

# **A Descriptive Case Study to the Meaning of Soft News Value in Metro Pagi News Program for Metro TV Jakarta Executive Producer**

by

**Dr. Lucy Pujasari Supratman, S.S., M.Si.**

**Communication Department, Communication and Business Faculty  
Telkom University  
me\_gutschullerin@yahoo.com / lucysupratman@telkomuniversity.ac.id  
087722016384**

## **ABSTRACT**

Metro Pagi news program contains news coverage with soft news concept. Producers of Metro Pagi should select the news based on its objectivity. News value is highlighted through selecting process by keeping up producer's ideology. In doing this research, I interviewed an executive producers and producer of Metro Pagi news program in Metro TV Jakarta. The methodology that I used is qualitative with case study approach. This research has identified that most of Metro Pagi news program content are soft news. It is very rare to have the news about pornography, violence and murder. The news is well-selected and has quality standard. The news value in Metro Pagi program was chosen based on the material construction of producer ideology and the television station itself. Both of them were involved in selecting process that occupied the meaning of soft news value.

*Keyword: Metro Pagi news program, producers, news value*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Metro TV is one of the biggest broadcasting television news industry in Indonesia. It has so many programs which produced by this station, one of them is Metro Pagi (Metro Morning) news program. Metro Pagi news offer news coverage with soft news concept. Metro Pagi in the course of production process will receive abundant news to be produced at newsroom. The news value should be the most significant things in selecting good news. It needs the accuracy of producers to select proper news. The process of presenting the news to the audience by Metro Pagi news producer are selecting, sorting, cutting, determining the duration, repeating, and the formatting soft news.

Modern broadcast news has seen soft news, which is associated with entertainment and immediate financial satisfaction for shareholders, has become more prevalent in news programs (Hamilton, 2004). Soft news stories, on the other hand, refer

to features (issue stories), or profiles (human interest stories). Producers of Metro Pagi news program select soft news rather than hard news. White (2002) lists hard news stories as: fires, accidents, crime, police-media relations, the courts, demonstrations, riots, disasters, tragedies, war, news conferences, local government, or political campaigns. Patterson (2000) specifies that, Soft news is sometimes used in a way that implies it is all the news that is not ‘hard news.’ Hard news refers to coverage of breaking events involving top leaders, major issues, or significant disruptions in the routines of daily life, such as an earthquake or airline disaster.

Information about these events is presumably important to citizens’ ability to understand and respond to the world of public affairs. News that is not of this type is, by definition, “soft”. Prior (2003) argues that soft news does not have the ability to teach the uniformed reader about politics because the subjects in his study did not recall specific political information following their exposure to soft news. Patterson believes that soft news serves to, “expand an audience by attracting people who find the news more enjoyable when it has a touch of personal drama”.



**‘Control Room’ of Metro TV Jakarta**

I am interested to do the observation of how the process of news producers in choosing and selecting soft news. So, I limit the research problem question into find the meaning of soft news value for Metro Pagi news program.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Previous researchers have been done to conduct the research about news value in television program station. Rena Bivens (2015) from Carleton University, Canada has run her research entitled, “Affording Immediacy in Television News Production: Comparing Adoption Trajectories of Social Media and Satellite Technologies”. The research talked about scholars who have added nuance to debates about technology’s effects on journalism by exploring how news organizations adopt technologies. This article argued that technological adoption occurs at the intersection of technological affordances, journalism practice, and internal power relations. It uses interviews and

observations with over 100 journalists at eight mainstream television news organizations in the United Kingdom and Canada to compare the adoption of social media and satellite technologies and their affordance of immediacy, a central television news value. Adoption trajectories and use of each set of technologies are found to vary in three respects: the extent to which they afford and shape immediacy; top-down versus bottom-up investment strategies; and effects on news-gathering and transmission practices. This article begins with a brief review of the sociology of television news production to contextualize the production practices and internal power relations at the center of this analysis. It then explores immediacy as a news value along with broader issues relating to professional ideology. Following a note on methods are three sections detailing the findings of this study. The first introduces three types of immediacy (speed, live, and feedback) and compares how satellite and social media technologies have shaped expectations about immediacy and production practices. The second considers adoption trajectories in relation to financial investment and power relations. The third explores power relations at the intersection of news-gathering and transmission practices. Though satellite and social media technologies both afford (or make it possible to achieve) immediacy in various phases of news production, this article argues that technological adoption occurs at the intersection of technological affordances, journalism practice, and internal power relations.

