

# Critical Discourse Analysis of the Internationalization of *Bahasa* in Online News: Norman Fairlough's Description Approach

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine online news media reports about Indonesian language (*Bahasa*) internationalization in *Kompas.id*. The focus of this research is to identify the representations of *Bahasa* and to understand the reality that is constructed in the news. The researcher used a qualitative method in analyzing four online news texts by applying Norman Fairlough's ideas of textual dimensions (description) regarding the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Data collection techniques were conducted through documentation, while data validity was obtained through internal validity. Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the news of internationalization of *Bahasa* in online news media *Kompas.id* forms a discourse that emphasizes nationalism and pride in UNESCO recognition. In the text dimension, the narrative in the news emphasizes national success and cultural diplomacy as the main factors behind UNESCO recognition. As the result, online news media *Kompas.id* shows how the media shapes public understanding of the position of *Bahasa* as Indonesian language at the global level.

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## ABSTRAK

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pemberitaan media daring tentang internasionalisasi bahasa Indonesia di *Kompas.id*. Fokus penelitian ini adalah mengidentifikasi representasi bahasa Indonesia dan memahami realitas yang dikonstruksi dalam pemberitaan tersebut. Peneliti menggunakan metode kualitatif dalam menganalisis empat teks berita daring dengan menerapkan gagasan Norman Fairlough tentang dimensi tekstual (deskripsi) terkait Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui dokumentasi, sedangkan keabsahan data diperoleh melalui validitas internal. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa pemberitaan internasionalisasi bahasa Indonesia di media daring *Kompas.id* membentuk wacana yang menekankan nasionalisme dan kebanggaan atas pengakuan UNESCO. Pada dimensi teks, narasi dalam pemberitaan tersebut menekankan keberhasilan nasional dan diplomasi budaya sebagai faktor utama di balik pengakuan UNESCO. Hasilnya, media daring *Kompas.id* menunjukkan bagaimana media membentuk pemahaman publik tentang posisi bahasa Indonesia sebagai bahasa global.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Bahasa* has been officially designated as one of the official languages at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) general assembly on November, 20th 2023, making it the 10th official language recognised by the organisation. This designation not only elevates the status of *Bahasa* in the international arena, but also marks as significant step in the internationalisation of the language itself. As the national language, *Bahasa* has acted as a unifying tool among the diversity of regional languages in Indonesia. The role of *Bahasa* is not apart from the role and its function as a national language, but also as a national identity, unification of ideas, attitudes, and outlook on life, both individually and institutionally (including mass media), so that the development of *Bahasa* is always cultivated, preserved, and developed through language behaviour and ethics in various contexts of life (Annas & Fitriawan, 2018).

UNESCO's recognition underscores this important role and confirms the success of *Bahasa* as a unifying tool in the midst of tremendous diversity. In addition to being a unifier, language plays a fundamental role in human life, not only as a means of communication, but also as a reflection of identity, culture, and power (Choirunisa, 2015). In this context, it is important to analyse how the media reported on the internationalization of *Bahasa* and its recognition by UNESCO. Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective offers a framework for understanding how language is used in social practices and how discourse can reflect and shape power and ideology in society (Munfarida, 2014). This approach allows the researcher to explore the representations, relations, and identities formed through media texts in reporting the event. The mass media, as an information delivery agent, has an important role in shaping public perceptions related to linguistic issues. *Kompas.id*, as a national online news media, has reported on various efforts to internationalize the *Bahasa*. However, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth study on how the internationalization discourse is presented and what implications it has on readers. The media not only conveys information, but also shapes the way people perceive an issue through word choice, point of view, and intensity of reporting (Chan & Leung, 2005).

The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand how the media frames significant events such as the recognition of *Bahasa* by UNESCO. This understanding can reveal how certain ideologies are promoted or challenged through reporting, as well as how media discourse can influence public perceptions of national identity and pride in *Bahasa* as Indonesian language. Previous research shows that the media plays a key role in shaping public opinion and can reproduce or challenge existing structures of power (Rejeki et al., 2023). As such, a critical analysis of these news reports can provide insight into the power dynamics and ideologies that are involved in the process of internationalising languages. The main reason for using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective of Norman Fairclough in this research is because the model is comprehensive in analysing media texts through the text dimension.

