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Critical Discourse Analysis of News Reports on Junior High School Students Who Cannot Read in the Online Media Kompas.Com

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Abstract

The issue of education is an interesting topic that is often discussed from various sides by online media. This study aims to analyze the text structure, social cognition, and social context in the online media Kompas.com related to news about junior high school students who cannot read. This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through documentation, observation, and direct notes in the media. The data sources in this study came from three news items published in August 2024 by the online media Kompas.com regarding the phenomenon of junior high school students who can't read. Data analysis techniques including of data condensation, data presentation, conclusions and verification. The results of the study show that the three news items published in the Kompas.com media have fulfilled the critical discourse analysis framework of Teun A. Van Dijk's model, namely; (1) macro structure; (2) superstructure; and (3) micro structure. Based on the critical discourse analysis that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the three news items have different discussions, but in principle they are interrelated. The components of the news text in the online media fulfill the Van Dijk discourse analysis model which consists of text structure, social cognition, and social analysis. This research can provide knowledge about the current reality of education in Indonesia and contribute to the development of critical discourse analysis theory in online media.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis; Junior High School Student News; Kompas.com online media.

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INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia currently ranks relatively low compared to other countries in terms of educational systems. One critical issue related to education is literacy. Literacy experience is defined as an individual's recorded engagement with reading, writing, and comprehending knowledge (Dewayani & Retnaningdah, 2017). In reality, various data sources and research studies on students' reading interest in Indonesia indicate that reading motivation among Indonesian students remains at a concerning level. This low level of literacy and reading interest inevitably affects students' ability to think critically. Discourses surrounding the current state of education in Indonesia, along with factors contributing to students' low literacy engagement, have increasingly emerged across various media platforms, particularly online news media.

With the rapid advancement of technology and information, online news media now play a powerful role in shaping public perceptions of social realities. Media operate within a complex social context filled with conflicts, interests, and multifaceted truths (Sobur, 2006). Today, online news has become a common and essential medium for disseminating information about events both domestically and internationally. Online media serve as persuasive sources that provide content influencing and shaping public perception on specific issues including education.

One prominent online media platform that extensively covers current and trending events is Kompas.com. Educational issues are frequently highlighted from multiple perspectives on this platform, including school bullying, curriculum reforms, educational policy changes, teacher recruitment, learning outcomes, and general overviews of the national education landscape. Among the many topics discussed, recent attention has focused on reports revealing that numerous junior high school (SMP) students are unable to read. A previously uploaded video from 2023 resurfaced on social media in mid-2024, showing dozens of junior high school students in West Java who could not read. This incident sparked widespread public reaction and was subsequently covered by various news outlets. The renewed virality of this video prompted Kompas.com to report on the event due to the significant societal discourse it generated regarding the state of education. Given the complexity of educational challenges, such issues are closely scrutinized particularly by online news platforms like Kompas.com. Notably, the phenomenon of junior high school students lacking basic reading skills is not isolated to West Java but has also been reported in other regions, such as East Nusa Tenggara.

In producing news content, Kompas.com often involves experts and practitioners to enhance reader trust and credibility. The texts published through online media significantly contribute to the formation of social discourse. Contemporary online media, aligned with public

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needs, have become a vital channel for delivering information framed within particular discourses to the public by individuals, groups, or government institutions (Fitriana, 2019). The texts presented in media are products of media discourse, enabling society to construct meaning in social life through the interpretation of written content. Ideologies and institutional interests embedded in educational discourse are inherently present in this process, illustrating how media interpret reality through their own perspectives and worldviews (Winingsih et al., 2022). Media function as spaces for disseminating group ideologies and become arenas where ideological contestation occurs, aiming to occupy cognitive space within the audience (Abdullah et al., 2016).

Therefore, critical discourse analysis is necessary when examining educational discourse, particularly in relation to the linguistic choices made by online media and their functional implications. Language can represent the same phenomenon in different ways it constructs and reconstructs reality and functions as a signifier that points to specific social meanings. As such, the way educational issues are linguistically framed in online news influences public understanding and shapes societal attitudes toward education.

