

# The Production of Tattooed “Bad People” and “Good People” as a Subject in Online Mass Media Kompas.com, Liputan6.com, and Detik.com

Asih Kurniasih

## Abstract

*Mass media come along with the reality that happens in the social life. This gives the opportunity to construct tattooed subject through the statements, appropriate with the discursive formation it creates, so that it is interesting to read and use as knowledge. The representation with discursive approach by Michael Foucault, as stated in Stuart Hall, chooses this part to examine a discourse relationship, knowledge that is always connected to power and subject related questions. The subjects that are produced by tattoo-related discourse get through the news and then are associated with the knowledge surrounding them. This research produces the subject of “bad people” and “good people” that operates in criminal, religious, and medical discourse.*

**Keywords:** *Tattoo, Discourse, Representation, Knowledge, Power*

Author's Affiliation

Department of Culture and Media Study, Graduate School of Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Email: [wortelcoklat10@gmail.com](mailto:wortelcoklat10@gmail.com)

## Preface

In the development of news media, with the increasing numbers of online media publication, almost every media group now has its own online news portal. Consequently, this helps the citizens to access news more easily, especially for those who possess phones and internet connection (Nugroho, Putri & Laksmi, 2012:90-91). The mass media starts its job with gathering, processing and editing, followed by publishing the information to the target readers or viewers. The process, which goes along with the reality, can be constructed in a way so that

the news can be more appealing to read; this is because the mass media company fully understands that the information it provides is the spirit of the publication in journalism. Waziz (2012:10) explains that the latest, actual, even controversial and dramatic information, will always be the main course served to the public with its interesting different point of views, objects, and subjects. This will surely affect media’s performance in constructing in-field realities, which, principally, is to tell stories, situation, or things which later produces knowledge that we absorb.

According to Vitor Ferreira Sergio (2014:304-308), the permanent characteristics and the physical pain caused by tattooing is often considered to be able to raise the social life as body harassment extensively. Subsequently, it also raises the social suspicion because the people who tattoo their body, especially those who are defined differently by discourse, are mostly main characters in extraordinary social situation. They tend to be exploited as the main attraction to talk about, especially as they are deemed to violate the normal body, or in other words, as a body that denounces the norm.

Discussing the representation concept, Hall (1997:18) emphasizes how we/they give, build, and produce meaning of something through a language. This is, of course, related to the construction of tattoo-related discourse. On the other hand, Foucault states that representation is not only about the production of meaning, but also the production of knowledge which is related with power through a discourse (Hall:27-28). He sees power and knowledge as the two sides of a coin, like the two faces of a piece; one is inseparable from the other. There is no power relation that is not connected to the formation of a knowledge field, as well as there is no knowledge that does not presuppose and build power connection (Adlin, 2016:28).

An arrest of a criminal that makes it into news in many media, with extensive highlights to their tattooed part of the body, has created a generalization that tattoo and criminality are inseparable entity. Foucault’s confirmation (1977:26-27) about the effect of power to the body places it in the middle of a struggle among knowledge-power form, which writes and classifies them differently in power regime and its own truth. Hatib Abdul Kadir Olong (2006) describes in a book he wrote, *Tattoo*:

*“For so long, the media has been the information agent of underdog criminal power, which, generally, can be easily immobilized by the country’s authority with its police officers. It shows that country-police combination is equitably respected and absolutely obeyed as a justifier.”*

The connection to this is how a tattoo related discourse and the discursive practice that builds them in statements made in a news text produces knowledge about how bad people and a set of law system rule criminal and criminality. Take for instance, a news item in Liputan6.com entitled *Relapsed! Tattooed Recidivist Burglar Jailed Again* (7 April 2018). Here, the term *“tattooed recidivist burglar”* in the news has constructed our knowledge about the subject criminal or bad people. This strengthen our/their knowledge about tattoo, a particular

## MEDIO

Vol 1, No 2, July-December 2019, pp. 77-90

institutional practice which works to handle how to talk about, order, take control, to giving appropriate law enforcement to a tattooed body. Tattoo itself means a scratch, design, or symbol made on the skin permanently. In *The Arts of the New Zealand*, Niscolas (in Barry & Mariant, 200:2) describes that the word tattoo originated from Tahiti language *tatau* which means putting sign on someone's body skin by pricking, scratching or cutting with sharp objects that has been dipped into coloring substance so that it is more long lasting.

