

## DOMINATION OF POWER IN MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE DRAFT LAW ON THE INDONESIAN NATIONAL ARMY (TNI): A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Emilia Vetri Rindi Febiani<sup>1</sup>, Erika Dwi Sabrina Putri<sup>2</sup>, Rusdhianti Wuryaningrum<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1, 2, 3</sup> Universitas Jember, Indonesia

Email: [sabrinaerikaa12@gmail.com](mailto:sabrinaerikaa12@gmail.com)

Received  
22 July 2025

Revised  
17 November 2025

Accepted  
3 December 2025

### Abstract

*Language in media discourse is not merely a tool of communication but an arena for the reproduction of power and ideology that shapes socio-political reality. The aim of this research is to reveal how textual structures, social cognition, and social context shape the construction of legislative discourse and influence public perceptions of the legitimacy of the DPR (House of Representatives) and the TNI. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method, with news texts as the primary data source, complemented by supporting literature to strengthen contextual interpretation. The findings show that Detik.com frames the enactment of the TNI Bill by emphasizing the formal legitimacy of the DPR through macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure, including lexical choices, the use of passive constructions, and the omission of dominant actors. The voices of civil society and public protest are presented only in a limited manner, while government actors are foregrounded, directing readers to accept the legislative decision as legitimate and final. The analysis of social cognition reveals that the media shapes collective understandings regarding the legitimacy of state institutions, whereas the social context dimension shows an asymmetrical power relationship between the government and civil society. These findings affirm that media discourse production is not a neutral activity but an ideological instrument to reproduce power domination and control public opinion. This research enhances comprehension of online media discourse regarding military legislation, emphasizing the impact of microstructural strategies and framing on public perception. The findings are expected to serve as a basis for future research to explore cross-media news comparisons, public responses via social media, and the dynamics of legal legitimacy in the context of Indonesian democracy.*

**Keywords:** critical discourse analysis; power; media; draft law TNI

### INTRODUCTION

In the realm of discourse, language is not merely a tool for conveying messages from one party to another. It is a space in which power and ideology shape and reproduce social reality. Within discourse, language regulates how ideas are articulated and received, while simultaneously embedding hidden power relations. Halliday conceptualizes language as a system of social semiotics that is heavily laden with ideological functions in constructing social meaning (Dharmawan et al., 2025). From this perspective, language is not simply a vehicle for information but an arena in which struggles over meaning and power take place. Wuryaningrum (2023) states that discourse is the most complete and highest linguistic construction that functions to convey information in a cohesive and coherent manner. Discourse plays a crucial role in shaping social understanding of

particular issues. It is not only the utilization of language but a manifestation of social practice that perpetuates power and knowledge (Eriyanto, 2019). Discourse emerges as a social construction grounded in specific cultural and political practices. Consequently, any endeavor to comprehend discourse must consider the ideological and social dimensions that support it.

One prominent form of discourse that significantly contributes to the formation of public opinion and social influence is legal discourse. Laws are not just a set of formal rules that everyone must follow; they are also ways of talking about values, ideologies, and power relationships. Yasa (2021) explains that legal products constitute an arena for ideological articulation shaped by socio-political contestation. In this arena, various actors compete to gain legitimacy in determining what is recognized as lawful or unlawful. The creation and reporting of laws and bills should be viewed not only as legal narratives but also as discursive forms that govern meaning and social conduct. In this process, media plays an active role in framing the meaning of laws presented to the public, either consciously or unconsciously (Ratnaningsih, 2019). Consequently, the media functions as a site for the reproduction of legal discourse that can either reinforce or challenge state legitimacy.

Several studies have demonstrated that the media is far from neutral in presenting legal and political discourse. Islamiyah et al. (2024), in their analysis of political news on the portal Kabar24, found that the structure of news discourse—from thematic organization and narrative arrangement to lexical choices—contains ideological interests that reflect certain social conditions. Similar findings are reported by Yanti et al. (2019), whose study of political speeches shows that language in speech texts is strategically employed to construct image and legitimacy through carefully ordered and persuasive structures. Meanwhile, Suparman and Septiadi (2021) identify a pattern of governmental political communication in the legislative process that tends to be unilateral and reactive, thereby triggering prolonged debate and public resistance. These three studies collectively emphasize that media and political texts frequently function as platforms for the preservation or challenge of power. Although previous research has examined power relations and political legitimacy in media coverage, there remains a lack of studies that specifically address the Draft Law/Law on the Indonesian National Armed Forces (RUU/UU TNI) using van Dijk's model. For instance, Sibagariang et al. (2025) analyze news reports on the destruction of TNI ammunition on Kompas.com through the lens of van Dijk, but their focus is still limited to military issues and accountability, rather than the legislative process of the TNI Bill itself. Mustopa and Hamdani (2025), on the other hand, investigate media coverage of resistance to the TNI Law on (Detik.com, 2025) using Theo van Leeuwen's Critical Discourse Analysis model, which methodologically differs from van Dijk's approach because it does not examine text structure, cognition, and context in the way van Dijk emphasizes. Putri et al. (2025) also use van Dijk's model to look at pro-and-contra discourse about military policy on Liputan6. com. Nonetheless, this study remains within the realm of general social discourse and does not specifically examine legislative narratives within the context of state law. Accordingly, there is still a theoretical and empirical gap regarding how online media frames the ratification of the TNI Bill and how such framing relates to power relations and state legitimacy amid public responses. This study therefore offers novelty by applying van Dijk's model comprehensively to news coverage of the ratification of the TNI Bill. Such an approach is expected to provide a more profound understanding of how text structure, social cognition, and social context interact in constructing legislative discourse in the media.

