

The Images of Indonesian Women Workers in the Arabic-Language Sites on the Internets: A Critical Language Analysis

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Abstract

Problems of Indonesian workers, especially domestic servants, often become the spotlight of mass media at home and abroad. Several researches have studied on Indonesian women workers from the aspects of human rights. This article discusses the headlines about Indonesian women workers contained in the Arabic-language sites on the Internet, using a critical linguistic approach to determine the extent to which the attitude of the Arab mass media in highlighting this problem. After conducting a research on selected vocabularies and grammatical structures used, this article finds that the headlines on Arabic-language sites on the Internet are mostly tendentious in exposing Indonesian women workers. This can be analyzed from the themes that appear in the media that are mainly in negative news. The choice of words, nominalization, passivation and others have contributed to marginalize Indonesian housemaids in Saudi.

Index terms— women workers, discourse, arabic, linguistics, mass media.

1 Introduction

One of the frequent news about Indonesia in the spotlight of mass media at home and abroad is the problem of Indonesian migrant workers, in particular women workers, ranging from problems of bad treatment from employers, sexual harassment, low salary, until suicide cases. In highlighting this problem, of course, each media has its own discourse. Several researches have studied on Indonesian women workers from the aspects of human rights. This article discusses the headlines about Indonesian women workers contained in the Arabic-language sites on the Internet, using a critical linguistic approach to determine the extent to which the attitude of the Arab mass media in highlighting this problem.

The news about Indonesian women workers are often broadcasted by mass media around the world, including in Indonesia and in Arabic, as the parties concerned, and each of the mass media of course has its own discourse in exposing such problems in accordance to their ideology. Based on the above data, this article seeks to explore how the attitudes of the Arab mass media, especially the sites on the Internet, in highlighting the problem, because there is the assumption that the mass media in the Arab publicize disproportionately in cases relating to Indonesian domestic servants who works in Saudi.

This article is necessary to show the world about the attitudes of Arab mass media towards Indonesian housemaid. It is because only the Arab and Indonesian mass media that contains news about this issue whilst only news in the Arab mass media which is read by international readers because Arabic is the international language used in the United Nations, while the news contained in Indonesian language is usually not read. Therefore, this phenomenon can cause a bad image from the world community about Indonesian women.

In this article will give an analysis of the headlines about domestic servants which are written in the Arabic-language sites on the Internet, using the approach of Critical Language Analysis (Critical Linguistic), ie, research

2 II. CRITICAL LANGUAGE ANALYSIS OF HEAD-LINES IN ARABIC SITES ON INTERNETS

that not only see the news as the mediation of reality (representation of reality) , but also as a construction of reality, the so-called discourse. The focus of this research is the choice of words and grammatical structures used by the mass media in expressing the meaning of a particular ideology.

In presenting the media as a discourse, the author uses definition that is provided by Hasan Alwi, who said that the discourse is a series of linked sentences forming a harmonious meaning among sentences. (Alwi 1993: 43). The author also uses the Harimurti's definition who said that discourse is the most complete unit of language. In the hierarchy of grammatical it represents the highest or largest grammatical unit. The discourse is realized in the form of a whole essay, paragraph or word that carries a full mandate (Kridalaksana: 1993).

Another is the definition formulised by D. Maingueneau which states that discourse is a word + speech (communication situations). Discourse must have a clear message and is autonomous that can stand on its own. Thanks to his communication situation, discourse can be understood even though not a complete sentence. The understanding of discourse must take into account the context of the situation as it affects the meaning of discourse. In general, the discourse is arranged in a clear structure. However, its form is uncertain, may consist of one word, one sentence, one paragraph, one article, one book, several books or even one field of science. (Zaimar, 2009).

Meanwhile, the conceptual framework used in this article, first of all is the conceptual framework used by Ibn Hamad, namely the media function as a mediation of reality (representation reality) and the media as the construction of reality (discourse) (Hamad, 2008). Discussed in this article are only a function of the media as construction of reality. In accordance with sections that will be discussed futher, namely the headline problem, then the discourse that will be discussed in this article are the discourse in the form of word or sentence.

