



DISARTIKULASI SUARA MAHASISWA DAN LEGITIMASI NEGARA DALAM WACANA MEDIA ONLINE: ANALISIS KRITIS 2022–2024

DISARTICULATION OF STUDENT VOICES AND STATE LEGITIMACY IN ONLINE MEDIA DISCOURSE: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS 2022–2024

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Abstract

This study examines how online media frames student demonstrations and how student voices are disarticulated in the news, especially in relation to the state's legitimacy strategy. The study period covers 2022 to 2024, when the intensity of the student movement increased in response to various public policy issues. The main purpose of this research is to uncover the practice of digital mainstream media representation of student actions and dissect the ideological power relations between state actors and civil society groups in the realm of media discourse. The approach used is Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (AWK), which includes analysis at three levels: textual structure (lexical and syntactic), discourse practice (the process of production and consumption of texts), and social practice (ideological and institutional context). Five news articles from Kompas.com were analyzed in depth as the main sample. The results of the study show that online media tends to frame student actions through dictionaries that reduce the meaning of their struggle, such as "chaos," "secured," and "not conducive," while prioritizing quotes from state officials or security forces. This disarticulation plays a role in strengthening the state's authority in shaping public opinion and shows the tendency of the media as a hegemonic agent. These findings emphasize the urgency of ideological awareness-based media literacy so that people are able to criticize and not passively accept media discours



Keywords : Discourse, Media, Students, Legitimacy, Ideology

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana media online membingkai demonstrasi mahasiswa serta bagaimana suara mahasiswa mengalami disartikulasi dalam pemberitaan, khususnya dalam kaitannya dengan strategi legitimasi negara. Periode kajian mencakup tahun 2022 hingga 2024, saat intensitas gerakan mahasiswa meningkat sebagai respons terhadap berbagai isu kebijakan publik. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah mengungkap praktik representasi media arus utama digital terhadap aksi mahasiswa dan membedah relasi kuasa ideologis antara aktor negara dan kelompok masyarakat sipil dalam ranah wacana media. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) model tiga dimensi dari Norman Fairclough, yang mencakup analisis pada tiga tingkat: struktur tekstual (leksikal dan sintaksis), praktik wacana (proses produksi dan konsumsi teks), serta praktik sosial (konteks ideologis dan institusional). Lima artikel berita dari Kompas.com dianalisis secara mendalam sebagai sampel utama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa media online cenderung membingkai aksi mahasiswa melalui diksi-diksi yang mereduksi makna perjuangan mereka, seperti “kericuhan,” “diamankan,” dan “tidak kondusif,” sembari mengutamakan kutipan dari pejabat negara atau aparat keamanan. Disartikulasi ini berperan dalam memperkuat otoritas negara dalam membentuk opini publik dan menunjukkan kecenderungan media sebagai agen hegemonik. Temuan ini menekankan urgensi literasi media berbasis kesadaran ideologis agar masyarakat mampu mengkritisi dan tidak menerima wacana media secara pasif.

Kata Kunci : Wacana, Media, Mahasiswa, Legitimasi, Ideologi

1. INTRODUCTION

In a digital era characterized by the massive and rapid flow of information, online media plays a central role in shaping public opinion and the construction of social reality. The media no longer functions merely as a conveyor of information, but as an agent of the production of meaning that helps construct socio-political discourse. Through word choice, narrative structure, and information selection, media contributes to shaping people's perception of a particular social event or group (López, 2022).

One of the important arenas in the production of media discourse is the representation of student demonstrations. In Indonesia, student demonstrations have a long history as a form of articulation of the interests of the people and resistance to injustice. Student actions are not only a response to policies that are considered detrimental, but also reflect the dynamics of relations between the state and civil society (Fardyan, 2023). Therefore, how the media frames these actions is important to be critically examined.

The media's representation of student demonstrations is not always neutral. In many cases, the media has actually become a tool for disarticulating student voices through delegitimizing news practices. The use of diction such as "riot", "secured", or "not conducive"



shows how media narratives can reduce the meaning of students' struggles, as well as strengthen the state's position as an authority and rational. In other words, the media has the potential to silence opposition voices in subtle and veiled ways through language (Verger et al., 2019; Rahmadi, 2020).

Previous research has shown the tendency of the media to reproduce dominant discourses that benefit the ruling party. For example, research by Verger et al. (2019) reveals how mass media can contribute to the delegitimization of student protests against market-oriented education reforms. In the Indonesian context, similar studies have also shown a similar pattern, but are still limited to specific issue contexts, and have not specifically highlighted the dynamics of online media discourse in the last two years that have been fraught with political tensions (Putra & Triyono, 2019; Fardyan, 2023).