To uncover the workings of power in discourses such as laws or media news, a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach is indispensable. This approach becomes all the more important when media function as ideological channels capable of shaping opinion and regulating public ways of thinking (Rahmawati, 2022). CDA thus serves as an essential tool to unravel language as an instrument of social control. One of the most widely used theories in CDA is Teun A. van Dijk's framework, which is particularly helpful for examining media as a discursive agent in constructing narratives that appear neutral yet potentially contain specific ideological agendas. A recent phenomenon that has attracted public attention is the ratification of the TNI Bill amidst waves of citizen protest. On Thursday, 20 March 2025, the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI) held a Plenary Session that officially passed the TNI Bill into law at the DPR building in Senayan, Central Jakarta (Detik.com, 2025). One day after the law was enacted, various elements of society, including student groups, human rights activists, and civil society organizations, staged protests. They argued that the TNI Bill reopens space for the military's "dual function" (*dwifungsi militer*), which has long been criticized for threatening civilian supremacy and democracy. The new law's provisions allow the TNI to engage in civilian affairs without strict oversight. Such an arrangement raises concerns about the potential re-emergence of military dominance in state governance, reminiscent of the New Order era.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand how the media can reproduce, reinforce, or even challenge power narratives through the news it produces. In the midst of ongoing democratization, the role of a critical media becomes vital to maintaining a free and balanced public sphere. In light of the controversial ratification of the TNI Bill, it is important to examine how online media frame this issue—whether they predominantly support the state's narrative or provide space for critical voices from civil society. Based on the foregoing background, this study aims to reveal how text structure, social cognition, and social context shape Detik.com coverage of the ratification of the TNI Bill. The research is expected to offer more profound insights into how the media frame strategic political issues and how media discourse influences the construction of social reality amid the dynamics of Indonesian democracy.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Discourse*

Discourse is a form of language use that does not stand alone, but is always related to the surrounding social and cultural context. According to Wuryaningrum (2023), discourse has an important function in shaping and maintaining power, particularly within social institutions. Discourse is not merely a sequence of words, but a way of thinking that reflects particular values and ideologies. Teun A. van Dijk (Tarumingkeng, 2025) argues that discourse is a tool of social control. Setiawan (2014) explains that discourse encompasses values that are implicitly embedded in the language used. In this respect, every discourse in the public sphere should be interpreted as a representation of interests that operate systematically. Therefore, the study of discourse becomes important for understanding how language is used to influence society in subtle ways.

The development of digital technology has also brought changes to the forms and modes of operation of discourse. Today, discourse is frequently found in social media, which is fast-paced and interactive. In this context, the language used is not only textual, but also includes images, sound, and other symbols that contribute to meaning-making. Moreover, digital discourse must be viewed as part of new power dynamics that emerge in

virtual spaces. In other words, contemporary discourse analysis does not only examine the content of texts, but also pays attention to how texts are produced and received within a digital ecosystem.

### ***Domination of Power in Discourse***

Power domination is a form of influence or control exercised by certain groups over others. Domination of power in discourse refers to the use of language as a tool to control how people think and act. [Marzuki \(2023\)](#) explains that language is not merely an instrument of communication, but can become an instrument of power that conceals hidden interests. [Eriyanto \(2024\)](#) adds that discourse is often used to maintain elite positions through framing techniques and the selection of particular perspectives. [Jumadi \(2017\)](#) further emphasizes that linguistic structures, such as choice of terms and text formats, can shape who appears powerful and who is rendered “silent.” Thus, to understand discourse is also to understand how power is maintained through language. Strategies of domination often appear through what is articulated and what is omitted in a text. [Marzuki \(2023\)](#) stresses that when certain crucial aspects of information are deliberately left unsaid, this constitutes a concealed form of power. [Yasa \(2021\)](#) adds that critical discourse helps reveal which parties or countries are silenced or ignored, even if not explicitly mentioned. [Eriyanto \(2024\)](#) shows that concealing alternative viewpoints makes a discourse appear “neutral,” while in fact it is biased. Consequently, it is essential to analyse discourse critically, especially with regard to context and the salience of information.

In the digital era, the domination of discourse occurs not only through written texts, but also through social media and online distribution systems. [Suhaili et al. \(2023\)](#) explain that the use of corpora in discourse analysis reveals patterns of power through the frequency of particular words and themes. [Jumadi \(2017\)](#) also discusses how language education helps uncover dominant discourses disseminated through the media. This carries an implicit message regarding the importance of reader awareness so that narratives are not accepted uncritically. Therefore, discourse in digital media must be deconstructed by paying attention to technology, ideology, and its distributional structures.

