

# Critical Discourse Analysis of Social Class in Society and Language

Andreana Puspitasari<sup>1</sup>, Bela Rizky Utami<sup>2</sup>  
English Literature<sup>1</sup>  
English Education<sup>2</sup>

[belarizkyutami83@gmail.com](mailto:belarizkyutami83@gmail.com)

## Abstract

Concentrating on sociolinguistics implies concentrating on a profound language socio-social setting and the speaker's relationship with his audience members. Differences in population or groups based on power classes, income, position, and type of profession are referred to as social groups. Sociolinguistic research can reveal language variations as well as social groups or classes in a society. Language society is framed due to common comprehension, particularly as a result of the harmony in phonetic codes. The meaning of interaction has been incorporated into society through language-based communication. A wide range of languages are the result of social certification in a society, strengthening social certification further. The choice of language for levels of language is greatly influenced by this certification. That is, members of low-class society face communication challenges because their vocabulary is inadequate or limited in comparison to members of groups with higher social status.

**Key words:** *language variation, discourse analysis, society.*

---

## INTRODUCTION

Individuals and communities alike use both written and oral forms of language as a means of communication (Pradana & Suprayogi, 2021). Without language, there is no general public and no affiliation (Puspita & Pranoto, 2021). Language reveals a lot about the people who live in a given society (Al Falaq & Puspita, 2021), particularly its characteristics individuals make up society, and since individuals influence and rely on one another as a whole, the language of society is also ingrained in each individual (K. Sari & Pranoto, 2021). Individual behavior can take the form of language, and members of other language communities can be profoundly affected by the behavior of particular languages (Sartika & Pranoto, 2021). As a result, the individual remains bound by the game's rules, which apply to everyone in society (Heaverly & EWK, 2020). Language aims to explain how humans are able to use appropriate language rules in a variety of contexts and how it functions in society (Adelina & Suprayogi, 2020). People are social animals. In society, people interact, work together, and form social connections. Humans require language as a means of communication in order to accomplish this (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2020).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Humans are social creatures that cannot live alone but always interact with each other (Oktaviani, Mandasari, et al., 2020). For this purpose, humans use language as a means of communication as well as group identity (Suprayogi & Eko, 2020). This can be proven by the formation of language divisions in the world which have unique characteristics that make them different from other languages (Suprayogi et al., 2021). Meanwhile, social class refers to groups of people who have certain similarities in social fields such as economy, work, education, position, caste, etc (Suprayogi, 2021). Caste is a kind of closed social class, while other social classes are open and allow social mobility (Al Falaq et al., 2021). It is possible for an individual to have more than one social status (Suprayogi, 2019).

The differences between community groups are reflected in the variety of languages used. Different from the variety of regional dialect languages, one of which is marked by regional boundaries (Suprayogi & Pranoto, 2020), the sign in the various languages of the social class is the user. So in a variety of regional dialect languages, sometimes there are still various social class languages when viewed from the users (EWK, 2018).

The relationship between language and social context is studied in the field of sociolinguistics, as stated by Trudgill that "Sociolinguistics is a part of linguistics that is related to language (Fithratullah, 2019), linguistic phenomena and culture. This field also examines the phenomenon of society and is related to social science fields such as Anthropology or it can also involve geography and sociology, and social psychology (Fithratullah, 2021).

Studies in sociolinguistics have attempted to explain this connection between the use of language and the significance of perceptions, which is the foundation of our social construction and individual or group relationships (Nurmalasari & Samanik, 2018). Power, cultural or social background, region, or social status can all play a role in a particular spoken or written discourse (Nindyarini Wirawan, 2018). Language is closely linked to our social and cognitive development as children, as well as the formation of our identities (Nababan & Nurmaily, 2021). Sociolinguistics has focused a lot on the issue of how a listener reacts to the speech of another speaker. In the field of social psychology of language, one of the most significant subfields is the investigation of language attitudes (Oktavia & Suprayogi, 2021).

