

## REPRESENTATION OF THE DISMISSED KPK EMPLOYEES IN THE JAKARTA POST ARTICLES

*(Representasi Pegawai KPK yang Diberhentikan pada Artikel The Jakarta Post)*

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### **Abstrak**

*Studi kualitatif ini menganalisis strategi yang digunakan The Jakarta Post untuk merepresentasikan pegawai KPK yang diberhentikan dalam kasus kegagalan mereka dalam Tes Wawasan Kebangsaan (TWK) sebagai transisi status ketenagakerjaan dalam lembaga antigraft dan bagaimana representasinya. Peneliti menggunakan Analisis Wacana Kritis khususnya teori Social Actor Representation (SAR) dari Theo Van Leeuwen (2008). Hal ini didukung oleh teori Richardson (2007) untuk menganalisis pilihan leksikal produser teks dan teori transitivitas Halliday dan Matthiessen (2004) untuk menganalisis alokasi peran. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa The Jakarta Post merepresentasikan pegawai KPK yang diberhentikan dengan dua strategi yaitu pengecualian maupun inklusi, tetapi inklusi tidak dominan. Pegawai KPK yang diberhentikan direpresentasikan secara negatif. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa pilihan leksikal yang digunakan untuk merepresentasikan mereka adalah melalui kata-kata 'pemecatan', 'api', dan 'gagal'. The Jakarta Post juga menggunakan strategi lain yaitu klasifikasi dan individualisasi dan kolektivisme.*

**Kata kunci:** representasi; artikel berita; CDA; Pegawai KPK

### **Abstract**

This qualitative study analyzes the strategy used by The Jakarta Post to represent the dismissed KPK employees in the case of their failure in the Civic test as an employment status transition within the antigraft body and its representation. The researchers use Critical Discourse Analysis, specifically the Social Actor Representation (SAR) theory from Theo Van Leeuwen (2008). It is supported by Richardson's (2007) theory for analyzing the text producer's lexical choice and Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) transitivity theory for analyzing role allocation. This study shows that The Jakarta Post represents the dismissed KPK employees both exclusion and inclusion strategy, but inclusion is not dominant. The dismissed KPK employees are represented negatively. It shows from the lexical choice used through the words 'dismiss', 'fire', and 'fail' to describe them. The Jakarta Post also uses other strategies: classification, individualization, and collectivism.

**Keywords:** representation; news article; CDA; KPK employees

## INTRODUCTION

The rise of corruption in Indonesia has been going on for a long time and has a long history. Like Singapore, which has formed the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) since 1960 (Welianto, 2020), Indonesia has formed an independent state agency that serves as a deterrent and eradicates corruption. It is Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi (KPK or the Corruption Eradication Commission). KPK was formed not to take over the task of eradicating existing institutions but to focus on corruption eradication more effectively. In other words, the goal is to increase the results and usefulness to eradicate corruption (Fitria, 2012 & Saphely, 2017).

Since its formation, KPK has uncovered many corruptions successfully. Government officials to civil society became the target of KPK investigators' Hand Arrest Operation. Since December 2002, KPK has processed 1,064 people and corporations for corruption cases. As reported by [Kompas.com](http://Kompas.com) (9/12/2019), in the period 2015 to 2019, KPK has saved the risk of state losses worth Rp63.9 trillion (Welianto, 2020). Nevertheless, corruption cases remain widely reported due to corruption cases in Indonesia throughout 2020. The number of corruption crimes amounted to Rp 56.7 trillion in the state, and total state losses from bribery reached Rp322.2 billion (Tatang Guritno, 2021).

Amid the KPK struggle to eradicate corruption, the second amendment to Law No. 30 of 2002, namely Law No. 19 of 2019 concerning the Commission for the Eradication of Corruption Crimes, caused political turmoil in the community because it would weaken the position, function and authority of the KPK (Simbolon, 2020). Despite the rejection among the community and scholars, the government still passed it. The law led to several changes, including placing the KPK as an institution under the auspices of executive institutions (Susanto, 2018:103), the establishment of

a supervisory body in the KPK body, KPK employees to be part of the State Civil Apparatus like other state institutions (Simbolon, 2020). This change affects the performance of KPK as a super body to eradicate corruption, especially in law enforcement (Parama & Al-Fatih, 2021), (Einstein & Ramzy, 2020).

The change of the KPK employee status to State Civil Apparatus causes all KPK employees to take Tes Wawasan Kebangsaan (TWK or Civic Test) conducted from March 18 to April 9, 2021. TWK became part of the State Civil Apparatus loyalty test to Pancasila, the constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and the government to ensure that they are not involved in criminal organizations and are loyal to the legitimate government.