OVERVIEW OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Critical discourse analysis (CDA), as outlined in the background section above, is a methodological approach that examines the relationship between language and its context by drawing on disciplines such as linguistics, literary theory, philosophy of language, culture, sociology, psychology, and communication studies. CDA views discourse not merely as a linguistic structure but as a social practice through which dominant groups exert power, influence public perception, and maintain control over societal narratives (Darma, 2009). Pioneered by Fairclough (1995), CDA emphasizes the interconnection between language use and its sociocultural context. It functions as an analytical framework focused on explaining the dialectical relationships among language/linguistic practices, text/discursive practices, and culture/social practices.

Discourse, within this framework, is understood synergistically across three dimensions: (1) text spoken or written language; (2) discursive practice the processes of text production, distribution, and interpretation; and (3) sociocultural practice the broader social structures, cultural norms, ideologies, and beliefs that shape and are shaped by discourse (Setiawan, 2014). According to Van Dijk, Fairclough, and Wodak (cited in Zamzani & Rahayu, 2017), there are five key characteristics of critical discourse analysis: (1) discourse is regarded as a form of social action; (2) context plays a crucial role, as discourse is produced, interpreted, and analyzed within specific situational and institutional contexts; (3) historicity, meaning discourse is embedded in historical

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conditions and evolves over time; (4) power, as CDA explicitly examines how power relations are enacted, maintained, and challenged through discourse; and (5) ideology, recognizing that every text reflects the ideological stance of its producer and may seek to influence or manipulate readers' perceptions. Ideology here refers to shared beliefs held by particular social groups, and the interplay between discourse and ideology constitutes a significant aspect of social practice, often mediated through linguistic choices (Van Dijk, 2011).

One of the most widely applied models in CDA is the framework developed by Teun A. van Dijk. The distinctive feature of Van Dijk's approach lies in its integration of social cognition the mental processes through which individuals produce and interpret discourse as a bridge between macro-level social structures and micro-level textual features. As argued by Eriyanto (2001), Van Dijk incorporates both context and social cognition into textual interpretation, asserting that texts are constructed upon contextually grounded propositions. His analytical framework consists of three primary structural levels: macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure (Van Dijk, cited in Zamzani & Rahayu, 2017).

- Macrostructure refers to the global meaning or overall thematic content of a text, derived through identification of the central topic or issue.
- Superstructure denotes the conventional organizational framework or schematic structure of a text (e.g., news reporting patterns such as headline, lead, body, and conclusion).
- Microstructure involves the detailed linguistic analysis of intrinsic textual elements, including semantics, syntax, stylistics, and rhetoric, which contribute to the construction of meaning at the sentence and clause level.

Numerous studies have employed Van Dijk's CDA model to analyze media discourse. For instance, Winingsih, Anshori, and Nurhadi (2022) conducted a study titled "Critical Discourse Analysis of Teun van Dijk's Model in the Issue of Weakening KPK in Narasi Newsroom Reporting." Their findings revealed that across macrostructural, superstructural, and microstructural levels, the news texts contained discursive elements reflecting efforts to undermine the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), manifested through syntactic, stylistic, and semantic choices.

Another relevant study by Setiawan, Prasetia, and Putra (2022), entitled "Critical Discourse Analysis of Teun van Dijk's Model on the Case of Sexual Abuse of a Student by the Son of a Jombang Religious Leader in Online Media," analyzed reports from three major online portals Detik.com, Tribunnews.com, and Kompas.com. The results showed that all three outlets consistently reported the case of sexual abuse committed by MSAT, the son of a prominent religious figure in

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Jombang, East Java. Macrostructural analysis revealed variations in headlines that shaped distinct reader interpretations, facilitating different framings of the same event. Superstructural analysis indicated that the news articles followed standard journalistic formats, comprising introduction, body, and conclusion. Microstructural analysis demonstrated how linguistic choices were strategically used to construct MSAT as the primary suspect, thereby shaping public perception of the case.

