



## **The Discursive Representation of Companies in Malaysian Business Magazines**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article studies the portrayal of companies in Malaysian business magazine articles. 8 articles were selected from *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business* and they were analyzed using Fairclough's 3-dimensional critical discourse analysis (CDA) model. This entailed an analysis of text, discourse practice and social practice. Text analysis employs TRANSITIVITY from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to focus on Processes and Participants. Certain Processes relate a particular experience about companies. Companies are shown to have positive social agency because they manage their context to ensure profitability through Material Process while their positive traits are shown through Relational (Attributive and Identifying) Process. The discourse practice analysis covers intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Studying intertextuality reveals 2 dominant voices, the writer and spokesperson, where the writer quotes the spokesperson using Mental and Verbal Processes. Quoting the spokesperson enables the writer to substantiate his opinions, which makes his writing seem credible. Studying interdiscursivity reveals 2 dominant discourses, journalistic and public relations, where public relations discourse is conveyed through the reputed objectivity of journalistic discourse. Both text and discourse practice analyses construe a 'world' where everything revolves around companies for their benefit to garner economic capital, which implies the social practice of the articles in *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business*.

*Keywords:* Company, media, article, CDA, SFL

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### **INTRODUCTION**

*Business Today* and *Malaysian Business* are magazines about business in Malaysia. Among their monthly articles are those profiling local companies. These articles

explain a company's endeavors and aspirations to readers who are experts or non-experts in business. The articles evidence the role of the media in constructing reality (Macdonald, 2003, p. 14) about companies. This construction is examined by studying the portrayal of companies in *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business*. To do so, selected articles are analyzed using Fairclough's (1995) 3-dimensional critical discourse analysis (CDA) model. The analysis discloses a certain portrayal of companies through the choice of language features, texts and discourses, which reflect the motivation of the articles.

This article can complement related Malaysian studies about companies (e.g. Taib, 2010, Mustaffa & Rashidah, 2007) by studying companies in the media. It is useful to the literature of media discourse because it explains the way that language features, texts and discourses impact the portrayal of companies. These should form part of a journalist's discursive competence because for Bhatia (2002), discursive competence is part of professional expertise. Understanding media discourse increases the scope of theoretical and practical knowledge available to journalists. It sensitizes them to the potential of language to convey meanings, which could develop their ability to write convincing articles. It makes discursive competence a crucial element in developing professional expertise in journalism. Such discursive competence is valuable in teaching and training for the media since it always uses language to communicate with various readers.

## PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON MEDIA DISCOURSE

Fairclough (1995, 2003) has analyzed media discourse extensively but he has not emphasized media discourse about companies. There is research about media discourse in Malaysia, such as in newspapers (e.g. Lean, Zuraidah & Fernandez, 2012, Wong & Lean, 2011) but their focus is rarely companies. Similarly, there is research about corporate discourse in Malaysia but their focus ranges from company-to-company communication (e.g. Taib, 2010) or company to stakeholders communication (e.g. Mustaffa & Rashidah, 2007). While Taib (2010) and Mustaffa & Rashidah (2007) analyze corporate texts, companies produce these texts but journalists produce business magazine articles. Lean *et al.* (2012) and Wong and Lean (2011) analyze media texts but their texts did not mention companies. These earlier studies did not study companies in the media.

Fairclough (1995, 2003) employs TRANSITIVITY from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to study portrayal in media discourse because the choice of Processes and Participants conveys entities in a particular way. McManus (2009) shows a change from doctors as Participant in early 20<sup>th</sup> century medicine brochures to doctors and patient as Participant in early 21<sup>st</sup> century medicine brochures in the United Kingdom, which reflects evolving ethical and legal obligations. Rajandran (2012) exemplifies the use of faculty, program and students in the role of Participants to describe the experience of studying in a

university in Malaysia. While McManus (2009) and Rajandran (2012) report personalizing discourse through the choice of Participant, Halliday & Martin (1993) report impersonalizing discourse through the choice of Participant. Halliday & Martin (1993) chart the change of Participant in science manuals from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, where people are avoided as Participants. For Pietikäinen (2003), indigenous people are personalized by naming their group while their government is impersonalized by naming government agencies.

