



Netizens' Responses to the Allowances of Members of the Indonesian House of Representatives on TikTok: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Annisa Robbi Atunur Rosyida^{1*}, Dian Karina Rachmawati², R. Panji Hermoyo³

¹²³Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

*E-mail: annisarobbi153@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

TikTok social media serves as a medium for expressing criticism of the policies and behavior of state officials. One of these concerns the allowances and facilities received by the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI). This study aims to analyze netizens' responses to these statements through comments on TikTok social media using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (AWK) approach. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type, with data in the form of netizens' comments on the TikTok accounts @kabar_tvone, @officialnews, @lontara.today, and @kutipan_pemerintah. The results show that there are three dimensions: the first is the text analysis dimension, the second is the social practice dimension, and the third is the discourse practice dimension. In the text dimension, netizens express criticism through sarcasm, irony, and rhetorical questions. In the discourse practice dimension, TikTok functions as a space for discourse battles between the defense of political elites and public approval. Finally, in the social practice dimension, the discourse that emerges reflects economic inequality, social pressure, and the crisis of public trust in the DPR institution. This study confirms that netizens' comments on TikTok are not only emotional but also constitute a social practice that represents power relations in national life.

Keywords: netizens' responses, allowances, TikTok, critical discourse analysis

Respons Warganet terhadap Tunjangan Anggota DPR RI pada Akun Media TikTok: Kajian Analisis Wacana Kritis

ABSTRAK

Media sosial TikTok menjadi salah satu ruang digital yang dimanfaatkan masyarakat untuk menyampaikan kritik terhadap kebijakan pemerintah maupun perilaku pejabat negara. Salah satu isu yang banyak memperoleh perhatian publik adalah pemberian tunjangan dan berbagai fasilitas kepada anggota DPR RI yang memunculkan beragam respons dari masyarakat. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis respons warganet terhadap isu tersebut melalui komentar di TikTok menggunakan pendekatan Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) model Norman Fairclough. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis deskriptif. Data penelitian berupa komentar pada akun TikTok @kabar_tvone, @officialnews, @lontara.today, dan @kutipan_pemerintah yang membahas pemberian tunjangan dan fasilitas DPR RI. Data dikumpulkan melalui teknik dokumentasi dan dianalisis berdasarkan tiga dimensi Fairclough, yaitu analisis teks, praktik wacana, dan praktik sosial. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pada dimensi analisis teks, warganet mengekspresikan kritik melalui bahasa sarkasme, ironi, sindiran, dan pertanyaan retorik sebagai bentuk ketidakpuasan terhadap kebijakan. Pada dimensi praktik wacana, TikTok menjadi ruang produksi, distribusi, dan pertarungan wacana antara pembelaan terhadap elite politik dan penolakan masyarakat. Sementara itu, pada dimensi praktik sosial, komentar mencerminkan ketimpangan ekonomi, tekanan sosial, serta menurunnya kepercayaan publik terhadap DPR RI. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa komentar warganet di TikTok tidak hanya menjadi luapan emosi, tetapi juga merepresentasikan relasi kuasa, kritik terhadap kebijakan publik, serta partisipasi masyarakat dalam mengawasi penyelenggaraan pemerintahan melalui media digital.

Kata kunci: respons warganet, tunjangan, TikTok, analisis wacana kritis

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the contemporary era has significantly transformed the way people receive, interpret, and respond to various forms of information, including information related to public policies and the conduct of state officials. One notable example of advancement in digital technology is the utilization of short-form videos as a medium for delivering news (Nurazizah, 2024). Social media platforms such as TikTok not only function as a means of entertainment but also serve as spaces for public discussion, social criticism, and even the negotiation of meaning regarding political issues and government policies. In the contemporary era, social media has become one of the most widely favored and utilized platforms across various age groups (Kusnadi, 2025). Indonesia has also been recorded as the country with the largest number of TikTok users in the world, reaching more than 157 million users (Riyanto, 2024). Furthermore, TikTok possesses a strong appeal among Millennials and Generation Z, who are characterized by high levels of technological adoption and media consumption patterns that differ from those of previous generations (Akbar dkk, 2024). Within this digital space, every piece of information disseminates rapidly and widely, often triggering intense public discussions, particularly when it concerns sensitive issues that have a direct impact on public welfare.