Every power which is built and created through tattoo related knowledge and discourse is then deemed true. The truth is produced in which the public are herded to follow the set truth. Foucault (1980:119) reminds that knowledge is not always about power that operates negatively, like felon punishment or its control repression, but he also thinks that knowledge-power combination is as productive for this matter, like culturing happiness, creating another discourse that crosses and penetrates from all different directions which can be found in every place in social life. Instead of liberating them from censure, they are introduced into brand new knowledge like how tattoo discourse can also works in criminal, religious, and medical discourse.

Hence, this research is significant in examining how the tattooed subjects are produced in Kompas.com, Liputan6.com, and Detik.com by using Foucault's representation theory and discursive approach as quoted in Stuart Hall.

### Representation with Discursive Approach

The representation concept was first introduced by Stuart Hall (1997) in his book *Representation*. Hall explains that representation is a production of meaning through language and that it is connected with culture. '*Representation means using a language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people.*' Furthermore, Hall states that representation is an important part of a process where meaning is produced and exchange of different culture happens. He emphasizes the concept of representation on how we give, build, and produce meaning of something through a language:

*Language is therefore the second system of representation involved in the overall process of constructing meaning. Our shared conceptual map must be translated into a common language, so that we can correlate our concept and ideas with certain written word, spoken sounds, or visual images. The general term we use for words, sound, or images which carry meaning is sign. These between them we carry around in our heads and together they make up the meaning-systems of our culture. (Hall, 1997:18)*

The same culture must have the same conceptual map and sign interpretation to be able to decipher the language signs. This way, meaning can be communicated effectively among the people. Language, according to Hall, consists of several signs that are arranged in several relations. Yet, the signs can only be meaningful if we have the codes to translate our concept into the language and the other way around. The codes stated by Hall is the common conceptual map that is learned and unconsciously appreciated when we become part of a culture (Hall, 1997:28)

The representation concept is then drawn further to the constructive approach (when meaning is built inside and through a language) since Hall assumes that this approach is the most significant one related to cultural study. There are two models of the constructive approach; the semiotic approach and discursive approach. The first is greatly influenced by Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, while the latter is often related to a French philosopher and historian Michael Foucault (Hall, 1997:15). This study prioritizes more on the discursive approach.

Representation with discursive approach was developed by Foucault. In a narrow sense, he uses the word ‘representation’ which focuses on discourse, knowledge and power, as well as questions about subject. Foucault, through Hall, states that representation is not only about the production of meaning, but also production of knowledge which relates to power through discourse, just like what he always emphasizes; *“relation power, not relation meaning.”* (Hall, 1997:27-28). Quoting Foucault in his book, *Power/Knowledge*;

*Here I believe one’s point of reference should not be to the great model of language (langue) and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power, not relations of meaning (1980:114);*

He expresses the shifting of a language into a discourse, since he learned that discourse is a system of representation. Generally ‘discourse’ is used in linguistics concept, but to Foucault there is a distinction to this one:

*A group of statements which provide a language for talking about—a way of representing the knowledge about—a particular topic at a particular historical moment. Discourse is about production of knowledge through language. But.. since all social practices entail meaning, and meanings shape and influence what we do—our conduct—all practices have been a discursive aspect. (Hall, 1977:29)*

According to Foucault, we can only have knowledge of something if it has a meaning, affects our action and behaviour, and that this is a discourse (Hall. 1997:30). Take for example, a tattoo discourse. It is not only the meaning relation which tattoo has which can give us the truth about it, but also the relation of knowledge-power which spread around the tattoo discourse. This one is the discursive practice.

