

## **Anarchist Representations in the Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis Using Theo Van Leeuwen's Model on News of the Emergency Warning Demonstration in Rakyat Sulsel**

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### **Abstract**

This study analyzes media coverage of the student demonstrations in Makassar known as the Demonstrasi Peringatan Darurat (Emergency Commemoration Demonstration), one of the largest protest movements in Indonesia in the post-New Order era. The analysis employs a critical discourse analysis framework based on Theo van Leeuwen's model of exclusion and inclusion. The main focus of this study is to reveal how the media outlet Rakyat Sulsel frames the news by prioritizing exclusion strategies that marginalize anarchist groups and obscure police responsibility for the violence that occurred. The exclusion strategy consists of three sub-strategies, while the inclusion strategy comprises seven. This study finds that the use of language and media representation contributes to the social construction of the identity of anarchist groups. Thus, media discourse does not merely convey information but also shapes narratives that can influence public perceptions and/or reinforce stigma toward anarchist groups and anarchism as an ideology. The findings highlight the importance of the media's role as an ideological apparatus that has the potential to reinforce the status quo while neglecting alternative voices within society. This study is expected to encourage a more critical understanding of media coverage and to raise awareness of possible biases in news reporting.

**Keywords:** *Media, Anarchist, Anarchism, Critical Discourse Analysis Theo Van Leeuwen.*

### **Introduction**

Anarchism is often interpreted as chaos or violence. This can be seen in mainstream media narratives that frequently associate it with destructive behavior, particularly in coverage of demonstrations (Rizky, 2020). Alexander Berkman rejects this narrative, asserting that anarchism cannot be equated with chaos, violence, or disorder. (Berkman, 2017). Anarchism is the opposite of all these notions: that no one has the right to enslave anyone, rob anyone, or coerce anyone. For Berkman, anarchism is a condition of society in which all men and women are free, and all enjoy equality and the benefits of an orderly and rational life. (Berkman, 2017).

The concept of anarchism was first introduced by Joseph Proudhon in his book entitled *What Is Property?*. In this work, Proudhon argues that private property is essentially a form of theft (Proudhon, 1876). This view became central to anarchist thought. Fundamentally, anarchism is positioned as a revolutionary doctrine and an ideology located on the far-left end of the political spectrum (Goldman, 2024).

Etymologically, the term anarchism derives from the Greek words “anarchos” or “anarchia,” meaning “without government.” In a simpler sense, anarchism is a political philosophy that advocates a social order without the existence of hierarchy (Guerin, 1970). The hierarchy referred to in this context primarily concerns the state. Therefore, anarchism firmly rejects the existence of the state as well as the capitalist system. If anarchism is understood as a political ideology that opposes hierarchy, then individuals who adhere to this ideology are referred to as anarchists. The ideal upheld by anarchism is the creation of a social life free from hierarchy, particularly those associated with state power.

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The Russian anarchist philosopher and activist Mikhail Bakunin regarded the state as a destructive entity. Although it may have noble aims at the time of its formation, the state tends to destroy everything that falls under its influence. Bakunin argued that the state, with all the power it possesses, ultimately deprives individuals of their freedom. In his view, the state functions to serve the interests of a particular group while simultaneously acting as a tool for the ruling class to maintain its dominance over the broader society (Gagasan Dasar Pemikiran Bakunin, 2020).

In the Nusantara region, the existence of anarchism predates Indonesian independence. In his work *Proyek Suku Api*, Bima Satria Putra reveals the history of societies that lived without a state in the archipelago. In its first installment, Bima discusses stateless societies in Kalimantan through his book entitled *Dayak Mahardeka*. In the opening section, Bima emphasizes that stateless societies should not be regarded as primitive; their decision to be anarchist was not driven by an inability to form a state or to appoint a king among them (Putra, 2021).

Moving into the colonial period, Bima notes that there were already figures who studied anarchism, such as Multatuli and Alimin. A new era began after the administration of Indonesia's second president, Soeharto, entered its final phase in the late 1980s, marked by the emergence of punk and skinhead subcultures. In 2007, anarchists from various cities in Indonesia—such as Kolektif Afinitas Yogyakarta, Apokalips Bandung, Jaringan Otonomis Jakarta, Jaringan Autonomous Salatiga, Kontinum Makassar, and several others—consolidated into a network known as the Jaringan Anti Otoritarian (JAO). This network was the first to raise the black flag in a single mass action involving hundreds of participants in 2008. Since then, anarchist actions in Indonesia have continued, ranging from direct actions such as burning police posts and vandalizing ATMs, to involvement in community organizing in defense of land, organizing free markets, and disseminating propaganda through media and artistic works (Putra, 2018).