Other researchers were Geert Jacobs and Els Tobbacq (2012). Their research entitled, "Is language a News Value in Belgium?" which has been published in *Journal of Universiteit Gent, Belgia*. Jacobs and Tobbacq research told about globalized and multilingual mediascape the practicalities of inter-language translation that have become increasingly relevant in the newsroom. The question has been raised how multilingualism affects journalistic practice. This question seems particularly relevant in Belgium, where the political tension between Dutch-speaking and French-speaking communities has recently dominated the news agenda. In this paper we report on team fieldwork conducted in the TV newsroom of Belgium's French-language public broadcasting corporation RTBF in the spring of 2009. In particular, we will present a case study in which a journalist struggles with the integration of a number of Dutch-language quotes in a news report on the demise of the fashion industry. Our behind-the-scenes analysis, from the storyboard meeting until broadcasting, leads us to question whether the language in which source materials are available can be considered a news value in Belgium. In line with recent calls in media linguistics, our approach is a linguistic ethnographic one, demonstrating the added value of a fine-grained analysis of the discursive processes at the heart of newsmaking routines, one that allows us to revisit news values as decision-making parameters not just in gatekeeping but throughout the news production process.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses case study, qualitative research. The case study referred to subjective perspective. The findings are obtained through picture identification of phenomena that occur in the field. This interpretive paradigm seeks to create interpretation. The interpretive approach sees the informants in a subjective way and the

truth from participant point of view. I used Purposive Sampling technique by interviewing Two Producers of Metro Pagi News Program in Metro TV Jakarta Broadcasting Television.

#### **4. RESULT**

Metro TV is the first private Indonesian news television which broadcasted twenty-four hours in Indonesia. Metro Pagi is one of Metro TV news program that broadcasted early in the morning. Most of Metro Pagi program content is soft news. They are very rare to have the news about pornography, violence and murder. The news is well-selected and has quality standard. The news value in Metro Pagi program was chosen based on the material construction of producer ideology and the television station itself. Both of them were involved in selecting process that occupied the meaning of soft news value.



**I took a picture with Mr Rastra (Executive Producer) in Metro TV Jakarta**

Television news reporting activities began with community events in news production. The content of Metro Pagi news program is selecting soft news only. The selecting process through pre-production is a process that begins with the selection of soft news. After it is selected, the news can be broadcasted. But before that, the news value was elected first by producer to a redaction room. Then, it goes on to the establishment of news narration voice over. Production process program were conducted in the news studio and determined news duration through gatekeeping processes, news step filter to be on air and selection stages.



**I was observing News Production Process  
with Mr. Fauzi (Produser of Metro Pagi News Program)**

The producer always commenced with the process of thinking about what is news worthy for airing at the individual level. Interesting soft news will be the most selected items in Metro Pagi news program. As Fauzi (Metro Pagi Producer) said,

*“berita-berita yang kita tayangin sellau bernilai dengan kreativitas inovasi dalam menayangkan berita-berita yang ringan”.*

“the news should always offer creativity innovation in soft news coverage”.

Metro Pagi producers shall have their own news judgment to be as objective as possible in selecting news with high values. They really have genuine journalism ideology to broadcast high standard soft news issue. The producers strive to keep the news objectively and uphold ethical values by Metro Pagi producer. The producers’ background is very influential in forming news values.

Metro Pagi News Program has indicated its identity to the news value by always delivering quality information. The producers realized that the audience must have got good news. They have strong commitment to revitalized Indonesia. The news they produce can educate and enlighten people. As an early news program which broadcasted in the morning, the soft news are carefully selected through pre-production, production and post-production. When I interviewed two executive producer and producer of Metro Morning named Mr.Rastra and Mr.Fauzi, Metro Pagi teamwork has a solid team works to broadcast the soft news that has its value. Mr. Rastra (Executive Producer Metro Morning Jakarta ) said,

*“Metro Pagi tidak akan mengangkat berita yang mengandung gosip, karena semua berita yang kami produksi harus tetap berdasarkan fakta di lapangan yang sudah terverifikasi”*

"Metro Morning will not lift the news containing gossip , because of all the news that our production should remain based on the facts on the ground which has been verified "

According to him, each news which has passed the selection and worth to aired in the television must have news value standard. He stated that the news value is eligibility standards in terms of visual, audio and ethical rules.

