



## Power and Representation in The Jakarta Post's Article on UGM Rape Case Settlement

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### Abstract

In 2019, a rape case involving two students of UGM went viral. After being headlines in many news articles, the case was settled in February, and one of the newspapers which cover this news is The Jakarta Post who released an article entitled '*UGM settles alleged sexual abuse case*'. Through systemic functional grammar, this study attempts at analyzing the transitivity processes and participants in the article, and it aims at describing how it signifies the power relation and representation in the article. This is a qualitative study which applied critical discourse analysis, and the data used are sentences and clauses taken from the news article. To analyze the data, the researcher applied Halliday's transitivity theory and Fairclough's theory on power and representation. The results of the study reveal that there is an unequal representation in the article where it gives more opportunities for UGM to deliver their statement and argument since UGM holds more power than the other participants.

## INTRODUCTION

Language is mainly used for communication and expressing ideas, feelings and thoughts (Thompson, 2014). However, in the use of language, often, it is not only used to transfer information, but also utilized to alter reality and create a change in the society (Weiss & Wodak, 2007). Further, the use of language also signifies the power relations between the participants. These power relations are sometimes equal, but many times unequal (Fairclough, 1989). It depends on the social and economy class of the participants in the society. Further, in today's society, power relations are not only demonstrated in a face to face interaction, it is also exercised in a non-face to face communication where the participants do not interact directly, for example in mass media such as newspaper, radio and television (Fairclough, 1989). In relation to this, mass media, especially newspapers, has a significant role in the society (Liu & Jia, 2019). They are used to share information, to educate, to

entertain and to control social practices (Suharyanto, 2016). In addition, Van Dijk (1995: 10) argues that mass media has the power 'to control the readers or viewers mind to some extent'. Sari (2019: 15) strengthens this argument by saying that newspapers have the power to control 'what is right or wrong in the society'. Therefore, newspapers have a huge contribution in shaping the society's thoughts and beliefs. Therefore, to fulfil these functions, news from these sources which is broadcasted and shared widely should be neutral, factual and actual. However, although the news is indeed factual, Fairclough (1989: 50) argues that news articles often do not solely share information, but also deliver hidden messages. He also argues that these news articles often do not represent the ideology of the writer or reporter, but a representation of a particular group in power. Therefore, he claims that these news articles and broadcasts present an unequal source and give a certain group more spotlight and chance to deliver their ideology and messages. In relation to this, newspapers many times fail to remain neutral, and only provide partial information which can benefit the groups in power. At the end, the line between right and wrong becomes blurry. Most information in the society is from news in newspapers and radios (Brooks & Hébert, 2006), and the society is forced to believe in what the groups in power want them to believe. Because of this, this situation should not be normalized. People should be aware that inequality and discrimination exist in news articles. Therefore, in order to achieve this, analyzing power relations and representations in news articles is important and significant.

Furthermore, one of the most viral case recently is the rape case which involves two UGM students. This case received spotlights after Balairung published an article on how the victim's journey to find justice is not accommodated by her university, UGM. Then in February, the case was settled, and one of the newspapers which released an article on the settlement of the case is The Jakarta Post. In relation to the discussion in the previous paragraph, this article might not equally represent the participants in the case. Therefore, this study attempts to analyze how the Jakarta Post exercises power, and which participant is represented more in the article. As a way to reveal this, a transitivity analysis will be conducted to see the transitivity process and participants chosen by the writer.

In the last decade, researchers have conducted several studies on transitivity and have attempted to analyze power and representation in mass media and how the UGM rape case was settled. One of the studies which applied transitivity analysis