Furthermore, in analyzing aspects of vocabulary and grammatical structures, this article uses a conceptual framework of Roger Fowler et al and Norman Fairclough used by Eriyanto (2001), namely about the Critical Language Analysis (Critical Linguistics), which focuses on the language of discourse analysis and correlates with ideology. The essence of critical linguistics is to see how language grammar brings the position and meaning of a particular ideology. In other words, the aspect of ideology is observed by looking at the choice of language and grammatical structures used, either choice of words or grammatical structures, understood as an option, whichever is chosen and expressed by someone bring the meaning of the particular ideology.

2 II. Critical Language Analysis of Head-Lines in Arabic Sites on Internets

The author will analysis the first head-line in the article containing the Indonesian maid who was raped by 13 young Saudi Arabia (www.yesdubai, 7 April 2009). The headline is as follows:

13 ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????? The above headline is transitive sentence. The subject is 13 ?????? (13 youths), the predicate is ?????????? (to rape), and the object is ?????????????? ?????????? (an Indonesian housemaid). The use of the form transitive on this headline would have certain purposes to be conveyed by news writers. As the mediation of reality or the representation of reality, the use of such short, concise and complete sentences which contains the subject, predicate and object, can be regarded as a good headline, because it can provide representative information to the reader. However, judging from the construction order of reality or discourse, it seems, the head-line in the text above, not only functions to mediate reality, but also convey a particular ideology. For example, in the subject, news writer only mentions the word "youth", did not mention from where, while the object, obviously, the news writer deliberately mentions the origin of the "woman's servant", who was raped.

Needless to say that news writers want to hide the identity of the perpetrator. Perhaps, because news writers feels ashamed, if the rape suspect came from the same country with them. Conversely, by clearly mentioning the origin of a woman maid who was raped, it can be assumed that the news writers deliberately want to show the readers that women domestic servants (PRT) from Indonesia were not good. Another thing that also indicates the inferiority of women servants from Indonesia is to mention the word "13" on the subject. It is intended, in order to give the impression how low, powerless and poor is maid from Indonesia, got raped by 13 youths, an extraordinary tragedy. In fact, as the mediation of reality, news writers should not mention the number "13" on the headline but rather enough with the sentence: "A Maid Raped." Furthermore, placing the word "Indonesian Maid " at the position of the object in the sentence has showed that that female helpers from Indonesia are always used as objects, never considered as the subject, although their existence are very necessary. In fact, it could be, if the news writers do not have specific purposes, they can make the headline such as: "An Indonesian Maid Failed to Defend His Honor."

The second headline which becomes the focus of the author's analysis is in this article is about the Indonesian housemaid who had sex with a Pakistani in an office and recording all those sex scenes in his handphones, (www.Orum.te3p.com, 4 July 2009), as mentioned follow:

3 ???????????"? ??????"? ??? ?????? ?????? ??????????
 ???? ?????????? ?????? ??? ?????? ?????? (Pakistan male
 who have sex with Indonesian Women

Workers in an office in Qasim arrested??)

When viewed from the grammatical aspect, there are a few things to note. First is the problem of the use of the question sentence used on the headline above. Although the sentence is not used a question word, it uses two question marks (??) at the end of the sentence. Apparently, there is a certain tendency to be conveyed by the news writer to the reader. The question sentence above can be categorized as a rhetoric question sentence, because it does not require an answer, but it has a connotations to humiliate certain party, perhaps in this case, the author intend to question the authority.

News writer seriously questions the authority, whether or not the perpetrators of such immoral acts have been arrested. Because, perhaps according news writer supposed to support an activist of a moral organization who first discovered the incident, the perpetrators of free sex should be immediately arrested by the authority. The strong call also can be seen from the two question mark, which semiotically can be interpreted as an the sign of emphasis.

