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Ideology, resistance, and sociopolitical dynamics in Indonesia: media narratives and resistance discourses on the chairman of the corruption eradication commission's corruption case

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Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) is an anti-graft organization established in 2003 that plays a vital role in preventing and eradicating corrupt practices in Indonesia. Ironically, KPK Chairman 2019–2023, Firlu Bahuri, was named a corruption suspect on November 22, 2023. The incident of naming the KPK Chairman as a suspect by the police caused conflict between KPK and the Police Department and attracted the media's attention. This article aims to discover how DetikCom, Kompas.com, and Tempo.co, produce texts and discourses of resistance by the KPK Chairman against being named a suspect. Researchers also tried to uncover the ideology and interests of the media in the production of corruption discourse in Indonesia based on the external context of media and politics in Indonesia. The author used the text analysis method with Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis to analyze 18 media texts. The researcher found that the resistance discourse packaged by Detikcom online media tends to support the law enforcement narrative by providing more space for the Police Department to convey evidence and processes carried out. Kompas.com emphasizes that Firlu has the right to file a pretrial and that the legal process must be respected, giving the impression that the media respects Firlu's legal rights. Tempo.co emphasized the case's legal aspects and processes, including Firlu Bahuri's pretrial submission. At the sociocultural level, there is a relationship between corruption cases in Indonesia, government policies, and public responses to the conflict discourse over the KPK chairman.

KEYWORDS

corruption, critical discourse, media ideology, online media, Indonesia

Introduction

Corruption has deeply entrenched itself in Indonesia's social and political structure, posing a severe problem. The massive corruption cases in Indonesia have not only damaged the nation's values regarding the integrity and social identity of the people (Nugroho and Fitriawan, 2024). But also undermined the integrity of government institutions, weakened public trust,

and hampered sustainable development. This widespread corruption, which even 46% of women in Indonesia consider to be a normal occurrence (Wulandari et al., 2024) is a cause for concern. In the face of these challenges, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) stands as an institution with a strategic role in eradicating corruption (Aladdin and Hanafi, 2023). This institution must demonstrate a solid commitment to tackling corruption in Indonesia with the regulated duties and authorities. One of the main obstacles faced by the KPK is resistance from those involved in corrupt practices. In addition, coordination with government agencies, regulatory uncertainty, and political pressure complicate the KPK's performance in carrying out its mission. KPK is required to be a central institution that plays a crucial role in overcoming corrupt practices at various levels of society (Indriyawati and Hudiyo, 2023).

The phenomenon of corruption has also surfaced in a scandal involving KPK members themselves and even the highest leader, the 2019–2023 KPK chairman Firli Bahuri, who was named a corruption suspect on November 22, 2023, and made history in Indonesia. The incident highlighted the complexities and challenges faced by this anti-corruption agency and attracted the attention of many parties, including the media (Budiawan and Mulyani, 2022). The influence of the media is profound, as it plays a significant role in shaping public opinion. Mass media is considered a powerful tool in the competition to influence images (Foucault, 2002). In this context, the media can persuade the public's attention, direct it specifically to certain issues, events, or individuals, and establish the level of urgency of the problem or event. The media can emphasize the issues raised, although sometimes this is irrelevant to the community's needs (Choiriyati, 2024) As a result, the community seems to need the messages and information conveyed, which can change views and even culture in the community (Youna Bachtiar et al., 2016).

There are many online media in Indonesia, but only a few have gained the public's trust regarding their reporting. In this study, online media were selected based on data on public trust in media in Indonesia released by katadata.id in 2023. Researchers also looked at the intensity of news production about the KPK's conflict with the Police regarding naming the KPK Chairman as a suspect in receiving

gratuities. Figure 1 is related to the media most trusted by the Indonesian people in 2023. The illustrates the percentage of Indonesian people's trust in Kompas.com media, which is 69%, DetikCom 63%, Tempo.co 60%, Tribunews 55%, Jawa Pos 54%, and Merdeka.com 52%. People's trust in the media is critical in shaping their views and thoughts rather than the number of page visits. The trusted press usually has high credibility and maintains quality standards when presenting information. Online media in Indonesia produce texts and discourse on the news of KPK Chairman Firli Bahuri as a corruption suspect in the form of direct news reports (hard news) and indirect and in-depth news reports (soft news).

Research with the critical discourse analysis model of Norman Fairclough from Marlina et al. (2023) entitled Topic Markers in Pedagogical Discourse: A Critical Discourse Analysis explains the social practice of pedagogical discourse through the description of topic-marking markers in teacher-student interaction during micro-teaching activities and the interpretation of its discourse practice. This study contains the social practice of equality of teacher-student dominance in the classroom. Teachers consider students' subjects to have the right to be respected by selecting paragon marker words that show politeness (Marlina et al., 2023). An article about media and discourse of corruption cases from My Nhat and Thu Hien (2023) entitled Construction of roles, obligations and values in politicians' discourses on anti-corruption. This article explores the semiotic performances through which anti-corruption discourses have been constructed in Vietnam. The findings reveal that in this political system, the discourse on anti-corruption functions as a rhetoric of glory and determination. Politicians strategically used language to emphasize the achievements in combating corruption, aiming to gain support for anti-corruption initiatives and legitimize their political actions (My Nhat and Thu Hien, 2023).

Unlike the two previous research articles, this article tackles a significant topic. It attempts to analyze the role of three online media platforms, DetikCom, Kompas.com, and Tempo.co, in shaping discourse around corruption allegations against the KPK chairman. The study's focus is on understanding how these media outlets construct discourse based on their respective ideologies and interests.

