

Discourse Analysis of Social Antagonism in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe the discourse of social antagonism in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's work in the book Nyanyi Sunyi Sebuah Bisu. The method in this study is descriptive qualitative research analysis intends to describe and analyze the social antagonism present in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's letters in the novel Nyanyi Sunyi Sebuah Bisu. The data in this study is social antagonism in the novel Nyanyi Sunyi Sebuah Bisu by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. While the data source used is the novel Nyanyi Sunyi Sebuah Bisu which contains 12 letters. The data collection techniques used are reading techniques and note-taking techniques. The reading technique is used to read the entire discourse text in the book Nyanyi Sunyi Sebuah Bisu. The note-taking technique is used to record data from the findings after carrying out the reading process. The results of this study are the discovery of a discourse of social antagonism where the discourses put forward by Pram then give rise to a new identity that forms his original identity. The analysis techniques used are data reduction, data presentation, conclusions. Data reduction is the process of selecting data and focusing on the level of simplification, abstraction, and translating data obtained from field note sheets. Data presentation can be in the form of writing or words. While the conclusion is a series of structured information that triggers drawing conclusions and choosing actions.

Keywords: *Discourse of Social Antagonism; Silent Song Book*



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INTRODUCTION

Language functions as a medium of constructing social realities and expressing ideological tensions within power relations. In Indonesian literature, Pramoedya Ananta Toer stands as a seminal figure whose writings articulate the struggles of the oppressed under political authoritarianism. His book *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu* encapsulates ideological conflicts between individual subjectivity and state-imposed identity. Discourse, as Fairclough (2021) posits, is both shaped by and shapes social structures, thereby serving as a site where power and resistance intersect. According to Wodak and Meyer (2022), discourse analysis provides critical tools for unveiling hidden power mechanisms that sustain inequality and social antagonism. This research investigates how antagonistic discourse operates in Pramoedya's letters and how linguistic constructions reflect ideological and political resistance in postcolonial Indonesia.

The capacity of students to examine an issue transcends mere proficiency in their academic discipline; it necessitates mastery of language, encompassing discourse, which is necessary for any researcher. Language functions as a vehicle for knowledge acquisition and as a factor in the manifestation of written expression. Proficient command of discourse will yield high-quality written material, facilitating comprehension for the reader due to the absence of verbosity in the language employed. Discourse analysis is a prominent subject, examined in numerous debates and scholarly articles. Discourse analysis is a research that scrutinizes language employed organically, in both written and spoken modalities, concerning its users as a societal component. A discourse analysis can be performed structurally by linking text and context, and functionally by examining the actions undertaken by individuals to achieve a certain objective that imparts meaning to the parties involved.

Discourse represents the most comprehensive unit of language beyond the sentence and constitutes the apex of the grammatical hierarchy. Discourse, being the most comprehensive unit of language, encompasses concepts, ideas, and thoughts that can be comprehended by readers and listeners. Discourse, as the paramount grammatical unit, is constituted by sentences that fulfill grammatical and additional discourse criteria (Chaer, 2007: 267).

The influence of print media during the early days of independence was so formidable that it instilled fear in the authorities, who were attempting to suppress writers' freedoms. Pramoedya Ananta Toer personally encountered this. Pram, as he was known, heeded the counsel of an official during his exile on Buru Island to avert censorship of his writings by the government. His status as a political prisoner without trial and his continuous incarceration throughout his life appear to have eroded his trust in the authorities. An unidentified official in the preface of "The Silent Song of a Mute" counsels Pram to engage with the authorities as a political prisoner by employing kite flying techniques: in severe winds, draw the string; in calm conditions, pull the string. Pram stated in the introduction to "The Silent Song of a Mute" that this proposal also impacted his destiny and correspondence, enabling its compilation into a book.

Lane, an Australian author and critic, stated to mediaindonesia.com and in his essay "Indonesia is not present on Earth Man" that the Nation University translated numerous works of Pramoedya. He asserted that Pramoedya's writing was perceived by Indonesian readers merely as engaging literature. All occurrences in Indonesia, together with its social and political issues, are interpreted with acute and profound knowledge in each of his writings, particularly in his letters, which have been included in the book "Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu" (The Silent Song of a Mute).

