

Behind the Instagram post: unpacking ideological framing in @Folkative coverage of Indonesian political controversies

Azzahra Nabila Azhari¹ ✉, Mohamad Ikhwan Rosyidi²

¹Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

²Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Article Info	Abstract
<i>Article History:</i> Received 30 June 2025 Approved 08 July 2025 Published 31 July 2025 Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, Indonesian political controversies, Instagram study, Media discourse	This research examines how @Folkative, one of Indonesia's most influential Instagram-based information platforms, frames political controversies through ideological language. By applying Fairclough's three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis, the research focuses on two viral posts: the Pertamina corruption case and the TNI Bill. The findings reveal that @Folkative employs strategic lexical choices, a visual and informal tone, and bilingualism as a powerful ideological framing tool to shape audiences' perceptions of political events in Indonesia. The study also shows how @Folkative transforms passive media use into active discussion, where followers engage in comments, sarcasm, and debate over political issues. This research highlights how digital platforms, such as @Folkative, influence political narratives and public opinion in Indonesia's evolving media landscape, particularly among young people.

© Copyright 2025

How to cite (in APA style):

Azhari, A. N., & Rosyidi, M. I. (2025). Behind the Instagram post: unpacking ideological framing in @Folkative coverage of Indonesian political controversies. *Rainbow : Journal of Literature, Linguistics and Culture Studies*, 14, 21-32. <https://doi.org/10.15294/rainbow.v14i.29637>.

INTRODUCTION

Political discourse has increasingly shifted beyond conventional platforms to social media, particularly among younger generations. Instagram, in particular, originally was a photo-sharing platform. Still, over time, it has evolved into a multi-purpose space where Gen Z and millennials now go for news and social causes. Among social media content, some Instagram accounts have become a real-time information platform for subtle ideological messaging, shaping how people perceive issues, particularly political controversies in Indonesia. Ahlstrand & Maniam (2025) argue that online media in Indonesia have become instrumental in shaping gender and political ideologies, particularly during the Jokowi era. Similarly, Rakhmani (2024) examines how digital narratives mediate neoliberalism and

religious populism, influencing public sentiment among politically fluid groups. These studies confirm that digital platforms, such as Instagram, are not always neutral but rather active agents in constructing political realities and framing ideological boundaries.

In Indonesia's current political climate, marked by the transition from President Joko Widodo's era to President Prabowo's administration, controversies surrounding corruption, executive decisions, legislative ratifications, and numerous other issues have triggered a significant public discourse. Much of this discourse takes shape on social media, where visual storytelling and informal commentary blur the lines between journalism and activism. One of the most prominent platforms in this landscape is @Folkative, an Instagram-based information hub with over 6.5 million followers. Martutik et al.

✉ Corresponding author:

Email: azzahranabila03@students.unnes.ac.id

p-ISSN: 2252-6323

e-ISSN: 2721-4540

(2024) reveal that Indonesian users often employ provocative language and emotional expressions, including flaming and sarcasm, in their responses to online political tensions. Furthermore, Venus et al. (2024) demonstrate that youth political expression is driven by perceptions of authenticity and identification with content creators, rather than institutional trust. Therefore, it is crucial to critically examine how platforms like @Folkative present political information, especially considering its impact on how the public understands issues and how young people engage in politics through social media.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has emerged as a powerful methodological framework for examining the intersection between language, power, and ideology in media discourse. Fairclough (1993) argued that language is not neutral, it plays a crucial role in constructing, reproducing, and challenging social structures. In his book *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*, Fairclough (1993) proposed a three-dimensional model for analyzing discourse. Fairclough's three-dimensional model has been widely used to uncover how language reflects and reinforces power structures. Piliang et al. (2024) employed CDA to demonstrate how digital discourse functions as a space for ideological legitimization. Sartini & Adrian (2023) applied CDA to analyze discriminatory rhetoric targeting gender minorities in Indonesian media, while Rouabhia (2024) used the framework to explore political rhetoric in American presidential speeches. In the Indonesian context, Suharyo & Fasya (2024) employed CDA to analyze how ideological stances influenced corruption narratives in Tempo's news. While these studies offer valuable insights, most focus on conventional news media or Western digital platforms. Few studies have examined how social media like Instagram functions as a site of ideological discourse in Southeast Asia, specifically in the context of political controversies. This presents a clear research gap, particularly with youth-oriented content in politically charged environments.

What distinguishes this study is its focus on @Folkative, a verified Instagram account that utilizes a blend of casual language and visually compelling formats to inform its followers about political controversies. Marzella et al. (2024) argue that @Folkative successfully meets Gen Z's informational needs through trendy and accessible

content, while Atthahirah (2024) cautions that, although the platform delivers popular and up-to-date content, the information validity of the account can't always be guaranteed. This is influenced by @Folkative's cultural hegemony, which allows it to embed ideological bias. Darmawan et al. (2024) found that emotional appeal, visual storytelling, and humor significantly influence how youth interpret politically sensitive content on the platform. Prianti & Athique (2025) emphasize how Instagram allows young Indonesians to negotiate their digital identities in postcolonial and political contexts. These findings support the need to analyze @Folkative's discourse, not just in its content, but also in terms of its broader social, cultural, and political significance.