The main point of a discursive practice is that a discourse produces knowledge, objects, subjects, and different knowledge practices from one time period to another without continuity (Hall 1997:31). Foucault, in *The Archeology of Knowledge*, explains:

*... all the statements that named it, divided it up, described it, explained it, traced its developments, indicated its various correlations, judged it, and possibly gave it speech by articulating, in its name, discourse that were to be taken as its own (1972:32)*

Then, he provides examples about the discursive practice with ‘craziness’ –mentally ill people and ‘sexuality’ –homosexuals, who only appear on medical, psychiatric, and institutional discourse. The knowledge and practice of these subjects is produced through a discourse and

## MEDIO

Vol 1, No 2, July-December 2019, pp. 77-90

ruled by a discursive practice and the society's discipline technique (social system) in a certain occasion.

Then, the discourse produces knowledge/power. Foucault focuses more on the how the knowledge is applied throughout a discursive practice, which is in organizing a certain institution to set others' behaviour/action. This concept, as Hall states, leads to the relation of knowledge, power, and body. The knowledge is ever-connected in relation to the power because it is always implemented within social rules in a particular 'body' practice. This background marks the development in constructionism approach towards representation (Hall, 1997:32)

### Knowledge, Power, and Truth

The production of knowledge underpins power because every power that is built, established, and manifested through a particular knowledge and discourse creates a particular truth (Episteme) and knowledge which generates an authority effect. Truth is not understood as something that drops from the sky, nor an abstract concept. On the other hand, it is produced every time power generates the truth itself, in which public are influenced to follow the truth that has been established.

Foucault tends to think that knowledge does not have to be about direct operating power, ruthless repressing behaviour, nor sharing a civilization (as in sharing culture or knowledge), but he emphasizes on the application and the effectiveness of the knowledge-power more than the questioning of its 'truth' (Hall, 1997:33). Knowledge-power is used to put other people's behaviour, limitation, and rules and discipline practice, in order. Take for example a person with deviancy. His situation as a deviant will affects the treatment on how to order, take control, and punish him. Hence, the knowledge-power rule cannot be applied in void; sometimes it works through a certain technology and strategy, situation, historical context, and institutional regime. Foucault states:

*"Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth. Its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault, 1980:131)*

From here, Foucault develops a new conception of power. He says that power does not function in a form of chain, but it spreads and not monopolized by one center (Foucault, 1980:98). In another words, he defines power as light that shines from not only one source or a single place, but penetrates from all different directions. The connection of power could break through all level of social existence; hence, can be found operating in every place where social life exists. Just as he says, power is not always negative; repressing what it wants to control, but it is also productive; transverse and creating something (inducing happiness, knowledge,

producing discourse) which runs through every social body (Foucault, 1980:119). Hall takes this part by mentioning it like a law system, which produces books, conversations, rules, recognition, etc. and sex programs, which induce preach, novels, stories and magazine features, medical advice and essays, thesis, and learned research programs like safe sex to the emergence of pornography industry (Hall, 1997:33).

Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish* (1977:26-27), mentions the term “microphysics” from the study of microphysics. He assumes that the effect of power could enter ‘deep into the society’ which is done to a body. It is understood not as a property, but as a strategy that the domination effect it has caused is not for a deprivation, but for disposition, maneuvers, tactics, and techniques. Then, a critical question emerges from Foucault’s arguments; for what object is the microphysics power that he has applied? He said it is for the body. He positions the body in the middle of a fight among any kinds of knowledge/power, distinctive formation and discursive tools, classifying and writing a body differently in an authority regime and its own truth. Hall (1997:35) explains that the body is not only the actual body that the humans have. This particular body is produced in a discourse, based on different discursive formation; the knowledge about criminal and criminality that are seen as true to change and prevent criminality, about how specific punishment tools and technology are at that very time.

