

Hegemony in Digital News: A CDA Approach to Power Relations in Indonesian Social Media

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INDEXING	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Keyword 1 ; Discourse Keyword 2 ; Language Keyword 3 ; Power Keyword 4 ; Media Keyword 5 ; Ideology	This study investigates language that constructs and legitimizes power relations in news discourse published on social media platforms during the covid-19 pandemic. Drawing on Fairclough's (1995) critical discourse analysis framework, the research aims to reveal the ideological mechanisms embedded in linguistic choices used by state actors in shaping public perception. The study employs a qualitative method with data collected through documentation of news texts posted on Facebook. The news text was particularly concerning to government responses on the pandemic. The analysis involves textual examination, intertextuality mapping, and social semiotic interpretation. The findings reveal that government-affiliated discourse employs declarative structures, institutional deixis, and culturally embedded phrases such as <i>gotong royong</i> . It is to promote national unity, responsibility, and trust in leadership. The texts construct an authoritative narrative that normalizes state intervention and discourages dissent through moral appeals and symbolic alignment with cultural norms. Linguistic features are strategically used to legitimize top-down communication and to frame the state as both protector and moral guide. The study concludes that language in social media news discourse serves as an instrument of symbolic power that maintains ideological hegemony under the appearance of crisis communication and collective solidarity.

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INTRODUCTION

The intersection of discourse and power has become a central concern in the study of language, media, and society. The concern is especially within the digital communication landscape. In contemporary media studies, discourse is no longer perceived as a neutral medium of communication. It is rather a constitutive element of social reality and power relations (Jovanovic & Stankovic, 2024). Social media, as a ubiquitous form of communication, has redefined narratives that are constructed, disseminated, and contested. With the shift from traditional mass media to user-generated content, power dynamics are no longer exclusively governed by institutional actors but are also shaped through language choices, participatory engagements, and the performativity of digital discourse (Barton & Lee, 2013; Crystal, 2011). As Fairclough (Fairclough, 1995) (1995) asserts, language is a site of struggle where meanings are negotiated, ideologies are reproduced or challenged, and social orders are maintained or transformed.

This transformation is particularly significant given the participatory nature of social media. It enables individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage in the creation and dissemination of discourse. Unlike traditional media, where control over the narrative largely resided with elite institutions, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter,

and Instagram have disrupted hierarchical structures by offering an ostensibly open space for public dialogue (Anwar et al., 2020; Noorikhsan et al., 2023; Syahputra, 2017). However, as Fairclough (2015) emphasizes, the existence of such platforms does not inherently guarantee democratic participation or the equal distribution of discursive power. Instead, discursive practices on social media often reflect underlying socio-political tensions, algorithmic biases, and asymmetrical access to communicative resources (Adiputra, 2021). The linguistic construction of meaning in digital texts is inextricably linked to broader structures of domination, marginalization, and resistance (Halimah Tussa'diah & Kartika, 2022; Jovanovic & Stankovic, 2024).

The central problem addressed in this study concerns the operation of power within news discourse on social media. While the democratization of content production has allowed a plurality of voices to emerge. It is not all voices hold equal weight in shaping public discourse (Althof & Bisyaquillah, 2025; Setiawan & Daisy adela, 2020). Linguistic choices—such as diction, framing, narrative structure, and intertextual references—play a crucial role in shaping audience perception and reinforcing specific ideologies (Fairclough, 1995, 2015). In this regard, power in social media discourse is not merely about who speaks, but about the way meaning is produced, whose voice is amplified, and what is left unsaid. The general solution to the problem is found in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a framework that seeks to reveal the hidden operations of power through the analysis of textual and contextual features in language. As proposed by Fairclough (1995), CDA involves a dialectical analysis between discourse and social practice. It is uncovering language that serves to naturalize and legitimize certain power relations.