Based on the discussion above, there remains a need for further research focusing specifically on educational discourse particularly the portrayal of junior high school (SMP) students who are unable to read, as reported in online media. The same fact or event can be represented differently depending on how media choose to construct reality (Permadi et al., 2024). This variation occurs because media actors selectively determine which aspects of reality to highlight, frame, and disseminate. Such discourse is particularly worth examining, as it reveals how media representations such as those published by Kompas.com reflect, shape, and potentially distort the current state of education in Indonesia. Investigating these narratives through Van Dijk's CDA model offers valuable insight into the ideological underpinnings and discursive strategies used in framing literacy issues within the national educational context.

OVERVIEW OF TEUN A. VAN DIJK'S CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

This study employs a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is a methodological approach used to understand phenomena through methods that explore and interpret meanings derived from social or human issues (Creswell, 2023). It involves comprehensive processes of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting narrative and visual data to gain deeper insights into specific phenomena of interest (Gay et al., 2006, p. 399).

The present study is a library research (documentary analysis) focusing on published written sources (Arikunto, 2002). The data are drawn from educational discourses related to news reports titled *"Siswa SMP Belum Bisa Membaca",* published online by Kompas.com on August 2, 6, and 7, 2024. The research process consists of three stages: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing with verification (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Data collection was conducted using the reading and note-taking technique. For data analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) based on the framework developed by Teun A. van Dijk was employed. Van Dijk's model of critical discourse analysis comprises three structural components: macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure (Zamzani & Rahayu, 2017).

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The findings are presented narratively and described qualitatively to facilitate readers' understanding of the research content. Collected data are organized into qualitative descriptions aligned with Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis theory. This analytical approach enables researchers to examine socio-political phenomena reflected in language use, particularly within media discourse (Eriyanto, 2009). Moreover, Van Dijk's method emphasizes the role of social cognition in linguistic practices, positioning critical discourse analysis as a tool for uncovering ideological structures embedded in texts (Marlia et al., 2022). The following section outlines Van Dijk's model of critical discourse analysis.

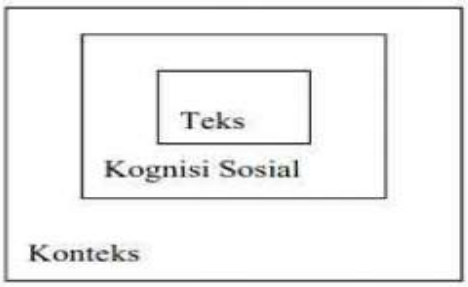


Figure 1. Teun A. Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis Model

RESULTS

The analysis and discussion are based on news articles published by Kompas.com on August 2, 2024, August 6, 2024, and July 7, 2024, concerning the issue of junior high school students who are unable to read. The three news articles are titled: *"Viral Video Puluhan Siswa SMP Tak Bisa Baca, Begini Faktanya", "Viral Puluhan Siswa SMP Belum Bisa Baca, Pengamat: Kurikulum Belum Sesuai Harapan",* and *" Viral Siswa SMP Tak Bisa Baca Tulis, Pakar UM: Perbanyak Guru ABK di Sekolah."* (Kompas.com, 2024). Although these articles differ in focus, they are thematically interrelated and collectively address the broader educational concern regarding literacy deficits among junior high school students. The textual components of these online news reports conform to Teun A. van Dijk's model of critical discourse analysis, which includes macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure encompassing textual, cognitive, and social dimensions. The analytical framework applied to each article is detailed below.

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Table 1: Discourse Analysis Framework Article 1

Title: *Viral Video Puluhan Siswa SMP Tak Bisa Baca, Begini Faktanya*

Discourse Structure	Element	Analysis Results
Macrostructure	Thematic: Topic/Theme	Facts related to a viral video showing dozens of junior high school students unable to read.
Superstructure	Schematic Schema	Headline: *Viral Video Puluhan Siswa SMP Tak Bisa Baca, Begini Faktanya.* Body: Public reactions and comments from social media regarding the video, along with factual clarifications provided by officials. Conclusion: Inadequate teacher competence, particularly in handling students with special needs, as the underlying cause. Students who cannot read are often children with special educational needs and should be taught by special education teachers (SLB).
Microstructure 1	Semantics	Setting: State Junior High School No. 1 Mangunjaya, Pangandaran Regency, West Java. Details: Description of the incident, including the school location and official response from the Head of the Regional School Principals' Working Group (K3S) of Pangandaran Regency. Purpose: The K3S head acknowledges that some schools have graduated students who cannot read. Presupposition: Some students remain illiterate but are promoted or graduated due to various administrative or systemic reasons.
Microstructure 2	Syntax	Sentence structure: The news text follows an inductive pattern, beginning with specific statements and concluding with general conclusions.