The long history of anarchism in Indonesia has gone hand in hand with simplifications and misunderstandings of anarchist thought itself. This can be traced back to when Indonesia's first president, Soekarno, wrote in the magazine *Fikiran Ra'jat* in July 1932, thirteen years before Indonesia's independence in 1945. In his article entitled *Anarchisme*, the proclaimer of Indonesian independence described anarchism as a theory of individualism that values the individual more than society (Prawirodirdjo et al., 2019). If Soekarno merely simplified anarchism in the past, contemporary portrayals go even further. Anarchism is now attached solely to violence and chaos, while its adherents—recently labeled as anarchists—are narrated by the media as rioters or the masterminds behind unrest.

Such narratives can be observed in media coverage of large-scale demonstrations in Indonesia. This pattern has been repeatedly employed by the police. For instance, in 2020, demonstrations against the Omnibus Law in various regions were dispersed, and hundreds of people were temporarily detained (Firmansyah, 2020), the same pattern was also evident during May Day 2021 (Sjofjan Rassat, 2021), and the demonstrations on 11 April 2022 (Rachman, 2022), followed by the commemoration of National Education Day in Makassar in 2023 (Sak, 2023), and the Emergency Commemoration demonstrations in various cities in 2024 (Ilham, 2024), and culminating in the Indonesia Gelap demonstrations (Alim, 2025). In several of these events, the pattern is the same: security forces disperse demonstrations on the grounds that the crowd has been infiltrated by anarchists, the police arrest demonstrators claimed to be anarchists, and this is followed by mass media coverage that amplifies these accusations.

This study focuses on analyzing Rakyat Sulsel's coverage of the Emergency Commemoration demonstration in Makassar. Rakyat Sulsel is one of Indonesia's local media outlets in South Sulawesi Province, based in the city of Makassar. It is a subsidiary of the Fajar Group, a media corporation connected to the Jawa Pos Group, one of the largest media groups in Indonesia owned by a conglomerate (Tapsell, 2018).

Meanwhile, the Emergency Commemoration demonstration was a civil society protest movement in Indonesia that took place in August 2024. It was described as a movement intended to break the chain of evening (Robet, 2024). At that time, civil society groups in various cities across Indonesia took to the streets to protest the Draft Law on Regional Head Elections (RUU Pilkada). The proposed regulation raised the percentage threshold for political parties to nominate regional head candidates and lowered the minimum age requirement for candidates, which was widely perceived as a maneuver by the then president, Jokowi, to enable his son, Kaesang Pangarep, to run as a candidate for deputy governor in the Central Java regional election (Diana, 2024).

In Makassar, the base area of Rakyat Sulsel, demonstrations were held from 22 August and culminated on 26 August 2024. Several main roads in Makassar were paralyzed, and lectures at a

number of campuses were moved to the streets by students. A national road, Jalan Urip Sumoharjo, became the central point of the protests, and it was also on this road that a public minibus was burned. The police forcibly dispersed the crowd at night. Several protesters were beaten and arrested. Clashes between the police and demonstrators also occurred at Bosowa University (Unibos) and the Indonesian Muslim University (UMI). At Makassar State University (UNM), in addition to clashes with the police, students were also attacked by civilians whose origins were unclear.

During and after these events, various news reports emerged from a number of media outlets. The narratives were similar, citing police statements that anarchists were the masterminds behind the unrest and the triggers of the clashes. News, indeed, is a rapid report of an event, as commonly defined (Charnley, 1975). However, it must also pay attention to facts, principles, and ethical standards in its reporting. Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, in the Elements of Journalism they formulated, emphasize several key points in journalistic practice, one of which is accuracy (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2006). This is because news can become an instrument of social reconstruction (McQuail, 1996). Bias and misinformation can construct public perceptions in ways that are not desired by the public, or even direct them toward what is desired by those in power.

One media outlet that reported on the Emergency Commemoration demonstration using a narrative that accused anarchists was Rakyat Sulsel. Rakyat Sulsel was selected for analysis not only because its accusations against anarchists relied on police statements, but also because it is one of the local media outlets that serves as a popular reference for the people of Makassar. This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis using Theo van Leeuwen's exclusion and inclusion model to examine how anarchists are included and excluded within news texts (Van Leeuwen, 2013). Based on this, one research question is proposed: how does Rakyat Sulsel employ strategies to represent anarchists in its coverage of the Emergency Commemoration demonstration?

