

Eufemism in Environmental Discourse of the Movement Capital Country in Indonesian Mass Media: Critical Ecolinguistics

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Abstract

In its presentation, the mass media use various language tools to package environmental discourse, one of which is euphemism. This study highlights the phenomenon of the use of euphemisms contained in the environmental discourse of moving the country's capital city in the mass media in Indonesia. This research is a qualitative descriptive study. The data was taken from online news portals, namely Kompas.com, Okezone.com, and Detik.com using the listening method with an advanced technique in the form of note taking. The data is limited only around the context of the transfer of the country's capital. Data analysis is done interactively and continues continuously until complete. The euphemism expression unit used by the mass media in Indonesia in the discourse of the transfer of the country's capital is divided into four, namely words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. Units of expression in the form of words, namely in the form of the basic words noun and adjective units of expression in the form of derivative words are divided into three, namely noun, adjective, and drab. Euphemism units of expression take the form of phrases, namely noun phrases and adjective phrases. Units of expression in the form of clauses and sentences found only one variation. The euphemism categorization found in ten data, namely one for one substitutions, flippancy, generale for specific, remodeling, colloquial, understatement, circomlucation, acronym, metaphor, and clipping. Euphemism.

Keywords

Euphemisms; displacement of the nation's capital; critical ecolinguistics



I. Introduction

As an area that is considered strategic, has minimal disaster risk, is close to developing cities, and has large land availability, parts of North Penajem Paser Regency and parts of Kutai Kartanegara Regency in East Kalimantan Province were chosen to be the new locations for the National Capital City (IKN). Through these considerations, the IKN transfer plan is contained in Presidential Regulation (Perpres) Number 18 of 2020 concerning the 2020-2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan. Since it was announced on August 9, 2019 by President Joko Widodo, the decision to transfer IKN is still a polemic. The debate revolves around regulatory, budgetary, and environmental issues. Among these issues, environmental issues are the most discussed (see Kurniadi, 2019 Muhtar et al, 2020 Hamdani, 2020 Mutaqi, 2020). Although the government launched the concept of Living with Nature (Youth Talks, August 20, 2019) and carried out other environmental socialization, the plan to move IKN from DKI Jakarta to East Kalimantan still contains ecological polemics. These polemics are manifested in environmental discourse.

The discourse on the transfer of IKN forms public concerns about the changes that will occur. One of them is environmental change. If environmental changes occur in the

direction of destruction, the reciprocal relationship between the community and the IKN location environment will change. Public awareness of the diversity (diversity) of the environment is recorded in the cognition of the community through language as long as there is interaction, interrelation, and interdependence between the community and its environment. The understanding of cultural ecology states that humans create culture based on environmental conditions or the dimensions of the space they occupy. Symbolically, the understanding of the speech community towards environmental diversity is manifested in certain forms of environmental lexicon (eco-lection) and ecological discourse (eco-discourse). In accordance with Wierzbicka (1997) which states that words reflect or reflect the characteristics of the way of life and way of thinking of the speaker in order to provide valuable clues in understanding culture. In this case, language has a role in reflecting back the characteristics of a good environment. One of the linguistic products that can increase public understanding is the mass media.

Environmental issues related to the transfer of IKN have become one of the focuses of mass media coverage in Indonesia. As a part that plays a role, the mass media has a responsibility in increasing public understanding through information that is manifested in discourse. McQuail (2000:66) divides six conceptions of the role of the mass media, namely (1) mass media as the basis for conveying events so that people know about these events; (2) the mass media as an honest image of the events that are happening even though the image displayed is not pleasant; (3) mass media as a filter in scanning events that are deemed necessary to be given attention or not; (4) the mass media as a guide that shows the public what is appropriate or true; (5) the mass media as a forum in presenting various information so as to generate responses; and (6) mass media as interlocutors that enable interactive communication to occur. Judging from the six conceptions above, the role of the mass media as a forum in representing information to the public is very significant.

However, the role that is realized through linguistic discourse is not only understood as information, but builds the reality of people's understanding of a phenomenon. The mass media that produce environmental discourse will affect the reader's cognition. In this case the community is influenced to participate in preserving the environment or vice versa. In the manifestation of fulfilling the role, the mass media has a variety of languages that are flexible and interesting in conveying events. Each type of text is unique and has different characteristics (Zein et al, 2017:773). Regarding this uniqueness, Chaer (2010:10) states that the journalistic variety of Indonesian also has its own characteristics that distinguish it from other languages. In addition, Wazis (2012: 125) says that the products produced by the mass media do not contain absolute truth. The reality presented by the mass media is the result of reconstructing the facts observed by journalists in the form of an angle about the interesting side of the event. In this case, the mass media use various language tools to package constructive and destructive ideologies related to the environment, one of which is the use of euphemisms (Laili, 2013: 48).