Building upon this foundation, the present study offers a specific analytical lens by focusing on the linguistic structures—particularly diction and phrasing—employed in news discourse circulated on social media platforms. It argues that power is not only encoded in institutional language, but also in the subtle and strategic deployment of lexical choices, syntactic arrangements, and semantic implications (Schiffrin et al., 2007). This approach enables a rougher understanding of certain narratives that are legitimized, the way social actors are positioned, and the boundaries of public opinion which are discursively managed (Istiqamah, 2023; Noorikhsan et al., 2023). By examining the linguistic features embedded in user-generated comments and institutional posts, the study highlights the dynamic interplay between text and context, authorial intention, and audience reception, as well as domination and subversion in digital spaces. The investigation of diction and phrasing as tools for ideological positioning complements existing CDA models by foregrounding micro-linguistic strategies within macro-discursive formations (Barton & Lee, 2013; Fairclough, 1995, 2003; Thurlow, 2017; Vessey, 2016).

A review of relevant literature further substantiates the need for this approach. Benmetan and Setyowibowo (2021), for instance, explore media narratives on moral panic during the pandemic that were framed through sensationalist headlines and emotionally charged language. Similarly, Adiputra (2021) examines hoaxes during the COVID-19 crisis which served as discursive tools to maintain political dominance. It is reflecting the view of discourse as a dispersed but pervasive form of power. In a related disposition, Nugroho (2019) show media texts that construct gendered power relations through stereotypical representations, while Syahputra (2017) highlights media alignment which influences political bias. These studies collectively demonstrate the importance of critically analyzing media discourse, not only at the level of thematic content but also through the

linguistic and semiotic mechanisms that sustain power relations. However, despite this growing body of research, there remains a gap in comprehensively analyzing the role of diction and linguistic structuring in managing discourse power within social media ecosystems.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the power relations embedded in social media news discourse by focusing on language and diction that influence the distribution of power within digital platforms. The novelty of the research lies in its emphasis on the micro-level linguistic elements—such as word choice, tone, modality, and syntactic structuring—as instruments of discourse control. It is a dimension that has received limited attention in prior studies. Furthermore, the research investigates users of social media who strategically navigate, manipulate, or challenge dominant narratives by exploiting the linguistic affordances of the platform. By integrating Fairclough's CDA (1995) model with contemporary cases of media discourse, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of digital power configurations. At the same time, it offers theoretical insights and empirical evidence on language that constructs and contests power in the era of social media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between media discourse and power has been a central concern in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It is particularly within the Indonesian context where media outlets often act as powerful agents of ideological dissemination (Fairclough, 2015). Drawing on Fairclough's conceptualization of discourse as a form of social practice, Benmetan and Setyowibowo (2021) demonstrate Tirto.id that constructs a discourse of moral panic during the COVID-19 pandemic through sensationalized headlines and emotive language. Their findings emphasize that media discourses are not passive reflections of reality, but are actively involved in constructing public fear. This discursive construction becomes a performative act that shapes not only audience emotions, but also broader social responses. It is also underlining the media's capacity to amplify certain narratives while marginalizing others. Thus, the article reinforces Fairclough's notion that the media are not merely conveyors of information, but are deeply implicated in hegemonic reproduction through recontextualization and discursive framing.

In a parallel condition, Adiputra (2021) explores the interplay of power and knowledge through a Foucauldian lens in the government's approach to pandemic-related hoaxes. The analysis reveals that the Indonesian state strategically constructs the category of *hoax* to discipline public discourse while maintaining the facade of democratic openness. This dynamic is manifested through official communications that distinguish between legitimate knowledge and misinformation, thereby reinforcing institutional authority over epistemic validation. The discourse of combating hoaxes becomes a technology of governance. It is echoing Foucault's understanding of discourse as a vehicle for surveillance, classification, and regulation. While not explicitly Faircloughian, this work aligns with CDA's concern for language that mediates power and legitimizes state control under the pretext of public safety and information hygiene.

