

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ONLINE NEWS TEXTS ABOUT GMNI IN DETIKNEWS

Analisis Wacana Kritis terhadap Teks Berita Online tentang GMNI di Detiknews

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Abstract

This study examines the representation of Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia (GMNI) in online news articles published by detikNews from September to December 2025 using Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis framework. The study aims to reveal how GMNI is represented through textual structure, social cognition, and social context in news discourse. This research employed a qualitative descriptive design. The data consisted of two detikNews articles selected purposively, with GMNI positioned as the primary social actor in issues related to policy advocacy, mining, and organizational discipline following an ethnic insult incident. Data were collected through documentation and analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing procedures. The findings show that GMNI is consistently represented as a legitimate, critical, and socially responsible student organization. detikNews constructs GMNI as a central actor associated with public advocacy, social responsibility, and national interests. The analysis of social cognition and social context further strengthens this positive representation in the news discourse. This study concludes that detikNews ideologically frames GMNI as an organization aligned with public interests and national values rather than as a marginal or disruptive movement. The study also demonstrates that online news discourse functions not only as a medium of information but also as a space for constructing meaning, legitimacy, and the representation of social actors.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, GMNI, representation, online news, detikNews.

Introduction

Language plays a central role in shaping social reality, particularly in media discourse. In online news texts, events and social actors are not simply reported but are constructed through specific linguistic choices. Meaning emerges from lexical selection, clause structure, attribution patterns, and rhetorical emphasis that shape how readers interpret events and evaluate actors. Thus, news language functions not only as a medium of information but also as a site where ideology operates through naming, labelling, modality, and evaluation (Priyanto, 2023). Therefore, news texts constitute significant objects of linguistic inquiry, especially within discourse analysis.

Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis provides a systematic framework for examining how ideological meanings are embedded in discourse. Unlike approaches that focus solely on textual structures, Van Dijk conceptualizes discourse as the interaction between text, cognition, and society. Within this framework, discourse is viewed as a social practice through which social actors, events, and ideological perspectives are represented and interpreted. News texts are therefore understood not as neutral reflections of reality, but as discursive constructions shaped by institutional and social contexts. This

perspective enables researchers to investigate how linguistic and structural choices contribute to the formation of particular representations in media discourse.

To examine these representations, Van Dijk proposes three interconnected levels of discourse analysis: macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure. Macrostructure refers to the global topic or dominant theme of a text, superstructure concerns the schematic organization through which information is arranged, and microstructure focuses on local linguistic features such as lexical choices, syntax, semantics, and rhetorical devices. These levels operate together in constructing meaning, allowing researchers to identify how specific perspectives and ideological orientations are realized through news discourse. Consequently, Van Dijk's model is particularly suitable for analysing the representation of social actors in online news texts. From a linguistic perspective, representation is realized through specific textual strategies. Social actors may be foregrounded or backgrounded through active or passive constructions, evaluated through descriptive and emotive lexical choices, and legitimized through selective quotation and modality. Previous research in national journals has demonstrated that media discourse often positions social actors asymmetrically, privileging certain voices while marginalizing others through narrative structure and thematic emphasis (Ramadlan & Aminuddin, 2025). Therefore, the analysis of representation in news discourse must focus on how language constructs meaning rather than merely describing media content.

The representation of student organizations in Indonesian online media is often constructed through varying and sometimes contrasting discursive strategies. News coverage does not only highlight demonstrations and political demands but may also emphasize moral positioning, organizational values, and responses to social issues. Previous studies have indicated that media narratives tend to selectively foreground certain aspects of social actors while backgrounding others, resulting in partial and context-dependent representations (Bakry, Rahman, & Ramadhan, 2025). Such representations are not neutral; they are linguistically constructed through lexical labelling, evaluative language, and patterns of information organization that shape how readers perceive social actors. This variation suggests that media discourse does not present a fixed image of student organizations but actively constructs different representations depending on the context and communicative purpose. Therefore, examining how student organizations are represented in news discourse becomes essential for understanding how language shapes public perception.

Previous studies have demonstrated the usefulness of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis in examining ideological representation in online news discourse. Bena (2022), for instance, found that macrostructural themes, schematic organization, and microstructural linguistic features were strategically employed to construct legitimacy, influence public opinion, and represent social actors in particular ways. The study also revealed that ideological meanings were embedded across different levels of discourse structure,

highlighting the effectiveness of Van Dijk's framework in uncovering the relationship between language, representation, and power in news reporting.

Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia (GMNI) is a student organization associated with Marhaenism and student cadre development in Indonesia (Bena, 2022). As part of Indonesian student movements, student organizations are often connected with public issues, political responses, and social concerns that receive media attention (Ramadlan & Aminuddin, 2025). However, their presence in media discourse is not merely informative but is also constructed through specific linguistic choices. Previous studies have shown that media discourse represents social actors through topic selection, information structure, lexical choices, and evaluative language (Ratnaningsih, 2019). Therefore, GMNI is examined in this study not as a sociological entity, but as a discursive object whose representation is shaped through textual structures in news texts.