### ***Critical Discourse Analysis***

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach that combines linguistic studies with social theory to uncover power relations hidden behind texts. Its main objective is to lift the veil on ideologies embedded in language. In addition, CDA examines how social structures influence, and are influenced by, discursive practices. CDA views language not as a neutral system, but as a tool used by dominant actors to maintain their positions. [Sarasati \(2019\)](#) states that CDA operates within three important dimensions: textual analysis, discourse practice, and social practice, which are interconnected in the production and consumption of discourse. This approach becomes increasingly important when the media are used as ideological channels capable of shaping opinion and organising public modes of thinking ([Rahmawati, 2022](#)). Thus, CDA becomes a key instrument for unpacking language as a means of social control.

CDA has been developed into various models by several scholars, including Norman Fairclough, Sara Mills, Ruth Wodak, Roger Fowler, Teun A. van Dijk, and others. Fairclough offers a three-layered model that integrates text, discourse, and social structure. Sara Mills contributes a feminist perspective that focuses on the representation of women in language. Roger Fowler lays the foundations of critical linguistics by examining how grammar encodes hidden ideological values. Different from the previous scholars, Wodak

emphasizes the importance of historical context in shaping and understanding discourse. [Masitoh \(2020\)](#) notes that the diversity of these approaches enriches the perspectives used in text analysis, particularly in exposing power relations that subtly influence social life. These approaches broaden the scope of CDA and provide a rich theoretical framework for dissecting discourse constructions in various contexts ([Wuryaningrum, 2023](#)).

### ***Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis***

Teun A. van Dijk's theory is one of the most widely used theoretical frameworks in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis. Teun A. van Dijk is a Dutch linguist known for his socio-cognitive approach. He argues that discourse comprehension cannot be separated from the social context and cognitive processes that shape readers' perceptions of texts. He formulates three key dimensions in analysis: the textual dimension, the social cognition dimension, and the social context dimension. Together, these function as a bridge for understanding how discourse is produced, disseminated, and socially received ([Yasa, 2021](#)). This framework is particularly helpful for examining mass media as discourse agents that construct seemingly neutral narratives which may, in fact, contain particular ideological agendas.

In the CDA approach developed by Teun A. van Dijk, the first dimension of focus is the textual dimension. This dimension highlights how the content of discourse is organized through specific structures. Van Dijk divides this into three levels: macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure. Macrostructure relates to the main theme or central idea that the author intends to convey. Superstructure refers to the overall framework or logical organisation of the text, such as introduction, body, and conclusion. Microstructure encompasses linguistic elements such as word choice, sentence types, metaphors, and stylistic devices. These three levels function to convey messages subtly yet meaningfully, and can reveal particular interests or ideologies behind texts that appear neutral on the surface ([Humaira, 2018:32](#)).

Second, the social cognition dimension plays an important role in bridging the text with the knowledge world of its readers. According to van Dijk, social cognition refers to the perspectives, beliefs, and collective knowledge that develop in society and shape how individuals understand discourse. In this regard, readers do not approach texts as blank slates, but bring with them social, cultural, and even political backgrounds that influence their interpretive processes. This means that every text is understood differently by individuals or groups depending on their experiences and social positions ([Prihartono & Suharyo, 2022](#)). This dimension demonstrates that meaning is not solely determined by the text, but also by the experiences and social backgrounds of readers.

Meanwhile, the social context dimension in CDA refers to the social, cultural, and political conditions that underlie the production and consumption of discourse. [Rohana and Syamsuddin \(2018\)](#) state that discourse does not appear in a vacuum, but is always bound to specific situations and social structures that influence its meaning. In other words, the language used in discourse reflects power relations, dominant values, and the ideologies that operate within society. Therefore, analysing a text without considering its social context results in a one-sided understanding. Placing discourse within its social context can reveal how texts are used as instruments to maintain power or as tools to resist domination.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method. It aims to describe phenomena systematically, factually, and accurately in relation to power domination in news coverage



of the ratification of the TNI Draft Law (RUU TNI) (Sugiyono, 2023). This approach enables the researcher to trace social phenomena through textual data that are natural and contextual so that the information obtained can provide an in-depth understanding of discourse construction in online media. The sources and types of data in this study are online news items relevant to the topic, namely an article, "Gavel Strikes to Ratify the TNI Bill amid a Wave of Protests," published on Detik.com on 21 March 2025. The research data take the form of sentences or paragraphs that indicate power domination, ideology, or particular framing strategies. In addition, supporting data are obtained from official documents, journal articles, and related literature to strengthen contextual analysis and to compare the findings with previous studies (Sugiyono, 2023). The research instruments consist of table sheets and textual analysis notes. These are used to mark discourse elements according to the three dimensions of Teun A. van Dijk's CDA, namely textual structure, social cognition, and social context (Setiawan et al., 2022). Data collection is conducted through documentation methods by reading and recording relevant parts of the text. This method ensures that the data obtained are structured and can be analyzed systematically.

