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# The Construction of Social Actors in the News Coverage of the 2019 Presidential and Vice Presidential Victory Claims

**Abdul Rahman**
Ilmu Komunikasi, Fakultas Ilmu Komunikasi, Universitas Mercu Buana, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: dr.a.rahman@mercubuana.ac.id

***Abstract***

*This study examines the construction of social actors in news coverage claiming victory during the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election in the April-May 2019 editions of Kompas Daily. The research aims to analyze how media discourse represents social actors and constructs political legitimacy within contested electoral narratives. Using a qualitative approach and Stuart Hall's Critical Discourse Analysis, the study analyzes selected news articles focusing on the representation and positioning of political actors. The findings show that Kompas selectively foregrounds official institutions and political elites as dominant and credible actors, while grassroots supporters receive less prominent representation. The discourse of victory claims is constructed as a symbolic arena where legitimacy and truth are contested through language use, quotation patterns, and source selection. This study concludes that media discourse plays a significant role in shaping public interpretation and reinforcing ideological positions during political events. The research contributes to communication and media studies by highlighting the relationship between discourse, representation, and power in political journalism.*

***Keywords:*** *Social Actor Construction, Critical Discourse Analysis, Stuart Hall, Political News Coverage, Victory Claims.*

## PENDAHULUAN

Presidential elections are one of the most important political moments in a democratic system because they serve as an arena for contestation of power and a process of legitimizing leadership through electoral mechanisms. In the Indonesian context, the dynamics of presidential elections not only reflect competition between candidates but also demonstrate how social actors construct narratives, produce meaning, and influence public opinion through various communication media (Subekti et al., 2025). One medium that plays a crucial role in this process is the mass media. Media functions not only as a conveyor of information but also as a space for producing discourse that shapes how society understands political reality. The political contestation in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election is one of the most prominent examples of the dynamics of political communication in Indonesia (Deha, 2021). The election pitted two pairs of presidential and vice-presidential candidates against each other: the incumbent Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin and the challenger Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Uno. The competition between these two pairs took place not only in the formal political campaign but also in a narrative battle in the public sphere, particularly through mass and digital media (HIDAYATULLAH et al., 2024). This situation became even more complex when both camps openly claimed victory even before the official results were announced by the General Elections Commission (KPU). This claim of victory sparked various responses in society and sparked widespread debate regarding the legitimacy of the election results.

The claims of victory by both political camps are inextricably linked to the use of quick count data, exit polls, and internal surveys, which serve as the basis for establishing political legitimacy in the public eye (Schedler, 2023). Several national survey institutions at the time released quick count results showing a lead for the Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin ticket with a vote range of around 54-55 percent. Meanwhile, the Prabowo-Sandiaga camp also claimed victory based on their internal data. This situation led to the emergence of two different narratives of victory in the public sphere. These differing narratives were then

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produced, represented, and widely distributed by the mass media, leaving the public faced with diverse interpretations of the ongoing political reality (Supriadi, 2017).

The phenomenon of dual victory claims in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election is not only an electoral political event but also a crucial moment in socio-humanities studies because it demonstrates how the political meaning of news reports claiming presidential and vice-presidential victory in 2019 is produced, contested, and legitimized through communication processes in the public sphere(Sutrisno & Taufik, 2021). When two candidate camps simultaneously declare victory before the official announcement of the election results, the public is confronted with two competing narratives of truth (Subiakto, 2019). This situation has the potential to trigger social polarization, undermine public trust in democratic institutions, and create fragmented interpretations regarding the legitimacy of the election results. Thus, the emerging issue is no longer limited to who wins the political contest, but rather how the media constructs social realities that influence public perceptions, attitudes, and context regarding the democratic process(Remoortere & Vligenthart, 2025).

