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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **The Language of Protest: Ideological Framing in Indonesian's Demonstration News Headlines**

**Baiq Wina Aisha Kamila<sup>1</sup>, Yeni Artanti<sup>2</sup>, Sulis Triyono<sup>3</sup>, Nur Hidayanto Pancoro Setyo Putro<sup>4</sup>, Susana Widyastuti<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

<sup>3</sup>*Department of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

<sup>4</sup>*Department of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

<sup>5</sup>*Department of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

**Corresponding Author:** Baiq Wina Aisha Kamila **E-mail:** [baiqwina.2025@student.uny.ac.id](mailto:baiqwina.2025@student.uny.ac.id)

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**| ABSTRACT**

This study examines the ideological representations constructed by Indonesian online news media in their coverage of the August 2025 parliamentary demonstrations, with particular emphasis on the linguistic strategies embedded in the headlines. The study highlights the lack of attention paid to a comprehensive ideological analysis of news headlines pertaining to Indonesian demonstrations. Using a descriptive qualitative design with a netnographic approach, thirty-seven headlines from several national media outlets were examined through Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA model, supported by van Dijk's socio-cognitive perspective. The analysis focused on transitivity patterns, thematic structures, nominalization, and representational strategies to identify underlying ideological meanings. The findings reveal that police-centered headlines frequently employ bald reporting, euphemism, and justification-of-action structures that can obscure agency or soften negative impressions of state actors. In contrast, demonstrator-centered headlines tend to use either direct (bald) constructions or condemnation-of-action patterns that establish causality and portray the protestors as sources of disruption. The analysis also reveals instances where victims are foregrounded in headline themes, creating a humanizing effect and drawing emotional attention to specific individuals involved in the events. Overall, the study concludes that the language used in these headlines is not neutral but strategically constructed to promote particular interpretations of the demonstrations. The identified patterns show how linguistic choices in headline formulation contribute to ideological framing that influences public perceptions of protest and social conflict.

**| KEYWORDS**

Critical Discourse Analysis; Demonstration; Ideology; Media Framing; News Headlines

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### **1. Introduction**

In late August 2025, hundreds of students and civilians protested outside the House of Representatives (DPR) building in Jakarta, following reports that lawmakers received a monthly housing allowance ten times higher than the Indonesian minimum wage. This occurred alongside widespread layoffs, a property tax increase exceeding 100%, and budget reductions for education and universities. It was not the first time that Indonesians have taken to the streets this year. However, anger peaked after a fatal police incident that claimed the life of a young online motorbike driver and sole breadwinner for his family, *Affan Kurniawan*, during a protest. Videos of the incident went viral, catalyzing outrage and prompting widespread demonstrations. The protests were more than a reaction to a single tragedy—they reflect deeper resentment toward rising economic inequality, government corruption, and perceived elite impunity. Indonesian media extensively reported the events, providing comprehensive coverage through online portals and social media, which offered the public frequent updates.

Such visibility created an essential informational space where public opinion was formed, contested, and amplified, thereby serving as a critical lens through which Indonesians could evaluate governmental performance and mobilize collective responses (Li & Gao, 2023). Therefore, when the media's role becomes significant in shaping public perceptions, its capacity to influence audiences proportionately escalates (Nickl et al., 2024). This impact represents a form of symbolic power, as the media can discreetly shape how events are interpreted by selecting which concerns to emphasize, which voices to prioritize, and which frames to employ. Through repeated patterns of representation, it can normalize particular values, assumptions, and viewpoints, encouraging audiences to accept them as common sense. In this way, ideological messages are not delivered overtly but embedded within narrative choices and linguistic constructions, allowing the media to instill certain beliefs without explicitly stating them. Thus, it is necessary to use specific analytical frameworks to identify how particular word choices, narrative structures, or symbolic references work beneath the surface to promote certain perspectives while marginalizing others.

This study draws from the idea that language possesses the capacity to shape perceptions, thereby positioning Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a central tool for unravelling ideological framing embedded in Indonesian online news headlines, with specific attention to media coverage of the parliamentary demonstrations that occurred in August 2025. Within the context of CDA, discourse is conceptualized as an ongoing process of production, foregrounding how textual features construct social meanings that often appear naturalized or impartial to the interpreter. Building on this conceptual foundation, the study adopts the theoretical framework of CDA as articulated by Norman Fairclough (1995), complemented by Teun A. van Dijk's (2014) socio-cognitive approach.

Fairclough's (1995) model focuses on three levels of analysis: text (micro level), discursive practice, and social practice (macro level). This approach enables the researcher to explore how linguistic choices at the micro level, such as dictions and sentence structures are interconnected with macro-level (social and ideological structures), including political interests and media power. Meanwhile, Van Dijk (2014) emphasizes the role of social cognition in discourse analysis. Since headlines serve as the primary interpretive gateway through which readers construct initial perceptions of an event, this study contributes by examining how ideological meanings are specifically encoded at this preliminary stage of textual engagement. By focusing on headlines, the analysis highlights the subtle yet consequential ways in which framing decisions shape interpretation even before the full news article is accessed.

Acknowledging the importance of news headline analysis, there appear several studies that discussed such topic, ranging from usual news headlines in the global north (Haimed, 2024), Indonesian (Muhardis, 2024; Akhiroh, et al., 2024), and demonstration news headlines in the global south (Kibarabara & Otiemo, 2025; Hao Mo, 2025; Hasanah, et al., 2021). Each of these articles provides a useful contribution to our knowledge of news headline analysis.