On 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021, the Vice Chairman of KPK Nurul Ghufron held a press conference. He said:

*"1274 are qualified employees (MS), 75 are ineligible employees (TMS), 2 employees who did not attend the interview... (KOMPASTV, 2021)*

President Jokowi gave his response toward this KPK verdict. He requested that the results of TWK not be used as a basis for firing the KPK employees. However, KPK finally eliminated 51 of its 75 employees who were declared not to have passed the civic test. Vice-Chairman of the KPK Alexander Marwata stated that the assessment of the 51 employees is red and cannot be improved anymore. According to Yudi Purnomo, the KPK workers union, this decision ignored the direction of President Jokowi (Suhendra, 2021). The employees who did not pass the civic test have reported the case to the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia and the National Commission on Human Rights.

This polemic led strong response from political observers, politicians, and the general public. Many dialogues were held in various television broadcasts to solve this chaos. Not to

be missed to make headlines in print or online media. A discourse on the chaos of the KPK verdict in the news is interesting to be analyzed.

Many scholars give great attention to analyzing the representation of KPK. Some of them are Maritsa Nurfitri (2014), Bobby Sander (2016), Fajri Prima Irfan (2016), and Satria Perdana Putra (2016). Maritsa Nurfitri (2014) examined the representation of the KPK chairman related to the leak case *sprindik* in the article *KPK Chief's "Coup" talk Panned*. She used Norman Fairclough's theory (1995) in textual and sociocultural level analysis. On a textual level, social actors, clauses, and representation were analyzed. On a sociocultural level, she analyzed an institutional level. Based on a textual level, the chairman of the KPK was displayed in the form of inclusion personality in the material, mental, relational, and verbal processes. Meanwhile, at the sociocultural level, the chairman of the KPK was represented negatively by its access. Bobby Sander (2016) analyzed the KPK's representation of the conflict between KPK and POLRI in Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's Speech in Sociocognitive approach with macrostructure and microstructure of Van Dijk (2008). He found that SBY gave KPK full support and stressed his effort of reconciliation as respond of the conflict. Fajri Prima Irfan (2016) analyzed the representation of President Joko Widodo in *The Daily Mail* article related to the conflict between KPK and POLRI in 2015 using CDA van Dijk theory. The purpose of this research was to find out the role of Jokowi as the new head of state. Macro analysis has used to analyze the power of *The Daily Mail*, and micro-level has used to analyze the representative of President Jokowi. The results showed that *The Daily Mail* has the power to represent Jokowi negatively with his power. It is proven by negative other achievement through headlines, main events, verbal reaction, description level, degree completeness, and implicitness. Then, Satria Perdana Putra (2016)

examined the representation of KPK paralysis in caricature on the cover of *Tempo Newspaper* to find out the denotative, connotative, mythical and ideology meaning using semiotic studies (Roland Bathes) of journalistic science. The results showed that the *Tempo Newspaper* did not favor either KPK or POLRI.

Differently, this study aims to find out the strategy used by *The Jakarta Post* in representing the dismissed KPK employees and its' representation in *The Jakarta Post* articles. Besides visual addition, a text's representation in is shown through words choice, relations between sentences, and photo assistance. Therefore, Eriyanto mentions that representation is a linguistic phenomenon. Representation refers to how a person, a group, a particular idea or opinion is displayed as it should, whether it is prioritized, marginalized or neutralized (Eriyanto, 2011). It is consistent with Van Leeuwen's (2008) Social Actor theory, which examines how social actors are included or excluded in a representation.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

News not only presents the reported events, but there is ideology in it. The media has the power to control the thinking of its readers or their audience to lead its audience to have the same understanding or perception as them. Its' discussion is under linguistic studies, precisely Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). According to van Dijk, CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. Critical discourse analysts take a precise with such dissident research and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality (Van Dijk 2001: 352 cited from Widdowson, 2004). In addition, Fairclough defines that CDA is combination of 1) text analysis; 2) analysis of

discursive practice (production, consumption and distribution processes); and 3) socio-cultural analysis on discursive event as a whole (Fairclough, 2004).

In this study, the writers used Social Actor Representation (SAR) theory from van Leeuwen (2008). This theory states that a phenomenon can be represented differently, or in other words, it can be represented in several versions, where the differences are motivated by text producers' interests, knowledge, and ideology. In other words, the dismissal of KPK employees can be represented differently depending on the adopted ideology and the interests of text producers. This study also uses Richardson's theory (2007) to analyze the text producer's lexical choice and transitivity analysis from Halliday and Matthiessen (2013) to help the data classification, primarily to determine the role allocation of each actor in a sentence. The theories above aims to uncover how the text producers (The Jakarta Post) represent the dismissed KPK employees in their articles. The limitation of this research is that it only focuses on analyzing news article published in May 2021.