The author will be studying a book in which social discourse is distinctly documented in both his personal and national life through the narrative of his letters. The book "Silent Songs of a Mute" has 12 letters and six appendices, which, upon scrutiny, disclose many personal identities that are undermined by the impact of national identity. The author's motivation to submit a thesis proposal named "Discourse Analysis of Social Antagonism in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Works in the Book 'Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu'" stems from this discourse of antagonism.

Social antagonism arises when distinct identities mutually exclude one another. While an individual may possess multiple identities, these identities need not exist in opposition to one another. Hobsbawm's example suggests that we can simultaneously occupy the roles of "workers" and "guides." Worker identity undermines obligations to the state during wartime; for instance, if national identity compels the killing of perceived colleagues in foreign nations, the interplay between these two identities becomes contradictory

concerning identical actions in the public domain, ultimately resulting in one identity obstructing the other. Each individual's discourse, which forms their identity, exists within a broader discursive framework; thus, each antagonism that arises poses a threat to the integrity of that discourse and the stability of its meaning (Laclau 1990: 17). Consequently, the reliance and mutual reliance of the identities it formulates become evident. Van Dijk posits that discourse is an element of society that evolves within it. Consequently, in the analysis of text, it is imperative to scrutinize social antagonism by investigating the production and construction of discourse within society. The central focus of this work is to demonstrate how shared meanings and social power are generated through discursive practices and legitimation, subsequently shaping the personal identities presented by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. Pramoedya Ananta Toer's letters, later compiled in *"Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu"* (The Silent Song of a Mute), convey anger, contemplation, and extensive social commentary from the New Order era, which engendered new discourses predicated on power-sanctioned legitimacy, thereby constraining personal identities, particularly those associated with the narratives of New Order authority. This culminates in social hostility or detrimental activities, initiated by the elevation of awareness of new discourses inside society.

Initial observations indicate that Pramoedya Ananta Toer's work, *"Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu"* (The Silent Song of a Mute), contains numerous texts reflecting social conflict. For instance, the text authored by Pramoedya Ananta Toer employs the term *"menjabat"* (to occupy a place) within the sentence.

"This child is my first, the child I love. Previously, his grandmother hoped he would become a doctor, but it turned out he would be your wife's husband (1,3,6)."

Laclau posits that antagonism arises when the identity of one discourse is undermined by the negation of another discourse. This is the occurrence involving the term (*menjabat*), whose initial identity was deliberately obscured. Occupying a position should elucidate an individual's role within the organizational hierarchy or agency, akin to a salaried employment role. Nonetheless, this significance is altered by the addition of another identity: that of being your wife. The suitability of the term *"menjabat"* (to hold a place) is elucidated in the preceding sentence: "Previously, his grandmother hoped he would become a doctor." This statement accurately elucidates the original identity of the term *"menjabat,"* although it has been intentionally misrepresented due to the prevailing circumstances. Pramoedya Ananta Toer's offspring discontinued his medical education due to the challenging socioeconomic conditions that adversely affected the family's financial circumstances. Pramoedya Ananta Toer's confinement in the Special Detention House (RTH) for political prisoners of the Indonesian Communist Party further curtailed the family's mobility, including that of his offspring. The military hegemony and contemporary rulers gradually constrained Pram's family, rendering marriage a more conventional alternative than pursuing a medical career.