### **The Production of Subject in Discourse**

In a representation concept with the discursive approach that is explained by Foucault, the focus is on the discourse, knowledge and power, as well as the questions about the subject. He states that subjects, who obey rules and conventions, are produced through a discourse. In his writing, *The Subject and The Power* (in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982), he explains about subject and power which has been the main focus for his research in the last twenty years. He states that it is a discourse, not a subject that produces knowledge. In other words, it is not a subject’s activity which produces a set of knowledge, useful or resistance to power. It is in fact the power, the process and struggle that come across it and shape it, which will determine the form and domain possibility of knowledge (Foucault, 1977:28).

Discussing about subject and power, Foucault explains more specifically about two definitions of the word subject; the first is a subject that obeys other people by control and dependence and the second is a subject who is bound to his/her own identity by consciousness and self-recognition.

*...subject to someone else by control and dependence; and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to (Foucault, 1982:781)*

This form of power applies to daily life which categorizes individuals, embedding itself to its own identity, forcing the law of truth that he and others have to recognize. This one is a form of power embodiment that subjugates and makes subject. Within discursive approach, Foucault’s concept of subject, according to Hall, is produced through a discourse from two

## **MEDIO**

*Vol 1, No 2, July-December 2019, pp. 77-90*

different places or common senses. First, the discourse itself is the one who produces the subject figure embodied in the form of certain knowledge. The subject is defined by the discourse with certain expected attributes like mentally ill people, hysteric woman, homosexuals, criminal, etc. Foucault states that all individuals will become subjects of a certain discourse; hence they will also become knowledge bearers resulting from the discourse. This proves that the discourse indeed produces the subjects so that they become meaningful and effective (Hall, 1997:40)

Foucault (1982:786) mentions that the relation of power and communication (transmitting information through language, sign system, or other symbolic media) is a particular way to take action towards other people in a certain discourse. Referring to this research, the subjects in a tattoo discourse is produced by online media in the form of particular knowledge like bad people, beautiful women, good people, police, etc. so that the media, as a communication resource, acts as a system ruled and conditioned to materialize a subject.

### **Research Method**

The method used in this research is qualitative data processing with the use of interpretation towards several news statements. This research covers discursive formation to analyze tattoo discourse as seen on news by following Stuart Hall (1977:30). (1) The statements about tattoo which give a particular knowledge, (2) rules that determine ways to discuss tattoo which define 'truth' (3) the subjects embodied in a discourse with some expected attributes, (4) how a knowledge about tattoo obtains its authority, (5) institutional practice to handle subject whose actions are controlled.

### **Data Collection Technique**

This research is inseparable from the observation process on six news items published in 2017 and 2018 (hard and soft news) in Kompas.com, Liptan6.com, and Detik.com which produce the tattooed subjects within a tattoo discourse in online mass media. The researcher analyses the news items thoroughly from the title to the news body regarding the tattoo discourse.

### **Finding and Discussion**

In his writing about knowledge-power, Foucault is able to give us a reference to analyze subjects who are produced and embodied in a tattoo discourse with a depiction of a certain body attribute. He argues that power is productive, going across and creates a shape of knowledge which runs through all social bodies. The implementation of power that is quoted by Foucault (1982:789) says that a total action structure is taken for possible other actions such as induction, punishment, privilege or complication. Hence, power is a way to rule or react based on other people's action.

The subject in this research is defined as subjects that are produced through tattoo discourse in online mass media Kompas.com, Liputan6.com, and Detik.com. All individuals and groups, as well as the social practice that surrounding it are produced in a media-text framework

as a discursive formation and become the knowledge bearer and power working practice at the same time. The result of this research is the production of the subjects “bad people” and “good people” depicted by a discourse with certain attributes and obey discursive rules.

