

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS TO UNMASK THE IDEOLOGICAL STANCE BEHIND “AL-QAEDA IN THE ASIA PACIFIC: ORIGIN, CAPABILITY, AND THREAT”

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ABSTRAK

Tulisan ini memaparkan analisis teks berjudul “Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat” menggunakan Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) untuk menjawab tiga pertanyaan: bagaimana penulis teks menggunakan piranti menilai sikap (*appraisal devices*) dalam menyuguhkan pandangan ideologisnya terhadap materi teks yang ditulis, mengapa teks itu diterbitkan melalui laporan berkala IIAS, dan apakah pandangan ideologis yang melatarbelakangi penulisan teks tersebut? Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa dalam menyuguhkan sikapnya terhadap materi teks, penulis teks mengutarakan penggunaan sistem afek (*system of affect*) dan untuk menunjukkan kuat atau lemahnya sikap itu penulis teks mengutarakan penggunaan lexis sikap (*attitudinal lexis*). Teks itu diterbitkan melalui laporan berkala IIAS karena penulis memandang para pembaca laporan sebagai orang-orang yang tepat untuk menerima dan menindaklanjuti pandangan penulis mengenai materi teks itu. Latar belakang ideologis penulisan teks tersebut adalah Al-Qaeda merupakan organisasi yang berasaskan Islam, yang berarti berbahaya bagi kaum Nasrani, dan karenanya harus dihapuskan.

Kata Kunci : Critical Discourse Analysis, ideological context, social practise, discourse practice, attitudinal lexis.

INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a relatively new method of text analysis, which began to conceive in the 1980s, after some linguists felt dissatisfied with the way of analyzing linguistic texts which focused only on the linguistic features. The works of a group of linguists based at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s seemed to have inspired the works on CDA. These linguists adopted a critical approach – called ‘critical linguistics’ – in doing linguistic text analysis. They tried to combine a method of text analysis with a social theory of the functioning of

language in political and ideological processes (Fairclough, 1992:26). Text analysts are finding CDA a powerful tool for analyzing texts, therefore more and more people are becoming interested in using it to analyze texts. CDA is a three-dimensional framework of text analysis which involves the analysis of the social practice, that of the discourse practice, and that of the text itself.

The theoretical framework of CDA is derived from Louis Althusser’s theories of ideology, Mikhael Bakhtin’s genre theory, and the philosophical traditions of Antonio Gramsci and

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the Frankfurt School (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, and Vetter translated by Bryan Jenner, 2000). Michel Foucault also has a strong influence on some exponents, including Norman Fairclough, one of the most prominent figures in CDA. It is generally acknowledged that Fairclough's CDA is related to Michael Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, whereas Ruth Wodak and Teun van Dijk, two other exponents of CDA, have been more influenced by the cognitive models of text planning (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, and Vetter, 2000:144).

CDA practitioners usually draw attention to power imbalances, social inequities, non-democratic practices, and other injustices in hopes of spurring readers to corrective action. This is why the term *critical* is used: CDA not only describes unfair social/political practices but is especially critical of them. Text analysis using CDA usually aims at uncovering the underlying ideology that prompts the text production. This study tries to uncover the ideological stance behind a text entitled "*Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat*". The text is one of the articles published in the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) Newsletter of the November 2002 issue. It was originally a lecture given in the IIAS annual lecture in Amsterdam on 14 June 2002 by a person well-known as a specialist in terrorism, Dr. Rohan Gunaratna of St Andrew's University, Edinburgh.

It is generally understood that language plays an important role in presenting someone's ideological stance towards the subject s/he is writing. Language can be used as a means of evaluation: evaluating people's attitudes towards other people, objects, and anything found in their surroundings. This evaluation system is called 'appraisal system' (Martin and Rose, 2003). Using appraisal devices, a person can evaluate objects (human and non-human) and things that s/he is confronting. Judging the important role that language plays in presenting a person's attitude, it is also in the interest of this study to find out how the writer uses language to achieve the political as well as the ideological purpose of the

text. The fact that the text was published in a special mass media, in this case the IIAS Newsletter, entails the need to find out the reasons for publishing it in this particular mass media.

