



Discourse on Power Regarding Threats Against Female Journalists in Tempo.co Media Coverage

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ABSTRACT

Using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, this study examines how power discourse is constructed across textual structures, discursive practices, and socio-cultural practices in the case of threats against female journalists reported by Tempo.co. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method. The primary data sources consist of diction choices, sentence structures, metaphors, and news narratives extracted from reports published on Tempo.co between March and July 2025. Data collection was carried out through a documentary technique involving close reading and note-taking, while data analysis utilized Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA framework. The findings reveal that: (1) At the textual structure level, power discourse is manifested through the use of resistance diction, a mix of active-passive sentence structures to shift the focus of aggression, and dehumanizing surveillance metaphors; (2) Discursive practices highlight a tactical news production process by the editorial team to construct political causal relationships, alongside fragmented text consumption split between the ideological resistance of digital readers and institutional support; (3) Socio-cultural practices reflect the influence of national political momentum surrounding the revision of the TNI Law, a legitimacy crisis within state apparatus institutions, and the strengthening of professional journalist alliances amidst a pervasive culture of impunity.

Keywords: power, threat, female journalists, media

INTRODUCTION

The role of mass media as a pillar of democracy has long been viewed as a strategic instrument for generating and disseminating information to the public. Media serves as a platform for public participation, enabling audiences to access accurate news—such as coverage of corruption cases or human rights violations. However, journalistic activities are inextricably linked to power dynamics inherent in reporting methods, including how the media frames figures, issues, and socio-political contexts within news texts. These power dynamics are evident in the media's selection of events to report, the prominence given to

specific subjects, and the framing of issues—all of which are influenced by the socio-political context of the news text.

Language cannot be interpreted merely as an unconscious phenomenon or speech devoid of intent—such as incoherent rambling or utterances made under hypnosis. On the contrary, human interactions and relationships are constructed by individuals through the conscious and purposeful use of language. From the perspective of Eriyanto and Badara (in Fauzan, 2014:5), speaking and writing are viewed as social actions grounded in specific intentions directed at the interlocutor. Conse-

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quently, every linguistic structure employed in the public sphere carries an agenda—deliberately constructed to influence social dynamics.

The link between language and social conditions is explained by Fairclough (cited in Masitoh, 2020:66) through the concept of social practice. He posits that discourse embodies a dialectic: social reality is shaped by language, while specific social situations simultaneously influence language use, thereby rendering linguistic neutrality impossible. Aligning with this view, Haryotmoko (in Hanathasia, 2017:21) argues that social events can be manifested through language; in other words, discourse is language put into social practice. Furthermore, he asserts that knowledge regarding specific topics during particular periods is presented by individuals through the use of language in discourse to generate specific statements. Tempo.co is an online news portal belonging to the Tempo media group, a press institution with a long-standing reputation for investigative journalism and a history of critically challenging the power of the New Order regime.

In this study, the researcher analyzed data from the Tempo.co online portal regarding threats against its female journalists, examining the associated narratives, ideologies, and social practices. This approach is based on the premise that language is not neutral; rather, it is influenced by specific social contexts while simultaneously playing a role in shaping social reality. As Haryotmoko (2015:153) notes, language within discourse can be used to make statements or to present knowledge about a specific topic during a particular period.

Regarding the threats against female journalists, the study focuses on Fransisca Christy Rosana—famously known as Cica—an investigative journalist for Tempo and the host of the podcast *Bocor Alus*, a program featuring critical discussions on politics, law, and other state policy issues.

One factor contributing to her becoming a target of intimidation is her role as a host of the *Bocor Alus* podcast, which frequently exposes sensitive

issues regarding power and politics. Specifically, Cica faced serious threats after covering the controversy surrounding the revision of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) Law—a bill drawing public criticism for allegedly loosening restrictions on military personnel holding civilian posts. Her investigative reporting sharply highlighted the potential resurgence of the military's "dual function" (*dwifungsi*) and the erosion of bureaucratic reform; these reports are strongly suspected of triggering a fierce backlash that culminated in threats against her. Furthermore, her active involvement in covering issues that intersect with high-level authorities has made her a target of systematic control mechanisms.

According to Michel Foucault (in Addina et al., 2025:196), power does not always manifest as physical violence; it also operates subtly through control, normalization, and the shaping of compliant individuals. This suggests that the female journalist's body is positioned as a vulnerable subject within power relations, as such intimidation serves as a "textual message" indicating that there are discursive boundaries a journalist must not cross to remain safe. From a Foucauldian perspective, this power functions as a tool to regulate and limit individual expression—particularly through normalization, which frames any deviation from the norm as a serious threat.