The field of social psychology has been the focus of much of the research on language attitudes (Kardiansyah, 2019), These attitudes can be very positive or very negative, and

they can be shown in subjective judgments about the correctness, worth, and aesthetic qualities of varieties as well as the personal qualities of their speakers (Puspita & Amelia, 2020). These attitudes can also be very positive or very negative (Sinaga & Oktaviani, 2020). While research in sociolinguistics has demonstrated that such attitudes do not have a linguistic basis, research in linguistics has demonstrated that attitudes are social in origin, and they may have important effects on language behavior (S. N. Sari & Aminatun, 2021), being involved in acts of identity and linguistic change. The term "discourse" has many different meanings and "integrates a whole palette of meanings" that span linguistics, sociology, philosophy, and other fields (Wahyudin & Sari, 2018). The whole process of interaction of which a text is just a part (Kardiansyah & Salam, 2020), is what the term means when it refers to "expressing oneself using words". Discourses are pervasive ways of experiencing the world. Power and knowledge can be asserted through discourses, as can resistance and criticism. Texts have ideological content that is expressed by both the speaker and the linguistic form of the text.

## **METHOD**

The method used in writing this paper is Analytical Descriptive, which explains clearly and analyzes it comprehensively.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. The Definition of Social Class**

Social class is defined as a layer of people who have the same position in a series of social status units. This definition tells us that in society there are people who individually or collectively have more or less the same social position. Those who have more or less the same position will be in a layer which is more or less the same.

Besides, social class also can be defined as the division of members of society into a hierarchy of different class status so that members of each class have relatively the same status and members of other classes have a higher or lower status.

### **B. Relationship between Language and Social Context**

Humans are social creatures that cannot live alone. For this purpose, humans use language as a means of communication as well as group identity. This can be proven by the formation of various languages in the world which have unique characteristics that make them different from other languages.

Besides, the relationship between language and social context is studied in the field of sociolinguistics, as stated by Trudgill. On the other hand, Fishman also stated that Sociolinguistics has a main component, namely the characteristics of language and language functions. The function of language referred to is a social function, which is to form direction and interpersonal functions, namely maintaining good relationships and an imaginative function, namely to explore the realm of fantasy and emotional functions such as to express moods such as anger, sadness, joy and appreciation (Amelia, 2021).

The development of language that is in line with the development of human life in the modern age shows changing phenomena, among others, by the use of language as a particular social tool known as language variations such as jargon and argot. Humans without communication will become empty (Kuswoyo et al., 2020). How do humans communicate and socialize with each other in the absence of language. Language is dynamic, which means that language also changes over time.

- Benjamin Lee Worf argues that humans are confined by language. Language influences their outlook on life. They cannot think except in the language.
- In fact, this view is a further development of the opinion of Whorf's teacher, namely Edward Sapir.

Sapir argues that people with different languages live in a different world of reality, in the sense that language influences the way people think.

- In other words, language affects how people see the world around them. Their view became known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis.
- The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis states that the language of a nation determines its view of the world and its surroundings.

But in reality, what is acceptable is the opposite, namely that society influences language. Because:

- There are many examples that show that the environment in a society is reflected in its language, especially in the lexicon.
- The judgments that people give on things can influence language. This can be seen in the symptoms of language which is taboo to speak of.

#### **. The relationship between language and social class**

According to Barger, social class is a social stratification according to economy. Social class refers to groups of people who have certain similarities in the field of society such as

economy, work, education, position, caste, and so on (Oktaviani & Mandasari, 2019). As an example:

- For example, Budi is a father in his family, who also has social status as a teacher. If he is a teacher at a public school, he is also in the civil service class. If he is a scholar, he can enter the "educated" social class.
- And if Budi is a teacher whose husband is an official. If she is a civil servant teacher, she is included in the civil service class and also in the official wife class. When he communicates with fellow civil servants, the language he uses will be different when he communicates with his fellow officials' wives (Mandasari, 2020).

All speakers have accents and dialects. Accent is a characteristic form based on pronunciation, while dialect is a form of speech style based on differences in vocabulary and grammar (Mandasari & Wahyudin, 2019). Certain styles and language characteristics are often associated with certain social groups, usually people expect members of this social group to use a style or speech characteristic that is appropriate to their status (Aminatun & Oktaviani, 2019). People who come from a high social class are considered to automatically use a variant of the language that is also prestigious, namely the variant that is considered by the community as the language of people with education and high social status.

