

## ASSESSING TEXT ALIGNMENT: SARA MILLS' MODEL

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### **Abstract**

*This study compares two on-line texts reporting the same news. This study is meant to find out a possibility of the both news alignments seen from the angle of critical discourse analysis of Sara Mills which looks at the perspective of feminism, and the power relations implied in the texts reflected by the words, phrases, and clauses used. This as well studies the accuracy of the equivalence of transferred messages to their source text, and what social and cultural aspects behind the discourse strategy are applied by the authors in the news. The findings revealed that both the original and the translated news tend to represent woman positively. Seen from the micro features used, woman was positioned proportionally in the texts. Woman does not only take the object position, but also the subject position. However, some choice of words refers to relatively downgrading which still reflects the man world, especially in the translated version where power relations is clearly influencing. The equivalence of the messages can be considered quite accurate with a discourse strategy of extension. In summary, both texts support gender equality, with some recommendation of a more careful choice of words to attain high equivalence of original message*

**Key words:** *feminism, gender, equality, power relations, equivalence, discourse strategy*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been applied to analyse texts for some decades. This has contributed to text analysis and added to the variety of aspects in the text being analysed. It as well has been regarded to help readers understand the use of the language in a text. Language in use is not only a means of communication, but it can also be used, among others to apply speaker's or writer's ideology, or to show authority. Variety of the critical discourse analysis principles has been revealed by different experts, they are, for instance, Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, Ruth Wodak and Sara Mills.

Each of the experts has their own focus in the field. In doing CDA, Fairclough, for example, focuses on types of text, discourse practices, and social practice (Haryatmoko, 2016). Teun van Dijk focuses on three aspects: discourse description, social structure and discourse relation, and participant mental cognition structure (Kristina, 2016). While Wodak,

in addition has also focuses on the historical aspect of the discourse, considering that a text may work in a certain social context in a certain time.

Sara Mills, on the other hand, has different perspective on this CDA, as she put forward feminism, then the focus of her analysis is woman, and it is called feministic stylistics approach. Her model is based on Foucault basic theory reflecting power and ideology in the society, where power is negotiated and distributed through social relations (Mills, 2001). The framework of Sara Mills CDA model studies how characters in a text are described by the writer. It also looks at the position of each character in each social context, what their ideas are, and what the events look like. Beside that, the positions of the writer and the reader are taken into account, as the reader's position may determine the level of readability.

By using the Sara Mills CDA model, the writers here try to analyse two online texts, the original or the source text is in English entitled "Army Reserve Officer Deshauna Barber crowned Miss USA

2016”, and the translated version in Bahasa Indonesia entitled “Miss USA 2016 Jatuh ke Tangan Seorang Prajurit Militer”. These two texts raise interest firstly because of the title. The word ‘crowned’ is parallel with the words ‘queen’ and or ‘princess’, which means that the word is upgrading. While the word ‘jatuh’ means ‘to fall’, and is parallel with a gift as there is no efforts needed to gain the ‘Miss USA 2016’. These two words have different meaning, while the main point of translation is equivalence.

From that point, it is decided that the purpose of the study is to find out a possibility of the both news alignments seen from the angle of critical discourse analysis of Sara Mills which looks at the perspective of feminism, and the power relations implied in the texts reflected by the choice of words, phrases, and clauses found. This also looks at the accuracy of the equivalence of transferred messages to their source text, and what social and cultural aspects behind the discourse strategy are applied by the authors in the news.

## Literary Review

Sara Mills introduced the Feminist Stylistics (1995) that continue to this day, nearly 20 years after its publication, and her work is getting stronger in this field. This idea provides an understanding of written works of women on the one hand. And on the other hand, as stylistic women can be useful for young researchers who are interested in this field, because the field is well structured and requires a preliminary knowledge about feminism.

Feminist Stylistics is structured in two dimensions: This theory started with the complete theory component, entitled "General Theoretical Issues", and continues to the application. The issues are related to the generic theory of feminist text models and analysis of the type of language. In this case, Sara Mills was inspired by David Crystal, a language

represented for Sara Mills "as a form of information transfer, forms of social network or attachment to social, where the relations of power (power relations) negotiated and enforced, as an exclusive selection strengthening each other in a closed system .

Furthermore, Sara Mills criticized traditional approach to literary works, which always have wrong view of the fact that the author is not the controller of the results of his writings, that there are many constraints on the use of language and information organization (Foucault, 1972, QTD, in Mills, 1995: 21). Another problem of the traditional approach is that a lot of text that is focused to the stylistic analysis becomes fragmented—and it is concluded as of a limited number of texts seen to have literary value (D. H. Lawrence, Shakespeare, Pinter, Beckett, etc.).