This phenomenon is crucial and compelling to study because, through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis, news reporting is no longer viewed merely as a neutral channel for conveying factual information; instead, it has transformed into a text deeply imbued with discourses of power. This analysis also extends to how Tempo.co frames its news stories, how it addresses specific issues, and the outlet's own response in taking direct action to resolve this case. The researcher adopts Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model, which specifically serves to bridge the relationship between the micro-linguistic dimension and the macro-sociopolitical context. Fairclough offers a three-dimensional analytical framework: the textual dimension—which encom-



passes not only linguistic cohesion and coherence but also the unpacking of lexical choices, metaphors, and grammatical strategies used to represent the reality of threats against journalists—and beyond that, a dissection of specific words, as they may carry multiple meanings depending on the context.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method. Yuliani (2018:88) and Razak (2017:176) state that the qualitative descriptive method is commonly used in various types of social science research.

The qualitative approach focuses on narratives, interpretative exposition, and in-depth data description to reveal the meanings underlying language use. The data for this study consist of words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs from news texts regarding threats against a female journalist from Tempo.co, selected to reflect the three dimensions of CDA.

The data source for this study consists of digital news reports from the online media portal Tempo.co during March (when the case first emerged) and July (the evidence-gathering phase) of 2025. Data collection involved an in-depth reading and note-taking technique applied to the news texts to classify data into a corpus based on relevant linguistic units. Data analysis was conducted systematically using Fairclough's three-stage analytical framework: textual description, interpretation of discursive practices (production and consumption), and explanation of sociocultural practices.

Through incisive descriptive analysis, utilizing Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, this study aims to present comprehensive findings regarding the hegemony of power produced by the media. The final results of this methodological approach are presented as a logical and critical narrative, providing a clear understanding of the dynamics of power discourse surrounding the issue of female journalists' safety.

RESULTS

1. Power Discourse Viewed Through Textual Structure

The textual structure in this study is examined through three key elements found in the news texts: diction, sentence structure, and the use of metaphors.

1.1 Choice of Diction

The choice of diction within power discourse is not merely a neutral communication tool; rather, it is a strategy deliberately designed to construct reality, shape public opinion, and legitimize dominance. This is illustrated by the following data:

"Suspecting this attempt to be an act of terror against Tempo's journalistic work. 'We suspect this is an act of terror and a move to obstruct journalistic work,' he/she said" (B2.D1).

Based on the analyzed data, Tempo.co tends to employ diction that conveys resistance (opposition) and institutional reinforcement. This linguistic choice appears consistently across several excerpts—for instance, in data B2.D1: "suspecting this attempt to be an act of terror against Tempo's journalistic work." "We suspect this is an act of intimidation intended to obstruct journalistic work." This statement does more than merely characterize the incident as a crime; it frames the action as a systematic attack on press freedom and the function of public oversight.

At the same time, the statement serves as an institutional strengthening strategy for Tempo.co, reaffirming its legitimacy and noble role within the public sphere. The use of the pronoun "We"—coupled with the phrase "taking measures"—projects the image of a solid institution that possesses agency and is prepared to take both legal and editorial action in its own defense. The phrase "obstructing journalistic work" implicitly reminds the public that a right to information is being forcibly curtailed. Through this choice of words, Tempo.co successfully constructs an image of itself not merely as an aggrieved media company, but as a final bastion for press freedom and the essential function of public oversight.

“If the goal is to instill fear, we are undaunted—but stop this cowardly act.” (B7.D5)

In general, Tempo.co’s choice of diction reflects a stance that prioritizes condemning the perpetrators and defending press freedom over highlighting the vulnerability or trauma of the victims (its journalists). The use of a word like “undaunted” (gentar) in data B7.D5 shifts the narrative from portraying the journalist as a helpless victim to symbolizing professional steadfastness. This move diverts public attention away from the destructive impact of physical or psychological attacks, directing it instead toward the media institution’s strength in refusing to yield to intimidation.

Through this framing, Tempo.co prioritizes advocating for broader press freedom rather than exploring the personal vulnerability or trauma experienced by the victims. The narrative focus is deliberately shifted to openly condemn the perpetrators—labeling them “cowards”—in order to delegitimize the opposition’s moral standing in the public eye. This choice of words underscores that an attack on a journalist is an attack on a pillar of democracy; consequently, the response must be one of institutional firmness, even if this results in the neglect of narratives regarding the recovery of the individual journalist targeted by the violence.

The raw reproduction of language regarding violence indirectly risks perpetuating the very effect of terror within the public sphere, while simultaneously obscuring the narrative concerning the need for psychological protection and trauma recovery for the individual journalists directly targeted by such threats.

1.2 Sentence Structure

The analysis of sentence structure in this study is explained as follows:

“Francisca Christy Rosana’s mother’s mobile phone was seized by a man; he used the number to call and converse with Francisca’s family members.” (B1.D4)

Findings from data B1.D4 reveal the use of a mixed sentence pattern that combines active and passive structures to manage the focus of infor-

mation. In the first part, the report employs the passive phrase “was taken over,” deliberately highlighting the object—“Francisca’s mother’s mobile phone”—as the focal point to underscore the impact of the terror experienced by the victim’s family. This structure does not completely obscure the perpetrator; rather, the perpetrator is explicitly identified at the end of the clause to clarify the nature of the attack. Conjunctions and active sentence structures—using verbs such as “using,” “calling,” and “chatting”—are subsequently employed to describe the perpetrator’s follow-up actions. This shift to an active pattern serves to expose the aggression and acts of intimidation consciously directed by the perpetrator at other members of Francisca’s family. The combination of these two structures creates a layered effect: the initial passive form anchors public sympathy on the loss suffered by the victim, while the subsequent active form emphasizes the perpetrator’s proactive role in directly perpetuating psychological terror.