## **Literature Review**

Research on anarchism in Indonesia remains limited, particularly within the fields of media and communication studies. Previous studies, rather than examining anarchists as subjects of violence, have in fact perpetuated labels such as rioters, chaos, and various equivalent terms when employing the concept of anarchism itself. Such tendencies can be seen in studies such as (Hasse, 2012), that were published in the journal *Studi Pemerintahan* of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. An article entitled "Anarkisme Demonstrasi Mahasiswa: Studi Kasus pada Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar" instead reinforces such unfounded labeling of anarchists. The concept of what the author means by anarchism is unclear, ultimately becoming trapped in the understanding propagated by mainstream media.

Another study comes from (Aden Suryana, 2022) entitled "Representation of Anarchist Groups in the Media: Media Bias in Reporting on Anarchist Circles and Anarchism." The conceptualization of anarchism in this study is more comprehensive. The research employs a critical discourse analysis approach using Norman Fairclough's model, which examines discourse through social practice. The findings show that anarchist groups are consistently portrayed as actors responsible for creating unrest and are therefore considered to disrupt public order. The study concludes that negative media coverage of anarchists has produced stigma, leading to their rejection by society.

Almost similar to the study (Aden Suryana, 2022), the research conducted (Pahalmas, 2016) entitled "The Meaning of Anarchism in Online News Media" also employs discourse analysis, albeit using a different model. This study employs van Dijk's discourse analysis model, commonly known as social cognition. The model emphasizes social psychology, so it does not analyze the text alone but also examines the background of how the text is produced. The study finds that Antara.com, in reconstructing news about demonstrations in March 2015, used the term anarchism inaccurately. From philosophical, social, as well as economic and political perspectives, this usage was considered misleading. As a result, readers are guided toward an inappropriate interpretation and become trapped in the misunderstanding that anarchism and anarchist groups are inherently negative.

In 2020, Remotivi, a media and communication research institute, published an essay entitled "How the Media Facilitates Police Narratives about Anarchists." Although the article was not published in a reputable academic journal, its findings are noteworthy, as it examines how media patterns consistently provide a platform for the police to amplify narratives related to anarchists (Rizky, 2020). One of its findings shows that out of 58 news articles published by six leading online media outlets in Indonesia, police sources were used most frequently, accounting for 76.2%. In contrast, observers constituted only 16.7%, citizens 4.8%, and anarchists merely 2.4%.

Building on this, among the existing studies—both those outlined above and based on the researcher's review—it appears that none specifically examine how the media functions as an instrument of power. In the terminology of the Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser, this is referred to as an Ideological State Apparatus. Therefore, this study employs Althusser's theory known as the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). The concept of ISA was introduced by Althusser in his essay *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. In Indonesian, this work has been published by IndoProgress under the title *Ideologi dan Aparatus Ideologi Negara* (Althusser, 2015).

According to Althusser, power possesses two instruments to maintain the status quo: Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA) and Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA). RSA includes the military, the police, and the judicial system, while ISA encompasses institutions such as schools, family, religion, and the media. ISA operates in a more subtle manner through ideology to shape individual consciousness (Althusser, 2015). In the context of media, the media can function as an instrument through which power implants its ideology. This aligns with John Fiske's view that the media is not merely a means of message transmission, but also contains a semiotic dimension (Fiske, 2016).

## **Methodology**

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis using Theo van Leeuwen's exclusion and inclusion model within a qualitative approach. This model focuses on identifying individuals or groups that are marginalized; in the context of this research, these are anarchists. Van Leeuwen's model identifies who is marginalized in the text by examining how social actors are included or excluded (Eryanto, 2001). The news article analyzed is a publication from *Rakyat Sulsel*, which was released on 27 August 2026 at 15:56 local time. The article is entitled "Police Accuse Anarchists of Being the Masterminds Behind Student Demonstration Unrest in Makassar." Since this is a qualitative study, the instrument used is the researcher themselves (Sugiyono, 2010).

The data were analyzed using ten strategies, as outlined in Theo van Leeuwen's exclusion and inclusion model, consisting of three exclusion strategies and seven inclusion strategies. The explanations are as follows:

### **Exclusion**

#### **1. Passivation**

This strategy removes the actor by transforming a sentence into the passive voice. It is a classic method of erasing the actor, which cannot be achieved if the sentence is in the active voice.