The researcher is intrigued by this title due to their reading of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's work and *"Discourse Analysis: Theory and Methods,"* which sparked an interest in Social Antagonism Discourse and its manifestation in *"The Silent Song of a Mute."* In light of this context, the researcher undertook a study centered on the inquiry: How is the discourse of social antagonism articulated in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's book *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu*? Antagonism constitutes the boundaries that arise from actions of closure or the formation of totality (e.g., meaning, discourse, objectivity, society). For him, such constraints are an essential component of politics. In other terms, conflict and contestation constitute political ontology. Mouffe asserts that this antagonism is inherent and inescapable; thus, Habermas's endeavor to eradicate conflict and contestation from deliberative democracy equates to the eradication of the "political" aspect. Mouffe tackles inquiries on her theoretical basis by invoking the Heideggerian dichotomy between the "ontological" and the "ontic." "Ontic" pertains to traditional political practice, but "ontological" refers to the institutionalization of society or the fundamental elements constitutive of human society, succinctly described as "the political" (Mouffe, 2005: 8-9).

The antagonist is a character who introduces conflict and consistently opposes the primary protagonist. Furthermore, antagonists possess traits that enable them to manipulate the veracity of contemporary events. The antagonist characters are motivated to oppose the protagonist's primary objective in the narrative. To create a dramatic effect, the adversary typically possesses a sly facial expression and a cynical tone, which often leads to their unpopularity.

In one narrative, the antagonist is very pleased to feign virtue while frequently concocting malevolent schemes that could jeopardize or even terminate the protagonist's life. In a literary work, such as a novel, the

depiction of the enemy typically embodies a villainous figure, characterized as malevolent, often belonging to a non-human entity or organization.

Moreover, all varieties of antagonist roles inherently possess distinct objectives and face expressions. In novels, the author typically constructs the adversary using dialogue or narrative that elucidates the antagonist's malevolent intentions. This chapter examines the issue of the battle for meaning, highlighting that discourse, conflict, and struggle are prevalent in the social realm, hence rendering this struggle a crucial aspect of particular analysis. We shall now analyze how hostile bias conflicts are conceptually conceptualized within the discourse framework.

The formation of hegemonic discourse as objectivity and its resolution in the contemporary political arena are significant elements of the social process examined by discourse analysis. According to Laclau, the resolution of hegemonic discourse constitutes an extension of the process of discourse analysis. Laclau characterizes deconstruction and hegemony as "two sides of a single operation," utilizing Jacques Derrida's concept of deconstruction to elucidate such interventions (Laclau 1993: 281). Hegemony is a construct that may arise from indeterminate elements within a field, while deconstruction is a process that demonstrates the feasibility of hegemonic intervention, indicating that these elements can be reconfigured in alternative ways (Laclau 1993: 281). Consequently, deconstruction conveys the potency of undecidability, whereas hegemonic intervention normalizes a particular articulation (cf. Torfing, 1999: 103).

Discourse analysis seeks to dismantle structures perceived as conventional. Discourse analysis seeks to demonstrate that certain organizations in this world emerge from political processes that yield social ramifications. For instance, if "immigrants" are associated with "criminals" in a specific discourse, discourse analysts can elucidate how such assumptions are discursively constructed and the implications for both immigrants and native populations. Discourse analysis, like to other methodologies, lacks a privileged vantage point external to the discourse structure; thus, deconstruction must initiate from inside the current framework: the deconstruction movement does not dismantle the system from an external position. The deconstruction movement is both impractical and ineffective, and it is unsuitable for its intended aim unless it engages with those structures (Derrida 1998: 24)

METHODS

The study methodology employed is descriptive qualitative design within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Qualitative research seeks to comprehend the realities experienced by research subjects, including their attitudes and verbal expressions, within a specific natural setting, employing diverse natural methodologies (Moleong, 2007:27). This analysis employs social antagonism discourse analysis found in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's correspondence in the book *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu* (Jorgensen, 2007:89). The research data include words or sentences reflecting social antagonism in the book *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. In this study, the researcher employed reading and note-taking procedures to gather data. This study's data analysis, following field data analysis, employs the Miles and Huberman model (Sugiyono, 2016: 246), which categorizes the post-data collection procedures into three phases: data reduction, data presentation, and verification. Interpretation is guided by Laclau and Mouffe's (1990) concept of social antagonism and Fairclough's (2021) three-dimensional CDA model, which connects text, discourse practice, and sociocultural context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings reveal that antagonistic discourse in Pramoedya's text manifests through contradictory lexical constructions and metaphorical inversions. For instance, the juxtaposition between 'menjabat' (to hold office) and 'to become a wife' symbolizes the subversion of expected social roles under political duress. Similarly, metaphors such as 'train of fortune' and 'breath of the machine' represent the dehumanizing effects of authoritarian governance. These expressions expose linguistic reconfigurations of meaning, where political oppression distorts everyday semantics.