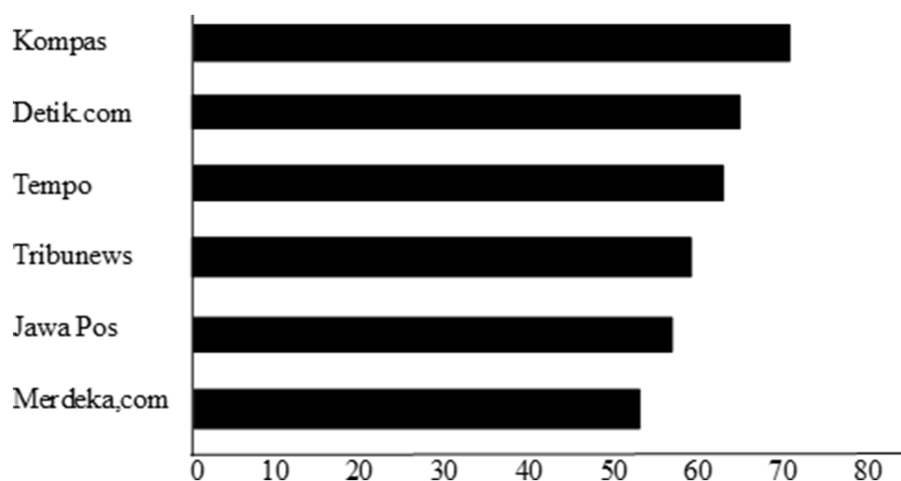


FIGURE 1
The most trusted media in Indonesia. Source: databoks.katadata.co.id (2023).

The researcher also aims to uncover how these media platforms shape perspectives and representations influenced by the external context of media and politics in Indonesia.

Language, discourse, and power

Using language is the most common form of social behavior, and language has become the primary medium for social control and power (Fairclough, 2010a, 2013b; Randy and Briones, 2017). Language cannot be separated from its role as a tool of social control and a tool of power (Hassan, 2018). There is a distance or gap between language and power to present forces in the text. Language that is inseparable from a discourse from a critical perspective is not interpreted as something neutral that can transmit and present social reality as its original state, but language is already charged with power. According to Habermas (1984), language is the interest of those who use it (Eriksen and Weigard, 2003). Moreover, those with power also control language, namely language that carries the interests of their power. Through language, power can be increasingly collected or influential in all directions.

The concept of discourse as a tool of manipulation is presented by Van Dijk (2006), where manipulation is a communicative and interactional practice in which manipulators exercise control over others, usually against their will or against their interests. In everyday language use and discourse, manipulation has a negative association, and manipulation is terrible because such practices violate social norms (Abdulmajid, 2019). Having said that, it should be remembered that “manipulation” is a category of typical observers, e.g., critical analysts, and not of the category of participants. Some language users will refer to their own as “manipulative” discourse, such as for example racist discourse and gender discourse.

The media is one of the actors that produce language and discourse in conveying an event or event through text. In producing texts, the media does not express meaning or reflect reality but produces “representations.” Based on the fact that it exists in people’s lives, the text is then reconstructed into media content (Hall, 2003; Van Dijk, 2006). Media is not only considered an entity that creates texts and images but is also understood as a mirror of the economic and political interests in producing and disseminating texts. Indonesia’s media today has been co-opted, where the authority of “public media” has collapsed due to the actions of a group of people who have power over the media (Aspinall, 2005; Jamaluddin, 2016; Nugroho, 2023). By producing awareness and reports that distort objective reality, the media becomes an instrument to influence public views that interest groups, both in political and economic aspects, already distort. Efforts often rooted in political-economic conflicts are utilized by manipulating the role and position of the media to cover up and represent antagonisms in a biased manner (Nugroho et al., 2021).

Political economy of media

Theoretically and practically, mass media, both conventional and digital, are inseparable from economic and political influences in determining the direction of the text or content. Media institutions use economic and political interests as a prism in

selecting the first reality formulated in editorial policies. The same reality can produce different news constructions when constructing events into media content. Framing and media bias have become commonplace in the media industry to date (Entman, 1993; Eriyanto, 2002; Hapal, 2021).

Shoemaker and Reese (2014) explain several factors or levels that influence decision-making in the newsroom, namely the individual level, which is a factor related to the background and experience of each individual involved in media management. The media routine level is a level that has a relationship with the mechanism and process of media production. The media organization level highlights inequalities in organizational roles, internal structures, goals, technology, and markets related to the structure and dynamics of media organizations (Ferruci and Kuhn, 2022). The extra-media level relates to environmental factors outside the media, such as news sources, sources of media income, and the government and business environment. The last is the ideological level, a specific frame of mind or reference individuals use to see reality and how their strategies deal with it (Shoemaker and Reese, 2014).

Data and methods

This research uses a qualitative text analysis method with Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze 18 media texts from three online media. Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis method explains several theories related to discourse, language, and power (Fairclough, 2013b). In CDA, language is not considered a neutral medium; rather, it conveys the writer’s values, attitudes, judgments, and beliefs while also reflecting social practices (Essa and Harvey, 2022; Haryatmoko, 2015). Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis model consists of three levels of analysis: micro (text), mezzo (discourse), and macro (sociocultural) (Fairclough, 2003, 2010b, 2013a; Mu et al., 2021). First dimension is textual analysis (micro level), which includes a description of the text. In the micro-analysis stage, the researcher analyzes the text with care and focus to obtain data that can describe the representation of the text. Also, the aspects pursued in this level of analysis are the outline or content of the text, the location, attitudes and actions of the character, and so on.

