

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF NEWS REPORTS ON  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MALAYSIAN NEWSPAPER.

LEONG KIM WENG

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR

2011

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF NEWS REPORTS ON  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MALAYSIAN NEWSPAPER.

LEONG KIM WENG

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE  
MASTER DEGREE OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE.

2011

## Abstract

Domestic violence is a social issue that is viewed in a stereotypical manner. The focus of the study is on how the elements of bias are manifested, through the use of language and the generic structure of the reports, in the news reports on the cases of domestic violence. The data shows that the news reports on the issue of domestic violence have been constructed with certain elements of gender bias. The text producers may or may not have intentionally used words that shade positive or negative perceptions to the male perpetrators and the female victims in the case of domestic violence. Besides, the generic structure of the text too may or may have constrained information that is presented to the readers and of how they are presented in the text. The features highlighted here are some of the features of the texts that may perhaps be the loop holes of how gender bias is being reproduced in the texts. They are often embedded in the texts, through the use of the linguistic features and the generic structure. The representation might be discreet, but they are found effective.

As the primary focus of the study was on how bias can be penetrated in texts, through the use of language and the generic structure of the text, the researcher extracted lexical items, for instance, *enraged* and *punched* that are used by the text producers to describe the male perpetrators and the female victims in the case of domestic violence reported in the local English daily, The New Straits Times. A comparison is made between the words used by the text producers to describe the male perpetrators and the female victims in order to unveil how gender bias may perhaps have been discreetly connoted in the texts, through the choice of words made by the text producers. It is realized that the text producers could have also utilized the generic structure of the texts in convincing readers of how the facts should be regarded.

It is hoped that this study would assist academic researchers who intend to study further into the area. It is also hoped that this study will inculcate interest among researchers who intend to further their study in this area.

## Abstrak

Sudah sebatu dalam masyarakat yang isu keganasan rumah tangga semestinya dijelaskan dengan nada yang stereotipikal. Fokus kajian ini adalah di atas elemen-elemen prasangka yang ditimbulkan dalam berita yang berkaitan dengan kes-kes keganasan rumah tangga, melalui penggunaan bahasa dan struktur teks.

Data-data yang diperolehi menunjukkan yang keganasan rumah tangga , biasanya dilaporkan dengan sentimen bias gender. Perkataan-perkataan yang dipilih dalam pemberitaan, secara kebetulan, mungkin akan menggambarkan pelaku dan mangsa secara berbeza yang barangkalinya berdasarkan jantina dalam kes-kes keganasan rumah tangga. Selain itu, struktur teks tersebut juga memainkan peranan dalam memampatkan informasi yang boleh disampaikan kepada pembaca dan bagaimana informasitersebut disampaikan. Ciri- ciri tersebut mungkin adalah kunci yang menjelaskan bagaimana elemen bias gender disuntik dalam teks-teks tersebut.

Fokus utama kajian ini adalah ke atas penggunaan bahasa dan struktur teks untuk menyuntik elemen –elemen bias gender, jadi penyelidik kajian ini telah mengekstrakkan perkataan-perkataan yang digunakan dalam teks untuk menggambarkan pelaku dan mangsa dalam kes- kes keganasan rumah tangga, yang dilaporkan dalam surat khabar bahasa Inggeris. Perbandingan antara perkataan-perkataan yang digunakan untuk menggambarkan pelaku dan mangsa,berdasarkan jantina, dibuat untuk menyingkap elemen-elemen bias gender dalam teks-teks tersebut. Selain itu, pemerhatian pembaca terhadap perbezaan antara pelaku dan mangsa juga dipengaruhi oleh struktur

teks-teks tersebut. Ini adalah ketara dalam laporan berita, yang merupakan teks yang mempunyai struktur yang berbeza daripada teks lain.

Harapannya adalah kajian ini dapat membantu penyelidik-penyelidik yang ingin menceburi bidang kajian ini. Selain itu, adalah harapan penyelidik yang kajian ini dapat menimbulkan kesedaran orang ramai tentang kewujudan elemen-elemen yang bias gender dalam teks-teks,terutamanya dalam teks-teks laporan berita.

## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to express my gratitude to a few people who had helped and supported me in completing this project paper entitled “A Critical Discourse Analysis of Domestic Violence in Malaysian Newspaper Reports”.

First of all, I would like to thank Dr. Mahmud Hasan Khan for his guidance and supervision. The journey to complete the paper would not have been this smooth if it had not been for Dr. Mahmud’s effortless supervision and guidance. So, I would like to take this opportunity to thank him again.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my parents who have always been supportive and encouraging. It is their support and encouragement that constantly push me hard and firmly to give the best to complete this paper.

This is also the opportunity for me to express my gratitude to my fellow course mates. Their belief and encouragement have been set as the pillars of strength to be able to complete what I had set to do and had wanted to do from the beginning.

## Table of Content

Abstract	iii
Abstrak	v
Acknowledgement	vii
Table of Content	viii
Chapter 1	
1.0 Background of the study	
• 1.1 Media Bias and Language	1
• 1.2 Stereotyping	2
• 1.3 Gender Stereotyping	3
1.4 Statement of problem	4
1.5 Objectives of the study	5
1.6 Research questions	6
1.7 Significance of the study	6
1.8 Scope and limitation	7
Chapter 2	
2.0 Domestic violence	8
2.1 Media bias	
• Media and violence	9
2.2 Critical discourse analysis	11



Chapter 3	
3.0 Type of study	16
3.1 Theoretical framework	16
3.2 Data collection	17
3.3 Social cognition framework	18
3.4 Data analysis	
• 3.4.1 Textual analysis	19
• 3.4.2 Socio cognitive analysis	23
Chapter 4	
4.0 Introduction	25
4.1 Textual analysis	26
4.2 Social cognition	27
4.3 Data analysis	
• 4.3.1 News report 1	28
• 4.3.2 News report 2	33
• 4.3.3 News report 3	36
• 4.3.4 News report 4	39
• 4.3.5 News report 5	44
4.4 Social Cognition	
• The discourse of gender bias	49
• The discourse of male patriarch	50

Chapter 5	
5.0 Discussion of the finding	51
5.1 Limitations of the study	53
5.2 Implications for further research	54

Bibliography	56
--------------	----

## Appendix

Text 1

Text 2

Text 3

Text 4

Text 5