The study by Wati et al. (2015) provides further insight into ideological positioning which is subtly embedded in media discourse. It happens particularly in the coverage of the 2014 Indonesian presidential election. Using Appraisal Theory within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics, the authors analyze verbal processes in news texts from the Jakarta Globe. It reveals evaluative language and selective quoting strategies that

support implicit political alignments. By dissecting reported speech and the positioning of news actors, the study evidences journalistic discourse that can be crafted to serve partisan ends. This substantiates Fairclough's emphasis on interdiscursivity and the reproduction of ideology through seemingly neutral journalistic forms. It suggests that news texts are not ideologically innocent, but are structured to guide interpretation and affect political sentiment.

A different facet of discursive power is explored in Nugroho's (2019) examination of gender representations in a NET.TV talk show featuring Sultan Hamengkubuwono X. Applying Fairclough's CDA model, the study illustrates the show that utilizes syntactic structures, lexical choices, and narrative sequencing to portray the royal family as progressive while strategically avoiding critical engagement with underlying patriarchal norms. The analysis exposes the discourse of gender equality which can be co-opted by elite actors to reproduce existing power structures under the show of reform. This affirms CDA's utility in unpacking language practices that sustain ideological hegemony, particularly in the context of gender discourse. The claims refer to inclusion that may mask exclusionary logics and institutionalized inequality.

The transnational dimension of media discourse is addressed in Aviandy et al.'s (2021) analysis of Kompas' framing of the Crimean Peninsula crisis. Through Fairclough's CDA approach, the authors uncover the way that Kompas adopts discursive strategies which align to Western geopolitical interests. It is including the use of negative lexical choices and selective intertextuality to construct Russia as an aggressor. This study demonstrates Indonesian media that can function as a site for the circulation of global hegemonies. It echoes Fairclough's argument that media discourse is shaped by both local and international power relations. The research highlights discourses that are imported, adapted, and redeployed to fit national agendas, thereby making media a channel of both domestic and global ideological projects.

Media's role in producing and sustaining moral panic is further illuminated by Tuhri (2021), who investigates conservative religious leaders and cultural elites in West Sumatra construct LGBTQ+ identities as moral threats within Minangkabau society. Employing CDA, the author maps four stages of discursive framing that position LGBTQ+ individuals as deviant and dangerous. The study shows traditional values and religious discourse that are mobilized in tandem with local media to legitimate social exclusion and heteronormative dominance. The analysis substantiates Fairclough's notion of discourse as both a product and instrument of social structure. It is dominant groups that use language to reinforce cultural hegemony and maintain symbolic control over minority identities.

A broader perspective on digital discourse is presented by Noorikhsan et al. (2023), who contextualize media discourse within the third generation of political communication—cyber democracy. The authors argue that social media platforms enable greater interactivity between political actors and citizens, but also introduce new risks such as image manipulation, cyber populism, and misinformation. This duality aligns with Fairclough's model of dialectical relations between discourse and society, where the emancipatory potential of digital media is counterbalanced by new forms of discursive manipulation and symbolic violence. The study underscores the urgency of developing media literacy to navigate the increasingly complex and mediated landscape of political communication. It is where traditional power structures are being both challenged and reasserted in novel ways.

Anwar et al. (2020) present a meta-analysis of CDA research in Indonesian media studies. They identify three dominant domains: economic, political, and social discourse. Their review of ten scholarly articles highlights the methodological adaptability of CDA and its effectiveness in uncovering latent ideologies and power asymmetries in media texts. The study reinforces Fairclough's triadic model—text, discursive practice, and social practice—as a comprehensive framework for investigating discourse that operates across levels of meaning-making. By cataloging diverse applications of CDA in Indonesia, the review affirms its continued relevance in critically interrogating media practices, institutional discourse, and the shaping of public consciousness.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research method to explore the power relations embedded within social media discourse particularly in news texts circulated on Facebook. Qualitative research provides a descriptive and in-depth understanding of linguistic and ideological mechanisms that sustain or challenge power dynamics within digital communication environments (Miles et al., 2014). As Fairclough (1995) asserts discourse is not only a reflection of social practices, but also a constitutive element of those practices and thus requires contextual and interpretive analysis. This methodological approach allows the researcher to capture the complexity, nuance, and socio-political underpinnings of news discourse related to governmental policy. The overall research stages include data collection, data analysis, and the presentation of findings which each designed to facilitate a critical exploration of discourse structures and the ways they construct, legitimate, or contest power.

