

Language Morality and Affect in Neoliberal Indonesia

In recent years, the concept of neoliberalism has permeated various aspects of Indonesian society, including language use, morality, and affect. Neoliberalism, as an economic and political ideology, emphasizes individual freedom, market competition, and reduced government regulation. This article delves into the intricate connections between language, morality, and affect in the context of neoliberalism in Indonesia.

Language in Neoliberal Indonesia

Language plays a vital role in shaping social dynamics and power relations. In a neoliberal society like Indonesia, language becomes commodified and instrumentalized to serve economic interests. English, as the global language of business and technology, takes on a dominant role, becoming a marker of social status and employability.

This linguistic hierarchy perpetuates inequality and widens the gap between those who speak English fluently and those who do not. Those proficient in English are more likely to have access to better job opportunities, educational resources, and social networks. Consequently, the importance placed on English proficiency creates a sense of linguistic and cultural alienation for those who are unable to meet these standards.

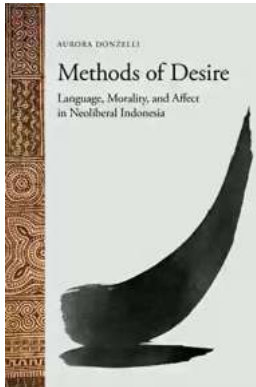
Methods of Desire: Language, Morality, and Affect in Neoliberal Indonesia by Mitsuo Fuchida(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

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Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled
Print length : 238 pages



Language, Morality, and Identity

Within a neoliberal framework, language becomes intimately linked to concepts of morality and identity. The ability to speak English fluently is often associated with being "modern," "cosmopolitan," and "intellectually superior." These moral judgments create a sense of hierarchy and superiority among language users, reinforcing existing power structures.

The moral dimension of language proficiency can be seen in the stigmatization of local languages and dialects. Speakers of regional languages often face discrimination and prejudice, while those who primarily speak English or standardized Indonesian are praised for their linguistic choices. This leads to the erosion of indigenous languages and cultural diversity, as individuals strive to conform to the dominant language model dictated by neoliberal ideals.

Affect and Language Use

Affect, or the emotional dimension of language use, is also deeply influenced by neoliberal ideologies. The market-driven nature of neoliberalism fosters a hyper-competitive environment, where individuals are encouraged to constantly brand and market themselves. This self-commodification extends to language use,

where individuals strategically choose words and phrases that evoke positive affect in others.

In this context, language becomes a tool for self-promotion, where individuals use linguistic tactics to manipulate and influence others. Emotional manipulation and persuasion techniques are employed to create desired affective responses, ultimately serving individual interests and enhancing personal branding.

The Implications of Language Morality and Affect

The intertwining of language, morality, and affect in neoliberal Indonesia has significant implications for social cohesion and inclusivity. The emphasis on English proficiency as a marker of success creates linguistic hierarchies that marginalize those who do not meet the standard. This exclusionary language policy reinforces existing inequalities and widens the gap between the privileged and the marginalized.

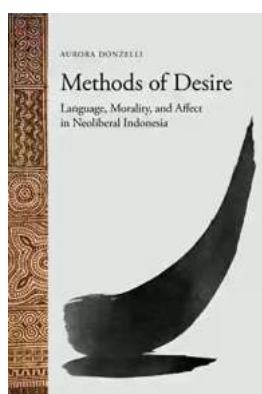
The erosion of regional languages further undermines cultural diversity and diminishes the voices of marginalized communities. Language should be celebrated as a means of expression and identity, rather than a tool for exclusion and moral judgment.

To create a more inclusive society, it is essential to recognize the diverse linguistic practices and value systems present in Indonesia. By embracing linguistic diversity and challenging the dominant language hierarchy, we can promote a society where language is not used as a mechanism of power but as a means of mutual understanding and cultural enrichment.

The relationship between language, morality, and affect in neoliberal Indonesia showcases how neoliberal ideologies shape and influence linguistic practices. The commodification of language, moral judgments related to proficiency, and

affective manipulation all contribute to the perpetuation of inequality and exclusion.

To foster a more inclusive society, it is crucial to challenge these dominant language ideologies and embrace linguistic diversity. By recognizing the value of regional languages, celebrating cultural differences, and fostering a sense of linguistic inclusivity, we can create a society that values language for its richness and diversity, rather than as a tool for moral judgment and exclusion.



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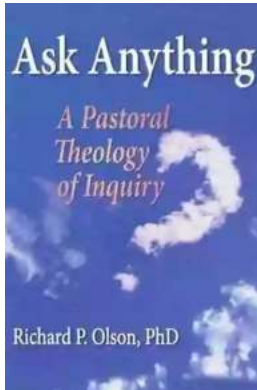


Since the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s, Indonesia has undergone a radical program of administrative decentralization and neoliberal reforms. In *Methods of Desire*, author Aurora Donzelli explores these changes through an innovative perspective—one that locates the production of neoliberalism in novel patterns of language use and new styles of affect display. Building on almost two decades of fieldwork, Donzelli describes how the growing influence of transnational lending agencies is transforming the ways in which people desire and voice their expectations, intentions, and entitlements within the emergent participatory democracy and restructuring of Indonesia's political economy. She argues that a largely overlooked aspect of the Era Reformasi concerns the

transition from a moral regime centered on the expectation that desires should remain hidden to a new emphasis on the public expression of individuals' aspirations.

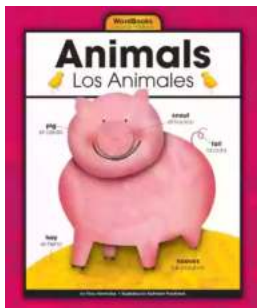
The book examines how the large-scale institutional transformations that followed the collapse of the Suharto regime have impacted people's lives and imaginations in the relatively remote and primarily rural Toraja highlands of Sulawesi. A novel concept of the individual as a bundle of audible and measurable desires has emerged, one that contrasts with the deep-rooted reticence toward the expression of personal preferences. The spreading of foreign discursive genres such as customer satisfaction surveys, training sessions, electoral mission statements, and fundraising auctions, and the diffusion of new textual artifacts such as checklists, flowcharts, and workflow diagrams are producing forms of citizenship, political participation, and moral agency that contrast with the longstanding epistemologies of secrecy typical of local styles of knowledge and power. Donzelli's long-term ethnographic study examines how these foreign protocols are being received, absorbed, and readapted in a peripheral community of the Indonesian archipelago.

Combining a telescopic perspective on our contemporary moment with a microscopic analysis of conversational practices, the author argues that the managerial forms of political rationality and the entrepreneurial morality underwriting neoliberal apparatuses proliferate through the working of small cogs, that is, acts of speech. By examining these concrete communicative exchanges, she sheds light on both the coherence and inconsistency underlying the worldwide diffusion of market logic to all domains of life.



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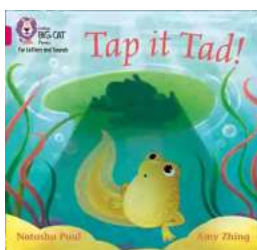
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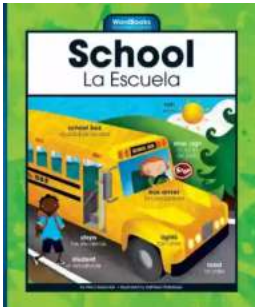
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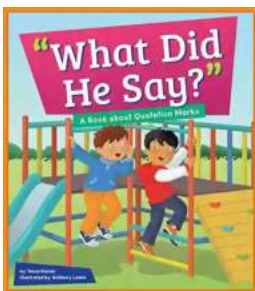
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