In addition to the question form, this sentence is also structured in the passive form. It can be observed from the verb ?????? ?????? ??? which means in passive, already arrested. The writer wrote this sentence in the passive voice in order to hide the ignorance of the news writer about whom should be arrested. Meanwhile, to highlight elements of "what", the author explained it in the informative object.. The third headline is about the maid who had sex with his boyfriend in the house of her employer when his employer is not at home (www.syria-news.com, 20 July 2007), namely:

4 ??? ?????? ??? ?????????? ?????????? ??? ?????????? ?????? "
 ?????????"? ?????? "

Viewing from the amount of information to be conveyed to the reader, the headline above looks representative and interesting enough, but when compared to the lead (first paragraph) and its short remainder of the story (body news) short, this headline is too long. Perhaps, there is something to be exposed by the headline writer in this news. The phrase used by news writers is a complex sentence (clause), namely:

5 ?????????? ??? ?????????? ??????

(He thought there is a burglar in his house)

Reading the above complex sentence (clause), probably will appear on the mind of readers who is the subject of the verb "think" and "find", because the sentence was not clear who is the subject. The subject mentioned is simply a the singular pronouns in the form of past verb ?????? (he thought) and continues verb ?????? (he find). This may be intentionally done by the news writer, because the subject is clearly mentioned in the headline, is not so important to him, because it will not appeal to readers. What he want to be stressed here is the object, that is ??? (a burglar) and the phrase ?????? ??????"? (the maid's boyfriend). The news writer wants to show the reader about how bad are the behavior of the two objects who do not come from his country. For a short news-story, at least in order to meet the requirements of a good headline writing, the news writer simply use a interesting single sentence, not a complex sentences(clause).

Another thing that indicates that there is a certain attitude to be conveyed by news writers when he uses a mark (") in the phrase ??????"? .????? As mentioned above, that, there are two objects that are emphasized in the headlines, the "burglar" and "maid's boyfriend", but it seems that the last object is more emphasized by the news writer, because it related to domestic worker issues. The use of mark (") in the phrase is aimed to get the readers attention.

The fourth headline is about the Indonesian woman worker who are forced to sell themselves with a cheap price, because of economic necessity (www.arabsvip.com, 3 October 2007), namely: ?????? 5 ?????????? ?????? ??????????"? ??????"? ?????? ... ?????????? (Paid for 5 Dinar an Indonesian domestic worker forced to be a prostitute)

When viewed from the aspect of reality construction, there is some purpose to be conveyed by the news writer. First, from the aspect of grammar, the using a sub clause.

? ?????? 5 ?????????? (paid for 5 Dinar) in the beginning of the headline that is before the main clause shows that the news writer want to emphasize the sub clause. The news writer wishes to emphasize to readers that how low is the dignity of an Indonesian domestic helper, just for money of 5 Dinar, she will serve as a prostitute. Here, the attitude shown by the news writer against a domestic helper from Indonesia is obvious.

Another attitude shown by the author in the news headlines is the use of the passive sentence in the sub clause. The word ?????? is passive participle. The use of passive sentence in this sub aimed to hide the subject. For news writer, it is not really matter who is the subject, who pays 5 dinars. The important thing is the object that is an Indonesian woman domestic worker. It is because the subject could be someone who comes from the same nationality or ideology with the author so it will embarrass him if it is mentioned clearly in the headlines.

The concealment of the subject as explained above is called passivation. In addition to passivation, other ways that are also contained in the above headline is a nominalization, namely changing the verb into a noun. The word ????? (‘ijbaar-) is a noun derived from the verb of ????? (‘ajbara). Although it has the same meaning that is "forced", but the news writer wants to show readers that there is no subject who forced a domestic servant to do such a thing, but all are on his own. The fifth headline is the news about an Indonesian housemaid who kidnaped a employer's baby girl (www.mrahb.com, 28 May 2009), namely:

6 ?????????İ??"? ?????İ??"? ?????? ?????? ?????? İ?»?"?"
 ?????İ??"? İ?»?"İ??"? ?????????