### **Variety of social class languages**

When we see in Indonesia a class of people with a low education they tend to use a variety of non-standard languages (Oktaviani, Aminatun, et al., 2020). One of them is the variety of their language can be recognized in terms of their pronunciation (Aminatun, 2021). For example: the suffix -kan which is pronounced -ken (Aminatun et al., 2021). So the differences or classifications of human society groups are reflected in the various languages of that community group. It can be concluded that the higher the social class, the lower the social class the more non-standard language use is found.

Additionally, people with different educational backgrounds will certainly have different languages. Highly educated people (Bachelor's) will find it easier to use the formal form of language than people with low education (didn't passed Elementary School or just graduate from Elementary School) (Qomariah & Sucipto, 2021). Likewise, what happens to people with different work backgrounds in which that people who work as pedicab drivers tend to use informal, abusive language and does not maintain prestige (Mandasari

& Aminatun, 2020). Meanwhile, people whose jobs are teachers are certainly not the case (Putri & Aminatun, 2021).

### **Standard social class and variety**

There are standard rules in English, if the subject is a singular third person pronoun (she, he, it), the verb predicate must use the suffix-s and then conducted research whether there is a relationship between social groups and this language symptom. The research was conducted in two places (Setiawan et al., n.d.), which are in Detroit (USA) and in Norwich (UK). The informants include various levels of social class, they are:

Ø High Middle Class

Ø Upper Middle Class

Ø Middle working class

Ø Lower working class

### **C. Labov's role**

In 1966, William Labov published the results of his extensive research on New York City speech, entitled *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. He conducted recorded interviews, not with a small number of informants, consisting of only 340 people. With this Labov incorporated the sociological method into his research.

Labov, in his research proves that an individual from a certain social class, a certain age or a certain gender will use a certain variation of forms several times in a certain situation. Furthermore, Bernstein put forward the basic assumption about the two kinds of speakers' languages called elaborated code which tends to be used in formal situations and restricted code that tends to be used in informal situations. Because in the educational process decomposed code is used more frequently, speakers who are accustomed to using limited codes, for example the working class will experience difficulties and have an effect on cognitive power or learning outcomes.

Meanwhile, Sapir-Whorf stated that "a human's view of the environment can be determined by language", this opinion received several refutable evidence, namely the physical environment in which a society lives can be reflected in its language, the social environment can also be reflected in language and can often influence the structure of the vocabulary, the presence of layers of feudal society and caste which exert influence in

language, in addition to the environment and social structure, the values of a society can also influence the language of that society.

Moreover, In society, there is often a distinction between the educated or those who have studied up to the tertiary level and the uneducated or generally only having education up to the elementary-junior high school level who constitute the majority of Indonesian society. Most of them use a common variety in their daily conversations. As we know that usually the vocabulary in general varieties contains very little standard variant. This book stated that the lower the social class, the more non-standard forms are used.

### **CONCLUSION**

Social class is a group of people formed as a result of various dynamics of human development. This social class also has an influence on the development of the language used. Besides, the dialect differences that occur in each social class indicate the level of taste or honor that exists in each social class.

There are several theories relating to the development of language and social class, which are:

1. Labov's theory which states that there is a tendency for dialect differences to be used to express the identity of social strata.
2. Bernstein's theory which states that there are differences in the languages used when communicating with certain social groups.
3. The Sapir-Whorf theory which states that a person's language becomes a filter in accepting certain cultures.

### **REFERENCES**

- Adelina, C., & Suprayogi, S. (2020). Contrastive Analysis of English and Indonesian Idioms of Human Body. *Linguistics and Literature Journal*, 1(1), 20–27.
- Al Falaq, J. S., & Puspita, D. (2021). Critical Discourse Analysis: Revealing Masculinity Through L-Men Advertisement. *Linguistics and Literature Journal*, 2(1), 62–68.
- Al Falaq, J. S., Suprayogi, S., Susanto, F. N., & Husna, A. U. (2021). Exploring The Potentials of Wattpad For Literature Class. *Indonesian Journal of Learning Studies*, 1(2), 12–19.