This study aims to critically deconstruct how @Folkative constructs, circulates, and frames Indonesian political controversies on Instagram by examining its linguistic choices, audience interactions, and the underlying ideological messages through Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework. This study is driven by the urgent need to critically examine how influential social media platforms, such as @Folkative, construct political narratives that shape public opinion, particularly in an era where digital discourse increasingly substitutes for traditional journalism and blurs the boundaries between information, ideology, and entertainment. This study offers a fresh perspective by analyzing how an Indonesian social media account reports and frames political controversies, especially during the early phase of President Prabowo Subianto's era in 2025. It focuses on real-time cases and reveals how digital platforms shape public discourse in Indonesia's evolving political landscape.

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research approach with deeper analysis using Fairclough's CDA model. Qualitative research is chosen as Lim (2024) explains, it emphasises context, existence, experience, perspective, meaning, and subjectivity, offering a unique lens through which to explore and interpret the complexities of social phenomena. Descriptive qualitative research is relevant to CDA theory because it thoroughly describes and explains the

texts' content and the relationship between them and the context or discourse (Darojat & Widhiatama, 2025).

The primary data were selected from @Folkative's Instagram posts from February to March 2025, which highlight political controversies in Indonesia. A period marked by a wave of significant political issues, characterized by massive demonstrations and intense public discourse. The data was gathered in the form of screenshots, capturing both the visual and textual elements used by @Folkative. Moreover, the data was collected through non-participant observation and note-taking to systematically analyze @Folkative's news coverage about related topics. This approach allowed the researcher to objectively examine how events were framed without being influenced by the content (Darojat & Widhiatama, 2025).

As the study employed CDA, the data were then analyzed using Fairclough's three-dimensional model, which encompasses description, interpretation, and explanation stages, to understand how media framing influences public perception. The description stage focuses on how @Folkative uses grammar and vocabulary to represent actors and expose bias in lexical choices (Sari & Pranoto, 2021). According to Rubing & Sandaran (2023) vocabulary plays an essential role in the transmission of ideology because it emphasizes the metaphors and meanings used in the text, grammar analysis sentences through relevance and theme, while coherence reveals how linguistic units are articulated. The writer's strong opinion is frequently reflected in over-lexicalization, where similar words highlight particular characteristics (Fowler, 1991; Rubing & Sandaran, 2023). The stage of discursive practice or interpretation examines the text's production, distribution, and consumption, as well as audience participation and media routines Darojat & Widhiatama (2025). Veloso da Silva & López (2023) note that texts are always open to interpretation, shaped by individual perspectives. At this stage, the study will examine how @Folkative's news coverage is produced by their editors, how it is disseminated as public discourse, and how the audience receives and processes the information. The last is the explanation stage, which reveals the deeper power dynamics underlying the message by analyzing how larger social, political, and cultural contexts impact the

discourse's creation and interpretation Rouabhia (2024) In short, this stage reveals the reason behind the message or text and how social conditions like society, culture, politics, and power shape it.

Additionally, after applying the three-dimensional model, the findings were discussed in depth, critically referencing books, journal articles, and other credible sources to support and validate the interpretations and explanations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings



Figure 1. Folkative's post on February 26, 2025

1. Textual Analysis (Description)

1.1 Actor Representation

- **Data 1** "..., the President Director of Pertamina Patra Niaga, Riva Siahaan,..."
- **Data 2** "Yoki Firnandi, President Director of PT Pertamina International Shipping"
- **Data 3** "According to the Kejaksaan Agung, ..."
- **Data 4** "SDS, Director of Feedstock and Product Optimization at PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional; AP, VP of Feedstock Management at PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional; MKAR, the beneficial owner of PT Navigator"

Khatulistiwa; DW, Commissioner of PT Navigator Khatulistiwa and PT Jenggala Maritim; and GRJ, Commissioner of PT Jenggala Maritim and President Director of PT Orbit Terminal Merak."

Data 1 and **2** wrote "the President Director of Pertamina Patra Niaga, Riva Siahaan,..." and "Yoki Firnandi, President Director of PT Pertamina International Shipping." Mentioning social actors being named in a text is known as nomination. In his book, van Leeuwen (2008) argues that nomination is a strategy for representing people through names, including formal titles, honorifics, or degrees of anonymity, depending on the ideological purpose. This means that how someone is named is never neutral; it reflects the writer's intent or bias. In this context, using full names and the position like "the President Director of Pertamina Patra Niaga, Riva Siahaan,..." or "Yoki Firnandi, President Director of PT Pertamina International Shipping..." implicitly says that they have complete control and should be held responsible for the issue. @Folkative also pointed out that using Riva and Yoki's full names and titles meant highlighting them as the leading actors in the corruption case. By doing this, the post puts the spotlight or full exposure on Riva and Yoki, making them the 'face' of the scandal. This makes him the key figure to blame and the main target of public attention and scrutiny.

In **Data 3**, "*the Kejaksaan Agung*" (Indonesia's Attorney General's Office or AG) or Kejaksaan is presented as the primary source of authority. The Attorney General's Office is a state institution with the authority in the prosecution and other legal actions in the public interest, as regulated in Law No. 16/2004 (Christianata, 2020). Mentioning the "Attorney General's Office" adds credibility because it shows that a serious, official investigation is happening. People are more likely to trust news when it comes from legal institutions, not just media or public opinion (Sonnac & Smadja, 2025). This strategy makes the report feel factual and legal, not just based on speculation. It shows that the government is taking action without directly blaming anyone. It's @Folkative's way to build public trust in the Investigation.