is a thesis entitled '*Transitivity Process and Ideological Construction of Donald Trump's Speeches*' by Nova Anggraini in 2018. This study analyzed the transitivity processes in Donald Trump speeches and revealed how it reflects his political ideology. The results revealed that Trump inserted his ideology of democracy in his speeches, and tried to make his audience accept his belief. In addition, the research also provided significant proof that transitivity analysis has the ability to reveal hidden messages. Additionally, on the topic of power and representation, a study entitled '*Why Political Parties Colonize the Media in Indonesia: An Exploration of Mediatization*' was conducted by Muhammad Taufan Arifuddin in 2016. Through politico-economy analysis, this study analyzed mediatization in politics, and based on the findings, Arifuddin (2017) argues that most mainstream media are in control of political groups and elites. Also, the study has proven that mediatization of politics exist in Indonesia. Further, another study conducted an analysis on the viral UGM rape case. The study was written by Sallika Marra Rizki Darrista entitled '*UGM Rape Case Reviewed from the Perspective of Behavioural Theory, Objective Morality System and Values*' in 2018. Darista (2018) found that UGM tend to cover the rape case, and the punishment given to the perpetrator is not severe enough. Based on this discussion, it can be seen that none of the previous studies applied transitivity analysis to examine news articles especially related to the UGM rape case, and academically analyze how language can reveal power relations in the news articles. Therefore, following the background of the problems, this research aims at:

- a) revealing the transitivity processes and participants applied in the article, and
- b) describing how the transitivity choices reflect the power relation in the article.

### **Language and power in mass media**

In his book entitled '*Language and Power*', Norman Fairclough (1989: 49) explains that power relations demonstrated in a face to face interaction and non-face to face communication like in mass media are different for several reasons. First, non-face to face communication tends to be one sided. Compared to face to face interaction where people can directly react to what other people say, here, information is released and people will only receive it without having a chance to give direct feedback. In addition, during communication, people usually adjust the way they communicate to the context and the audience. However, this is usually hard in a mass media communication since the participants consist of people from different backgrounds and knowledge.

Since the communication is one sided and the audience is general, mass media holds the exclusive right over the news and information they share (Fairclough, 1989: 50). In other words, they can control what information to share, and whatnot, and they are free to choose from what perspective the information is delivered. The problem then arises when the media starts to become biased and tend to support a certain group. Nowadays, mass media tend to release news which supports the group who is in power, for example the government (Fairclough, 1989: 51). To make it worse, their support toward a certain group is usually unclear and disguised. Fairclough (1989: 52) argues that mass media has a power to cover the power in the text which is what he called 'hidden power'. To put it differently, mass media has the ability to manipulate their sentences to make people unconsciously construct a certain ideology and belief (Söğüt, 2018). Albeit factual, they tend to present not the whole information, but only the parts which create a good image for the group they favor.

### **Systemic Functional Linguistics**

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) sees language based on their function in humans' communication and interaction. Fontaine (2013) argues that the SFL framework is applied to provide a thorough explanation of the function and structure of language. According to Halliday (1985), there are three basic functions of language which are; 1) to share stories and show emotions, 2) to develop and maintain relationships with other people, and 3) to create and organize texts which are coherent with other concepts. In SFL, these functions are termed as metafunctions where the first function mentioned previously is called experiential metafunction, the second one is interpersonal metafunction, and the third one is textual metafunction (Thompson, 2014). Each of these metafunctions is used for different purposes in social interaction, and they are usually incorporated together. However, as this study plans on focusing only on the analysis of transitivity, it will only focus on experiential metafunction. This metafunction illustrates how people see the world; what happens, who is involved and in what manner (Ezzina, 2015). In this metafunction, Eggins (2004) states that transitivity analysis is used to identify the types of processes someone has done, is doing or will do in the future.

In a communication process, people often focus on their involvement to take credits or blame others. Also, they often emphasize their actions to show their contributions and to demonstrate their capability. Transitivity analysis is carried out to

analyze how people share experiences (Fontaine, 2013). Analyzing transitivity processes will help people see what actions they are focusing on, and analyzing the participants will reveal whose involvement they are highlighting. For example, when a material process is dominant in a text, it implies that the writer wants to focus on the participants' action. In relation to this, Halliday (Chalimah dan Sumarlam, 2017) argues that systemic functional grammar can 'reveal power and representation' in texts. In transitivity analysis, the actions in material processes can also show the power of the participant. As an example, when a participant '*punishes*' other participants, it signifies that he/she has more power than the others since only those who have authority can carry out such action. Moreover, the analysis of participants in the transitivity process can also reveal their representations in the text. When one participant appears more frequently than the other, it indicates that the writer gives more opportunity for them to voice out their argument and show their actions.