Euphemism is an alternative refinement of expressions that are considered rude (see Allan and Buridge, 1991 Laili, 2016 Johansari, 2019). Etymologically, euphemism consists of two words, eu 'good' and phemeoo 'speaking'. These two words indicate good speech, smooth, polite, and all efforts in giving a good impression to the listener or reader. Seeing its meaning, it is very natural that euphemisms are often used by speakers, including journalists, in conveying news.

However, the use of these linguistic tools cannot be separated from the politicization of language. As a means of politicizing language, the use of euphemisms in environmental discourse in mass media in Indonesia is reflected in several new terms that often hide facts

about the environment (Laili, 2016:7). Euphemisms in environmental discourse are more varied than in the realm of sociolinguistics which is closely related to taboo concepts. Some experts (see Wardhaugh, 2002:237, Soemarsono 2007:106-107, Kridalaksana 2008:59) agree that euphemisms are related to taboo concepts. Taboo can be interpreted as something that should not be said because it is considered to be harmful to a group or individual. Laili (2016: 28) says that taboo topics vary widely, depending on the social and cultural conditions of the people, for example topics about sex, death, the function of certain body parts, things that are removed from the body, matters relating to religion, politics, and so on. Euphemism in environmental discourse not only replaces terms that are considered taboo, but also ideological politics.

Linguistic problems related to this environment are studied in ecolinguistics, especially critical ecolinguistics. Alexander and Stibbe (2011) define ecolinguistics as the study of the impact of language use on survival that bridges the relationship between humans, other organisms, and the physical environment which is normatively oriented to the preservation of sustainable relationships in life. In other words, ecolinguistics is closely related to how language plays a role in shaping, maintaining, influencing, or destroying relationships between human beings, living conditions, and their environment. Ecolinguistics develops as a result of the development of human ecology related to various systems (economic, social, religious, cultural systems, linguistics and ecosystem) which are interdependent and related to each other (Stibbe, 2010). Critical discourse analysis in the realm of environmental discourse is still a trend for ecolinguistics researchers today.

Critical ecolinguistics focuses on discourse related to the environment. The mass media as a linguistic product that often discusses the environment will reflect the characteristics of people's understanding of the environment. The mass media influence the reader's cognition to participate in preserving the environment. However, there are also discourses created by the mass media that are full of destructive political content (Laili, 2013: 48).

Trampe (in Fill and Muhlhausler, 2001:239) states that environmental discourse in the mass media usually contains the following: (1) reification, namely treating living things as objects of economic value, related to technology and ideology, for example living things or resources can be produced, optimized, managed, and used (utilized); (2) hiding facts, namely the use of euphemisms to replace some words or terms that are avoided, for example those relating to death, destruction or extermination; (3) expressing hatred or resistance to those who destroy traditional or customary lands; (4) creating slogans and elements that convey ideas and ideas that are used to make the process of environmental and cultural destruction carried out by a group of people appear as if they are appropriate and in line with the laws of nature. Environmental discourses published in the mass media sometimes cannot be separated from the interests of figures who have responsibility for environmental development.

Schultz (in Fill and Muhlhausler, 2001: 109-110) states that there are three linguistic or linguistic tools that are often used in texts related to environmental commercialization. First, the use of neutral words that have connotations of praise or tend to favor exploitation, but the reality represented by these words is very different, for example the use of words or terms ecologically sustainable development, fertilizer and human resources. Second, tools that are often used, namely the use of euphemisms (the mention of objects or things that are unpleasant to be more polite, for example, the use of the terms clearing, harvesting, greenhouse effect and global warming. Third, tools that are rarely used, but have a very strong effect when used, namely the use of pejorative terms or

dysphemism (the mention of objects or things with a more negative connotation), for example the use of words or terms earthworm food and animals' homes to refer to humus.