As we can see in **Data 4**, @Folkative also uses the initial in representing other actors like "SDS, Director of Feedstock and Product..., AP, VP of Feedstock Management at...; MKAR, the beneficial owner of PT Navigator..., DW, Commissioner of PT Navigator...". (van Leeuwen, 2008) explains that using initial instead of full names is part of a nomination strategy that can un-individualize a person, lower emotional impact, less blaming the actor, or limit public backlash. Using initials creates anonymity so that readers cannot immediately recognize who the actor is. However, this can be intentional; @Folkative might be protecting their identity for legal reasons, or they want to downplay the attention or make these actors not the main person to blame, as with Riva Siahaan or Yoki Firnandi. Even though their names are hidden, their job titles are still included, framing them more as representatives of institutions than individuals.

1.2 Lexical Choices

- **Data 5** "*Pertalite dioplos jd Pertamina*"
- **Data 6** "*Mixing Pertalite into Pertamina*"
- **Data 7** "*...has been named a suspect in corruption case*"
- **Data 8** "*...caused the country a loss of Rp193.7 trillion*"

The text shown in the picture, like in **Data 5**, includes the word "*dioplos*," which plays a significant role in shaping how the audience understands the issue. "*Dioplos*" literally translates to "blended" in English, but it is not a neutral word in Indonesian. It carries a strong negative meaning, often used to describe illegal, dishonest, and low-quality mixtures like 'Alkohol oplosan' (English: blended booze). @Folkative employs ideological framing to set the tone, suggesting that something of low quality and cheap (Pertalite) was deliberately marketed as something premium (Pertamax). This choice of words creates a sense of deception and betrayal, as most Indonesians use it daily.

The text started with a line in **Data 6**, the word "*mixing*" is derived from the word "mix" which refers to the process of two or more substances or things combined, usually in a way that cannot easily be separated (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). "*Mixing*" here is an active verb

that suggests intentional action, which means someone did it on purpose. This word is neutral in everyday context, but in this article, placing it in the beginning and combining it with “*Pertalite into Pertamina*” implies a serious act of manipulation. Pertalite, as mentioned earlier in the text, is a lower-grade fuel in Indonesia (equivalent to RON 90); meanwhile, Pertamina is a higher-grade and more expensive fuel (RON 92). By placing “Mixing Pertalite into Pertamina” as the opening of the text, it emphasizes the action more than the person. @Folkative lexical choices lead to wrongdoing and trigger national outrage.

“...Has been *named a suspect* in corruption case” in **Data 7** is written in the passive voice, which conveys an unbiased report, but still implies blame. “*Suspect*” means someone officially believed guilty of something without definite proof (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). When people hear the word “*suspect*,” they instantly associate it with crime, guilt, and wrongdoing, and by referring to the Riva Siahaan suspect, they carefully frame Riva as involved in corruption, even though legally, he’s just being investigated. @Folkative word choices here could influence the audience’s perception of someone.

In **Data 8**, “...*the country a loss*” gives the sense that the corruption feels personal. “*The country*” is a broad but emotional term that refers to people, the nation, and the economy, in this case, the Indonesian. @Folkative also mentions the total amount of loss by specifically saying “*Rp 193.7 trillion*” which frames the audience using the scale. This makes the damage feel huge and collective, making the impact sound tangible and measurable. Instead of using neutral words like ‘financial damage’, @Folkative implies that everyone is being disadvantaged and persuaded to feel angry, betrayed, or at the very least concerned.

Another @Folkative’s lexical choice can be seen in **Data 1**, **Data 2**, and **Data 4**. As explained above, full names like ‘Riva Siahaan’ and ‘Yoki Firnandi’ directly spotlight these individuals and make them easily identifiable. Whereas, the use of Initials like ‘SDS,’ ‘AP,’ ‘MKAR,’ ‘DW,’ and ‘GRJ,’ on the other hand, hides or blurs their identities, making them less visible, less emotionally impactful, or even less accountable. The use of job titles such as “President Director,”

“VP of Feedstock Management,” “Commissioner,” or “Beneficial Owner” indicates the high-ranking corporate roles that are loaded with authority and responsibility. Their position in the corporation shows that they had control over significant decisions and issues, possibly involving the entire institution. By combining the individual’s name and position, Riva and Yoki are presented with complete identity and powerful institutions, making them appear more responsible and more culpable in the public’s eyes.

2. Discursive Practices (Interpretation)

The post was published on February 26, 2025, two days after the seven suspects who were reported to have been arrested Catherine (2025). In @Folkative minimalist style, the post employed a bold headline typed over the image, “*Pertalite dioplos jd Pertamina, PT Patra Niaga bikin Negara Rugi Rp193,7 Triliun*” (English: “Pertalite mixed into Pertamina, PT Patra Niaga caused a Rp193.7 trillion loss to the country.”) In the background of the text, there were two overlay images; one is Jakarta skyscrapers as the main background, which is credited to @wibisono.ari in the caption, and a small circular shape with the picture of the Indonesian famous gas station, Pertamina. The Jakarta skyscrapers represent the news about the nation, including the people, government, and the environment. Meanwhile, the Pertamina gas station picture suggests the key to the issue or scandal connected to it.