Recent coverage in detikNews reveals contrasting representations of GMNI in different news contexts. In one report, GMNI is constructed as a political actor advocating policy evaluation and economic justice through its engagement with state institutions. In another, the organization is portrayed as a moral entity that emphasizes unity and anti-discrimination in response to a social controversy. These contrasting portrayals indicate that GMNI is not represented through a single, stable identity, but through multiple discursive constructions shaped by context and communicative purpose. Such variation is realized through linguistic choices, including lexical selection, patterns of quotation, modality, and agency structures, which influence how readers interpret the organization. This inconsistency highlights a critical issue in news discourse, where the same social actor can be constructed differently across texts, thereby shaping public perception in divergent ways. Therefore, a systematic linguistic analysis is necessary to examine how these representations are constructed at different structural levels in news discourse.

Previous studies have applied Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis to examine Indonesian news discourse, particularly in relation to ideological representation, media framing, and textual structures in political and social contexts. These studies have demonstrated that news discourse is systematically organized through macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructural linguistic features that reflect particular perspectives. However, most of this research has primarily focused on electoral politics, public policy issues, and specific social cases, with limited attention to ideological student organizations such as GMNI. In addition, previous studies tend to analyse these structural levels separately, without fully integrating them to explain how meaning is constructed across different levels of discourse. This limitation becomes particularly significant in cases where a single social actor is represented in contrasting ways across news texts, as seen in the representation of GMNI. Therefore, a more comprehensive linguistic approach is needed to examine how multiple levels of discourse interact in constructing ideological meanings in news reporting.

Method

This study using qualitative descriptive as research design. The data consist of two detikNews online news articles about Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia (GMNI) published between September and December 2025. Data were collected through documentation techniques and analysed through macrostructural, superstructural, and microstructural levels of discourse. Through this approach, the study investigates how textual structures contribute to the representation of GMNI and the construction of ideological meanings in online news discourse.

In response to these gaps, a systematic linguistic analysis is required to examine how GMNI is represented in online news discourse. This study applies Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis model to analyse macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructural linguistic features in detikNews news articles about GMNI. By integrating these three levels of analysis, the study aims to explain how ideological meanings are constructed across different structural dimensions of news discourse. This study contributes to linguistic research by providing a comprehensive analysis of how a single social actor can be represented in contrasting ways through language. Furthermore, it offers insight into how media discourse shapes public perception of student organizations, thereby contributing to the development of critical awareness in interpreting news texts.

Discussion and Result

1. Overview of the Data

This study analyzes two detikNews online news articles featuring GMNI as the central social actor, published between September and December 2025. The first article covers GMNI's advocacy at the House of Representatives (DPR) regarding economic policy and mining issues, while the second reports GMNI's expulsion of a member following an ethnic insult. Together, these articles represent GMNI in contrasting yet complementary discursive contexts — political advocacy and internal discipline — analyzed through Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis model across macrostructure, superstructure, microstructure, social cognition, and social context.

2. Macrostructure

The macrostructural analysis identifies the dominant themes that give direction to each news text. Both articles construct GMNI within a positive and socially responsible framework, though through different topics.

Table 1 Macrostructural Themes and Representation of GMNI

| News Article | Main Theme | Representation of GMNI |
|--|---|--|
| Audiensi di DPR, GMNI Minta Menkeu Dievaluasi– Setop Tambang Kei Besar | Policy advocacy and environmental concern | Active and critical student organization concerned with public policy and public welfare |
| Resbob juga Dipecat dari | Organizational discipline and | Institution that maintains |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| GMNI Buntut Hina Suku Sunda | social harmony | ethical order, social harmony, and respect for diversity |
| Shared thematic pattern | Public responsibility and social concern | Socially responsible organization connected with public interest and collective stability |

The first article positions GMNI as an active critic of government policy and mining activities, while the second frames it as an organization upholding ethical responsibility and diversity. Both themes converge in representing GMNI as a student organization committed to public interest and national values.

3. Superstructure

The superstructural analysis examines how information is arranged in the news texts through elements such as headline, lead, background, main event, and quotation. Both articles consistently position GMNI as the central actor across all news elements.

