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FRAMING THE ROHINGYA CRISIS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF NEWS MEDIA DISCOURSE IN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This research examines the framing of the Rohingya crisis in Indonesia and Malaysia through A Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of two online newspaper stories, one from every country. The study uses appraisal theory to examine the attitudinal resources (emotion, judgement, and appreciation) employed in the articles in order to better understand how they may change public perceptions of the Rohingya. The analysis shows significant differences in how the crisis is portrayed by the two media outlets. The Indonesian article takes a positive and humanitarian stance, emphasizing Indonesia's commitment to global refugee protection and expressing concern for the well-being of Rohingya refugees. In contrast, the Malaysian article represents a shift towards a restrictive and nationalistic approach, highlighting concerns about national interests and depicting the Rohingya as a potential threat. Although the articles acknowledge the shared challenges faced by refugees, they also expose the complexity of regional responses to the Rohingya crisis, and the divergent perspectives adopted by Indonesia and Malaysia. This study contributes to the understanding of how media discourse shape's public opinion and influences ideological perspectives on international events.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Media Framing, Media Discourse, Rohingya Crisis, Indonesia-Malaysia Perspectives.

INTRODUCTION

Research on political discourse necessitates a clear definition of the term politics. According to Chilton (2004), there are two major areas of political study: implicit and explicit ideas in conventional politics, and political discourse studies, which are intrinsically conflicting. One school of thought sees politics as a struggle between people in positions of power and authority and others who want to oppose it on a smaller scale. The second regards politics as an effort by many societal and governmental actors to achieve a just distribution of resources, authority, and personal freedom on a large scale. While both political conceptualizations are useful, they take different tacks when it comes to politics. Chilton (2004) asserts that there is an unbreakable relationship between political action and language. Notably, Al Saud (2006) highlights the need to look at the role that language plays in the media's use of language and the transmission of ideas and viewpoints (Aljanadbah & Alramamneh, 2022). Because of this, journalists try to shape their readers' reactions to select

stories that are high in value by using lexical and syntactic devices. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), with its emphasis on language usage, is an important instrument for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the evaluation of texts and discourses (Zhu & Wang, 2020). Similarly, news, as a kind of discourse, demands an examination of the communication context in which news is formed, as well as how journalists attempt to validate and endorse narratives associated with political goals, making it an interesting field of research (Bednarek & Caple, 2012).

Finding evaluation methods that could disclose the underlying ideology is one of the trickiest parts of assessing political speech, as Li and Zhu (2020) point out. That being said, they contend According to Thompson & Hunston (2006), referenced in Li & Zhu 2020, The most exacting, thorough, and rigorous discourse values framework to explain how language is utilised in social interaction is provided by evaluation theory evaluation, position adoption, and the revealing of underlying ideologies. Martin and White (2005) developed the appraisal theory, which holds that language is used in certain ways to communicate information, based on Halliday's interpersonal meta function.

Using it, they developed a theory of their own to investigate how interpersonal meanings are expressed in talks. This theory is based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The evaluation concept examines the ways in which presenters construct personas and engage with their target audience. By examining certain speech traits, researchers can deduce the opinions, objectives, and interpersonal relationships of the discourse creator (Haristyanti, 2015).The evaluation language employed by the discourse producer establishes their ideological stance and attitude towards the discourse topic, whether communicated directly or indirectly; hence, appraisal theory focuses largely on this evaluative language (Puspita & Pranoto, 2021).

The study project aims to respond to the the subsequent research inquiries (RQs):

a. Which These two articles cover attitude subsystems about nations?
b. Do each countries' media utilise comparable or different attitude subsystems?

Literature Review

The impetus behind this research stems primarily from the convergence of two influential disciplines: Systematic Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Functional Linguistics (SFL). Before beginning a study of prior research about the influence of political ideology on newspaper reporting, it is essential to scrutinize the fundamental theoretical underpinnings of these two frameworks. This examination will lay the groundwork for a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical landscape that informs the subsequent analysis of political discourse and journalistic practices.
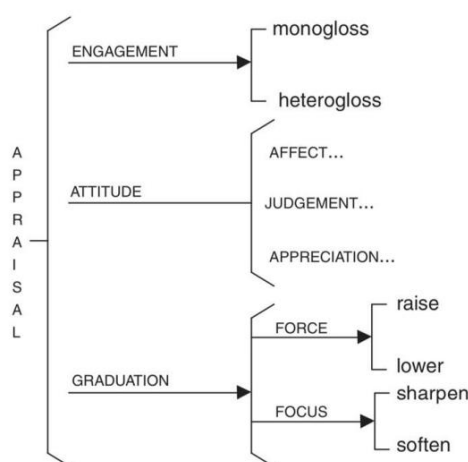
Critical Discourse Analysis