Mr. Fauzi (Producer of Metro Morning) also describes the feasibility which I describe it in a matrix:

#### Packaging Content of Metro TV News

- The news packaged has in accordance with the facts of camera recorded , reporter excavated by upholding the editorial guidelines
- The news forbid to have the contain of gossip, speculation and sensation
- The news should not use offensive language,cynical,insulting, and pornographic.
- The image reflects the actual facts , not engineered to exaggerate problems and shrink issues ,
- The news Images of violence are not aired in a vulgar way. It is edited with the principle of editing results which represent the facts.

Broadcasting facts in a news show should be in accordance with news value. It can be obtained from various sources. In the principle of journalism, the soft news which delivered to the audience must be clarified. If it is not clarified or rechecked, the watchdog media institution like Dewan Pers (Press Council) and KPI (Indonesia Broadcasting Commision) warn the news content of news program. Mr.Fauzi (Producer of Metro Pagi) added,

*“Sebuah institusi media punya kerangka-kerangka, dia punya rambu-rambu bagaimana membuat tim redaksi beritanya itu melakukan kerja-kerja jurnalistik yang benar. Dan memang kita punya rujukannya lembaga yang mengadvokasi media kita punya Dewan Pers, kita punya KPI. Nah Dewan Pers dan KPI memiliki fungsi untuk memberikan batasan-batasan apa yang boleh atau tidak boleh. Namun metro tv sebagai institusi media juga punya pakem, koridor dan kode etik yang dijalani serta dipatuhi seluruh karyawannya disitu, kita punya kode etik Metro TV sendiri yang harus dipatuhi karyawannya itu sendiri. Kode etik seperti tidak boleh dalam memberitakan berita, tidak boleh fitnah adalah nilai berita yang harus dijunjung tinggi jurnalis Metro TV.”*

" A media institutions have its skeletons. It had signs of how to make the news editorial team obeying the rules of journalistic guidelines. And indeed we have the

media advocate like Press Council (Dewan Pers), we have Indonesia Broadcasting Commission (KPI). But Metro TV as the media institution has rules and boundaries of what is allowed or not allowed. We have grip, corridors and code of conduct undertaken and adhered to all its employees here. The ethic codes must be obeyed like reporting the news based on its value, not a slander. The news value must be respected by metro tv journalist".

Metro Pagi has its ideology in upholding news value by the producers who select the news. The producers obey the ethic, code of journalistic rule and policy of each media too. It is somehow determine the direction and characteristics of the news. A level of objectivity to the news is professionalism of media in supporting the democratic process.

## 5. CONCLUSION

News is not created randomly from the coverage of associated events. Producers created the news through selection processes. They also put their minds of ideology in specific construction to the news they chose. They do the selection process of various realities by highlighting specific part of an event which has the content of soft news. In case of broadcasting hard news, soft news is more preferable by producers to select to their news program. This soft news will greet the audience with light events, social news, humanism, and other entertaining soft news. But of course, the objectivity news value is the highest point to be pointed out. If it is not objective, it would endanger public knowledge in gaining information. Producer job who act as a gatekeeper has kept pro active in shaping quality soft news based on its news value. and media actively shaping the reality of the value of news.

## Bibliography

- Bivens, Rena. (2015). *Affording Immediacy in Television News Production: Comparing Adoption Trajectories of Social Media and Satellite Technologies*". Canada: Carleton University
- Hamilton, J. T. (2004). *All the news that's fit to sell*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Jacobs, Geertz and Els Tobback (2012). *Is language a News Value in Belgium?*". Belgia: Journal of Universiteit Gent.
- Patterson, T.E. (2000) *Doing well and doing good: How soft news and critical journalism are shrinking the news audience and weakening democracy – and what news*

*outlets can do about it.* USA: Harvard University.

Prior, M. (2003). *Any good news in soft news? The impact of soft news preference on political knowledge.*

White, T. (2002). *Broadcast news: Writing, reporting, and producing.* Boston, MA: Focal Press.