“To date, the police have not succeeded in identifying the perpetrator or the mastermind behind the terror.” (B9.D1)

The sentence patterns in these news reports frequently employ a technique of specifically obscuring the subject—using collective or anonymous subjects—to accommodate the limitations of available information from the field. This pattern is evident in data B9.D1, which states that “the police have not yet succeeded in identifying the perpetrator”; here, the word “police” represents the law enforcement institution as a whole, without singling out specific investigating officers. Such sentence structuring demonstrates that the arrangement of subjects and objects in news texts serves not merely a grammatical function but acts as a crucial instrument for shaping public opinion.

This active sentence structure deliberately highlights the state institution’s failure to resolve cases of violence against the press. By positioning the police force at the beginning of the sentence as a subject that has “not yet succeeded,” the text



critically steers public opinion toward questioning the commitment and performance of law enforcement regarding the safety of journalists. Through this straightforward syntactic pattern, the media demonstrates that the positioning of subjects and objects does more than satisfy grammatical rules; it serves as a tactical tool to demand public accountability without resorting to speculative personal accusations.

1.3 Metaphor

In the discourse of power, metaphor is not merely a linguistic flourish or a stylistic device of fiction; rather, it is a strategic cognitive tool used to simplify complex issues and shape public perspective in alignment with the interests of those in power. The analysis of metaphors in this study is outlined below:

"A 'silent game' is haunting you" (B4.D10).

The combination of the metaphor "silent game" (main senyap) and the verb "haunting" in data B4.D10 is tactically employed to translate a covert political strategy into a chilling psychological realm. The use of the phrase "silent game" implies the existence of clandestine, subsurface maneuvers deliberately conducted beyond public scrutiny to avoid detection. When this covert tactic is paired with the word "haunting," that impersonal political reality transforms into a mystical entity actively pursuing its target, thereby creating a horror-like effect that amplifies the intensity of the intimidation directed at the victim.

This layered metaphorical construction effectively builds strata of mental terror, anxiety, and profound insecurity stemming from an invisible threat. By characterizing the tactic as "haunting," the discourse successfully transmutes an act of physical or bureaucratic repression into a tangible and pressing form of psychological pressure. Through this framing, the media not only exposes the deviousness of the methods employed by those in power but also stirs public empathy by revealing the crushing weight of mental terror borne by victims in the silence of their isolation.

"With provocative statements that ultimately incited many low-quality individuals through the muzzle of your mouth." (B4.D11)

The excerpt above (data B4.D11) employs a biting metaphor—specifically the phrase "muzzle of your mouth"—to characterize the way a person speaks or delivers statements. Literally, the word *moncong* (muzzle/snout) typically refers to the protruding mouth or nose of an animal (such as a dog or pig) or the tip of a firearm barrel. When applied to a human's mouth, the function of the word shifts from a mere tool of communication to an object perceived as crude, feral, or dangerous. This metaphor deliberately strips away the humanity of the person being criticized (dehumanization), equating their speech or manner of speaking to uncontrolled animalistic instincts or a weapon poised to fire off provocations.

In the context of this data analysis, the use of this metaphor serves to reinforce the destructive impact of the speaker's actions. The "muzzle" (*moncong mulut*) is positioned here as the source or origin of "provocative statements" possessing immense destructive power—capable of captivating and inciting the group characterized as having "low-quality human resources" (*SDM rendah*). This choice of imagery not only conveys the speaker's deep-seated anger or hatred toward the subject but also visually emphasizes that the words issuing from that mouth do not constitute healthy communication; rather, they are attacks or propaganda that corrupt the mindset of an uncritical public.

2. Discourse of Power Viewed Through Discursive Practices

Discursive practice serves as an intermediary dimension bridging textual structures with the broader socio-cultural context. This dimension examines how discourse is actively produced by text creators through specific language choices and ideological content, as well as how that discourse is consumed or interpreted by audiences based on their social backgrounds. The analysis is presented below:

2.1 News Production

The results of the analysis regarding news production data are presented as follows:

"Previously, acts of terror involved digital attacks, wiretapping, Pegasus interception, mob intimidation, and even bombs," said Bagja Hidayat, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Tempo, on March 28, 2025. (B1.D10)

A total of 29 data points were identified within the news production category. The news production process at Tempo.co reveals a systematic and calculated approach to framing events of institutional terror. Regarding the selection of sources, Tempo.co actively engages various strategic actors, including internal editorial elites—as seen in data B1.D10. This lends significant credibility and authenticity to the constructed narrative. The involvement of these internal sources goes beyond merely providing supplementary quotes; it represents a tactical move to demonstrate that the threats in question have reached a level... ..serious institutional implications, thereby necessitating a direct statement from an editorial authority figure.