The data collection process employed document analysis. It focused on textual materials from Facebook that present news reports or commentary related to government policies. Facebook is selected as the primary platform due to its widespread use as a site for disseminating and debating public information in the Indonesian digital sphere. The selected news text was taken from Kompas Facebook account with the title *Pemerintah Jaga dan Minimalkan Dampak Penyebaran Virus Corona* which published on March 20, 2020. It was the early time when covid-19 pandemic happened in Indonesia. It was also marked the new adaptation on social interaction to prevent the pandemic. The analytical process includes intertextual analysis to trace connections between texts and broader discourses, as well as social semiotic examination to uncover underlying meanings and symbolic codes. The data was systematically codified to identify salient linguistic features such as lexical choices, modality, transitivity, and evaluative stance.

The findings were presented through informal and descriptive methods that allowed for comprehensive elaboration of each discursive pattern observed. Presenting the data informally using interpretive narrative enabled the researcher to illustrate linguistic evidence within its social context and connect micro-level textual features to macro-level power structures. This descriptive approach enhanced the accessibility and depth of analysis. It made visible for the ideological workings and communicative strategies embedded in the text. Such elaboration was essential for revealing the complex interplay between language, media, and power relations in digital public spheres. Ultimately, the methodological framework provides the analytical clarity needed to understand the way discourse on social media platforms like Facebook contributes to the negotiation, reproduction, or subversion of power in the public sphere.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

There are three data is presented in this section. Those three data is part of one news text taken from Facebook account of Kompas. The news text is separated for three different parts due to detail of analyzing the data. Having two or three paragraphs for each part, the analysis can be detail and in-depth of explanation. Each of data is described in the following.

Pemerintah Jaga dan Minimalkan Dampak Penyebaran Virus Korona

Pemerintah bekerja keras untuk menjaga dan meminimalkan dampak dari penyebaran virus korona di tengah masyarakat yang turut memperlambat ekonomi dunia secara masif.

Di tengah situasi ini, Presiden Joko Widodo dalam keterangannya di Istana Kepresidenan Bogor, Jawa Barat, pada Minggu, 15 Maret 2020, memastikan ketersediaan bahan kebutuhan pokok yang diperlukan masyarakat dan berupaya menjaga dunia usaha serta roda perekonomian berjalan seperti biasa.

"Pemerintah memastikan ketersediaan bahan kebutuhan pokok yang cukup memadai untuk memenuhi kebutuhan masyarakat. Pemerintah juga telah memberikan insentif kebijakan ekonomi sebagaimana telah diumumkan oleh Menko Perekonomian dan jajaran Menteri Perekonomian untuk menjaga dunia usaha yang telah berjalan agar tetap berjalan seperti biasa," kata Presiden.

Figure. Data 1

The news article titled *Pemerintah Jaga dan Minimalkan Dampak Penyebaran Virus Korona* (The Government Protects and Minimizes the Impact of the Coronavirus Spread) in figure data 1 exemplifies the discursive strategies through political authority which is enacted and legitimized during a health crisis. Using Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework—text, discourse practice, and social practice—this analysis examines linguistic features that construct power relations and shape public perception of governmental control and stability in times of uncertainty.

At the textual level, the article employs assertive and declarative sentence structures to foreground governmental action and responsibility. Phrases such as *Pemerintah bekerja keras* (The government works hard) and *Pemerintah memastikan ketersediaan* (The government ensures the availability) exhibit a modality of certainty and authority. These lexical choices are not merely descriptive, but serve to reinforce institutional credibility and managerial competence. The repetition of the word *memastikan* (to ensure) strengthens the assertion of control over the situation and contributes to the discursive construction of the government as a proactive agent.