### **Bad People**

“Bad People” refers to individuals who have tattoo and have committed crimes, such as stealing, killing, robbing, harrying, and other malicious deeds. In relation to this research, the meaning of “bad people” should be related to criminal with certain attributes, laws that regulate the criminal, institutions that deal with the criminals, and other things that are produced and are organized by discourse formation. Subject definition that is portrayed in tattooed criminals emphasizes on the body with tattoos which can lead to practices and techniques of power in police institutions. Foucault (1982) stated that power has communication relation that can transmit information through language, signs, and symbols to deal with one person to another.

The subject of “Bad People” that are reported in Kompas.com entitled *The Characteristics of “Bad Boys” Gang, Having Tattoo of Gang’s Name on Neck and Leg (Ciri Anggota Geng “Bad Boys”, Pakai Tato Nama Geng di Leher dan Kaki)* (12/07/2018), shows that the news represented subjects with “Bad Boys” tattoo being engraved on their body and belong to member of street gangster.

The members of “Bad Boys” gangster have special characteristics on their body...., every “Bad Boys” member has tattoo engraved with their gang’s name.

“We wish them extirpated. However, after they plead guilty and come out of jail, they commit another crime. They will be recidivist”, Ali stated. As what has reported previously, RS was shot death by police officer. Beside RS, police officers had successfully crippled the other five members of “Bad Boys”.

The name “Bad Boys” – as used for the gang’s name – refers to “Boys with Bad Attitude” which can be connected to the meaning of gang, teenagers group with similar social background. The afore-mentioned discourse practice gives knowledge that all members of the gang that have tattoo on their body are bad people or criminals. When discussing about the construction of bad people in this case, there is other subject/group that appears i.e. police officers who handle the bad people. Indeed, the successful roles of police institution in this context are arresting bad people, disciplining bad people, and handling crimes.

Liputan6.com also presents similar subject as Kompas.com entitled *Relapsed! Tattooed Recidivist Burglar Jailed Again (Tak Kapok! Garong Bertato Doyan Bolak-balik Masuk Bui)* (April 07 2018). The news described “Garong” with tattoos all over the body who became a recidivist of burglary. The term “Garong” in this report referred to a robber or a thief. Therefore, it can be stated that the construction of the reports connects a crime and tattoo as the robber has tattoo on his body.

A robber with abstract tattoo all over his body was captured with his female partner as they wanted to rob a house...

## MEDIO

Vol 1, No 2, July-December 2019, pp. 77-90

*Hardiansyah alias Hamka (37) seemed to have no remorse after being jailed for similar crime. The robber that lived in Jalan Kemauan, Makassar, captured by police in the same case although he has just being freed from being imprison in Rumah Tahanan (Rutan) Klas 1 Makassar*

The subject that was constructed by the discourse manifested the role of police as subject that handle the act of crime committed by the subject burglar. The discourse describe police officers and law enforcement as the subject that are always present (on behalf of particular interest) to handle the crime. It is, indeed, in line with polices' duty as law enforcer for the society.

Detik.com also presented a report entitled *Sadistic Robbers with Naruto Tattoo Jabbed Laborer in Karawang (Komplotan Begal Sadis Bertato Kartun Naruto Bacok Buruh Karawang)* (03/05/2018). The "Group" here referred to people who commit crime while "Begal" referred to robbers. The produced subject in this news was a group of robbers with emphasizes on the interwoven connection of a crime and tattoo within social system.

*...the four members agreed to tattoo their arms with Itachi Uchiha tattoo, one of ninja warriors of Akatsuki Group in Naruto anime...*

The news highlighted the burglars' bodies that had Itachi Uchiha, a member of Akatsuki Group that represents criminal gang who is famous for slaughter in Naruto anime, tattoo on. The subject burglars in this report seemed to intentionally attach the meaning of them being both the owner of tattooed body and the criminal. The report also reported the existence of police handling the case. Therefore, the act of the burglars as subject is related to the law which has power to handle crimes, namely the power of police officers over criminals.