Being a Participant makes individuals or groups active as the source of a Process or inactive as the target of a Process. People are represented as active if they cause change to their lives (Moore, 2002) or the public (Stamou, 2001) or inactive if other factors cause people to change (Pietikäinen, 2003). Hence, Participants and their relation to Processes are important in constructing social agency or the responsibility for causing or not causing change. As Barnard (2003) demonstrates, social agency for Japan's World War II atrocities is traced to Japan's Imperial Army, not Japan the country, which mitigates blame for Japan. Similarly, Thomas (1997) shows a change in social agency from a company to the economy as the company went from profit to loss, which moves blame from the company to the economy. In Oteiza & Pinto (2008), using non-humans in the role of Participant decreases the social agency of people in historical episodes.

These studies confirm the benefit of TRANSITIVITY to examine portrayal in numerous texts. Yet, TRANSITIVITY is a linguistic analysis and a linguistic analysis might not be adequate to explain the presence of other texts and discourses in business magazine articles. These texts and discourses should be considered because they contribute to the portrayal that TRANSITIVITY analyzes. This requires an intertextual and interdiscursive analysis. For Fairclough (1995, p. 84, 2003, p. 218), intertextuality means combining other texts to form new texts and interdiscursivity means the relations between discourse types; discourse types being a discourse, genre or style.

The studies until now have certainly extended our understanding of media discourse but there are some gaps in our knowledge. First, few studies study media discourse about companies in Malaysia. Second, other studies often emphasize a linguistic analysis to the detriment of an intertextual and interdiscursive analysis. This article hopes narrow such gaps by studying business magazine articles profiling Malaysian companies. It conducts a linguistic analysis of TRANSITIVITY and combines it with an intertextual and interdiscursive analysis to understand the motivation of these articles, following Fairclough's (1995) 3-dimensional CDA model.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Selected Articles*

Reach Publishing publishes *Business Today* and Bernama Publishing publishes *Malaysian Business*. The articles in these magazines are about business in Malaysia. Their language is not technical and is suitable for an average educated person, which means that almost anyone interested in business could be a reader of *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business*. Articles profiling a company were selected for analysis. These articles are a monthly feature and explain a company's endeavors and aspirations to readers. *Business Today* profiles 1 company and *Malaysian Business* profiles 3 companies from numerous industries. Articles from *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business* from January 2011 to April 2011 were selected, as detailed in Table 1. Only 8 articles were selected to make them manageable for a qualitative analysis.

### *Method*

Fairclough's (1995) 3-dimensional CDA model is employed as a heuristic to analyze the articles systematically. The model views discourse as an amalgamation of 3 related dimensions of text, discourse practice and social practice (Fairclough, 1995, p. 73). Simply put, text investigates the properties of texts, often using SFL while discourse practice investigates the production and consumption of texts. This article concentrates on production, notably other texts and discourses that contribute to producing the articles. Social practice investigates the influence of social events, social practices and social structures on texts (Fairclough, 2003). It includes references to the broad areas of history, culture, economy and politics (Fairclough, 1995, p. 62).

Text is analyzed using TRANSITIVITY from SFL. TRANSITIVITY provides a detailed and structured linguistic analysis, which makes TRANSITIVITY crucial for CDA (Fairclough, 1995, p. 57). Choices in TRANSITIVITY construe our experience of the world through the clause

TABLE 1  
Selected articles

Magazine	Issue	Company	Sector <sup>1</sup>
<i>Business Today</i>	01 2011	Fujitsu	Telecommunications Equipment
	02 2011	Grand Slam Golf	Clothing & Accessories
	03 2011	SmartPools	Furnishings
	04 2011	Las Vacas	Food Products
<i>Malaysian Business</i>	01 2011	Pensonic	Consumer Electronics
	02 2011	CBS	Business Support Services
	03 2011	Return 2 Green	Industrial Suppliers
	04 2011	Emery	Specialty Chemicals

1: Industry Classification Benchmark (2008)

(Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 170). For TRANSITIVITY, the clause has 3 functional elements, namely Participant, Process and Circumstance, which are normally realized by the syntactic elements of the nominal group, verbal group and adverbial group or prepositional phrase respectively (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pp. 175-177). Table 2 shows the typical matching, using a few article examples.