Moreover, the incorporation of President Joko Widodo's direct speech—*Pemerintah memastikan ketersediaan bahan kebutuhan pokok yang cukup memadai...*—adds performative legitimacy to the discourse. The strategy constructs a personalized authority and recontextualizes institutional power through the voice of the president and symbolizing

centralized leadership. The use of technocratic language such as *insentif kebijakan ekonomi* (economic policy incentives) aligns the government with rational decision-making processes. According to Fairclough (Fairclough, 1995, 2015)(1995), such strategies exemplify language functions that ideologically to sustain existing power structures by presenting them as common-sense solutions.

At the level of discourse practice, the text reproduces a hegemonic discourse of national unity and economic stability. The framing of the pandemic in terms of *menjaga dunia usaha* (maintaining the business sector) and *roda perekonomian berjalan seperti biasa* (ensuring the economy runs as usual) shifts public concern from health issues to economic continuity. This reframing suggests an underlying ideological function of news discourse; to depoliticize the crisis by masking structural inequalities and portraying the government as both caretaker and savior (Anwar et al., 2020; Setiawan & Daisy adela, 2020). In Fairclough's terms (2015), the text constitutes a process of interdiscursive hybridization and blending political rhetoric with managerial discourse to strengthen the hegemony of state power.

In the broader social practice, the article emerges within a context of global panic and national emergency. It is where media functions as a tool for ideological state apparatuses (Jovanovic & Stankovic, 2024). The discourse constructs a compliant public that depends on governmental guidance. Therefore, it is reinforcing asymmetric power relations between the state and its citizens. The public is not addressed as an agentive participant, but rather as a beneficiary of governmental action—passive, yet reassured (Adiputra, 2021; Noorikhsan et al., 2023; Wati et al., 2015).

This news text reflects a discursive configuration in which language is strategically deployed to assert power, construct political legitimacy, and manage public anxiety. Through modal assertions, lexical foregrounding, and ideological framing, the government's narrative of control is stabilized. As Fairclough (2015) notes, such texts are never neutral—they are embedded in and reproduce wider relations of domination and consent.

Kepala Negara melanjutkan, pihaknya juga telah melakukan langkah-langkah antisipatif bagi jajarannya di Kabinet Indonesia Maju. Sebagaimana diketahui, salah seorang menteri di kabinet saat ini tengah menjalani perawatan sebagai dampak dari penyebaran virus korona tersebut. Meski demikian, Presiden Joko Widodo memastikan bahwa jajarannya di kabinet dapat tetap bekerja sebagaimana biasanya.

"Bahkan hari-hari ini para menteri bekerja lebih keras walaupun sebagian dilakukan dengan cara online untuk mengatasi isu kesehatan dan mengatasi dampak perekonomian akibat Covid-19 ini," ujarnya.

Figure Data 2

The excerpt from the news article in figure data 2 continues the discursive strategy of reinforcing governmental authority during the Covid-19 pandemic. Following Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model—text, discursive practice, and social practice—this analysis explores language that functions to construct power relations, project authority, and manage public perception through institutional discourse.

At the textual level, the language used in the news text is identified with modalities of certainty and reassurance. The statement *Kepala Negara melanjutkan, pihaknya juga telah melakukan langkah-langkah antisipatif...* (The Head of State continued, he has also taken anticipatory steps...) utilizes institutional titles and active verbs that underscore a sense of preparedness and foresight. The use of *telah melakukan* (has taken) as a perfective aspect verb signals that government actions are not only current, but already initiated—emphasizing competence and decisiveness. Similarly, the phrase *Meski demikian, Presiden Joko Widodo memastikan...* reiterates a performative act of guaranteeing the functionality of the cabinet, even in the midst of internal health challenges which implicitly affirms stability and control.

Furthermore, the clause *Bahkan hari-hari ini para menteri bekerja lebih keras...* (Even these days, ministers are working harder...) operates as a legitimizing move which highlighting dedication and sacrifice. The insertion of *walaupun sebagian dilakukan dengan cara online* (although some work is done online) preempts potential public doubts about the effectiveness of remote governance, thus safeguarding institutional credibility. These linguistic choices—especially the adverbial markers such as *meski demikian* and *bahkan*—serve to foreground resilience and continuity in which two ideologically charged concepts in political crisis management.