### Good People

Foucault (1982) argues that there are other authority aside from domination power and exploitation that form new subject, i.e. religion and spirituality, to take direct part on one's spiritual life which has relation on the salvation and the truth written on holy books/religious texts. As Foucault discusses pastoral authority within Christian institutions, the researchers discussed this matter on other religions, particularly Islam. The researcher figured out movements of character formation; how subjects were constructed to be more religious so that the title of "Good People" would be embed on them regarding the fact that they had tattoos in the past. Foucault argues that this sort of power guarantees individual's salvation in the present world as well as the next world. This power also pays attention to every individual and perceives what is inside the mind and soul that it enables the individual to spill the deepest secret. A set of mundane goals is replaced by spiritual goals through the opening of righteous path to achieve better spiritual life through the hijra of the tattooed people as pictured in the discourse. From Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia-KBBI 2019) Hijra means migrate or getting away temporarily from a place to another better place for specific

purposes (salvation, goodness) or can be comprehended as the changing of attitude and behavior to be better. Indeed, the discourse emphasized that the power of da’wah community replaces the power of da’i to handle tattoo by holding the principal of economy and medic by providing free services along with special requirements.

Kompas.com reported an article entitled *Free Tattoo Removal, Removing The Ink Through Prayer (Program Hapus Tato Gratis, Menghapus Tinta dengan Doa (14/09/2017)*. The report described a person (Ucu) who was joining free tattoo removal provided by Da’wah and Social Community (*Komunitas Dakwah dan Sosial/Kodas*) which required the participants to memorize Ar-Rahman, one of the chapters (Surah) in Holy Koran. Ucu as the subject was depicted as a person who undertook hijra, did repentance, and underwent better life since he decided to remove the tattoos on his body. Ucu who was manifested in discursive way give the researcher knowledge on special attributes:

*The guy from Bandung Regency had strong willingness to remove the tattoos that had been part of his body. The act of removing the tattoo became the beginning of undertaking better life or hijra.*

*“I did tattooing just for fun although the environment had influenced me too. Then, I began questioning the significance. Deep in my heart, I felt something was wrong and unclean; having tattoo on my back for four years”.*

*“I was born with clean body and sinless, so I want to have at least clean body when I died later”*

The afore-mentioned text creates an obsession towards the subject’s identity as Moslem to be better in the present life as well as the next life. The discursive project depicted the power of individual/da’wah community (Kodas) from religious and social institution directly replacing the role of da’i to serve and to handle Ucu spiritual needs to remove his tattoo on “Tattoo Removal Program for Better Life”.

*...holy Koran memorization, Rifki Saiful Rohman, one of the committee members states that the program aims to facilitate the tattooed people to get closer to God. In fact, it is easy for those who are willing to do hijra to remove their tattoos.*

*Another requirement for the participants is that they have to memorize Surah Ar-Rahman. Those who want to undergo tattoo removal have to memorize and to recite the Surah before the removal treatment is given. “The most important thing is that they have to be serious. Second, they have to memorize Surah Ar-Rahman, then they have to join coaching program so that the hijra process go well. You can say that it will bind their willingness to do hijra...”*

*Rifki states that the general purpose of tattoo removal program is to spread messages that the community is willing to be facilitator for tattooed people to have better quality of life and to be more religious.*

## MEDIO

Vol 1, No 2, July-December 2019, pp. 77-90

*"Never ever try to have tattoo! However, Inshaa Allah we will be able to be facilitator for those who has gotten their tattoo and want to be better. Prayer is the most essential. We only want to do good deeds and we wish it to be hujjah in front of Allah".*

Another point to pin was that the production of health practitioners (doctor) as a subject that handle Ucu as patient in free tattoo removal program.