Processes impose order on the variation of experience (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 170) about companies. Processes are always a verbal group. Table 3 provides

the Processes, their central meanings and their typical Participants. A clause must have a Process but it does not need to have all the Participants.

Participants include human and non-human entities. The Participant labeled Actor is responsible for an action, which impacts a Goal or Scope (Example 1). The Participant labeled Senser is responsible for a type of sensing. The content of sensing is labeled Phenomenon (Example 2). The Participant labeled Carrier is the entity described while Attribute is the description (Example 3). The Participant labeled Token is the entity

TABLE 2  
Matching function and form in TRANSITIVITY

Function	Form	Examples
Participant	nominal group	Fujitsu, its focus, the ambitious target, he, we
Process	verbal group	is shifting, has, had identified, will produce
Circumstance	adverbial group prepositional phrase	already at Telok Panglima Garang, by 2015, from Japan, in the middle of the month, to other parts of the world

TABLE 3  
Processes and Participants

Process	Meaning(s)	Major Participants
Material	Experiences of action	Actor, Goal, Scope
Mental	Experiences of cognition, desideration, emotion, perception	Senser, Phenomenon
Relational Attributive	Experiences of description	Carrier, Attribute
Relational Identifying	Experiences of identification	Token, Value
Verbal	Experiences of communication	Sayer, Verbiage
Existential	Experiences of existence	Existent
Behavioural	Experiences of psychology and physiology	Behavior, Behaviour

## Example 1

<b>Clause</b> (Pensonic)	Pensonic	operates	two factories	in Penang...
<b>Form</b>	nominal group	verbal group	nominal group	prepositional phrase
<b>Function</b>	Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance

## Example 2

<b>Clause</b> (Return 2 Green)	'We	need	more factories!'
<b>Form</b>	nominal group	verbal group	nominal group
<b>Function</b>	Senser	Mental Process	Phenomenon

## Example 3

<b>Clause</b> (Emery)	Emery	is	already	a leader in green polymer additives	with brands like Edenol and Loxiol.
<b>Form</b>	nominal group	verbal group	adverbial group	nominal group	prepositional phrase
<b>Function</b>	Carrier	Relational Attributive Process	Circumstance	Attribute	Circumstance

## Example 4

<b>Clauses</b> (Las Vacas)	The other selling point of Las Vacas	is	that it only sells chilled meats instead of frozen meats.
<b>Form</b>	nominal group	verbal group	clause
<b>Function</b>	Token	Relational Identifying Process	Value

## Example 5

<b>Clauses</b> (CBS)	'They will be very profitable,'	says	Sun.
<b>Form</b>	clause	verbal group	nominal group
<b>Function</b>	Verbiage	Verbal Process	Sayer

## Example 6

<b>Clause</b> (Emery)	...there	will be	enough jobs	for 'any number of factories'.
<b>Form</b>	-	verbal group	nominal group	prepositional phrase
<b>Function</b>	-	Existential Process	Existent	Circumstance

identified while Value is the identification (Example 4). The Participant labeled Sayer is responsible for a type of communication. The content of communication is labeled Verbiage (Example 5). The Participant

labeled Existent is an entity that simply exists (Example 6).

It might be said that TRANSITIVITY is a complex way to analyze the articles but it provides clear and rigorous linguistic

categories for analysis (Blommaert, 2005, p. 23), which enables explanatory consistency in analysis. A cursory reading might claim to deduce the same thing but being intuitive, it lacks an empirical method to ground its claims.