Beyond bolstering credibility, the presence of Bagja Hidayat—representing the pinnacle of the editorial hierarchy—in data entry B1.D10 serves as an institutional personal branding strategy that reaffirms Tempo.co's position at the forefront of the struggle for press freedom. By directly featuring the Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Tempo.co does more than merely report an act of terror; it engages in a symbolic confrontation against the intimidation attempt. The narrative constructed around this authority figure shifts public perception: the incident is no longer viewed merely as a routine operational disruption, but rather as a fundamental attack on a pillar of democracy.

Consequently, the active involvement of this internal leader generates a broader resonance, sparking public solidarity and underscoring that Tempo.co will not yield to any form of institutional pressure. Nezar Patria stated that his organization had not yet determined its response to the incident involving the pig's head left for Cica. However, he explained that the government would only take

concrete action after receiving the results of the police investigation.

"Well, it depends on how the investigation unfolds" (B3.D10).

Data B3.D10 highlights Nezar Patria, the Deputy Minister of Communication and Digital Affairs (Komdigi), as representing a measured stance in response to the terror incident targeting Cica. His statement—that the government would only act after receiving results from the police, underscored by the direct quote "Well, it depends on how the investigation goes"—demonstrates bureaucratic adherence to legal principles. This structure clearly positions the government in an objective role, where concrete executive action is deliberately made contingent upon the police's investigative authority.

The "wait-and-see" attitude displayed by Nezar Patria reflects a framing strategy that positions the state as a neutral actor and a guardian of legal order. By refusing to offer an emotional response or take premature action prior to police clarification, the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs seeks to dampen the potential for the terror case against Cica to become politicized. Conversely, this framing can also be interpreted as a temporary deferral of responsibility, wherein executive authority shelters behind bureaucratic formalities to avoid polarizing public opinion. Through the phrase "it depends on how the investigation goes," the news narrative effectively conveys that the government will not rush to take a position but will instead operate strictly within the bounds of applicable regulations to maintain institutional objectivity.

2.2 News Consumption

The results of the data analysis for the "News Consumption" category are presented below:

"The account @derrynnoah sent a threatening message to Tempo's official Instagram account. It read: 'Hello, haven't had enough of being pigs? Later, if your building burns down, people will call it an act of anarchy, but you idiots don't realize you're being watched because you love spreading



provocative news that pits the people against the government. The terror will continue until your office is dead and gone.' This was followed by a 'laughing-crying cat head' emoticon." (B1.D13)

Regarding the dimension of discursive practice, data B1.D13—concerning threats from the account @derrynoah—provides a vivid illustration of how news texts produced by Tempo.co are consumed and radically interpreted by the audience. The narrative of these threats reveals extreme ideological resistance from news consumers harboring specific political biases. Instead of consuming the news as a product of objective social oversight, the @derrynoah account interprets Tempo.co's journalistic output through a lens of suspicion. The use of the phrase "fond of spreading provocative news so that the people and the government clash" indicates that consumers in this category have adopted a preconceived mindset that rejects the media's critical function; they subsequently assert an opposing stance by identifying the media as an agent of political instability.

From the perspective of text reception, this destructive consumption of news does not stop at mere misinterpretation but transforms into acts of verbal and physical terror. Word choices such as "the terror will continue until your office is dead," punctuated by a "laughing-while-crying" emoji, demonstrate a total devaluation of press freedom values and a loss of human empathy driven by information polarization. This data proves that a news text viewed as critical by one audience group can be perceived as a threat to stability by another. Consequently, the subversive interpretation adopted by consumers like @derrynoah serves as a basis for legitimizing aggressive counter-confrontation against the media institution.

"Irfan Kamil, Chairman of the Legal Journalists Association, stated that the pig's head incident constitutes a vile form of intimidation that not only threatens individual safety but also poses a serious threat to press freedom in Indonesia." (B2.D12)

Regarding news consumption, the response from Irfan Kamil—as Chairman of the Legal Journalists Association—to the data in B2.D12 reveals

a linear pattern of audience interpretation (a "dominant-hegemonic reading") regarding the message produced by the media. As a member of both the legal and press communities, Kamil does not consume the news text merely as a report on a common crime; instead, he interprets it through the lens of the ideal values of freedom of expression. His choice of words—specifically "vile intimidation" and "serious threat to press freedom"—indicates that this segment of the audience successfully grasped and validated the framing established by the editorial team, critically linking the pig's head terror incident directly to a declining democratic climate and weak safety guarantees for journalists in Indonesia.

Conversely, a stark contrast in news consumption—characterized by fragmentation and resistance—emerges when the text reaches lay audiences or oppositional groups in the digital sphere, as reflected in the data from account @derrynoah (B1.D13). By claiming that Tempo "likes to spread provocative news to incite conflict between the people and the government," this type of news consumer engages in an "oppositional reading." Rather than empathizing with the act of terror targeting the journalist, this audience consumes the text through an ideological bias that views the media as harboring a hidden agenda to pit the public against one another. The contrast between these two datasets demonstrates that the same news text can be consumed in diametrically opposed ways: as an act of silencing the press that must be resisted by one audience group, or as a form of "social karma" for a media outlet perceived as provocative by another.