Second, discourse analysis or discourse practices (mezzo level) focuses on interpreting the relationship between the discourse production process and the (Fairclough, 2010a; Hazaea et al., 2014; Subagyo, 2015). The discourse dimension relates to the process of text production and consumption, such as work patterns, work charts, and routines when producing news. About institutional processes, Fairclough (2010b, 2013a) refers to institutional routines such as editorial procedures involved in the production of media texts. Discourse practices include how media workers produce texts that relate to the journalist himself as a person, the nature of the journalist’s network with other media workers, and the pattern of media work as an institution, such as how to cover news, write news, and become news in the media.

Sociocultural analysis or sociocultural practices (macro level) involves explaining the relationship between discourse processes and social processes (Fairclough, 2010b). The macro-level analysis is based on the notion that the social context outside the media influences how discourse exists in the media. The newsroom or journalist’s room is

not a sterile field or space but is also largely determined by factors outside the media. Sociocultural practices analyze three things: economics, politics (especially related to issues of power and ideology), and culture (especially related to values and identity), which also affect media institutions and their discourse. The discussion of sociocultural practices covers three levels: The situational level, which relates to the production and context of the situation; the institutional level, which relates to the influence of institutions internally and externally. The social level relates to more macro situations, such as the political, economic, and cultural systems of society as a whole.

The author uses the critical paradigm in this research to explore a media’s ideology, interests, and goals in producing texts and discourse related to the news of KPK Chairman Firli Bahuri becoming a corruption suspect. From an epistemological point of view, the critical paradigm views a particular relationship of values between the realities being studied (Nugroho, 2022). The data obtained in this study are data in the form of news texts regarding the news of KPK chairman Firli Bahuri becoming a corruption suspect contained in the online media DetikCom, Kompas.com, and Tempo.co in the period November 22nd to December 5th, 2023. Text in this context includes both written and spoken forms. It can be analyzed from vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure. This involves studying words, clauses, and sentences, how clauses and sentences are connected, and the organizational structure of the text (Yu and Zheng, 2022). It examines the categorization of words and the underlying ideologies associated with them. The relational values of words explore how word choice reflects the social relationships between participants, including the use of euphemisms and levels of formality. Expressive values, on the other hand, relate to subjects and social identities (Mu et al., 2021).

Based on Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis, the author carries out the stages of data analysis carried out in this study, namely:

- 1 Combining what is obtained from the DetikCom, Kompas.com and Tempo.co news texts and synchronized with the (secondary) data obtained by the author.
- 2 Analysing the data with Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis tool.
- 3 Discuss the research findings and elaborate on theories related to text, language, discourse, and power.
- 4 Concluding the previous stages.

Results and discussion

Production of texts and discourse of DetikCom

At the discourse level analysis, several words, phrases, and key sentences refer to the discourses published by Detikcom regarding the news of KPK chairman Firli Bahuri’s resistance as a corruption suspect. Six DetikCom news issues are analyzed, as Table 1 shows. In the DetikCom news issue, the text begins by briefly conveying the core information, namely the naming of Firli Bahuri as a suspect and Firli’s response to not accepting the naming. It is a standard convention in news writing to grab the reader’s attention with the most important information at the beginning. The text then provides more details about the suspect designation, including the articles violated and a statement from the Jakarta Police. This is part of the news structure that provides context and in-depth information. Including a quote from Director of Special Crimes (Dirkrimsus) of Metro Jaya Regional

TABLE 1 Detikcom news issues.

No.	News headline	Date of news	Quotes
1	<i>Firli Bahuri Siapkan Perlawanan Usai jadi Tersangka</i> (Firli Bahuri Prepares to Fight After Becoming Suspect).	23 November	KPK Chairman Firli Bahuri <i>did not accept</i> that he was named a <i>suspect in an alleged extortion</i> case against former Agriculture Minister Syahrul Yasin Limpo (SYL). <i>Firli is preparing a fight</i> against the naming of the suspect by Polda Metro Jaya.
2	<i>Firli Bahuri Ajukan Praperadilan Lawan Kapolda Metro</i> (Firli Bahuri Files Pretrial Against Metro Police Chief).	23 November	He revealed a number of reasons why <i>Firli objected to being a suspect</i> . “The first thing we object to is yes. As his legal counsel, <i>we object</i> to the naming of Mr. Firli as a suspect,” said Ian Iskandar when contacted.
3	<i>Polisi tak Masalah Firli Mau Lawan Penetapan Tersangka Kasus Pemerasan SYL</i> (Police Have No Problem with Firli Fighting Suspect in SYL Extortion Case)	24 November	“Polda Metro Jaya <i>has no problem</i> if Firli wants to <i>fight</i> .”
4	<i>Firli Bahuri Ajukan Sidang Praperadilan, Sidang Perdana digelar 11 Desember</i> (Firli Bahuri files for pretrial hearing, first hearing held on 11 December)	24 November	“ <i>We guarantee that the Police investigators will be professional, transparent, and accountable and free from all forms of pressure or intimidation, any influence</i> ”
5	<i>Kapolri Minta Penyidik Bersiap Lawan Praperadilan Firli</i> (National Police Chief Asks Investigators to Be Prepared to Fight Firli’s Pretrial Appeal)	27 November	“Our investigation can be accounted for. I think that’s normative. The SOP is like that. Yes, <i>we’ll see</i> .”
6	<i>Begini Respons Firli Soal Apartemennya yang di Geledah</i> (This Is Firli’s Response About His Apartment Being Searched)	5 Desember	“ <i>Firli Bahuri only smiled</i> when asked about the search”

Source: authors’ data from DetikCom texts (2024).