### **Transitivity processes and participants**

Material process is one of the most commonly used processes in texts or in everyday conversations (Halliday, 2004). It involves physical action as walking, hitting, or pushing (Waskita, 2014: 95). Furthermore, the participant who performs the action is called an actor, while the one who is 'being done to' is called a goal (Kurnia, 2018). In addition, the participant who is affected by the action but is not directly involved in it is called beneficiary which is further divided into two subtypes; 1) recipient which is the participant who receive something from the actor, and 2) client which is the participant who the actor is doing the action for (Thompson, 2014:111).

Mental process involves the process of 'sensing' (Landa, 2017: 16). Further, mental process is divided into four sub processes; 1) perception which involves the act of 'feeling' or 'seeing', 2) cognitive which involves the act of thinking, 3) emotion which involves the process of 'liking' or 'hating', and 4) desiderative which involves the process of 'wanting' (Thompson, 2014: 95). In this process, there are two types of participants. First is the senser who is the human participant who hosts the process of sensing, thinking, or feeling, and second is phenomenon which the thing being 'perceived' or felt (Thompson, 2014: 99). Verbal process involves the process of 'saying' or 'speaking. Here, the participant who speaks is called a sayer, the thing being said is called verbiage, and the one who is being addressed to is a receiver. Another participant is called a target which is the participant who the verbiage is directed at.

Relational process shows relations of two or more objects or participants (Fontaine, 2013: 75). It is further divided into two subtypes which are 1) attributive where A is the attribute of B or vice versa, and 2) identifying where A is used to identify B or vice versa (Wang, 2010: 258). In an attributive relational process, the participant who carries the quality is called a carrier, and the quality being carried is called an attribute. Meanwhile, in identifying relational processes, there are two types of participants which are value and token. Value is the participant being identified which is more general, and token is the more specific quality which is used to identify the value (Thompson, 2014: 103).

Existential process describes the existence of a particular object (Fontaine, 2013: 75). Compared to the other processes, it is relatively easy to recognize this process since the clause or sentence will usually start with the word *there* followed by *a be form*. Moreover, there is only one participant in this process namely an existence which is the thing that exists described in the process (Anggraini, 2018: 19).

Downing and Locke (2006: 151) describe behavioural processes as a physical reflection or manifestation of 'psychological' processes in people's mind for example *crying, listening* or *coughing*. There are two types of participants in this process: 1) behavior which is the participant who performs the behaviour and 2) behaviour which is the participant which modifies the behavioural process. Unlike actors in the material process, only humans can become the behavior in this process.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive qualitative research where the researcher only observes the data without having the right to control it (Kothari in Nur Pratiknyo: 2016). Moreover, Vanderstoep and Johnston (2011: 167) in their book argue that qualitative research aims at presenting an in-depth analysis of a problem. Further, this study analysed the viral rape case settlement to see whether UGM is successful in resolving the case, and whether AN has achieved justice. The object of this study is a news article from The Jakarta Post which reported about the rape case settlement. The Jakarta Post was selected because it is one of the most popular newspapers in Indonesia. The data in this study are clauses taken from an article entitled '*UGM settles alleged sexual abuse case*' written by Sri Wahyuni and were retrieved from <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/02/06/ugm-settles-alleged-sexual-abuse-case.html> in February 24th, 2019.

This study applied critical discourse analysis to examine power 'the concept of power' in the article (Mengibar, 2015: 1). In addition, it attempted at analysing language patterns and examined the 'hidden ideologies behind the text' (Al-Gublan, 2015). Because of that, there were two layers of analysis where the first analysis focused on the linguistic aspects, and the second one focused on its implications. On the first layer, first, the researcher separated the article into clauses. Then, using the theory of transitivity by Halliday (1985), the researcher categorised the clauses into different types of transitivity, and identified the participants in each clause. On the second layer, she used the theory of language and power by Fairclough (1989) to examine the power and representation in the article. Moreover, in the data analysis, the primary instrument of this research was the researcher itself, and as a way to ensure trustworthiness, the researcher rechecked the analysis by referring to the theories and previous research, and consulted to the lecturer and fellow researchers. Based on the findings, the researcher provided conclusions and suggestions for future researchers.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the clauses in the article, all types of transitivity process were employed by the writer. However, the frequency of the data differs from one type to another. The table below presents the amount of data, the percentage, and the numbers of data in each process as participant.