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		Coherence: Information within the text is logically connected, with repeated key terms used to reinforce prior statements. Pronouns: Demonstrative pronouns such as "that" ("itu") are used to refer to previously mentioned elements.

Source: Researcher's analysis (2024)

Table 2: Discourse Analysis Framework Article 2

Title: *Viral Puluhan Siswa SMP Belum Bisa Baca, Pengamat: Kurikulum Belum Sesuai Harapan*

Discourse Structure	Element	Analysis Results
Macrostructure	Thematic: Topic/Theme	Educational analysts' perspectives on the viral video showing numerous junior high school students in West Java unable to read.
Superstructure	Schematic Schema	Title: *Viral Puluhan Siswa SMP Belum Bisa Baca, Pengamat: Kurikulum Belum Sesuai Harapan.* Body: Opinions from education analyst Totok Amin of Paramadina University on the root causes and implications of the literacy crisis. Conclusion: The government must revise educational policies to systematically address ongoing challenges in the education system.
Microstructure 1	Semantics	Setting: National-level education issues in Indonesia. Details: The analyst discusses potential solutions to the problem of widespread illiteracy among junior high students. Purpose: The new curriculum has failed to resolve existing educational problems,

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		necessitating greater awareness and immediate policy reform by stakeholders. Presupposition: Multiple underlying factors contribute to the phenomenon of students unable to read, including systemic and pedagogical weaknesses.
Microstructure 2	Syntax	Sentence structure: The article employs a deductive pattern, starting with general assertions followed by supporting explanations. Coherence: The information flows cohesively, with lexical repetition used to clarify and emphasize key points. Pronouns: First-person plural pronouns "we" and second-person pronouns "he" is used to engage readers and reference the analyst.

Source: Researcher's analysis (2024)

Table 3: Discourse Analysis Framework – Article 3

Title: Viral Siswa SMP Tak Bisa Baca Tulis, Pakar UM: Perbanyak Guru ABK di Sekolah

Discourse Structure	Element	Analysis Results
Macrostructure	Thematic: Topic/Theme	Pendapat pakar pendidikan terkait video viral yang menunjukkan siswa SMP di Jawa Barat tidak bisa membaca.
Superstructure	Schematic Schema	Headline: *Viral Siswa SMP Tak Bisa Baca Tulis, Pakar UM: Perbanyak Guru ABK di Sekolah.* Body: Views from Prof. Bambang Budi Wiyono, M.Pd., an education expert from Universitas Negeri Malang (UM), on the root causes of literacy issues and potential solutions involving multiple

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		stakeholders, particularly concerning students who remain illiterate. Conclusion: A coordinated, and maximal effort is required from central and local governments, as well as schools, to address learning challenges especially in enhancing students' literacy competencies.
Microstructure 1	Semantics	Setting: Literacy problems at both regional and national levels in Indonesia. Details: The expert elaborates on various solutions to improve educational quality, focusing on literacy development and strategies to enhance teaching effectiveness. Purpose: To urge the government to implement strategic measures to improve education quality, especially by strengthening literacy programs. Presupposition: There exists a widespread literacy issue among junior high school students, prompting expert recommendations and public discourse on possible remedies.
Microstructure 2	Syntax	Sentence structure: The news text follows a deductive pattern, beginning with general statements followed by specific explanations. Coherence: Information within the article is logically connected, with repeated key terms used to clarify and reinforce prior ideas.

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		Pronouns: The following pronouns are used: (1) Second-person pronouns such as "he", "his" , "he said" , and "according to him" ; (2) Demonstrative pronouns including "this" , "that" , and "all" .