The data analysis technique is carried out in several stages. First, the entire news text is read thoroughly to understand the main theme and general context. Second, the data are analyzed based on textual structure: macrostructure for the main theme, superstructure for the narrative framework, and microstructure for details of word choice, language style, and rhetorical strategies indicating power domination. Subsequently, social cognition analysis is used to understand the perspective of the text producers and how the text is perceived by the audience. Social context analysis examines external factors that influence the production and reception of discourse, such as the political situation, public protests, and the dynamics of democracy in Indonesia (Rahmawati, 2022). With this methodological design, the study is able to reveal power relations, ideology, and media framing strategies systematically, while also providing an understanding of how media discourse shapes public perception and legal legitimacy in the case of the ratification of the RUU TNI.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of the news report "Ketok Palu Pengesahan RUU TNI di Tengah Gelombang Protes" on Detik.com shows that the media constructs a particular discourse through linguistic strategies and news structure. The report is examined using van Dijk's approach, which consists of three dimensions: textual structure, social cognition, and social context.

### *Text Dimension*

#### *Macrostructure*

At the macrostructural level, the main theme presented in the Detik.com report published on 21 March 2025 is the ratification of the TNI Bill (RUU TNI) by the Parliament (DPR) amid a wave of protests from civil society. This topic consistently appears from the headline through the entire news text, indicating the media's emphasis on state legitimacy rather than public response. This aligns with van Dijk's view (Tarumingkeng, 2025) that macrostructure functions to highlight the main idea or core topic in discourse, reflecting the media's narrative choices and certain ideological agendas.

The choice of topic reflects the way the media frames a conflicting social phenomenon, namely the formal decision of the state versus public protest, without providing in-depth analysis of the substance of the Bill. This indicates that the media often presents conflict in a factual manner, but does not yet provide a critical examination of state

policies that have broad implications (Rahmawati, 2022). This focus selection also reveals a subtle strategy of discursive domination, whereby the media foregrounds certain perspectives and limits public access to alternative information (Marzuki, 2023). Thus, the macrostructural analysis confirms that the main theme of the news is not merely a factual report, but also a representation of socio-political interests that can shape how the public understands the ratification of the TNI Bill.

### ***Superstructure***

The analysis shows that the news structure used by Detik.com follows van Dijk's model, namely headline, lead, body, and background.

Table 1  
*Analysis of News Structure*

Structure	Description
<i>Headline</i>	The ratification of the TNI Bill and the wave of public protests
<i>Lead</i>	The DPR's success in passing the Bill, with public responses mentioned only briefly
<i>Body</i>	Responses from the government and DPR regarding the plenary session; critiques and voices from civil society and students appear only in the middle to the end
<i>Background</i>	Information on the controversial content of the Bill's articles that form the root of the protests

At the superstructural level, the Detik.com report follows a conventional news pattern consisting of headline, lead, body, and background. The headline foregrounds two aspects: the political decision (ratification of the Bill) and the social dynamics (wave of protests). However, in the lead which should function as the main point of attention—the public reaction is only briefly mentioned. The ratification of the TNI policy is instead elevated as the primary focus. Public voices only appear in the middle to the end of the article so that, in terms of narrative structure, the media seems to privilege the government's point of view.

These findings are consistent with Teun A. van Dijk's theory (Yasa, 2021), which explains that the superstructure of discourse organizes information in such a way that dominant actors are placed in primary positions, while subordinate or opposing groups may be positioned at the end, ignored, or marginalized. Through this arrangement of superstructure, Detik.com tends to portray alignment with the government and sidelines public voices, thereby illustrating how the media frames socio-political realities in line with particular ideological agendas.

### ***Microstructure***

The microstructural dimension relates to linguistic aspects that enable readers to grasp the intended meaning of the news text. The following is a microstructural analysis of the Detik.com news report on the ratification of the Bill.

Table 2  
Microstructural Data Analysis

Aspect	Description
Setting	The presence of tension in the area around the DPR RI (Indonesian House of Representatives) building
Detail	Details are predominantly used to describe the plenary session process and the arguments of DPR members. The voices of the public are only minimally presented.
Implicature	The ratification of the Bill is portrayed as legitimate and final; public protests are implied to have no effect.
Presupposition	Provides limited information regarding the controversial content of the Bill's articles that constitute the root cause of the protests.
Nominalization	Sentences such as "The Bill was ratified" obscure the acting subject (the DPR), making the action appear neutral and impersonal.
Negation	Explicit negation is almost absent; this indicates a tendency to avoid direct confrontation or denying the state's position.
Sentence form	A large number of passive constructions obscure the agents of power. Active sentences are generally used when referring to the government.
Lexicon	The expressions "ketok palu" (literally "gavel strike"), "official," and "marked by protests" suggest that the decision remains strong despite disruption. The word "wave" ("gelombang") produces a dramatic effect but is not followed by urgency or empathy

The microstructural analysis of the news report on the ratification of the TNI Bill highlights the various ways linguistic elements are used to frame socio-political reality. First, in terms of setting, there are signs of tension around the DPR RI building, which implicitly depicts confrontation between the public and the government. Positioning the setting in this way creates a dramatic context, yet there is no exploration of empathy towards the conflicting parties. From van Dijk's perspective (Tarumingkeng, 2025), such a narrative structure shapes public perceptions of the social actors presented, so that readers come to view power dynamics from a particular perspective.