The writing style of @Folkative also contributed to the positive public perception of this news. By starting the caption with “*Mixing Pertalite into Pertamina, the President Director of Pertamina Patra Niaga, Riva Siahaan,...*” @Folkative straightforwardly presents the core of the issue to the readers. The post is also tagged with the location “Indonesia”, which targets the Indonesian audience, most of them are young people. According to Instagram’s algorithm, the content with location tags will prioritize user proximity and inference (Frichot, 2025). This shows how technology helps spread news more widely and directly to the right audience.

The post went viral, garnering 338,000 likes, 9,900 comments, and 27,500 shares, indicating that the topic sparked a public conversation. The audience’s response in the comment section of the

post reflected a deep sense of disappointment and betrayal. “*Turns out I’ve been buying Pertalite from the fast-track lane all this time.*” “*It’s not just the state’s loss, imagine how many people lost out because they paid for Pertamina but ended up getting Pertalite instead.*” This comment shows that @Folkative’s post became a way to voice public criticism and channel collective anger toward the scandal.

3. Social Practices (Explanation)

This news gained massive attention because it exposed a scandal involving Pertamina, Indonesia’s state-owned oil and gas company. On February 24, 2025, the Attorney General’s Office (*Kejaksaan Agung*) named seven suspects. One of them, Riva Siahaan, President Director of PT Pertamina Patra Niaga, was accused of mixing lower-grade fuel (Pertalite) into higher-grade Pertamina, and selling it at a higher price. This act alone has cost the state up to IDR 193.7 trillion.

While people were upset about broken business ethics and poor public service standards, what bothered them was the unfair mismatch between what they paid and what they received (Fatimah & Najicha, 2025). Moreover, the phrase “Pertalite mixed into Pertamina” (or “pengoplosan”) quickly went viral on social media and triggered public anger. Many online news outlets used the word “*pengoplosan*” in their headlines, reinforcing the sense of betrayal.

According to Abdul Qahar, Director of Investigation at the Special Crimes Division of the Attorney General’s Office, when interviewed on March 25, confirmed that one of the suspects, RS, had imported RON (Research Octane Number) 90 fuel (equivalent to Pertalite). However, the contract stated it was RON 92 (Pertamax). Later, RS was blended at the depot to make it appear as if it were RON 92, despite this type of blending being prohibited and against regulations (Cna.id, 2025). The public seems to have misinterpreted the Attorney General’s Office’s statement that the fuel they sold was blended with a lower-grade fuel. The Pertamina fuel sold to the public still met the correct specifications and contained the proper RON 92 (Cna.id, 2025). The truth is, the issue is not about mixing the fuels, but the decisions related to importing crude oil. Moreover, a study concluded that blending fuels with different RON values, such

as Pertalite (RON 90) and Pertamina (RON 92), results in significant differences in performance and exhaust emissions, and is not recommended for long-term use as it can lead to incomplete combustion and faster engine damage (Artika et al., 2022).

Another reason the public was so outraged is the sheer amount of money involved in this corruption case. According to Catherine (2025), the Rp193.7 trillion that the Attorney General’s Office reported only accounts for losses in 2023. The investigation showed that there was data manipulation and expenditure that did not follow the budget that had been set for 5 years, from 2018 to 2023; the loss was approximately one quadrillion rupiah (Siahaan, 2025). The number is way larger than previous corruption cases like tin mining, which reached 271 trillion rupiah, or the case of Bank Indonesia Liquidity Assistance (BLBI) in the 1997 monetary crisis, which reached 147 trillion rupiah. This Pertamina corruption case became the case that cost the state the most in Indonesia’s history.

This shows that @Folkative seems more focused on breaking news quickly than checking facts thoroughly. They use emotional and biased language that makes their content appear trustworthy, even when some of the information may be incorrect. Young audiences like this fast, visually appealing, and simple format, but it can shape opinions based just on headlines without encouraging people to think critically. However, this approach garners huge attention and sparks active discussions in their comments, demonstrating the account’s influence in shaping what young people think about current issues.



Figure 2. Folkative's post on March 20, 2025

1. Textual Analysis (Description)

1.1 Actor Representation

- **Data 1** "*DPR RI has officially approved RUU TNI...*"
- **Data 2** "*Many are concerned about how quickly...*"
- **Data 3** "*Protesters gathered outside the parliament building...*"

The post opens with **Data 1**, "DPR RI" here as a legitimate and authoritative institution, the abbreviation of *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Republik Indonesia*, or the Indonesian House of Representatives. According to Feulner (2024), the House of Representatives plays a crucial role in the legislative process, budget control, and political oversight. The phrase "*has officially approved*" uses passive construction, which depicts them as a formal, authoritative entity without personalizing action. This lack of personalization limits accountability, which is common in institutional discourse (Sari & Pranoto, 2021).

In **Data 2**, the word "*Many*" here is a vague or unspecified social actor. This kind of representation is what van Leeuwen (2008) calls impersonal or generic actor reference. It is a linguistic strategy that deliberately avoids naming individuals or groups while implying a broad

collective concern. The word *many* here could be activists, academics, NGOs, or civil society groups. It creates the impression of widespread disapproval or public resistance while protecting the writer from appearing biased.

In contrast, **Data 3** "*protesters gathered*" uses an active voice, emphasizing that the public is portrayed more actively. This gives people a strong sense of agency and positions them as active participants responding to power. The contrast between **Data 1** and **Data 3** creates a vivid power dynamic; the authority acts quietly and indirectly, while the public resists openly. In Darajat & Widhiatama (2025) finding that actor representation reveals underlying ideological positions used.