Source: Researcher's analysis (2024)

DISCUSSION

Macrostructure Analysis

The thematic element refers to the general overview, central idea, or main content of a text. Thematic structure also known as topic or theme constitutes the macrostructure of discourse. According to Van Dijk (1997), macrostructure involves the analysis of the primary topic emphasized within a news report. The three news articles published by Kompas.com share a common overarching theme: the phenomenon of junior high school (SMP) students who are unable to read. Despite their shared central theme, each article presents a distinct sub-theme:

1. The first article, published on August 2, 2024, focuses on the factual verification of the viral video depicting junior high school students who cannot read.
2. The second article, published on August 6, 2024, highlights the perspective of an education observer regarding the viral video showing dozens of students in West Java unable to read.
3. The third article, published on August 7, 2024, centers on the viewpoint of an education expert from Universitas Negeri Malang (UM) concerning the same viral incident.

An analysis of these sub-themes reveals notable differences in how the headlines frame the issue. In the first article, the headline functions as a representational tool that emphasizes factual clarification of a viral educational phenomenon students who cannot read. This framing enables readers to verify the actual circumstances behind the news, promoting transparency and credibility. In the second article, the headline shifts focus toward systemic failure, suggesting that the root cause lies in the inadequacy of the national curriculum.

By attributing the literacy crisis to curricular shortcomings through the voice of an education analyst the article guides readers to interpret the phenomenon through a policy-oriented lens, thereby enhancing its perceived reliability. In the third article, the headline implicates teaching personnel, particularly the lack of special needs educators, as a contributing

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factor to students' inability to read and write. This claim is reinforced by the inclusion of expert opinion from a university professor, which enhances the article's authority and strengthens public trust in the information presented.

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that all three articles fulfill the textual structure dimension of Teun A. van Dijk's critical discourse model. A notable commonality among the headlines is the use of the word "viral", which signals a shared reference to the same social phenomenon. At the same time, each headline exhibits unique characteristics in how it frames the issue whether emphasizing facts, policy critique, or pedagogical responsibility. This variation aligns with prior research indicating that differences in headline construction across news portals serve to guide public understanding and facilitate audience comprehension of the core message within each report (Fendi Setiawan et al., 2022).

Superstructure Analysis

The superstructure, or schematic organization, functions as a framework that outlines the general form of a discourse (Van Dijk, 1997). It reflects the strategy employed by speakers or news writers to emphasize certain elements they wish to highlight while potentially downplaying or omitting others. According to Suciartini (2017), the superstructure of a text consists of four main components: introduction, body, conclusion, and summary. It comprises a coherent schematic unit formed by interconnected elements that guide the overall organization of the discourse.

In critical discourse analysis, examining the superstructure involves identifying how these schematic elements are structured and interrelated within a text. An analysis of the three selected news articles from Kompas.com reveals a consistent schematic pattern across all reports. Each article begins with a headline that clearly reflects its core content:

1. The first article, published on August 2, 2024, titled "*Viral Video Puluhan Siswa SMP Tak Bisa Baca, Begini Faktanya*", includes subheadings that highlight key factual points central to the report: (a) "The video is old," and (b) "Teachers lack competence and reasons why students cannot read."
2. The second article, published on August 6, 2024, titled "*Viral Puluhan Siswa SMP Belum Bisa Baca, Pengamat: Kurikulum Belum Sesuai Harapan".*
3. The third article, published on August 7, 2024, titled "*Viral Siswa SMP Tak Bisa Baca Tulis, Pakar UM: Perbanyak Guru ABK di Sekolah"*, also features subheadings to signal important discussion points: (a) "Improving children's literacy through various approaches," and (b) "Students with special needs have equal rights."

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All three articles follow a concise and streamlined schematic structure typical of online journalism. This brevity aligns with the principles of digital news reporting, which prioritize short, clear, and efficient communication. As noted by Wijana and Rohmadi (2022), journalistic language is characterized by being concise, informative, clear, simple, fluent, direct, engaging, and linguistically standard qualities evident in these texts. Despite their brevity, all three articles fulfill the essential components of superstructure: an introductory section (often embedded in the headline and lead paragraph), a body presenting facts and expert perspectives, and a concluding segment offering insights, critiques, or recommendations related to the educational phenomenon discussed.