*Rifki states that those who remove the tattoo are guaranteed to be qualified and has been medically certified.*

*The guarantee is important to ensure that the program is halal and legal. "Those in charge of removing the tattoos are certified doctors and health practitioners".*

The knowledge of tattoo on medical field has received authority by inducing truth that guarantee tattoo removal participants' health and safety. Foucault states that this is surely a form of power to overpower the subjects; in this case doctors' authority over the patients. Therefore, Fault (1982:784) theory on religious institutions that are spreading into social body is possibly correct. He finds many supports on many institutions which are related to power strategy, including "free service" strategy that can attract more patients; later both sides use each other as means of achieving the purposes. This is surely manifested to free and passive subject that can be persuaded by using sophisticated yet cheap and safe technology to achieve wellness.

Liputan6.com reported an article entitled Free Tatto Removal by Memorizing 50 Koran Surah (*Hapus Tato Gratis dengan Mahar Hapalan 50 Ayat Al-Quran.* (15/10/2017). This news described a subject that was determined to remove the tattoo.

*"I should be clean as I have vowed to do hijra..."*

*He claimed the tattoo removal program helps a lot. Aside from being free, the required religious deeds ensured him that he had taken the right path.*

*"I feel uneasy whenever I perform prayer as I have not been cleaned from tattoo ink, thus I force myself to join the program".*

The subject in this case was defined as being obsessive to be better person with better quality of life by cleaning the body from tattoo so that the person can be freed from the dark past. The subject was bound by his identity as truth quoted from religious orders. The emphasis of Tediaana as someone who has done hijra and tawbah is strengten by these statements:

*However, his condition does not reduce his strong will to do hijra. For him, having better life in the future and being free from his dark past become his core motive on undergoing tattoo removal.*

*Still, the most important point of this program is serving as well as inviting people to obtain peacefulness through Islam.*

*The Production of Tattooed “Bad People” and “Good People” as a Subject (Kurniasih)*

*“This is the best path that has been given by Allah to me. Alhamdulillah, it is free and I only have to memorize 50 Surah from Koran”.*

The discursive project in this case leads to authority that replaces the role of health practitioners to handle and to serve patients’ needs of removing the tattoo on “Tatto Removal Hijra” program. In addition, the program serves as a means of serving patients’ spiritual needs as well as safety.

*He emphasizes that the tattoo removal program being done by him along with the other nine people has had legal permission from medical field; thus, the program is halal and legal. “We did the training in advance, and it was not careless treatment. We had certified as well as professional doctors and practitioners”, he adds.*

From this discursive information, there is another authority aiming at influencing subject behavior. The authority does not give the participants freedom of choices on removing the tattoo, yet smoothly guiding them to undergo laser tattoo removal treatment.

*All processes of tattoo removal are conducted based on clinical standards, from anesthesia of the arm part that will undergo laser treatment to the process of removing the ink that has stayed on the arm for years. “I could feel the heat”, he stated.*

*Rizky Muhammad as one of the committees of “Tatto Hijrah Removal” in Garut Regency states that the practice of tattoo removal in his program is better than having the tattoo removed by drinking traditional herbs or using traditional tattoo removal machine.*

*“The traditional method usually cripples the skin and possibly causes keloids as the skin is taken after going through anesthesia. I have asked dermatologist, and laser method is still the best treatment”.*

Foucault (1982:792) argues that his analysis on the relation of power has stipulated a system that enables a person to act over other act. As traditional way of tattoo removal is claimed to be unsafe for the skin, thus a safer method using technology is proposed. This discursive formation on tattoo placed medical power technology to be made available and affects subjects’ behavior, reactions, and direct experiences.

Detik.com wrote an article entitled “Tattoo Removal Participants Have to memorize Surah Ar Rahman” *Peserta Hapus Tato Gratis Wajib Hafal Surat Ar Rahman* (14/09/2017) which depicted tattoo removal program by Da’wa and Social Community (Komunitas Dakwah dan Sosial/Kodas) to have special rules to be obeyed by those who want to get the service.

