

**FRAMING OF A SUCCESSFUL FEMALE ATHLETE IN A
MALAYSIAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY:
A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS**

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**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
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A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at examining how the Malaysian World No.1 female squash player, Nicol Ann David is being framed in one of the English-language Malaysian dailies, *The Star*. Studies on stylistics features of news reporting have frequently focused on male athletes (Klien, 1988) and as such, this study would further enrich the field of sports news reporting by focusing on reports of a female athlete. The added focus on analysing the visuals that accompany the reports would also justify the need for this study as previous studies on sports news are mostly linguistically based.

Nicol Ann David was made the subject of the study as she is the most outstanding female athlete in Malaysia. Named the eight-time National Sportswoman of the year and the five-time world champion in 2010, Nicol is also ranked World No. 1 for 56 consecutive months while reports on Nicol were collected from *The Star* as it is the most circulated and the most widely read English-language daily in Malaysia (*Audit Bureau of Circulation 2010*). The analysis will focus on the lexical and visual resources of the reports, with visuals claimed to be the element to enhance the credibility of a text (Shirato & Yell, 2000). These linguistic and non-linguistic features of a text are fundamental to ensure the message intended is comprehended.

The framework for linguistic analysis is based on *Framing Theory* by Goffman (1974) and specifically Kian's (2006) framework of framing athletes is adopted in analysing the lexical items in the reports. Results of the analysis showed that three major frames emerged; *personalization frame, achievement frame and strength frame* where *personalization is* the new frame introduced by this study. Another new frame established by this study is the *localisation frame*, though it is merely a minor frame.

The visuals that accompany the reports were analysed using the Interaction Analysis of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) where the contact and social distance

between images of Nicol and the readers of the reports were examined. This is to observe whether these visuals reflected the frames that emerged in the linguistic analysis. Results revealed that the images provide information on Nicol's achievements and display her strength /athletic prowess. In addition, Nicol was being portrayed as having close relationship visually with her audience just as being drawn by the lexical findings. Hence, the study shows that the frames realized by the lexical items used are also realized in the visuals provided.

This study is hoped to provide a rare insight on coverage of a woman athlete in the printed media and sport reporting in Malaysia and across the field. Besides enlightening the society that marginalization and trivialization of women athletes in sport and the media is not a global ideology, this study would initiate more studies on women athletes from various perspectives.

ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk meneliti bagaimana pemain skuasy wanita No. 1 Dunia kelahiran Malaysia, Nicol Ann David diliputi di dalam *The Star*, salah satu akhbar berbahasa Inggeris di Malaysia. Penyelidikan ke atas ciri-ciri gaya bahasa laporan berita sukan sering memberi tumpuan kepada atlet lelaki (Klien, 1988) dan oleh itu, penyelidikan ini akan terus memperkayakan bidang laporan berita sukan dengan memberi tumpuan kepada laporan atlet wanita. Tumpuan tambahan pada penganalisaan visual yang disertakan dalam laporan juga akan memberikan justifikasi kepada keperluan untuk penyelidikan ini kerana penyelidikan terdahulu mengenai berita sukan kebanyakannya hanya menumpukan kepada penyelidikan linguistik.

Nicol Ann David telah dijadikan subjek penyelidikan kerana beliau adalah atlet wanita paling cemerlang di Malaysia. Dinobatkan sebagai Olahragawati Kebangsaan selama lapan tahun dan juara dunia lima kali pada tahun 2010, Nicol juga menduduki ranking pertama dunia untuk 56 bulan berturut-turut manakala laporan mengenai Nicol telah dipetik daripada pautan *The Star (Online)* kerana ia merupakan akhbar yang paling banyak diedarkan dan mempunyai paling ramai pembaca setiap hari di Malaysia (Biro Audit Edaran 2010). Analisis akan memberi tumpuan kepada sumber leksikal dan juga visual dalam laporan, kerana visual dikatakan sebagai suatu elemen untuk meningkatkan kredibiliti sesuatu teks (Shirato & Yell, 2000). Ciri-ciri linguistik dan bukan linguistik setiap teks adalah asas untuk memastikan mesej yang cuba disampaikan difahami.

Rangka kerja bagi analisis linguistik secara amnya adalah berdasarkan teori *Framing* oleh Goffman (1974) manakala rangka kerja khusus adalah berdasarkan rangka kerja Kian (2006) *Framework of Descriptive Categories of Framing Athletes* digunakan dalam menganalisis item leksikal dalam semua laporan. Keputusan analisis mengenalpasti tiga **rangka liputan** (frames) utama; **rangka liputan peribadi**

(personalization frame), **rangka liputan pencapaian** (achievement frame) dan **rangka liputan kekuatan** (*strength frame*) di mana rangka liputan peribadi adalah salah satu rangka liputan baru yang diperkenalkan oleh penyelidikan ini. Satu lagi rangka liputan baru yang diperkenalkan oleh penyelidikan ini adalah **rangka liputan tempatan** (localization frame), namun, ia hanyalah satu rangka liputan yang kecil.

Manakala, visual yang disertakan dalam laporan dianalisa menggunakan *Interaction Analysis* (Analisis Interaksi) Kress dan Van Leeuwen (1996, 2006), di mana **hubungan** (contact) dan **jarak social** (social distance) antara imej Nicol dan pembaca laporan telah dianalisa. Ini adalah untuk meninjau sama ada visual ini mencerminkan rangka liputan yang telah dikenalpasti dalam analisis bahasa. Hasil penyelidikan menunjukkan bahawa imej-imej menyediakan maklumat mengenai pencapaian Nicol dan mempamerkan kekuatan/kehebatan dalam sukan yang diceburinya. Di samping itu, Nicol telah digambarkan sebagai mempunyai hubungan visual yang agak rapat dengan penonton visual beliau seakan ianya mempunyai hubungan peribadi dengan mereka.sama seperti yang digambarkan melalui penggunaan leksikal. Oleh itu, penyelidikan menunjukkan bahawa rangka liputan yang direalisasikan oleh item leksikal yang digunakan diperkuatkan lagi oleh imej visual yang mengiringi/dimuatkan dalam laporan mengenai Nicol.

Oleh itu, penyelidikan ini diharapkan dapat memberikan gambaran yang jarang berlaku dalam liputan atlet wanita dalam media cetak dan laporan sukan di Malaysia, khususnya dan seluruh bidang penyelidikan sukan, amnya. Selain menyedarkan masyarakat bahawa **peminggiran** (marginalization) dan **tindakan memperkecilkan** (trivialization) atlet wanita dalam sukan dan media bukanlah ideologi global, penyelidikan ini diharapkan akan menjadi titik tolak untuk lebih banyak penyelidikan dijalankan.ke atas atlet wanita dari pelbagai perspektif.

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