Discourse practice covers intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Identifying intertextuality and interdiscursivity requires the researcher's judgment and experience (Fairclough, 1995, p. 77) but they have linguistic cues (Fairclough, 1995, p. 78), such as nouns or verbs indicating explicit or implicit reference to texts, direct speech, indirect speech and speech act for intertextuality (Fairclough, 1995, 2003) and traces of other discourses, genres and styles through lexis for interdiscursivity (Fairclough, 2003). As to social practice, there are no fixed social theories that must be used for CDA (Fairclough, 2003, p. 7). Bourdieu's (1977, 1997) notion of capital is employed to explain the motivation of the articles.

### *Research Design*

For analysis, every sentence of the articles was typed in Microsoft Word. These sentences were segregated into clauses because clauses are the basic unit of analysis for TRANSITIVITY. Next, the clauses were tagged manually for Process and available Participants. Some examples of labeling are shown in Examples 1-6 above. For the discussion, the row for form in Examples 1-6 is excluded in Examples 7-24 in the interest of space. Moreover, brackets () are put to separate parts of the clause not under discussion and ellipsis (...) excludes

other clauses not under discussion. Then, the clauses were examined to identify linguistic cues indicating intertextuality and interdiscursivity. The texts and discourses were noted and considered in relation to portraying companies.

## **DISCUSSION**

*Text- TRANSITIVITY* explains text analysis and *Discourse Practice- Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity* provides the intertextual and interdiscursive analyses. Results from *Text- TRANSITIVITY* and *Discourse Practice- Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity* are utilized to posit the social practice of the articles in *Social Practice-Types of Capital*.

### *Text- TRANSITIVITY*

All Processes contribute to represent companies although not in equal proportion because every Process plays distinct roles in the articles. From Table 4, the articles prioritize a company's actions and descriptions using Material and Relational Processes respectively. Both Processes also dominate the texts in Moore (2002), McManus (2009) and Rajandran (2012), and actions and descriptions might be prototypical in certain texts.

A company in the role of Actor personalizes a Material Process. Grand Slam Golf (Example 7) and Pensonic (Example 8) become the source of a Process, where these companies are taking steps to expand their business. Expansion is made tangible in the Goal, which exists because companies perform actions to achieve it, be it having a branch (Example 7) or distributing products



(Example 8). Grand Slam Golf and Pensonic utilize the Goals in Examples 7-8 for their benefit because these Goals enable them to do business. The Goals in Examples 7-8 are positive because they help Grand Slam Golf and Pensonic to increase their presence among customers. Companies in the role of Actor and their activities in the role of Goal portray companies as directly responsible for their endeavors. This provides them positive social agency in the articles.

TABLE 4  
Frequency of Processes

Process	Percentage
Material	40.5%
Relational Attributive	32.9%
Verbal	11.1%
Mental	10.4%
Relational Identifying	3.2%
Behavioural	1.1%
Existential	0.8%

Companies depend on their products or services to be profitable. Products are traced to companies in Examples 9-10. For example, the Goals in Examples 9-10 do not exist until Emery and Grand Slam

Golf make them. Emery and Grand Slam Golf in the role of Actor become directly responsible for the quality and quantity of Goal, their products. This portrays Emery and Grand Slam Golf as taking an interest in their business. They have to bear this responsibility because their business relies on their products. Also in Examples 9-10, Circumstance sets the place (Example 9) and time (Example 10) for production. Circumstance establishes the context of where and when to expect the products, implying that Emery and Grand Slam Golf are organized in conducting their business.