Although various previous studies have addressed media framing, political communication strategies, the use of social media in campaigns, and the dynamics of disinformation during elections, there remains a lack of research specifically examining how representations of social actors are constructed through reporting claims of dual victory and how these representations function as mechanisms of meaning production that reflect power relations and media ideology. Previous studies have tended to focus on the content of messages or candidates' communication strategies, while analysis of the distribution of discourse space, the hierarchy of voices, and the legitimation processes of actors through text remains relatively limited. This gap provides an important basis for this research to contribute conceptually to the study of political communication and media analysis.

In this context, Kompas Daily is not positioned solely as a channel for disseminating information, but rather as an ideological institution that actively selects, computes, and represents social reality through its journalistic practices. The choice of sources, the intensity of quotations, the narrative structure, and the placement of actors within news texts are forms of discursive practices that contribute to the formation of contexts regarding who is deemed to have legitimacy, authority, and credibility in the public sphere. Using Stuart Hall's perspective, reporting is understood as a process of meaning production (a process of meaning-making) that is never neutral but always influenced by the relations of power, values, and ideology at work behind the production of media texts. Therefore, an analysis of Kompas Daily's coverage of the claim of double victory is crucial for uncovering how the media participates in shaping the social context and constructing the boundaries of political legitimacy amidst democratic contestation(Stuart Hall, 1992).

Based on these arguments, the novelty of this research lies in its attempt to analyze the news coverage of the double victory claim through the perspective of social actor representation and Stuart Hall's theoretical representation to uncover the ideological mechanisms in the production of media texts. This research not only examines the content of the news, but also investigates how Kompas builds a hierarchy of voices, constructs political legitimacy, and produces a public context through representational practices that have implications for the formation of the meaning of democracy in Indonesia.

## METODE

This study uses a qualitative approach with a critical discourse analysis (CDA) design based on Stuart Hall's representational perspective. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the meaning, ideology, and construction of representations of social actors contained in media texts in depth and contextually. Qualitative research is oriented towards understanding meanings constructed through interpretive processes, emphasizing the exploration of social phenomena in their natural contexts and inductive data analysis from specific themes to more general conceptual constructions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the context of this study, this approach is relevant to examining how social actors are represented in news reports claiming victory for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election, as well as how these representations contain specific ideologies that operate within media discursive practices.

A critical discourse analysis design was used because this approach views language as a social practice that is not neutral, but rather bound by power relations and ideology (Wodak & Meyer, 2022). Critical discourse analysis allows researchers to identify discursive strategies such as the inclusion and exclusion of social actors, categorization, attribution of actions, and the use of modalities and narrative structures that have implications for political legitimacy. Stuart Hall's perspective on representation is used as a theoretical foundation to understand that meaning is not simply reflected by the media but produced

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through an encoding process in texts that then has the potential to be decoded dominantly, negotiated, or oppositionally by the audience (Hall, 2020). Thus, this method is aimed at uncovering how news texts*Kompas Daily*constructing particular subject positions, distributing symbolic authority, and reproducing or challenging ideological structures in the context of post-vote victory claims.

The data source for this research is a news text published in*Kompas Daily*The April–May 2019 edition explicitly included news about the claims of victory by the presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the 2019 Presidential Election. The selection of this period was based on the consideration that the post-voting phase is a crucial momentum in the production of political legitimacy narratives. The news selection criteria included: (1) news that directly discussed the claims of victory by one or both candidate pairs; (2) news that contained statements by social actors such as campaign teams, survey institutions, the General Elections Commission, political observers, or public figures regarding claims of victory; and (3) news that contained dimensions of dominant, neutral, or opposing discourse as understood in Stuart Hall's representational framework. With these criteria, the unit of analysis in this study is the news text as a discursive product, not readers' opinions or public comments.

Data collection techniques are carried out using documentation methods by accessing printed archives and digital archives.*Kompas Daily*April–May 2019 edition. The data collection process was carried out using news clipping techniques that met the research criteria, then systematic recording of the title, publication date, news position, social actors quoted, and the context of statements related to the claim of victory was carried out. During this process, the researcher also conducted intensive reading (close reading) to identify patterns of representation, lexical choices, sentence structures, and relationships between actors built in the text. This process allows the researcher to understand the discursive dynamics that developed in the news during the period.