#### **2. Nominalization**

This strategy changes a verb into a noun. Typically, in Indonesian, this is done by adding the prefix "pe-an," as in "rekrutan" (shooting). For example, the verb doesn't need to mention the subject to form a sentence, so the actor can be omitted.

#### **3. Substitution of Subordinate Clauses**

The final exclusion strategy is clause substitution. The added subordinate clause functions as a replacement for the actor, so that the actor does not need to be explicitly mentioned in the sentence.

### **Inclusion**

#### **1. Differentiation-Indifferentiation**

This strategy introduces other actors or events to show that a particular group is inferior compared to another group. Besides making comparisons, this strategy can also take the form of creating a polarization between "us" and "them."

#### **2. Objectivation-Abstraction**

This strategy transforms something concrete into something abstract. For example, journalists sometimes use terms like "everywhere" to describe numerous traffic jams caused by a demonstration, even though the exact number of locations could be specified concretely.

#### **3. Nomination-Categorization**

This strategy categorizes actors or groups based on characteristics or aspects of their identity. For example, a thief might be identified by their religion or skin color—details that, even if omitted, do not change the essential meaning of the sentence.

#### 4. Nomination-Identification

This strategy is similar to nomination-categorization. However, nomination-identification not only categorizes the actor but also defines them with a negative description. Technically, in Indonesian, this is often connected using words like "yang" (who/which) and "di mana" (where).

#### 5. Determination-Indetermination

This strategy involves referring to events or actors in an unclear or anonymous manner. Anonymity is employed for various reasons and often results in generalization.

#### 6. Individualization-Assimilation

This strategy makes a single actor appear as many. Journalists sometimes use this to attract readers. For example, if one student is shot, the report might state that "students were shot."

#### 7. Disassociation-Association

This strategy links an event or actor with another event or actor. It serves to glorify the meaning, leading the audience to accept it by imaginatively connecting the actors or events.

In this study, the researcher developed a coding system to facilitate data collection following the analysis process, given the numerous subcategories. The coding is presented in the table as follows:

**Table 1. Coding of Theo Van Leeuwen's Discourse Strategies**

Eksklusi		Inklusi	
Strategi	Kode	Strategi	Kode
<b>Passivation</b>	E1	Diferensiasi-Indiferensiasi	I1
<b>Nominalization</b>	E2	Objektivasi-Abstraksi	I2
<b>Substitution of Subordinate Clauses</b>	E3	Nominasi-Kategorisasi	I3
		Nominasi-Identifikasi	I4
		Determinasi-Indeterminasi	I5
		Asimilasi-Individualisasi	I6
		Disasosiasi-Asosiasi	I7

## Results and Discussion

Rakyat Sulsel published an article entitled "Police Accuse Anarchists of Being the Masterminds Behind Student Demonstration Unrest in Makassar." The article was written by a journalist who prefers to remain anonymous for this study. On a daily basis, the journalist covers legal and criminal issues. After analysis using Theo Van Leeuwen's exclusion and inclusion model of Critical Discourse Analysis, a total of 24 strategies were identified in the article. One strategy was exclusionary, while the remaining 23 were inclusionary. The distribution is categorized in the table below:

**Table 2. Number of Discourse Strategies**

Jumlah Strategi Wacana										
Eksklusi			Inklusi							
E1	E2	E3	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	
1	0	0	6	4	0	2	11	0	0	

### Exclusion

The only exclusion strategy employed by Rakyat Sulsel was passivization. The actor was removed by turning the sentence into the passive voice. In this article, Rakyat Sulsel subtly applied this strategy.

*As revealed by a Pete-Pete (public minibus) driver named Baharuddin, his vehicle caught fire after a spark hit it, followed by a thick white smoke that irritated his eyes.*

The event is made the focus, rather than the actor. This passivization directs the reader's attention to "his vehicle caught fire after a spark hit it." As a result, who caused the spark may not be mentioned. Van Leeuwen calls this actor deletion through the passivization strategy (Van Leeuwen, 2013). This sentence shifts the reader's attention from the question of who set the fire to merely what happened. Baharuddin's testimony as a minibus driver, instead of clarifying who the perpetrator was, adds an additional layer of ambiguity regarding the arsonist.

