

**Flood in The Indonesian Online Newspapers:  
A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of the Representation of Flood**

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**ABSTRACT**

This present study examines the representation of flood in Indonesian online newspapers verbally and visually by using Kress and van Leeuwen's framework (2006) and Systemic Functional Linguistics as proposed by Halliday (1994). This study employed a qualitative method to describe the representation and its signification. The collected data were analysed from kompas.com, republika.co.id, radarcirebon.com, and harianjogja.com online newspapers. The data were in the form of words, phrases, and sentences and pictures. This study, verbally, found that flood was represented as actor (14) or 60.9%, goal (5) or 21.7%, carrier (2) or 8.7%, and phenomenon (2) or 8.7%. The processes used are material (19) or 65.5%, flood as material process (3) or 10.3%, relational: attributive (3) or 10.3%, relational: identifying (1) or 3.4% mental: perceptive (1) or 3.4%, and mental: cognitive (2) or 6.9%. Furthermore, flood is also represented as circumstance of time (4) or 66.7%, circumstance of condition (1) or 16.7%, and circumstance of reason (1) or 16.7%. Visually, flood was represented as an actor which does a damaging action, a circumstance of time which was waited by several people to get new jobs such as ojek rider, and a goal which was considered to be a swimming pool and a new playground in Jakarta.

**Keywords:** *Representation, Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics, and Online Newspapers.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Most people in the world cannot be separated from the media whether they are visual, audio, or audio-visual media. These media serve as sources of information on global phenomena such as the programs of health risks, political elections, royal weddings, armed conflict financial crises, and natural or man-made disaster (Doveling, von Scheve, & Konijn, 2011). These realities shown in the media are often represented by different types of texts such as verbal and visual. This study examines the representation of flood in the Indonesian online newspapers verbally and visually.

### **Representation**

Representation is the production of meaning through language in numbers of a culture (Hall, 1997). The meanings are produced by depending on people's thoughts and ideas which are related with words, sounds, and images. In addition, van Leeuwen (2008) argues that representation can discover meanings in a certain context and culture visually and verbally. It can be understood that representation is the

way meanings are produced through the images and the words.

### **Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis**

An analysis of texts by using more than one mode at the same time can be called as 'multimodality' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). They propose that multimodality is the term that people use to communicate by using more than one mode at the same time. Nowadays, people use not only verbal texts to convey the meaning of something, but also images, such as advertisement in television, posters, and billboard. In relation to discourse, Machin & Mayr (2012) state that text not only can be analysed by lexical analysis, but also by visual analysis. In addition, they state that there is the simplest kind of analysis carried out in Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, namely iconographical or iconological analysis. It means that people can explore texts and images to signify discourses in ways that might not be obvious at an initial viewing.

## Systemic Functional Linguistics

Functional Grammar takes the analysis from the functional analysis rather than the formal analysis (Halliday, 1994). In addition, Gerot and Wignell (1994) state that Functional Grammar or Systemic Functional Linguistics investigates not only the use of language, but also the choices made by people in using language and to see how meanings are formed in the interaction. This study uses transitivity to reveal representation of flood in the articles. According to Halliday (1994), transitivity focuses on clauses in its function as a way of representing patterns of experience. He argues that clause plays a central role that it embodies a general principle of experience made up by processes.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative method to describe the representation of flood and its signification. The data were in the form of verbal and visual texts from kompas.com, republika.co.id, radarcirebon.com, and harianjogja.com online newspapers. The verbal texts were

analysed by using Transitivity analysis in Systemic Functional Linguistics as proposed by Halliday (1994). The visual texts were analysed by using Kress and van Leeuwen's framework (2006).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis, the study finds that verbally flood is represented as actor (14) or 60.9%, goal (5) or 21.7%, carrier (2) or 8.7%, and phenomenon (2) or 8.7%. The processes used are material (19) or 65.5%, flood as material process (3) or 10.3%, relational: attributive (3) or 10.3%, relational: identifying (1) or 3.4% mental: perceptive (1) or 3.4%, and mental: cognitive (2) or 6.9%. Furthermore, flood is also represented as circumstance of time (4) or 66.7%, circumstance of condition (1) or 16.7%, and circumstance of reason (1) or 16.7%.