(The kidnapping of a Saudis baby girl in Jeddah by an Indonesian housemaid)

When compared with its short content, apparently the headline at this text is too long. There are words that do not need to be addressed in this headline, such as the element of "where", that is in Jeddah. This element can be inserted into the lead (first paragraph) in the next part. Then, the adverb attached to the element of "who", namely Saudi Arabia and Indonesia, makes the headline too long and unnecessary.

Actually by saying ?????İ??"? ?????? ????? İ?»?"İ??"? "a baby girl kidnapped by a housemaid" is representative and interesting enough to attract the readers, the details can be red in the next part of the article. However, because there are certain purposes to be conveyed by the news writer, the headline is made such a long way. The News writer wishes to emphasize to readers that the perpetrator of the kidnapping was a maid from Indonesia, not from his country. It is possible if the kidnapper is from his own country, the headline is not written in the such way.

The sixth headline is about the maid who is ironed and forced to eat feses by the employer (www.aksalser.com, 13 January 2009), namely:

7 ????????? ?????? ?????? ?????????? ?????????İ??"? ?????????
 ?????? ????????

(An Saudis ironed an Indonesian housemaid and forced her to eat feses)

When briefly viewed from the construction of reality there is no indication to suggest that there are certain purposes to be conveyed by the news writer, except he only wanted to mediate the reality. However, when analysed in depth, we may ask to ourselves, why the headline is made in a equal complex sentence, active and transitive form with a complete subject, predicate and object, not in other forms, such as nominalization or passivation, as it is often done in other texts?

In other texts, such as in the case of rape, the news writer is always trying to hide the subject, eg by using a nominalization or passivation when the perpetrator comes from his country, and instead highlighting the subject in the same case when the actor comes from another countries. The problem is why in this headline, the author does not hide the subject, for example with the words "An Indonesian maid to be ironed and forced to eat dirt", in fact the actor comes from his own country? Surely, there are certain things that want conveyed by the news writer. Therefore, when viewed in terms of meaning, of course there are differences between the case of "rape" and "torture". The rape is an ashamed act, while torture is not an embarrassing, perhaps even the opposite, it shows a brave action. namely a nerve. Yet, there is no need to hide the subject.

The seventh headline is about a maid who brought to the court because she deemed to insult the religion (www.al-arabiya.net, 14 March 2006),. such as

8 ?????? ?????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ??????????
 ?????????? ?????????İ??"? ?????İ??"? ?????? ?????İ??"?
 ?????İ??"?

(Because of the shari'a reasons not allow to touch, the Saudi court punish to an Indonesian maid for Abusing the Quran)

When compared with the body of the story, the above headline is too long because there are elements of news-story that is not too important. Supposedly, just by entering the element of "who", namely ?????İ??"? ?????İ??"? (an Indonesian housemaid), and "what", that is ?????? ?????? ?????? (abusing the Quran), it will be enough short, concise, representative and interesting. So, the headline will be as follows:

9 ?????????? ?????????? ?????????İ??"? ?????İ??"? ??????????

(an Indonesian housemaid abuses the Quran).

However, it seems that news writer is not satisfied by only putting two elements in the headline. He also wants to incorporate another elements, why, namely:

10 ?????? ???? ??????? ?????? ?????? ???????

The element of who, that is ??????i?"? ?????i?"? (Saudi court) and the element of what that is ?????? (to punish). Therefore the information is very complete. In fact, by forcibly inserting the elements of news-story that are actually not necessary in the headline makes the headline not interesting, because it is too long and unfocused.

The use of a sentence in the above headline does not mean without intention. When the subject is a person or institution from the same country with the writer and the object is person or agency from another country, the writer uses a complete active sentence with a subject, predicate and object without using nominalization or passivation because he does not have something to hide. In fact, the headline is made into a complex sentence preceded by the sub headline in order deliver the ugliness of an object in details.. This is one way to marginalize the object.