Opinions from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) Discourse is described as the language used in social contexts to both spoken and written forms (Wodak, 2014). CDA establishes a dialectical relate an intellectual viewpoint and the environment, organisation, and social system it concerns. In this approach, these components influence how the media presents a real-world event while also changing the event itself. As a result, CDA looks beyond identifying linguistic elements to study the ideological and political processes that affect discourse forms.

Systemic Functional Linguistics

Both Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) attempt to explore the connections between language and society (Li & Wang, 2009). Even while CDA is equally successful for studying a wide range of linguistic paradigms, texts, and discourses, SFL is a particularly relevant methodological option for this study because of its emphasis on the communicative and social components of discourse.

The functional-semantic study of language known as systemic functional linguistics (SFL) looks explored the ways in which language is employed in different contexts and how it evolved into a semiotic system (Eggins, 2004). According to Liu (2017), SFL theory sees language as a social semiotic, or tool, for meaning formation and underlines the significance of the interactions between alternatives in meaning systems. Rather than examining brain representations of language or mental processes, SFL aims to understand the nature of spoken or written discourses and how they may influence the attitudes and viewpoints of the listener.

METHOD

Research Design

This study was aim to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on the attitude resources inside two online media publications by Kompas.id and the Diplomat about the framing of Rohingya in 2023. The purpose was to evaluate how each outlet represented the different media discourses on the framing of Rohingya and their possible influence on public opinion, both locally and abroad. The selected analytic approach entails doing a qualitative analysis of the two publications' attitude resources to identify the underlying philosophies influencing readers' opinions and attitudes in both. The researcher employed a qualitative approach to give a more in-depth study of the findings as opposed to a quantitative technique, which would be ineffective with limited CDA data. This technique allowed for consideration of both the article writers and the researcher's points of view.

Data

The information was collected from two chosen articles featured on the Kompas.id December 2, 2023, and The Diplomat July 10, 2020. These specific news media outlets were selected to illustrate examples of Framing on Rohingya.

Procedure

The analysis employed the idea of assessment, originating from the interpersonal role of Systemic Functional Linguistics. Three attitude subtypes were the focus of the investigation: affect, judgement, and appreciation. The objective was to analyse and contrast the two newspaper stories, focusing on how the viewership of each online newspaper was influenced by elements from the attitude subsystems.This investigation attempted to find out the ideologies included in the publications.

The data analysis consisted of seven essential phases. Initially, the researcher found internet news items on the framing on Rohingya on the Kompas.id and The Diplomat websites. Each of the two articles was thoroughly studied individually to obtain a full grasp of their content. The researcher then highlighted words and phrases that expressed ideas pertaining to the attitude resources of appraisal theory. The related subcategories for these highlighted keywords were then gathered. Descriptive statistics, which provided case frequencies and percentages, were used to examine the categories and subcategories in order to give a thorough overview of each newspaper's ideological position on the dispute.There was no statistical analysis done because of the tiny sample size. Additionally, qualitative descriptions that identified recurring themes in every article were created for every occurrence of attitude resources.

Data Analysis

The writer will analyse news articles from Kompas.id and The Diplomat, which represent opposing sides of the international debate on the Rohingya crisis. The writer will analyse how media articles in the public sphere shape the general consensus on both sides, and how each's substance won't be backed by its corresponding ideology. The focus is on contributing to the understanding of how media discourse shape's public opinion and ideological perspectives on events. The study will analyse the language used in these articles to provide insights into the underlying ideology and power dynamics that shape the public perception of the Rohingya disaster.

Attitude Subsystems in Indonesian News

Positive Attitudes

The Indonesian article reflects a positive attitude towards the acceptance and accommodation of Rohingya refugees in Indonesia.

Example Sentence: "The entry and acceptance of Rohingya refugees into Indonesia is a manifestation of this nation's commitment to the protection of refugees in the world."

Humanitarian Stance

The article highlights Indonesia's humanitarian reasons for accepting Rohingya refugees, even though it is not legally obligated to do so.