## METHOD

This study is qualitative since this study focuses on answering questions descriptively. The followings are the steps to analyze the data: 1) the writers categorize the data based on van Leeuwen (2008) Social Actor Representation theory (exclusion-inclusion); 2) the writers use the theory of transitivity from Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) to help the classification process to find the role allocation of the actor in the data (activated or passivated actor); 3) the last, the writers conclude how the text producers represent the dismissed KPK employees.

## DISCUSSION

### *Exclusion-Inclusion*

The dismissed KPK employees are the most frequent social actors, including The Jakarta Post. Among 65 data, there are only 12 data showing exclusion in the form of nominalization. The rest are inclusion. Nominalization allows the exclusion of social actors (Leeuwen, 1996). The following are the data that shows The Jakarta Post represent the dismissed KPK employees in the form of nominalization.

Data 1: The KPK's current leadership reportedly signed a letter ordering **the dismissal of 75 employees** who failed the civic knowledge test held by the BKN as part of the employee status transition within the commission. (TJP-18-05-2021)

Data 2: "The leaders of the KPK and BKN have clearly disobeyed the President's instructions by still [insisting on] directly **dismissing 51 KPK employees** and by **reeducating 24 [employees]** without any guarantees [of achieving civil servant status]," Yudi said in a statement received by the Post on Tuesday. (TJP-28-05-2021)

Data 3: Several burner accounts on Twitter started to upload the propaganda posts on May 4, around the time that reports on **the dismissal of KPK employees** were brought to public attention. (TJP-24-05-2021)

Data 1, data 2 and data 3 show the use of nominalization through the word "dismissal", "dismissing", "reeducating" and "dismissal", Due to Leeuwen's theory, the data above do not tell the readers who is responsible for the activity, the dismissal KPK employees at this case. It indicates that The Jakarta post drive the readers not to focus on the leaders of KPK who signed the decision instead the process

of the dismissal of KPK employees. The nominalization use is due to the journalist's strategy to avoid redundancy.

In dominant, The Jakarta Post used inclusion strategy to represent the dismissed KPK employees. It means that The Jakarta Post include the social actor of the dismissed KPK employees frequently. Due to its' role allocation, it is mostly in passivation (43 data) and just a little number in activation (8 data).

### **Role Allocation: Activation-Passivation**

Based on the collected data, due to the role allocation to know how the dismissed KPK employees represented in The Jakarta Post articles, there found 8 active data and 43 passive data. The passivated consists of 31 beneficialisation passivation and 12 subjected passivation. The following data are the active one.

- Data 4: Also on Monday, **the 75 employees** who failed the test filed a report of an alleged ethical violation committed by KPK supervisory board member Indriyanto Seno Adji for his alleged involvement in the commission's operation. (TJP-18-05-2021)
- Data 5: **Seventy-five employees**, including several investigators, did not pass the test and were to be dismissed from the antigraft body. (TJP-24-05-2021)
- Data 6: **Some employees taking the test** claimed it was not relevant to their work at the KPK as it contained questions related to religious beliefs and ethnic affairs. (TJP-18-05-2021)

Data 4, data 5 and data 6 shows the active role of KPK employees. Based on Halliday's theory on transitivity, both data 4 and data 5 are material processes. In data 4, "the 75 employees" is the actor who filed a report of an alleged ethical violation committed by a KPK supervisory board member. At data

5, "Seventy-five employees" is the actor who didn't pass the test. Meanwhile, data 6 is a verbal process. It means that "Some employees taking the test" say that the Civic test was not relevant to their work at the KPK as it contained questions related to religious beliefs and ethnic affairs. Although having an active role, due to its' processes, it shows that the 75 employees don't have the power to interrupt the result of the leaders of KPK. As their resistance, they report an alleged ethical violation committed by a KPK supervisory board member. In addition to their report, they claimed that the Civic test was not relevant to their work at KPK.

The Jakarta Post mostly used passivation to represent the dismissed KPK employees in 43 data. According to Van Leeuwen (Leeuwen, 2008), passivation occurs when the social actors function as objects in a representation. There are two types of passivation: subjection and beneficialization. The following are the data that show how the dismissed KPK employees are passivated by beneficialization.