From the perspective of discursive practice, the text draws upon a dominant discourse of governance resilience. It intertextually echoes other political speeches and media narratives where national leaders emphasize bureaucratic effectiveness and institutional stability (Cahyono et al., 2021; Söğüt, 2018; Suprayitno, 2020). According to Fairclough (1995), such discourses are never merely representational; they actively constitute and reproduce social relations. The discourse constructs a coherent narrative in which ministers continue their duties regardless of health setbacks. Thus, it reasserts the central government's ability to function seamlessly. This is not just about facts; it is about framing reality to generate trust and compliance (Noorikhshan et al., 2023).

At the level of social practice, the text functions within a broader political context in which public confidence in governmental institutions is critical. The pandemic, as a moment of social crisis, exposes vulnerabilities in governance structures (Sadewo & Pribadi, 2023; Wati et al., 2015). In response, the media and state actors engage in what Fairclough (2015) describes as *discursive recontextualization*—transforming a potential crisis into a demonstration of institutional integrity and leadership. The government is portrayed as not only reactive but proactive. It is constantly monitoring and adjusting its operations. Citizens are indirectly positioned as the recipients of effective leadership, not as co-agents in public health management (Adiputra, 2021).

This text exemplifies language that is employed strategically to reinforce hierarchical power relations and sustain political legitimacy. The lexical, grammatical, and intertextual features serve to normalize state dominance while obscuring potential criticisms. As Fairclough (1995) argues, discourse is a form of social practice that both reflects and shapes the distribution of power in society—this news report is a clear case in point.

Selain itu, Presiden meminta masyarakat untuk tetap tenang, melanjutkan produktivitas dengan sejumlah langkah antisipatif sekaligus meningkatkan kewaspadaan terhadap penyebaran Covid-19, dan bersatu padu agar wabah virus korona yang telah menjadi pandemi global dapat tertangani dengan baik.

"Dengan kondisi ini saatnya kita kerja dari rumah, belajar dari rumah, ibadah di rumah. Inilah saatnya bekerja bersama-sama, saling tolong menolong, bersatu padu, dan bergotong royong. Kita ingin ini menjadi sebuah gerakan masyarakat agar masalah Covid-19 ini bisa tertangani dengan maksimal," tandasnya.

Figure. Data 3

The third data excerpt in figure data 3 reveals a strategic use of language in the construction of power through discursive means during a national crisis. As conceptualized by Fairclough (1995), discourse is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but a social practice shaped by and shaping power relations. In this context, the language employed by the President serves to assert leadership, mobilize collective compliance, and shape public behavior under the guise of unity and reassurance.

At the textual level, the President's appeal begins with the directive clause: *Presiden meminta masyarakat untuk tetap tenang...* (The President asked the public to remain calm...), which immediately frames the relationship between the state and citizens in a top-down and authoritative structure. This request is simultaneously a command cloaked in politeness. It is reflecting what Fairclough (Fairclough, 2013, 2015) refers to as *power behind discourse* in which social structures (i.e., institutional authority) enable speech to function as a tool of governance. The collocation of *melanjutkan produktivitas* (continuing productivity) and *meningkatkan kewaspadaan* (improving awareness) reinforces dual imperatives: maintain economic contribution while embracing health vigilance. This dual demand implicitly burdens citizens with both national economic continuity and health safety. It is revealing embedded power expectations (Halimah Tussa'diah & Kartika, 2022; Jovanovic & Stankovic, 2024).

The text constructs unity as a moral obligation through phrases such as *bersatu padu* (stand united) and *agar wabah... dapat tertangani dengan baik* (so that the outbreak... can be properly handled). These nominal groupings function to position national unity as a prerequisite for successful crisis management which is a classic strategy of discursive legitimation. The repetition of *dari rumah* in *kerja dari rumah, belajar dari rumah, ibadah di rumah* is a stylistic device known as anaphora. It rhetorically emphasizes containment and reinforces the acceptability of restricted mobility. This discursive device normalizes altered behavior as both patriotic and moral.