Various descriptions about companies are portrayed using Relational Attributive Process. Companies are in the role of Carrier and their descriptions are in the role of Attribute. These Attributes present companies as having positive traits. In Examples 11-12, the traits for CBS and Return 2 Green are positive because there are words in the Attribute that indicate this, such as ‘appealing’ and ‘healthy’ in Example 11 and ‘ambitious’ in Example 12. These words in Attribute construe CBS

#### Example 7

<b>Clause</b> (Grand Slam Golf)	...GSG	set up	its local office	as recent as March 2010	without an existing clientele or shop...
<b>Function</b>	Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance	Circumstance

#### Example 8

<b>Clause</b> (Pensonic)	...[Pensonic]	distributes	electrical products	under the brandnames of Pensonic, Cornell and Lebensstil Kollektion...
<b>Function</b>	[Actor]	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance



## Example 9

<b>Clause</b> (Emery)	The Emery-AK ChemTech joint venture	will produce	specialty esters	at Telok Panglima Garang,...
<b>Function</b>	Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance

## Example 10

<b>Clause</b> (Grand Slam Golf)	We	are (actually) coming up with	a junior range	in the middle of the month (January).
<b>Function</b>	Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance

## Example 11

<b>Clauses</b> (CBS)	The modest- sized technology company, (however),	has	two features investors should find appealing- uninterrupted profitability since its inception more than 14 years ago, and a healthy net cash balance.	
<b>Function</b>	Carrier	Relational Attributive Process	Attribute	

## Example 12

<b>Clause</b> (Return 2 Green)	Return 2 Green	has	the ambitious target of having 124 satellite factories	by 2015.
<b>Function</b>	Carrier	Relational Attributive Process	Attribute	Circumstance

and Return 2 Green positively by evaluating them through their traits.

The articles also relate a company's traits through Relational Identifying Process. This Process is commonly used as a thematic equative (Examples 13-14), where Token and Value mean the same thing but Value restates Token in a detailed manner. The Value in Examples 13-14 expands the meaning of the Token, and relates a generic situation in Token to a positive progress in Value. For example, the Token in Example 14 mentions 'key route' to emphasize the importance of 'new products' in the Value.

In the articles, Relational Identifying Process helps to define (Example 15), exemplify (Example 16) and translate (Example 17) a company's traits. The traits in Examples 15-17 require Relational Identifying Process because definition, exemplification and translation are set meanings and other Processes cannot articulate these meanings. This limits the meaning of Value to that Token only, making a trait non-negotiable. For example, the commitment fee in Example 15 and the translation in Example 17 are already decided and there are no other options for

## Example 13

<b>Clause</b> (CBS)	(Incidentally,) that	had been	the first and only dividend...
<b>Function</b>	Token	Relational Identifying Process	Value

## Example 14

<b>Clause</b> (Emery)	The key route to upgrading margins	is	with new products and new technology...
<b>Function</b>	Token	Relational Identifying Process	Value

## Example 15

<b>Clause</b> (Return 2 Green)	First	is	the 'commitment fee' of RM500,000.
<b>Function</b>	Token	Relational Identifying Process	Value

## Example 16

<b>Clauses</b> (Grand Slam Golf)	One such instance	was	when a client wanted 100 logos imprinted on one duffle bag, or another that wanted a golf shirt with very distinct and odd cuttings all over it, which effectively changed the way it looked altogether!
<b>Function</b>	Token	Relational Identifying Process	Value

## Example 17

<b>Clause</b> (Las Vacas)	The name Las Vacas	is	Spanish for "The Cows"...
<b>Function</b>	Token	Relational Identifying Process	Value

the commitment fee and translation. They can only mean what the writer wrote and not anything else. This substantiates Halliday & Matthiessen (2004, p. 71), where thematic equative means 'this and this only'.

In Relational (Attributive and Identifying) Process, there is no change of state, unlike Material Process. Relational Process fixes a company's description in a particular place and time, and a description is valid for a certain place and time for companies. The extent of validity can be

made explicit through a Circumstance, as in Example 12 or the tense in a Process. In Examples 11-12, the present tense is employed, implying that descriptions are valid until further notice. In Examples 13 and 16, the past tense is employed, implying that descriptions are no longer valid.

Material Process portrays companies as action-oriented because they influence their context to cause positive change for themselves (Examples 7-10) while Relational (Attributive and Identifying)

Process portrays companies as having positive traits (Examples 11-17). Material and Relational Processes complement one another to portray a company's positive actions and descriptions as centered on itself for its benefit.