The corpus of euphemisms used in environmental discourse is different from the corpus commonly used in sociolinguistics as proposed by Allan and Burrige (1991). Trampe (in Fill and Muhlhausler, 2001:233-239) mentions several corpus of euphemisms in environmental discourse contained in the mass media in Germany, among others, relating to the following matters: (1) problems regarding waste, waste, toxic materials, and pollution, (2) destruction of natural habitats and the extinction of several species, (3) nuclear energy, (4) plants or plants (flora), (5) animals (fauna), and (6) landscapes and soils. As for the data in this study sourced from four Indonesian online mass media, namely Okezone.com, Kompas.com, and Detik.com. The online news portal was selected based on the highest daily visitors (see Alexa.com, 2021) and the news portal is national.

The researcher considers the use of euphemisms in the environmental discourse of IKN transfer in the Indonesian mass media as important to investigate further as an effort to see the extent to which the mass media use various language tools to package constructive and destructive ideologies that will build the reality of people's understanding of this phenomenon. Observing the problems above, the researcher used the approach of Allan and Buridge (1991) in analyzing and classifying the data.

II. Research Method

This research uses descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative method is used to see the phenomenon of the use of euphemisms and categorize them based on the approach of Allan and Burrige (1991). The data in this study were sourced from three Indonesian online mass media, namely Kompas.com, Okezone.com, and Detik.com. The online news portal was chosen based on the highest daily visitors, which is included in the five most accessed news portals in Indonesia (see Alexa.com, 2021) and the news portal is on a national scale. In collecting data, this study used the listening method followed by note-taking techniques (Mahsun, 2005: 90). In collecting data, researchers listened to news related to the environmental discourse of IKN transfer in three online mass media. Furthermore, the note-taking technique is done by looking at and recording words, phrases, clauses, or sentences that contain euphemisms in the coverage of the environmental discourse on the transfer of IKN in the mass media. Then, the data is analyzed interactively and takes place continuously until it is complete (Miles et al, 2014:14).

III. Results and Discussion

The mass media in Indonesia use various forms of euphemistic expression units in reporting the transfer of IKN. The unit of expression is in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. The form of the expression unit is presented in various ways, such as the word is divided into two: the root word and the derived word. The units of expression of euphemisms in the form of words can be categorized into two: nouns and adjectives. In addition, the expression unit of euphemism in the form of a phrase is only found in one category, namely nouns.

3.1 Unit of Expression Euphemism

There are four types of euphemistic expression units used by Indonesian online news portals in the discourse of IKN transfer. The unit of expression is in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. The units of expression in the form of words are divided

into two types, namely basic words and derived words. The unit of expression of euphemism in the form of derived words is divided into three, namely derived words in the categories of nouns, adjectives, and compounding. The unit of expression of euphemism in the form of a phrase is only found in the form of a noun.

The units of euphemism used by Indonesian online news portals in the discourse of IKN transfer are quite varied. The categories of euphemism expression units in the form of basic words include noun and adjective categories.

The euphemisms in the form of basic noun categories contained in Indonesian online news portals are quite varied, for example the word deforestation replaces the word logging, the word limitation replaces the word lack, the word commitment replaces the word promise, the word conservation replaces the word preservation, and the word magnet replaces the phrase excitatory power.

The euphemisms in the form of basic words with adjective categories found in Indonesian online news portals are quite varied, for example, the word expired replaces the word stale, the word restless replaces the word waswas, the word bald replaces the word extinct, the word illusion replaces the word fake, and the word stubborn replaces the group of hard-hearted words. .

The units of euphemism used by Indonesian online news portals in the discourse of IKN transfer are quite varied. The categories of euphemism expression units in the form of basic words include noun and adjective categories.

The euphemisms in the form of derivative words in the noun category found in Indonesian online news portals are quite varied. The use of words derived from euphemisms is quite varied. For example, the word inequality replaces the word lame, the word obstacle replaces the word disturbance, the word note replaces the word warning, and the word imbalance replaces the word injustice.

The euphemisms in the form of derivative words in the noun category found in Indonesian online news portals are quite varied. The use of words derived from euphemisms is quite varied. For example, the word eroded replaces the word destroyed, the word freed replaces the word owned, the word adopted replaces the word picked up, the word minimized replaces the word reduced, and the word connected replaces the word forwarded.

The euphemisms in the form of compound derivatives found in Indonesian online news portals are quite varied. The use of euphemistic compound derivatives is quite varied. For example, the word money circulation replaces the word money circulation, the word hotspot replaces the word threat, the word production forest replaces the word industrial forest, the word legal umbrella replaces the word reason, and the word brainwash replaces the word manipulation.

