

Social Cognition in *Kompas* Daily Editorials

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SUBJECT

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political issues. This article also strengthens the argument that journalism is increasingly needed to build public awareness of policies.

1. Introduction

The media still has the leading power in the current information era, namely the power to construct reality; the media can package various existing issues and then rise to the surface to become interesting public discussions (Heryanto, 2018). Words and other signs in social contexts construct our views and perceptions of reality. The concept of truth adopted by the mass media is not absolute but something that society considers the truth. In short, the mass media determines the truth. Thus, news readers need help with

Abstract

This article discusses social cognition in the *Kompas* Daily editorial using Teun A van Dijk's theoretical framework. Social cognition, as the central concept in this theory, refers to how individuals process, store, and use social information in various forms of communication. This research explores how *Kompas* daily editorials utilize the principles of social cognition in forming public opinions and views. This study uses the content analysis method to analyze the *Kompas* daily editorial "*Dengarkan Suara Rakyat*" (Listen to the Voice of the People), published on October 6, 2020. The results of the analysis show that there are social cognitive patterns that emerge in word choice, framing and editorial argumentation structure. Within the theoretical framework of Teun A van Dijk, this article explores how these editorials build social representations, manipulate collective cognition, and influence the process of people's understanding of specific issues. The findings from this research provide new insights regarding the use of social cognition in the context of mass media, especially daily editorials. The implications of the results of this research help further understanding of how mass media can play an essential role in shaping people's perceptions and attitudes towards social and

responding to news. At least readers must have sufficient ability to filter news until it approaches the truth.

The approach used in this research is critical discourse analysis developed by Teun A van Dijk. Darma (2009) stated that of the many critical discourse analyses introduced and developed by several experts, Dijk's model is the most widely used. This model has the advantage of being more practical in application. This description takes the material object of *Kompas'* daily editorial "Dengarkan Suara Rakyat" (Listen to the Voice of the People), published on October 6 2020, and focuses on aspects of social cognition and the social context of *Kompas* mass media. According to the author, the appropriate approach is through critical discourse studies on the Teun A van Dijk model. According to Eriyanto (2009), this approach differs from language studies in the traditional linguistic sense. Language is analysed not only by describing linguistic aspects but also by connecting them with context. The context here means that language is used for specific purposes and practices, including the practice of power.

In his critical discourse analysis theory, Teun A van Dijk studies language and discourse used in society. This theory considers language and discourse as both a means of communication and a tool for establishing and maintaining societal power (van Dijk, 1993). In this theory, critical discourse analysis is carried out by paying attention to three dimensions of discourse, namely the text dimension, the social cognition dimension, and the social analysis dimension (Gyollai, 2022). The text dimension studies the text structure and discourse strategies that emphasise a view or ideology. The social cognition dimension studies the text production process involving the creator's cognition. Meanwhile, the social analysis dimension studies the discourse that develops in society and will influence society's perspective and actions. Teun A van Dijk's theory of critical discourse analysis can be used to uncover the interests and ideology in a discourse to help understand power relations in society.

This theory emphasises the critical role of language in shaping and reproducing social inequality, power, and ideology in society. In van Dijk's critical discourse theory, social cognition theory discusses how language can form social representations (Humaidi, 2016). In critical discourse analysis, it is essential to understand how the mass media represents certain groups or issues (Setiawan et al., 2022). For example, in editorials, word choice, framing, and language can form a particular image or perception regarding a topic. Teun A van Dijk emphasised that mass media can manipulate collective cognition by presenting information selectively or with exceptional framing (van Dijk, 2005). In an editorial context, analysis needs to highlight how the presentation of an issue can influence society's collective understanding of a topic or event.

On the other hand, social cognition is also related to how people construct and organise arguments. In editorial analysis, attention to argumentation structure is essential for understanding how messages are structured and how arguments are positioned to influence readers. Van Dijk highlights that discourse can reproduce certain ideologies (van Dijk, 2005). In editorial analysis, it is necessary to consider whether the language used supports or opposes a particular ideology and how this can influence people's views. By applying these concepts in editorial analysis in mass media, research can uncover the communication strategies used to shape public opinion, understand social construction in media discourse, and identify its impact on people's attitudes and perceptions (Setiawan et al., 2022; Waugh et al., 2022; Waugh et al. al., 2016).