For example, Haimed (2024) revealed that several countries reported certain news with varying tendencies according to their allies. Furthermore, both Muhardis (2024) and Akhiroh, et al. (2024) analyzed Indonesian news headlines; whereas Muhardis uncovered the importance of paired sound and harmonic words in news headlines, Akhiroh found the importance of thematic structure in news headlines to influence the audience. On the other hand, utilizing Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), Kibarabara & Otiemo (2025) found that media coverage of Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Act was politically framed, showing a divide between international condemnation and local justification.

Considering the findings of previous articles, however, the authors contend that this field of study need to be expanded, deeper, and more holistic. Although reporting the tendency of news headlines in AS, Britain, China, and Russia, Haimed (2024) did not investigate the tendency of the government's power abuse through media in framing the condition of demonstrations. Hao Mo (2025), on the other hand, explored such problem. However, they delved into a Chinese demonstration. Hasanah, et al. (2021), to add to that, scrutinized Indonesian's demonstration. Nevertheless, Hasanah did not evaluate the tendency of media's partiality narration, whether on the side of the government or demonstrators by ideological interest. In consequence to this prevailing gap, the researchers want to examine the implied ideology through language use construction within August 2025 Indonesian's demonstration online news headlines.

This study, in conjunction with CDA, intend to encourage readers comprehend that the language used in news headline is not neutral, but frequently contains lexical choices and syntactic structures that represent the media's tendency by specific ideological interest. This awareness is crucial so that the public does not remain passive recipients of information, but instead becomes capable of critically evaluating and interpreting news content, which includes of questioning who is speaking, for whom, and in whose interest a particular reality is being reported.

## 2. Theoretical Background

The increased demand for rapid and reliable information during periods of demonstration underscores the critical role of media as an institutional source of information. In this hyper-connected era, significant global events are fundamentally linked to the framing of texts and media, that shape how such events are communicated and interpreted within the public sphere (Altheide, 1997). By selectively emphasizing certain aspects while obscuring others, the media episodically or thematically prescribes public norms and viewpoints (Wodak & Meyer, 2015). Thus, language use and discourse analysis have become crucial lenses for examining how social realities are constructed through texts.

A headline, in regard, serves several crucial functions within the media landscape (Singh, 2020). It may be constructed in either active or passive forms, and the choice between them carries distinct ideological implications. In the study of news text, intention is commonly referred to as ideology, and it has been a prominent topic among scholars and researchers. Ideology is a term first introduced by Tracy at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, referring to a system of ideas, particularly social, political, and religious concepts, which are transmitted by groups or social movements (Akhiroh, et al., 2024). Therefore, ideology can be defined as the intentions of news writers and media institutions to emphasize or conceal certain facts in the news headlines they write.

To interrogate how such intentions are embedded in textual form, this study employs an analytical framework capable of revealing the underlying ideological practices within news discourse. Critical Discourse Analysis emerged in the late 1980s, and since then became one of the most influential and visible branches of discourse analysis (Bloommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). CDA is an approach that examines the dialectical relationship between discourse as a linguistic text and sociocultural practice (Fairclough, 2013). This perspective highlights that the nature of language is primarily determined by its social function, which stems from its role in broader social communication. In line with this theoretical foundation, this study also analyzes and interprets linguistic data using van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework, a CDA approach that explores the interaction between society, cognition, and communication. A significant feature of van Dijk's framework is its emphasis on shared collective perceptions within discourse, making it ideal for studying protests based on collective identity, common goals, and solidarity (Bako, 2025).

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design and Data

This study used a descriptive qualitative research design with a netnographic approach. Developed from traditional ethnography by Kozinets (1998, 2010), netnography is intended to examine behaviors, communication practices, and meaning-making processes within online communities. This approach was chosen because the research data derive from digital media. In this space, public discourse, opinions, and ideologies are expressed through language and virtual interaction. Netnography provides the opportunity to understand discursive practices contextually, reflectively, and critically within the new media ecosystem that has become a significant part of contemporary social life.

The source of data was taken from the online news on Indonesian mainstream media outlets, such as *CNN Indonesia*, *CNBC Indonesia*, *BBC Indonesia*, *Kompas*, *Tempo*, *Tribun News*, *IDN Times*, and *Metro TV*, but not limited to. The data comprises of 37 news headlines addressing the specific issue of the parliamentary demonstrations, collected over a two-month period, from August to September 2025. The decision to include these media outlets was determined by their national reach, influence, and varied editorial perspectives, ensuring a thorough representation of the media discourse regarding Indonesian's demonstrations. However, this study does not exclude the potential inclusion of smaller or alternative media outlets as supplementary data sources, particularly when they provide distinctive narrative perspectives, localized insights, or counter-discourses that major national platforms may overlook. It is important to note that the headlines analyzed constitute a representative sample of the overall media coverage during the specified timeframe, selected through a systematic sampling process to capture the range of narratives and perspectives present in the public discourse.

The CDA framework developed by Fairclough (1995) was applied, which consists of three-dimensional stages: description, interpretation, and explanation. The description phase involved a linguistic analysis of vocabulary, transitivity patterns, and thematic structures, which were systematically analyzed to identify prominent linguistic choices within the headlines. The interpretative stage then focused on how these textual features are produced and consumed within specific socio-discursive contexts. Finally, the explanation stage analyzed these discursive processes within larger sociopolitical and ideological formations, constructed through the headlines. Complementing this, van Dijk's (2014) socio-cognitive approach provided a lens for understanding how mental models, shared social knowledge, and ideological schemata mediate the relationship between discourse and society. Together, these frameworks served as the primary analytical instruments for identifying linguistic strategies embedded in online news headlines and provided deeper insight into the ideological dimensions that shape media representations of the parliamentary demonstrations.