Flood represented as an actor (14) or 60.9% means that flood does something. The clause "banjir yang terjadi di Jakarta pada Kamis (17/1/2013) lalu akan menyebabkan inflasi sedikit melonjak" or "the flood that happened in Jakarta last Thursday (17/1/2013)], would cause

the inflation to increase” shows that flood does something. In this context, flood could do anything such as flood caused a financial issue, flood made the made the electricity panel room was forced to stop, flood caused the train lane in Sudirman station was cut, and flood also gave people new jobs such asojek rider to get more incomes in Jakarta. Flood represented as a goal (5) or 21.7% means that flood was the entity on which something is done. the clause “Ahok menghilang, Jokowi hadapi banjir sendirian” or “Ahok disappeared, Jokowi faced the flood alone” shows that flood was something on which was done by Jokowi. In this context, flood was the goal which was being faced by Jokowi and the people in Jakarta. The process used was material process (19) or 65.5%. According to Halliday (1994), material process is the process of doing. In the clause “Jakarta banjirlagi” or “Jakarta was flooded again”, flood is a process because flood floods Jakarta. In this context, perhaps, the actor is the water which floods Jakarta.

Flood represented as a carrier (2) or 8.7% means that flood is the

entity to which it is attributed in an attributive process. The clause “sama halnya dengan ojek perahu di kawasan Pluit dan Muara Karang, banjir juga menjadi sarana bagi sebagian warga untuk mengais rejeki” or “[it] is the same as the boat transportation in Pluit and Muara Karang, the flood also became a way for several people to get the livelihood” shows that flood was the carrier which attributes to something. In this context, flood became a way for several people to get the livelihood in Jakarta. The process was attributive process (3) or 10.3%. According to Halliday (1994), attributive process is the process where an entity has some quality attributed to it. It can be seen from the verb “menjadi” or “became”; this verb realises attributive: intensive process.

Furthermore, flood represented as a phenomenon (2) or 8.7% means that flood was what being sensed. It can be seen in the clause “genangan terlihat dari pintu gerbang, hingga jalan penghubung antara Balai Kota dan parkir Gedung DPRD DKI Jakarta” or “the puddle was seen from the gate till the

connecting between the city hall and the parking place of the Parliament Building Jakarta”. The process used was mental perceptive process (1) or 3.4%. According to Halliday (1994), mental: perceptive process is the process when the senser does something using the five senses. Based on the analysis, the process is a perceptive process. It can be seen from the use of the verb “terlihat” or “was seen” in the clause. Flood was also represented as a phenomenon in the mental: cognitive process (1) or 3.4%. It can be seen in the clause “Bank Indonesia (BI) memperkirakan banjir yang terjadi di Jakarta pada Kamis (17/1/2013) lalu akan menyebabkan inflasi sedikit melonjak” or “Bank Indonesia (BI) estimated the flood that happened in Jakarta at the last Thursday (17/1/2013), would cause the inflation to increase”. In this context, flood was the phenomenon which caused the financial issue; flood causes the inflation to increase at that moment.

Flood represented as circumstance of time (4) or 66.7% means that flood is the time or the moment which was waited by several

people in Jakarta. In the clause “Inidia orang yang paling girang saat Jakarta banjir” or “this was the person who was the happiest when Jakarta was flooded”, flood is only the time when the flood happened in Jakarta. In this context, the person who was the happiest attributes to the *ojek* rider because the article tells about the *ojek* rider in the event of flood in Jakarta. *Ojek* rider is a person who works for taking people from one location to other locations by a motorcycle. In this context, the *ojek* rider works for taking people to cross the flooded area.

Next, flood represented as a circumstance of condition (1) or 16.7% means that flood was the condition of the event in Jakarta at the moment. The clause “namun, dengan adanya banjir menjadi 1.1 percent” or “however, in the event of the flood in Jakarta, the inflation became 1.1 percent.” shows that the flood was only the condition when the inflation increased into 1.1 percent. This event was related to the financial issue in Jakarta. The process used was identifying: intensive process which appears 1 time or 3.4%. According to Halliday

(1994), identifying process is the process when one entity identifies other entities. In this context, the token was actually the inflation (implied subject) that identifies the value; the value is 1.1%. This was happened because of the flood in Jakarta.

Finally, flood represented as a circumstance of reason (1) or 16.7% means that flood was the reason why the inflation increased at the moment. In the clause “dampak banjir, inflasi bias melonjak” or “the effect of the flood, the inflation increased”, flood was considered to be something that caused anything in Jakarta including the financial issue. In this context, flood caused a bad thing; flood caused the increase of the inflation in Jakarta.