Titscher et al. (2000) explain that critical discourse analysis conceptualises language as a form of social practice and tries to make readers aware of the reciprocal influence between language and social structures that is usually unrealised. The approach used to analyse is called social cognition. This approach assumes that social cognition is essential in producing discourse in society. A discourse that emerges has a particular tendency because of the cognition or mental awareness within the author, even the awareness of the community where the discourse appears. Van Dijk views discourse analysis as not being limited only to text structure because the discourse structure itself shows and indicates several meanings, opinions, and ideologies (van Dijk, 1993, 2005). An analysis of cognition and social context is needed to uncover a text's hidden meaning. He describes discourse as having three dimensions: text, social cognition, and social context. The three are combined into a unified analysis (Darma, 2009).

2. Method

The method used in this research is descriptive with a critical paradigm (Janks, 1997). Epistemologically, the critical paradigm sees that the reality being studied and specific values connect the researcher. Understanding a reality is called value-mediated findings. Apart from that, methodologically, the critical paradigm prioritises comprehensive, contextual and multilevel analysis by placing oneself as a participant in social transformation (Fairclough, 2013). Ontologically, the critical tradition views reality as "pseudo", which is formed through historical processes, social forces, culture and political economy (Zustiyantoro, 2023; Zustiyantoro et al., 2022). This research refers to the *Kompas* editorial "Dengarkan Suara Rakyat", published on October 6, 2020. The techniques used in collecting data are documentation, involvement and note-taking. The data analysis techniques include data editing, data presentation, and conclusion. The data analysis carried out in this research was text structure, social cognition, and social context (van Dijk, 1993).

3. Media and Social Change

From a critical reading of the text of the *Kompas* Editorial "Dengarkan Suara Rakyat", October 6 2020, it appears that the narrative in the text was built to construct the behaviour of Joko Widodo's leadership and the government in power in general which did not or did not listen to the voice of the people in drafting the Job Creation Law. This was built on the awareness that the media must side with the public. *Kompas* Daily, as one of the leading media in Indonesia, has a role in encouraging the social changes society desires. In a democracy, the mass media has a vital position to guard this.

How is *Kompas's* bias towards the public recorded in its reporting - which in this context is related to the Omnibus Law/Job Creation Law? We can trace this from various previous reports. On February 13 2020, *Kompas* wrote a news story entitled "Penyusunan Omnibus Law" (The Preparation of the Omnibus Law) will listen to the public's voice." It states that several factions in the DPR have prepared plans to study the two omnibus law drafts the government sent to the DPR. They also promised to involve parties affected by the two omnibus laws when compiling a problem inventory list.

Previously, on February 12 2020, *Kompas* wrote the news, "Buruh Tak Ingin Dikorbankan Demi Investasi" (Workers Do not Want to Be Sacrificed for Investment). It contains a group of workers who are members of the All-Indonesian Trade Union Conference demonstrating in front of the Parliament Complex, Senayan, Jakarta, to

protest against the Job Creation Bill. They do not want regulations to harm workers for investment.

The demonstration coincided with submitting the draft omnibus law from the government to the House of Representatives. Before demonstrating in front of the Parliament Complex, Senayan, Jakarta, on Wednesday (12/2/2020) afternoon, the crowd represented by the President of the All Indonesian Trade Union Conference (KSPSI) Andi Gani Nena Wea and the KSPSI management were received by the DPR. They were met by Deputy Chairman of the DPR Rahmat Gobel, Deputy Chairman of Commission IX DPR Melky Laka Lena, and members of Commission IX Obon Tabroni and Rahmad Handoyo. At the same time, the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs, Airlangga Hartarto, visited the DPR Building. Airlangga handed over the President's letter and the draft Job Creation Bill (RUU) to DPR Speaker Puan Maharani and other DPR leadership.