The unit of expression of euphemism is in the form of a phrase used by Indonesian online news portals in the discourse of transferring IKN in the noun category. The use of euphemistic phrases is quite varied. For example, the word poll replaces the word poll, the word economic wheel replaces the word economic disability, the word illegal mining replaces the word illegal mining, and the word ecological disaster replaces the word wrath of nature.

The unit of expression of euphemism in the form of clauses used by Indonesian online news portals in the discourse of moving IKN is quite varied, for example the clause ...keeping the forest proboscis monkey habitat as the development of the IKN replaces ...helping proboscis monkeys from IKN development, the clause ...protecting the environment, social, and also providing convenience and also provides convenience and a positive impact for the community to replace the clause ...helps the environment, socially,

and does not make it difficult for the community, and the clause ...does not disturb the proboscis monkey habitat replaces the clause ...does not damage the proboscis monkey habitat.

The units of expression of euphemism in the form of sentences used by Indonesian online news portals in the discourse of moving IKN are quite varied, for example, the sentence "Proboscis monkeys will not be disturbed. The people there who become the enclave, I think their welfare should also be raised. Don't let them become an enclave, feel alienated from their IKN," said Suharso when inspecting the location of the State Palace in Penajam Paser Utara, East Kalimantan, Monday. I think they also have to raise their finances. Don't let them become a cultural area, feeling neglected from their IKN." said Suharso when inspecting the location of the State Palace in Penajam Paser Utara, East Kalimantan, Monday.

3.2 Euphemism Forms in Environmental Discourse on the Transfer of IKN

The expression of euphemism in discourse is a style of language used to avoid mentioning taboo things. In categorizing shapes, the researcher uses the approach of Allan and Burrige (1991). Allan and Burrige classify euphemisms into 16 categories, and 10 found in the data. The following is an example of each form of euphemism in the discourse of the IKN transfer environment.

3.3 Flippancy's Euphemism Form

Flippancy is a refinement of a word, but the meaning of the resulting word is outside the statement. The following is an example of flippancy analysis:

a) *The next analysis is whether the relocation of the capital city has been transparent or not.*(09/11/19/D/D35)

The word transparent means not limited to certain people; open. In the context of the sentence above, the word transparent refers to the process of moving a new IKN. The word transparent is a euphemism of honest. The word honest means conveying everything according to the truth; do not lie. In the context of sentence (a), the word honest has a taboo connotation because the word openly conveys an indication that there is a possibility that the new IKN transfer process will be carried out by lying or being covered up so that the authorities in it may lose face.

3.4 Euphemism Form One for One Substitutions

One for one substitutions is a form of euphemism for one word to replace another word. The following is an example of the findings of one for one substitutions and their analysis:

b). *According to Kuncoro in the book Regional Planning (2012), connectivity is one of the causes of inequality in Indonesia.*(20/05/19/D/D33)

The word affixed to inequality means something that is not as it should be (such as unfair, not right); lameness. The word inequality is a euphemism for lameness. Lameness means something that is out of balance or not as it should be; lack; blemish. The word lameness has an unpleasant connotation because it raises the connotation of blasphemy openly so that the concept of taboo is conceived. Therefore, the word inequality is more subtle than the word lame.

3.5 Clipping Euphemism Forms

Clipping is the refinement of a word by cutting and making the replaced word short or short. The following is an example of clipping findings and their analysis:

c) *It is also necessary to minimize interference with nature.* (22/08/19/O/D27)

The root word *intervention* means to intervene in a dispute between two parties. The word *intervention* in the context of sentence (c) refers to the intervention of human resources in the environment which causes the environment to become unstable. The phrase *intervene* means involved in or involved in a criminal act. The word *intervention* is considered to be more subtle than the phrase *intervene* because the phrase *intervene* contains a clear image of someone who is destroying nature so that the party being discussed can lose face.

3.6 Circumlocutions Euphemism Forms

Circumlocutions is a refinement of a word by using several words that are longer and are indirect. The following is an example of the findings of circumlocutions and their analysis:

d). *Starting from toll roads, supply chains to the manufacture of silicon valley will be built in the new capital city.* (14/09/19/O/D22)

The word *supply chain* is a euphemism for *supply*. The word *supply* means that which is paid for, procured, or provided. The word *supply* in the context of sentence (c) has a taboo connotation because the word openly means supplies which image excessive procurement in the construction of new IKN in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, *supply chain* compound words are more subtle than *supply* words.