Example Sentence: "However, Indonesia still wants to accept them with open arms. This is solely because of humanitarian reasons."

Concern for Well-being

The narrative expresses concern for the well-being of the Rohingya refugees, emphasizing the challenges they face, especially during the pandemic, in terms of vulnerability to infection and lack of access to basic needs.

Example Sentence: "During the pandemic, Rohingya refugees became a highly vulnerable group to infection."

The Indonesian article adopts a positive and humanitarian stance towards the Rohingya refugee crisis. It portrays Indonesia as a nation committed to global refugee protection and emphasizes the challenges faced by Rohingya refugees, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The article underscores Indonesia's willingness to accept refugees based on humanitarian reasons, creating a narrative that aligns with global values of compassion and assistance.

Attitude Subsystems in Malaysian News

Shift in Attitude

The Malaysian article presents a shift in attitude towards Rohingya refugees, moving from historical support to a more restrictive stance.

Example Sentence: " Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin recently said that Malaysia can no longer take in Rohingya refugees from Myanmar during the 36th ASEAN Summit."

Nationalistic Tone

The article reflects a nationalistic tone, emphasizing the prioritization of Malaysians' interests over accepting Rohingya refugees.

Example Sentence: " Najib's recent statements are instructive: "Malaysians' interests ought to come first."We should not allow the Rohingya to abuse our generosity."

Xenophobic Sentiments

There is a mention of xenophobia and rising anti-Rohingya sentiments within Malaysia, with the Rohingyas being perceived as social, economic, and security threats.

Example Sentence: " Some have started to view the Rohingyas as a social, economic, and security concern as they have grown in prominence inside Malaysia over time."

The Malaysian article reveals a significant shift in attitude, adopting a more nationalistic and restrictive stance towards Rohingya refugees. Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's announcement at the ASEAN Summit signals a departure from Malaysia's historical support. The article reflects concerns over Malaysians' interests and accuses the Rohingya of taking advantage, indicating a more sceptical and guarded approach towards refugee acceptance.

Comparison of Attitude Subsystems

Similarities

Both articles acknowledge the challenges faced by Rohingya refugees, such as living conditions in refugee camps and vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Example Sentence: "The situation in these refugee camps is certainly far from ideal."

Differences

Indonesia's article focuses on positive and humanitarian aspects, portraying the nation's commitment to global refugee protection.

Example Sentence: "This critical discourse analysis offers a lens through which to examine the intricacies of media representations in the context of climate change."

Malaysia's article emphasizes a shift in attitude, adopting a more nationalistic and restrictive stance, with indications of rising xenophobia.

Example Sentence: In 2016, Najib Razak, the prime minister of Malaysia at the time, proclaimed, "I will not close my eyes and shut my mouth," during a pro-Rohingya rally."

While both articles address the challenges faced by Rohingya refugees, they diverge in their overall tone and portrayal of the respective countries' positions. Indonesia's narrative is characterized by humanitarian ideals and commitment to refugee protection, while Malaysia's article signals a more sceptical and restrictive approach, marked by nationalistic concerns and a perceived threat from the Rohingya community. These differences highlight the complexity of regional responses to the Rohingya refugee crisis, and the diverse attitudes adopted by neighbouring countries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the Rohingya outbreak in Indonesia and Malaysia was conducted by CDA on two online newspaper sources from Kompas.id and The Diplomat. The two newspaper articles that were most likely to provide attitudinal resources (affect, judgement, and appreciation) were compared and examined using attitude analysis impact their respective readerships' thoughts and attitudes regarding this occurrence.

In Malaysia, the government has implemented some of the provisions of the 1951 Refugee Convention, despite not being a signatory. The country currently hosts the most ASEAN's Rohingya refugees are the fourth most numerous globally. However, recent media attention has brought to light the government's decision to turn away Rohingya refugees and increase immigration arrests in neighbourhoods with high Populations of migrants and refugees were recognised as COVID-19 cluster zones. There are concerns about the treatment of Rohingya refugees in Malaysia and the potential for xenophobia to rise. In Indonesia, the refugees have been accommodated in various locations, including Pidie, Bireuen, and East Aceh districts. The country has shown a commitment to protecting refugees, even though it not one of the parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention. However, the recent influx of Rohingya refugees has led to tensions in Aceh. Some locals claim that the Rohingya behave badly and create a burden on society, resulting in a hostile reception for Rohingya refugees in Indonesia.

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