To prove her thoughts, Mills filed a criticism to literary feminists, like Toril Moi (1985) Elaine Showalter (1978) who have shown that "the text of women" are always excluded from canonical status, by a process known as phallogocentric criticism. By contrast, the analysis model proposed by the feminist Stylistics lead to two main aspects: the production and acceptance of the text. Previously highly dependent on the flow of discourse, factors of socio-historical, textual events and conventions in literature, affiliated to the issue of gender, race, social class, and its dependency on the publisher and advertising.

Mills also filed two examples of text that looks feminine (coordinated clause is not perfect, there is no dominant voice, related to the experience of women and hard to read), but then Mills explained that the text belonged to James Joyce, who intentionally would make the definition be imprecise.

In an effort to respond to input from readers, Sara Mills with schematic analysis of the book, "Gender and reading", discusses the reception, handling issues

such as "direct and indirect address" or dominant readers who will be "male". Sara showed evidence of advertising and radio programs clearly aimed at men. Although the advertisements are based on various examples and authoritative cited name, its purpose, which she mentions in the introduction primarily intends to design a device (toolkit) "and to inquire about commonsense ideas about gender and text. However they disbursed by assuming that every reader is an expert in the theory of acceptance.

On the Feminist Stylistics, Sara Mills directs its analysis to the problem of words, phrases / sentences, and to the level of discourse. One of the problems thoroughly discussed is related to "generic pronouns and nouns", which is generally masculine, or, when the feminine, always refer to a profession that has become stereotyped reserved for women, such as nurse, secretary or librarian (Mills, *Gender Matters: Feminist Linguistic Analysis*, 2012).

In Mills view (as other views of linguistic feminists), language that represents the male experience as the norm, is "sexist" and can be avoided by using several options of "gender-free language": the plural pronoun, such as conventions of s/he, passive use of feminine pronoun usage in general-is then very difficult to implement equality of gender.

In the analysis at word level, Sara Mills also discusses matters related to the semantic derogation of women ("semantic derogation of women") in a pair of words such as master/mistress, lord/lady, bachelor/spinster, each pair of words can cause negative connotations. Although the information provided is new or revolutionary, chapters of the book was written with good structure and develop a valid proposal of a language that is not too sexist.

Interestingly, it is discovered and can be developed to the level of language-and perhaps some monumental works of Mills

that may be mentioned are: *Gender Across Languages - The Linguistic Representation of Women and Men*, edited by Marlis Hellinger and Hadumod Bussmann, published by John Benjamins in 2001, in 30 languages: Arabic, Belizean Creole, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Eastern Maroon Creole, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Oriya, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian / Croatian / Bosnian, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Turkish, Vietnamese, and Welsh (2001). Although not all of the works mentioned written by Sara Mills directly, but their influence cannot be denied.

Sara Mills analyzed the level of the phrase/sentence "including ready-made phrases, such as the famous proverb or quote, metaphor, following Lakoff and Johnson (1980), included jokes and humor. All of her work is based on her view of the ideology, stereotypes, pre-suppositional and inference. Based on the representations and context, this book is actually an extension of the discussion of the earlier works of Sara Mills. Sara Mills acknowledged that stylistic analysis is less commonly used at the level of discourse, because the analysis of stylistic is less interested in individual pattern of lexical, but rather focus on the structure and a wider pattern that will determine the pattern of lexical and with its effect on these items and broader structural aspects. Based on the framework of discourse of Foucault (1972), Sara Mills analyzes the construction of characteristics of literary texts, and also in a variety of media, identifies stereotyped concept. Mills' approach is very interesting (and it is inspired by Joanna Russ's *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (1983)

## RESEARCH METHODS

The texts are analyzed using the feminist stylistics approach or feminist discourse analysis. The analysis is started

from the interpretation of the accuracy of the transferred messages of linguistic units, i.e. micro units: from the word level, phrase and clause, and finally at the discourse level. Using logical arguments, the meaning of the linguistic units are interpreted taking into account the contexts bound. The next step is applying the framework analysis of Sara Mills which has four purposes, i.e. exploring the assumption or ideology of the writer from the language style in the text; the position of the actors: the subject and the object; the position of the writer and the reader; and the sequence of the information in determining the legitimacy of an actor in the text.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The followings are the texts, both in English version (Hume, 2016) and in bahasa Indonesia (Reporter, 2016) Each of the discussion gives details of the analysis.