#### *Discourse Practice- Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity*

There are 2 dominant voices in the articles, which are the voices of the article writer and the company spokesperson. The writer is the default voice because he writes the articles but the spokesperson's voice is included frequently. This is achieved through direct and indirect speech using Mental and Verbal Processes. These Processes signal intertextuality because they indicate that another voice is being introduced in the articles. For example, the writer writes the clauses in Examples 18-20 but the spokesperson has responsibility for their content (Phenomenon or Verbiage)

because he is the Sensor or Sayer. It is the Sensor or Sayer who projects the Phenomenon or Verbiage in Examples 18-20 and the Phenomenon or Verbiage are the spokesperson's opinions about his company. His opinions indicate important endeavors in the past (Example 19) or aspirations for the future (Examples 18, 20).

The Phenomenon (Example 18) is always indirect speech because Mental Process takes place in our consciousness (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 197) and cannot be externalized. Verbiage is either indirect speech (Example 19) or direct speech (Example 20) because it can be externalized as a conversation between the writer and spokesperson. In Examples 18-20, the spokesperson's opinions are mediated through the writer, who is believed to convey them reliably. While the writer cannot change the spokesperson's opinions, he can display his evaluation towards these opinions through the verbal group that projects the spokesperson's opinions.

#### Example 18

<b>Clause (CBS)</b>	CBS	expects	'very significant' growth in both revenue and profit from its regional expansion.	
<b>Function</b>	Sensor	Mental Process	Phenomenon	

#### Example 19

<b>Clause (CBS)</b>	It [CBS]	has (so far) declared	two one-for-two bonus issues	- in April 2008 and January 2010.
<b>Function</b>	Sayer	Verbal Process	Verbiage	Circumstance

#### Example 20

<b>Clauses (Return 2 Green)</b>	'We need more factories!'	Mahadi	tells	<i>Malaysian Business.</i>
<b>Function</b>	Verbiage	Sayer	Verbal Process	Receiver

For Mental Process, most of the verbal group shows cognition. Cognition covers any sort of thinking, where the writer is indicating that the spokesperson makes a rational decision about his company. Readers can trust his decision because it is not haphazard, as the verbal group (**bolded**) in Examples 21-22 imply. For Verbal Process, most of the verbal group (**bolded**) sounds neutral and does not show the writer's evaluation, as in Example 23. This is also the case of *informs*, *notes*, *opines* and *remarks*. The inverse is also possible, with *defends*, *laments*, *maintains* and *urges*. In Example 24, *defends* shows

the writer's evaluation of the spokesperson's opinions, where the spokesperson seems to be justifying his company's behavior.

Table 5 shows the frequency of Processes for the writer and spokesperson. It is apparent that both voices employ a similar proportion of Processes. The spokesperson complements the writer because he also emphasizes a company's actions and descriptions. This could explain the structure of the articles, where the writer's opinions are often followed by the spokesperson's opinions. The spokesperson's voice provides substantiation because only he can provide insights about a company. He is part of

#### Example 21

<b>Clauses</b> (Return 2 Green)	R2G	<b>projects</b>	that investors will be able to see a return on investment (ROI) within 3.5 years	
<b>Function</b>	Senser	Mental Process	Phenomenon	

#### Example 22

<b>Clause</b> (Emery)	Emery	<b>is planning</b>	a RM480 million Islamic bond issue	within four months...
<b>Function</b>	Senser	Mental Process	Phenomenon	Circumstance

#### Example 23

<b>Clauses</b> (Emery)	'Our product portfolio will grow and directly translate to a larger market share in the oleo chemicals business,'		he	<b>says.</b>
<b>Function</b>	Verbiage		Sayer	Verbal Process

#### Example 24

<b>Clauses</b> (Emery)	'We are a relatively young company and we have to plan to get us to next level... When such opportunities arise, we do not need to borrow a lot of money and put our whole company at risk,'		<b>defends</b>	Sun.
<b>Function</b>	Verbiage		Verbal Process	Sayer

and represents a company and he becomes a reliable source of opinions. He is also a highly-ranked person in a company, which makes his opinions more reliable because he knows the details of his company's operations. The articles need intertextuality because it is a way to include the perspective of a company's management. It substantiates claims made by the writer and makes his writing seem credible.

