

ABSTRACT

Kurniawan, Erika Fauziah Putri. (2026). **Indonesian EFL Students' Recognition of Bias in Instagram Threads Texts: A Case Study in Critical Academic Reading Course.** A Paper. English Education Department, Faculty of *Tarbiyah* and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

Critical reading has become an essential competence for students in contemporary academic contexts, particularly when evaluating digital texts such as Instagram Threads posts that may contain implicit or explicit bias. However, students often struggle to recognize how language choices construct ideological positions and partial perspectives. Thus, this research aims to investigate Indonesian EFL students' recognition of bias in Instagram Threads texts.

This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Document analysis and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data, with the interviews exploring the reasoning behind students' recognition. Nine eighth-semester students of the English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung who had completed the Critical Academic Reading course were chosen as participants using purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using the data analysis spiral proposed by Creswell (2014), focusing on six bias indicators developed from Norman Fairclough's (1995) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework.

The results show that students' success in recognizing bias depended on how directly each indicator was expressed in the text. Indicators such as Evaluative Language, Presupposition, and Generalizations/Stereotypes were identified by nearly all students, while Unbalanced Perspective was harder to recognize when it had to be inferred. Selective Emphasis and, especially, Omission of Alternative Perspectives were the most difficult, as they left no direct linguistic trace. Interview data indicated that students' recognition was generally grounded in explicit textual evidence, while lower recognition rates for certain indicators were linked to difficulty locating supporting evidence in the text.

In conclusion, Indonesian EFL students who had completed the Critical Academic Reading course were able to apply Fairclough's (1995) CDA framework to recognize linguistically explicit bias, while recognizing bias built on omission or unstated assumptions required a different, less consistent form of reading. Educators are encouraged to provide explicit instruction on missing perspectives and implicit assumptions to strengthen students' critical digital literacy.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Academic Reading, Recognize Bias, Instagram Threads Text