Police, Kombes Ade Safri Simanjuntak and a detailed legal explanation of the articles violated gives credibility and authority to the information presented. The contrasting perspectives shown by including the views of Firli Bahuri and his attorney who opposed the naming of the suspect, ensures a balanced view in news reporting.

This news belongs to the investigative news genre, where journalists conduct in-depth research to uncover facts and present viewpoints on major legal cases. The use of formal language and legal terminology shows the characteristics of this genre, where the accuracy and clarity of legal information are critical. Opinion elements are also seen in the quote from Firli's attorney, who expressed objections and accusations that the naming of the suspect seemed forced. This shows a combination of the news genre with opinion or argument elements.

The discourse in this text also reflects legal battles and legitimacy, where both sides, the Metro Jaya Police Department and Firli Bahuri, are actively engaged in proving the truth and validity of their claims. This active participation creates a narrative of a complex and interest-laden legal conflict. The news quoted the Director of Special Crimes (Dirkrimsus) of Metro Jaya Regional Police, Kombes Ade Safri Simanjuntak. This source provides the perspective of law enforcement and authority in this case, thus adding credibility and legitimacy to the actions taken by law enforcement. Firli Bahuri's attorney, Ian Iskandar, was also a key informant. This shows the perspective of the party who feels aggrieved by the legal process. It adds elements of argument and opinion, underscoring the objection to naming a suspect.

The selection of sources in DetikCom news reflects an attempt to provide comprehensive and balanced coverage. By combining various discourse elements, the chosen sources help shape the news narrative, add depth and complexity to the issue, and allow the audience to see multiple perspectives on the ongoing legal conflict. The style of this news issue uses formal and technical legal terminology such as "extortion," "acceptance of gratuities," "acceptance of bribes," and "Article 12e, 12B, or Article 11 of Law Number 31 Year 1999 on the Eradication of Corruption in conjunction with Article 65 of the Criminal Code." This demonstrates the news's intention to provide accurate and detailed information on the legal aspects of the case. The choice of words from Firli Bahuri's lawyer such as "objected," "forced," and "never shown" shows a critical and opposing attitude toward the actions of Metro Jaya Regional Police. This reflects an attempt to defend and defend Firli Bahuri's position.

News on the second issue is organized in an inverted pyramid style, where the most essential information is conveyed at the beginning of the text. The leading information that Firli Bahuri filed a pretrial against his designation as a suspect by Metro Jaya Regional Police is expressed in the first paragraph. By explaining the legal process (pretrial filing, case number, official statement from the police), the news aims to educate the public about the ongoing legal steps and ensure that readers understand the context of the case. Focusing on the details of the allegations and evidence found by Metro Jaya Regional Police could shape a more negative public opinion toward Firli Bahuri. This discourse production is a subtle way for the media to influence readers' perceptions. In analyzing this news "genre" based on Norman Fairclough's approach, it appears that the press uses standard news journalism conventions to convey information in a way that is considered professional and objective. There is a tendency to focus more on the narrative from

the law enforcement side, which could show subtle favoritism toward Metro Jaya Regional Police. This genre reflects how news genres shape public perception and maintain institutional authority. Phrases such as "did not accept being made a suspect" and "chose to fight" indicate defensiveness and resistance.

The following news issue emphasizes the evidence found by Metro Jaya Regional Police, such as foreign exchange documents and meetings related to the handover of money. This text strengthens the narrative that Firli Bahuri's actions were suspected and supported by material evidence. The emphasis on formal and procedural legal processes affirms trust in legal institutions and their enforcement, which can strengthen the institutional legitimacy of Metro Jaya Regional Police. Ex uses different framings to describe the ongoing legal case. Firli Bahuri and his lawyers portrayed his suspect status as coerced and highlighted the lack of evidence. At the same time, representatives from Metro Jaya Regional Police emphasized the professionalism of the investigation and confidence that the legal process was proceeding according to the procedure. Using direct quotes from sources adds a personal dimension and depth to the representation of the legal cases discussed. The text's cohesion is maintained through appropriate conjunctions and references between paragraphs, maintaining a smooth narrative flow and understanding for the reader. The information presented consistently supports the news text's overall narrative and communicative purpose.

In the fifth news issue, the language used in the text reflects hope and optimism toward the ongoing legal process. For example, when the National Police Chief (Kapolri) expressed his hope that the pretrial process would go well and that investigators would carry out their duties professionally and transparently, the news text represents the world of investigations and legal processes through identity formation, meaning construction, and depiction of authority. These representations shape readers' perceptions of the ongoing case and influence how they understand and respond to the information presented in the news text. This discourse is dominated by facts about Kapolri's response to the pretrial lawsuit, which are conveyed through direct quotes from his statement. Direct quotes give authenticity to the news and give readers direct insight into Kapolri's thoughts and attitudes regarding the situation. Using formal and technical language that emphasizes police professionalism could suggest that the media is more inclined to support the narrative that police actions are legitimate and according to procedure.