In the context of this news report, based on the researcher's observations at the scene, clashes occurred between demonstrators and police in front of Bosowa University (Unibos). The demonstrators used stones and firecrackers, while the police fired tear gas and pursued with batons. The vehicle in question was located in front of Unibos. According to the driver's account—whose full interview video was uploaded by the alternative local media Bollo.id on Instagram—the vehicle caught fire after a spark was followed by white smoke (Aidil, 2024). This means that either of the two actors—the demonstrators using firecrackers or the police deploying tear gas—could have caused the vehicle to catch fire. It is not yet known for certain. What is clear, however, is that the explosion was followed by white smoke that irritated the eyes, which is characteristic of tear gas.

The tendentious framing of anarchists from the outset in this text leaves the interpretation that anarchists, who were part of the demonstration, are the perpetrators. Here, the media, instead of reporting the event based on the principle of accuracy—which is considered the cornerstone of journalism according to the Elements of Journalism—fails to do so (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2006). The media, instead, amplifies the police's accusations, facilitating unfounded claims. Ultimately, the media, whether consciously or unconsciously, becomes an ideological state apparatus (Althusser, 2015).

### **Inclusion**

The inclusion strategies were used 23 times in the Rakyat Sulsel article. First, differentiation—indifferentiation appeared six times. Two of these instances quoted the police, who stated that there was a dichotomy between two groups of protesters: one referred to as "pure students" and the other as infiltrators labeled as anarchists. The police presented these two actors in contrast. This is evident in the following two data excerpts:

*The Chief of Makassar Metropolitan Police, Kombes Pol Mokhamad Ngajib, stated that the clashes occurred due to the infiltration of anarchist groups. According to him, the demonstration carried out by hundreds of "pure" students under the flyover was orderly and dispersed by 18:00 WITA.*

*"However, after 19:00 WITA, a group of anarchist youths appeared and took over the action. They were not demonstrators; they intended to create chaos in Makassar city," Ngajib said on Monday night.*

In the first data excerpt, the police are presented as actors who dictate the moral positioning of the other two actors: the pure students and the anarchists. The pure students are depicted as morally neutral actors, while the anarchists are portrayed as infiltrators who disrupt the situation, leading to clashes. In addition to marginalizing the anarchists, Rakyat Sulsel positions the students as passive actors who are easily infiltrated.

In the next excerpt, which is actually a direct quote from the previous statement, the citation reinforces the police's claims. The phrase "They were not demonstrators" also constructs a dichotomy between "us" and "them." The pure students and the police are framed as part of the public, while the anarchists are depicted as actors who do not represent public interests and merely "intend to create chaos." Van Leeuwen refers to these instances as differentiation—indifferentiation (Van Leeuwen, 2013). A similar strategy is used to emphasize the social distance between the authorities and the demonstrators. For example, in the following sentence, the police explain the chronology of the minibus fire.

*"Earlier, it was clearly seen that the minibus was set on fire by the crowd because we were still positioned far away. We threw tear gas, but they had already burned the vehicle," claimed Ngajib.*

A clear distinction is constructed between the police, referred to as "we," and the crowd, referred to as "they." The police are depicted as being in a defensive position and "still far away," while the crowd is portrayed as aggressive and instigating violence. This contrast creates a moral image: the crowd is emotional and destructive, whereas the police act in a measured manner.

*Ngajib stated that his forces took firm action to disperse the anarchist activities carried out by the anarchist group...*

The data above demonstrates that moral differentiation through labeling anarchists legitimizes police actions. The anarchist group is positioned as a distinct entity, separate from ordinary demonstrators, so the difference is not only behavioral but also social. Police violence, including firing tear gas and beating demonstrators, appears legitimate and rational because it is directed at a deviant group. When this strategy is repeated, it increasingly widens the gap between anarchists and the public, as shown in the next data excerpt.

*However, the demonstrators are described as uncooperative, which justified the police in securing them.*

Being cooperative or uncooperative becomes a moral criterion for determining who is right and wrong. The police are assumed to be actors striving to maintain order, while the crowd is positioned as irrational and stubborn. The differentiation does not stop there; it is extended to a broader social level, as seen in other data.