### 3.2 Data Analysis

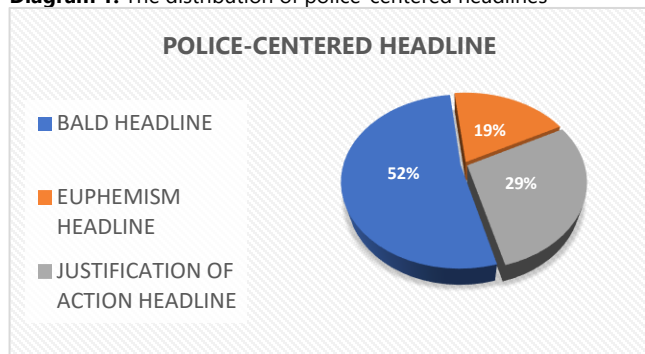
The research was conducted through several systematic stages aligned with the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. First, data were collected in the form of online news headlines pertaining to the parliamentary demonstrations in late August 2025. The headlines were obtained by accessing the official websites of several Indonesian media outlets. No specific consent is required to access these online portals, as it is freely available on the web pages. Data collection was ceased once no further headlines were suspected that exhibited linguistic patterns potentially indicative of ideological encoding. Second, a detailed textual analysis was conducted, focusing on the structural and linguistic features of the headlines. This stage involved close examination of lexical choices, transitivity patterns, modality, and thematic structures (theme–rheme), that contribute to meaning construction within headlines. Third, a social-interpretative analysis was undertaken to identify the implicit ideological meanings and broader sociopolitical implications embedded within the textual choices. This step required situating the textual features within their wider sociocultural context and evaluating how specific linguistic formulations might shape readers' interpretations, reinforce particular viewpoints, or influence public perceptions of the demonstrations. Finally, the findings from the textual and interpretative analyses were synthesized to draw conclusions regarding the ideological tendencies of the selected media outlets, thereby highlighting how discursive strategies contribute to the construction of power-laden narratives in news reporting.

## 4. Results

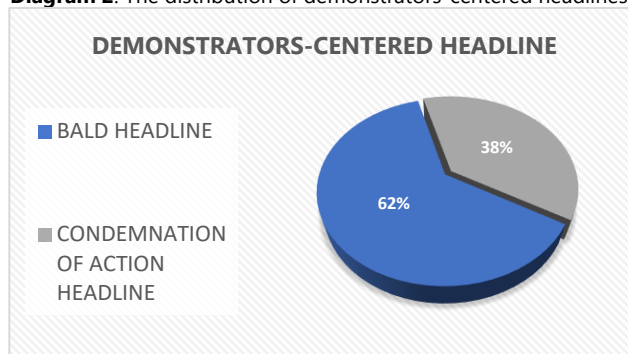
In light of the fact that this research is based on Fairclough's analysis of Critical Discourse; thus, within this section, the reader will be indulged with three dimensions of Fairclough's CDA model comprising description, interpretation, and explanation. In the description stage, the researchers analyse the text structure of the headline, noting that the ideology lies in the structure of the text. After the text structure successfully analysed, the next stage is to interpret the meaning and intention behind. The final stage is to connect the intention with the ideological intention. These stages go hand in hand to uncover the ideological intention in the Indonesian news headlines.

All headlines are obtained from various news portal and has two distinction types. From all the 37 headlines, there are three major news portal that each gives 6 headlines and 5 headlines. As such, Tribun News and Kompas with 6 headlines and Metro TV with 5 headlines ; however, the rest is equally distributed across media. These 37 headlines, furthermore, is divided into two types, those that focussed in police and those that focussed in demonstrators with each types have several strategies in arranging the headlines. While police-focussed consists of bald, euphemism, and justification of action headline, demonstrators-focused headline consists of bald, and condemnation of headline only. These distribution is clearly depicted in diagram 1 and 2.

**Diagram 1.** The distribution of police-centered headlines



**Diagram 2.** The distribution of demonstrators-centered headlines



From these 2 types of headlines, there are three strategies in which the headline reported about police, and two strategies in which the headline reported about demonstrators. In the next subsection, the example of headlines along with their analysis will be presented.

### 4.1. Police-centered Headlines

Within this type, the headline make the *police* as the point of attention. Either it will be as grammatical subject or grammatical object, the *police* is still the actor. The placement of *police* as an actor bring forward the ideological representation or certain message. By analysing this type of headline, further, the researchers able to uncover the way news portals depicted *police* in their headlines. As such, table 1 is presented as the table of police-centered headline.