### Interpretation of the Source Text from Linguistic Units Used

No	Elements Analyzed(ST)	Interpretation/Argumentation
1	Army Reserve Officer Deshauna Barber <b>crowned</b> Miss USA 2016	'crowned' is for queen and or princess who have hegemony, pride, dignity. The word is upgrading the title and Deshauna Barber.
	(CNN)An Army Reserve officer and IT analyst from the District of Columbia has been <b>crowned</b> Miss USA 2016 after <b>mounting a strong defense of women in combat roles</b> in the military.	' <b>mounting a strong defense of women in combat roles</b> in the military' is also positive comments, meaning that she has initiative, willingness to defend women to gain equality in military
2	<i>She continued: "We are just as tough as men. As a commander of my unit, I'm powerful. I am dedicated and it is important that we recognize that gender does not limit us in the United States."</i>	The clause 'we are as tough as men' shows that Deshauna Barber has an intention to show that woman and man have the same quality, no difference.
3	"As a woman in the United States Army, I think it was an amazing job by our government to allow women to integrate into every branch of the military."	In this statement, she reflects her ideas of the homogeneity of world life between woman and man. The world is not man dominating but equal.

From the analysis of 21 clauses of original text (ST) in which found smaller linguistic units of words and phrases, it can be seen that all words, phrases, and clauses obviously empowering woman. There is not any word seems to under grade woman.

### Interpretation of the Target Text from Linguistic Units Used

No	Elements Analyzed(TT)	Interpretation/Argumentation
1	Gelar Miss USA 2016 Jatuh ke Tangan Seorang Prajurit Militer.	'jatuh' means 'to fall' means like a gift, without efforts, this is a downgrading of the title itself and of Deshauna Barber.
2	"Kami sama kuatnya dengan kaum lelaki," tegas dia yang disusul tepuk tangan riuh dari penonton yang memadati T-Mobile Arena, Las Vegas.	These clauses show the equality of man and woman(the object talks for herself), and how strong and smart Deshauna is described by the writer.
3	Barber terlihat tak ragu. Dia lalu menjawab, "sebagai wanita di AS, saya rasa itu merupakan tugas yang luar biasa, dan kesempatan yang juga baik dari pemerintah kita untuk bisa menyatukan perempuan di seluruh cabang tugas militer."	The clauses also reflect the objection of woman stereotype, which says that woman is doubtful, instead in this statement, it is obviously the opposite, 'tak ragu' means no doubt. Even military which is man dominating work, here is now being penetrated by woman.
4	Latar belakangnya itu terlihat sangat mendukung kemampuan dia untuk memberi jawaban yang tajam pada sesi tanya jawab, terkait isu perempuan di medan perang.	She here is rated as intelligent and smart, and has profound knowledge about woman issue and combat battle.
5	Uniknya, Barber adalah seorang prajurit militer, yang juga bekerja sebagai analis teknologi informasi di Departemen Perdagangan AS	This clause generally is upgrading, however, 'uniknya' , 'unique' in English means the only one tends to show that being a woman in military is not normal, then in my assumption that the writer still believes in man dominating world, specifically in military, it really is supposed to be man's job.

From this Indonesian version, it may be assumed that the text in general does not seem to take sides in terms of man or woman domination. However, when we look at some words chosen: 'jatuh' and 'uniknya', although they may not be

deliberately written, yet still reflect where the text stands. This may happen because of the writer's knowledge of Indonesia vocabulary and also the familiarity to the phrase of 'the award goes to', the verb 'goes to' is usually transformed into 'jatuh ke tangan' which is a methaphore.

### **The Framework of Sara Mills in the Texts**

Both texts show no alignments, they are aware of the importance of gender equality. This is proved by the results of the texts analysis which reflects the tendency of empowering woman as human beings and a creature just like man, there is not any difference. Women are constructed as strong as men, have power in a man-dominating work, i.e.military.

The position of the actors in both texts are the same. For instance, it is not only the writer who becomes the subject, but also the object of the text (Deshauna Barber), and another actor, Joe Zee, a jury in the pageant contest. This style can maintain the objectivity of the texts. It is not only the writer, but also the object and another person are involved in showing their ideas and roles. However, in both texts the position of the readers are not clearly seen, they are only the parties receiving information. While the writer is delivering information, whose source varies from the writer himself or herself, and from other sources: the object of the texts and a jury in the pageant. From the sequence of information, it is clearly stated that the texts endorse the existence of woman, they support gender equality. Even the Indonesian version applies a discourse strategy of putting additional information about Deshauna Barber, taken from her biodata. This additional information has also confirmed the position of her and women in general of the intelligibility, smartness, physical and mental strengths.

## **CONCLUSION**

Showing equality in texts is a necessity. This is a positive way to enhance peace and to avoid controversy. This can be done by carefully select linguistic units used in texts. In terms of transformed messages, it is also wise to consider the culture of the target text to be able to come to the correct equivalence. By having careful considerations before issuing texts in public, the text will be more beneficial for many parties.

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