- Amelia, D. (2021). UPAYA PENINGKATAN KOSAKATA BAHASA INGGRIS MELALUI STORYTELLING SLIDE AND SOUND. *Journal of Social Sciences and Technology for Community Service (JSSTCS)*, 2(1), 22–26.
- Aminatun, D. (2021). *STUDENTS ' PERSPECTIVE TOWARD THE USE OF DIGITAL COMIC*. 2(2), 90–94.
- Aminatun, D., Ayu, M., & Mulyah, P. (2021). ICT Implementation during Covid-19 Pandemic: How Teachers Deal with a New Style of Teaching. *The 1st International Conference on Language Linguistic Literature and Education (ICLLLE)*.
- Aminatun, D., & Oktaviani, L. (2019). USING “MEMRISE” TO BOOST ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS VOCABULARY MASTERY: STUDENTS’VIEWPOINT. *PROCEEDINGS UNIVERSITAS PAMULANG*, 1(1).
- EWK, E. N. (2018). Redefining Hybridity of Chicano Literature in Jimenez’s Fictions. *The Center for Asia and Diaspora*, 8(2), 293–319.  
<https://doi.org/10.15519/dcc.2018.06.8.2.293>
- Fithratullah, M. (2019). Globalization and Culture Hybridity; The Commodification on Korean Music and its Successful World Expansion. *Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(2018), 00013. <https://doi.org/10.29037/digitalpress.42264>
- Fithratullah, M. (2021). Representation of Korean Values Sustainability in American Remake Movies. *Teknosastik*, 19(1), 60. <https://doi.org/10.33365/ts.v19i1.874>
- Heaverly, A., & EWK, E. N. (2020). Jane Austen’s View on the Industrial Revolution in *Pride and Prejudice*. *Linguistics and Literature Journal*, 1(1), 1–6.  
<https://doi.org/10.33365/llj.v1i1.216>
- Kardiansyah, M. Y. (2019). Wattpad as a Story Sharing Website; Is it a field of literary production? *ELLiC Proceedings*, 3, 419–426.
- Kardiansyah, M. Y., & Salam, A. (2020). The Translator’s Strategy as a Cultural Mediator in Translating Indonesian Novel into English. *4th International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education (ICOLLITE 2020)*, 413–418.



- Kuswoyo, H., Sujatna, E. T. S., Indrayani, L. M., & Rido, A. (2020). Theme Choice and Thematic Progression of Discussion Section in Engineering English Lectures. *Asian EFL Journal*, 27(4.6), 171–203.
- Mandasari, B. (2020). The Impact of Online Learning toward Students' Academic Performance on Business Correspondence Course. *EDUTECH: Journal of Education and Technology*, 4(1), 98–110.
- Mandasari, B., & Aminatun, D. (2020). IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE THROUGH VLOG. *English Education: Journal of English Teaching and Research*, 5(2), 136–142.
- Mandasari, B., & Wahyudin, A. Y. (2019). Flipped Classroom Learning Model: Implementation and Its Impact on EFL Learners' Satisfaction on Grammar Class Corresponding Email Article's History Flipped Classroom Learning Model: Implementation and Its Impact on EFL Learners' Satisfaction on Grammar C. *Ethical Lingua*, 8(1), 2021.
- Nababan, R. M., & Nurmaily, E. (2021). *THE HYPERMASCULINITY AS SEEN IN THE MAIN CHARACTER IN RAMBO : LAST BLOOD MOVIE*. 2(1), 25–32.
- Nindyarini Wirawan, A. and S. (2018). *Sociopathic Personality Disorder in Humbert Humbert'S Character of Nabokov'S Lolita*. 2, 432–439.  
<https://jurnal.unimus.ac.id/index.php/ELLIC/article/viewFile/3568/3394>
- Nurmalasari, U., & Samanik. (2018). A Study of Social Stratification In France In 19th Century as Portrayed in `The Necklace 'La Parure'` Short Story by Guy De Maupassant. *English Language & Literature International Conference*, 2, 2.  
<https://jurnal.unimus.ac.id/index.php/ELLIC/article/view/3570>
- Oktavia, W. R., & Suprayogi, S. (2021). GRAMMATICAL COHESION IN BORIS JOHNSON'S SPEECH ENTITLED CORONAVIRUS SPREAD IN UK. *Linguistics and Literature Journal*, 2(1), 8–16.
- Oktaviani, L., Aminatun, D., & Ahmad, I. (2020). PENINGKATAN PROFESIONALITAS GURU SDN 4 MESUJI TIMUR MELALUI PROGRAM

T2KT. *INTEGRITAS: Jurnal Pengabdian*, 4(2), 333–345.