Kompas's editorial, published on October 6 2020, 2020, is *Kompas's* attempt to remind the government that it had previously made a promise but broke it. The title stated that the Joko Widodo government and its coalition were straightforwardly implementing various policies. Not only the Job Creation Law, but this has been visible since the success of the government and DPR in revising the Corruption Eradication Commission Law, the Mining Law, and the Constitutional Court Law, as well as the regional elections on December 9 2020.

(2) Dengan kekuatan mayoritas di parlemen, pemerintahan Presiden Joko Widodo dan koalisinya – minus Partai Demokrat yang walk out dan Partai Keadilan Sejahtera – apa pun keinginan koalisi pemerintah, mudah digolkan. Kerja politik seperti itu sudah dibaca sejak keberhasilan pemerintah dan DPR merevisi UU Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi (KPK), revisi UU Pertambangan Mineral dan Batubara (Minerba), revisi UU Mahkamah Konstitusi (MK) yang memperpanjang masa jabatan hakim konstitusi hingga 15 tahun, serta pemilu kepala daerah (pilkada) serentak 9 Desember 2020. Pengambilan keputusan di tingkat paripurna dipimpin Wakil Ketua DPR Aziz Syamsuddin dari Partai Golkar.

Translate

(2) With the power of a majority in parliament, the government of President Joko Widodo and his coalition - minus the Democratic Party, which walked out and the Prosperous Justice Party - whatever the government coalition wants, it is easy to achieve. Such political work has been read since the success of the government and DPR in revising the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) Law, the Mineral and Coal Mining (Minerba) Law, the revision of the Constitutional Court (MK) Law, which extended the term of office of constitutional judges to 15 years, as well as the head election – regional elections (pilkada) simultaneously on December 9 2020. Decision-making at the plenary level is led by the Deputy Speaker of the DPR, Aziz Syamsuddin, from the Golkar Party.

TAJUK RENCANA

Dengarkan Suara Rakyat

Bangsa ini jelas membutuhkan investasi. Namun, harus dipahami, investasi tidak akan bisa bekerja tanpa ada keterlibatan kaum pekerja, terlebih saat pandemi tak kunjung bisa terkendali.

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KOMPAS/WAWAN H PRABOWO

Para menteri Kabinet Indonesia Maju bersiap berfoto bersama pimpinan DPR RI di akhir rapat paripurna DPR RI masa persidangan I tahun sidang 2019-2020 di Kompleks Parlemen, Senayan, Jakarta, Senin (5/10/2020). Rapat paripurna hari itu mengesahkan Omnibus Law RUU Cipta Kerja menjadi undang-undang.

Pemerintah dan DPR, Senin (5/10/2020), akhirnya menyetujui Rancangan Undang-Undang tentang Cipta Kerja yang digarap dengan mekanisme omnibus.

Dengan kekuatan mayoritas di parlemen, pemerintahan Presiden Joko Widodo dan koalisinya—minus Partai Demokrat yang walk out dan Partai Keadilan Sejahtera—apa pun keinginan koalisi pemerintah, mudah digolkan. Kerja politik seperti itu sudah dibaca sejak keberhasilan pemerintah dan DPR merevisi UU Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi (KPK), revisi UU Pertambangan Mineral dan Batubara (Minerba), revisi UU Mahkamah

Figure 1. Screenshot of the *Kompas* editorial “Dengarkan Suara Rakyat”.

In the next paragraph, *Kompas* also criticises the pattern of “while in power” or while in the majority” as a political decision strategy that ignores the people. This law not only discusses employment issues but also includes several other regulations.

(3) Kita tidak berharap pola “mumpang berkuasa” atau “mumpang mayoritas” menjadi strategi pengambilan keputusan politik yang meninggalkan rakyat. RUU Cipta Kerja yang dibahas dengan mekanisme omnibus – satu UU yang merevisi sejumlah UU – adalah eksperimen konstitusional yang dilakukan Presiden Jokowi. Dengan mekanisme seperti itu, sistematika RUU Cipta Kerja tidak mudah dipahami.