The notion of 'Tapol Cilik' (child political prisoner) exemplifies ideological manipulation through discourse. Such terminological contradictions mirror Laclau's (1993) argument that antagonism arises when

one discourse negates the identity of another. These findings align with recent scholarship emphasizing that discourse functions as both a site and a mechanism of ideological contestation (Fairclough, 2021; Wodak & Meyer, 2022; Leivada et al., 2023). Through this linguistic antagonism, Pramodya transforms personal trauma into collective critique, positioning his letters as acts of resistance within Indonesia's socio-political landscape.

The book "Nyanyian Sunyi Seorang Bisu" comprises Pramudia Ananta Toer's correspondence with his family following his relocation from the Salemba Special Detention Center (RTC) to Buru Island. The letters were composed due to the distance and the family's inability to visit him. Among the 12 notes in the book "The Silent Song of a Mute," not all exemplify the practice of hostility that subsequently led to the emergence of phrases or terminology associated with antagonism. This assertion is evident from the author's data findings.

Antagonism in Term Menjabat The findings of antagonism are evident in Pramudia Ananta Toer's first notes titled "Reflection and Floating," page 1. The use of the word (to hold) in a sentence. "His grandmother used to hope he would become a doctor, but it turns out he will be your husband." (1,3,6)

Laclau posits that antagonism arises when the identity of one discourse is undermined by the negation of another discourse. The term (menjabat) experienced a deliberate erasure of its original identity. Occupying a position should elucidate an individual's role within the organizational hierarchy or their status inside the institution, which is equivalent to a remunerated employment. Nonetheless, this significance is altered with the incorporation of an additional identity: that of being your spouse. The suitability of the term "menjabat" (to hold a place) is elucidated in the preceding sentence: "formerly, his grandmother hoped he would become a doctor." The sentence accurately elucidates the original identity of the term "menjabat," yet it has been intentionally misrepresented due to the prevailing circumstances: Pramudia Ananta Toer's offspring discontinued his medical education due to the adverse socioeconomic conditions that rendered the family's financial circumstances challenging. The condition of Pramodya Ananta Toer, who was incarcerated in the Special Detention House (RTH) for political prisoners of the Indonesian Communist Party, further constrained the family's mobility, including that of his offspring. The military hegemony and contemporary rulers gradually constrained Pram's family, rendering marriage a more conventional alternative than pursuing a medical career.

Antagonism in Term Kereta. The impact of despotic and capricious authority rendered societal living conditions aimless, occasionally compelling individuals to make rapid decisions. These events also impacted the terminology that was developed. For instance, trains.

"That one event will always be remembered: you came with your future husband and a religious official, who was so rushed, worried about missing the train of fortune." (1,2,1)

The term "car," representing a mode of mobility, is contrasted with "fortune" to elucidate the scenario of a child hastily seeking his father's approval. When juxtaposed, that interpretation results in a distortion of the original meaning. Particularly in contrast to the scenario of seeking approval from in laws. The term "kereta" (vehicle) refers to a scheduled mode of transportation for individuals or goods, but "rejek" (sustenance) denotes an intangible entity that cannot be physically held or moved. The authentic significance of "rejek" is thereafter undermined when coupled with the term "kereta," which denotes concrete and material entities.

Antagonism in Term Nafas. Antagonism is also present in the initial note on page 3 entitled "Reflection and Forgiveness." The term "Breath" in the sentence:

"Don't listen to the panting breath of that rickety ship's engine." (3,3,8).