Second, the article's details place greater emphasis on the course of debate in the DPR, particularly the arguments put forward by parliamentary representatives. Meanwhile, the voices of civil society are presented only in a limited manner. This indicates that the media provides more than sufficient space for the representation of the government, but very little for oppositional forces. It reflects an imbalance in representation, whereby the dominant party is afforded broader space to control public opinion, in line with van Dijk's theory of the reproduction of power through control of information (Yasa, 2021).

Third, the implicature of the coverage constructs the impression that the ratification of the Bill is a final and binding decision, despite ongoing public protests. Pragmatically, this builds the sense that opposition is merely an expression of dissatisfaction that will not affect the outcome. Such implicature tends to benefit the authorities' control over public discourse in other arenas. In addition, it can further strengthen the authority and legitimacy of the government's dominant decisions.



Fourth, the presuppositions in the news text mention the amendment of controversial articles as the trigger of the protests, but this is not elaborated further. In van Dijk's framework, presuppositions often carry hidden ideological content. This constructs the assumption that readers are already familiar with the substance of the problem. The media thereby closes off explicit critical positioning, giving the appearance of objectivity while in fact transmitting and reinforcing the government's dominant discourse.

Fifth, the most striking aspect of actor deletion appears in the sentence "the Bill was ratified," which removes the DPR as the main actor from the sentence structure. This kind of strategy obscures the agents of power. According to van Dijk, when dominant actors are not clearly mentioned, this indicates an attempt to conceal their role (Rahmawati, 2022). This enables those actors to continue to control discourse and maintain their power.

Sixth, the absence of negation indicates that Detik.com does not attempt to refute the government's position or policies. From this, it can be inferred that Detik.com still avoids taking an overtly partisan stance. This shows a strategy of avoiding confrontational media discourse with the authorities. The strategy adopted by Detik.com is aimed at maintaining a balanced power relationship between the media, governmental institutions, and society.

Seventh, in the use of the phrase "signing of the law," a passive construction is employed that presents the process as impersonal and non-partisan. This use of passive voice obscures the agents of power. It creates the impression that readers are expected to view the government as a legal and active participant, while controversial policies are presented without clear actors, thereby blurring responsibility for those policies. Lastly, at the lexical level, the choice of words such as "ketok palu," "official," and "marked by protests" emphasizes the legal legitimacy of the DPR's decision while downplaying the weight of public protest. The term "wave" ("gelombang") can indeed denote a large scale of action, but due to the absence of detailed narrative follow-up, its meaning becomes shallow. Such lexical choices align with van Dijk's perspective (Tarumingkeng, 2025) that lexicon functions as an ideological instrument that influences public perception. Overall, Detik.com's microstructural strategies indicate that the media tends to comply with the government's formal narrative and displays limited criticality toward contested policies. The seemingly neutral approach conceals broad ideological consequences, such as reinforcing authority, sanitizing social agitation, and silencing civil society voices in public debate.

### ***Context Dimension***

Detik.com's coverage of the enactment of the TNI Bill illustrates a pronounced structural tension between state institutions and civil society. The law was passed despite public protest. This is evident in the following excerpt:

#### **Data 1**

The Plenary Session of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) continued even though demonstrators had gathered and voiced their opposition outside the building. The session was approved by the majority of factions despite some parties considering the bill controversial (Detik.com, 2025).

This sentence depicts power relations, one aspect of which is the DPR's ability to impose its political agenda through policy while paying minimal heed to public rejection.

In this context, the majority of factions functions as an internal mechanism that legitimizes the exercise of such power, even in the face of significant resistance. This indicates that although democracy idealizes representation and attentiveness to popular aspirations, at the level of implementation formal power can override informal power or public pressure. Public opposition, however loud, often operates merely as an expression (a “voice”) without coercive force to directly overturn or alter decisions already taken by legislative power holders, particularly when those decisions are backed by dominant political forces. This highlights a gap between procedural legitimacy (a formally valid session approved by the majority) and substantive legitimacy (a policy that is accepted by and represents the will of the people).

Furthermore, the legislature’s latent bias in favour of the military is embedded within the content of the bill, which expands the military’s authority into the civilian domain. This is reflected in the following news excerpt:

#### **Data 2**

In the bill, the TNI is granted expanded duties that are no longer limited to warfare, but also include handling acts of terrorism, cyber threats, and even natural disasters without requiring civilian approval ([Detik.com, 2025](#)).

This quotation suggests that the already fragile state of democracy in the country is further weakened, and that the law clearly grants excessive power to the TNI without adequate mechanisms of civilian oversight. In van Dijk’s terms, this expresses deep institutional power control over the civic sphere and signals a policy shift toward the erosion of participatory democracy. At the same time, another part of the report captures civil society’s resistance through narratives of protest and open criticism from civil society coalitions:

#### **Data 3**

The Civil Society Coalition describes this bill as a step backwards for democracy. They argue that there is no urgency to assign the military to civilian tasks that have thus far been handled by non-military institutions ([Detik.com, 2025](#)).