It can be seen that this study seeks to achieve three main purposes: *first*, to find out how the writer of the text employs appraisal devices to present his ideological stance towards the subject he is writing; *second*, to find out the reasons why the text was published in the IIAS Newsletter; *third*, to discover the ideological stance behind the text entitled '*Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat*'. The answers to the first two queries are expected to give a clue to answering the third one.

CDA, as has been earlier mentioned, is a three dimensional framework, which includes the analysis of the social practice, that of the discourse practice, and that of the text itself. Data analysis in this study was also done in three steps which then resulted in three forms of analysis: *first*, the analysis of the social practice of the society in which the writer of the text lives; *second*, the analysis of the discourse practice, which refers to the processes of text production, text distribution, and text consumption as commonly happen in the culture in which the text writer lives; *third*, the analysis of the text.

Social practice refers to "practices that are related to customs for how various people enact various works or events" (Encyclopedia, [http://www.google.com/social+practice %2F definition](http://www.google.com/social+practice%2Fdefinition)). Members of a society do a lot of things as part of their participation in maintaining its existence. Most of the things they do are the reflection of their customs or traditions on which their normative order is based, and these traditions, in their turn, are a reflection of a part of their culture. Examples of social practices are activities that have to do with religion, the development of economy, the running of institutions, language and discourse. Thus, in analyzing the social practice of a text writer, one has to focus on the study of the culture of the society in which the writer lives. Since the writer of the text under analysis lives in England,

analysis of the social practice in this study was focused on the study of the English culture.

It has been earlier mentioned that discourse practice refers to the processes of text production, text distribution, and text consumption. Since the discourse being analyzed in this study was a written one, text production means the processes through which the original text, i.e. the text fresh from the writer, had to go through in the printing office, before it went to the printing-press ready for production. Thus, it involved the processes of editing, of arranging the lay-out of the print in the newspaper/newsletter, of deciding what font type to be used, also of deciding whether the text should occupy front-page or some other pages. It is also important, in the discourse practice analysis, to take into consideration the kind of people involved in these processes.

Text distribution refers to the process how the text reaches the readers. The text could be sent by mail to the individual addresses of the readers, delivered collectively to an institution, or delivered in person to the homes of the individual readers. Into the text distribution is also included the type of readers to whom the text is sent, e.g. level of education, social class, ethnic, etc.

Text consumption refers to how readers interpret the text. This will depend on the personal knowledge and experience that the individual readers bring to the text. In other words, different readers may have different interpretations of the text depending on the personal knowledge and experience of the reader, and on whether the reader comes from the same culture as that of the text producer or otherwise.

It can be concluded that analyses of the social practice and that of the discourse practice have to do with the scrutiny of the social context, and the ideological context, in which the text is produced and later interpreted.

As has been earlier alluded to, this study is concerned with the ideological stance of the text writer towards the subject matter of the text. Ideology has to do with attitudes, and attitudes belong to the realm of 'interpersonal meaning' in Systemic Functional Linguistics. In other words, text analysis in this study focused only on the

analysis of interpersonal meanings. The attitudes of the text writer can be uncovered by means of an approach called 'appraisal system'. For this reason, this approach was used here to analyze the text entitled "***Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat***", which was the object of this study.

As this study is a CDA, it is qualitative and descriptive in nature. The qualitative method was used in this study to unfold the text under analysis, and the descriptive method was used to describe the realization of the interpersonal meanings found in the text using the appraisal system offered by Martin and Rose (2003).

This qualitative-descriptive method of investigation was accomplished in two stages. *First*, the text was closely read to get a comprehensive understanding of its content. *Second*, the text was broken down into clauses or chunks manageable for analysis following the model offered by White (2001), and then each of the clauses or chunks was analyzed using the appraisal system offered by Martin and Rose (2003). In this way, the text was first approached from a general point of view, that is, the text was treated as a whole, and then it was approached from a more specific one – clause by clause, and finally to the smallest units: words of appraisal devices that the text writer used to realize the interpersonal meanings.