**Table 1.** Police-centered Headlines

No	Headlines
1	APARAT PUKUL MUNDUR MASSA DENGAN WATER CANON
2	POLISI PUKUL MUNDUR MASA AKSI DEMO
3	POLISI MEMUKUL MUNDUR MASSA AKSI
4	DEMO RICUH, POLISI BUBARKAN AKSI MASSA
5	SITUASI AKSI DEMO MEMANAS, POLISI TEMBAKKAN GAS AIR MATA
6	POLISI TEMBAKKAN WATER CANON KE KERUMUNAN
7	MASSA AKSI DIPUKUL & DITANGKAP PETUGAS DI DEPAN GEDUNG DPR RI
8	TEMBAKAN WATER CANON UNTUK PENDEMO YANG LEMPAR BATU
9	APARAT PUKUL MUNDUR MASSA DENGAN WATER CANON
10	AFFAN, DRIVER OJOL YANG TEWAS DILINDAS RANTIS BRIMOB, SEDANG ANTAR PESANAN
11	MOBIL RANTIS BRIMOB TABRAK PENGEMUDI OJOL KEPOLISIAN RI TANGKAP 7 PETUGAS
12	SOSOK DRIVER OJOL YANG TEWAS DILINDAS RANTIS BRIMOB
13	AKSI DEMO KEMBALI PECAH DI GEDUNG DPR SENAYAN, POLISI TEMBAKKAN GAS AIR MATA KE ARAH MASSA
14	MAKO BRIMOB KWITANG KEMBALI DIGERUDUK MASSA, POLISI TEMBAKKAN GAS AIR MATA KE ARAH MASSA.
15	PENERANGAN DI KAWASAN MAKO BRIMOB KWITANG PADAM SAAT MASSA PENDEMO KEMBALI BERDATANGAN
16	DEMO 25 AGUSTUS DI DEPAN DPR, WATER CANON SEMPROT DEMONSTRAN
17	DEMO DPR 25 AGUSTUS BERUJUNG RICUH, 6 ORANG DIRINGKUS APARAT
18	DEMO AGUSTUS 2025 DIWARNAI AKSI REPRESIF APARAT, KAPOLRI DAN PRESIDEN DIMINTA BERTINDAK
19	KENDARAN TAKTIS BRIGADE MOBIL ATAU BRIMOB MELINDAS SEORANG PENGEMUDI OJEK ONLINE ATAU OJOL YANG IKUT BERDEMONSTRASI
20	KRONOLOGI DEMO DPR RICUH BERUJUNG DRIVER OJOL TEWAS DILINDAS
21	KASUS PENABRAKAN AFFAN KURNIAWAN, POLISI SANKSI BRIPTU DANANG SETIAWAN

From all of these 21 headlines, there are three characteristics that differs them (as shown in diagram 1). First, there are 11 headlines that reported **BALDLY**. This characteristic of headline mostly indicates direct way to report the news. However, the researchers found salient data that express particular ideology to the audience.

### EXTRACT 1

#### *DEMO AGUSTUS 2025 DIWARNAI AKSI REPRESIF APARAT, KAPOLRI DAN PRESIDEN DIMINTA BERTINDAK*

Contained in this datum, there is a process which called **nominalisation**. This nominalisation is implemented in news headline writing to obscure the action from actor. In order to unveil the text structure, the researchers utilized transitivity analysis and thematic structure analysis :

<i>Demo Agustus 2025</i>	<i>diwarnai</i>	<i>aksi represif aparat</i>
Goal	Process: Material action	Actor
Theme	Rheme	

The news headline in this extract was written in passive construction with goal as the theme. On the other hand, neither goal nor actor are animate being (*Demo Agustus 2025*, as goal ; and *aksi represif aparat*, as actor). With material action process *diwarnai*, this headline uses nominalisation to obscure **animate entity** that is doing something actively. Looking closer, indeed there is *aksi represif aparat* as an actor with material action process *diwarnai* ; however, this construction does not explain clearly the animate entity that is actively doing something. Rather than conceptualizing *aparat* as an active agent, this strategy of construction shaped audience perception that the one who is doing something is the event itself (*aksi represif*). This construction, moreover, put an emphasize on goal rather than actor as point of departure.

Ideologically, this construction of news headline bring certain representation. With its nominalisation, the headline creates a logical idea that in this whole message, the animate entity does not important. The one, instead, that is important is *Demo Agustus 2025* depicted through theme as it is the point of attention. However, the nominalisation *aksi represeif aparat* is placed in rheme albeit it is the actor of the process. The headline could have otherwise verbalized the clause *Aparat beraksi represif pada demo Agustus 2025*. The reportation of this headline has ideological implication that the animate entity does not important, however, there is headline that clearly reported event with salient emphasis as shows in the extract 2 below.

## EXTRACT 2

AFFAN, DRIVER OJOL YANG TEWAS DILINDAS RANTIS BRIMOB, SEDANG ANTAR PESANAN

Within this headline, there is an appositive phrase which is located in the middle of a clause. Moreover, in its appositive phrase there is relative clause to explain the head noun therein. The main ideological play relies on that relative clause. As a result, there are two steps in analysing this headline, main clause analysis and appositive phrase analysis.

<i>Affan</i>	<i>sedang antar</i>	<i>pesanan</i>
Actor	Process: Material action	Goal
Theme	Rheme	

In this main clause, the researchers utilise both transitivity analysis and thematic structure analysis. In transitivity analysis, it can be seen that *Affan* as an actor with material action as a process. This transitive structure creates a logical meaning within which an actor (*Affan*) is doing something actively (*sedang antar*). Moreover, in thematic structure analysis, *Affan* is placed as an unmarked-topical theme, while *sedang antar pesanan* is its rheme. This thematic structure implies that the center of news in this headline is *Affan himself* as an animate entity. To add to that, the headline emphasis the actor by adding appositive phrase. The analysis of appositive phrase is presented below :

<i>driver ojol yang tewas</i>	<i>dilindas</i>	<i>rantis brimob</i>
Goal	Process: Material action passive	Actor
Theme	Rheme	

Unlike main clause that utilise active voice with actor as unmarked-topical theme, this appositive phrase use passive voice construction with goal as marked-topical theme. As its terminology suggests, this type of theme *marks* something as an emphasize or point of reportation. In addition, this clause has material action *lindas*, noting there appears action that affects the goal *driver ojol yang tewas*.

