

## **Women's Resistance to the Customary Practice of Captive Marriage in the Novel *Women Cry to the Black Moon***

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### **Abstract**

Captive marriage, a traditional Sumba marriage tradition, is still on going. This ancestral heritage is prone to violent practices against women and causes trauma. In the tradition of capture marriage, without their knowledge, women are kidnapped in public places to become wives. This action shows that women's position is considered second class. This traditional practice that weakens women is challenged by female writer Dian Purnomo in her novel *Bulan Menangis Untuk Bulan Hitam* through the character Magi Diela. In the novel Magi Diela tries to show resistance to the customary practice of captive marriage which does not favor women. To find out the form of resistance of the female characters in the novel to these traditional practices, a critical discourse analysis research approach was used. This research is a type of qualitative research. The data is in the form of novel text fragments that are suspected of resistance. From this research, it was found that Magi had a form of resistance to the customary practice of captive marriage.

**Keywords – resistance, women, critical discourse analysis**

### **Introduction**

Customs in Indonesian society are something that cannot be separated. Custom regulates all community life, including marriage. Customs come from ancestors and are passed down orally and in writing and are passed down from generation to generation. This then develops into a habit in the lives of the people of an area. Sumba, for example, is one of the regions in East Nusa Tenggara that has an unusual marriage tradition, namely capture marriage. Interestingly, this tradition is still maintained even though in practice it causes polemics (Bembot, 2022). One of them is because the tradition of captive marriage violates human rights, especially women.

As individuals, every human being has the most basic rights that must be respected and protected by fellow humans and the state. These human rights include the right to life, the right to religion, the right to feel safe, and even the right to form a family (Takukawi & Sudibya, 2021). Hayden (Pujiati & Tengsiu, 2013) explains

that human rights are when humans live by their own choices without any pressure from other humans except themselves. The practice of captive marriage shows that human rights are violated. The practice of captive marriage involves deliberately capturing/kidnapping a woman in a public place to become a wife. It is not uncommon for women to experience physical, psychological and sexual violence which causes trauma (Bire & Melinda, 2023). In some cases, the practice of captive marriage is even accompanied by rape so that the woman's position is squeezed (Panjaitan, 2022). Thus the woman's family has no reason to reject the arresting man's proposal.

This situation confirms that women do not have their human rights fulfilled. The practice of capture marriage in Sumbanese customs occurs because, among other things, the woman's family is in debt. Girls are used as a tool to pay off family debts (Bembot & Sermada, 2022). Therefore, women are forced to accept marriage with men chosen by their parents

who are older or even very old (Bravo, Pilar, Ismael, 2014). This statement shows that women are discriminated against and do not have the choice to determine their own desires.

In society, discrimination and violence against women often occur. Mardikantoro, et al (2022) explain that cultural customs, religious practices, economic conditions and politics may trigger and perpetuate violence. Alordiah et al (2022) explained that discrimination and violence against women is influenced by patriarchal social culture. Patriarchy views men as having a higher position than women. Men have more power over economic resources and decision making (Setyawan, 2020). Patriarchy forms a power relationship where men are more dominant than women. Differences in power relations result in gender inequality, discrimination and violence. Women are seen as weak, vulnerable and in a position to be exploited (Mardikantoro, et al 2022).

Apart from that, patriarchal culture also influences women's awareness to resist the violence they experience (Dayanti, 2011). In reality, only a handful of women dare to resist oppressive traditions. The novel *Perempuan Menangis Kepada Bulan Hitam* by Dian Purnomo is a literary work that reveals the reality of Sumbanese women who are trying to resist the shackles of tradition. The novel as a literary work is a depiction of social reality which is arranged in such a way by the author (Damayanti & Anas, 2022).

There is a purpose expressed by the author through his work. This novel tells the story of the resistance of a woman named Magi Diela to the tradition of captive marriage. Magi, a brave and critical Sumba woman. He strongly opposes the traditional tradition of captive marriage. His courage to challenge tradition was displayed in direct and planned resistance.