Visually, flood was represented as an actor, a circumstance of time, and a goal. This is illustrated in the following pictures.



Figure 1. “Ahok menghilang, Jokowi Hadapi Banjir Sendirian”

Radarcirebon.com Article

The picture shows that Jokowi and other participants are looking at something caused by the flood in front of them. In this context, the flood does a damaging action in Jakarta. The following picture illustrates flood represented as the actor which does damaging action. The flood flooded Jakarta and broke houses there.

Furthermore, flood is also represented as circumstance of time. In this context, flood is the time or the moment waited by some people in Jakarta because flood can give them a new job.



Figure 2. “Ini Dia Orang yang Paling Girang Saat Jakarta Banjir”

Republika.co.id Article

When Jakarta was flooded, some people could get new income by working as an *ojek* rider. Therefore, flood is the moment which gives

profitable thing for people in Jakarta. The following picture illustrates flood represented as circumstance of time which gives profitable thing.

Flood is also represented as a goal. In this context, flood is the goal enjoyed by some people in Jakarta.



Figure 3. "Jakarta Banjir Lagi: 9 Kelurahan terendam"

Harianjogja.com Article

Based on the analysis, the picture shows that the man is the main participant in the event. In this context, flood was represented as a goal which was considered to be an enjoyable thing. Flood could be considered to be a swimming pool for people there, especially for the man in the picture.

The following picture also illustrates flood represented as a goal which was considered to be an enjoyable thing.



Figure 4. "Dampak Banjir, Inflasi Bisa Melonjak"

Kompas.com Article

Based on the analysis, the picture shows that the two children are the main participants in the event. They seem happy and enjoyable for the Styrofoam boat on the flooded area. Perhaps, they are talking about how to play the Styrofoam boat or anything else. In this context, flood is represented as a goal which is considered to be an enjoyable thing because it can be a new playground for the children. They do not seem panicky because of the flood at all.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the verbal texts analysis of the articles investigated, this study that flood is represented as actor (14) or 60.9%, goal (5) or 21.7%, carrier (2) or 8.7%, and phenomenon (2) or 8.7%. The processes used are material (19) or 65.5%, flood as material process (3) or 10.3%, relational: attributive (3) or 10.3%,

relational: identifying (1) or 3.4%  
 mental: perceptive (1) or 3.4%, and  
 mental: cognitive (2) or 6.9%.  
 Furthermore, flood is also  
 represented as circumstance of time  
 (4) or 66.7%, circumstance of  
 condition (1) or 16.7%, and  
 circumstance of reason (1) or 16.7%.  
 In addition, visually, flood is  
 represented as an actor which does  
 damaging action in Jakarta, a  
 circumstance of time or the moment  
 that is waited by people in Jakarta,  
 and a goal which is considered as an  
 enjoyable thing for people in Jakarta.

Flood is represented as actor  
 and goal through material process, as  
 carrier through attributive: intensive  
 process, and as phenomenon through  
 mental: perceptive and cognitive  
 process. Furthermore, flood is  
 represented as circumstance of time  
 through attributive: intensive, as  
 circumstance of condition through  
 identifying: intensive process, and as  
 circumstance of reason through  
 material process.

### **Verbal Representation of Flood**

Based on the analysis, verbally, flood  
 is represented as actor and goal  
 through material process, carrier

through attributive: intensive  
 process, phenomenon through mental  
 process, circumstance of time  
 through attributive: intensive  
 process, circumstance of condition  
 through identifying: intensive  
 process, and circumstance of reason  
 through material process. In the  
 clauses, flood represented as actor  
 appears 14 times or 60.9%. Flood as  
 actor is the dominant participant in  
 the clauses. Flood is also represented  
 as goal which appears 5 times or  
 21.7%. According to Halliday  
 (1994), material process is the  
 process of doing. In the context of  
 online articles investigated, flood  
 represented as actor means that flood  
 does something to Jakarta. Flood  
 caused a financial issue, flood the  
 made the electricity panel room  
 forced to stop, flood caused the train  
 lane in Sudirman station was cut, and  
 flood also gave people new jobs as  
*ojek* riders in Jakarta. It can be seen  
 in the example of sentence “Bank  
 Indonesia (BI)estimatedthe floodthat  
 happenedin Jakartaat the last  
 Thursday (17/1/2013)],would  
 causethe inflation to increase”. Flood  
 does something in Jakarta; flood  
 caused the inflation to increase in



Jakarta. It can be understood that flood can influence anything in Jakarta including financial issue.