TABLE 5  
Frequency of Processes by voices

Process	Writer	Spokesperson
Material	39.4%	42.9%
Relational Attributive	31.9%	35.0%
Verbal	14.3%	4.2%
Mental	9.9%	11.5%
Relational Identifying	2.9%	3.9%
Behavioural	0.9%	1.4%
Existential	0.6%	1.1%

While intertextuality helps the articles to seem credible, it also shows the social relation between the writer or spokesperson and companies. This is seen in the choice of pronouns to replace a company's name. Pronouns indicate the social relation between the writer or spokesperson and companies (Fairclough, 1995, 2003) because they mark belonging or non-belonging to companies. For the writer, a company is referred to as 'it' (Example 25) but for the spokesperson, a company is referred to as 'we' (Example 26). The spokesperson's 'we' marks his authority because he speaks for the whole company, being a highly-ranked person in a company. Also, he is part of and represents

a company and 'we' marks his solidarity with a company. The use of pronouns to mark authority and solidarity is recognized by Fairclough (1995).

On the other hand, the writer is not from the company and cannot use the pronoun 'we'. His default pronoun is 'it', which distances him and a company. The spokesperson's 'we' (Example 26) and the writer's 'it' (Example 25) distinguish belonging and non-belonging respectively to companies, which contrasts the social relation between the writer or spokesperson and companies. The choice of pronouns establishes a distant social relation between the writer and companies but a close social relation between the spokesperson and companies. This relation causes the writer to depend on the spokesperson to know more about companies, hence justifying the inclusion of the spokesperson's voice in the articles.

Besides the 2 dominant voices, the articles mix 2 dominant discourses of journalism and public relations. Journalistic discourse is expected because the articles are in magazines. It presumes certain conventions, such as objectivity towards the companies, structure of writing, orientation to space and time, reporting both positive and negative news and interviewing company and non-company representatives. Information should be the focus of journalistic discourse. Yet, the articles only have positive news and interview company representatives, which provides a one-sided perspective about companies. The portrayal of companies in journalistic discourse shows

## Example 25

<b>Clauses</b> (CBS)	CBS is leveraging on the expertise and success of Super Pages within the small and medium enterprise (SME) space to expand into regional markets. <b>It</b> is building what <b>it</b> calls a regional ‘digital ecosystem’.
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## Example 26

<b>Clauses</b> (Pensonic)	‘ <b>We</b> ’re putting in more effort in brand and distribution. In terms of manufacturing, <b>we</b> control the key manufacturing and outsource the rest,’ Chew explains.
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## Example 27

<b>Clauses</b> (Las Vacas)	What do two former finance professionals, passion for business and cows have in common? Las Vacas, that’s what. Established in 2007, Las Vacas is the name of a lifestyle and retail butchery set up by two entrepreneurs Yusof Dayan Iskandar and Freddy Azman. The name Las Vacas is Spanish for ‘The Cows’ and was specially chosen for the business, says the enthusiastic 43-year-old Yusof.
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traces of public relations discourse. Public relations discourse tries to influence readers about one perspective of companies (Seital, 2004, p. 3) since promotion is the focus of public relations discourse.

In Example 27, the article starts with a rhetorical question and provides the answer immediately and continues by explaining about the company. The question-answer sequence is promotional because it spurs interest in a company. It is not typical in journalistic discourse and it introduces new entities (‘two former finance professionals’, ‘business’, ‘cows’) which are not explained until later. The explanation is informational because it gives details about a company, has an orientation to time (‘2007’) and cites a company representative (‘says...’), which are typical in journalistic discourse. Example 27 is an indication that journalistic discourse has been mixed with public relations discourse and separating them

would disturb the article’s cohesion. Mixing journalistic discourse with public relations discourse enables promotion to pass as information. Since it is reputed to be objective, journalistic discourse transfers its reputed objectivity to public relations discourse and helps to convey promotion as information.