**Table 1. Types of transitivity process applied in the article**

NO	Process	Sum	%
1.	Material	26	43
2.	Verbal	20	33
3.	Mental; Cognitive	3	5
4.	Relational; Identifying	9	15
5.	Behavioural	1	2
6.	Existential	1	2
Total:		60	100

From Table 1, it can be seen that material process is revealed to be the most frequent type used by the writer, and followed by verbal process, relational: identifying process, mental: cognitive process, behavioral process and existential process.

**Table 2. Transitivity profiles of the article**

Transitivity Roles	UGM*	AN	HS	The Case	Others*	Total
Initiator					1	1
Actor	14	5	4	2	3	28
Sayer	15	1	2		1	19
Senser	1	1	2			4
Token	1				1	2
Behaver	1					1
Goal		2	2	3	13	20
Target	1					1
Beneficiary		1				1
Accompaniment		1	1			2
Total:	33	11	11	5	19	79

Furthermore, based on Table 2 above, there are ten types of participants used in the article which are initiator, actor, sayer, senser, token, behaver, goal, target, beneficiary and accompaniment. Further, there are three main participants in the article namely UGM, AN (the victim) and HS (the perpetrator). The participants labelled as others in the table are not specified since each of the only occurs once, and is not really significant to the study. Meanwhile, the participants labelled as UGM consist mainly of the rector, the official, and UGM itself as a university. They appeared to be the most dominant participants, followed by AN and HS.

### **Transitivity processes and participants**

#### *Material process*

As discussed in the previous section, material process involves the act of doing, and is one of the most commonly applied processes in a text. The participants in this process are usually an actor which is the one who performs the action and a goal which is the one who is affected by action. Consider the following examples:

- (1) “(Actor) We did not want (*Pr; material*) to force (*Goal*) our solution,”  
(datum 43)
- (2) “(Actor) UGM (*Pr; material*) has also given (*Goal*) a mandate (*Recipient*)  
to the School of Social and Political Sciences and the School of  
Engineering to fully oversee the education of HS and AN (datum 31)

In example (1) above, there are actually two verbs, but the material process is signified by the second verb *to force* which means to make someone do something.



In this datum, the actor is *we* which constitutes the UGM officials who take part in the case settlement, and the goal is *our solution* which is the solution UGM offers to settle the case. Further, the verb phrase *has also given* in example (2) signifies that this clause is also a material process since it demonstrates an act of doing. Similar to the previous example, the actor in example (2) is *UGM* as well since it is the one who perform the act of giving, but here, it constitutes UGM as a whole or as a university rather than a certain official, and the goal is *a mandate* since it is the one being given. Additionally, there is also a recipient who receives the thing given by the actor which is *the School of Social and Political Sciences and the School of Engineering* who, in the table above, is generalized as UGM.

#### *Verbal process*

While the material process involves the act of doing, the verbal process demonstrates the act of saying. Therefore, the participants are a *sayer* which is the one who does the saying, and a *verbiage* or a *projected* which is something being said by the *sayer*. However, a *verbiage* and a *projected* are different since the latter is usually a reported speech. Below are the examples of verbal process:

(3) *(Sayer) Panut (Pr; verbal) said, adding, (Projected) that as rector he also signed the agreement together with AN and HS. (datum 10)*

(4) *“(Sayer) HS (Pr; verbal) has expressed (Verbiage) regret...(datum 6)*

The verbal process in example (3) is signified by the verb *said* which is typically used in this process. The *sayer* is *Panut* who is the rector of UGM which, in the participant table, is generalized as UGM. Further, the thing being said is *that as rector he also signed the agreement together with AN and HS*, and since it is a reported speech, it is labelled as a *projected*. In addition, the datum 6 in example (4) is also a verbal process since it uses the verb phrase *has expressed* which means to communicate one's feeling. In this example, the *sayer* is *he* which is HS or the perpetrator, and the thing being said or expressed is *regret* and is labelled as *verbiage*.