Flood represented as goal (5) or 21.7% means that flood is the goal on which something is done by the actor. For example, the clause “Jokowi faced the flood alone” means that flood is something or situation that has to be faced by Jokowi. Actually, this is not only Jokowi’s duty, but also all people’s duty in Jakarta. All people have to face the flood in Jakarta.

Flood represented as carrier appears 2 times or 8.7%. The process used is attributive process. Halliday (1994) states that attributive process is the process when an entity has some quality attributed to it. In the example that has been mentioned above, the clause “the flood also became a way for several people to get the livelihood” means that the flood attributes to a way for people to get the livelihood. The flood is not only damaging something in Jakarta, but also giving good things to Jakarta people.

Furthermore, flood represented as phenomenon appears 2 times or 8.7%. In this context,

flood is not only considered to be phenomenon which is seen, but also has to be faced. The process used is mental process. Halliday (1994) states that mental: perceptive process is the process when the senser does something using the five senses. Based on the analysis, the process used in the clause “the puddle was seen from the gate until the connecting between the city hall and the parking place of the Parliament Building Jakarta” is mental: perceptive process because the verb used is “was seen” which means that the senser used the sight sense. Perhaps, the puddle or the flood was seen by people around the city hall and the parking place of the Parliament Building Jakarta. Flood is also represented as a phenomenon in mental: cognitive process. The clause “Bank Indonesia (BI) estimated the flood that happened in Jakarta at the last Thursday (17/1/2013)” shows that flood was the phenomenon which was estimated by Bank Indonesia (BI). Therefore, flood is considered to be something that not only damages and breaks the houses, but also to be phenomenon that has to be faced.

Flood is also represented as circumstance of time which appears 4 times or 66.7%. In the clause “here was the person who was happiest when Jakarta was flooded”, the flood is only the situation which is waited by several people of Jakarta. The process used is identifying: intensive process which means that the person here refers to the *ojek* rider who feels happiest because of the flood. People in Jakarta do not feel panicky when Jakarta was flooded. They even felt happy because the flood could bring positive effects. When Jakarta was flooded, people could have a new job as an *ojek* rider to get more incomes at that moment.

Flood represented as circumstance of condition appears 1 time or 16.7%. In the clause “however, in the event of the flood in Jakarta, the inflation became 1.1 percent”, the flood is the condition which influences the financial issue in Jakarta. The event of the flood in Jakarta made the inflation increased from 0.9 percent to 1.1 percent. In this context, flood is represented as the condition that influences bad things, especially for financial issues.

Finally, flood represented as circumstance of reason appears 1 time or 16.7%. In the clause “the effect of the flood, the inflation increased”, flood is the reason that causes something. In this context, flood causes the financial issue. It can be understood that flood gives a bad thing for Jakarta. Flood causes the inflation to increase.

### **Visual Representation of Flood**

Visually, flood is represented as actor through the vector that is created by Jokowi’s gaze, circumstance of time through the layout composition, and goal through the layout composition. In the picture of “Ahok Menghilang, Jokowi Hadapi Banjir Sendirian”, flood is represented as an actor. Based on the analysis, what flood does is damaging action. It can be seen in the picture that Jokowi and other participants are looking at something pointed by Jokowi’s finger. Therefore, flood is the actor which does something to Jakarta. In this context, flood has more power than human because flood can do anything to Jakarta.

Flood is also represented as a circumstance of time. It can be seen in the picture “Ini Dia Orang yang Paling Girang saat Jakarta Banjir”. In this picture, flood is not described by the picture of the water. Based on the analysis, flood is the time or the moment which gives a profitable thing for people in Jakarta. Flood is also the moment which is waited by some people in Jakarta. When Jakarta was flooded, some people felt happy because they could get more incomes from being an *ojek*rider. In the picture, the participant is the man who is waiting for the passengers to use his service. That is crossing the flooded area.