3.7 Euphemism Forms of Understatement

Understatement is a meaning of a word that is independent of the meaning of the word. The following is an example of the findings of circumlocutions and their analysis:

e). *With the new capital city, it will create a new magnet.* (14/09/19/O/D22)

The word *magnet* is considered to be more subtle than the phrase *arousal* because the word *stimulant* has a taboo meaning out of context, which is related to sex.

3.8 Colloquial Euphemism Forms

Colloquial is an expression that is used everyday or a variety of conversation. The following is an example of the findings of circumlocutions and their analysis:

f). *"There are no floods. They do exist, but in different locations. In Penajam Paser Utara, but not at IKN," he said when met at the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Investment, Jakarta, Monday.* (24/02/2020/K/D9).

Sentence (f) as a whole contains an element of euphemism because it avoids taboo concepts, namely so that the speaker and what is being discussed do not lose face because if you use the standard variety in the form of negation, it does not and will produce a negative response because professionals who position themselves by speaking formally will be burdened with expectations the big one.

3.9 Acronym Euphemism Forms

Acronym abbreviation of some words. The following is an example of the findings of circumlocutions and their analysis:

g). *They say they have an AMDAL, but in fact most of the forests or plants that used to protect them from erosion due to the continuous rain are cleared into housing, which eventually causes flooding.* (27/08/19/D/D28)

EIA is a euphemism of *environmental impact analysis*. Analysis of impacts and the environment means activities to control and signal if a disaster cannot be prevented. The acronym *AMDAL* is considered more subtle than an analysis of environmental impacts

because in the context of the sentence (f) an analysis of environmental impacts contains a taboo concept, namely conveying openly regarding the agency and its role in the failure of a disaster analysis so that what is discussed can lose face.

3.10 Euphemism Forms of Remodeling

Remodeling is a form of refining modeling. The following is an example of remodeling findings and their analysis:

h)...even become mainstream in compiling a master plan and detailed plan for IKN," he said. (11/02/20/K/D8)

The word *mainstream* is a euphemism of tendency. The word *tendency* contains meanings that can offend or hurt, both to the person being spoken of and to those who hear it because the word *tendency* causes the person being discussed to lose face because it shows the interests of the majority and departs from the content of the text that discusses the environmental discourse of IKN transfer.

3.11 Metaphoric Euphemism Forms

Metaphor is an implicit comparison between two different things. The following is an example of remodeling findings and their analysis:

i). Taufiq (38), an employee of a state-owned subsidiary in Balikpapan, believes that the government's decision to move the capital city is a premature decision. (27/08/19/D/D28)

Premature words are considered smoother than hasty words because they are in the context of a sentence (h). The word *haste* contains a taboo concept, which is to openly convey the government's unpreparedness in making the decision to transfer IKN so that what is discussed can lose face.

3.12 General for Specific Euphemism Forms

General for specific is a refinement of the general to the particular. The following is an example of remodeling findings and their analysis:

j). Borneo is the third largest island in the world, with Malaysia and Brunei within it, covered by vast rainforest but plagued by rampant deforestation in recent years.. (27/08/19/D/D32)

The phrase *logging forest* contains a taboo image and causes the party being discussed to lose face. The word *deforestation* in the text fragment (a) refers to the condition of the forests in East Kalimantan as the site of the new IKN. The word *deforestation* represents all illegal and special forest clearing activities. Specifically, it refers to logging activities, destructive natural resource theft, and misuse of forest functions.

IV. Conclusion

The use of euphemisms on Indonesian online news portals, especially those discussing the environmental discourse of IKN transfer, is quite common. The units of expression used are various, such as words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. The form of the expression unit is presented in various ways, such as the word is divided into two: the root word and the derived word. The units of expression in the form of words are divided into two types, namely basic words and derived words. The unit of expression of euphemism in the form of derived words is divided into three, namely derived words in the categories of nouns, adjectives, and compounding. The unit of expression of euphemism in the form of a

phrase is only found in the form of a noun. Euphemisms in the form of clauses are positioned as the core of the sentence. The unit of expression of euphemism in the form of sentences is developed in direct sentences. Based on the approach of Allan and Burridge (1991), euphemisms on Indonesian online news portals in the discourse of the IKN transfer environment can be categorized into ten forms, namely one for one substitution, flippancy, generale for specific, remodeling, colloquial, understatement, circomlucation, acronym, metaphor, and clipping. Based on the findings and analysis above, the person in charge of the online news portal is expected to be objective and independent in creating the reality of the discourse on the IKN transfer environment so that readers can get constructive information.

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