- Data 7: "I personally argue there's still a chance to remedy [**those who failed the test**] with training on civic knowledge," the President went on to say. (TJP-18-05-2021)
- Data 8: The Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) announced on Tuesday that it would fire **51 of 75 employees** who had failed the internal test required to transition to civil service employment status. (TJP-27-05-2021)

According to van Leeuwen (2008), beneficiary social actors occur when the social actors are treated as the third party which got positive or negative benefits from the action. In other words, those data show that the employees are the parties who have reached the positive/negative "benefit" from the acts done by the actor/doer.

There are two steps to know whether the social actor gets the positive or negative benefit. The first is analyzing the doer/actor of each clause. Due to its' transitivity, the three data above are verbal processes through verb/verb phrase "say" at data 7 and "announced" at data 8. Since the process is verbal process, the doer is called Sayer. In data 7, the Sayer is the president since the pronoun "I" refers to the president who says the quoted. At data 8, the Sayer is "The Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK)". The Sayers have an active role in both clauses above. In contrast, "those who failed the test" at data 7 and "51 of 75 employees" at data 8 have passivated roles.

The second is analyzing lexical choice. From the data above, The Jakarta Post's choice is interesting to investigate. Data 7 used "to remedy," which emphasized the phrase "with training". Based on Online Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, "to remedy" means to provide or serve as a remedy for relief so that when it is combined with the word training, it reflects that the president as the head of the Indonesian government, personally, agreed to give the 75 employees training on Civic knowledge so that they can pass the test. Thus, at data 7, "those who failed the test" or the 75 employees get positive benefits because they get the second chance to pass the Civic test. At data 8, it used "would fire", which is emphasized by the qualifier "who had failed the internal test required to transition to civil service employment status". "would" as finite verb and "fire" as lexical verb. Based on Online Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, "fire" means to dismiss from a position. The word "fire" with the qualifier "who had failed the internal test..." shows that the dismissal of 51 employees is the consequent of their failure in the test. Thus, the 51 employees get the negative benefit of their dismissal. Data 9 used "to remedy", which is emphasized with the phrase "with training". Based on Online Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, "to remedy" means to provide or serve as a remedy for relief

so that when it is combined with the word training, it reflects that the president as the head of the Indonesian government, personally, agreed to give the 75 employees training on Civic knowledge so that they can pass the test. Thus, at data 7, "those who failed the test" or the 75 employees get positive benefits because they get the second chance to pass the Civic test.

Based on the whole data, out of 31 passivated beneficialisation, 17 data show negative benefit, and 14 data show positive benefit. It reflects that The Jakarta Post represent the 75 KPK employees in a negative role related to the KPK's decision on their test failure. On another side, The Jakarta Post represent them positively associated with the president's respond to give them training and not to use the test result as the primary consideration to dismiss them from their position.

Besides passivation-beneficialization, the dismissed KPK employees also realized in the form of passivation-subjection. It means that The Jakarta Post represent them as an object in the representation. It is in line with Leeuwen Theory (2008) which explains that this strategy occurs when the social actors function as objects in material process, a phenomenon in mental process, etc. the data is as follows:

Data 9: KPK deputy head Alexander Marwata said that out of the 75 employees who took the test, **only 24** had been selected for further civic education training to achieve civil servant status. (TJP-27-05-2021)

Data 10: The rest would be dismissed, as their assessors had deemed them unfit to receive additional career development support. (TJP-27-05-2021) (TJP-28-05-2021)

Just as the nominalization, passivation subjection is the strategy to drive the readers not to focus on the actor/doer but the object of

representation. Due to its' transitivity, both data 9 and 10 are verbal processes through the verb "said". Although there is no found verb/verbal phrase at data 10, it is the following sentence of data 9. Data 10 is included in the verbiage of the verb "said" at data 9. Thus, the one who has an active role is KPK deputy head Alexander Marwata as Sayer. At data 9, The Jakarta Post used the verbal phrase "had been selected for further civic education training". The lexical verb is selected. Based on Online Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, "select" means to choose (as by fitness or excellence) from a number or group. It shows that out of 75 employees, only 24 considered having civic education training. It means that the rest were not. The 24 employees get a positive benefit, but the 51 employees get a negative benefit. Data 10 emphasized the previous clause in which The Jakarta post used the verbal phrase "would be dismissed". The lexical verb is "dismissed". Based on the Online Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, "dismiss" means to remove from position or service. It is clearly that "the rest" or the 51 employees get a negative benefit.

Based on the whole data, out of 12 data of passivation-subjection, 10 in negative benefit while 2 in neutral one. The Jakarta Post's dominant use of passivated role to represent the dismissed KPK employees shows that The Jakarta Post tends to drive the readers to be more focused on the dismissal of KPK employees' case, not to KPK as the one who responsible for the decision on its' dismissal. Although there found an active role, the dominant-negative role of the 75 KPK employees indicates that they get the negative benefit due to their powerless on complaining or denying the dismissal decision.