3. Discourse on Power Viewed Through Socio-cultural Practices

"The week she received the package containing a pig's head, she was writing a major report on the key figures behind the revision of the TNI (Indonesian National Armed Forces) Law, which was passed by the House of Representatives (DPR) on March 20, 2025. The TNI Bill reinstates the ABRI

'dual function' by assigning active-duty soldiers to 15 state institutions." (B1.D14)

The political context is strongly evident in data B1.D14. It reveals a clear chronological and causal link between the act of terror and the critical journalistic piece Cica was writing. The timing—coinciding with the drafting of a report on the TNI Law revision—suggests that this terror was not a random attack but rather an attempt at intervention and intimidation regarding the bill's passage. The bill reinstates the ABRI "dual function" by placing active-duty soldiers in 15 state institutions—a highly sensitive political issue that directly intersects with the structure of state power. Thus, the data demonstrates that physical and symbolic threats were deliberately employed as instruments to silence a journalist.

The political implications of the framing in data B1.D14 further underscore that the terror campaign against Cica constitutes a tangible form of forced suppression—driven by state interests—aimed at cutting off the flow of public information. By highlighting sensitive issues such as the resurgence of the military's dual function (*dwifungsi*) through the placement of active-duty soldiers in 15 state institutions, this news narrative reveals that the escalating physical intimidation—manifested in the delivery of a pig's head—was ideologically motivated to shield the established power structure from the scrutiny of investigative journalism. Through this bold establishment of causality, Tempo.co implicitly positions itself not merely as a victim of crime, but as a bulwark of democracy standing in direct opposition to militaristic oligarchic forces attempting to erode Indonesia's reformist values.

"Law enforcement's failure to identify the perpetrators of this terror" (B5.D14).

Textually, the phrase "failure to identify the perpetrators" is not merely a factual report but a social verdict passed by the public upon law enforcement institutions. The word "capable" (*mampu*) implies a standard of competence expected of the authorities, while "yet" (*belum*) indicates a duration of failure that has exceeded rea-

sonable limits. This choice of words subtly yet sharply exposes the contradiction between the police's claims of professionalism and the reality of a stalled investigation. In a socio-cultural context, this statement serves as a tool to delegitimize state authority in the eyes of the public. When the public begins using the phrase "failure to" (*belum mampu*) to evaluate the performance of authorities, a shift in power relations occurs: the state is no longer automatically trusted but must instead empirically demonstrate its competence. The failure to identify those behind the terror against this female journalist symbolically demonstrates the state's failure to fulfill its fundamental duty to protect its citizens, particularly those engaged in critical professions.

From a deeper socio-cultural perspective, this data reflects a crisis of structural legitimacy plaguing law enforcement institutions in Indonesia. The inability to identify and apprehend the perpetrators cannot be divorced from a broader social context: a weak investigative system, the politicization of law enforcement, and an entrenched culture of impunity. This sentiment—that authorities are "unable" to resolve these matters—stems from a cumulative public experience of repeatedly witnessing cases of violence against journalists and activists left unresolved. In the socio-cultural realm, this expression serves as a form of discursive resistance against the state's official narrative, which frequently claims that cases are being handled seriously. The public no longer accepts procedural promises; they demand concrete evidence. Thus, the phrase functions as a tool of social oversight pressuring the state to take immediate action, while simultaneously reflecting the fragility of a democracy where press freedom still contends with unexposed violence.

"Acting like one possesses a nationalist spirit—what is there to even scrutinize about Indonesian politics?" (B4.D24)

Indonesian socio-cultural practices are reflected in data B4.D24 through the sarcasm found in the phrase "Acting like one possesses a nationalist spirit." The word "acting" (*gaya*) sharply ex-



poses a sense of artificiality; the displayed nationalism is perceived merely as a mask rather than an authentic conviction. In the context of Indonesian socio-cultural practices, this type of sarcasm stems from accumulated public disillusionment with political elites and state institutions that frequently employ nationalist rhetoric to silence criticism while failing to protect their citizens. The public making this comment has reached a state of total skepticism, where nationalism is no longer viewed as a noble value but rather as a tool for manipulation. The evident socio-cultural practice is a crisis of legitimacy regarding nationalist discourse: the public refuses to accept nationalist narratives at face value, instead turning them into objects of ridicule. This indicates a fracture in the emotional bond between the state and its citizens; nationalism—which ought to serve as a social glue—has instead become a target of cynicism.