On the other hand, the development of digital media has changed the landscape of political communication and power relations between the state, society, and the media itself. Online media such as Kompas.com not only has a wide reach, but also a symbolic authority in shaping the public's frame of mind. Therefore, it is important to examine how this mainstream digital media frames the student movement and contributes to the reproduction of the symbolic power of the state through their reporting (Harsono, 2021).

Critical Discourse Analysis (AWK) is a relevant approach in answering this problem. With the three-dimensional model developed by Norman Fairclough—namely textual structure, discourse practice, and social practice—this study can unravel the relationship between language and power that is internalized in news texts. This approach not only observes what is said, but also how and why certain messages are constructed in media discourse (Fairclough, 2018; Nugroho, 2020).

A number of studies have used AWK to analyze media representations of social and political issues. Fardyan (2023), for example, uses this approach to explore media reports about student protests related to fuel price hikes in Indonesia. However, very few studies have specifically examined how online media such as Kompas.com frame student demonstrations in the 2022–2024 period, which are fraught with controversial state political and policy issues (López, 2022; Rahmadi, 2020).

Although there are several studies examining the media's representation of student demonstrations, there are still gaps in the literature on how online media in Indonesia, especially Kompas.com, frame these actions in the current political and social context. In addition, there have not been many studies that use Fairclough's three-dimensional AWK approach to analyze news texts in depth in this context. This research aims to fill this gap by analyzing how Kompas.com represent student demonstrations during the 2022–2024 period.

This research makes a theoretical contribution in the field of media and communication studies by combining Fairclough's three-dimensional AWK approach to analyze media representations of student demonstrations. By analyzing news texts at the textual level, discourse practices, and social practices, this study reveals how online media can play a role in disarticulating student voices and strengthening the legitimacy of the state. The findings of this study are expected to enrich understanding of the role of media in the construction of social and political realities in Indonesia.



2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a critical qualitative approach based on the three-dimensional model Critical Discourse Analysis (AWK) developed by Norman Fairclough (1992, 1995). This approach was chosen because it is in accordance with the research objective of revealing how language in media texts is used as a tool of reproduction of power and ideology, especially in framing student movements and constructing state legitimacy. AWK enables the reading of texts that transcend linguistic surfaces and unravels the power relations hidden in the production and consumption of media discourse.

Fairclough's three-dimensional model became the main framework in the analysis. The first dimension is textual analysis, which focuses on linguistic elements such as lexical choices, syntactic structure, modalities, and the use of metaphors to identify ideological traces in the text. The second dimension is discourse practice, which is an analysis of the process of production and distribution of texts, including the institutional position of the media and the way texts are consumed by the public. The third dimension is social practice, which seeks to understand how texts are associated with broader socio-political contexts, such as power relations between the state, media, and civil society, as well as the ideological interests behind the narratives constructed.

The data sources in this study consist of five online news articles published by Kompas.com in the period 2022 to 2024. The data selection was carried out purposively by considering the relevance of the content of the article to the theme of student demonstrations that are directly related to state policies, such as the Job Creation Law, fuel price increases, and election momentum. The analyzed articles also explicitly display the involvement of state actors and students, as well as show patterns of representation that can be analyzed comparatively in terms of narrative, framing, and discourse structure.

The analysis process is carried out in three stages according to Fairclough's dimensions. In the first stage, text analysis is focused on delegitimizing terms such as "riot", "secured", and "not conducive", as well as analysis of citations and sentence structures that put students in passive or active positions. The second stage includes the analysis of discourse practices, by examining the origins of information (e.g. from official releases of state institutions) and news consumption patterns by the public. The third stage is the analysis of social practices, in which texts are associated with broader ideological contexts, such as the role of the media in supporting the hegemonization of state discourse. The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of theories (Fairclough, Hall, van Dijk, Gramsci), peer discussion, and repeated reading, while reliability is maintained through systematic documentation of the entire analysis process that allows replication by other studies in the future.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to reveal how online media Kompas.com represent student demonstrations throughout 2022–2024, as well as how the practice of this discourse contributes to the process of disarticulating student voices and the formation of state legitimacy. Using the three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (AWK) framework from Fairclough (1995), it was found that Kompas.com news is not neutral, but plays a role in strengthening the dominance of the state narrative through linguistic strategies, selection of sources, and ideological orientation.



a. Textual Dimensions: Lexical and Syntactic Strategies in the Delegitimization of the Student Movement

Textual analysis of five news articles showed that word choice (diction) and syntactic structure were used to frame student actions as a threat to order. Dictions such as "riot", "secured", "anarchic", and "disrupting traffic" consistently appear and form a negative image of student action. For example, in the news "Student Demonstration Riots in Front of the House of Representatives" (April 11, 2022), phrases such as "the crowd began to get out of control" and "the apparatus secured" were used without clarifying the cause or context.