### *Social Practice-Types of Capital*

The analyses in of text and discourse practice must be interpreted in social practice because social practice motivates the characteristics of text and discourse practice in the articles (Fairclough, 1995, p. 105). Social practice can be examined using Bourdieu’s (1977, 1997) types of capital. Bourdieu (1977, 1997) envisions 4 types of capital, namely economic, cultural, social and symbolic. While economic capital means any sort of monetary contribution (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 47), cultural capital

means certain privation, renunciation and sacrifice to own objects (Bourdieu, 1997, pp. 48-50). Bourdieu (1997, p. 51) defines social capital as the people we know in any formal or informal relationship and the benefits that we gain from knowing them and he (1977, p. 179) defines symbolic capital as any consecration, distinction, prestige or renown. These types of capital seem abstract but can be related to the companies.

The companies are profiled in *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business*. These magazines survey business in Malaysia. Business is crucial to Malaysia because in the Prime Minister's present Economic Transformation Program (ETP), companies are to play a larger role in developing Malaysia. For companies to play this role, they need investment to conduct their operations. One way to do gain investment is by increasing their visibility among investors through the articles in *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business*. The articles employ the characteristics of text and discourse practice to build symbolic capital for the companies by portraying companies positively in a 'world' where everything revolves around companies for their benefit. Companies seem stable and dependable, which conveys prestige to them. Prestige is enhanced by *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business* profiling profitable companies since profitability can improve a company's prestige.

Such prestige helps to promote a company among investors. This builds social capital between companies and investors because a relationship is cultivated

between them and it can benefit both of them. The symbolic and social capitals gained through the articles might influence investors to invest in these companies. Investment is an economic capital because it would be a monetary contribution. Hence, symbolic and social capitals are exchanged for economic capital and substantiates the perfect interconvertibility (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 178) between one type of capital and another type of capital. This conversion to economic capital is crucial because it enables companies to continue their operations and investors to gain dividends. Economic capital is the motivation for companies in the articles. It is probably a motivation to be profiled in *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business*. This reflects the capitalist economic system, where companies compete for private investment to finance their operations.

## CONCLUSION

This article has studied the portrayal of companies in articles from *Business Today* and *Malaysian Business* using Fairclough's 3-dimensional CDA model. Text analysis explains that the choice of Processes and Participants portray a company's positive actions and descriptions as benefiting itself. The discourse practice analysis identifies the voices of the writer and the spokesperson, where the writer cites the spokesperson to make his writing seem credible. This analysis also identifies mixing journalistic and public relations discourse to convey promotion through information. Both text and social practice analyses help to decipher



the social practice of the articles, which is motivated by a company's pursuit of economic capital.

This article can contribute to studies about companies in the media. It is useful to those teaching and training media discourse, notably business journalism because it utilizes the media to write about companies. Since business journalists do not only write for magazines, the results from this article can be extended to other registers, such as newspapers and corporate reports. Knowledge of text and discourse practice converts business journalism into a multidisciplinary field with insights from CDA, so that journalists become more critical of companies. This provides them another way to approach writing their texts. This knowledge can also be spread to the public to make them more aware of the way that the characteristics of text and discourse practice try to influence their perception of companies, as well as the social practice motivating these characteristics. It would contribute to enhance the public's critical thinking about language, which Fairclough (1995, p. 201) recommends.

Future research can solidify the study of media discourse about companies. Other elements in text can be analyzed, such as MOOD, THEME and COHESION. For a better sample, more articles should be studied, from more magazines, countries or languages. This reflects the global presence of articles profiling companies. Yet, text analysis by itself is restricted and a complete CDA considers the production and consumption of texts (Fairclough, 1995,

2003). This requires some ethnographic methods (Fairclough, 2003, p. 15), where opinions from journalists and readers who interact with the articles are acquired.

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