The breath and the vessel's engine are two distinctly dissimilar entities. Breath is generated by the functioning of the organs of living creatures, whereas an engine is a mechanical apparatus composed of numerous components made of iron or steel. While the raw ingredients of breath and machine differ, the circumstances in Pramudia's life, as reflected in his writing "The Silent Song of a Mute," are distinct. The phrase "breath of the machine" or "one who labors incessantly" emerged as a result of arbitrary authority and prevailing political conditions. The phrase "machine" becomes into an antagonist as it distorts the meaning of "breath" under the sway of oppressive authority, leading to its interpretation by the village leader.

Antagonism in Term Mencangkul. Antagonism also occurs in the second note on page 24, titled "When the Gods Descend to Earth." The word "hoeing" in the sentence:

"Mr. Dilar Darmawan serves as a lecturer in English literature at a university. During this eight years, he ought to have cultivated proficient grads in English Literature. He is currently engaged in hoeing." (24,4,2-4)

The antonym of "hoeing," which refers to labor performed with a hoe and is typically associated with non-degree-required agricultural job, becomes an enemy when executed by an individual holding the position of English Literature Lecturer. Antagonism in such cases arises from an underlying power hegemony. The exertion of authority is undermining the identity of professors, who ought to be in their offices, engaging with academics, dedicating their time to reading and instructing pupils. The lecturer's role in the discourse on page 24 is compromised in its identity by becoming a hoe-wielder.

Antagonism in Term Tapol Cilik. On page 26, the second note in the book "Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu Satu" (Silent Song of a Mute Person) reveals a conflict in the usage of the term "Tapol," which we categorize as antagonism stemming from the nation's political machinations, resulting in a redefined identity for "Tapol" through the incorporation of the term "cilik" (small). This term evolved into a new identity that conflicted with "Tapol," altering the meaning of the entire statement, which is as follows.

"I possess a narrative regarding this relationship; one day a mother instructed her child, an elementary school pupil, 'Go locate your father!' The boy deeply adored his father and embarked on a quest to search from one prison to another. Ultimately, he discovered that his father had been imprisoned for political reasons. Due to his profound affection for his father, he chose not to return home and accompanied him, so becoming a captive child. Several years later, his father was liberated, although the young inmate remained behind. His banishment extended to Buru. In Unit III, he is referred to as Asmuni." (26,2,1-11)"

Tapol, or political prisoner, denotes individuals engaged in practical politics who are deemed to operate beyond the regulations established by the authorities. A political prisoner is an adversary of the authorities who is incarcerated due to divergent viewpoints or misaligned ideology. The identification of a Tapol should pertain to those who comprehend philosophy and act in accordance with their beliefs and aspirations aligned with that ideology. Such endeavors would be unattainable for a young child or even a teenager lacking exposure to an ideology.

Antagonism in the sentence "Liberation." The term "liberation" is derived from the word "bebas," signifying freedom or release. In the circumstances outlined by Pram in note 9 on page 218, his entitlement to unconditional release as a prisoner, given that he was never subjected to trial, ought to have been unequivocal, particularly as the majority of political prisoners had already been liberated.

"Ah, liberated!" Humanity has yearned throughout its history- during the era of slavery, the feudal period, the colonial epoch, the contemporary age, and my own time. The freedom of liberty occupies a unique place in my heart, and in our hearts. For an individual who has been denied their liberty and rights for 12 years." (218,1,1-5)"

An individual's freedom is fundamentally absolute, as every human is born with intrinsic liberty and is recognized by the state, regardless of being born to an incarcerated mother. Consequently, prior to the occurrence involving Pram and his fellow political prisoners during the Soeharto administration, it was deemed unnatural. The combination of the phrase "liberation" with "deprived" constitutes a perversion of linguistic terminology that contradicts the principles of the state. Consequently, the term "confiscated" serves as an antagonist by distorting the authentic meaning of the word "free."

In Pramudia Ananta Toer's "Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu" Volume 1, there is a notable absence of animosity. The content of Pramudia's letters encompasses more than just social issues and the nation's circumstances. In certain chapters, Pram narrates historical accounts, including the era of the gods, as noted in the second annotation, or merely discusses appendices devoid of any novel speech. Nonetheless, the author identified eight data points concerning Antagonism, wherein the discourses presented by Pram subsequently engendered a new identity that conflicted with his previous identity.