As this study employed qualitative method of investigation, the researcher became the main instrument for collecting the data. Data collection in studying discourse using a critical approach was done by studying the socio-cultural context and the ideological context in which the text was produced, and by the text close reading. This was done in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the content of the text which would then form the basis for further analysis.

The data for social practice analysis are the customs, traditions, the beliefs of the society in which the writer of the text lives. As has been earlier alluded to, social practice refers to anything people do. Most of the things people do are a reflection of the customs and traditions on which their normative order is based, and these

customs and traditions are a reflection of part of their culture. Thus activities that have to do with religion, the development of economy, the running of institutions, and the use of language are all forms of social practice. The source of the data, as can be deduced from the above explanation, is the culture of the society in which the text writer lives. In this study, the source of the data was the British culture.

The data for discourse practice analysis are the processes by which a text is produced and interpreted. This refers to processes of text production, text distribution, and text consumption. In this study the data were the processes of the production, the distribution, and the consumption of the text entitled "*Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat.*" The source of the data was the newsletter in which the text was published. Newsletter is part of discourse practice, which, just like social practice, is part of the culture of the society in which the text writer lives. It is understood that social practice and discourse practice are a reflection or the manifestation of culture, thus both of these types of practices have the same source.

The data for text analysis were the clauses, phrases or words found in the text being analyzed that contained the attitudinal implications. In other words, they were the clauses, phrases or words that contained the appraisal devices. The source of the data was the text entitled "*Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat.*"

It has been repeatedly mentioned that analyzing a text using CDA involves three levels of analysis: analysis of the text, that of the social practice, and that of the discourse practice. The methods of analyzing the text, the social practice, and the discourse practice are described in the following part.

ANALYZING THE TEXT

In an attempt to find the answer to the first query, i.e. in order to achieve the first purpose of this study, text analysis was conducted. The text was broken down into clauses or chunks manageable for analysis following the model

offered by White (2001), and then each of the clauses/chunks was analyzed using the appraisal system offered by Martin and Rose (2003). Analyzing a text using **appraisal system** covers three different kinds of analysis: text analysis based on the systems of **attitude**, one based on the systems of **amplification**, and one based on the systems of **source**.

Text analysis based on the systems of attitude is further divided into three different types of analysis: text analysis to find out the text writer's feelings toward the subject s/he is writing (called **the system of affect**), text analysis to find out the text writer's attitudes toward people's character (called **the system of judgement**), and text analysis to find out the writer's attitudes toward the value of things (called **the system of appreciation**). Tables 1, 2, and 3 below are examples of text analyses based on these three systems of attitude, taking just a few clauses from the text as examples of analysis for each system.

The analysis of the text using appraisal systems reveals that in presenting his attitudes towards the subject matter of the text, the writer in most cases uses the affect system. Out of 207 chunks/clauses that the text consists of, 114 of them contain the affect system, 46 contain the judgement system, and 36 contain the appreciation system, and the rest of them contain no particular attitudes. The writer uses negative evaluation towards the subject he is writing through most of the chunks/clauses containing the affect values. Text analysis based on the system of affect shows that out of 114 chunks/clauses containing affect values, 110 (96%) of them are negatively evaluated. Since the text under analysis is a kind of narrative, and in a narrative the narrator is fully responsible for the evaluation, we can say that the writer has negative feelings towards the subject matter of the text, which is al-Qaeda.