1.2 Contrastive Conjunction

Contrastive conjunctions are conjunctions that connect two sentences that are opposites, meaning the first and second sentences are contradictory.

- **Data 4** "*...with no factions opposing the bill. However, the decision has sparked widespread criticism.*"

In **Data 4**, the first sentence states that everyone or all factions in DPR agreed on the bill. In contrast, the second sentence, connected by the word "*however*," comes as a twist. The second sentence indicates that, despite all political factions agreeing, the public reaction is one of upset and criticism regarding the decision made. The use of "*however*" strongly contrasts institutional agreement and public disagreement. According to Aditya (2022), contrastive conjunctions help build ideological contrast between what is presented as truth and what is felt or experienced by society. This kind of technique is used by media like @folkative to invite critical thinking without directly accusing anyone.

1.3 Lexical Choices

- **Data 5** "*has sparked widespread criticism.*"
- **Data 6** "*...how quickly the bill was passed*"
- **Data 7** "*...held in secret at a five-star hotel*"
- **Data 8** "*... controversial dwifungsi...*"
- **Data 9** "*...has also fueled debate*"
- **Data 10** "*Public frustration...*"

The word “*sparked*” in **Data 5** is metaphorical, giving the image of a spark starting a fire. ‘Spark something’ transitively means to cause something to start or develop (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). In this context, the effect of ‘spark’ here gives a sense of urgency, and heat fits well to illustrate public outrage. The adjective “*Widespread*” means that the reaction is not limited but broad in scale and affects many people. By putting all the words together, this issue feels important and causes strong public disapproval. This lexical choice can shape perception by using emotionally charged and expansive language.

The word “*quickly*” in **Data 6** means a fast speed (Cambridge, n.d.). The phrase seems straightforward, but in the context of lawmaking and the political process, the speed raises concerns. According to Bell & Reed (2022), participatory decision-making should be transparent, accountable, equitable, and efficient in serving the least privileged members of society. The phrase does not directly state that anything wrong happened, but it has substantial implications, such as lawmakers rushing the process and possibly having hidden intentions. @Folkative provided clues to its audience and allowed them to draw their conclusions about what happened. The lexical choices here have a powerful and effective influence on shaping public opinion.

The interesting findings are also evident in **Data 7**, “Held in secret,” which immediately signals a lack of transparency, suggesting that something important was deliberately hidden from the public. In a democratic context, Davydova (2022) argued that transparency in lawmaking and increasing public influence on laws are seen as a reflection of democratizing the lawmaking process. This phrase triggers mistrust in the public and makes them wonder what was being hidden? Who was involved? Why was the public informed? The word “*secret*” implies that there might be something inappropriate about the discussion. The phrase also continued with “*at a five-star hotel*”. The “*five-star*” refers to the highest quality in a system that measures quality Oxford Dictionaries (n.d.). Mentioning a “*five-star hotel*” is not just about the venue; it evokes images of luxury, elitism, and wealth. This type of lexical strategy sparks criticism from the public and influences public perception of the government.

In **Data 8**, the word “*controversial*” refers to something that gives rise to public disagreement or heated debate (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). Rather than describing the policy in neutral terms, “*controversial*” signals that the subject (Dwifungsi) is not universally accepted, is associated with conflict, and is causing discussions. In this context, Dwifungsi refers to an era under the reign of President Soeharto where ABRI (Indonesian Armed Forces) has dual function as a defense and security forces, and socio-political power (Inpantri et al., 2022) which used to stabilize the regime but led to military overreach and weakening civil control (Djuyandi, 2023). The use of “*controversial*” here reintroduces and reminds the audience of authoritarianism in the past. This word carries evaluative meaning, which views Dwifungsi as problematic law.

The phrase “*fueled debate*” in **Data 9** uses strong and intentional lexical choices to emphasize the rising tension surrounding the issue. Unlike the neutral verbs like ‘*caused*’ or ‘*led to*’, “*fueled*” draws imagery of fire and intensification that suggests the issues did more than raise questions, but ignited strong reactions in public. “*Fuel*” denotatively refers to any material that produces heat or power, while “*debate*” is a neutral term to imply rational discussion at a public meeting (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). When those words are paired, it carries a sense of conflict, is more emotionally charged, and perhaps polarizing. @Folkative subtly frames the issue not just as controversial, but as one that continues to stir public opinion, suggesting it is far from being resolved.

In **Data 10**, the word “*Frustration*” describes an emotional response. Kemp et al. (2024) argue that frustration is a feeling that arises when a person encounters obstacles or unmet expectations, often leading to emotions such as anger, helplessness, or resignation, especially in complex environmental and social challenges. In this case, “*frustration*” reflects a sense that the public feels excluded, ignored, and powerless. This phrase positions the public as active observers and participants in the issue. The effect of this word makes the criticism feel emotional and reasonable. It shows the public’s disappointment, and the power may have lost public trust.

2. Discursive Practices (Interpretation)

p-ISSN: 2252-6323

e-ISSN: 2721-4540

@Folkative published the post on March 20, 2025, when the DPR RI officially passed RUU TNI. This shows that @Folkative is a media platform that consistently responds to current issues. The post uses @folkative's signature minimalist style, highlighting the core issue with a bold headline: "*RUU TNI telah resmi disahkan oleh DPR RI per hari ini jadi Undang-Undang*", which translates to "*The TNI Bill has officially passed by the DPR RI today and become law.*" The background features an image of the iconic DPR RI building, taken and credited to @alivikry in the caption. This image likely represents Indonesia's legislative authority, or DPR RI, as a lawmaker, and the place where the bill was passed.