(4) RUU Cipta Kerja bukan hanya membahas soal substansi ketenagakerjaan, melainkan juga merambah sejumlah aturan lain, termasuk produk halal, tenaga nuklir, tata ruang, soal imigrasi, hak paten, hak adat, dan sejumlah substansi lain.

RUU Cipta Kerja memberikan gambaran corak UU yang kapitalistik, resentralisasi, tetapi juga etatisme.

Translate

(3) We do not expect the “while in power” or “while in the majority” pattern to become a political decision-making strategy that leaves the people behind. The Job Creation Bill, which is being discussed using an omnibus mechanism—a law that revises several laws—is a constitutional experiment by President Jokowi. With a mechanism like that, the systematics of the Job Creation Bill are not easy to understand.

(4) The Job Creation Bill not only discusses the substance of employment but also includes several other regulations, including halal products, nuclear energy, spatial planning, immigration matters, patent rights, customary rights and several other substances. The Job Creation Bill overviews the law’s capitalistic, decentralised, and etatism.

Kompas writes that the Job Creation Law is an elite product far from participatory democracy. *Kompas* criticised President Joko Widodo’s current leadership style, which is different from the previous period, namely when he was Mayor of Solo. While in Solo, as *Kompas* wrote, Joko Widodo carried out lengthy negotiations when moving a market. In a presidential candidate debate, Joko Widodo also defined *democracy* simply as hearing the people’s voice.

(6) Praktik demokrasi kaum elite jauh dari praktik politik yang pernah dijalankan Presiden Jokowi. Dalam sebuah debat calon presiden, Presiden Jokowi mendefinisikan demokrasi secara sederhana, yakni mendengar suara rakyat. Praktik itu bukan hanya diucapkan, melainkan sudah dipraktikkan Presiden Jokowi saat menjadi Wali Kota Solo ketika berunding memindahkan sebuah pasar di Solo melalui proses yang panjang dan sabar. Pertanyaannya, mengapa pendekatan dialog yang sudah dilakukan Presiden Jokowi selama ini, kini berubah?

Translate

(6) The democratic practices of the elite are far from the political practices that President Jokowi has carried out. In a presidential candidate debate, President Jokowi defined *democracy* simply as listening to the people’s voice. This practice is not just spoken about but was put into practice by President Jokowi when he was Mayor of Solo when negotiating to move a market in Solo through a long and patient process. The question is, why has the dialogue approach that President Jokowi has taken so far changed?

Efforts to remind the government traced back to the news that followed. In the main news, October 13 2020, *Kompas* wrote the news “Draft Job Creation Law Allegedly Changed”. It states that the draft Job Creation Bill circulating in the community changed after it was approved to be passed into law at the DPR Plenary Session. Suppose this change occurs and is carried out after being ratified at the DPR Plenary Session. In that case, it will make the regulations formed using the omnibus law mechanism have the potential to be formally flawed.

Kompas received three law drafts after the Job Creation Bill was approved to become law at the DPR Plenary Session on October 5 until Monday (12/10/2020). The first draft, 905 pages thick, was obtained from Achmad Baidowi and Willy Aditya, the leadership of the DPR Badan Legislatif (Baleg), on October 5. At that time, both stated that the substance in the draft was approved at the plenary meeting. However, the public cannot access the draft because, according to them, there are spelling errors and a lack of punctuation, so it still needs to be corrected. The substance is promised to remain unchanged.

Monday morning, *Kompas* received a draft law with 1,035 pages from the Secretary General of the DPR, Indra Iskandar. Indra said the draft resulted from improvements by the DPR Baleg on Sunday evening (11/10). He also said the final draft would be sent to President Joko Widodo for signature and ratification.

However, on Monday night, Indra again presented the draft law. This time, the number of pages in the draft shrunk to 812 pages. The reason is that the paper format has been changed from the original A4 to legal format. Meanwhile, on October 14 2020, *Kompas* published the headline "Improving Communication", related to poor public communication regarding the Job Creation Bill, which urgently needs to be addressed. This communication problem also sparked polemics around this regulation. In the same edition, there was also the news "Draft Tinkering Meeting While the Parliament Building is in 'Lockdown'". It states that several council members are still gathering to finalise the draft Job Creation Bill before it is passed, even though several rooms are being locked because there are staff who have tested positive for COVID-19.