Table 2 Superstructural Organization in the Representation of GMNI

| News Element | First Article | Second Article | Representation of GMNI |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| Headline | GMNI linked to DPR, ministerial evaluation, and mining | GMNI linked to member expulsion | GMNI as central actor in both reports |
| Lead | GMNI's demands in a formal political setting | GMNI's disciplinary action after ethnic insult | GMNI presented as active and responsive |
| Background | Public policy and mining context | Controversy and social sensitivity context | GMNI connected to broader social issues |
| Main Event | GMNI criticizes and demands policy change | GMNI expels a member institutionally | GMNI represented as critical and authoritative |
| Quotation | GMNI's voice and position given space | GMNI's decision explained and supported | GMNI's credibility reinforced |

In the first article, GMNI is framed as a legitimate political actor. In the second, it appears as a responsible institution managing internal conflict. In both cases, the schematic structure of the news reinforces GMNI's visibility and authority within the discourse.

4. Microstructure

Microstructural analysis examines how meaning is constructed through semantic, syntactic, stylistic, and rhetorical elements at the linguistic level.

Table 3 Microstructural Aspects in the Representation of GMNI

| Aspect | Linguistic Focus | Finding | Representation of GMNI |
|------------|------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Semantic | Meaning relation | GMNI connected with policy concern, discipline, and social harmony | Socially responsible |
| Syntactic | Sentence structure | GMNI as subject of active and institutional actions | Active and authoritative |
| Stylistic | Word choice | Neutral diction for GMNI; negative expressions directed at external issues | Separated from negative meanings |
| Rhetorical | Emphasis and quotation | Headlines and quotations foreground GMNI's position | Credible and important |
| Aspect | Linguistic Focus | Finding | Representation of GMNI |

In the first article, GMNI is the grammatical subject of critical actions (demanding, criticizing), and neutral diction distances it from negativity directed at mining issues. In the second, institutional language frames GMNI's response as controlled and principled. Across both texts, rhetorical strategies such as headline placement and direct quotation reinforce GMNI's credibility and centrality in the discourse.

5. Social Cognition and Social Context

Social cognition and social context explain the ideological meanings embedded in the representation of GMNI, traced through the way the organization is positioned, evaluated, and connected with public values in the news texts.

Table 4 Social Cognition and Social Context in the Representation of GMNI

| Aspect | First News Text | Second News Text | Representation of GMNI |
|------------------|---|---|--|
| Social Cognition | GMNI as critical actor in public policy and environment | GMNI as institution maintaining discipline and social sensitivity | Critical, responsible, and institutionally aware |
| Social Context | Public policy, mining, and environmental | Ethnic insult, organizational | Connected with wider social and |

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| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| | concern | discipline, and social harmony | national concerns |
| Ideological Direction | Student organization as agent of public oversight | Student organization as guardian of ethical and social values | Placed within a positive national framework |

In the first text, GMNI is framed within a discourse of public policy and environmental responsibility, legitimizing its role as a critical public actor. In the second, the social context of ethnic sensitivity positions GMNI as an institution that actively upholds social cohesion and national unity. Taken together, both articles reflect a shared cognitive frame in which GMNI is understood as a student organization aligned with public interest and national values — confirming that online news discourse not only informs but also constructs the legitimacy and social identity of its actors (Bakry et al., 2025; Suriadi, 2025).

Conclusion

Based on the analysis conducted using Van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis framework, this study concludes that detikNews consistently constructs GMNI as a legitimate, critical, and socially responsible student organization. At the macrostructural level, both news texts frame GMNI through dominant themes of policy advocacy, environmental concern, organizational discipline, and social harmony. The first article positions GMNI as an organization actively responding to public policy and mining issues, while the second portrays it as an institution taking firm action in response to ethnic discrimination. Despite addressing different issues, both texts place GMNI within a broader framework of public responsibility and national values. At the superstructural level, GMNI is systematically positioned as the central actor through its consistent presence in the headline, lead, main event, background information, and quotations. This textual organization provides strong visibility and reinforces the organization’s legitimacy. At the microstructural level, semantic, syntactic, stylistic, and rhetorical features collectively construct GMNI as active, credible, and institutionally recognized. Lexical choices, grammatical structures, and rhetorical emphasis consistently support a positive representation of the organization while directing negative evaluations toward external issues or individual actions.

In terms of social cognition and social context, the representation of GMNI reflects shared social assumptions that student organizations have a legitimate role in public criticism, policy oversight, and moral responsibility. In the first article, GMNI is associated with public policy, environmental concerns, and state institutions, whereas in the second article it is linked to ethnic sensitivity, organizational discipline, and social harmony. These broader social contexts demonstrate that GMNI is represented not merely as an organization involved in isolated events but as a social actor embedded within wider national concerns.

Overall, the findings confirm that the representation of GMNI in detikNews is constructed through the interaction of textual structures, social cognition, and social context. Through macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure, the news texts consistently reinforce GMNI's legitimacy, authority, and social responsibility. This study highlights the role of online news discourse in shaping public perceptions of student organizations and demonstrates the usefulness of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis in revealing how ideological meanings are embedded within media representations.

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