Furthermore, flood is represented as a goal and an enjoyable thing. It can be seen in the pictures “Jakarta Banjir Lagi: 9 Kelurahan Terendam” and “Dampak Banjir, Inflasi Bisa Melonjak”. In the first picture, there is a man who is tubing in the water of the flooded area. He does not seem panicky. He even looks happy enjoying what he is doing at that moment. Based on the analysis, the picture does not represent the title at all. There is no picture that represents the districts

which are flooded. In the second picture, there are two children who are playing the Styrofoam boats in the flooded area. They also do not seem panicky because of the flood. They even enjoy playing in the flooded area. Probably, they consider that the flooded area can become a new playground for them. Based on the analysis, the picture does not represent the title at all. The picture does not relate to financial issue. It only shows what the children are doing in the event.

From the findings, in the article “Ahok Menghilang, Jokowi Hadapi Banjir Sendirian” from Radarcirebon.com, flood is represented as an actor which does damaging action. It can be understood that Radarcirebon.com is the media which represents the flood as an actor because of people’s perspectives in Cirebon. They probably think that flood that happened in Jakarta is the actor which does damaging action and gives negative effects to Jakarta.

In the articles “Ini Dia Orang yang paling Girang saat Jakarta Banjir” from Republika.co.id online newspaper and “DampakBanjir,

Inflasi Bisa Melonjak” from Kompas.com online newspaper, flood is represented as something that gives positive effects. Republika.co.id and Kompas.com are the media which represent flood as a positive thing. Republika.co.id represents flood as the time when people are waiting for. Flood is the time which gives profitable thing to people in Jakarta. Kompas.com represents flood as a goal which becomes enjoyable thing for people in Jakarta. Those media represents flood based on people’s perspectives in Indonesia because they are national media.

Furthermore, in the article “Jakarta Banjir Lagi: 9 Kelurahan Terendam” from Harianjogja.com, flood is represented as a goal which becomes an enjoyable thing for people in Jakarta. This media represents flood as a goal based on people’s perspectives in Yogyakarta. This means that people in Yogyakarta probably think than flood that happened in Jakarta is not a bad thing, but a good thing. It can become a playground for children in the event.

## CONCLUSION

This study disclosed the representations of flood in Jakarta as evidenced in four articles of Indonesian online newspapers from Republika.co.id, Kompas.com, Radarcirebon.com, and Harianjogja.com. This study employs Kress and van Leeuwen’s framework (2006) to analyse the visual texts. This study also uses Systemic Functional Linguistics as proposed by Halliday (1994) to analyse the verbal texts.

Based on the analysis, verbally, flood is represented as actor, goal, carrier, phenomenon, circumstance of time, and circumstance of condition. In this context, flood represented as an actor becomes the dominant participant of the clauses investigated. Flood can do anything to Jakarta. For example, flood caused a financial issue. Therefore, flood is represented as a goal which is done by the actor. For example, flood is something that has to be faced by Jokowi. Flood is also represented as a carrier, which attributes to something. For example, flood becomes the medium for several people to get the livelihood

in Jakarta. Flood is represented as a phenomenon which was seen by people around the flooded area in Jakarta.

Flood represented as circumstance of time means that flood is the moment waited by people in Jakarta. Flood is the moment when people get more income by being an *ojek* rider. In addition, flood represented as circumstance of condition means that flood is only the condition which affects the financial issue.

Visually, flood is represented as an actor which does damaging action. In this context, flood broke houses in Jakarta. Flood is also represented as circumstance of time which gives a profitable thing. In this context, flood is the moment when people get more income. People can become an *ojek* rider to across the flooded area. Furthermore, flood is represented as a goal which becomes an enjoyable thing. The flooded area becomes a swimming pool and a playground for people. People can swim in the flooded area. Children also can play the Styrofoam boats in the flooded area.

This study did not investigate the relationship between visual and verbal texts. This study only investigated the representation of flood in the online newspapers visually and verbally without investigating their relationship. In this context, the readers have to fill the gap by themselves to understand the message from the verbal and visual texts.

Having done the analyses, this study ends with suggestion which can be considered for the next study. The next study should use more innovation in analysing multimodal texts. The next study may use other perspectives to analyse the verbal and visual texts. In addition, the next study also should investigate the relationship between verbal and visual texts in any source.

It is expected that this study can contribute to Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis. Moreover, hopefully, this study can help the readers to understand the message that is created by verbal and visual texts, because oftentimes, the verbal and visual texts are not related each other. Hence, the readers have to understand what the texts mean.

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