

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a wide-scope description of the study. It contains the background, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The internet becomes an excellent place for spreading fake news, such as misleading information, fake reviews, fake advertisement, rumors, false political claims, satire, and other deceptive content, this could be seen by the significant growth of cyber media in Indonesia, with the Press Council (Dewan Pers) estimating over 43,000 online media outlets in 2018. However, only 0.4% of these are considered professional (Warsito, 2018). According to Balmas (2014), fake news spreads more rapidly and gains more popularity on social media platforms compared to traditional mainstream media.

In media discourse, language is a vital tool for shaping and expressing power dynamics and ideological perspectives, aligning with this statement Khan (2024), language is not a neutral tool but a means of shaping reality, identify, and influence. According to Dijk (1993), discourse is a kind of social activity that embodies and conveys ideas that have the possibility to be connected to more general power dynamics. The terminology employed in the media to describe events and subjects is not objective; rather, it represents the ideological preferences of those in the lead of media companies that are being used to spread and reinforce ideas that can promote or oppose the current situation. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used to investigate how language in the media is used around this matter because it reveal what buried in language used to maintain power and sustain existing social relations (Bouvier, 2018).

Van Leeuwen (2008) notes that media narratives are selective. Public opinion and discussion surrounding popular figures' actions and choices are greatly influenced by how they are portrayed in the media (Degaf et al., 2019). One of them is Nadiem Makarim, the Minister of Education that led

the charge on educational reform in Indonesia. He received lots of attention as he proposes about his 100-day's plans to improve Indonesia's education (Nugraha & Citralesmana, 2022). It is fundamental to comprehend how the media, particularly online newspapers, portrays Nadiem Makarim's profile.

Nadiem Makarim, former CEO of Gojek, in October 2019, he was appointed Minister of Education by President Joko Widodo. The "Merdeka Belajar" program received praise from students, with 82% positive responses on satisfaction and 80% positive response on perception (Rambe et al., 2025). there also doubt and skepticism from various parties about his ability. He is also the figure who has brought about great change and innovation, but also a controversial figure whose policies have triggered various reactions among the public, ranging from full support to sharp criticism (Sari, 2020).

This research objective is to uncover how various Indonesian online media outlets portray the underlying power dynamics and ideological perspectives of the Nadiem Makarim profile. It will demonstrate how Makarim's reputation condition may either enhance or diminish a well-known individual or, in this case, a political figure. Understanding these depictions is essential for understanding the wider public conversation of his era and, most importantly, increasing public awareness by making audiences aware of the techniques used to embed ideology in media that resist biased representations and informed public to be more critical (Sharma, 2023). And according to KBBI, "kritis" refers to the someone attitude that does not take information at face value. This study could trains English education students to think critically about how language in media reflect ideology and power.

A previous research investigation on popular individuals in online media provides a textual analysis that serves as inspiration for this work. According to Degaf et al., (2019), a study that employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how language maintains and shapes the public's perception of celebrity. By examining web articles, the researchers learned how specific language was used by the media to either improve or damage the reputation of famous people. It correlates with the goal of my research,

which shows how language is used by Indonesian online media to portray political figures, in this case, Nadiem Makarim. There is a noticeable knowledge gap in the research; the author only focuses on macrostructure and microstructure that only consist of several elements to analyze the news. To fill this gap, in this research, the writer analyzes the news using a complete model that consists of macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure on different objects that are still under-explored, such as Nadiem Makarim.

The research employs critical discourse analysis as its methodological framework, specifically utilizing Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model. CDA is well-suited for analyzing how language in media constructs social realities. This study will examine how language enhances or diminishes the reputation of famous figures. The central research question guiding this study is, “How do Indonesian online media in their newspapers construct the public image of Nadiem Makarim?”

1.2 Formulation of the Problem(s)

Based on the background above, this research focuses on answering the central question, “How do Indonesian online media in their newspapers construct the public image of Nadiem Makarim’s role?”

1.3 Operational Definition(s)

To prevent any potential misinterpretation of this research, the following are the operational definitions for each key term:

1.3.1 Web-Based Media : Web-based media refers to content created, shared, and accessed over the internet through websites or online platforms. It encompasses various forms of digital media specifically online news articles. These digital news sources with Indonesian bases that disseminate articles and news stories examine how these outlets use language and discourse to construct narratives about public or political figures such as Nadiem Makarim. The media

chosen in this study are TheJakartaPost, Jakarta globe.id, and Kompas.id

1.3.2 Web-Based Media Perspectives On Nadiem Makarim : This research will focus on how Indonesian online media portrays Indonesian Minister of Education, known as Nadiem Makarim role and educational policies.

1.3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis On Indonesian Article : In this study, critical discourse analysis refers to the method used to analyze language within media texts, particularly through the lens of Teun A. van Dijk's model (socio-cognitive model), to uncover underlying power dynamics and ideological perspectives. It involves examining the text using microstructure, macrostructure, and superstructure.

1.4 Aim(s) of the Study

This research uncovers how various Indonesian online media outlets portray the underlying power dynamics and ideological perspectives of the Nadiem Makarim profile and how they increase public awareness of media bias and ideological perspectives. This research contributes to the understanding of media representation and its impact on public perception, particularly in the context of Indonesian education. The study will provide insights into how language and discourse in online media shape the public's view of Nadiem Makarim and his policies by applying Critical Discourse Analysis, revealing the underlying power dynamics and ideological perspectives in media portrayals of Nadiem Makarim's profile within Indonesian online journalism.

1.5 Significance(s) of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Uses

This study applies Teun A. Van Dijk's model to the Indonesian media environment, specifically in the context of political discourse, contributing to the theoretical growth of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This study adds to our understanding of how media discourse functions to reveal power and ideological stances. By demonstrating how media language can enhance or diminish well-known individuals, especially in the educational sector in Indonesia. The study's findings will contribute to the field of discourse theory.

1.5.2 Practical Uses

In practical terms, the findings of this study offer valuable perspectives not only for the field of ELT (English Language Teaching) but also media and literacy education. Media outlets can benefit from understanding how their language choices affect how the public views political figures, allowing them to approach reporting with greater awareness of their role in shaping discourses. Educators can use these findings to help students develop critical media literacy, which can help them in their critical thinking skill. The general population are able to distinguish and increase their awareness between news that comes from Indonesian online newspapers that may have diverse ideological stances and power relations leading to the possibility of creating biases and subjectivism in their articles.

1.5.3 Empirical Uses

Empirically, this research fills a gap in the existing literature by focusing on the specific case of Nadiem Makarim's representation in Indonesian online newspapers, a subject that has not been extensively studied. The empirical findings will provide valuable data to the fields of media studies. Furthermore, this study offers a methodological example for future research on the intersection of media, discourse, and political representation in other national contexts.