Oktaviani, L., & Mandasari, B. (2019). Powtoon: Presenting SQ3R Implementation in Reading Class through A Web-Based Medium. *PROCEEDINGS UNIVERSITAS PAMULANG*, 1(1).

Oktaviani, L., Mandasari, B., & Maharani, R. A. (2020). IMPLEMENTING POWTOON TO IMPROVE STUDENTS'INTERNATIONAL CULTURE UNDERSTANDING IN ENGLISH CLASS. *Journal of Research on Language Education*, 1(1).

Pradana, F. A., & Suprayogi, S. (2021). *CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON CHINESE AND AMERICAN NEWS WEBSITES*. 2(2), 84–92.

Pranoto, B. E., & Suprayogi, S. (2020). A Need Analysis of ESP for Physical Education Students in Indonesia. *Premise: Journal of English Education*, 9(1), 94–110.

Puspita, D., & Amelia, D. (2020). TED-TALK: A SUPPLEMENT MATERIAL TO PROMOTE STUDENTS' AUTONOMY IN LISTENING. *ELTIN JOURNAL, Journal of English Language Teaching in Indonesia*, 8(2), 91–102.

Puspita, D., & Pranoto, B. E. (2021). The attitude of Japanese newspapers in narrating disaster events: Appraisal in critical discourse study. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 8(2), 796–817.

Putri, N., & Aminatun, D. (2021). USING FACEBOOK TO PRACTICE WRITING SKILL: WHAT DO THE STUDENTS THINK? *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 2(1), 45–50.

Qomariah, L., & Sucipto, A. (2021). Sistem Infomasi Surat Perintah Tugas Menggunakan Pendekatan Web Engineering. *JTSI-Jurnal Teknologi Dan Sistem Informasi*, 2(1), 86–95.

Sari, K., & Pranoto, B. E. (2021). *Representation of Government Concerning the Draft of Criminal Code in The Jakarta Post : A Critical Discourse Analysis*. 11(2), 98–113.

Sari, S. N., & Aminatun, D. (2021). STUDENTS'PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF ENGLISH MOVIES TO IMPROVE VOCABULARY MASTERY. *Journal of*

- English Language Teaching and Learning*, 2(1), 16–22.
- Sartika, L. A., & Pranoto, B. E. (2021). *Analysis of Humor in the Big Bang Theory By Using Relevance Theory : a Pragmatic Study*. 2(1), 1–7.
- Setiawan, D. B., Prameswari, S. R., & Putri, S. R. (n.d.). *MENINGKATKAN KEPERCAYAAN DIRI ANAK-ANAK PANTI ASUHAN*. 23–28.
- Sinaga, R. R. F., & Oktaviani, L. (2020). The Implementation of Fun Fishing to Teach Speaking for Elementary School Students. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 1(1), 1–6.
- Suprayogi, S. (2019). Javanese Varieties in Pringsewu Regency and Their Origins. *Teknosastik*, 17(1), 7–14.
- Suprayogi, S. (2021). PRELIMINARY STUDY ON MAPPING CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND REVITALIZATION MEASURES FOR LAMPUNGIC LANGUAGE. *The 1st International Conference on Language Linguistic Literature and Education (ICLLLE)*.
- Suprayogi, S., & Eko, P. B. (2020). The Implementation of Virtual Exhibition Project in English for Tourism Class for University Students. *Academic Journal Perspective: Education, Language, and Literature*, 8(2), 87–97.
- Suprayogi, S., & Pranoto, B. E. (2020). VIRTUAL TOURISM EXHIBITION ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH FOR TOURISM CLASS: STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES. *Celtic: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, 7(2), 199–207.
- Suprayogi, S., Samanik, S., Novanti, E. A., & Ardesis, Y. (2021). EFL Learner's Literary Competence Mapping through Reader-Response Writing Assessed using CCEA GCSE Mark Scheme. *Celt: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching & Literature*, 21(1), 2. <http://journal.unika.ac.id/index.php/celt/article/view/2871>
- Wahyudin, A. Y., & Sari, F. M. (2018). The effect of Instagram on the students' writing ability at undergraduate level. *The 1st International Conference on English Language Teaching and Learning (1st ICON-ELTL)*, 1–10.