A distinctive feature observed in Kompas.com's reporting is its positioning as a credible platform that presents verified field facts and incorporates voices of domain experts. This approach reflects editorial selectivity and responsibility, particularly when covering sensitive educational issues. By including authoritative sources such as education analysts and university professors the outlet enhances the reliability and social relevance of its reporting. Based on the analysis of superstructure across the three articles, it can be concluded that effective news writing typically begins with an attention-grabbing headline, followed by an introduction that accurately reflects the article's content. The body then elaborates on verified facts and expert opinions, while the conclusion often includes critical reflections or policy suggestions regarding the reported phenomenon. This structural consistency supports reader comprehension and reinforces the media's role in shaping informed public discourse.

Microstructur Analysis (Semantic)

The first level of microstructure encompasses several linguistic dimensions used in news writing, including setting (background), detail, intention (purpose), and presupposition. The following analysis examines these microstructural elements across three news articles published by Kompas.com concerning the phenomenon of junior high school (SMP) students who are unable to read.

1) Setting (Background)

The setting in all three articles shares a common general context: the issue of literacy challenges in Indonesia. This reflects the overarching focus of the reports presenting factual information about the viral case of junior high school students in West Java who cannot read, along with proposed solutions and expert recommendations. Although each article varies in emphasis, they collectively situate the problem within broader educational and societal

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frameworks, highlighting its relevance at both regional and national levels.

2) Detail

In the first article, the details center on the specific location SMP Negeri 1 Mangunjaya in Pangandaran Regency and include statements from the Head of the Regional School Principals' Working Group (K3S) of Pangandaran, providing official clarification regarding the incident. In the second article, the details expand beyond the local case to incorporate the perspective of an education analyst from Paramadina University, linking the regional literacy crisis to systemic failures in national curriculum implementation. In the third article, the details emphasize expert recommendations from Prof. Bambang Budi Wiyono of Universitas Negeri Malang (UM), focusing on practical strategies to improve literacy and overall educational quality, particularly through the recruitment of more special needs educators (Guru ABK). These variations illustrate how each article tailors its content to different aspects of the same phenomenon ranging from localized facts to policy-level discourse.

3) Intention (Purpose)

Broadly speaking, the primary intention of all three articles is to report on the viral phenomenon of junior high school students lacking basic reading skills. However, their specific communicative purposes differ: The first article aims to verify and clarify the facts surrounding the viral video, offering institutional confirmation and contextualizing the incident as involving students with special educational needs. The second and third articles go beyond fact-reporting to advocate for systemic reform. Their specific purpose is to urge the government to revise the current curriculum and implement strategic improvements in education policy to address widespread literacy deficiencies. Thus, while all three share a foundational goal of informing the public, the latter two adopt a more critical and prescriptive stance, positioning the media as a catalyst for policy reflection and change.

4) Presupposition

Each article carries distinct presuppositions that guide readers toward particular interpretations: The first article presupposes that some schools promote or graduate students despite their inability to read often due to administrative pressures or lack of specialized teaching capacity implying gaps in accountability and inclusion practices. The second article presupposes that the root cause of low literacy lies in structural issues, particularly the inadequacy of the national curriculum, suggesting that pedagogical reform is necessary. The third article presupposes that improving literacy requires targeted investment in human resources, especially by increasing the number of qualified special needs teachers, thereby framing teacher availability

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as a key barrier to equitable education. These underlying assumptions reflect not only editorial choices but also ideological positions embedded within the discourse.

The interplay of setting, detail, intention, and presupposition in these three news texts demonstrates how journalists construct narratives around critical educational issues. At its core, news discourse does not merely convey information it reflects institutional policies and ideological stances shaped by state actors, educational authorities, and media organizations (Ramanathan & Hoon, 2015). As critical discourse analysis reveals, media representations are never neutral; they participate in processes of power and ideology by framing social problems in particular ways (Dezhkameh et al., 2021). The differences in microstructural elements across these articles reveal varying perspectives on responsibility, causality, and solution whether attributing the problem to individual schools, curricular design, or resource allocation. Ultimately, the way such issues are linguistically constructed influences public perception and policy responses. By analyzing these microstructures, this study highlights how media discourse contributes to shaping national understanding of education crises and, potentially, drives calls for reform.