Here, civil society organizations assume the role of guardians of democracy, and “repeating democracy” symbolizes a constrained and contested civic space that seeks to protect democracy under the shadow of a military legal framework. This shows that discourse cannot be defined merely as a reflection of reality, but rather as a stage on which a real struggle unfolds between state interests and civic forces.

Detik.com does not adopt an explicit stance either in favour of or against the adoption of this policy. The outlet merely reports policy developments descriptively and in a factual style, as illustrated below:

#### **Data 4**

The DPR RI has officially passed the TNI Bill into law in a Plenary Session held on Thursday (20/3) evening at the Parliament Complex ([Detik.com, 2025](#)).

From van Dijk’s perspective, this neutral style of writing reveals the media’s position within power relations. The outlet attempts to preserve the image of professional journalism. However, it simultaneously faces the dilemma of whether to side with the

government or with the public. The neutral stance expressed in the report does not necessarily indicate objectivity; rather, it is a subtle form of positioning achieved through the choice of speakers, quotations, and emphasis on the conspicuous actions of the crowd. Moreover, the voices of academics support civil resistance and serve as an intellectual justification for criticizing the legal revision:

#### **Data 5**

Professor Wahyudi Kumorotomo of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Gadjah Mada University (UGM), considers this enactment to have a harmful impact, particularly for civil society. The ambiguous articles could restore a military regime in Indonesia reminiscent of the New Order ([Detik.com](https://www.detik.com), 2025)

The presence of academic narratives functions as a counter-discourse to state power. The phrase “restore a military regime” evokes collective memories of the trauma experienced during the New Order era. It also serves as an ideological marker indicating that civil society’s rejection of such measures is not only political but also historical in nature. The social contextual dimension that emerges in [Detik.com](https://www.detik.com)’s reporting on the enactment of the TNI Bill portrays a conflictual tension between the DPR and civil society. As a government institution, the DPR appears half-hearted in responding to public aspirations. This is evidenced by the DPR’s decision to pass the TNI Bill despite widespread opposition from various societal groups. The enactment of the bill in the face of broad public rejection indicates a state of emergency in terms of civilian control. In this situation, civil society acts as a counterweight seeking to preserve democratic space. At the same time, the situation reflects the power relations between the state and its citizens: the voice of the people is effectively disregarded when it comes into conflict with political and military interests.

Within Teun A. van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis, the social context dimension underscores how discourse in the production and interpretation of texts is shaped by social structures, power, and ideology. [Detik.com](https://www.detik.com)’s reporting reveals a dilemma in its self-presentation as an institution striving for neutrality while remaining embedded within power relations with the government. This can be seen in [Detik.com](https://www.detik.com)’s use of formal and informative language without overt editorial opinion. The neutral posture adopted by the media becomes a strategy of ideological meaning-making, aimed at avoiding direct confrontation with the government while maintaining public trust. In van Dijk’s framework, such a stance can be understood as a manifestation of symbolic power in discourse production. [Detik.com](https://www.detik.com)’s reporting thus serves not only as a vehicle for information, but also as a battleground of discourse between governmental domination and societal resistance.

#### ***Dimension of Social Cognition***

Within van Dijk’s model of social cognition, [Detik.com](https://www.detik.com)’s reporting on the ratification of the TNI Bill demonstrates an effort to construct public understanding of the position of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI) as a strong and legitimate legislative body by foregrounding procedural structures in the presentation of information. This is evident in the following excerpts.

**Data 6**

The session was chaired by the Speaker of the DPR RI, Puan Maharani, accompanied by the other Deputy Speakers of the DPR, namely Sufmi Dasco Ahmad, Saan Mustopa, and Adies Kadir.” (Detik.com, 21 March 2025) “The DPR RI officially ratified the TNI Bill into law on Thursday (20/3) evening in the Plenary Hall of the DPR RI building, Senayan, Central Jakarta. (Detik.com, 2025)

The choice of diction such as “officially,” “plenary,” and the explicit mention of prominent political figures forms part of the discursive strategy used to build the formal legitimacy of the DPR in the eyes of readers. Within a social cognition framework, this narrative instills a collective perception that the DPR’s decision is final, legal, and trustworthy, and therefore does not need to be questioned. In addition, the reporting on the policy does not elaborate in detail the substance of the policy itself. This can be seen in the following excerpt.

**Data 7**

Utut conveyed several crucial points regarding the position of the TNI, retirement age, and the involvement of active TNI personnel in ministries or agencies. He ensured that there would be no dual function of the TNI in the discussion of this law revision.” (Detik.com, 2025)

In the above quotation, only the voice of a DPR member is used to explain the content of the policy. There is no counter-quotation from civil society. This positions the government as the sole legitimate and authoritative actor. The absence of public voices implies that discourses opposing the government are not considered important or relevant for public consumption. This is reinforced by the following excerpt.