From both clauses, transitivity analysis and thematic structure analysis have uncovered ideological representation of this headline. Humanistic approach toward *Affan* is clearly seen by placing *it* to the theme structure. To add to that, the theme itself is explained further using appositive phrase that implements passive voice construction highlighting the entity in question is subjected to active action by visible actor *rantis brimob*. This headline successfully deliver humanistic by making the victim as a point of attention in its news headline.

However, the researcher found several headlines that has *misty* element within and one of this misty technique is **EUPHEMISM**, There are 4 headlines use euphemism to obscure its meaning and thus deliver particular logical thinking. One of them will be presented in extract 3 below.

## EXTRACT 3

MOBIL RANTIS BRIMOB TABRAK PENGEMUDI OJOL, KEPOLISIAN RI TANGKAP 7 PETUGAS

This headline contains two clauses with independent clause is placed in the front. Both clauses, furthermore, have ideological representation. This ideological representation, then, will be examine using transitivity analysis and thematic structure analysis. As such, the researcher presented analysis of dependent clause below :

<i>Mobil rantis brimob</i>	<i>tabrak</i>	<i>pengemudi ojol</i>
Actor	Process: Material Action	Goal
Theme	Rheme	

In this clause, the *mobil rantis brimob*, functioning as the actor, is constructed as an unmarked-topical theme, a structure that emphasizes the agent of the action. However, the action (Process) used in this clause has been subjected to a process of **euphemism**. The Process *tabrak* (to hit/collide with) is a material action process **that fails to describe the totality of the incident in the field**. Through this construction, the news headline indeed establishes an animate entity as the primary focus of discussion, but this entity is represented by a **Process that does not accurately reflect the actual circumstances on the ground**, achieved through the tactic of euphemism.

Euphemism also occurs in the next clause, obscuring the participants of the clause. As a result, independent clause of this headline takes transitivity and thematic structure analysis as well. The analysis is presented below:

<i>Kepolisian RI</i>	<i>tangkap</i>	<i>7 petugas</i>
Actor	Process: Material Action	Goal
Theme	Rheme	

This clause uses the term **petugas** (officer/official) instead of directly naming the entity or profession targeted by the action, *tangkap* (arrest/capture). By doing this, the identity of the entity subjected to the action is left unspecified. In contrast to the goal, the actor is not euphemized; it is clearly identified as the entity performing the action: *Kepolisian RI* (Indonesian National Police). This type of news headline illustrates that the action of "arresting" is performed by a clearly identified institutional entity, while the "goal" subjected to the action is merely an "officer" whose affiliation is left unstated.

This headline, structured with its two clauses, utilizes both a process and a goal whose meanings have been softened or refined. By employing a process that does not fully depict the complete event on the ground, the headline presents an incomplete representation of the occurrence. Furthermore, by using a goal that obscures the full identity of the entity being discussed, the headline intends to emphasize that the identity of the goal entity is unnecessary to mention, whereas the identity of the actor entity is essential. Through this process of euphemism—the alteration of words for the sake of semantic refinement—the headline instills a certain ideology in the audience regarding the event and the identities involved.

Another technique in order to obscure certain element in the news headline is termed **JUSTIFICATION OF ACTION**. Unlike euphemism, this technique does not alter the words to a *softer* word, instead this technique utilizes special arrangement of sentence to justify the action undergone in the later clause of the headline. Further, the example of data that implement justification of action will be presented in extract 4 below.

#### EXTRACT 4

##### DEMO DPR 25 AGUSTUS BERUJUNG RICUH, 6 ORANG DIRINGKUS APARAT

The news headline above contains two clauses, both of them are independent clauses. This means that both clauses could technically stand on their own. However, there is certainly an intention behind why this single headline sentence contains two independent clauses, arranged in this specific sequence. This intention can be uncovered through transitivity analysis and thematic analysis below:

<i>Demo</i>	<i>DPR</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>berujung</i>	<i>ricuh</i>	<i>6 orang</i>	<i>diringkus</i>	<i>aparatus</i>
<i>Agustus</i>							
Carrier			Process: Relational Attributive	Attribute	Goal	Process: material action	Actor
Theme					Rheme		

From the analysis above, we can see that the clauses within the headline fulfill different roles in their thematic structure. The first clause functions as the Theme, while the subsequent clause functions as the Rheme. Naturally, the headline places its primary emphasis on the clause functioning as the Theme. Furthermore, the two clauses also utilize different Processes. This variation corresponds to the specific intention behind each clause, an intention that can be further examined using transitivity analysis.

Employing transitivity analysis, the first clause reveals the embedded process to be a Relational Attributive type. This Process emphasizes a specific quality (Attribute) possessed by a participant (Carrier). Consequently, through the Relational Attributive process, the clause is representing an inherent characteristic of the participant: namely, that the DPR protest was riotous. Moreover, the word "rusuh" (riotous/chaotic) explicitly conveys a negative evaluation of the demonstrators' characteristics. This clause, with its Relational Attributive process, intends to represent a state of affairs that causes a subsequent event. The second clause, however, explains that "consequence." By employing a Passive Material Action process, the headline foregrounds the Goal entity rather than the Actor entity. With this structure, it is clear that the news headline focuses more on the participant affected by the action than the participant performing the action. This clause, with its Passive Material Action, intends to represent an active event that is a direct result of a preceding state. By analyzing the processes of both clauses, it

becomes evident that the first clause intends to provide a **cause**, while the second provides an **effect**. A cause *ricuh*, which is the nature of the August 25 DPR protest resulted in the action *6 orang diringkus aparat*.