The eighth headline is the story of a housemaid who was accused of witchcraft to her employer's child's so that the child was behaving strangely (www.burnews.com, 15 July 2009), namely:

(A baby girl's cry reveals the witchcraft's mask of an Indonesian housemaid in Baridah..!!)

When viewed from the mediation of reality, the headline above is sufficiently representative, because it can provide clear information to readers with aspects of who, what and where. Similarly, the headline is also interesting because it exposes a unique problem, ie a problem of the witchcraft. But, judging from the terms of making a good headline, which should be short, concise and balanced with its body of the news, it seems there is an elements that need to be removed, namely the element of where ??????? (in Baridah) because this element is not important and does not attract the readers. The problem is why this element inserted by the news writer? Of course, there is an motive in writing in this way.

When observed from its grammatical structure, the above headline is written in a complete sentence consistings of a subject ?i?»?"i?"? ?,????? (baby girl's cry), a predicate in continues verb ?,????? (reveal), an object ?????????i?"? ?????i?"? ????? (the withchcraft of an Indonesian housemaid) and adverb of place ??????? (in Baridah). This kind of structure indicates that news writer wants to give information in details that an alleged even already happened. Although as the mediation of reality, the element of where is not urgent, but as the construction of reality it is important, to give attention to the readers that this story is real, not imaginary one. It is because when the element of where is not mentioned, the headline could have been regarded as fiction. Is it true that the cries of a baby girl can uncover a witchcraft maid?

Another indication which shows that the news writer would like get attention from the readers is the use of two exclamation marks behind the headline. In semiotis, the two exclamation marks indicate that information is really happening and should become the reader's attention

The ninth headline is about the Indonesian maid who committed suicide, because her employer did not want to bear the cost of treatment at his hospital (www.manbaralrai.com, 1 December 2009), namely (An Indonesian Woman Worker Suicides by Throwing Himself from Third Floor "Hamzah" Hospital) Viewed from the content of its body of stories, the above headline seems to be too long. Supposedly, only by mentioning the element of who and what, namely ?????i?"? (An Indonesian Woman Worker 3 Suicides) is representative and interesting enough. Without mentioning other elements, the words "a woman worker" and "suicide" is enough to attract the readers to follow the next news. Therefore, it is unnecessary to mention other elements that are less important and cause the headline becomes too long, such as the adverb of place ?????????i?"? (Indonesia) in the element of who, ?i?»?"? ??????? (throwing herself) as how and ?"????? ?????i?»?"? ??????? ??????? ???? (from the third floor Hamzah Hospital) as where, since those three elements can be inserted in following parts of the writing.

However, it seems that by completely incorporating the elements of news-story, regardless of requirements of making a good headline, the news writer wants to convey certain purposes in it. For example, by mentioning the word ?????????i?"? in headline has showed that the writer wants explain in details that the one who performs a sin is his people but the people from another country.

In addition to, through the inclusion of elements of how, "by throwing himself from the third floor", and the element of where, "Hamzah Hospital," which actually are not too important to be disclosed. Here, it appears that there is an intention of the author to corner the marginalised group, Indonesian migrant workers who live in Saudi Arabia.

The tenth headline is about the demand of the Indonesian government to the government of Saudi Arabia to raise the salaries of Indonesian domestic workers who work there (www.aawsat.com, 7 March 2004), i.e.

11 ?i?»?"?? ?????? ?????? ?i?»?"?? ?????????i?"? ?????? ?????i?"? ??????? ??????? ??????? ??????????? ??????? ?????????