At the level of discursive practice, the text aligns with broader government messaging strategies during pandemics—positioning the citizen as a cooperative agent under state guidance. Fairclough (1995, 2015) discusses the way of dominant discourses often conceal asymmetrical power relations by invoking shared values. In this text, the use of inclusive pronouns *kita* (we) and collective expressions like *saling tolong menolong* (helping each

other) and *bergotong royong* (mutual cooperation) ideologically construct the illusion of horizontal power, while in reality masking a vertical directive from state to people. This populist rhetorical strategy maintains state dominance by creating the appearance of mutual participation.

The text reflects a state-centered model of governance in which political leadership not only dictates behavioral norms, but also monopolizes the symbolic capital of unity and care. By casting the crisis response as a *gerakan masyarakat* (social movement), the government appropriates grassroots discourse and repackages it as a state-led initiative. This move exemplifies what Fairclough (1995) describes as *colonization of discourse* in which institutional power absorbs vernacular values to solidify its hegemony.

The language of unity and productivity in the face of a global health crisis is discursively mobilized to maintain power and legitimize control. While the tone is cooperative and motivational, the underlying structure remains hierarchical. Fairclough's model effectively unveils discourse that operates as a site of power negotiation particularly in moments of societal vulnerability (Adiputra, 2021; Nasution, 2024; Nugroho, 2019).

Discussion

The analysis of the three news excerpts reveals state discourse that constructs and maintains asymmetrical power relations through strategic linguistic choices embedded in crisis communication. In the first dataset, language is utilized not merely to inform, but to project a narrative of state control and competence. Lexical selections such as *memastikan ketersediaan bahan kebutuhan pokok* (ensuring the availability of basic necessities) and *menjaga roda perekonomian* (maintaining the wheels of the economy) operate within a discursive field that presents the state as an authoritative provider. It is effectively placing citizens in a position of dependency and passive reception. Fairclough (1995, 2013, 2015) argues that such discursive mechanisms are manifestations of *power in discourse* where control is exercised through textual practices that normalize and legitimize existing hierarchies. Here, governmental authority is not questioned but presented as rational, necessary, and caring. The President's speech acts, particularly assertive and declarative statements, position him as the legitimate voice of certainty and stability which is reinforcing top-down communication structures (Koutamanis et al., 2015; Lee & Chun, 2016).

The second dataset continues this pattern by extending the representation of institutional resilience and governmental proactiveness in the face of a national health emergency. However, the tone slightly shifts to acknowledge internal strain, as seen in the phrase *seorang menteri... tengah menjalani perawatan* (a minister... is undergoing treatment). Despite this admission of vulnerability, the state's discursive strategy is one of reassurance. The text immediately shifts to statements like *jajarannya di kabinet dapat tetap bekerja seperti biasanya* signaling a continuity of governance. This is consistent with Fairclough's (2013) notion of *power behind discourse* in which institutional structures enable certain subjects (such as political leaders) to speak authoritatively, while others (citizens or even ill cabinet members) are represented primarily as objects within the narrative. Moreover, the President's declaration that ministers are working *lebih keras* (even harder) emphasizes the moral authority of the government. By framing labor under adversity as a virtue, the discourse constructs a moral high ground for state actors. It aligns them with sacrifice and national solidarity, while implicitly demanding the same

commitment from the populace.

The third dataset illustrates the intensification of ideological interposition—inviting citizens to internalize the government’s agenda under the guise of collective identity and moral responsibility. Phrases such as *bersatu padu* (unite), *bergotong royong* (mutual cooperation), and *sebuah gerakan masyarakat* (a people’s movement) are loaded with cultural capital and drawing on long-standing nationalist discourses in Indonesia. Yet, the President’s use of these terms operates within what Fairclough (1995, 2015) refers to as an *ideological-discursive formation* in which hegemonic meanings are recontextualized to serve current political needs. The invocation of *kerja dari rumah*, *belajar dari rumah*, *ibadah di rumah* constructs behavioral norms as moral imperatives. By framing pandemic responses as moral acts, the state legitimizes control over private behaviors without the need for coercion. This aligns to the state that extends its influence not only through policies but through discursive practices that shape the conduct of individuals in everyday life. Citizens are hailed not merely as subjects of regulation, but as co-responsible moral agents although the structure of power remains unidirectional (Sadewo & Pribadi, 2023; Syahputra, 2017).