Through a marked-topical Thematic structure, with the Attributive Relational process serving as the Theme, this headline emphasizes that **the action taken by the authorities was necessitated by the chaotic nature (*rusuh*) of the protest**. Furthermore, the researcher also found headlines that constructed the second clause using an active construction, such as: "*SITUASI AKSI DEMO MEMANAS, POLISI TEMBAKKAN GAS AIR MATA*" (PROTEST SITUATION HEATS UP, POLICE FIRE TEAR GAS). With this thematic structure, the headline provides a stronger justification for the active measure taken by the Actor in the second clause. The transitivity analysis, which reveals the intention of each clause, combined with the thematic analysis, which reveals the purpose of the Theme-Rheme placement, leads to one crucial conclusion about this headline's construction: that **even when an active measure is taken by the police, that action is framed as being a direct consequence of the riotous (*rusuh*) nature attributed to the protest**.

#### **4.2. Demonstrators-centered Headlines**

Unlike the previous type of headline, this type of headline depicts the demonstrators as the center of attention in the news headline. Same as the previous type, center of attention can be achieved through grammatical subject (active voice construction), or grammatical object (passive voice construction). To facilitate the reader, the researcher provide demonstrators-centered headline in table 2 below :

**Table 2.** Demonstrators-centered Headlines

No	Headlines
1	MASSA ADANG MOTOR PETUGAS KEPOLISIAN HINGGA TERJATUH
2	DETIK-DETIK BUS BRIMOB DIRUSAK MASSA UNJUK RASA BUBARKAN DPR RI
3	DIPUKUL MUNDUR, MASSA MASIH MENYERANG PETUGAS
4	RICUH DEMO DI MAPOLRES KARAWANG, MASSA AKSI LEMPARI BATU HINGGA PETASAN
5	MASSA JEBOL GERBANG DPR RI
6	APARAT KEWALAHAN! MASSA JEBOL & MASUK GEDUNG DPR
7	JEBOL PAGAR, PENDEMO MASUK GEDUNG DPR
8	PAGAR DEPAN GEDUNG DPR RUSAK IMBAS DEMO
9	MASSA KEMBALI DATANGI GEDUNG DPR RI
10	AKSI MASSA SEMPAT DIWARNAI KERICUHAN
11	MASSA BERUSAHA JEBOL PAGAR UTAMA
12	MASSA GELAR DEMO DI MAKO BRIMOB KWITANG
13	MASSA TAGIH 17 + 8 TUNTUTAN RAKYAT
14	MAHASISWA DEMO TAGIH REALISASI 17 + 8 TUNTUTAN RAKYAT
15	TAGIH 17 +8 TUNTUTAN RAKYAT, BEM UI DEMO DI DPR
16	DEMO TUNJANGAN DPR DI MEDAN MENCEKAM, POS POLISI DIBAKAR

From these 16 headlines, there are two features that characterize them. Fristly, there appear bald headline which reports the news directly. Further, the second characteristic is condemnation of action. The distribution of these characteristics are presented in the diagram 2 above. The example of **BALD HEADLINE** is shown in the extract 5 below.

#### **EXTRACT 5**

*MASSA JEBOL GERBANG GEDUNG DPR RI*

This news headline contains a single clause with a clear process and thematic structure. A process and thematic structure carry specific implications regarding the ideology the headline seeks to instill in the audience. Uncover these implications, furthermore, provides crucial insight into the hidden intent realized through the news structure. Therefore, transitivity analysis and thematic structure analysis is chosen to dig the ideological representation deeper. Transitivity analysis and thematic structure analysis is presented as follow:

<i>Masa</i>	<i>jebol</i>	<i>gerbang gedung DPR RI</i>
Actor	Process: Material Action	Goal
Theme	Rheme	



In this clause, the term *massa* (the masses/crowd) functions both as the actor within its transitivity structure, and as the theme within the thematic structure. This placement reveals that the headline intends to emphasize the participant entity as the primary focus of the news. This participant is represented as undertaking an active measure *jebol* (breaking through), with the Goal being *gerbang Gedung DPR RI* (gate of the DPR RI building.) Through the transitivity analysis conducted by the researcher, we see how this headline very clearly conveys the agent, the type of active action, and the target of that active action itself. Meanwhile, the analysis of the thematic structure provides insight into the main message intended for the audience: namely, that the actor of the action serves as the theme of this headline.

Ideologically, **this news headline focuses on reporting the demonstrators**, signaled by the placement of *massa* (the crowd/masses) as the unmarked-topical theme. Meanwhile, the representation of the event this clause seeks to convey is that an active event, *jebol* (breaking through), was carried out by the *massa* entity against the *gerbang gedung DPR RI* (gate of the DPR RI building) entity. When reporting on the protesters in this manner, the headline does not need to modify its clausal structure. However, there are other headlines that, when reporting on demonstrators, choose to obscure the action performed by the actor through nominalization process. The analysis is presented in extract 6 as follow.