Amid the dynamics of contemporary society, language plays a significant role as a tool that extends beyond mere communication. Through language, meaning is constructed, power is maintained, and ideology is reproduced within particular contexts. Every word employed in news reporting carries ideological weight that can influence readers' perspectives and ways of interpreting an event (Machin, 2020). From the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), language is viewed as a social practice that is neither neutral nor free from vested interests. Language possesses the capacity not only to represent but also to reproduce power relations

through ideological processes (Fairclough, 1995). Critical Discourse Analysis also reveals an important reality through language, namely how language is utilized as an instrument of power within society (Rohana, 2015). Therefore, analyzing public discourse on social media is essential to understand how power is currently exercised, contested, or even normalized through the linguistic choices that emerge within digital interactions.

Fundamentally, human life can never be separated from politics, as politics is embedded in all aspects of social life within society (Darma, 2009). Within the context of national and state life, public officials play a crucial role as policy communicators and decision-makers whose actions significantly affect society at large. Every statement they convey is not merely informational in nature, but also contains symbolic power capable of shaping public perception. This also applies to statements made by members of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI), who serve as representatives of the people and possess the authority to formulate state policies. One issue that frequently attracts public attention is the allowances provided to members of the DPR RI, which often trigger public debate. These allowances include basic salaries and performance-based incentives, which are widely perceived by the public as excessively high, as well as official housing allowances, transportation facilities, and health insurance benefits provided by the state. Whenever this issue emerges, it is often regarded as controversial due to its sensitivity in relation to the economic conditions experienced by society. It is within this context that TikTok has become an important space for facilitating public responses, enabling individuals to openly express opinions, criticism, and reactions toward social and political issues (Agustia, 2024). This phenomenon was triggered by statements made by members of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) regarding salary allowances, official housing, transportation, healthcare, and other facilities they receive, which subsequently sparked public debate on social media, particularly on TikTok. Netizens



expressed diverse responses ranging from sharp criticism, satire, rejection, and resistance to strong disapproval, as these benefits were perceived to be inconsistent with the current economic conditions of society, which remain concerning. One netizen comment on a TikTok video that reflects such a critical attitude stated, “Honorable members of the council, whose welfare are you actually fighting for?” This phenomenon demonstrates the existence of a discursive struggle between political elites seeking to maintain their image and legitimacy, and the public engaging in resistance through reinterpretation and criticism of the constructed narratives. Therefore, netizens’ comments on TikTok should not merely be understood as emotional expressions, but rather as social practices that reflect power relations being negotiated within the digital sphere.

This study was conducted to describe and analyse the forms of netizens’ responses toward statements made by members of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) regarding allowances, as reflected in comments posted on TikTok. In addition, this study aims to reveal how the linguistic aspects embedded within these comments reflect discursive practices and social practices, as well as how power relations between political elites and society are represented through language choices. By employing Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, this research seeks to uncover the ideologies underlying the public discourse surrounding the issue of state officials’ allowances. Accordingly, critical discourse analysis within Norman Fairclough’s framework fundamentally involves three interrelated dimensions: the dimension of textual analysis, the dimension of discursive practice, and the dimension of social practice. These three dimensions constitute an integrated framework that cannot be separated from one another (Santoso, 2006 dalam Rohana, 2015).