Microstructur Analysis (Syntax)

The second level of microstructure focuses on syntactic analysis, which examines the linguistic choices authors make in constructing news texts. This includes sentence structure, cohesion, and the use of reference (pronouns). In the three selected articles from Kompas.com, both deductive and inductive sentence patterns were identified, reflecting different strategies in organizing information either beginning with a general statement followed by supporting details (deductive), or starting with specific facts leading to a general conclusion (inductive). According to Bakri et al. (2020), word order in journalistic writing serves two primary functions: placing key information at the beginning of a sentence (deductive emphasis) or reserving it for the end (inductive emphasis). All three articles demonstrate coherent textual organization. The primary form of coherence observed across the reports is lexical repetition, used strategically to reinforce central ideas and maintain thematic continuity. Regarding pronoun usage:

In the first article, demonstrative pronouns such as "itu" ("that") are frequently used to refer directly to the viral video and the incident involving junior high school students who cannot read.In the second article, first-person plural pronouns ("kita" – "we") and second-person references ("dia" – "he") appear prominently, creating a sense of collective responsibility while attributing opinions to specific individuals. In the third article, second-person referential expressions such as "ia", "ujarnya", and "menurutnya" ("he," "he said," "according to him"), along

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with demonstratives like "ini" ("this"), "itu" ("that"), and "semua" ("all"), are used to attribute expert viewpoints and clarify discourse participants.

These variations in pronominal reference reflect differences in focus and narrative positioning across the articles. For instance, the use of "we" invites reader identification with national responsibilities, while third-person references distance the journalist and foreground expert authority. In summary, all three news items fulfill the syntactic components of microstructure: sentence structure, coherence, and reference. The reporting in Kompas.com is clear, concise, and effective in conveying information without omission. As Wahyudi et al. (2021) note, syntactic analysis can reveal whether the subject of a report is explicitly stated or implicitly constructed through language. Furthermore, Schiffrin (2007) emphasizes that discourse functions as a linguistic unit whose coherence emerges from systematic relationships among smaller units such as words, meanings, clauses, or speech acts allowing for comparison and interpretation within a given text. Thus, syntactic choices are not neutral; they actively shape how readers perceive agency, causality, and responsibility in social narratives.

Social Cognition

In Teun A. van Dijk's framework, social cognition refers to how individuals or groups process social information and construct meaning through language and communication. This dimension is crucial in critical discourse analysis because no text is produced in isolation it reflects the author's background knowledge, beliefs, and ideological stance. Van Dijk identifies four key cognitive schemata that influence how media produce discourse: Person schema – knowledge about individuals involved, Self-schema – the media's perception of its own role, Role schema – understanding of social roles (e.g., teacher, expert, official), Event schema – structured knowledge about typical sequences of events (Eriyanto, 2011).

An analysis of the three Kompas.com articles reveals that the event schema is the most dominant. The reporting centers on the location, sequence, and factual context of the incident the inability of junior high school students in West Java to read positioning the event as a public concern requiring verification and response. Through this framing, Kompas.com implicitly critiques governmental performance in managing education, particularly literacy development. While the media outlet does not overtly assign blame, the selection and presentation of facts suggest that the phenomenon undermines public trust in the education system.

Moreover, journalists function as narrative agents who, although often absent as direct subjects in the text, retain significant control over how stories are told. They shape plotlines, select

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sources, and emphasize certain perspectives all of which reflect their interpretive stance (Asmarani & Emilapalau, 2022). Despite maintaining an objective tone, reporters exercise discursive power by describing events through particular lenses. Ultimately, these reports aim to urge policymakers to reform the education system comprehensively and address student needs more inclusively. The repeated inclusion of expert voices reinforces the call for structural change rather than blaming individual actors.