**Data 8**

Crowds of demonstrators rejecting the TNI Bill continued arriving at the DPR building. They also forced the Pancasila gate of the DPR RI building to be opened so they could enter.”(Detik.com, 2025).

In this quotation, the choice of diction such as “forced” and “reacted” emphasizes disorder and frames the protest primarily as an emotional outburst rather than as part of democratic practice. This creates a representation of mass action as a disturbance, not as a valid form of political expression.

Based on Detik.com’s reporting on the ratification of the TNI Bill amid a wave of protests, the social cognition dimension in van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis shows the existence of a meaning-production process that centers the state institution, namely the DPR RI. The DPR RI is depicted as the dominant actor in the construction of public knowledge. The media portray the ratification of the law as being carried out in accordance with legal requirements and democratic procedures. This is reflected in Detik.com’s chronological and orderly narration of the plenary session, the emphasis on high-ranking officials who participated, and the use of formal language such as “officially,” “ratified,” and “deliberation.” This strategy represents a symbolic neutralization of power and strengthens the DPR’s legitimacy in the eyes of the public (Humaira, 2018).

The discourse analysis indicates that readers are steered to accept the legislative process as a legitimate and final action. This is further reinforced by the dominance of quotations from DPR member Utut Adianto, presented without a balancing perspective from civil society. In van Dijk's theory, this illustrates how social cognition is formed through the interaction between the dimension of discourse structure (text), the dimension of social context (power relations), and the mental models of readers (Yasa, 2021). In this case, readers are positioned as recipients of pre-filtered knowledge, leading them to understand DPR RI's policy as credible. Detik.com implicitly treats the protest actions of students and the public as emotional outbursts rather than rational political discourse. Detik.com places information about the demonstrations toward the bottom of the text and uses language that emphasizes actions such as "forcing open the DPR gate." The media thus reinforce the view that protests are disturbances and not an integral part of democratic discourse. Within van Dijk's framework, the news reveals the dominance of a power ideology operating through information filtering. This shapes a dominant understanding that the entire process of ratifying the TNI Bill is legal and should not be disrupted by minority voices. These findings reaffirm van Dijk's core principle that discourse production is not a neutral activity but is closely related to social structures, dominant ideologies, and control over meaning-making in society (Tarumingkeng, 2025).

## CONCLUSION

This study indicates that the online news outlet Detik.com, in its coverage of the enactment of the TNI Bill, indirectly constructs power relations through specific choices in discourse structure and language strategies. Based on van Dijk's model of the text dimension, it was found that Detik.com tends to frame the issue of the ratification of the TNI Bill in formal and procedural terms. In contrast, criticism and the voices of civil society are only presented superficially. This phenomenon is evident in the selection of information structures that predominantly center on government actors. In addition, through the use of microstructures in the news, the locus of political responsibility is obscured. At the social context level, the media coverage reflects an unequal power relationship between state institutions (the Parliament and the TNI) and civil society. Although there were waves of protest, the media did not portray them as a legitimate form of political discourse. This observation indicates that the media tends to maintain a neutral narrative and avoid direct confrontation with governmental power. At the level of social cognition, the media contributes to shaping readers' understanding that the Parliament's decision is final, legitimate, and not open to contestation. The analysis of the news on the ratification of the bill in Detik.com illustrates that this media outlet exercises power in more subtle, layered, and covert ways to reproduce power relations. The media thus functions not merely as a channel of information but as an active ideological apparatus that shapes public discourse and influences social consciousness as well as the legitimacy of policy. This reinforces van Dijk's argument that discourse production is not a neutral activity but one that is imbued with social, political, and ideological interests. As a recommendation for future research, subsequent studies could explore comparative analyses of coverage across different online news portals, or between print and online media, to examine variations in discourse construction on legislative issues. Future research may also investigate public responses via social media as part of social cognition, thereby enabling an analysis of how readers' interpretations diverge from, or align with, mainstream media narratives. In this way, subsequent studies can deepen our



understanding of the interaction between media, power, and public perception in the context of contemporary democracy.