Production of texts and discourse of Kompas.com

According to Table 2, Kompas.com news issue reports on a legal case involving a public figure, namely Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) Chairman Firli Bahuri, and the legal action taken by Metro Jaya Regional Police. It provided more details on the reason for the lawsuit, the context of the suspect designation, statements from the authorities (Metro Jaya Regional Police), and details of the investigation. Kompas.com frames complex legal cases into information that can be accessed and understood by a broad audience. The use of a systematic structure, formal language, and official quotes helped to emphasize the credibility of the news. At the same time, including investigative details showed an effort to provide a comprehensive and transparent report.

TABLE 2 Kompas.com news issue.

No.	News headline	Date of news	Quotes
1	<i>Tak Terima Jadi Tersangka, Firli Bahuri Ajukan Gugatan Pra Peradilan</i> (Firli Bahuri does not accept being a suspect, files pre-trial lawsuit)	24 November	“Chairman of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) files pre-trial lawsuit <i>against</i> the Chief of the Jakarta Metropolitan Police Department Greater.”
2	<i>Firli Bahuri Minta PN Jaksel Nyatakan Status Tersangkanya Tidak Sah</i> (Firli Bahuri asks District Court to declare his suspect status illegal)	24 November	“This lawsuit was filed by Firli through his attorney Ian Iskandar et al. who are members of the <i>IISPA Law Office Advocate & counselors at Law office.</i> ”
3	<i>Firli Akan Lakukan Perlawanan Usai Jadi Tersangka. Polda Metro: Itu Hak Tersangka</i> (Firli will fight back after being named a suspect. Metro Police: That’s the suspect’s right)	24 November	“The suspect <i>has the right to challenge</i> the case that ensnares him. Yes, that is <i>the right of the suspect and his legal counsel.</i> ”
4	<i>Firli Ajukan Pra Peradilan, Kapolda Metro: Itu Hak Tersangka, SAH!</i> (Firli files pre-trial motion, Metro Police Chief: That’s the suspect’s right, it’s legal!)	25 November	Metro Jaya Police Chief: <i>The suspect’s right to file a pretrial is valid.</i>
5	<i>Firli Bahuri Ajukan Praperadilan, Jokowi: Harus Kita Hormati</i> (Firli Bahuri files pretrial, Jokowi: We Must Respect)	25 November	“President Joko Widodo stated that the pretrial lawsuit filed by inactive Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) Chairman Firli Bahuri over his suspect status is a <i>legal process, that must be respected.</i> ”
6	<i>Drama Firli Bahuri: Tak Terima Jadi Tersangka, Masih Aktif ‘Ngantor,’ hingga Dicapot Jokowi</i> (Firli Bahuri’s Drama: Not Accepting Being a Suspect, Still Actively ‘Working’, to Jokowi’s Removal)	25 November	“Our investigation can be accounted for. I think that’s normative. The SOP is like that. Yes, <i>we’ll see.</i> ”

Source: authors’ data from Kompas.com texts (2024).

By including direct quotes from authorities such as the Jakarta Police’s Director of Criminal Investigation, Kombes Ade Safri, the report gains authority and validity. The style of this news text is professional and formal, according to journalistic norms for reporting legal and criminal cases. The text’s tone is neutral and objective, aiming to convey information without showing partiality or emotion. Firli Bahuri and the Chief of Metro Jaya Regional Police are positioned as authority figures facing off in a legal context. The text emphasizes their roles as high-ranking officials involved in significant legal proceedings, portraying them as the main actors in this conflict. The text centers on the ongoing legal process, suggesting that the justice system is the main arena in which this conflict is played out. As such, legal discourse becomes the primary way to understand and respond to this situation. The case occurs within the broader context of politics and corruption in Indonesia, where the KPK often confronts other institutions to combat corruption.

The next news issue is informative and does not contain biased opinions or interpretations. The main objective is to convey the facts and the latest developments in legal cases. The straightforward and structured style of conveying information shows that the text is aimed at providing clear and precise information to readers without any attempt to directly influence their opinions. The use of quotes from authorities and legal details gives the impression that the text is trustworthy and supported by official sources. This discourse places the KPK, especially KPK Chairman Firli Bahuri, in a defensive position as the party filing the pre-trial lawsuit. This creates a discourse that the KPK is under pressure and must defend itself before the law. The mention of case numbers, legal articles, and procedures for filing pre-trial motions emphasizes that every step taken is in accordance with the existing legal framework. This builds a discourse that the actions taken by Firli Bahuri and the Police response are within strict legal boundaries. As the KPK Chair who filed the lawsuit, Firli Bahuri

was forced to defend himself, which is different from his usual role as a law enforcer, which raises the discourse that no individual is above the law.

The next issue supports the discourse on the right of every individual to defend themselves and obtain justice through existing legal procedures. Although news texts try to maintain neutrality and objectivity, the choice of words, the structure of presenting information, and the narratives used can hint at specific alignments. The media is trying to strike a balance between providing space for clarification and defense from Firli Bahuri and showing support for the actions and procedures taken by the police, which shows the complexity of delivering news, which must consider various perspectives and interests in sensitive legal cases. Furthermore, the news provides information on the legal action taken by inactive KPK Chairman Firli Bahuri and President Joko Widodo’s response to the case. The text follows a typical news structure with an introduction providing the main summary, more details about the event, direct quotes from sources, and an explanation of additional context. There is also an element of power discourse, where the position and authority of the various actors (President, KPK Chairman, and Polda Metro Jaya) in the legal and political hierarchy is reflected through the way they are given space to speak and how their statements are reported.