Text analysis based on the judgement system also shows that the writer mostly gives negative judgements towards the subject matter of the text through the chunks/clauses containing the judgement values. Out of 46 chunks/clauses

Table 1. Analysis of the Text Based on the System of Affect

No.	Clause/Chunk	Analysis	Emoter	Target
1.	Al-Qaeda is an umbrella organization waging multiple campaigns both against the West and against Muslim regimes friendly to the West.	Negative affect, direct, non-authorial	The West, Muslim regimes friendly to the West	Al-Qaeda
2.	In addition to its core of 3,000 members, al-Qaeda has established linkages with two-dozen Islamist groups.	Negative affect, direct, authorial	Author	Al-Qaeda
3.	Al-Qaeda has been able to politicize, radicalize, and mobilize Muslims through-out the world.	Negative affect, direct, authorial	Author	Al-Qaeda
4.	With its global reach, al-Qaeda presents a new kind of threat hitherto-un-imagined by counter terrorism practitioners and security and intelligence professionals.	Negative affect, direct, authorial	Author	Al-Qaeda
5.	Al-Qaeda's targeting reflects its sophistication as a professional terrorist group.	Negative affect, direct, authorial	Author	Al-Qaeda

Notes: The words in bold print are the ones that contain the affect system. The clauses are taken from the text at random, not in the order in which they are presented in the text.

Table 2 Analysis of the Text Based on the System of Judgement

No.	Clause/Chunk	Analysis	Target
1.	Al-Qaeda al-Salbah (The Solid Base) is the first multi-national terrorist group of the twenty-first century.	Negative judgement	Al-Qaeda
2.	Al-Qaeda is an umbrella organization waging multiple campaigns both against the West and against Muslim regimes friendly to the West.	Negative judgement	Al-Qaeda
3.	Driven by the ideal of universal jihad, al-Qaeda has been able to politicize, radicalize, and mobilize Muslims throughout the world.	Negative judgement	Al-Qaeda
4.	It is the painstaking and steadfast construction of this network over many years that enabled al-Qaeda to mount 9/11.	Positive judgement*	Al-Qaeda
5.	Al-Qaeda's targeting reflects its sophistication as a professional terrorist group.	Positive judgement*	Al-Qaeda

Notes: The words in italic are the ones containing the judgement values. The last two clauses are evaluated as having positive judgements but are marked with an asterisk (*); this indicates that from the point of view of the culture which the writer represents, they have negative judgements.

Table 3. Analysis of the Text Based on the System of Appreciation

No.	Clause/Chunk	Analysis	Target
1.	Between pre-modern Afghanistan and post-modern continental United States via Europe and Asia, al-Qaeda has built a <u>state-of-the-art</u> terrorist network for moving funds, goods, and personnel	Positive* appreciation, quality	Terrorist network
2.	Al-Qaeda's targeting reflects its <u>sophistication</u>	Negative appreciation, complexity	Al-Qaeda
3.	as a <u>professional</u> terrorist group	Positive* appreciation, valuation	Al-Qaeda
4.	And as terrorist groups employ <u>cost-effective</u> tactics,	Positive* appreciation, quality	Terrorist groups
5.	Attacking <u>highly prestigious and symbolic</u> targets is difficult	Positive appreciation, quality	Targets

Notes: The underlined words are the ones containing the appreciation values. In the analysis column, the word 'positive' marked with an asterisk (*) shows that from the point of view of the culture which the writer represents, it has a negative appreciation.

containing judgement values, 44 (96%) are negatively evaluated. This implies that, in addition to having negative feelings, the writer also ethically has a negative judgement about the subject matter, i.e. al-Qaeda.

The results of text analysis based on the appreciation system also shows that the writer gives negative appreciation towards the subject matter of the text through most of the chunks/clauses containing appreciation values. The text has 36 chunks/clauses that contain appreciation values, and 30 of these (83%) are given negative

appreciation. This strengthens the earlier conclusion that the writer has negative attitudes towards al-Qaeda.

Text analysis based on the system of amplification shows that the writer mostly uses high grading in amplifying the resources of amplification. Of the 53 resources of amplification, 41 of them are rated with high grading, 10 with medium grading, and 2 with low grading. Following is an example of text analysis based on the system of amplification.