Indonesian socio-cultural practices are further illuminated by the cynical question in data B4.D24: "what is there to even scrutinize (pelototin) about Indonesian politics?" The choice of the word "pelototin" (to stare intently or scrutinize) carries a dismissive tone, implying that Indonesian politics is nothing more than a cheap spectacle unworthy of serious attention. Socio-culturally, this statement reflects a deep-seated political apathy among segments of Indonesian society. Instead of demanding justice regarding threats against journalists, the comment shifts focus toward mocking politics in general. The resulting socio-cultural phenomenon is a fragmentation of solidarity: at a time when press freedom is under threat, a portion of the public chooses to sneer rather than offer support. This cynicism is not merely an individual expression but a reflection of a structural crisis of confidence in the entire political system. Disillusioned citizens are no longer able to distinguish between constructive criticism and destructive mockery; Consequently, the public sphere has fractured into groups that disparage one another, rather than uniting against threats to democracy.

DISCUSSION

Discourse of power viewed through textual structure

a. Diction choice. In Norman Fairclough's textual dimension, the choice of diction is not merely a technical linguistic matter; rather, it represents ideology and a discursive struggle that reflects power dynamics. Based on the analysis of the 35 data points regarding diction choice, Tempo.co's reporting consistently functions as a tool of resistance, rather than as an instrument that reproduces discourses of power that undermine female journalists.

These research findings align with Norman Fairclough's (1995:9) assertion that discourse possesses an ideological dimension inseparable from the socio-political context of its production. This demonstrates that Tempo.co's reporting serves as a means of resistance rather than a vehicle for reproducing power dynamics directed at female journalists. The findings also indicate that the choice of diction in media can serve as a tangible medium for ideological struggle within society.

Drawing on data from B2.D1 and B5.D1, Tempo.co employs ideologically charged, confrontational language—such as "terror," "hindering journalistic work," and "cowardly act"—to elevate the incident from a mere criminal matter to a structural violation that "sets back democracy and the fight against corruption." The use of assertive diction, such as "we are undeterred" (data B7.D5), tactically shifts the image of female journalists from that of vulnerable, intimidated victims to symbols of professional steadfastness backed by institutional strength. This linguistic resistance is particularly crucial given the media industry landscape documented by AJI and PR2Media (2022), which reveals that 27 percent of female journalists still face gender-based discrimination in the workplace. Various studies also confirm that masculine dominance within media organizational structures often relegates female journalists to the margins, forces them into passive domestic roles, and exploits women as objects portrayed in biased and unfair ways (Mujahidin, 2025:127-128). Thus, the

assertive language found in this data serves as a tangible response to counter the patriarchal stereotypes and structural inequalities highlighted by these experts.

b. Sentence Structure. Through an analysis of active and passive sentence structures, Fairclough emphasizes how the placement of subjects and objects indicates the distribution of responsibility and the shaping of informational focus within a text. Of the 29 data points identified, the sentence structures in this reporting are explicitly constructed as a tool of resistance that clarifies institutional accountability. In data B1.D4, the text employs a mixed structure; the passive clause "diambil alih" (taken over) is used at the beginning to focus public attention on the psychological terror experienced by the female journalist's family, while the perpetrator's identity is explicitly revealed to avoid the bias of anonymity.

Vocabulary used in media discourse can be categorized into several types: classifying vocabulary, passivizing vocabulary, active sentence vocabulary, and vocabulary that limits perspectives. Classifying vocabulary—which involves summarizing or abstracting reality into specific categories—allows for distinctions to be made between different elements. Active vocabulary refers to words frequently used in communication and writing. Passive sentence vocabulary consists of words rarely used in communication, according to Roger Fowler (in Setiani et al., 2021:93).

These linguistic characteristics reinforce Norman Fairclough's theory regarding the dimension of textual analysis, specifically concerning the ideological function of transitivity structure choices. The selection of passive or active forms within a sentence is not merely a linguistic coincidence but a reflection of how power relations are constructed (Fairclough, 1995:183–187). Regarding the psychological terror conveyed through passive clauses at the beginning of sentences, the text ideologically prioritizes exposing the domestic space of vulnerability under attack by the perpetrator. Nevertheless, asserting the perpetrator's identity in the subsequent clause serves as a dis-

cursive anchor that rejects euphemism; the text firmly refuses to normalize the terror by directly identifying the actor controlling the violence. This verbal resistance is further strengthened in data B2.D6, which highlights an active structure by placing Editor-in-Chief Setri Yasra at the beginning of the sentence as the subject who "suspects this attempt to be an act of terror." This pattern of personalization and the use of transitive verbs underscore the personal courage of the top editor in clarifying both moral and legal accountability. Conversely, when highlighting the performance of law enforcement, Tempo.co employs transparent active sentences such as "Police only collected evidence after 125 days" (B8.D4) or collective subject patterns like "the police have not yet succeeded in identifying the perpetrator" (B9.D1).