Across all three texts, the discursive function of the President’s statements serves to naturalize institutional authority during a crisis. Through a combination of assertive modality, collectivist rhetoric, and moral positioning, the discourse legitimizes state intervention while obscuring potential contradictions such as uneven access to resources or the lived difficulties of compliance. Furthermore, the consistent use of inclusive pronouns (*kita*, *masyarakat*, *bersama-sama*) creates the illusion of democratic participation and shared agency. However, as Fairclough (1995) highlights, such inclusivity often masks the reality of control exercised by those in power. The President’s utterances are not dialogic; they are monologic and disseminated through media platforms where interactivity is limited or absent. This reinforces the hierarchical nature of state communication. Importantly, the medium of social media—though technically interactive—becomes a channel for top-down messaging in this context and transforming it into a monologic tool of statecraft. Thus, even in a digital environment known for participatory discourse, the structure of power remains largely intact (Cahyono et al., 2021; Samsuri et al., 2022; Vessey, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The linguistic analysis of the three news texts reveals a highly strategic use of language that functions beyond the mere transference of information. The discourse is marked by the frequent use of declarative sentences, modal verbs of certainty (e.g., *memastikan* (ensure), *telah dilakukan* (has taken)), and institutional deixis (e.g., *pemerintah* (government), *Presiden* (President), *kami* (we)) that collectively signal authority, credibility, and control. Key lexical choices such as *antisipatif* (anticipatory), *menjaga roda perekonomian* (maintaining the wheels of the economy), *bekerja lebih keras* (working even harder), and *gerakan masyarakat* (people’s movement) are not neutral. They are embedded with ideological significance. These terms shape public perception by foregrounding state action as proactive, efficient, and morally righteous. Additionally, the texts employ inclusive pronouns (*kita* (we), *masyarakat* (society)) to generate a sense of national solidarity, while simultaneously reinforcing government-initiated behavioral norms. The use of culturally resonant expressions such as *gotong royong* (mutual

cooperation) and *bersatu padu* (unite) further anchors the discourse within familiar socio-cultural frameworks which enhances legitimacy and public acceptability. This linguistically encoded framing enables the government to construct a coherent crisis narrative that emphasizes stability, productivity, and collective responsibility while simultaneously suppressing alternative viewpoints or critical engagement.

The relationship between these linguistic features and the exercise of power, as theorized by Fairclough (1995), becomes evident when situated within the broader context of media discourse on social media platforms. While the medium is apparently interactive and participatory, the structure of the news texts reflects a top-down and monologic model of communication that privileges institutional voice and marginalizes dissent. Through what Fairclough identifies as *power in discourse* and *power behind discourse*, the government shapes not only what is said, but also how it can be said and who has the authority to say it. The President's role as the central speaker consolidates institutional authority. It applies language to simultaneously inform, direct, and moralize public behavior. In doing so, the discourse subtly imposes behavioral norms as moral obligations and constructing an idealized citizen-subject who is cooperative, obedient, and aligned with state interests. This ideological interpellation is achieved not through overt coercion, but through linguistic naturalization—where power relations are normalized and rendered invisible through everyday expressions. The texts analyzed illustrate language functions as a vehicle of symbolic power that maintains hegemonic structures under the guise of national unity, moral clarity, and crisis management. Such findings underscore the importance of critically engaging with media discourse especially in digital public spheres. It is where the boundary between information and ideology becomes increasingly blurred (Anwar et al., 2020; Fairclough, 2015; Wajdi & Asrumi, 2024).

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