Production of texts and discourse of Tempo.co

The Tempo.co news issue as shown in Tables 3, 4, is a culmination of information from various sources, including the court, Firli Bahuri’s lawyer, and the police. This diverse range of sources underscores the journalistic practice of providing balanced and objective reporting.

TABLE 3 Tempo.co texts news.

No.	Date of news	Title	Quotes
1.	24th November 2023	Firli files pre-trial motion against suspect designation Suspect by Metro Police.	“The Chairperson of the Jaksel District Court <i>has appointed a single judge Imelda Herawati, SH.MH to examine and hear the case.</i> ”
2.	24th November 2023	MAKI confident that South Jakarta District Court will reject Firli’s Pre-Trial	“Confident that the South Jakarta District Court will reject the pretrial motion.”
3.	25th November 2023	Jokowi Says Firli’s Pre-Trial Lawsuit Must be respected.	“Jokowi does not want to comment much on Firli Bahuri’s case.”
4.	27th November 2023	Firli files pretrial motion, attorney mentioned <i>Kapolda Metro Jaya as the mastermind.</i>	“It’s strange not to make a report. The one who made the report, the police itself. <i>That’s odd.</i> ”

TABLE 4 Tempo.co news issues.

No.	News title	Date	Quotes
1	<i>Firli Ajukan Pra Peradilan Lawan Penetapan Tersangka oleh Polda Metro</i> (Firli files pre-trial against Metro Police’s suspect designation)	24 November	“The Chairperson of the Jaksel District Court <i>has appointed a single judge Imelda Herawati, SH.MH to examine and hear the case.</i> ”
2	<i>MAKI Yakin PN Jakarta Selatan Tolak Pra Peradilan Firli</i> (MAKI believes South Jakarta District Court will reject Firli’s pre-trial motion)	24 November	“Confident that the South Jakarta District Court will reject the pretrial motion.”
3	<i>Jokowi Bilang Gugatan Praperadilan Firli Harus dihormati</i> (Jokowi says Firli’s pretrial lawsuit must be respected)	25 November	“Jokowi does not want to comment much on Firli Bahuri’s case.”
4	<i>Firli Gugat PMJ, Sidang Perdana Praperadilan 11 Desember</i> (Firli sues Metro Jaya Police Department, pretrial hearing on 11 December)	26 November	South Jakarta District Court Public Relations: The South Jakarta District Court has <i>received a pre-trial application on behalf of Firli Bahuri.</i>
5	<i>Firli Ajukan Praperadilan, Kuasa Hukum Sebut KaMetro Jaya Regional Police sebagai Dalang</i> (Firli files pretrial, attorney names KaMetro Jaya Regional Police as mastermind)	27 November	“It’s strange not to make a report. The one who made the report, the police itself. <i>That’s odd.</i> ”
6	<i>Kapolri Minta Penyidik Harus Siap Hadapi Praperadilan Firli Bahuri</i> (National Police Chief asks investigators to be ready to face Firli Bahuri’s pretrial appeal)	26 November	Chief of the Indonesian Police: “Investigators <i>must be prepared to account for their actions in pre-trial</i> ”

Source: Authors’ data from Tempo.co texts (2024).

While there may be certain tendencies or biases in practice, the text’s focus on specific facts related to the legal case, such as case numbers, court dates, statements from court officials, and details of evidence found, remains a common characteristic of news genres that prioritize factual information. The text also engages with broader legal and institutional discourses, referencing existing legal procedures and the roles and responsibilities of various institutions (courts, police, and KPK). This demonstrates how the news text is not isolated but is intertwined with broader social practices and structures. By presenting news in a formal and balanced legal genre, the media aims to foster trust and credibility in the eyes of readers. It also serves to frame the Firli Bahuri case in a legitimate legal context, influencing readers to view the case as a serious and professional legal process.

The second Tempo.co news issue is primarily focused on informing readers about the latest developments in the legal case involving KPK Chairman Firli Bahuri. It opens with a strong statement from the Indonesian Anti-Corruption Society (MAKI) Coordinator, who gives an opinion that the pretrial will most likely be rejected. This sets the main focus of the news story. The text then develops the argument by further quoting statements from Boyamin Saiman that support his claims, as well as presenting the relevant legal context. The

news closes with a brief summary of the development of the case and a statement from the Public Relations Officer of the District Court, who provides additional procedural information.

Using direct quotes from key sources such as Boyamin Saiman and other legal officials is a standard convention in the legal news genre to add credibility and show a different perspective. The text seeks to demonstrate neutrality by providing space for multiple perspectives, including the views of MAKI, Metro Jaya Regional Police, and KPK. These multiple perspectives reflect the ideology of professionalism in journalism that aims to provide a balanced and informative report. The text is organized with a clear and logical structure, starting with the main statement (Boyamin’s prediction), followed by supporting arguments and legal context and concluding with procedural information regarding the pretrial application. The quote from Boyamin Saiman stating that the pretrial process is a “civilized way” underscores the importance of following official and structured legal channels. This news text seeks to convey information formally, professionally, and neutrally. The discourse emphasizes respect for law enforcement institutions’ legal process, transparency, and professionalism. The choice of language and text structure reflects an effort to educate

and inform readers objectively while using direct quotes from credible sources.