There are several previous studies that are relevant to this research. A previous study (Rachmawati, 2016) entitled “*The Positioning of Habibie in the Negotiation Between Soeharto and*

Habibie in the Novel Habibie & Ainun: A Critical Discourse Analysis Study,” examined the use of language in character dialogues and narratives, particularly in identifying the power relations constructed through linguistic choices within the story. The discourse was analyzed as a representation of social and political realities; however, the study remained situated within the context of literary fiction. Second, a study (Pratama, 2024) entitled “*Accusations of Political Dynasty in Kiky Saputri’s Podcast Roasting Kaesang Pangarep: A Critical Discourse Analysis*,” examined allegations of political dynasty directed toward Kaesang Pangarep in a roasting podcast program. The study analyzed how language use, satire, humor, and political narratives were constructed within digital media, particularly on YouTube. Furthermore, the research demonstrated that political discourse is not only shaped through conversational texts, but is also influenced by media production processes and the prevailing socio-political conditions, especially during the period leading up to elections and amid issues surrounding political dynasties in Indonesia.

Third, a study (Farhani, 2020) entitled “*Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis of the News Coverage of the Cisadane Festival in Satelit News Newspaper*” found that the reporting of the Cisadane Festival in *Satelit News* primarily emphasized the cultural acculturation between Chinese culture and the local culture of the Tangerang community. In addition, the media portrayed the festival as a representation of cultural diversity and as an effort to package the event in a more appealing manner for the public. However, within the socio-cultural context, the study also revealed that public interest in cultural activities remained relatively low. Consequently, the media played an important role in reconstructing public attention toward such cultural events.

In contrast to the previous studies, this research focuses on analysing netizens’ responses toward statements made by members of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) regarding allowances on TikTok through the

perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This study does not merely examine comments as ordinary texts, but also investigates how netizens' linguistic choices represent criticism, disagreement, and even forms of resistance toward policies or statements issued by public officials. By applying Norman Fairclough's CDA approach, this research analyses netizens' responses through three dimensions. First, the textual dimension is employed to examine word choice, language style, and the meanings constructed within the comments. Second, the dimension of discursive practice is used to analyse how comments are produced, disseminated, and interpreted within the digital space of TikTok. Third, the dimension of social practice is utilized to explore the relationship between these comments and broader social conditions, such as power relations, economic inequality, and public trust in state institutions.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design through Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model. Qualitative research is a type of research that emphasizes data analysis; therefore, this study is primarily directed toward obtaining and interpreting the meanings embedded within the observed objects (Rachmatullah, 2019). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an analytical approach that examines and focuses on various social phenomena represented through language in the form of texts (Pradita, 2023). The primary data sources used in this study were short-form videos obtained from the following accounts on TikTok @kabar_tvone, @officialnews, @lontara.today, @kutipan_pemerintah. The data used in this study consisted of netizens' comments. The data collection techniques followed Mahsun (2017), who emphasized that language data collection can be conducted through: (1) observation methods, (2) note-taking techniques, and (3) documentation methods. These data collection techniques not only facilitate the

accurate acquisition of data, but also ensure that the discourse analysis conducted is grounded in a strong factual basis.

RESULT

Criticism regarding statements about the allowances of members of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) has widely emerged and developed on social media, particularly on TikTok. This phenomenon demonstrates the existence of diverse netizen responses, ranging from support to rejection, which reflect the dynamic relationship between power, policy, and society. To examine this phenomenon, the present study employs the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach based on the framework proposed by Norman Fairclough (1995). Norman Fairclough categorizes Critical Discourse Analysis into three dimensions: textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. In this study, the discussion is simplified without eliminating the essential substance of these three dimensions. The research data were obtained from netizens' comments on TikTok accounts.

According to Norman Fairclough, as cited in (Darma, 2009), discourse theory integrates several approaches, including linguistics, interpretative traditions, and sociology. Through this framework, Norman Fairclough formulates a discourse analysis model consisting of three dimensions: the dimension of textual analysis, the dimension of discursive practice, and the dimension of social practice. Although each dimension possesses a different focus and analytical process, they are closely interconnected. The first dimension is textual analysis, which refers to particular representations presented within a text that generally carry certain ideological meanings. The second dimension, discursive practice, relates to the processes of text production and consumption. The third dimension, social practice, concerns contexts outside the text itself, including broader situational contexts and social conditions.