Table of key findings from the lexical analysis:

Yes	News Headlines	Delegitimizing Phrases That Appear
1	<i>Student Demonstrations Riot in Front of the House of Representatives (2022)</i>	riot, uncontrolled mob, secured
2	<i>Student Action Disrupts Jakarta Traffic (2022)</i>	interfere with traffic, secured by officers
3	<i>Demonstration to Reject the Job Creation Law Colored by Clashes (2023)</i>	clash, provocative, not conducive

Passive sentence structures such as "a number of students were secured" tend to obscure the perpetrators (security forces) and implicitly place students as the subject of harassment. This shows a subtle delegitimization strategy through grammar and narrative selection, in accordance with the findings of KhosraviNik (2020) regarding the negative framing of opposition groups in digital media.

b. Dimensions Discourse Practice: Information Production Centralized on State Authorities

At the level of discourse practice, it can be seen that the structure of news production Kompas.com highly dependent on official sources from state institutions. The majority of the quotes in the article are from government or police officials, while student statements are minimal or not raised at all. For example, the following quote was used in the March 21, 2023 news:

"The students started acting anarchically after the police asked them to disperse in an orderly manner," – Head of Public Relations of the Metro Jaya Police.

The statement is not contextualized and presented as if it were an objective fact. There was no attempt to cross-verify or present a narrative from the students. This kind of practice reflects the model of "official source journalism" (Kumar, 2022), which places the government as the main actor in shaping the reality of news.

c. The Dimension of Social Practice: Media as an Agent of State Legitimacy

In the social framework, Kompas.com's position as part of a major media corporation in Indonesia shows an attachment to the narrative of stability and public order. Framing student demonstrations as a disturbance of order, not as a democratic expression, is a form of media participation in the country's ideological hegemony.



These findings are in line with Van Dijk's (2018) concept of *the ideological square*, where the media tends to highlight the negative side of the ideological opponent and the positive side of the dominant institution. The media not only conveys information, but also distributes ideological values that benefit the state and the political elite.

d. Discussion: Contributions to Media Literacy and Hegemony Studies

The results of this study show that mainstream media such as Kompas.com are not free of value, but participate in hegemonic practices through the presentation of narratives that corner students. The articulation of students' voices occurs when their opinions, motivations, and the substance of their demands are removed from the public discourse. This supports Gramsci's (1971) argument that hegemony is established not only through coercion, but through ideological consensus mediated by institutions such as the mass media.

The practical implications of this study lie in the importance of media literacy based on ideological awareness (critical media literacy). People need to be trained to read media texts critically, understand who is speaking, who is being silenced, and what ideologies are being reproduced. In addition, this research also shows the urgency for alternative media to expand public space for civic groups such as students so that the discourse that emerges is more inclusive and balanced.

4. CONCLUSION

This research critically highlights how Kompas.com as a representation of mainstream media in Indonesia has helped shape discourses that support the legitimacy of the state and systematically articulate student voices in the reporting of demonstrations in 2022–2024. Using Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (AWK) approach, it was found that the construction of news texts is not neutral, but rather favors power structures through language strategies that dwarf students' positions as political subjects.

In the textual dimension, lexical choices such as "chaos", "secured", and "not conducive" show subtle but consistent attempts to delegitimize the student movement. Meanwhile, in the practice of discourse, the media prioritizes institutional sources such as security forces and state officials, and places student voices as peripheral elements, if not eliminated altogether. This shows a pattern of news production that is oriented towards state authorities and ignores alternative narratives from civil society.

Sociologically, these findings reflect the power relations that occur between the media and the state in the post-reform political landscape. In the context of neoliberal media operating under economic-political pressure and the interests of national stability, media reporting plays a role in maintaining state hegemony by filtering discourses that are considered not in line with the dominant narrative. The media, in this case, is not only a distributor of information, but also an ideological agent that produces symbolic obedience through representation selection.

Thus, this study emphasizes the importance of strengthening media literacy based on critical and ideological awareness. The public needs to understand that news is not just a mirror of reality, but the result of a social construction full of interests and power. Critical discourse literacy is the key to challenging the dominance of single representation and



opening up articulation space for groups that have been silenced in the public space of the media.

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