The definition of resistance or resistance is very broad. There are those

who assume that resistance is something valuable or even liberating (Digeser, 2023). There are also those who say resistance is an indicator of strength. Scott (2020) explains that resistance is an act of resistance that is manifested in several forms and occurs in everyday life. Therefore, to determine women's resistance to the customary practice of captive marriage in the novel *Perempuan Menangis Ke Bulan Hitam*, the research used Teun A. Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis is used because it is able to explore power that is constructed and produced by society (Hoppstadius, 2019).

Apart from that, critical discourse analysis provides an approach to open new insights in the study of language and social change (Schiffrin, 1994). Fairlough said that in critical discourse analysis, apart from paying attention to linguistic aspects in the structure of the text, the results of the interpretation of the production and composition of the text are also taken into account (Firmansyah, 2018). In critical discourse analysis, Dijk divides text levels into macro structure, superstructure, and micro structure. Macro structure understands the meaning of a text through the topic of a text. Superstructure understands the meaning of a text through the flow from the introduction to the end. Microstructure, namely the meaning of the text, can be determined by analyzing semantics, syntax, stylistics and rhetoric. Teun A. Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis model is valuable and practical because it combines all components of discourse (Eriyanto, 2011).

In connection with critical discourse analysis research using the Teun A. Van Dijk model, previous researchers have carried out this research (Setiawan et al, 2022). However, the object studied (Setiawan et al, 2022) is in the form of news texts reporting cases of molestation of Islamic boarding school students by the children of Jombang clerics in online media, whereas in this research the

research is in the form of novel texts. Another research conducted by Pujiati (2023) has similarities with this research, analyzing the resistance of the character Magi Diela in the novel *Perempuan Crying to Bulan Hitam* using a literary sociology approach. From this research, it is known that the character Magi Diela provides open and closed resistance to the actions she experiences.

Based on the description above, this research has novelty value from previous research. The novelty of this research is to describe women's resistance to the tradition of captive marriage in the novel *Perempuan Menangis Ke Bulan Hitam* by elaborating on Teun Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis with Scott's theory of resistance. This research is expected to raise women's awareness to resist oppressive actions.

### **Methodology**

This research uses qualitative research with a critical discourse analysis approach. The critical discourse analysis model used is Teun A. Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis. The data source in this research is the text of the novel *Perempuan Menangis Kepada Bulan Hitam*. The data in this research are text fragments in the form of words, phrases, sentences, which are thought to show women's resistance to the customary tradition of capture marriage. Data was collected using the observation method. Next, the data was analyzed through stages (Miles & Huberman, 1994), namely reducing, presenting and concluding the data.

### **Finding and Discussion**

In text analysis, the focus is on discourse strategies and the way the author describes an event. Therefore, in critical discourse analysis it is necessary to know the structure of the text which includes macro structure, superstructure and micro structure. In this section, women's resistance to the customary practice of captive marriage will be described in the

novel *Perempuan Menangis Kepada Bulan Hitam* with critical discourse analysis by Teun A. Van Dijk. Below we will describe an excerpt from the novel text relating to women's resistance.

Magi meronta, mencoba menjelaskan diri, memukul ke segala arah, menendang, berteriak, menggigit apapun yang bisa dijangkau oleh mulutnya. Namun nihil. Tenaga seorang perempuan mungil yang sedang dalam keadan terkejut dihentikan dalam perjalanan menuju desa lain untuk sebuah pekerjaan tidak sebanding dengan lima laki-laki muda yang berbekal parang di piggang kiri mereka. Namun, Magi tidak pernah berhenti meronta sampai dia direbahkan paksa di lantai pick up dengan semua laki-laki memegangnya, lalu pintu belakang bak itu ditutup dan pick up segera melaju.