This study aims to identify and analyze the role of social actors in the news of the presidential and vice-presidential candidate victory claims in the 2019 Presidential Election and to reveal the hidden ideology in the construction of the discourse through the perspective of Stuart Hall's critical discourse analysis. The research questions raised include: (1) How are the roles of social actors represented in the news of the presidential and vice-presidential candidate victory claims in the 2019 Republic of Indonesia Presidential Election in*Kompas Daily*April-May 2019 edition? (2) What ideology can be identified in the construction of the news? (3) What meaning is produced through the representation of social actors from Stuart Hall's critical discourse perspective? These questions form the basis of the data categorization and analysis process. Data analysis was conducted by referring to Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model, which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification (Moleong, 2018). In the data reduction stage, the researcher selected parts of the text that were relevant to the research focus, particularly the representation of social actors and the discursive structure related to claims of victory. The data presentation stage was carried out by compiling the findings in the form of a systematic analytical narrative, supplemented by a table of categorization of social actors, patterns of representation, and indications of ideology that appeared in the text. The conclusion drawing stage was carried out gradually and continuously through a process of data verification, ensuring consistency between the textual findings and Stuart Hall's theoretical framework of representation.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the data, this study employed theoretical triangulation techniques, comparing and testing findings through various concepts in critical discourse analysis and representation theory. The examination examined the consistency between the discursive strategies found in the text and the conceptual framework of representation, ideology, and power relations. With these procedures, this study strives to maintain analytical rigor, methodological transparency, and academic integrity in uncovering the role of social actors and ideologies contained in the reporting of the 2019 Presidential Election victory claim in *Kompas Daily*.

## HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

The analysis of eight news articles published in *Kompas Daily* during the period of April 17–May 22, 2019, demonstrates that the representation of social actors in the reporting of the 2019 Presidential Election victory claims was constructed through strategies of exclusion and inclusion that reflect the practice of meaning production as explained in Stuart Hall’s representation perspective. Hall argues that the media does not merely reflect reality, but actively produces and organizes meaning through an encoding process operating within particular ideological structures. Thus, news texts become instruments of meaning production that determine who is positioned as rational, credible, legitimate, or, conversely, problematic actors within the political public sphere.

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The findings indicate that *Kompas Daily* tended to construct a dominant-hegemonic reading position by placing state legitimacy, quick count results, and electoral institutions as representations of democratic rationality. In contrast, counter-narratives in the form of allegations of electoral fraud and rejection of election results were represented as forms of political instability lacking strong legitimacy. This construction was developed through language selection, source positioning, quotation patterns, and media narrative structures. The following table presents the representation of social actors in *Kompas Daily* reporting related to the 2019 Presidential Election victory claims:

Table 1. presents the representation of social actors in *Kompas Daily* reporting related to the 2019 Presidential Election victory claims

| **Indikator legitimasi** | **Bentuk Representasi dalam Berita** | **Diksi atau Kutipan** | **Makna Ideologis** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Legitimasi institusi negara | KPU dan BAWASLU ditempatkan sebagai sumber utama dan otoritatif | "KPU memastikan proses rekapitulasi berjalan transparan | Negara direpresentasikan sebagai actor rasional dan sah |
| Representasi quick count | Hasil quick count diposisikan sebagai sebagai data objektif dan ilmiah. | Hasil quick count menunjukan pasangan Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin unggul. | Quick count dikontruksi sebagai legitimasi demokrasi |
| Representasi klaim oposisi | Klaim kemenangan oposisi diposisikan sebagai opini publik | Prabowo menyatakan kemengangan berdasarkan perhitungan internal | Klaim oposisi dipersepsikan kurang memiliki legitimasi kuat |
| Struktur Narasi Media | Berita diakhiri dengan imbauan menjaga stabilitas nasional | Masyarakat diminta menunggu hasil resmi KPU | Media mengarahkan pembaca pada dominan reading |
| Pola kutipan | Elite politik dan pejabat negara lebih dominan dikutip | Kutipan ketua KPU, Bawaslu dan Lembaga survey | Hierarki suara dibangun melalui otoritas formal. |
| Representasi konflik | Konflik direpresentasikan sebagai dinamika demokrasi | Terjadi perbedaan klaim kemenangan antara kedua kubu | Konflik dinaturalisasi sebagai bagian dari proses politik |
| Representasi masyarakat | Pendukung akar rumput diasosiasikan dengan emosi dan disinformasi | Masyarakat diminta tidak terprovokasi informasi media sosial | Public direpresentasikan sebagai kelompok yang rentan dipengaruhi |