(The Indonesian authorities warn to stop sending housemaids to Saudi Arabia if No Increased Salary) Look the word ??????? (export) in the above headline. For people who do not understand Arabic, probably they will not question the use of this word. But, for those who understand Arabic, will be concerned about the usage of this word. Why? The word ??????? means "to export" ??Wehr, 1980). It is ironic, if Indonesian workers equals with

Furthermore, the usage of the word ?????? (middle) in the phrase ?????? (high school students) is also clear. This is to give the impression that how bad is an Indonesian woman who has invited high school students who are still young to have sex with her. If the word ?????? is not added after the word ?,???? so it is only the word ?????, for sure the intention to humiliate the actor will not succeed. The word ????? only means "students" so it is not a big problem for them to have sex comparing with high school students).

Similarly, we can also further analyze the usage of the phrase ?????? (in the holy Mecca). It has a specific target. Actually, it is not necessary to mention the name of a place in the headline because it will make the sentence too long and becomes unattractive. But, for the news maker, mentioning the place is significant to damage the integrity and image of someone from a particular country for doing sinful acts in the place that is most known for its purity and holiness.

In addition, there are words ?????? (to spread AIDS) in the headline. It gives the impression that only an Indonesian woman worker that actually transmit the disease to the middle school students. In fact, it is not necessarily. Have the high school students not had sex with another woman before having sex with the woman? Is it the first intercourse that is at the shortest time, then the students were transmitted such disease? To avoid a negative opinion, should the writer make news headlines by inserting the word such as "suspected" for example, "The students who had sex with a woman allegedly infected with AIDS disease."

Likewise, the author does not mention proportionally the number of subjects and objects in the news and tries to develop bad images among the readers. By using the plural form, it indicates that the numbers of students who are infected to AIDS are a lot. Meanwhile, the Indonesian woman is written in the singular one, ie ?????? and the students are written in plural, that is ?.???? How low is an Indonesian woman, she is alone can transmit AIDS to great numbers of high school students. Supposedly, the headline state clearly the number of students who are suspected of being infected by AIDS from an Indonesian woman worker.

12 III.

13 Conclusion

By analyzing some headlines in the Arabic language sites on the Internet it can be concluded that the image of Indonesian women workers who work in Arab countries are not good. Those bad images are practicing free sex. It can be seen from the case of the arrests of Indonesian workers who are having sex with Pakistanis people and record their sexual scene in the mobile phone and many cases involve domestic servants who often have sex with her boyfriends at her employer's house when her employer is not at home; Having low status, such as the case of some Indonesian housemaids who work as prostitutes in order to fulfil their basic needs; Considered weak and powerless. It is apparent in the case of Indonesian women workers who are raped by 13 Saudis, the case of Indonesian women workers who were tortured, ironed and forced to eat feces and many many cases of human rights violations carried out in Saudi Arabia; Despair, for example the case of Indonesian domestic workers who jumped from the third floor of the hospital, just because the employer does not pay her hospital treatment;

Infected by dangerous diseases. It can be seen from the case of a female worker accused of spreading AIDS to some high school children in Saudi Arabia; Criminal, such as the case of an Indonesian housemaid who has worked for six months but kidnapped her employer's new child; Not religious, It is apparent in the case of an Indonesian domestic helper who was accused of insulting religion by abusing the Qur'an and the case of an Indonesian domestic worker who are accused of being a witchcraft against her master's children; Too Demanding, for example from the case of the Indonesian authorities who demands for increasing Indonesian women workers' salary.

In conclusion, the headlines about Indonesian women workers in the Arab media, especially in sites and internets are too tendentious. This can be analyzed from the themes that appear in the media that are mainly in negative news, such as the cases of rape, free sex, prostitution, boyfriend, kidnapping, suicide, increased salaries, religious harassment and AIDS transmission. Although, there are also positive themes, namely about human rights violations, but this theme is not written by the Arab mass media, but by CNN in Arabic. Pervasive spread of negative images about Indonesia in Arab media, the image of Indonesian women workers in general tend to be worst. Similarly, this image can be studied from the aspect of selecting of the words and its grammatical structure. The choice of words, nominalization, passivation and others have contributed to marginalize Indonesian housemaids in Saudi.

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Figure 1:

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