The third news issue belongs to the political and legal news genre, reporting President Joko Widodo's statement regarding the pretrial filed by former KPK Chairman Firlri Bahuri. This news combines political aspects with legal processes. The direct quote from President Jokowi shows that this text also adopts the interview news element, where journalists report the answers of the interviewed figures. The information about the presidential decree regarding the temporary dismissal of Firlri Bahuri shows that this text also deals with government actions and policies. Jokowi emphasized that the case is still under legal process, showing a neutral stance and an emphasis on the principle of presumption of innocence. The news uses many direct quotes from President Jokowi and Presidential Special Staff Coordinator Ari Dwipayana. This news lends credibility and authority to the text and provides clear and transparent information to the reader. By highlighting Jokowi's statements about evaluating the KPK and the hope for the institution to run well, the media may be criticizing the performance and accountability of the KPK under Firlri Bahuri's leadership. The emphasis on the need for evaluation is a critique of how the KPK has been run so far and the challenges it faces in carrying out its duties effectively and cleanly.

The discourse on the next news issue refers to the legal conflict between Firlri Bahuri and Metro Jaya Regional Police, as well as the allegations of the involvement of KaMetro Jaya Regional Police as the mastermind behind the determination of the suspect. The discourse that emerges is distrust of the law enforcement process and allegations of manipulation or abuse of authority by the police. This news framed the ongoing legal process as full of conflict and distrust between the parties involved. Firlri Bahuri and his attorney stated that the legal process was unfair and seemed forced. This discourse highlights criticism of the way Metro Jaya Regional Police carried out investigations and named suspects without an adequate investigation process. The allegation that the Chief of Metro Jaya Regional Police was the mastermind behind the suspect's appointment reflects suspicion and accusations of abuse of power. The style of language in this news story is formal and legalistic, with precise use of legal terminology to describe ongoing legal processes and events. Although it reports claims from one side (Firlri Bahuri and his attorney), the writing style tries to maintain neutrality by presenting information in a balanced manner and providing context from both sides.

The latest news issue emphasizes the National Police Chief's statement that investigators must be prepared to account for their actions in pretrial; the media may criticize the need for greater accountability in law enforcement. This sentence shows the hope that investigators work professionally and transparently. Recognizing Firlri Bahuri's right to submit a pretrial application emphasizes the importance of every individual's right to defend themselves in the legal system. It reflects the values of justice and human rights. Mentioning that investigators must be prepared to face pretrials and that their evidence must be intense shows the hope that law enforcers work with high standards of professionalism. Implicit criticism may be directed at potential abuse of authority or lack of professionalism in previous cases.

Discourse of KPK chairman's resistance in the context of politics and corruption in Indonesia

The long-standing conflict between the KPK and the Police, coupled with various criminalization efforts against former KPK leaders, forms a complex and dynamic backdrop for this corruption news discourse (Wasono Aji and Rokhman, 2018). Corruption cases in Indonesia are often marred by conflicts between law enforcement agencies, particularly the KPK and the Indonesian National Police (Polri). This conflict is not a new occurrence; the public has previously witnessed similar tensions in the "Cicak vs. Buaya" incident involving Susno Duadji, as well as the criminalization of KPK Chairman Abraham Samad. These instances reflect deep institutional tensions and the significant influence of various political and power interests on corruption eradication efforts. In this context, the media plays a crucial role in shaping public discourse and constructing news, particularly in the case of KPK Chairman Firlri Bahuri's resistance to being labeled a corruption suspect, given the history of conflicts that have exhibited similar patterns in the past (Wasono Aji, 2019).

The track record of conflict between KPK and Polri shows a recurring pattern of feuding, often triggered by corruption eradication efforts involving high-ranking police officials. This conflict reflects the tug-of-war over power and interests between Indonesia's two leading law enforcement institutions and the country's strong influence of politics on law enforcement. Corruption cases in Indonesia often involve political figures and high-ranking officials; this shows the close relationship between politics and corruption. Political interference often hinders a fair and transparent law enforcement process. The KPK is often faced with many challenges, including political intervention, pressure from the legislature and executive, and resistance from other institutions such as the Police and prosecutors (Soedarsono, 2023).

In institutional terms, the Indonesian government, under the leadership of President Joko Widodo, has demonstrated a commitment to fighting corruption (Noer Sunan et al., 2023). In the context of Firlri Bahuri's challenge, President Jokowi stated that Firlri's pre-trial challenge was part of a legal process that must be respected. This statement reflects the government's official stance of wanting to show respect for the legal process and the rights of accused individuals. However, it can also be interpreted as an attempt to maintain political stability and the government's image in the eyes of the public. Measures and policies are often criticized for their effectiveness and the political intentions behind them. A prime example is revising the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) Law in 2019. It received widespread opposition from the public for various reasons perceived as attempts to weaken the anti-corruption agency, such as establishing a supervisory board where this board has the authority to grant wiretapping licenses, which was previously one of the KPK's main strengths. This KPK Law revision reduces the KPK's ability to conduct prompt and confidential investigations.