Sumber : diolah oleh peneliti

The table above shows that *Kompas Daily* constructed a dominant-hegemonic reading position by placing state legitimacy, quick count results, and electoral institutions as representations of democratic rationality. In contrast, counter-narratives in the form of allegations of electoral fraud and rejection of the election results were represented as forms of political instability lacking a strong legitimate basis.

## Exclusion Strategy in the Representation of Social Actors

The passivation strategy can be seen in the reporting on survey institutions and quick count results. In several news articles, *Kompas* employed passive sentence structures such as:

> *"Hasil quick count menunjukkan pasangan Jokowi-Ma'ruf memperoleh suara unggul dibanding pasangan Prabowo-Sandi."*

In this structure, the media does not position specific survey institutions as active subjects "claiming" victory; instead, it presents the quick count results as objective facts that emerge neutrally. The use of the diction "shows" carries scientific and rational connotations, thereby creating the impression that Jokowi–Ma'ruf's victory was based on empirical data rather than political construction. In an interview with one of the national editors of *Kompas Daily*, it was stated that the term "quick count results" was

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deliberately chosen because it was considered to possess stronger methodological legitimacy compared to political claims made by elites. The informant stated:

> *"Kami berusaha memakai istilah yang dianggap mudah dan dapat diverifikasi publik. Quick count dipandang punya kajian metodologi ilmiah sehingga lebih aman digunakan sebagai rujukan awal dibanding klaim sepihak kandidat" (Wawancara Dewi Indriastuti, Sekretaris Redaktur Kompas, 12 Juni 2025).*

The statement indicates that the use of language in the media is not neutral; rather, it is the result of editorial considerations related to the credibility of the media institution. From Stuart Hall's perspective, this process represents a form of encoding dominant meaning that directs readers to accept quick count results as a legitimate representation of political reality. In contrast, when reporting on the Prabowo–Sandi camp, *Kompas* more frequently used diction such as:

> *"Prabowo menyatakan kemenangan berdasarkan perhitungan internal." Hal itu diutarkaan oleh juru bicara Prabowo-Sandiaga, setelah penutupan pencoblosan dilaksanakan".*

The difference in the use of the terms "quick count results" and "internal calculations" indicates a distinction in symbolic legitimacy. "Quick count" is associated with scientific methods and professional institutions, whereas "internal calculations" are associated with unilateral claims that have not been publicly validated. From Hall's perspective, the media is encoding the meaning of legitimacy through language choices that appear neutral but actually contain particular ideological positions. This is reinforced by an interview with political communication scholar Heri Budianto, who stated that the term "internal" in the context of Indonesian politics is often associated with subjectivity and partisan interests. The informant explained:

> *"Ketika media memakai istilah 'perhitungan internal', publik diarahkan untuk memahami bahwa data tersebut belum memiliki legitimasi publik. Berbeda dengan quick count yang sejak awal sudah dilekatkan dengan citra ilmiah dan profesional (Wawancara dengan Heri Budianto, Dosen Komunikasi Politik Universitas Mercu Buana, 18 Juni 2025).*

The nominalization strategy was identified in the reporting related to post-election political conflict. In several news articles, *Kompas* used sentences such as:

> *"Terjadi perbedaan klaim kemenangan antara kedua kubu."*

In this structure, political conflict is presented as an abstract phenomenon without explicitly identifying the main actors responsible for the emergence of the conflict. The nominalization structure removes the active subject, making the conflict appear as a natural situation within democracy rather than the result of particular political actions. This practice demonstrates how the media avoids directly delegitimizing state institutions and certain political elites. According to an interview with a *Kompas* political journalist, the use of nominalization structures was intended to maintain the media's position so that it would not be perceived as explicitly siding with one political camp. The informant stated:

> *"Kalau kami terlalu langsung menunjuk siapa penyebab konflik, media bisa dianggap partisan. Karena itu sering dipilih bentuk kalimat yang lebih umum dan tidak terlalu konfrontatif" (Wawancara dengan MP, Jurnalis Desk Politik Kompas, 15 Juni 2025).*

The terms "political tension," "political debate," "post-election situation," and "democratic contestation" create a depersonalization effect because the conflict is not directed toward particular individuals, but rather understood as part of the general dynamics of democracy. In the context of Stuart Hall's representation theory, this process functions to maintain the stability of dominant meaning that the democratic system continues to operate rationally and institutionally. Furthermore, the substitution strategy becomes evident when the media shifts the locus of conflict from political elites to grassroots supporter groups. In several instances, *Kompas* presented narratives such as:

> *"Pendukung kedua kubu saling memperdebatkan hasil quick count di media sosial." "Masyarakat diminta tidak terprovokasi oleh informasi yang belum terverifikasi."*

In this structure, political elites are not positioned as the primary source of tension; instead, supporters and the general public are portrayed as emotional or insufficiently critical in receiving information. This strategy demonstrates how the media constructs a narrative of political stabilization while maintaining the legitimacy of political elites and state institutions. In an interview, a media observer

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explained that such a pattern is commonly used by mainstream media to avoid the escalation of political conflict. The informant stated that:

> *"Media cenderung menggeser fokus konflik ke level masyarakat karena lebih aman secara politik. Jika elite terlalu disalahkan, media berisiko dianggap menyerang aktor politik tertentu" (Wawancara dengan Vania Utamie Subiakto Pengamat Media, 20 Juni 2025).*

This becomes even more evident when criticism toward the General Elections Commission (KPU) and the Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) is represented in a moderate manner. This is represented in news reports stating that:

> *"KPU mengakui terdapat kendala teknis dalam proses input data, namun tidak memengaruhi hasil akhir pemilu."*

The diction "technical constraints" carries a much softer meaning compared to terms such as "system failure" or "administrative fraud." Thus, the media mitigates meanings that could potentially delegitimize state institutions. In an interview with one of the editors of a national media outlet, it was explained that the use of more moderate terminology was intended to avoid public panic and maintain trust in the democratic process. The informant stated:

> "Pilihan kata dalam isu pemilu sangat sensitif. Kalau media memakai istilah yang terlalu keras, dampaknya bisa memperbesar ketidakpercayaan publik terhadap institusi pemilu" (Wawancara dengan Ghurry, selaku jurnalis Media Nasional, 22 Juni 2025).

**Inclusion Strategy in the Representation of Social Actors**

In the dimension of inclusion, the determination strategy becomes evident when *Kompas* explicitly identifies actors considered to be the source of allegations of electoral fraud. In several news reports, it was stated that:

> *"Badan Pemenangan Nasional Prabowo Sandi menilai telah terjadi kecurangan yang terstruktur, sistematis, dan masif."*

The use of the diction "considered" and "questioned" indicates that allegations of fraud are positioned as political opinions rather than objective facts. Thus, the media discursively constructs a boundary between "official facts" and "political claims." In an interview with Heri Budianto, a political communication scholar, it was explained that "the use of verbs such as 'considered,' 'claimed,' or 'questioned' is a framing strategy commonly employed by the media to distinguish institutional facts from political opinions." The informant stated:

> *"Pilihan kata seperti 'menilai' membuat pembaca memahami bahwa informasi tersebut masih berada pada level interpretasi politik, bukan fakta yang sudah diverifikasi" (Wawancara dengan Heri Budianto, Peneliti Komunikasi Politik Universitas Mercu Buana, 24 Juni 2025).*

Meanwhile, news sources from the General Elections Commission (KPU), the Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), and quick count institutions were frequently positioned as primary sources and were given greater quotation space. This is reflected in the diction used in the news coverage as follows:

> *"Ketua KPU menegaskan bahwa proses penghitungan suara berjalan sesuai prosedur dan diawasi secara terbuka."*

This structure demonstrates how institutional actors are positioned as rational authorities possessing formal legitimacy in determining political truth. Based on interviews with political journalists, official state sources are considered safer and more credible to serve as primary references in sensitive political situations. The informant explained in the interview as follows:

> *"Dalam situasi pasca pemilu, media biasanya mengutamakan sumber resmi karena dianggap paling bertanggung jawab secara hukum dan politik" (Wawancara dengan Ghurry Wartawan Politik Media Nasional, 25 Juni 2025).*

The word combination strategy becomes evident when the media links Jokowi–Ma'ruf's victory to national survey results without mentioning the methodological details debated by the public, as reflected in the statement: "The majority of survey institutions showed the incumbent pair leading." The use of the word "majority" creates an impression of social consensus and collective legitimacy. From Hall's perspective, this pattern produces a preferred meaning that the victory of a particular candidate pair in a

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democratic election is something natural and rationally acceptable. Furthermore, the researcher identified an association strategy when the media connected victory claims with the political ambitions of certain elites. In several news reports, narratives such as the following emerged:

> *"Klaim kemenangan yang dilakukan sebelum hasil resmi diumumkan dinilai dapat memperkeruh situasi politik."*

Through this sentence structure, the media associates acts of claiming victory with the potential for social instability. Opposition political elites are represented as actors who may disrupt democratic stability if they refuse to accept formal state mechanisms. In an interview with a democracy observer, it was stated that mainstream media during the post-election period tended to prioritize narratives of national stability over open political conflict. The informant stated in the interview as follows:

> *"Media mainstream biasanya mengambil posisi menjaga stabilitas. Karena itu narasi yang dianggap berpotensi memicu konflik akan direpresentasikan secara lebih negatif" (Wawancara dengan VUS, 27 Juni 2025).*

In contrast, the Jokowi–Ma'ruf pair was more frequently associated with institutional legitimacy through their close alignment with quick count results and the support of official survey institutions. This representation demonstrates an unequal distribution of legitimacy within national news coverage in Indonesia. The differentiation strategy also becomes evident when the media separates political elites from their supporters. In several news reports, this was reflected in the diction used in the coverage as follows:

> *"Sebagian masyarakat mempercayai adanya kecurangan karena terpengaruh informasi yang beredar di media sosial."(Wawancara dengan VUS, 27 Juni 2025).*

The data from the statement indicate that grassroots communities are positioned as groups that are easily influenced by disinformation, while political elites are positioned as rational actors who understand formal democratic mechanisms. This differentiation practice produces a hierarchy of representation between political elites and ordinary citizens.

## Quotation Patterns and the Hierarchy of Representation

The findings of this study indicate that quotation patterns in *Kompas* news coverage were dominated by political elites, state officials, and survey institutions. Of the eight news articles analyzed, most direct quotations originated from the Chairperson of the General Elections Commission (KPU), Bawaslu officials, quick count institutions, political party elites, and political observers. Meanwhile, the voices of civil society groups and grassroots supporters were relatively underrepresented. This imbalance in quotation patterns demonstrates that the media prioritized actors possessing formal and symbolic authority within the news production process. In an interview with a senior journalist, it was explained that limitations of access and considerations of credibility were the primary reasons behind the dominance of elites in political reporting. The informant explained that:

> *"Media cenderung memilih sumber yang punya otoritas formal karena dianggap lebih kredibel dan dapat dipertanggungjawabkan dibanding opini masyarakat biasa" (Wawancara dengan AA Jurnalis Senior, 28 Juni 2025).*

Stuart Hall argues that this pattern demonstrates how the media constructs a "hierarchy of voices" within the public sphere. Actors who receive greater quotation space possess greater opportunities to produce dominant meanings and influence public interpretation. For instance, the statement, "The KPU ensured that the recapitulation process was conducted transparently," was given greater prominence compared to the voices of citizens questioning the election results. Consequently, the preferred meaning constructed is that the state continues to function rationally and democratically.

## Media Narrative Structure and the Production of Meaning

In general, the narrative structure of *Kompas* news coverage was constructed through the following pattern: the presentation of quick count results, statements from political elites, responses from state institutions, and appeals to maintain national stability. This structure demonstrates that the media not only conveyed information, but also constructed a particular flow of meaning within the news coverage. The narrative was consistently directed toward political stabilization and institutional legitimacy. After reporting victory claims from a particular political camp, the news articles were often concluded with quotations such as: "The public was urged to wait for the official KPU results and maintain national unity."

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The placement of such quotations at the conclusion of the news articles carries an ideological function by directing readers toward a dominant reading position that political legitimacy is only valid through formal state mechanisms. From Hall's perspective, the media is constructing a dominant-hegemonic position, namely a dominant reading position that directs audiences to accept the official election results as rational and legitimate meanings. Counter-narratives such as allegations of electoral fraud are represented as forms of resistance lacking strong legitimacy.

**Relasi Media, Kekuasaan, dan Ideologi**

The findings of this study demonstrate that news coverage regarding the victory claims in the 2019 Presidential Election cannot be separated from the relationship between media, power, and ideology operating within the news production process. In this context, *Kompas Daily* as a mainstream media outlet not only performed an informative function by delivering political facts to the public, but also carried out an ideological function through representational practices that shaped particular meanings concerning political legitimacy, democratic stability, and state authority. This perspective aligns with Stuart Hall's view that media is a cultural institution that produces and distributes meaning through encoding processes operating within specific ideological structures. Therefore, news cannot be understood as an objective reflection of reality, but rather as a form of social construction influenced by institutional interests, power relations, and hegemonic media practices.

In reporting the 2019 Presidential Election victory claims, *Kompas* consistently represented official state institutions such as the General Elections Commission (KPU), the Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), and quick count institutions as rational and legitimate authorities in determining election results. This representation is evident through the dominance of quotations from state officials, the use of formal and scientific diction such as "quick count results," "official recapitulation," and "constitutional mechanisms," as well as narrative structures emphasizing the importance of maintaining national stability and waiting for the official KPU results. These practices indicate that the media discursively constructed legitimacy for the state's formal democratic mechanisms.

In contrast, counter-narratives in the form of allegations of electoral fraud, accusations of vote manipulation, and rejection of official counting results were represented as forms of political instability lacking rational legitimacy. The use of verbs such as "claimed," "accused," "questioned," or "argued" indicates that the media positioned opposition narratives as political opinions that had not been institutionally verified. From the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, this practice demonstrates how language functions as an ideological instrument to distinguish between "official facts" and "political claims." Thus, the media not only reported political conflict but also determined the boundaries of legitimacy for narratives considered acceptable within the public sphere.

The relationship between media and power is also reflected in the representation patterns of social actors within the news coverage. Political elites and state institutions received significantly greater representational space compared to civil society groups or grassroots communities. The dominance of elites in quotation patterns indicates the existence of a hierarchy of voices within the media, where actors possessing symbolic and institutional power gained greater authority in producing political meaning. In this context, the media functions as an arena for the distribution of symbolic power that determines who is considered rational, credible, and trustworthy by the public.