*Ngajib stated that the road closures caused by the demonstrators angered civilians and road users. As a result, clashes between the public and the protesters became unavoidable.*

Civilians are positioned as victims of the crowd's actions, reinforcing the view that the protest was not a legitimate form of political expression but rather a disruption of public life. Rakyat Sulsel and its sources together construct a dividing line between the "normal" group and the "troublemakers." This dichotomy clearly illustrates the use of the differentiation-indifferentiation strategy (Van Leeuwen, 2013). Another strategy in this news article, objectivation-abstraction, appeared four times. Three of these instances follow a similar pattern, referring to numbers. The numbers, which should be concrete, are made abstract. Examples can be seen in the following three data excerpts:

*According to him, the demonstration carried out by hundreds of "pure" students under the flyover was orderly and dispersed by 18:00 WITA.*

*"About a dozen people. But we are still investigating and developing the case further," Ngajib said.*

*"Earlier, it was also seen that (civilians) threw stones into (UNM campus), resulting in several broken windows..."*

In the three data excerpts above, the sentences are structured to appear concrete and detailed. However, abstraction is actually being applied. For example, in the first excerpt, it is stated that "hundreds of pure students" were present. Rakyat Sulsel describes the student demonstrators as "hundreds," which seems concrete but is actually abstract, since the exact number is unclear. The same applies to the second excerpt, which mentions "dozens of people," yet the precise number is not provided, even though such a figure would be easy to specify. Moreover, since this statement comes from the police, concrete data could have been presented.

The third excerpt is similar, but in this context, it does not refer to actors, but rather to the scale of the damage caused by the clashes. Terms like "hundreds of students," "dozens of people," and "several windows" construct a reality that is ambiguous. As a result, the destructive impact of the clashes can appear larger than it actually was. Similarly, the number of students or anarchist participants may appear more or less than the actual figure. In addition to referring to numbers, abstraction is also applied by referencing locations in an abstract manner, as in the following sentence:

*"It seems that way (the public is angry) because here (Pettarani) has been blocked for a long time. Makassar city is also congested everywhere," Ngajib explained.*

The police, in this case the Chief of Makassar Metropolitan Police, once again sought to explain the destructive impact of the clashes. In an abstract manner, he stated that traffic congestion occurred "everywhere." This abstraction is understandable, as he may not know the exact number of congested locations. However, given his position as the head of police in Makassar, it is hard to believe he would not have access to such data—or at least could have identified the concrete locations. The media, in this case Rakyat Sulsel, quoted this statement verbatim without investigating where "everywhere" actually referred to. Ultimately, this diction can exaggerate the perceived impact of events on the ground. Several of these patterns result in the obscuring of concrete reality, which Van Leeuwen refers to as objectivation-abstraction (Van Leeuwen, 2013).

Meanwhile, the nomination–identification strategy in this news article defines two actors: pure students and anarchists, each appearing in different data excerpts. The pure students are depicted in the following excerpt:

*According to him, the demonstration carried out by hundreds of “pure” students under the flyover was orderly and dispersed by 18:00 WITA.*

The students are nominated as the actors of the demonstration, but are then identified with the qualities “pure” and “orderly.” Through the term “pure,” the media subtly emphasizes the purity of the students’ motivations, while simultaneously implying that the unrest that occurred was not part of their actions. On the other hand, this reinforces the narrative that an external actor was responsible for the chaos. This external actor is then presented in the next data excerpt: the anarchists. Stigmatization is attached through the following excerpt:

*“However, after 19:00 WITA, a group of anarchist youths appeared and took over the action. They were not demonstrators; they intended to create chaos in Makassar city,” Ngajib said on Monday night.*

The use of this strategy is very evident in the statement: “They were not demonstrators; they intended to create chaos in Makassar city.” The anarchists are marked with malicious intent through the phrase “not demonstrators.” Through the police’s statement, Rakyat Sulsel portrays this group as lacking moral or political legitimacy to participate in the demonstration. The identification is reinforced by the addition of a subordinate clause, such as “who appeared and took over the action.” (Eryanto, 2001).

The most frequently used strategy in this news article is determination–indetermination. In online news reporting, this strategy is commonly employed, as it allows the media to avoid presenting actors directly, for either practical or ideological reasons. In this context, indetermination through the use of the term “anarchists” appears in the following four data excerpts:

*The police accused the anarchist group of being the masterminds behind the unrest during the “Reject Jokowi’s Political Dynasty” demonstration in Makassar on Monday night (26/8/2024).*

*The Chief of Makassar Metropolitan Police, Kombes Pol Mokhamad Ngajib, stated that the clashes occurred due to infiltration by the anarchist group.*

*“However, after 19:00 WITA, a group of anarchist youths appeared and took over the action. They were not demonstrators; they intended to create chaos in Makassar city,” Ngajib said on Monday night.*

*Ngajib added that his forces took firm action to disperse the anarchist activities carried out by the anarchist group.*

Through the four data excerpts above, the article consistently employs the determination–indetermination strategy to shape readers’ perceptions of who is considered the perpetrator and who holds authority over the “truth.” In the first excerpt, the identity of the “anarchist group” is explicitly presented as the subject responsible for the unrest. The use of the word “accused” emphasizes the attribution by authorities toward the party deemed guilty, as if the accusation were final. However, there is no clarity on which anarchists are meant, how many there were, or how they were involved.