Traditional identities, such as "holding office," typically associated with a position within an agency, organization, or institution, conflict with the emerging identity of being a wife. This discourse arises

from social reality, when individuals, confronted with political intrigue, find themselves unable to occupy their desired positions or fulfill others' expectations, finally compelling them to choose alternative choices, such as marriage. input_sentence: According to Pram's writings, excavation on Buru Island was arduous, and Pram posited that the area could not be cultivated for a century. This endeavor, executed by professors partially originating from foreign colleges, engendered hostility arising from the dominance of authority. Child inmates, particularly those associated with prohibited ideologies, are individuals who have comprehended the tenets of such ideologies. Consequently, political prisoners typically originate from higher education backgrounds or individuals who have had significant interactions with that ideological milieu. In truth, the political prisoner Pram encountered was a little child, prompting Pram to refer to him as "Tapol Cilik," a designation that contradicts his genuine comprehension or identity.

In this segment, Dewa encounters a conflict of significance. The phrase Dewa, representing an entity of glory or greatness that is venerated and has adherents, is undermined by its usage as articulated by Pram, the emissary of the monarch of Buru Island or the military tapol of Buru Island. Life is a revered human phenomenon that cannot be discovered or acquired through human effort. Nonetheless, the discussion around life, the most invaluable aspect of humanity, shifts upon the introduction of the term "saringan" or "nyawa saringan" (life filter). This contravenes the widely accepted notion of life as a valuable aspect of mankind, rendering it equivalent to a trivial thing that requires sorting, filtering, or sifting.

Animalization engenders animosity by introducing terminology that infringes upon or undermines human identity. The term "animalize" is absent from the book; it manifests as an animosity shaped by military authority. Animal protein derived from lizards would undoubtedly establish a novel identity, as there is no animal classified as "lizard" among the human dietary options that provide substantial protein. This occurs solely due to internal power interference, and the term "detained" pertains to criminals or wrongdoers who have undergone legal proceedings; yet, it is juxtaposed with an unnatural identity, specifically "detained because they are my siblings." This represents a type of antagonism characterized by the exertion of power. The presented descriptions and data indicate that the political turmoil and governance by a select few rulers significantly impact the evolution of the language they employ to acquire and sustain power, potentially transgressing or undermining social norms. This dominance style then led to the emergence of a new phrase that was either intentionally coined or arose spontaneously within society. The eight data points identified by the researcher substantiate this viewpoint. All originated from a form of authority distinctly documented by Pram, both as an author and as an observer, grounded in established linguistic conventions.

CONCLUSION

Pram's notes encompass the personal and social lives of the Tapol amongst the political dynamics between the government and the Indonesian Communist Party, wherein the authorities' response to the PKI's activities resulted in the victimization of innocent individuals. The rulers' military operations at that time generated new discourses and identities that required a linguistic reassessment. The effect of authority inside society engenders ambivalence about norms and fundamental human knowledge, particularly when events facilitate the interests of the rulers. This is documented in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's notes, specifically in "Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu Jilid 1 Dan 2" and his books, where he explores historical narratives via the perspectives of characters he developed or saw.

The ensuing ambivalence engenders contradicting discourse, language, and statements, potentially undermining the foundational comprehension of terminology that society has maintained for an extended period. The ruler significantly contributes to the concept of the antagonist. The influence of rulers in the development of linguistic terminology is considerable. Subsequently, from both negative and positive perspectives. Typically, linguistic discourse or vocabulary emanates from governmental entities responsible for language development. The formation of new vocabulary, aimed at enriching the linguistic treasury due to the necessity of national language development, should be managed by language institutions. Nonetheless, certain languages emerge clandestinely and proliferate within society, eluding suppression by authorities, often as a consequence of observable societal events, despite the language embodying an identity that contradicts the established meaning of the dominant language.

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