The language used in the caption is informal and relatable to its audience, targeting Gen Z. Words like "held in secret" and "five-star hotel" are used, along with the closing prompt "What do you think?" to provoke opinions and encourage discussion in the comment section. The post is also tagged with the location "Indonesia", which targets the Indonesian audience. This format garnered over 317,000 likes, 11,100 comments, and 38,500 shares, indicating strong public interest and engagement with the post or the issue itself.

The audience's consumption of the post reflects highly critical anger and frustration toward the newly passed bill. The post's comments section, filled with sarcasm like "*Congratulations for Indonesia*" or "*Thanks to 02 voters, see you in hell,*" shows public disappointment toward the government and the issue itself. Sarcasm becomes a way to express criticism and dissatisfaction since people feel powerless and betrayed. The comment section turns into a space for people to react to the news and how they interpret it through their political views and emotions.

3. Social Practices (Explanation)

@Folkative's post on the TNI bill reflects deeper issues in Indonesia's political and social landscape. One of the main concerns in the post is the return of the Dwifungsi policy, which gives ABRI or the military power not only in defense but also in civilian governance. This idea dates back to Indonesia's New Order era, a time when military control was strong and democracy was limited. According to Djuyandi (2023), at that time the dominance of ABRI led to human rights violations

and riots in many places so in late 90's ABRI was returned to the professional military forces and changed its name to TNI. By calling this policy "*controversial*", @Folkative reminds people of the past and hints at the fear that the country may be heading back to that era or the same past will be repeated. For younger generations of Indonesians, especially those who grew up after the reformation era, this is a cause for concern, as they see the separation between the military and civilian government as an important part of democracy.

Moreover, public outrage over the issue was that the bill was passed fairly fast, and the discussions were reportedly held behind closed doors in a prestigious hotel, with no media access allowed. This secrecy sparked a backlash because the legislative process, especially involving the creation of new laws, should be transparent and open to public scrutiny. According to Fadillah (2022), the principle of openness is a fundamental aspect of lawmaking and should ensure that the public can monitor and participate in the development of legislation. Quoted from Tempo.co, the meeting was held in Fairmont Hotel, Jakarta on March 14 to 15 (Girsang, 2025). According to Fairmont Hotel's website, the room price for one night is around 3 million rupiah which contradicts the previous decision of INPRES (President Instruction) about budget efficiency in many sectors. Together the clause "*held in secret at a five-star hotel*" criticizes the lawmakers by suggesting that a law was discussed behind closed doors, in a place that reflects privilege rather than public responsibility.

If we look deeper at the laws that were passed, starting from the meeting on 14-15 March, there are several revisions proposed for Law No. 34 of 2004 about Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI). One of the most controversial changes in the 2025 TNI bill appears on Article 47, paragraph 2, which allow active duty TNI personnel to hold civil positions across wider range of government institutions. In the previous law, it limited the roles of active-duty personnel on 10 positions without requiring the soldier to resign or retire. According to Catherine (2025), the revised bill expands to 16 positions, adding the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB), National Counterterrorism Agency, Maritime Security

Agency, National Border Management Agency (BNPP), and Attorney General's Office. This indicates a deliberate expansion of military authority, allowing active-duty personnel to occupy a broader range of civilian roles within state institutions (Catherine, 2025).

This dual function is seen as a step toward restoring the military's dual function (Dwifungsi ABRI) in the New Order era which allowed active military personnel to occupy roles in the cabinet, regional government, and legislatures and become key instrument in sustaining the regime prolonging Suharto's 32-year rule (Rahayu, 2024). According to Rahayu (2024), this system led to an authoritarian and military dominance which contradicted principles of democracy and civilian supremacy. Farchan (2022) also noted that Dwifungsi ABRI became a tool of state during the New Order and was linked to serious human right abuses, including the suppression of student protest, political opposition, and incidents such as the 1965 tragedy and Timor-Leste conflict. After the 1998 Reform era, Indonesia sought to restore civilian supremacy by limiting the military's role to defense. The public concern today reflects a fear that expanding military access to civil institutions could undermine democratic values and risk repeating the authoritarian patterns of the past.

Discussions

1. Textual Analysis (Description)

Based on textual analysis, @Folkative's choice of language plays a significant role in shaping how the public perceives the news. The way actors are represented in the text is not always neutral, it reflects the writer's purpose or ideological stance. How someone is referred to can significantly influence how readers perceive their role, importance, and level of responsibility within the text.

The lexical choices also help influence public perception. They use emotionally charged language, provocative words, and are packed in a casual and social media format. The word "*dioplos*" in the first post gives a sense of deception, implicitly steering the audience toward negative moral judgment. The lexical choices here, do more than deliver the issue, they actively guide public emotion and opinion. Through such language, it

becomes not only a tool to inform the public but also influences, frames, and shapes public opinion.

2. Discursive Practices (Interpretation)

@Folkative consistently engages with current political issues using a minimalist and impactful visual and linguistic approach. Additionally, the use of Indonesian in the headlines is intended to capture the attention of local audiences or Indonesians and ensure instant comprehension at a glance, providing clarity and cultural relevance. Meanwhile, the English caption is designed to appeal to a broader, young generation and a more globally oriented audience, including potential international viewers. This bilingual strategy not only reflects an effort to widen the platform's reach but also shapes @Folkative's unique identity. By using location tags "Indonesia" and emotionally engaging prompts such as "What do you think?", they effectively leverage digital tools and platform features to initiate conversations and boost virality.