Text Dimension (Description) analyses the text structure, text meaning, and text implications in reporting (Fairclough, 1995). Text structure includes the main theme to determine the focus of the news, narrative patterns that influence the way the news is organised, and writing style that can be objective with direct delivery of facts or persuasive with language that shapes opinions. Then, the meaning of the text is divided into explicit which is conveyed directly and implicit which is implied through the choice of words and sentence structure, so that it can influence the reader's perception. Text implication relates to the impact produced by text in shaping understanding and public opinion. In the text dimension, this research will examine how the

language used in the news about the recognition of *Bahasa* by UNESCO reflects certain meanings and how word choice and sentence structure can strengthen or weaken certain representations. The setting of place or the location is based on actual occurrences from literary works of fiction. Where a place named and a place that just illustrates the overall kind and nature of specific places are located. The location is typically covered by the novel's setting of place. would relocate as the story and characters evolved. The setting of time relates to "when" of events that are related to a literary work of fiction. That is typically connected to genuine time. Where the location of the site still needs to be taken into consideration when determining the time setting (Anggi Mutia, 2021).

By using Fairclough's dimensions of CDA, this research not only contributes to understanding how the media shapes the discourse of internationalization of *Bahasa* from the text dimension. However, it also reveals deeper meanings contained in the news, as well as how ideology and interests that are behind the news affect the formation of discourses that exist in society. The problem examined in this research is how the online news media *Kompas.id* represents the recognition event of *Bahasa* by UNESCO and the ideological implications of the representation. The purpose of this research is to identify and analyse the discourse used by the media in reporting the event, as well as understanding the text dimension in the discourse. Thus, this research can provide new insight into how *Bahasa* as a communication tool is used in global social and political stages through the news.

## 2. METHODS

This research uses the type of qualitative research with the method of critical discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough. Qualitative research was chosen because this research focuses on in-depth analysis of news texts, not on quantitative measurements. Qualitative research is a research method that can be used to explore and understand the meaning that comes from social problems or humanity (Purba, 2023). The data of the study are in the form of four online news texts published by *Kompas.id*, namely (1) Indonesian Becomes the Official Language of the UNESCO General Conference, (2) The President is Proud that Indonesian is the Official Language of the UNESCO General Conference, (3) Internationalization Expands the Influence of Indonesian Language, and (4) Academic Indonesian Language Challenges. Data collection conducted using the documentation method with data analysis techniques using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis of text dimensions (description): text structure analysis, text meaning analysis, and text implication analysis. Data validity is strengthened by the technique of triangulation of theories and sources to ensure accurate and in-depth interpretation of the discourse that is constructed in the news.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research shows that the media has a major role in shaping public opinion about the internationalization of *Bahasa*. This can be seen from the way the news emphasizes aspects of achievement and pride, without much raising the challenges that exist in the internationalization process. Thus, the dimension of the text on the *Kompas.id* news represents the internationalization of *Bahasa* as the Indonesian language as an achievement that should be proud of.

### 3.1 Text Structure Analysis

#### 3.1.1 Main Theme

The main theme in the news is the recognition of *Bahasa* as Indonesian language by UNESCO as a major achievement in expanding the influence of Indonesian language at the global level. This news always links the recognition with the efforts made by Indonesia, thus accentuating national success. In the perspective of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, the media not only conveys various points of view, but also shapes the way people understand an issue through the selection of information presented. News about internationalization of *Bahasa* as Indonesian

language highlights the national achievements and cultural diplomacy, while challenges such as the readiness of the education system in adjusting the curriculum, supporting infrastructure, as well as how the international community responds to the use of Indonesian language, receive less attention. The news emphasizes national pride without discussing in depth the challenges that may arise after this recognition is given, such as how the implementation of the status of *Bahasa* as the Indonesian language at the global level will go.

This analysis found that the main theme in *Kompas.id*'s reporting was the internationalization of the *Bahasa* as part of cultural diplomacy and national identity. UNESCO's recognition is attributed to the government's achievements, but it is not discussed in depth how Indonesian will be used in real terms in various global sectors. As a result, the discourse that is formed is more optimistic without much review of long-term implementation strategies.