c. Metaphor. Within Fairclough's framework, metaphors are viewed as powerful cognitive instruments for framing reality and conveying specific ideological effects to the reader. Based on the 21 data points identified, these news texts feature a clash of metaphors—involving physical imagery, animalization, and surveillance—that demonstrates the media's function as a tool of resistance against psychological repression. In data B4.D10, the phrase "main senyap" (playing silently/stealthy maneuvering), when paired with the verb "menghantui" (to haunt), anthropomorphically imbues the perpetrator's covert tactics with a life of their own; this creates a profound psychological effect regarding a threat that is invisible yet menacing to the target ("you"). This anthropomorphic metaphorical construction aligns closely with the Cognitive Metaphor Theory proposed by Johnson (1980). Lakoff and Johnson argue that humans tend to personify abstract concepts through ontological metaphors as a strategy to construct specific conceptual realities. In the context of data B4.D10, the perpetrator does not merely issue a threat but engages in radical cognitive manipulation. By attributing agency to the phrase "main senyap"—treating it as a living entity capable of "haunting"—the perpetrator seeks to disseminate



an intimidating ideological effect. As asserted by Fairclough (1995), these findings demonstrate that metaphor functions as an instrument of power, subtly dictating the consciousness and emotions of readers and discourse targets alike, compelling them to submit to the psychological repression being created.

The perpetrator amplifies this effect of cognitive repression through the use of surveillance metaphors and the delegitimization of the profession. Data B1.D7 reveals a surveillance metaphor: "you are under watch." Through this metaphor, the perpetrator seeks to construct a panoptic space of threat, positioning the press institution and its journalists as powerless objects subject to the perpetrator's intimidating gaze.

The perpetrator further legitimizes this atmosphere of fear in data B4.D11 by employing the pejorative physical metaphor "your snout" (*moncong*). The use of the word *moncong*—which literally refers to an animal's snout—serves as a metaphor of degradation, characterizing the podcasts and critical investigative work of Tempo journalists as "provocative statements" intended to incite the public.

Discourse of Power Viewed Through Discursive Practices

a. Production. Data B1.D10 presents a statement by Tempo Deputy Editor-in-Chief Bagja Hidayat, describing an escalation of terror ranging from digital attacks to bombings. The inclusion of an internal source from the top of the editorial hierarchy serves not merely to provide a quote, but as a tactical move to demonstrate that the threats have reached a serious institutional level requiring a response from the media outlet's highest authority.

This aligns with the concept of source selection strategies proposed by Eriyanto (2001:87–103), wherein the selection of elite internal sources reinforces the legitimacy and narrative authority of the media institution in the public eye. By featuring an editorial authority figure, Tempo.co does more than report events; it engages in a symbolic

confrontation against intimidation efforts while simultaneously galvanizing broader public solidarity.

Data B3.D10 contains a statement by Deputy Minister of Communication and Digital Affairs Nezar Patria, indicating that the government will await the results of the police investigation before taking action. The sentence structure reflects bureaucratic adherence to legal principles and positions the government as a neutral, objective actor. This framing strategy signals a temporary deferral of responsibility, with executive authority taking refuge behind bureaucratic formalities to avoid politicizing the case. Critical Discourse Analysis suggests that public officials often employ a strategy of discursive ambivalence—where statements appearing neutral and procedural serve to delay substantive commitment while maintaining an image of legal compliance (Haryatmoko, cited in Samuel, 2024:231). This narrative effectively conveys that the state operates rigidly within regulatory confines rather than acting based on the urgency of journalist protection. A framing strategy deeply rooted in the logic of investigative journalism often highlights temporal causality in news production; acts of violence are never presented in isolation but are invariably linked to broader political contexts to construct a narrative of public interest. This concept aligns with Alex Sobur's views (cited in Adawiyah R & Fathurokhmah F, 2021: 63–76, Analisis Teks Media) regarding how media constructs events. The application of this strategy is evident in data B1.D11, which links the timing of Cica receiving a package containing a pig's head to the week she was writing a major report on the revision of the TNI (Indonesian National Armed Forces) Law, passed by the House of Representatives (DPR) on March 20, 2025.

b. Consumption. Interpretive resistance stemming from deeply ingrained ideological prejudices often prompts audiences to flatly reject messages conveyed by the media. This concept aligns with Haryatmoko's (2017: 84) argument in Critical Discourse Analysis regarding how a reader's position shapes resistance to a text. This theory is concretely

illustrated by data B1.D13, which features a threat from the account @derrynoah; the user characterizes Tempo as an entity that "likes to spread provocative news to incite conflict between the people and the government" and threatens that "terror will continue until your office is destroyed."

The textual use of terms such as "provocateur" and "clash" reveals a negative framing that accuses the media institution of acting as an agent of social destabilization. Viewed through the dimension of discursive practice, the news consumption activity of the @derrynoah account represents a clear instance of oppositional reading. This reading model reinforces Norman Fairclough's (2003: 41) view that text consumption is never neutral but is always influenced by the reader's social position and ideological stance. Through this ideological lens, such audience members no longer interpret journalistic products as objective investigative reports, but rather as dangerous threats to legitimate political stability.

The presentation of highly specific investigative details regarding the chain of delivery for packages containing animal carcasses—transported via online ride-hailing platforms (Grab and Gojek) as shown in data B9.D20—serves as a focal point for audience interpretation. Tempo.co deliberately presents these operational facts and digital forensic findings to satisfy newsworthiness criteria while simultaneously guiding how readers perceive the perpetrator's *modus operandi*, which exploits digital anonymity loopholes to evade legal detection. This mechanical structure of data disclosure guides the audience to perceive that the act of terror against the female journalist did not occur spontaneously; rather, it was meticulously and professionally orchestrated by actors operating behind the scenes.