#### EXTRACT 6

##### MASSA GELAR DEMO DI MAKO BRIMOB KWITANG

Unlike the previous news headline, this headline contains a clause that nominalise an action. This action could otherwise have functioned as the process of an actor. The researchers can ascertain this by analysing the transitivity of the clause in this headline. The analysis will be provided as follow :

<i>Massa</i>	<i>gelar</i>	<i>demo</i>	<i>di Mako Brimob Kwitang</i>
Actor	Process: Material action	Goal	Circumstance
Theme	Rheme		

Through this transitivity analysis, it is clearly depicted that the goal *demo* (protest) of the process *gelar* (to hold/conduct) could have functioned as a process itself. Instead of writing, "The crowd protested (*Massa berdemo*) at Mako Brimob Kwitang," the headline nominalize the verb "*berdemo*" (to protest) into the noun phrase *gelar demo* (held/conducted protest).

In this regard, the nominalization process is employed to emphasize an objective rather than an activity. Consequently, the public ideological perception resulting from this nominalized headline is that the actor possesses an objective, not that they are actively performing an action at a specific location. This ideological constructed headline depicts a leaning toward demonstrators by nominalizing demonstrator's action. However, there appears a characteristic within which the headline demonstrates the otherwise.

One characteristic that is leaning against demonstrators is depicted through **CONDEMNATION OF ACTION**. In this feature, the headline shows causality to condemn the action of demonstrators as shows in extract 7 below.

#### EXTRACT 7

##### DEMO TUNJANGAN DPR DI MEDAN MENCEKAM, POS POLISI DIBAKAR

The structuralization pattern of this headline is similar to what occurs in the **Justification of Action** headline. Both headlines similarly feature two independent clauses with a deliberate arrangement. The point that differs them is the intention of the second clause, while the second clause of justification of action is functioned to delineate police action, the second clause of condemnation of action is functioned as a report of protest's riot. Through transitivity and thematic structure analysis, the researchers can uncover the type of ideology intended to be instilled in the audience.

<i>Demo tunjangan DPR di Medan</i>	<i>(berlangsung)</i>	<i>mencekam</i>	<i>pos polisi</i>	<i>dibakar</i>	
Actor	Process: event	Material	Circumstance	Goal	Process: Material action
Theme	Rheme			Theme	Rheme

Through transitivity and thematic structure analysis, it is apparent that a single headline contains two different Processes with differing structural arrangements. The preceding clause is a Material Event clause with an unmarked-topical Theme, while the second clause is a Material Action clause with a marked-topical Theme. The two clauses carry distinct implications.

The first clause, with its the material event process, describes something that occurs naturally. Instead of explaining who is doing what, the material event process simply explains *what merely happens*. However, with the addition of the second clause following the first clause, a causality effect is established. The second clause, furthermore, employs a material action process with a passive construction. With *pos polisi* (police post) serving as the Goal and also functioning as the Theme, the headline explains that the natural event in the first clause was caused by the police post being subjected to the active action (Material Action) of *dibakar* (being burned/set on fire).

From the analysis of these two clauses, it can be seen that there is a headline that places the demonstrators as the focus of discussion through a structural play that implies causality. The first clause, with its material event process, acts as the effect, while the second clause, accompanied by its material action process, acts as the cause. Simply put, this causality construction creates ideological representation that the action *bakar* (second clause) being the reason of circumstance in the first clause *mencekam*.

These data perfectly illustrate that there is an ideological play within the structure of headline news reporting August's demonstration in Indonesia. Some headlines, focusing police as a point of departure, report baldly while the other uses several features either to obscure or to justify. However, some headlines that focusses to demonstrators report to condemn demonstrators action. This ideological interpretation is not achieved unsystematic; rather, the researchers employ Fairclough's ways to uncover the implication of ideology. In the next discussion section, furthermore, the researcher explain the ideological inference deeper.

## 5. Discussion

The headline of the news, as Singh (2020) conveys, has pivotal role in the news media. The thing that directs audience perception toward the content of the news, moreover, is headline itself. In addition, Shah (2025) also postulates that when people want to read their interest quickly in the news media, headline is the one they read first. As such, certain arrangement of headline creates different *reality* in the audience's perception. Accompanied by Fairclough's model of CDA, the results above successfully demonstrate that some headlines are arranged in a particular way to create different ideological assumption in the audience's perception. The tendency of police-focused headline along with the tendency of demonstrators-focused headline is important to be discussed deeper.

In the demonstration of Indonesian's parliamentary building, there are two major types of headline used in news media. These two types are those that centered to the police, and those that centered to the demonstrators or protesters. As such, Danielle K. Brown in her essay entitled "*Media coverage of campus protests tends to focus on the spectacle, rather than the substance*" (2024), states that media coverage often frames protests through conflict and disruption, focusing on entities like police and protesters rather than the substance of demonstration. However, Indonesian's demonstration analysed in this article shows that these types are prevalent because Indonesian's parliament was passive throughout the demonstration. Consequently, news media only focussed in that two entity, police and demonstrators. Further to these types, there are certain features to characterize the way media represents certain ideological interpretation.

There are **21 headlines that placed police as a center of attention**, outweigh those which focussed on the demonstrators (see diagram 1). This dominant type clearly suggests that media tend to report police as the one that *does* something in the protest in question (see table 1). However, this does not necessarily mean that media is leaning toward demonstrator. To achieve such inference, the researchers underwent Fairclough's CDA model and found that media, in order to report the action of the police, characterized its headline in three ways: **bald headline**, **euphemism headline**, and **justification of action headline**.