Table 4 Text Analysis Based on the System of Amplification

No.	Clauses/Chunks	Analysis
1.	Al-Qaeda al-Sulba (The Solid Base) is the first multinational terrorist group of the twenty-first century.	Sharpening focus, high grading
2.	Al-Qaeda is an umbrella organization waging multiple campaigns against the West . . .	Amplifying force, high grading, attitudinal lexis
3.	With its global reach, al-Qaeda presents a new kind of threat	Amplifying force, high grading, attitudinal lexis
4.	...hitherto unimagined by counter terrorism practitioners	Amplifying force, high grading, attitudinal lexis
5.	It is the painstaking and steadfast construction of this network over many years that . . .	Amplifying force, high grading, attitudinal lexis

Notes: The words in bold print are the ones that contain the amplification values

Text analysis based on the source of attitude reveals that the author or the writer is the main source of attitude. In other words, the writer is responsible for most, if not all, of the evaluation. This is because the text under analysis is a narrative for which the narrator or writer is usually the main source of evaluation. The writer of *“Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat”* does give voice to other players, but the percentage is much too small compared with the writer’s own voice.

The results of text analysis based on the five types of appraisal devices (system of affect, system of judgement, system of appreciation, system of amplification, and system of source) lead us to conclude that the writer has strong negative feelings, negative ethical judgement, and negative appreciation about the subject matter of the text. This is a corollary of the earlier conclusion that all these negative feelings, negative ethical judgement, and negative appreciation about the subject matter of the text, are attributable to the writer. In other words, the writer is responsible for all of these assessments.

ANALYZING THE SOCIAL PRACTICE

The analysis of the social practice is intended to find out the socio-cultural context, as well as the ideological context, in which the text was written. Since the text writer lives in England, it was the social practice of the English people that was analyzed. Analyzing the social practice of the text writer means examining the culture of the society in which s/he lives.

The results of examining the British culture indicate that, politically, the British society is dominated by the Conservative Party, which is considered as one that can accommodate the interest of most of the English people (Mike Story and Peter Childs, 1997). Since the group of people in power is usually highly influential in determining what is good and proper and what is not, then the life conditions of the English people must be the reflection of the ideology of this particular party. People’s way of thinking, their behaviour, their reaction towards a particular

issue, will also reflect the way of thinking, the behaviour, and the reaction of this party. It is true that at present the Labour Party is in power, but history shows that this party never stays in power for long; it has never ruled for longer than five-and-a-half years (Mike Story and Peter Childs, 1997:228). Even under the Labour Party government, the conservative way of thinking persists among many, if not most, of the British people.

From the point of view of religion, we can see that most the British people (about 75%) are adherents of Christianity. Since they are mostly believers of Christianity, and since Christians and Moslems are historically not in good terms, it can be concluded that most British people must feel at odds with al-Qaeda, an organization which is based on Islam. Osama himself (the leader of al-Qaeda) has declared that the Crusaders (the Christians) and the Jews are the enemies of Islam (Gunaratna, 2002).

It can be seen that the text under study, entitled *“Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat”* was written within the social and cultural, as well as ideological, contexts of the British society. Since contexts have great effects on the process of text writing, the corollary is that the text reflects the way how the British people look at al-Qaeda. The underlying ideology is that al-Qaeda is an Islamist organization; Islam is an enemy of the Christians, therefore al-Qaeda is a big threat to the safety and well-being of the Western societies which are mostly adherents of Christianity; and for these reasons al-Qaeda must be destroyed and eliminated. These socio-cultural as well as ideological contexts explain why the writer seems to have such strong negative feelings, negative ethical judgement, and negative appreciation about al-Qaeda, as can be seen from the results of text analyses based on the system of affect, the system of judgement, and the system of appreciation.

ANALYZING THE DISCOURSE PRACTICE

The result of discourse practice analysis shows that the text, which was published in the

IIAS Newsletter, was sent to individual people mainly by post. The recipients are mostly highly educated people: high ranking officials, professors, journalists, students preparing for their doctorate degrees, etc. The management of the newsletter is also dominated by the academic people, i.e. university professors. The question that arises is: why was the text published in this particular media, whose consumers are mostly highly educated people?