Table 1
Research Findings on the Dimensions of Text Analysis

No.	TikTok's Account	Core Analysis
1.	@officialnews	"Even the Deputy Speaker of the DPR cannot calculate properly; perhaps they are simply too accustomed to marking up budgets..."
		"What kind of educational background do these legislators even have? I just found out that IDR 3 million multiplied by 26 days could be calculated that way. hahaha"
		"Oh dear... who elected representatives like these... hahahahaaa"
		"Honorable members of the council, whose welfare do you truly represent?"
2.	@kutipan_pemerintah	"What do they actually do anyway? All they do is sleep, right?"
		"They are with housing allowances despite already owning private provided residences."

Table 2
Research Findings on the Discourse Practice Dimension

No.	TikTok's Account	Core Analysis
1.	@officialnews	"It is reasonable for members of the DPR to receive high salaries and allowances because their responsibilities are substantial. They work hard for the people."
2.	@kutipan_pemerintah	"Why are housing allowances still provided to officials who already possess private residences?"

Table 3
Research Findings on the Dimension of Social Practice

No.	TikTok's Account	Core Analysis
1.	@officialnews	"You are exploiting state finances under the justification of allowances."
		"The DPR should be dissolved instead of allowing state funds to be misappropriated while the people struggle with economic difficulties."
2.	@kabar_tvone	"The rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer, yet paying taxes remains mandatory."
		"Oh dear... what is this country coming to?"
3.	@lontara.today	"The people face higher taxes, while the government receives higher salaries."
		"Teachers' salaries are constantly scrutinized, whereas legislators' salaries rise excessively; this situation is deeply concerning..."
		"Their daily salary is equivalent to our monthly income."
		"The DPR dances while the people go hungry, even though it is supposed to be the People's Representative Council."

DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings presented in Table above, the data were obtained from netizens' comments on several TikTok social media accounts, namely: @officialnews, @kabar_tvone, @lontara.today, dan @kutipan_pemerintah. The data were subsequently classified through a coding process using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis approach. The coding categories employed in this study consisted of DAT 1 (Textual Analysis Dimension), DPW 2 (Discursive Practice Dimension), and DPS 3 (Social Practice Dimension). Through these three dimensions, the findings indicate that within the textual dimension, netizens expressed criticism through sarcastic language, irony, and rhetorical questions. In the dimension of discursive practice, TikTok functioned as a space for discursive contestation between the defence of political elites and public resistance. Finally, within the dimension of social practice, the emerging discourse reflected economic inequality, social pressure, and a crisis of public trust toward the DPR as a state institution. The following discussion is organized based on Norman Fairclough's three dimensions of Critical Discourse Analysis:

Dimensions of Text Analysis

Data 1

"Even the Deputy Speaker of the DPR cannot calculate properly; perhaps they are simply too accustomed to marking up budgets..."

This data falls under the text analysis dimension because it uses sarcasm and an implicit accusation through the phrase "he's used to inflating the budget." This choice of words creates a negative image of the House of Representatives member by linking the miscalculation to alleged budget inflation practices. The criticism is conveyed through language that has a cynical tone.

Data 2

"What kind of educational background do these legislators even have? I just found out that IDR 3

million multiplied by 26 days could be calculated that way. hahaha"

This comment falls under the text analysis dimension because it uses a rhetorical question not intended to elicit an answer, but rather to question the competence of the House of Representatives member. The use of "hahaha" reinforces the element of irony, so the criticism is conveyed in a mocking tone.