*“It is all free. They only need to have strong determination to willingly do hijra. Second, they have to memorize Surah Ar-Rahman”*

There was a person named Riyo Hilmi who is portrayed as subject to replace the role of “Da’i” by relying on his da’wa community to serve the needs of those who want to remove the tattoo by showing salvation in the next world and guarantee it in the present world.

## MEDIO

Vol 1, No 2, July-December 2019, pp. 77-90

*Riyo stated that the requirement of Ar-rahman memorization could not be separated from its meaning. Allah, glorified and exalted be He, created everything including what will happen in heaven and hell.*

*“When we scrutinize the translation, “So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny? It includes how we were created. Thus we should be at least clean all the deeds we have done before we die”.*

Surah Ar-Rahman discusses God’s favor which in this case what is emphasis is not about threat but spiritual happiness as one is successfully transform to be better self and to be better person for other by using knowledge from Koran. Foucault describes this as having relation to religious institutions that spread to social body (Foucault, 1982:784)

All in all, the tattoo discourse on news that produce knowledge-power, which also applied in certain institutions through discursive practices to control other people behaviors will result on the relationship of knowledge, power, and body. Body in this case is not merely our true form, yet it becomes property that is embodied by knowledge and tattoo discourse. The purpose is not only negatively repressed, but also reducing happiness, next world salvation, and so forth.

## Conclusion

Discourse representation uses conceptual needs which are translated into a language to be given a meaning that can be exchanged effectively. However, Foucault (1980:114) stated that representation is not merely about producing meaning, but also a form of power through context. Then, context discusses knowledge through language as social practices need meanings which lead and influence acts and behaviors. In fact, all those practices have discourse aspect that is well-organized.

Discourse practices concerning the report of tattoo on online mass media, Kompas.com, Liputan6.com, and Detik.com in this case, lead to further knowledge about the described subject. The tattoo context which has been constructed by Kompas.com, Liputan6.com, and Detik.com produce a course of “Bad People” and “Good People” that surely cannot be separated from the power around it since every knowledge on particular subject will be based on power which in this case do not only repressed negatively so that it results on punishment for “bad people” in the context of crime but also “good people” in the context of serving the religion.

The “bad people” that are reported by Kompas.com, Liputan6.com, and Detik.com indicate that there is relationship between a crime and a tattoo on the subject being reported. It is than explained that in this case police officers take the role to give punishment based on the law. On the course of “good people” there is an indication on the relationship of repentance (tawba) and religion. In this case, religious institutions provide tattoo removal services as a beginning to be a new and better self (hijra). Furthermore, the production of “good people also

lead to new power of medic over the patient in term of using medical technology to give tattoo removal services in addition to economics practices to guarantee patients wellness.

### **References**

- Adlin, Alfathri. 2016. *Michel Foucault: Kuasa/Pengetahuan, (Rezim) Kebenaran, Parrhesia*. Bandung. Prodi Filsafat Agama, Fakultas Ushuluddin, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati. Jurnal Vol 1, No 1. JAQFI
- Ferreira, Sergio V. 2014. *Becoming a heavily tattooed young body: from a bodily experience to a body project*. Portugal: SAGE.
- Foucault. Michel. 1972. *The Archeology of Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon Book. Foucault. Michel. 1977. *Discipline and Punish*. Great Britain: Penguin Books.Ltd
- Foucault. Michel. 1980. *Power/Knowledge*. Great Britain: Harvester Press.
- Foucault. Michel. 1982. „*The Subject and Power*“, dalam Dreyfus and Rabinow (eds), *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Hall, Stuart. 1997. *Representation*. London : SAGE Publication Ltd.
- Nugroho, Putri & Laksmi. 2012. *Memetakan Lanskap Industri Media Kontemporer di Indonesia (Edisi Bahasa Indonesia)*. Jakarta: CIPG dan HIVOS.
- Olong, Kadir HA. 2006. *Tato*. Yogyakarta: LKIS.
- Waziz, Kun. 2012. *Media Massa dan Konstruksi Realitas*. Yogyakarta: Aditya Media Publishing.