#### *Mental process*

If the actions in material and verbal processes are carried out in the physical world, mental processes occur in people's minds. It involves the act of feeling, thinking, perception and wanting which is why it is divided into emotion, cognitive, perception and desiderative. Moreover, the participants in this process are *senser*

which is the one who hosts the process, and phenomenon which is the thing being felt. The examples are as follow:

(5) ...that (*Senser*) both AN, the victim, who is also known by the pseudonym Agni, HS (the perpetrator) and UGM (*Pr; Mental, Cognitive*) considered (*Phenomenon*) the case resolved. (datum 5)

(6) (*Senser*) [he] (*Pr; Mental, Cognitive*) admitted (*Phenomenon*) his wrongdoing...(datum 7)

Datum 5 in example (5) is labelled as a verbal process since it uses the verb *considered* which means to think of something as, and since it is an act of thinking, it is categorized as a cognitive process. Further, the sensers are AN, HS and UGM because they are the ones who host the process, and the phenomenon is *the case* since it is the thing being thought of as resolved. Similarly, example (6) is also considered as a mental cognitive process since the verb *admitted* signifies an act of thinking. Meanwhile, the senser is *he* which constitutes HS or the perpetrator, and the phenomenon is *his wrongdoing*.

#### *Relational process*

Rather than an action, the relational process explains relations of things. The relation might be in a form of A being an attribute of B which is later called relational attributive, and it might be in a form of A being identified with B which is later labelled as relational identifying. These two subtypes have different participants. In relational attributive, the participants are carrier and attribute, while in relational identifying, they are value and token. To have a clearer insight, consider the following examples:

(7) (*Value*) Accompanying the rector (*Pr; rel, identifying*) were (*Token*) two deputy rectors and deans of UGM's School of Engineering and School of Social and Political Sciences. (datum 11)

(8) "(*Token*)This (*Pr; rel, identifying*) is (*Value*) for the sake of AN's and HS's future," he said. (datum 58)

In example (7), the relational process is signified by the typical verb *were* or *to be*, and is labelled as a relational identifying since the relation shows how the second participant is identified with the first participant. In addition, *accompanying the rector* is labelled as the value since it is more restricted than *two deputy rectors and deans of UGM's School of Engineering and School of Social and Political Sciences* which is labelled as the token. Similar to this, example (8) is also considered as a relational identifying process since their relation is in the form of identification. *This* is

the token since it is more general, and *for the sake of AN's and HS's future* is the value since it is more specific.

#### *Existential process*

Similar to relational process, existential process does not involve any action as well. It simply describes the existence of a certain entity. Therefore, the participant is only an existent which is the thing that exists. Consider the example below:

(9) *There (Pr; Existential) had been (Existent) controversy, however, over how the university should handle the case. (datum 20)*

In this example, the existential process is indicated by the typical demonstrative pronoun *there* followed by the 'to be' *had been*. Meanwhile, the existent is *controversy* since it is the thing whose existence is being described in the clause.

#### *Behavioural process*

Behavioural process is similar to mental process since it is also related to perception. However, it is different since this process involves physical actions which are the manifestations of what happens in people's minds. Furthermore, the participants are a behavior which is the one who performs the action, and sometimes a behaviour which gives information about the action. Below is an example of behavioural process:

(10) *...for (Behaver) his side (Pr; behavioural) to really listen (datum 40)*

In example (9), the behavioural process is indicated by the use of verb *listen*. Here, the only participant is the behavior which is *his side*. It constitutes UGM as the side who wants to listen to the victim's voice.

### **Representation and power relation in the article**

Based on the findings in the previous section, it can be seen that the representation and power relation of the parties in the article are unequal. The participants which appear in the article are UGM, AN (the victim), HS (the perpetrator), the case, and several other participants which are not significant to the outcome of the study. Similar to the types of transitivity process, the participations of these participants are not equal since UGM frequently appears as active participant such as actor and sayer, while the others rarely appear as active participants and many times are passive. In relation to this, the transitivity process and participants applied by the writer reflects the power relations and representation in the article. Therefore, there are several interesting things that can be noted and analysed further;

1) the domination of UGM as an actor and sayer and the passive participation of AN and HS, and 2) the frequent use of the case as a goal, 3) the frequent use of material and verbal process