The findings further reveal that media representation is never value-free. As explained by Stuart Hall, media operates through hegemonic mechanisms by constructing preferred meanings directed toward public acceptance as natural and legitimate. In the case of the 2019 Presidential Election coverage, *Kompas* constructed a dominant-hegemonic reading by positioning state legitimacy, quick count results, and formal electoral mechanisms as representations of modern democratic rationality. Through this pattern, readers were directed to accept the official state vote count as a legitimate and constitutional form of political truth. At the same time, the media also restricted the legitimacy of counter-narratives emerging within the public sphere. Narratives

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concerning allegations of electoral fraud and distrust toward official results were represented as forms of political tension potentially threatening social stability. This practice indicates that mainstream media tended to prioritize the logic of political stability rather than opening equal space for conflict within the public sphere. In the context of post-reform Indonesian democracy, this tendency may be understood as part of the media's effort to preserve social integration and public trust in formal democratic institutions. Nevertheless, this practice also demonstrates that the media possesses particular ideological positions in interpreting democracy and political legitimacy.

The media therefore does not merely function as a communication institution but also as an ideological apparatus shaping public political consciousness. Through representational practices, the media produces political realities that influence how society understands political conflict, the legitimacy of power, and the role of the state within democracy. In the context of the 2019 Presidential Election, *Kompas* did not simply report political events, but also constructed meanings regarding who was considered legitimate, who was viewed as problematic, and how the public should understand the ongoing democratic process. From Stuart Hall's theory of hegemony, these practices demonstrate how mainstream media functions as a cultural production institution reproducing dominant values within society. State legitimacy and formal democratic mechanisms were represented as rational values that should be accepted by the public, while counter-narratives were positioned as forms of resistance lacking strong legitimacy.

Consequently, the media played a significant role in maintaining ideological stability through representational processes that appeared neutral but were deeply embedded with political and institutional interests. Political reporting in mass media is therefore never entirely objective or free from interests. Media always operates within particular social, political, and economic structures that shape the news production process. In this context, *Kompas* as a mainstream media institution demonstrated a tendency to reproduce institutional state legitimacy as a form of preferred meaning in national political reporting. This finding confirms that the media holds a strategic role in shaping public perception, producing political legitimacy, and constructing democratic reality in Indonesia.

## KESIMPULAN

The findings of this study demonstrate that the representation of social actors in *Kompas* Daily's coverage of the competing victory claims during the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election was not constructed as a neutral reflection of political events but through systematic strategies of exclusion and inclusion that produced a particular hierarchy of legitimacy. Institutions such as the General Elections Commission (KPU), the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), and survey organizations were predominantly represented as authoritative and credible actors through passivation and nominalization, whereas competing narratives of electoral fraud were associated with specific political elites and portrayed as insufficiently substantiated. At the same time, the use of subordinate clause substitution shifted responsibility for political tensions away from elite actors toward grassroots supporters, reinforcing a dominant interpretation that privileged official electoral procedures as the legitimate source of political truth.

The study further reveals that the ideology embedded in these representations is one of procedural legitimacy and institutional stability. Rather than operating through explicit editorial statements, this ideology is encoded in linguistic structures, source selection, and patterns of actor representation that privilege state institutions and formal democratic mechanisms over alternative political claims. Consistent with Stuart Hall's theory of representation, *Kompas* functions not merely as a channel of information but as an ideological institution that actively produces meaning and shapes public consensus through discursive practices. Consequently, the news texts encourage a dominant-hegemonic reading in which official institutions are positioned as the primary arbiters of political legitimacy.

Theoretically, these findings contribute to the development of critical journalism and media studies by demonstrating how representational strategies serve as mechanisms through which ideology and power are embedded in political news discourse. By integrating Stuart Hall's representation theory with strategies of exclusion and inclusion in critical discourse analysis, this research extends the understanding of journalism as an active producer of social reality rather than a passive transmitter of facts. The study

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therefore enriches critical perspectives in the social sciences by showing that journalistic texts participate in constructing democratic legitimacy, shaping public interpretation, and reproducing hegemonic meanings through everyday reporting practices.

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