This data fragment 1 confirms Magi's resistance to the oppression he experienced. Resistance is a person's form of resistance to harmful actions. Scott (2020) divides resistance into two categories, namely open and closed resistance. The section above is classified as open resistance. Open resistance has the goal of stopping acts of domination. Magi openly showed resistance to a man she didn't know who had kidnapped her. This resistance is also reflected in the use of the verbs to struggle, explain oneself, hit, kick, scream, bite as markers of Magi's actions which occupy the subject position of the sentence. Overall, the macro structure in this text is in the form of resistance to traditional practices that harm women. The discourse of this novel has a clear flow from the introduction to the end.

This fragment of text confirms that the author deliberately emphasized the subject and the actions he took. This information shows the subject Magi as a

strong woman who does not give up. Even though the subject was a victim of the tradition of captive marriage, with all his efforts he tried to escape the kidnapping of a number of young men. The young man who kidnapped him was Leba Ali, a womanizer whose age was far from Magi's. Since childhood, Leba Ali has liked Magi. To fulfill her desire, Leba Ali kidnaps Magi on a trip.

In this novel, the author does not try to hide information, whether Magi's actions were put down by the people who did them, namely a number of young men. This can be seen in the last sentence in the paragraph. The following quote displays Magi's resistance.

“Lepaskan sa! Siapa suruh kalian?! Lepaskan sa sekarang atau sa kasih masuk ko semua ke penjara?! Magi menendang ke arah orang itu dengan keras dan yang dia dapatkan sebagai balasan adalah sebuah remasan di dadanya yang dilakukan oleh lelaki yang lain bukan orang yang ditendangnya.

Data 2 above explains the chronology of the violence experienced by Magi as well as his rebellion efforts. The first sentence is a command sentence which indicates Magi's instructions to a number of young men who arrested him. Resistance can be seen in sentences that threaten to let me go now or I'll send you all to prison!

The third sentence in the paragraph is in the form of an active sentence. The structure of the active sentence determines the resulting meaning. The active sentence is marked from the highlighted subject. In this case the subject is Magi. Apart from that, there is also coherence in the sentences. Coherence is an important element in discourse to see someone's strategy in explaining facts or events (Eriyanto, 2012). Coherence determines whether an event is separate, related, or cause and effect. The choice depends on the writer. In a series of sentences there are two facts that are related to cause and effect.

Magi kicked and what he got in return was a squeeze on his chest. In this sentence there is also the use of the word to explain the clause carried out by another man. This clause indicates the person who committed the crime. This section explains Magi as a victim of violence. The Magi's resistance to the capture marriage tradition can be seen in the following quote.

“Sa tidak akan kawin dengan deng laki-laki yang kasih culik sa.”

Bukan keperawanan yang hilang yang Magi sesali, dia tidak peduli perawan atau tidak. Yang membuatnya marah adalah orang lain yang memberitahunya bahwa dia baru saja diperkosa.

“Pemerkosa! Ko tunggu pembalasanaku!” Magi memaki tepat di depan wajah Leba Ali.

Data 3 above shows Magi's open resistance to the oppression he experienced. The use of the pronoun she refers to Magi as a victim of a man's oppression. However, Magi did not remain silent, he fought back by cursing the rapist and threatening him. The threatening sentence "wait for my revenge" emphasizes that there is further resistance that Magi will carry out. This resistance is followed again by the use of the next active sentence. Magi as the subject carries out the action of cursing the object Leba Ali. Referring to this, the author tries to present the image of a brave woman.

“Lepaskan saya!” Magi meronta dengan rasa marah, jijik, sedih, tidak berdaya. “Sa tidak mau jadi ko pung istri. Lebih baik sa mati daripada jadi ko pung istri.”

Data 4 above describes Magi's resistance and anger towards Ali Leba. The second sentence in the paragraph uses the active form marked by the verb struggle. This sentence also shows open resistance, which expresses its anger directly by swearing that it would be better for me to die than to be a dead wife to Leba Ali.