Discourse of Power Viewed through Sociocultural Practices

The sociocultural practices surrounding the coverage of the terror campaign against the female journalist at Tempo.co reveal an asymmetrical power dynamic involving the media, the public, and state security institutions. Examining the "so-

cial practice" dimension within Fairclough's (1995:97) three-dimensional model, news texts and the consumption of discourse in the public sphere do not exist in a vacuum; instead, they are conditioned by hegemonic social structures that dictate how such texts are produced and interpreted. The incident involving a package containing a pig's head—which coincided with reporting on the revision of the TNI (Indonesian National Armed Forces) Law (as seen in Data B1.D14)—confirms that physical terror was employed as an instrument of political repression to safeguard the stability of established power.

Within the national political landscape, acts of intimidation and violence against investigative journalists are no longer merely ordinary street crimes; they constitute a form of systemic silencing deliberately engineered by power structures to control the flow of information that threatens their interests (Arifianto et al., 2021:145-158). By boldly establishing these causal links, Tempo.co exposes the ideological motives behind the terror while positioning the media as a counter-actor directly confronting the power dynamics of the post-reformasi militaristic oligarchy.

Institutional failure in law enforcement discursively triggers a profound crisis of legitimacy when juxtaposed with the reality of stalled investigations—a situation reflected in the phrase "not yet able to uncover the perpetrators" (Data B5.D14). Fairclough (1995:132) emphasizes that discourse can function as an ideology operating naturally within institutions, where the arena of institutional incompetence is often concealed behind bureaucratic, procedural rhetoric.

The stalling of the police investigation into this case of violence against a female journalist has fostered what Siregar (in Pradjasto, 2022:70) identifies as an entrenched cycle of impunity; here, the absence of firm legal sanctions against perpetrators of violence against the press is gradually normalized into a culture of structural permissiveness. The phrase "unable to" (or "not yet capable"), circulating in the public sphere, has transformed into a tool of discursive resistance used to pass social judgment and empirically delegitimize



claims regarding the professionalism of law enforcement. It is at this juncture that a discursive shift in power occurs: the public openly rejects the rhetoric of bureaucratic procedural promises and demands tangible accountability, reflecting an acute crisis of structural trust in the state's fundamental protective function.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of power discourse through textual structures reveals that the choice of diction, sentence structures, and metaphors in Tempo.co's reporting is constructed as a tool for ideological resistance. The diction consistently shifts the female journalist's position from that of a vulnerable victim to a symbol of institutional strength. Active and transparent sentence structures serve to criticize the sluggishness and failure of law enforcement agencies while explicitly demanding public accountability. Metaphors regarding the perpetrator's intimidation tactics are not used to subjugate the victim; instead, they are recontextualized as systematic evidence of threats to democracy. Thus, the textual dimension of this reporting demonstrates that language serves as an arena for ideological struggle—mobilizable to challenge dominant power structures—rather than merely a tool for reproducing power that marginalizes the oppressed.

An analysis of power discourse through discursive practices reveals that news production and consumption occur within a non-neutral ideological framework. Regarding production, Tempo.co strategically selects sources ranging from internal editorial elites to state officials to bolster institutional legitimacy and generate public solidarity. A chronological narrative rooted in political causality frames the act of terror as a calculated attempt to silence an investigative journalist, rather than a random criminal act. Regarding consumption, a sharp fragmentation of interpretation was observed among the audience. Some audience members adopted a dominant hegemonic reading, confirming the media's framing of the incident as an act of intimidation against press freedom; conversely,

others engaged in an oppositional reading that legitimized the terror by accusing the media of being a divisive force that provokes national discord. This fragmentation underscores that text consumption is invariably shaped by the reader's social position and ideological framework; consequently, meaning is never singular but remains open to negotiation.

An analysis of the discourse on power—viewed through the lens of sociocultural practices—reveals the asymmetrical power relations existing between the media, the public, and state institutions. The physical intimidation directed at Cica, which coincided with her coverage of sensitive political issues, confirms that violence against journalists serves as an instrument of political repression intended to safeguard the stability of established power structures. The prolonged failure of law enforcement agencies points to a crisis of structural legitimacy and a deeply entrenched culture of impunity within these institutions. Faced with the dual pressures of state failure and public cynicism stemming from political polarization, the media has mounted a discursive defense by asserting its role as a pillar of democracy. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that the coverage of threats against the journalist by Tempo.co constitutes a discourse heavily imbued with power dynamics. The portrayal of power relations in this coverage does not merely reflect social reality; it actively constructs a new reality through linguistic strategies, systematic discourse production, and the mobilization of public solidarity. Thus, the coverage functions not only as a source of information regarding the event but also as a platform for advocacy and resistance against exercises of power that suppress press freedom.

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