The way the writer places the participants in an article reflects the representation and power relation of the participants. In this article, it is particularly interesting. As discussed in the previous paragraph, active participants such as actor and sayer are all dominated by UGM, while AN and HS only occur in 4 or 5 data. This signifies that UGM is depicted as a participant who has the ability to carry out various actions where these actions will affect the other participants. In addition, it also indicates that UGM has the power to make people listen to their statements, and cite it as a source of information. In relation to this, the passive participation of AN and HS shows that the writer does not give equal chance to them to also participate actively in the article, they are given less chance to give their opinion and express their arguments. Further, this reflects the power relation of the participants in the article, in this case UGM, AN and HS. The dominant use of UGM as an active participant denotes that UGM holds more power than the other participants. Besides, this is strengthened by the use of words such as '*oblige*' and '*give mandate*' in clauses involving UGM as the active participant. These words can only be used and implemented by a certain group who is in power or is more powerful than the others which this case is UGM. Furthermore, the domination of UGM as active participants does not only reflect the power relation, but it also indicates that the settlement of the case is rather one sided. This interpretation is logical for the main participants are actually AN and HS, so they should be the one who is more active in the settlement of the case, and their opinion and argument should be represented more. Moreover, this is strengthened by the press release of AN's lawyer which states that the case is not actually settled, AN's side chose to end the investigation so that AN will not suffer more mentally.

Another interesting thing in the findings is how *the case* becomes a goal in three clauses while AN and HS participate as a goal in only two material processes. Because they are the main participants in the article and in the case, it is expected that they would be the one who participate actively in the article. However, as discussed in the previous paragraph, they appear as active participants only in four or five clauses and most of them are the actions UGM obliged and ask them to do. If they do not appear as active participants frequently, it would be understandable if

they appear as passive participants more for the investigation is conducted to find solutions for both of them, especially AN, the victim. Nevertheless, they appear as passive participants even less. This raises a question whether or not the investigation is actually conducted to help AN find justice. The answer to this question might be related to the fact that in the article, *the case* appears as a goal more than AN and HS. Following this finding, it indicates that UGM cares about the case more than it does about AN's situation, and the justice she is trying to reach. In other words, they conduct the investigation to complete the case as quickly as possible to avoid the public's judgment and protest.

Furthermore, the types of transitivity process applied by a writer in a text often indicates what type of activities they want to highlight and put emphasis on. In the article analyzed above, the dominant types are material and verbal process. The domination of the material process signifies that the writer wants to focus on the action of the participants; what they did, what they are doing, and what they will do. Most of the material process applied UGM as the actors, be it the rector, the officials or UGM as a whole, and the clauses explain and describe what UGM has done, what they are doing, what they will do in the future, and what they have capabilities of doing. On the other hand, AN only appeared in 5 data, and most of the clauses talk about what UGM obliged her to do, not what he is actually doing or will do. Meanwhile, HS appears as an actor in 4 data where one clause talks about the sexual abuse he did and the rest talk about the things UGM tells him to do after the settlement. Furthermore, another dominant type is verbal process. The dominant use of verbal process shows that the writer focuses more on what the participants are saying. Similar to the material process, in this process the dominant and active participant is UGM which means the clauses with verbal process mainly cite and express UGM's statement. In other words, the writer tends to refer to UGM's statement as the main source of the article, and ignores the other two participants, AN and HS. Therefore, the source of information in this article is unbalanced since the writer only covers the information from only one participant. This strengthened Fairclough's (1989) argument that mass media tend to favor those in power, and in this case, it can be seen that the writer represents UGM more rather than the other two main participants.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Following the discussions above, several conclusions can be made. First, following Halliday's systemic functional grammar, the transitivity analysis of the news article reveals that there are six different types of process applied by the writer; material, verbal, mental (cognition), relational (identifying), behavioural and existential process. Here, the most dominant process is material followed by verbal process, and the most dominant and active participant is UGM which consists of the rector and the officials. Second, these findings reflect the representation and power relations of the participants in the article.

The domination of material and verbal process signifies that the writer of the article wanted to highlight the action and statement of the participants. However, since the active participant is mostly UGM, it indicates that the article represents UGM more than the other main participants in the article. Moreover, the active participation of UGM and the passive involvement of AN and HS reflects their power relations where UGM holds more power than AN and HS. Further, the frequent use of *the case* as the goal indicates that the article and UGM cares more about the settlement of the case than it does to the victim's problems and suffering.

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