Different from before, data 5 below displays closed resistance.

Magi tidak tahu lagi seperti apa bermain cantik itu. Satu satunya hal bisa dia pikirkan adalah diam-diam merencanakan untuk kabur dari rumah. Kalau menggigit pergelangan tangan sendiri tidak menggetarkan para pelaku termasuk ayahnya maka perlawanan apa lagi yang harus dilakukan selain pergi? Hanya itu yang Magi pikirkan. Maka dia memulai dengan menyampaikan idenya kepada Gema Perempuan.

Closed resistance is resistance that is carried out indirectly. The manifestation can be through curses in his heart or plans in his mind as seen in the text above. Closed resistance is also visible in data 6 below.

Magi berusaha menjaga sikap selama berada di rumah. Dia tersenyum untuk hal-hal yang membuatnya marah, tertawa kecil untuk hal yang membuatnya tersinggung, bersikap hormat kepada orang yang ingin dibunuhnya.

Data 6 explains Magi's well-thought-out plan to resist Leba Ali. To carry out her plan, Magi pretends to look good in front of the people at home. Until finally Magi carried out his open resistance to Ali. This can be seen in data 7 below.

Magi balas menampar wajah Leba Ali, cukup keras untuk membuat laki-laki itu terkejut. Leba Ali menarik rambut Magi dan menyorongkan wajahnya ebgitu dekat,” Ko suruh sa tunggu tujuh hari untuk ini semua?”

Magi diam, mulutnya mengumpulkan ludah yang lalu disembarkanya tepat ke wajah Leba Ali. Leba Ali mengusap wajahnya lalu menjambak rambut Magi lebih keras dan melangkan tinju ke pelipis kiri Magi. Sesaat Magi merasa

duniannya gelap dan suara denging memenuhi telinganya. Magi mengumpulkan ingatan dan keberaniannya. Dia sudah merencanakan semua kalimat yang akan dijadikannya sebagai senjata malam ini. “ Karena sa jijik deng ko! Sa tidak pernah mau menjadi ko punya istri, laki-laki mata keranjang!”

“ Ko anjing! Babi! Keparat mata keranjang berpenis kecil.”

The data above explains the chronology of Magi's open resistance. The first sentence used by the author is an active sentence which is characterized by the role of the subject actor (Magi) as the perpetrator. The choice of the active sentence form explains that the central position in the sentence is Magi. Magi as a subject is featured explicitly. The use of the verb slap in the sentence represents Magi's rebellion against Leba Ali's actions. Other resistance can also be seen in other sentences in the paragraph in the form of insults to a womanizing man, dog! Pig! A womanizer, with a small penis.

The author uses active sentences that indicate the subject is taking action. It should be noted in critical discourse analysis that sentence form is not only a technical matter of grammatical correctness but also determines the meaning formed by sentence structure (Eriyanto, 2012). This part could be said to be the peak of Magi's resistance. Magi not only fought physically but also verbally.

Based on the data above, it is known that the micro structure through syntactic analysis in the text of this novel proves that the subject is clearly depicted. This confirms the attitude of writer Dian Purnomo in the discourse on the novel he produced. Dian's knowledge and experience as an activist on child and women's protection issues makes a major contribution to the novel. Through literature, we strive to raise women's awareness to dare to fight injustice. Magi

as a female character in this novel is described nicely by Dian Purnomo as brave and intelligent.

### Conclusions

Violence against women wrapped in tradition is still a problem in society. Violence in any form must not be tolerated. Continuous efforts need to be made to raise women's awareness of oppression. The depiction of women's resistance to traditions that ignore women's rights is stated clearly in the novel *Perempuan Crying for the Black Moon*. Through Teun A. Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis, open resistance was found to be more prominent in the novel. Apart from that, from this analysis it is known that the author's position is on the side of women, against domination and violence.

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