3. Social Practices (Explanation)

According to Rubing & Sandaran (2023), journalists are often influenced by their social background values and culture when constructing discourse, which means their ideology may be embedded within the context. Examining both cases, whether the corruption or TNI bill case, @Folkative coverage taps into the public's ongoing frustration with how justice, transparency, and democracy are handled in Indonesia. @Folkative often highlights the gap between the government and the people, especially regarding political issues. Their coverage highlights a lack of transparency, abuse of power, and public betrayal. Instead of being neutral, using bold headlines, emotional language, and relatable phrasing, @Folkative positions the government as distant from the public and often as the one responsible for the issues happening. In short, they use their platform to call out unfairness and give people a space to express their anger and disappointment.

CONCLUSION

This study examines how @Folkative, a digital media platform, presents political controversies and encourages people to discuss important issues. Instead of just sharing news, @Folkative carefully chooses its words, timing,

and visual elements to influence how people understand major political events.

The research focuses on two specific posts about the Pertamina corruption scandal and the TNI Bill. Both posts appeared immediately after these stories hit the news, which suggests that @Folkative deliberately jumps on breaking stories to shape public perception of them. They use attention-grabbing headlines, emotional language, and eye-catching visuals to engage people in political discussions and raise concerns about whether the government is being honest and accountable. What makes their approach particularly effective is their strategic use of bilingual communication to maximize reach and impact. Indonesian headlines provide immediate accessibility and emotional resonance for local audiences, while English captions target the young users and international observers interested in Indonesian politics. Their deliberate lexical choices, informal tones, and provocative words, such as “controversial,” “secret,” or “sparked,” function as rhetorical devices that create curiosity and encourage active participation from the audience. This linguistic strategy demonstrates how @Folkative transforms passive news consumption into engaged political discourse, using language as a powerful tool for democratic participation in Indonesia’s digital landscape. This means @Folkative isn’t just reporting what’s happening, but they’re actively helping to shape how Indonesians, especially young people, talk about politics online. They are creating a space where people can engage with critical civic issues.

Future research could explore how @Folkative’s framing compares with that of other Indonesian digital media, especially in their coverage of political issues. Since this study only examined two posts within a limited time frame, expanding the analysis to more platforms and a longer period could provide a more comprehensive picture of how public opinion is shaped online. It would also be beneficial to investigate how these media narratives actually shape people’s thoughts and engagement with political topics in the digital age.

REFERENCES

- Aditya. (2022). *Contrastive Conjunction: Pengertian, Jenis, Dan Contoh* - Lister.co.id. <https://lister.co.id/blog/contrastive-conjunction/>
- Ahlstrand, J., & Maniam, V. (2025). Kartini, Online Media, and the Politics of the Jokowi Era: A Critical Discourse Analysis. *Asian Studies Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2024.2347859>
- Artika, K. D., Syahyuniar, R., Persada, A. A. B., & Lingga, Y. M. (2022). Pengaruh campuran bahan bakar Pertalite dan Pertamax terhadap nilai torsi, daya, dan emisi gas buang sepeda motor 150 cc. *Elemen: Jurnal Teknik Mesin Dan Elektro*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/367221676>
- Atthahirah, A. (2024). Hegemoni Media Sosial: Akun Informasi Instagram @Folkative. In *Jurnal Pendidikan Modern* (Vol. 6, Issue 3). <https://journalpedia.com/1/index.php/jpm>
- Catherine, R. N. (2025). RUU TNI sah jadi undang-undang, ini poin-poin perubahannya. <https://Nasional.Kompas.Com/Read/2025/03/20/10494931/Ruu-Tni-Sah-Jadi-Undang-Undang-Ini-Poin-Poin-Perubahannya>
- Christianata, C. (2020). Pengenyampingan perkara tindak pidana korupsi oleh Kejaksaan Negeri Palangka Raya terhadap kasus kerugian uang negara di bawah Rp 50.000.000,-. *DiH: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum*. <https://www.neliti.com/publications/372804/pengenyampingan-perkara-tindak-pidana-korupsi-oleh-kejaksaan-negeri-palangka-ray>
- Cna.id. (2025). *Kronologi dugaan korupsi tata kelola minyak mentah yang merugikan negara Rp193,7 triliun*. <https://www.cna.id/indonesia/kronologi-dugaan-korupsi-tata-kelola-minyak-mentah-yang-merugikan-negara-rp1937-triliun-28696>
- Darmawan, N., Safitri, D., Putri, K. Y. S., Sary, M. P., Putri, M. L., & Sutjipto, V. W. (2024). The Effect of Uploads on Folkative on the Fulfillment of Information for Z Generation. *Journal of Digital Marketing and Communication*, 4(2), 70–77. <https://doi.org/10.53623/jdmc.v4i2.509>
- Darojat, A., & Widhiatama, D. A. (2025). Deconstructing the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in Online News Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis. *SALEE: Study of Applied Linguistics and English Education*, 6(1), 70–87. <https://doi.org/10.35961/salee.v6i1.1581>
- Djujandi, Y. (2023). Development of military role in Indonesian government. *Journal of Governance*, 8(1). <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/590049224.pdf>
- Fadillah, N. (2022). Penerapan asas keterbukaan dalam pembentukan Undang-Undang tentang Cipta Kerja dan Undang-Undang tentang Ibu Kota Negara. *Lex Renaissance*, 7(1). <https://journal.uui.ac.id/Lex-Renaissance/article/view/25241>
- Fairclough, N. (1993). *Discourse and Social Change*. Polity.
- Farchan, Y. (2022). Dinamika sistem politik otoritarianisme Orde Baru. *Jurnal Adhikari*, 4(2). <https://www.neliti.com/publications/441224>
- Fatimah, K., & Najicha, F. U. (2025). Analisis kasus dugaan korupsi minyak mentah PT Pertamina dalam perspektif nilai-nilai Pancasila sebagai sumber hukum. *ResearchGate*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/391274956>
- Feulner, F. (2024). The Indonesian House of Representatives and its role during democratic regression. *The Theory and Practice of Legislation*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20508840.2024.2351763>