In bald headline (see extract 1, this article) shows that nominalisation was implemented to obscure the actor and action and alter it to the *things that is subjected to an action*. This nominalisation clearly depicts the tendency to blur *what action is undergone*. This finding is supported by Qianbo's (2017) result that the nominalisation process in the news demonstrates media's attitude to direct the audience into biased judgement. Moreover, humanisation ideology was also presented in police-centered bald headline (extract 2, this article). Within that headline, the news media placed *Affan* in the theme, making it the point of attention. To add to that, there is no obscurity in its actor, process, or goal using transitivity analysis. The present study has a similarity with Mayers & Parks (2024) which demonstrate that placing the victim as the thematic point of departure shapes readers' interpretations, encouraging empathetic alignment and reinforcing a humanizing frame within the discourse. Moreover, humanity ideology is also justified by Montejo & Adriano (2018) findings, they discovered that by placing the victim in theme structure, the headline's intention is to evoke audience's emotion.

When reporting police-focused headline, another utilized strategy is the use of euphemism as well as justification of action. As Fromkin, *et al.* (2011) suggests, euphemism is used to avoid reference to certain acts or subjects. As such, the researchers found that this strategy, in police-centered headline, is implemented when the media wants to blur the actual event and actual entity involved (extract 3, this article). With euphemism, the headline did not present neutrally; instead, it reduced negative image toward the reported event. This finding is in accordance with Prawoto (2022) who postulates that euphemism is used to create positive image to the audience. Ideologically, this strategy reduces negative impression in police-centered headline through altering the word/words to a more subtle word/words, known as euphemism. On the other hand, when there is no alternation to the action or actors, justification by providing another clause is implemented. Within this research, justification of action is a condition in which a headline justify the underwent reported action by making the reason of that action as a theme (extract 4, this article). Ideologically, this constructs a representation in the audience's mind that even if the *negative* action is taken, it is because of something else; something that is placed in the very front of the headline.

In addition to police-focused headline, this research also reveals that when reporting Indonesian's parliament demonstration, **some news medias focused on the demonstrators** represented in their headline. When focusing protesters as the point of attention, that does not necessary mean that the protesters is always a grammatical subject. The passive construction process is sometime taken in order to deliver different message (see datum number 2 & 16, table 2). There are 16 demonstrators-focused headlines (see table 2) which is divided into two strategies, **bald headline** and **condemnation of action headline** (see diagram 2).

Extract 5 shows visibly how bald headline was constructed in news media. The headline in this extract placed the center of attention (the actor of the process) in the theme position, making it a point of departure. Then, the process and goal of the clause is clearly reported, without the process of euphemism or nominalization. This extract evidently represents the "as it is" headline reporting a real event. However, there is demonstrators-focused headline that utilize specific way while reporting baldly. Extract 6 shows a process of nominalization within where the news media focused its report in demonstrators. Instead of using verb *berdemo* (suffix *ber-* in Indonesian is used to verbalize), as usual report, the headline nominalized it to *demo*. This nominalization process obscured the action being undertaken and change it to the entity (change *berdemo* (to protest) to *demo* (demonstration)). This finding can support what Söğüt (2018) have found. Söğüt postulated that by nominalization, the news media can report with no emphasis on the agent, or to obscure the negativity of the agent. However, the researchers also found demonstrators-focused headlines within which there is no nominalization involved; however, they have ideological implication and can be realized through condemnation of action.

Condemnation of action, as this study found, is a strategy of headline arrangement where unfavored action is condemned by making the effect of that action as a theme in the headline. Thus, the causality effect is established. The causality itself is a result of contained process in the second clause. While the first clause report situation with material event *berlangsung mencekam* (tentious), the second clause report the active action through material event *dibakar* (burned by). Extract 7 demonstrates this strategy clearly where riotous condition is caused by active action burned. Ideologically, this emphasis that there will always be riotous situation because of malicious action committed by particular agent.

Albeit there are several studies reported similar findings in police-focused headline (Qianbo's, 2017; Mayers & Parks, 2024; Montejo & Adriano, 2018; Prawoto, 2022) and demonstrators-focused headline (Söğüt, 2018), this present study elucidates valuable insight about the ideological representation through language news of headline in reporting Indonesian parliamentary demonstration. As have explained, there appears several ideological arousals in the audience perception by constructing headline in particular ways. As such, the researchers conclude all the findings in the conclusion section below.

## 6. Conclusion

The demonstration toward Indonesian's parliamentary in the late August of 2025 provides valuable role to the news media. However, the language use in the headline of news media is not neutral. After conducted Critical Discourse Analysis through Fairclough's model, the researcher found 37 headlines that have language play in order to deliver ideological representation. From 37 headlines, there are 21 police-focused headlines with bald, euphemism, and justification of action strategy. On the other hand, there are 16 demonstrators-focused headlines with bald, and condemnation of action strategy. Further, the researchers found that victimhood through appositive phrase is utilized as an expression of humanism. However, the addition of causality can be both justified the action of the police, or condemn the action of the demonstrators, depend on the process of the headline's second clause.

This study, on the other hand, only analyzed the ideological play of the headlines. For further development of CDA along with media study, the researchers suggest deeper examination in the power relations between mass media and the audience. Consequently, triangulation of CDA and interviews can be implemented to uncover both ideological representations, and how that affects audience in power relations. With this examination, both of mass media's intention and effect it has on the audience will be covered clearly.

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**ORCID iD:** Baiq Wina Aisha Kamila <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6217-5206>

Yeni Artanti <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2673-8006>

Sulis Triyono <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2795-757X>

Nur Hidayanto Pancoro Setyo Putro <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3019-8498>

Susana Widyastuti <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0617-9094>

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