In the second excerpt, indetermination operates more subtly. The term “infiltration” implies the involvement of an external party causing the chaos. This statement shifts responsibility away from the authorities and structural conditions toward an actor whose existence is unclear. The sentence asserts determination toward the anarchists as the source of disruption, while simultaneously maintaining indetermination about who the “anarchist group” actually is. There are no details about evidence, identification processes, or the social context behind it.

The third sentence demonstrates determination coupled with moral labeling. The term “anarchist youths” determinatively marks the group with a clear identity, even though it does not specify who they are. Although the determination appears firm, the narrative structure still generates indetermination because there is no factual data—only claims made by the authorities.

In the final excerpt, the anarchists are again highlighted. The police are portrayed as the acting party, while the “anarchist group” is the object of action. Yet, the identity of the anarchists remains unclear. These four excerpts show that indetermination is used to keep the claims open and difficult to verify, allowing the authorities to remain morally and politically safe. Other instances of the determination–indetermination strategy also appear in this news article, such as in the following sentence:

*Similarly, regarding the burning of a minibus or Pete-Pete in front of the Unibos campus, Ngajib claimed that the vehicle was set on fire by the protesters.*

This sentence positions the police as the authoritative source conveying the “truth,” while the identity and motives of the actual perpetrators remain unclear. Here, the determination of the “protesters” simultaneously serves to eliminate the possibility of police responsibility for the circumstances that led to the burning. The protesters, in this context the anarchists, are again marginalized in this sentence. This is further clarified in the direct quote from the Chief of Makassar Metropolitan Police.

*“Earlier, it was clearly seen that the vehicle was set on fire by the crowd because we were still positioned far away. We threw tear gas, but they had already burned the vehicle,” Ngajib claimed.*

The direct quote from the Chief of Makassar Metropolitan Police demonstrates strong determination toward the “crowd” as the perpetrators of the burning. The phrase “clearly seen” reinforces the authority of the observation, as if the truth of the event does not require further verification. However, indetermination appears in the use of the term “crowd” without clarifying who is meant—whether students, external groups, or local residents. This indetermination is significant because it keeps the accusation general and obscures the identities of specific individuals or groups.

In another excerpt, Rakyat Sulsel mentions multiple actors. During the unrest, in addition to clashes between the demonstrators and the police, the demonstrators also clashed and threw stones at the public. Three social groups are mentioned: demonstrators, authorities, and the public. All are portrayed as involved in the violence. In this way, the media creates an illusion of neutrality, as if everything is clear, yet it does not specify who initiated the clashes or triggered the violence. As a result, all actors appear equally culpable, and structural contexts—such as the police’s use of tear gas—are erased from the text. Furthermore, Rakyat Sulsel employs the determination–indetermination strategy to explain the authorities’ efforts to maintain order, as seen in the following two data excerpts:

*Around 22:30 WITA, the police were reported to have conducted negotiations and dialogue with the group of protesters at UNM, accompanied by UNM’s Vice Rector III, Arifin Manggau.*

*However, the protesters were described as uncooperative, which led the police to secure them.*

In the first sentence, Rakyat Sulsel obscures the source of information. It is unclear who reported or confirmed that the negotiations actually took place. The diction choice, “conducted negotiations and dialogue,” also serves to reinforce a positive image of the authorities as rational and communicative. In the next excerpt, the protesters are again depicted as “uncooperative,” a label carrying a negative moral judgment. In contrast, the police’s actions are framed using the euphemism “secured,” an indeterminate term that conceals the possibility of violence or forced arrests. Indirectly, these two excerpts also shape how the actors are portrayed: the police as the “orderly” party, and the protesters, labeled as anarchists, as the “uncooperative” group.