- Frichot, E. (2025). *Exploring the ethical and legal dimensions of data collection: A case study of Meta platform*. https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/886845/Frichot_Emma.pdf?sequence=2
- Girsang, V. I. (2025). *Rapat Kilat Revisi UU TNI: Digelar di Hotel Bintang 5 hingga Didobrak Massa Aksi* | *Tempo*.Co. <https://www.tempo.co/politik/rapat-kilat-revisi-uu-tni-digelar-di-hotel-bintang-5-hingga-didobrak-massa-aksi-1220165>
- Inpantri, A. G., Siddiq, M. I. H., & Jayanti, M. P. (2022). The role and development of the function of ABRI (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia) in the New Order period. *Social Impact Journal*, 1(2). <http://journal.goresearch.id/index.php/sij/article/view/21>
- Kemp, A. H., Fisher, Z., & Pihkala, P. (2024). International Day of Happiness: Happiness and wellbeing in the age of climate catastrophe. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 1497347. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1497347>
- Lim, W. M. (2024). What Is Qualitative Research? An Overview and Guidelines. *Australasian Marketing Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14413582241264619>
- Martutik, Santoso, A., Rani, A., & Prastio, B. (2024). Exploring flaming in Instagram comments: Invoked strategies by Indonesian netizens. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2333601>
- Marzella, A., Rizal, E., Kurniasih, N., & Studi Perpustakaan dan Sains Informasi, P. (2024). Use of Instagram as a Media for Disseminating Information on Instagram @Folkative. *Journal of Sciencetech Research and Development*, 6(1). <https://idm.or.id/JSCR/inde>
- Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2025, from <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>
- Piliang, Y. A., Sulistyaningtyas, T., & Azhar, G. Z. (2024). Triadic discursive strategy: a digital arena for ideological legitimization in land movement. *Social Semiotics*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2024.2432425>
- Prianti, D. D., & Athique, A. (2025). Navigating Digital Identities: Instagram, Postcolonial Esthetics, and Indonesian Youth Culture. *Howard Journal of Communications*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2025.2500597>
- Rahayu, N. P. S. (2024). *Keterlibatan militer (Dwifungsi ABRI) dalam sistem pemerintahan politik di Indonesia pada masa Orde Baru*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378587273>
- Rakhmani, I. (2024). Understanding the floating ummah in neoliberal Indonesia. *Contemporary Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569775.2023.2267363>
- Rouabhia, R. (2024). *Discourse and Power in Presidential Rhetoric: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Biden's State of the Union Address*. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1930-4007>
- Rubing, G., & Sandaran, S. C. (2023). A Critical Discourse Analysis of News Discourse on in The Times. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13(1).
- Sari, K., & Pranoto, B. E. (2021). Representation of Government Concerning the Draft of Criminal Code in The Jakarta Post: A Critical Discourse Analysis. *Parole: Journal of Linguistics and Education*, 11(2), 98–113. <http://ejournal.undip.ac.id/index.php/parole>
- Sartini, N. W., & Adrian, D. (2023). Discriminatory discursive strategies targeting non-binary identity in Indonesia. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2270287>
- Siahaan, J. M. (2025). Korupsi dan moralitas: Tinjauan teologis terhadap fenomena frekuensi dan eskalasi nilai korupsi di Indonesia. *Jurnal Teologi Biblika*, 3(1). <https://jurnal.stt-biblika.ac.id/index.php/jtb/article/view/261>
- Sonnac, N., & Smadja, D. M. (2025). Rebuilding trust in public health: Countering medical disinformation as a democratic value in the digital age. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Health Services Research*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/10.1093/jphsr/rmaf005>
- Suharyo, S., & Fasyya, A. A. (2024). *Critical Discourse Analysis of Tempo News: Uncovering Power Relations in the Corruption Case of PT Timah Tbk Using Norman Fairclough's Theory* (pp. 216–223). https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-313-9_33
- Theo van Leeuwen. (2008). *Discourse and Practices: New Tools for Critical Analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Veloso da Silva, A., & López, A. M. C. (2023). Debating Feminism on Instagram: A Critical Discourse Analysis of @LasIgualdas in Colombia. *Information and Media*, 96, 136–152. <https://doi.org/10.15388/Im.2023.96.70>
- Venus, A., Intyaswati, D., & Ayuningtyas, F. (2024). Political expression among Indonesian youth on YouTube: Social identity and source credibility. *SAGE Open*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241262647>