If we look at the content of the text, we can see that the writer seems to be trying to persuade the readers to adopt the same feelings as he does about and the same reaction towards al-Qaeda. Logically, the writer also wants the readers to take actions as a follow up of these feelings and reactions. It is only people having high positions in offices, or those with high educational background that have the power and a chance of doing something about al-Qaeda, but not common people. This could be the reason why the text was published in the IIAS Newsletter.

In addition to persuading the readers to adopt a certain attitude towards al-Qaeda, there are indications that the writer also wants to use the text as a means of propaganda. Propaganda is intended to promote the objectives of the writer, and it involves the process of controlling the information flow, managing public opinions and manipulating behaviour patterns. It seems that the writer's main objective is to send out a certain ideology to the readers that al-Qaeda is a dangerous group, that it is a threat to the world's peace, and therefore it must be destroyed and eliminated. The writer is also in full control of the flow of information because in this discourse there is only a one-way flow of information. It can be inferred, then, that the text could be categorized as both a means of persuasion and a means of propaganda.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions that can be drawn, in relation to the three purposes that this study is trying to achieve, are as follows:

- (1) In presenting his attitudes or his ideological stance towards the subject he is writing, which is al-Qaeda, the writer prefers to use affect system to using other sources of attitudes. Of all the chunks/clauses containing the sources of attitude, 58% belong to the system of affect, 24% belong to the system of judgement, and 18% belong to the system of appreciation. The writer also uses negative evaluation more than positive evaluation towards the subject matter he is dealing with: negative affect vs positive affect (89% vs 11%), negative judgement vs positive judgement (96% vs 4%), and negative appreciation vs positive appreciation (83% vs 17%). These negative feelings, negative judgement, and negative appreciation are attributable to the social and cultural contexts, as well as the ideological contexts, in which the text was written.
- (2) The result of discourse practice analysis shows that the writer is trying to persuade the readers to agree with, understand or at least sympathize with his emotional reaction towards the subject he is writing. The corollary of accepting this emotional reaction is that the reader must take action to change the alarming situation. This can only be done by people who, in some way, have power to do so. It is generally known that people having high positions in society and highly educated people are the right persons to do this. Since the readers of IIAS Newsletter are people whom the text writer considers as having the right criteria to take the expected action, the text was then published through this mass media.
- (3) The writer of the text lives in England, which means that the socio-cultural as well as the ideological contexts in which the text was written were those of the British society. Socio-culturally the British people are adherents of Christianity, and historically Christians have always been at odds with the Moslems, the adherents of

Islam – the religion on which al-Qaeda is based. Naturally the British people, including the text writer, feel unhappy about al-Qaeda, and hence the strong negative feelings about it, and these negative feelings lead to the negative judgement and negative appreciation about it. Besides, England is an important ally of the US, which considers al-Qaeda as a threat to the country, thus it is an enemy of the American people. The British people who have become much influenced by the American way of life, will certainly feel the same way about al-Qaeda. Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qada, considers the US, the Crusaders and the Jews as the enemies of Islam. Thus it will not be a wild guess to say that the British people, who are mostly Crusaders, also consider al-Qaeda as their enemy. Applying Raymond William's (1977) three uses of the term ideology (in John Fiske, 1990:165), (1. a system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group; 2. a system of illusory beliefs – false ideas or false consciousness; 3. the general process of the production of meanings and ideas), we can say that the strong negative feelings about al-Qaeda derive from the underlying ideology that al-Qaeda is an enemy of the Christians because it is based on Islam – the religion of the Moslems with whom the Christians (the Crusaders) historically had been at war (application of the term ideology use 3); that it is a dangerous group endangering the safety and well-being of the Christians (application of the term ideology use 2), therefore it must be destroyed and wiped out from the earth. This ideology formed the ideological

context in which the text was written. In other words, the ideological stance behind the text entitled "*Al-Qaeda in the Asia Pacific: Origin, Capability, and Threat*" is that al-Qaeda should be destroyed and eliminated because it is an enemy of the Christians, and therefore endangers the safety and well-being of the Western people, particularly the Christians.

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