Data 3

"Oh dear... who elected representatives like these... hahahahaaa"

This data falls under the text analysis dimension because it utilizes emotional expressions, irony, and sarcasm. The word "ugh" conveys disappointment, while the laughter "hahahahaa" is used to emphasize the mockery directed at the quality of the House of Representatives member.

Data 4

"Honorable members of the council, whose welfare do you truly represent?"

This data falls under the dimension of text analysis because it uses rhetorical questions and irony. The term "honorable members of the House" is used figuratively as a jab at members of the House of Representatives who are perceived as failing to champion the interests of the public.

Data 5

"What do they actually do anyway? All they do is sleep, right?"

This comment falls under the text analysis dimension because it uses hyperbole and a rhetorical question. The statement implies that members of the House of Representatives are not performing their duties optimally, thus serving as a form of criticism of the institution's performance.

Data 6

"They are provided with housing allowances despite already owning private residences."



This data falls under the text analysis dimension because it demonstrates the use of informal language, emotional expressions, and emphasis through the words “even” and “damn it.” This word choice indicates opposition to the policy of providing housing allowances.

The Discourse Practice Dimension

Data 1

“It is reasonable for members of the DPR to receive high salaries and allowances because their responsibilities are substantial. They work hard for the people.”

This data falls under the discourse practice dimension because it represents a counter-discourse to the majority of comments criticizing the House of Representatives. This comment reinforces the narrative that the size of their salaries and allowances is a consequence of the heavy responsibilities borne by members of the House of Representatives. This highlights the exchange of differing viewpoints in TikTok’s comment section.

Data 2

“Why are housing allowances still provided to officials who already possess private residences?”

This comment falls under the discourse practice dimension because it is a direct response to news reports about DPR members’ housing allowances. The question illustrates how the public consumes information from the media, then generates criticism that is subsequently disseminated through social media, thereby shaping public discourse.

Social Practice Dimension

Data 1

“You are exploiting state finances under the justification of allowances.”

This data falls under the social practice dimension because it reveals public perceptions regarding the misuse of the state budget. This comment reflects low public trust in the House of Representatives’ financial management.

Data 2

“The DPR should be dissolved instead of allowing dimension because it shows the public’s concern about the state of governance and the country’s future. The comment reflects a crisis of public trust in government officials.”

Data 5

“The people face higher taxes, while the government receives higher salaries.”

This data falls under the social practice dimension because it contrasts the public’s economic burden with the increased prosperity of government officials. This criticism indicates a perceived imbalance in government policy.

Data 6

“Teachers’ salaries are constantly scrutinized, whereas legislators’ salaries rise excessively; this situation is deeply concerning...”

This comment falls under the dimension of social practices because it compares the salary policies for teachers and members of the House of Representatives. This discourse reflects criticism of the government’s priorities in allocating the national budget.

Data 7

“Their daily salary is equivalent to our monthly income.”

This data falls under the social practice dimension because it illustrates the income gap between government officials and the general public. The comment represents a social reality regarding the economic inequality experienced by the public.

Data 8

“The DPR dances while the people go hungry, even though it is supposed to be the People’s Representative Council.”

This data falls under the social practice dimension because it expresses criticism of power dynamics and officials’ lack of empathy toward the public’s plight. The contrast between the behavior

of House of Representatives members and the economic hardships faced by the people reflects a crisis of public trust in the House of Representatives as the people's representatives.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, it is found that netizens' comments are not merely emotional expressions, but also contain ideological meanings and reflect power relations between society and political elites. Within Norman Fairclough's CDA framework, there are three dimensions: textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. At the textual level, netizens employ linguistic strategies such as sarcasm, irony, and rhetorical questions to convey criticism. At the level of discursive practice, TikTok functions as a discursive battleground between the defence of political elites and public resistance. Meanwhile, at the level of social practice, the emerging discourse reflects economic inequality, social pressure, and a crisis of public trust in the DPR. Thus, netizens' comments can be understood as a form of social practice that reveals the existence of unequal power relations within the context of state life.

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