### 3.1.2 Narrative Pattern

The narrative pattern of news in *Kompas.id* is arranged chronologically, starting from official announcements, government responses, to community responses. This structure gives the impression of objectivity because information is presented sequentially according to the development of events. However, even though it seems neutral, this reporting still contains hidden argumentative elements. One of them is the dominance of sources from the government, which makes reporting highlight only the success without much discuss other challenges or perspectives. In addition, the selection of diction that emphasizes national achievements, such as *national pride* and *milestones*, strengthens the positive image of the internationalization of *Bahasa*. In Fairclough's analysis of critical discourse, argumentative patterns in the media are not only seen in explicit statements, but can also be implied through the selection of sources of information and the drafting of narratives.

In *Kompas.id* report, this argumentative pattern can be seen from the dominance of statements from parties who support the internationalization of *Bahasa*, without providing much space for critical perspectives or discussion of the challenges faced. Thus, even though it is not directly persuasive, the news structure still forms an understanding that leads to the viewpoint that the internationalization of *Bahasa* is a great success that has been achieved without significant obstacles. This happens because the news displays more of the achievement side without raising the remaining challenges, so readers are directed to look at this policy as something that is patent and does not require further debate.

### 3.1.3 Writing Style

The writing style about internationalization of *Bahasa* in *Kompas.id* is basically objective, but still contains persuasive elements that build nationalist sentiment. This can be seen from the use of emotionally arousing diction, such as *historic moments*, *national pride*, and *important milestones*, which emphasize UNESCO's recognition of *Bahasa* as a major achievement. Besides, the presentation of information highlights only the success without raising challenges or criticisms of the policy.

Fairclough & Thomas (2004) states that language in the media not only conveys information, but also forms certain understandings and ideologies. In this context, this study found that *Kompas.id* uses a delivery strategy that combines facts with emotional elements to show the success of Indonesian cultural diplomacy. Thus, the writing style in reporting on *Kompas.id* not only aims to convey facts, but also shape public opinion to see internationalization of *Bahasa* as a step that is considered successful without significant obstacles.

### 3.2 Text Meaning Analysis

The explicit meaning of the news on *Kompas.id* can be seen from the presentation of facts regarding UNESCO's recognition of *Bahasa*, which are arranged systematically to provide a clear understanding to readers. However, according to Fairclough (1995), discourse in the media not only conveys information, but also shapes social reality through language choices and the presentation of certain information. This is related to the implicit meaning in the news on *Kompas.id* which shows that the government's role in language diplomacy is emphasized more than the contributions of other actors, such as academics, language communities or organizations international.

The lack of representation of the group in the news can create the impression that the internationalization of *Bahasa* completely depends on government policy. In the perspective of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, the media has a role in shaping people's understanding by presenting certain aspects and ruling out other aspects that may have a significant role. Thus, readers are directed to see this success as an absolute result of government policy without considering the complexity of the internationalization process involving other parties.

### 3.3 Text Implication Analysis

The news about internationalization of *Bahasa* in *Kompas.id* formed a public understanding that the internationalization of *Bahasa* has gone well and not face significant obstacles. In the perspective of critical discourse analysis Fairclough (1995), the media not only conveys information, but also shapes social reality through selecting issues and emphasizing certain aspects. In this regard, the news more highlights the success without addressing the complexity of the process of internationalization of languages. The implication of this reporting pattern is the emergence of an understanding in society that the internationalization of *Bahasa* has taken place optimally, without the need for further evaluation or strategy.

According to Fairclough (1995), the media has a role in forming social structures by prioritizing dominant discourse and leaving aside other aspects that may be important. If reporting only focuses on achievements, then the debate about policy effectiveness and steps that are still needed in the internationalization of *Bahasa* is limited. Thus, the media not only presents information, but also shapes public perceptions about the status of Indonesian language at the global level, which may not fully describe the existing reality.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the news about the internationalization of *Bahasa* in online news *Kompas.id* forms a nationalistic and pride discourses towards the recognition of UNESCO. By using Norman Fairclough's text dimension (description), it can be stated that the internationalization of *Bahasa* presents a narrative that highlights national success and cultural diplomacy as the main factors behind UNESCO's recognition. *Kompas.id* as the media of online news plays a role in shaping people's understanding of the position of *Bahasa* at the global level. Overall, this research shows that *Kompas.id* shapes the discourse on the internationalization of *Bahasa* as a major achievement for the nation. However, the news tends to accentuate only the success without criticizing the challenges that is still faced in its implementation. Therefore, this research shows how the media not only represents the reality, but also builds public understanding of the internationalization of *Bahasa* through the presentation of the selected information to the readers.

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