive construction towards 5 (five) online news regarding to the child molestation cases. In news text 1, it was about *Head of Banten Islamic boarding school arrested for allegedly molesting students.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| According to Adj. Comr. Indra Deradinata, head of the Serang Police’s detective and criminal unit | JM | Was arrested | On Wednesday | Four alleged victims | Spoke out | Against him |
|  | Goal | material | Cir: Time | Sayer | Proc: verbal | Verbiage |

The data depicted the transitivity process of material and verbal process. The material process from the clause is shown by the words “*was arrested”.* Meanwhile, the verbal process could be known by the word *“spoke out”*. The clause above tried to convey the arresting of perpetrator after the victims spoke out about his action in molesting them. Based on the information of the clause above, the process of arresting the perpetrator occurs on Wednesday. Furthermore, from the clause we know that the head of Serang Police’s detective was as the informant who conveys the occurrences of arresting the perpetrator.

Furthermore, the news text 2 was about *Islamic school owner in Central Java arrested for allegedly molesting student*. Here are the data that constructed the transitivity process as follow:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The police | have named | a 44-year-old man | who owns | a pesantren (Islamic boarding school) in Banyumas, Central Java | A suspect for sexually abusing an 11 year old student. |
| actor | Proc:material | goal | Proc:relational | Cir:location | Cir: cause |

The table demonstrated the material process and relational process. The verb *“have named”* includes of the material process because the police had an action to get the name of perpetrator. The police have identified the perpetrator as the owner of a pesantren (Islamic boarding school) in Banyumas, Central Java. Furthermore, the clause portrayed the reason why the police suspected the name because of his action in abusing sexually the 11 year old student.

In news text 3, the news was about *“Man arrested for alleged child molestation in North* Jakarta*”.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *The Pademangan Police in North Jakarta* | announced | they | arrested | A 19 year old man | On Friday | For allegedly molesting at least six boys |
| Sayer | Proc: verbal | Actor | Proc:material | Goal | Cir: time | Cir: cause |

The table shows the transitivity process of verbal and material. The verbal process from the clause could be shown by the word *“announced”*. Meanwhile, the process of material is demonstrated by the word *“arrested”*. The clause portrayed the announcement of police (sayer) that they have arrested a 19 year old man. The process of arresting was held on Friday. Furthermore, there is a reason why the police arrested a 19 year old man because he has molested the six boys.

And the next, news text 4 was about *Police arrest teacher accused of raping 12 students in West* Java. The following are the data that constructed to the transitivity process:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Police in West Java | Have arrested | A teacher | accused | Of raping at least 12 children | Over the last five years |
| Actor | Proc:material | Receiver | Proc:verbal | Verbiage | Cir:duration |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| An official | said | Wednesday |
| Sayer | Proc:verbal | Cir:time |

The clause above demonstrates the transitivity process; material and verbal process. The material process is shown by the verb *“have arrested*”. Meanwhile, for the verbal process could be seen by the word *“accused”* and *“said”.* From the transitivity process, it found that police in West Java have arrested and accused the perpetrator because he raped at least 12 children. The perpetrator also allegedly has done his action for over the last five years. The information regarding to the occurrences of child molestation was delivered by an officer (the police) on Wednesday.

And the last news text was about *Surabaya court sentences ex-principal to 'light' 10 months for child sexual abuse*.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The Surabaya District Court | Has sentenced | Ali Shodiqin, the former junior high school principal of the Surabaya State University Labschool (Labschool Unesa) in the East Java capital, |
| Actor | Proc:material | Goal |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| It | Found | Him | Guilty | of sexually abusing six students |
|  | Proc: material | Carrier | Attribute | Attributor |

From the data of the clause above, there is a transitivity process of material. The material process from the clause could be seen by the verbs *“has sentenced”* and *“found”*. The clause delivered the occurrences of child molestation which the perpetrator named *“Ali Shodiqin”* has been got a sentence by the Surabaya District Court. It is also known that he was the former junior high school principal of the Surabaya State University Labschool (Labschool Unesa) in the East Java capital. Ali Shodiqin (perpetrator) got a sentence because of his guilty in abusing sexually the six students.

Furthermore, from the data analysis and the finding of transitivity process, the researcher obtained the ideology from the Jakarta Online news regarding to the child molestation case. There are two prominent processes that have found in online news such as verbal process and material process. The type of verbal process in transitivity was the most prominent in reporting the news. It is because the writer tried to reveal the chronological of molestation cases based on the evidence or information from the victims, victim’s family member and the police. Based on the finding above, it is the similar to the slogan of the Jakarta Post ***“Always Bold. Always Independent”*** which means the online news always has acourage to report the factual news and never have the intervention towards the other people in delivering their news.

Moreover, there is a lot of the verbal action such as *reported, told, said, claimed, etc.* that referred to the information toward the cases. By knowing the result of each process, the hidden ideologies of the news text in the Jakarta Post could be constructed as below:

Table. 4.2 The Ideology of the Jakarta Post

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Participants | Verbs/Action |
| Victims | were afraid to speak, did not want to tell, potentially traumatized, reported, refused to study the Qur’an, |
| Perpetrator | Identified, owns a Pesantren or school, abuse, had molested, assault, |
| Law Enforcement | Arrested, said, claimed, was sentenced, |

From Table 4.2 it depicted three essential figures of the occurrences of child molestation; those are victims, perpetrators and the law enforcement. The ideologies of the news text could be described as follow:

1. The children (victims) have a limitation towards the legal and protection. They tend to disclose their occurrences of molestation to their parents or their family. Besides that, the children are dependent human who need an adult to protect them. Therefore, when they couldn’t report the molestation cases to the police, they reported the molestation to their family or their parents. Their family or their parents could protect them by reporting the cases to the police. The report of them would help their children to get the justice toward the cases that happened to them.
2. The power position of perpetrator. The role of perpetrator in molesting the students was not only as the teacher at school but also as the principal or as the owner of school or Pesantren. The writer portrayed that the perpetrator was the person who has the essential position in school or Pesantern. For that reason, the perpetrator did the action in molesting the students because of the position they had.
3. The law enforcement has a deficiency in justice. From the news text, the role of police as the law enforcement was cooperative enough to investigate the case of child molestation. However, there would be just an action of the police in arresting the perpetrator after the victims’ parents reported the issues. Furthermore, it was known that the occurrences of child molestation could give the perpetrator punishment based on the under Articles 80 and 82 on child abuse and molestation of the 2002 Child Protection Law which carries maximum sentence of 15 years in prison if the perpetrator convicted to do the molestation. However, the punishment towards the perpetrator was not fairly enough for the victims when the judges had charged and punished the perpetrator with shorter sentenced. The perpetrator only had 10 months of punishment towards his action in molesting the students.

**Discussion**

First point was about the using of transitivity process as the element of finding CDA in online news and the second point was about the ideology of the Jakarta Post online regarding to the case of child molestation. Five online news have been analyzed by the researcher and all types of transitivity have applied by using M.A.K Halliday theory. According to (Lock:1996), Systemic Functional Linguistics is a tool to view the grammar of a language as a resource for constructing and exchanging meanings. In other words, Halliday's SFL emphasizes how meaning is expressed through language. Several linguists concurred that it is a systematic method for analyzing how language functions or operates in communication. Bloor and Bloor (1995: 2) concurred that SFL is semantic, or concerned with meaning, and functional, or concerned with how the language is employed.

In analyzing the online news from the Jakarta Post, it found that the prominent process used by the writer was verbal process. According to Halliday theory, verbal process is a process to convey ideas and emotions through speech. The online news has the role as the media to reveal the child molestation cases by displaying the facts and information in the news text.

The writer of online news shape and frame the ideology that the children were including the minor since they don’t have legal capacity and a power to protect themselves. Therefore, the family or parents has the essential role to protect their children toward the cases. Furthermore, the perpetrator has the essential role and position in Pesantren or school, therefore the students could not speak up and deliver the molestation cases that has experienced by them. And the role of law enforcement was very essential to get the justice for the child molestation occurrences. But unfortunately, the law enforcement in Indonesia was still deficiency in giving the justice towards the victims.

Therefore, the online news also tried to reveal that the case of child molestation could be concerned to the society which the cases were very crucial to the students and there were no specifics motif toward the perpetrator why he did the action.

There were some previous studies that relevant to the finding of research such as, Nasir, Siti Nurhayati, (2022) her journal was about Investigators Obstacles in Child Molestation Cases. The purpose of the study was to identify the obstacles investigators encounter when conducting child abuse investigations. In this investigation, an empirical research approach was utilized. This investigation employs qualitative methodology, purposive sampling, and descriptive qualitative analytic techniques.

The next study was a journal of Octaviana, Setyarini Nur (2019) that described about child sexual abuse in Indonesia: history and challenge in legal perspective. It described that sexual exploitation of children has become common place in the community. The fundamental question was why the case could not be eradicated and what the motivation of the perpetrator of the act of child harassment was. This study aims to examine the appropriate punishment for the perpetrators so as to serve as a deterrent, the impact of psychological casualties, and the obstacles we will face in attempting to eradicate the case.

And another relevant study was Butt, Muhammad Waqas (2022) that describe about the opinion in media was deliberately prepared from an ideological standpoint and intend to foster the desired ideological standards. Power, gender, and sexuality discourses are highlighted in articles arguing and discussing rape offenses. This research is undertaken through the social constructivist lens of gender and sexuality in relation to the dynamics of power relations in the Pakistani social system.

Therefore, the cases of child molestation were very crucial that must be concerned by the society. Online news could be as the media which report and reveal the cases based on the actual occurrences by the children. Base on the online news report, not most of the children have enough brave to speak up and reveal about what exactly happened to them. Child molestation also could affect their psychology that could be endangered to themselves to live their life.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the finding and discussion, the researcher can conclude the research as follow:

1. The transitivity could be as an element to find out the ideology of the online news. There were six types of transitivity that has found in the Jakarta Post online news; those were material, verbal, mental, relational, and existential process. From five news text in the Jakarta Post, it obtained that the verbal process was the prominent process. The frequency of verbal process in online news was 57 with the percentage 43.8%. As the function of transitivity, it conveyed the meaning of the writer in writing the online news. Based on the result of prominent process, it showed that the writer of online wrote the news based on the actual cases that occurred by the children. The online news mostly displayed some statements or information that has given by the victims, police and the victim’s family.
2. The discursive construction from the five online news texts in the Jakarta Post, showed that the news text 1 tended to portray the suspect of child molestation as a perpetrator toward the students. Furthermore, the news text showed that the students (victims) lacked the courage to report their incidents immediately to the police or their families although finally one of them has courage to report the occurrences to the police. Meanwhile, the news text 2, news text 3, and news text 4 tended to depict the role of parents was very essential to disclose the occurrences of molestation towards the children. And the last news text (news text 5) tended to disclose the next step of law enforcement (the judge) in punishing the perpetrator of child molestation. The news text depicted that the punishment for the perpetrator wasn’t fair enough as compared to the prosecutor's demand.
3. By knowing the result of each transitivity process, the hidden ideologies of the news text in the Jakarta Post could be found that the children (victims) have a limitation towards the legal and protection. And the victims have powerless position to disclose their occurrences. Furthermore, it was known that the perpetrator had the power position at school. And the last, the law enforcement has a deficiency in justice because the judge gave the shorter sentenced toward the perpetrator.

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