## REFERENCES

- Detik.com*. (2025). *DPR Sahkan RUU TNI di Tengah Gelombang Protes Warga*. Diakses dari <https://www.Detik.com> [pada 28 April 2025].
- Dharmawan, N. N., Suardana, I. K., & Semadi, Y. P. (2025). Social semiotics “Masako Package”: Systemic Functional Linguistics perspective. *Journal of Pragmatics Research*, 7(1), 34–53. <https://doi.org/10.18326/jopr.v7i1.34-53>
- Eriyanto. (2019). *Analisis Wacana: Pengantar Analisis Teks Media*. Jakarta: Kencana.
- Humaira. H. W. (2018). Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) Model Teun A. van Dijk pada Pemberitaan Surat Kabar Republika. *Literasi: Jurnal Penelitian Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia serta Pembelajarannya*, 2(1): 32-40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.25157/literasi.v2i1.951>
- Islamiyah, S. C., Ardhitia, W. I., Qabibi, R. N., & Jayanti, R. (2024). Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) Model Teun A. Van Dijk pada Berita “Anies Sentil Netralitas Penegak Hukum: Kalau Ada yang Bengkulu Luruskan” di Kabar24. *INNOVATIVE: Journal of Social Science Research*, 4(1), 4283–4291. <https://j-innovative.org/index.php/Innovative/article/view/7490>
- Jumadi, M. (2017). *Wacana, Kekuasaan, dan Pendidikan Bahasa*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar
- Marzuki, I. (2023). *Analisis Wacana Kritis (Teori dan Praktik)*. Papua Barat: UNIMUDA Press.
- Masitoh. (2020). Pendekatan dalam Analisis Wacana Kritis. *Jurnal Elsa*, 18(1): 66-76. <https://doi.org/10.47637/elsa.v18i1.221>
- Mustopa, E., & Hamdani, A. (2025). Analisis Wacana Kritis Theo Van Leeuwen pada pemberitaan penolakan UU TNI terus bergulir lewat tenda di gerbang DPR dalam *Detik.com* edisi 8 April 2025. *Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research*, 5(1), 3975–3994. <https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v5i1.18911>
- Prihartono, R., & Suharyo. (2022). Analisis Wacana Kritis Model Teun A. van Dijk dalam “#DebatKeren Papua – Budiman Sudjatmiko VS Dandhy Laksono”. *Wicara: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 1(2), 90–93. <https://doi.org/10.14710/wjsbb.2022.16367>
- Putri, C. H., Aliya, N., Nabila, A., & Juwaira, A. (2025). Analisis Wacana Kritis Model Teun A. van Dijk terhadap Wacana Pro-Kontra Pengiriman Anak ke Barak Militer dalam Pemberitaan Daring Liputan6.com. *CARONG: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial dan Humaniora*, 2(2), 715–720. <https://doi.org/10.62710/zs8cgy91>
- Rahmawati, N. (2022). *Analisis Wacana Kritis: Teori dan Aplikasi dalam Penelitian Media*. Yogyakarta: UGM Press.
- Ratnaningsih, D. (2019). *Analisis Wacana Kritis Sebuah Teori dan Implementasi*. Lampung Utara: Universitas Muhammadiyah Kotabumi.
- Rohana & Syamsuddin. (2015). *Buku Analisis Wacana*. Makassar: CV. SAMUDRA ALIF MIM.
- Sarasati, R. (2019). Analisis Wacana Kritis dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia: Peran AWK pada Pembelajaran Literasi Kritis, Berpikir Kritis. dan Kesadaran Berbahasa yang Kritis. *Humanika*, 19(1). 20-29. <https://doi.org/10.21831/hum.v19i1.30156>
- Setiawan, F., Prasetya, A. D. A., Putra, R. S. (2022). Analisis Wacana Kritis Model Teun A. van Dijk pada Pemberitaan Kasus Pencabulan Santri oleh Anak Kiai Jombang

- dalam Media Online. *KEMBARA: Jurnal Keilmuan Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, 8(2): 224-237. <https://doi.org/10.22219/kembara.v8i2.21772>
- Setiawan, T. (2014). Ancangan Awal Praktik Analisis Wacana Kritis. *Diksi*, 22(2): 111-120. <https://doi.org/10.21831/diksi.v2i22.3170>
- Sibagariang, A., Simanjuntak, F. M., Situmorang, Y. Y., & Sagala, V. M. (2025). Kritik sosial dalam pemberitaan media: Analisis wacana kritis Van Dijk pada berita pemusnahan amunisi TNI di Kompas.com. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora*, 1(2), 190–198. <https://doi.org/10.63822/ytq4nm74>
- Suhaili, A., Sayogie, F., & Farkh, M. (2023). *Corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis*. Jakarta: Rajagrafindo Persada.
- Sugiyono. (2023). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Suparman, N., & Septiadi, M. A. (2021). Komunikasi Politik Pemerintah dalam Perumusan Undang-Undang Omnibus Law Cipta Kerja. *Jurnal Penelitian Komunikasi*, 24(2), 161–174. <http://bppkibandung.id/index.php/jpk>
- Tarumingkeng, C. R. (2025). *Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): Pengertian, Teori, dan Aplikasi* (p. 73). RUDYCT e-PRESS. [https://rudycr.com/ab/Critical.Discourse.Analysis\(CDA\)Pengertian.Teori.dan.Aplikasi.pdf](https://rudycr.com/ab/Critical.Discourse.Analysis(CDA)Pengertian.Teori.dan.Aplikasi.pdf)
- Wuryaningrum, R. (2023). *Buku Ajar Analisis Wacana*. Jember: UPA Penerbitan Universitas Jember.
- Yanti, N. P. D. E., Putrayasa, I. B., & Artika, I. W. (2019). Analisis Wacana Kritis Teun A. Van Dijk pada Teks Pidato Klaim Kemenangan Pilpres 2019. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 3(3), 356–362. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jipp.v3i3.21846>
- Yasa, I. N. (2021). *Teori Analisis Wacana Kritis Relevansi Sastra dan Pembelajarannya*. Denpasar: Pustaka Larasan.