In another section, this strategy is used to explain the consequences of the demonstration while simultaneously legitimizing the authorities’ dispersal of the protest. Civilians and road users are presented as actors representing the public, yet their identities remain unclear. This is illustrated in the following two data excerpts:

*Ngajib stated that the road closures caused by the protesters angered civilians and road users, especially in front of UNM campus. As a result, clashes between the public and the protesters became unavoidable.*

*“Earlier, it was also seen that (civilians) threw stones into (UNM campus), resulting in several broken windows. It seems that way (the public is angry) because here (Pettarani) has been blocked for a long time. Makassar city is also congested everywhere,” Ngajib explained.*

Causality is evident in the first sentence. The protesters are immediately designated as the cause of traffic disruption and public anger. The phrase “caused the public to be angry” emphasizes a cause-and-effect relationship, positioning the demonstrators as the source of social disturbance. However, indetermination arises not only because the actors are presented too generally, but also because the narrative does not explain the context of the road closures—whether they were part of a peaceful protest strategy or a response to repressive police actions. The frequent use of the determination–indetermination pattern above demonstrates the complexity of this strategy (Van Leeuwen, 2013). Moreover, it shows that a text, while appearing normal and ordinary, can unconsciously become a tool of power propaganda to embed its ideology (Althusser, 2015).

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates how the media can shape narratives that not only reflect events but also influence public perception. Through its reporting on the Peringatan Darurat demonstration in Makassar, Rakyat Sulsel played a role in constructing stigmatization against the anarchist group while simultaneously minimizing police responsibility for the violence that occurred. The critical discourse analysis approach of Theo Van Leeuwen reveals how language and representation in the text marginalize certain actors.

For example, the analyzed news removes the police as actors from the text, so that those responsible for the violent incidents are either softened or omitted. Rakyat Sulsel not only ignores the actual perpetrators but also obscures the depth of responsibility for the ongoing demonstration. This creates a narrative in which the anarchists are positioned as the masterminds and the cause of the unrest, without providing space for a more comprehensive understanding of the context and dynamics of the events. On the other hand, in the strategy of including anarchist actors, they are always presented based on police statements. The anarchists are stripped of their identity as subjects with political rights to protest, while reinforcing the view that they lack legitimacy and reducing them to mere troublemakers.

The total of 24 strategies identified in this news article shows that media such as Rakyat Sulsel do not merely function as channels of information but also act as ideological agents shaping public perception. This reporting has the potential to influence public opinion and reinforce existing power structures. Meanwhile, the neglect of the presence and voices of anarchists not only creates injustice in reporting but also underscores how the media often operates as a tool to uphold narratives that benefit those in power. This narrative harms not only the anarchists but also public trust in the integrity of the media as a source of accountable information. The space for civil expression is also at risk, as every civil movement can easily be disrupted under the pretext of being orchestrated by anarchists.

## Benefit

Practically, this study is expected to provide insights for journalists and media practitioners on how reporting can influence public perception of social and political issues. By understanding the discourse strategies used in news articles, journalists can become more aware of how actors are portrayed in their reporting. This opens opportunities for improving journalistic practices to be more accurate and fair. Additionally, the findings of this research can be used to train journalists to identify bias and unbalanced representations in news coverage. Media organizations can also learn from this analysis to be more critical of the narratives constructed by official sources. Through awareness of harmful stereotypes and stigma, journalists can contribute to creating more inclusive discourse. Ultimately, this study encourages a reconciliation between public interest and the media's responsibility in presenting complex and diverse stories.

Theoretically, this study is written with the aim of enriching the field of critical discourse analysis by integrating Theo Van Leeuwen's model with Louis Althusser's theory of state ideology. By exploring the relationship between language, power, and representation, this research contributes to understanding how the media operates as an ideological instrument. Furthermore, it is hoped that this study can serve as a reference for future research focusing on issues of marginalization and representation in the media.

## Recommendations

This study is not intended to lecture any particular party but rather to correct and intervene in practices that risk becoming habitual. Based on the findings, the author believes that journalists' capacity is an essential aspect that must be improved. This capacity goes beyond merely understanding journalistic rules or codes of ethics at a textual level. Journalists must recognize that news and media are not simply tools for conveying messages; there is an ideological dimension behind them. Therefore, a journalist's commitment to truth—making accuracy paramount and giving voice to the marginalized—must be an uncompromisable principle.

Of course, individual efforts alone are not sufficient, as this is fundamentally a structural issue. According to the researcher, media organizations themselves must also reform, particularly regarding business models. Business models that rely on collaboration with those in power and financial backers only make media captive to vested interests. Such practices, common among local media in Indonesia, must be abandoned. The author advocates for publicly funded media models, because, ultimately, the media industry is a business built on public trust.

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