4. *Kompas* Background

Apart from the basic principle of mass media, which should ideally side with the public and not with power, *Kompas* received a mandate from Ir. Soekarno, the figure who named *Kompas*, for "giving direction". "I will give it a better name... '*Kompas*'. Do you know what a compass is? "Giving direction and paths in navigating the seas and jungles," said Soekarno.

Quoted from the book *Syukur Tiada Akhir: Jejak Langkah Jakob Oetama* (2011), the presence of *Kompas* began with the tense, polarised political situation at that time. Three major political forces emerged after the Presidential Decree was issued on July 5, 1959 – President Soekarno was the Great Leader of the Revolution. The Presidential Decree consolidated power and centralised politics in Bung Karno, which implemented guided democracy practices. Second is the Indonesian Communist Party, which is close to Bung Karno. The PKI also has several media, which are the party's mouthpiece and spread its ideas massively. In some cases, this thinking tends to limit information entry from outside.

Third was the strength of ABRI, which tried to reduce the political power of the PKI. ABRI tries to collaborate with non- or anti-communist communities and political organisations. In April 1965, Minister/Army Commander Lt. Gen. Achmad Yani proposed to former Plantation Minister Frans Seda that he establish a non-party newspaper to counter the hegemony of partisan newspapers. Frans Seda, a Catholic figure, then met with the General Chair of the Indonesian Catholic Party, Ignatius Joseph Kasimo, to realise this idea.

PK Ojong and Jakob Oetama The duo Jakob Oetama and Petrus Kanisius (PK) Ojong, who had previously founded *Intisari* magazine in 1963, were also involved. This

involvement was based on both of them having experience in leading newspapers. Reporting from the *korporasi.kompas.id* page, Jakob Oetama was previously the editor of the weekly *Penabur*, while PK Ojong was the editor-in-chief of the weekly *Star Weekly*.

However, the engagement plan was not immediately accepted by both of them. "We were both reluctant to accept the request to publish the *Kompas* newspaper. "The political, economic and infrastructure environment at that time did not support it," wrote Jakob in the *Kompas* editorial, June 2 1980. *Intisari Magazine* was also intended to break the politics of isolation carried out by Soekarno at that time. However, in the end, Jakob and Ojong agreed to the terms. The daily that will be published is not a party mouthpiece, stands above all groups, is general and is based on the diversity of Indonesia. The agreement was reached, and the *Bentara Rakyat* Foundation was finally founded. The popular *Bentara* magazine inspired the name in Flores.

Once the idea is agreed upon, the next stage is obtaining permission. One of the conditions that must be met is proof of customer existence based on at least 3,000 signatures. Thanks to Frans Seda's help, these requirements were met. However, a cabinet member, Frans Seda, finally reported the plan to Soekarno. At that time, the name of the daily to be published was *Bentara Rakyat*. Soekarno did not mind. He even gave it another name, which would later make the *Kompas Daily* the biggest newspaper in Indonesia to date.

When the dummy with the *Bentara Rakyat* header was ready to be printed, Bung Karno's proposal was submitted and accepted. *Kompas* journalist Edward Linggar immediately prepared the logo overnight. The logo was approved by Jakob and Ojong and is used today. However, the current logo has undergone minor changes, especially regarding the thickness and thinness of the letters.

5. Conclusion

As one of Indonesia's largest mass media, *Kompas* strives to maintain public trust in its press products. Continuously maintained trust, as well as innovation and creativity in delivering press products, will produce quality journalism. One effort that can be made is to strive to be independent and impartial to the government in power. Editorials are the attitude of the mass media in viewing problems currently emerging in society. Through the headline "*Dengarkan Suara Rakyat*" (Listen to the People's Voice), *Kompas* encourages the government to return to the basic principles of democracy, namely government by and for the people. Ir. Soekarno also mandates *Kompas'* efforts to maintain independence, the first president of the Republic of Indonesia, who also named this mass media.

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