In the societal context, Indonesians have high expectations of the KPK as an institution capable of eradicating corruption indiscriminately. However, revising the KPK Law and various controversies involving KPK leaders, including Firlri Bahuri, have undermined this trust. In the text analysis process, Boyamin's statement as MAKI Coordinator underlines the critical role of civil society and non-governmental organizations in overseeing the actions of the government and law enforcement agencies. This statement

shows that society passively receives information and actively criticizes and demands change. Firli's dismissal was considered a step to restore public trust in the KPK. This criticism shows that the public needs to be more satisfied with the leadership of the KPK, which is considered not independent and too close to political power. Rejection also occurred in various regions in Indonesia, showing that the public disagreed with the KPK law's ratification. This rejection was also accompanied by demands from the people against the President, demanding a presidential promise to strengthen the KPK. However, with the passing of the KPK law, the public considers that the government is trying to weaken the KPK (Wibowo et al., 2021).

In producing texts, the media do not reveal meaning or reflect reality but produce "representations" based on the reality in people's lives; the text is reconstructed into media content (Hall, 2003). Control over media content production is carried out according to the preferences of capital owners, who organize the expansion of media domination through capital. In the case of Firli Bahuri and the KPK versus Polri conflict, this control can be seen in how various media present news about the case. The media acts as a legitimizing tool for the interests of the dominant class by distorting objective reality. In the KPK versus Polri conflict, this can be seen in how specific media may manipulate the news to cover up or minimize criticism of Firli Bahuri or the KPK. Hall emphasizes that ideology is used to dampen class struggle, and control over class is reflected in media messages. In the KPK versus Polri case, ideologies that support stability can be seen in news coverage that supports Firli Bahuri.

Media that support Firli Bahuri may employ a law-and-order ideology to suppress criticism of alleged corruption. By accentuating the importance of respecting the legal process and individual rights, these media help foster the perception that Firli's resistance is legitimate and reasonable. By diverting attention from the issue of corruption and criticism of the KPK, the media aids in quelling potential protests or demands for change from the public. This underscores how the dominant class utilizes the media to control narratives and uphold stability (Abdulmajid, 2019). Stuart Hall's theory of critical political economy elucidates how the media functions as a tool to extend the dominance of the capital-owning class by controlling the production and content of news. In the context of the KPK vs. Polri conflict, the media can be harnessed to distort objective reality and shape narratives (Abdi and Basarati, 2016). The control over media content empowers the dominant class to influence people's views and suppress class struggle through the use of ideologies that promote stability and order (Launa and Tawaang, 2021). The three media's production of texts and discourses related to the KPK chairman's resistance to the Police's determination of his suspect status cannot be separated from each media's ideology and political economy interests.

Conclusion

The resistance discourse packaged by Detikcom online media tends to support the law enforcement narrative by giving more space to Metro Jaya Regional Police to convey evidence and processes carried out. Firli Bahuri is also portrayed as someone who defends himself actively. They emphasized the evidence supporting Firli Bahuri's suspect status and featured statements from the police. This

discourse shows the media's tendency to support or favor the police institution in the case. The representation of actors in this news shows Firli Bahuri as defensive and aggressive. At the same time, Metro Jaya Regional Police is portrayed as a professional institution that acts based on evidence and legal procedures. Despite providing space for Firli's lawyers to voice their objections, the media still set a heavier tone toward justifying Polda's actions. Tempo.co emphasized the case's legal aspects and legal processes, including Firli Bahuri's pretrial submission. They provided information on the legal actions taken by Firli Bahuri's side and highlighted statements from various parties regarding the legal process. Tempo.co gives a more balanced space for the multiple perspectives involved in the case. They highlighted Firli Bahuri's pretrial filing as part of the legal process and provided space for statements from Firli Bahuri and his lawyers.

These multiple perspectives show the media's tendency to provide more independent and balanced coverage. The news discourse tries to maintain neutrality by presenting the views of various parties involved in the case, both from the perspective of the Kapolri and the court. Tempo.co seems to raise some critical criticisms related to the legal process, KPK accountability, political dynamics, and the need for transparency and legal education for the public. Kompas.com's dominant discourse emphasizes repeatedly that Firli has the right to file a pretrial and that the legal process must be respected, giving the impression that the media respects Firli's legal rights. Tempo.co's discourse can be seen as a form of support for Firli's legal efforts. Overall, while Kompas.com is trying to remain objective and balanced, the emphasis on Firli's rights and the legal process gives the impression that the media tends to support Firli's legal efforts, which could be interpreted as a subtle form of favoritism. Kompas avoids direct criticism of Firli or others involved in the case. By not highlighting the allegations or evidence against Firli in-depth, Kompas is trying to maintain neutrality and not appear to favor one side. However, this could be interpreted as a form of veiled support.

Based on the results of research on media discourse and corruption in Indonesia using Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis in three media, Kompas.com, Detikcom, and Tempo.co, basically provide advice for the media to be committed to maintaining objectivity and neutrality in reporting. Although internal and external pressures can influence news content, the press must stick to independent and impartial journalism principles. There are several potential future studies, such as what linguistic and structural strategies the media use to favor one party while maintaining a neutral impression subtly. Also, a comparative analysis of media discourse on corruption cases in other countries is needed to determine how the discourse of different media platforms (mainstream vs. independent) compares when covering corruption cases and what differences exist in the coverage of corruption cases in democratic vs. authoritarian countries.

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to denmasnuno@telkomuniversity.ac.id.

Author contributions

ZQ: Writing – original draft, Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Resources. CN: Writing – original draft, Methodology, Writing – review & editing. FY: Data curation, Supervision, Writing – review & editing. AW: Project administration, Resources, Visualization, Writing – original draft. RW: Funding acquisition, Validation, Writing – review & editing.

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Supplementary material

The Supplementary material for this article can be found online at: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fcomm.2025.1552110/full#supplementary-material>

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