Social Context

In Van Dijk's model, social context encompasses power relations and access to discourse, both of which shape how reality is represented in media (Van Dijk, 2011). Ideological positions embedded in news texts become visible through linguistic choices, which play a vital role in constructing subjects, themes, and rhetorical strategies (Meisandini et al., 2023). Language functions not only to inform but also to legitimize dominant groups' perspectives while marginalizing others. Online media, in particular, wield significant influence in shaping public perception and opinion about political figures, professionals, or social phenomena (Puspitasari, 2020). The way an issue is framed determines how audiences interpret its causes, consequences, and solutions. An analysis of Kompas.com's coverage reveals that the reporting on the viral case of illiterate junior high school students is influenced by the media's institutional ownership and editorial orientation. While Kompas.com generally maintains a balanced stance and does not overtly align with government narratives, especially in educational matters, its neutrality should be critically examined. Although the language used appears straightforward and non-confrontational, no text is ideologically neutral.

As Fairclough (1995) argues, media discourse inherently carries potential to guide or manipulate readers toward particular ideological positions even when claims of objectivity are made. Kompas.com enhances credibility by incorporating responses from education analysts and experts, thereby positioning itself as a platform for informed public debate. However, the consistent portrayal of the literacy crisis as a result of governmental neglect suggests a subtle critique of policy implementation. Experts quoted in the articles propose various solutions curriculum revision, improved teacher training, and increased deployment of special needs educators aligning with broader calls for educational reform in Indonesia. These recommendations support the argument that addressing literacy deficits requires inclusive and adaptive approaches, particularly for students unsuited to traditional formal education (Melinda et al., 2021). Thus, while the articles present themselves as factual reports, they simultaneously

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participate in a larger ideological project: holding institutions accountable and advocating for systemic improvements in education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of three news articles published by Kompas.com concerning the viral case of junior high school (SMP) students who are unable to read, the following findings were obtained.

First, the macrostructural analysis reveals differences in the meaning conveyed through the headlines. These variations serve to guide and facilitate public understanding of each article's content. Although all headlines begin with the word "viral", indicating a shared reference to the same social phenomenon, their distinct formulations reflect different thematic emphases ranging from factual clarification to systemic critique thereby helping readers quickly identify the focus and perspective of each report.

Second, the superstructural analysis shows that all three articles fulfill the essential components of news discourse: introduction, body, and conclusion. Each article begins with an attention-grabbing headline designed to attract reader interest. This is followed by an introductory section that outlines the core issue, while the main content presents verified facts, expert opinions, and contextual details often marked by subheadings that highlight key discussion points. The articles conclude with recommendations or implicit critiques aimed at relevant stakeholders, particularly the government, thus reinforcing the media's role in promoting accountability and reform.

Third, the microstructural analysis indicates that the journalists actively construct discourse around a critical issue in Indonesian education: literacy deficiency among secondary students. The linguistic choices including sentence structure, cohesion, and reference demonstrate intentional framing to inform, engage, and influence public perception. Furthermore, the reports are written clearly and concisely, adhering to principles of journalistic language, ensuring completeness and accessibility of information without ambiguity or omission.

In terms of social cognition, the dominant schema identified across the three articles is the event schema. The reporting primarily centers on the location, sequence, and factual context of the incident specifically, students in Pangandaran, West Java, who cannot read. By emphasizing empirical details and official responses, the media positions itself as a neutral conveyor of truth, while subtly shaping audience interpretation through selection and presentation of information.

Regarding social context, the analysis shows that Kompas.com, while maintaining a

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seemingly impartial stance, does not always align with governmental narratives particularly in educational matters. However, this lack of alignment is not explicitly stated. Instead, it is implicitly constructed through the use of direct, factual language and the inclusion of expert voices from outside government institutions. By privileging perspectives from education analysts and university scholars, the portal enhances its credibility while indirectly critiquing policy effectiveness without overtly appearing oppositional.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on critical discourse analysis (CDA) of news texts using Teun A. van Dijk's model. The three dimensions of Van Dijk's framework macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure were fully evident in the analyzed articles. Moreover, the integration of social cognition and social context further confirms the applicability of Van Dijk's comprehensive approach in uncovering how ideology, power, and institutional positioning are embedded within media discourse.

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