### **Personalization-Impersonalization**

In addition to role allocation, The Jakarta Post also uses another strategy in representing the 75 KPK employees.

Whether it is represented as human or not (personalization or impersonalization). There is no impersonalization found. Based on the data, there found 36 personalization data: 31 determination (specific) data in the form of classification and five indetermination (unspecific) data.

Data 11: **Some employees** taking the test claimed it was not relevant to their work at the KPK as it contained questions related to religious beliefs and ethnic affairs. (TJP-18-05-2021)

Data 12: Previously, **some employees, including senior investigator Novel Baswedan**, were alleged to have been exposed to radical ideologies and to be part of a conservative Muslim and anti-Jokowi "Taliban" faction inside the KPK. (TJP-19-05-2021-1) (TJP-19-05-2021-2)

At data 11, "some employees" is indetermination. There is no explicit reference to who some employees are. In this case, The Jakarta Post might be due to unclear information on all the names of employees that claimed the test was not relevant to their work at the KPK. Thus, the journalist of The Jakarta Post prefers an indetermination strategy to a determination strategy. In data 12, the journalist also used "some employees," but then it is followed by post modifying "including senior investigator Novel Baswedan." Like data 11, it might be unclear information about the names of the alleged KPK employees who have been exposed to radical ideologies and to be part of a conservative Muslim and anti-Jokowi "Taliban" faction inside the KPK. But addition of post modifying, the journalist gives clear information that one of them is senior investigator Novel Baswedan. The use of indetermination strategy is due to still-limited information gained by the journalist or confidentiality information maintained by KPK employees.

In the determination strategy, there are found 31 data. All are in the form of classification.

Data 13: “It’s no longer feasible to hold further training” for **the 51 employees**, whose assessment reports were “in the red”, Alexander said at Tuesday’s press conference. (TJP-28-05-2021)

Data 14: How controversial test seen as pretext to fire **top KPK employees** (TJP-24-05-2021)

In data 13, the journalist used the noun group “the 51 employees” followed by the qualifier “whose assessment reports were “in the red.” Due to its’ transitivity, the clause is verbal process. The Sayer is Alexander. Thus, the noun group “the 51 employees, whose assessment reports were “in the red” is a quote. It indicates the one who classifies is Alexander as the representative of the KPK. In this case, the journalist used a classification strategy based on the classification done by the KPK. Meanwhile, at data 14 the journalist used the noun group “top KPK employees.” Due to its’ transitivity, the clause is a mental process with the verb “seen.” At this data, the word “see” means thinking or regarding the test as controversial, and the aim of the test is to fire top KPK employees. In this case, data 14, shows the ideology of the journalist regarding the civic test. The cyberattack against suspended KPK employees and the supporters influences it.

### Genericisation-Specification

Based on the collected data, there is no Genericisation strategy found. But the journalist used specific strategies either in the form of Individualization or Assimilation. There are 6 Individualization data and 11 Assimilation in the form of Collectivization. The data are shown as follow:

Data 15: **Novel and Sujanarko** were among 75 employees who failed the test. (TJP-24-05-2021)

Data 16: “**We** question why the KPK chairman [Firli Bahuri] is so eager to dismiss **us** as KPK employees by using unclear [performance] indicators,” he said. (TJP-27-05-2021) (TJP-28-05-2021)

At data 15, The Jakarta Post represents two of the 75 KPK employees in individualization strategy. The journalist used this strategy to inform the most influential KPK employees as part of 75 employees who failed the test. In this case, The Jakarta Post stimulates the readers to think critically about the dismissal of KPK employees’ issue. Meanwhile, at data 18, The Jakarta Post used a collectivization strategy. Because the clause is the verbal process; related to the previous clause, the Sayer is Yudi Purnomo. It indicates that the journalist used a collectivization strategy based on the quote of Yudi Purnomo. The pronoun “we” and “us” at data 16 refer to the group of the dismissed KPK employees.

### CONCLUSION

The analysis above shows that The Jakarta Post represents the dismissed KPK employees in both exclusion and inclusion strategies, but inclusion is dominant. Due to the way text production includes the dismissed KPK employees, The Jakarta Post represents them negatively by using the words ‘dismiss,’ ‘fire,’ and ‘fail.’ Despite The Jakarta Post used active role allocation, the analysis shows that it is only related to efforts of the dismissed KPK employees to report the case to the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia and the National Commission on Human Rights. This effort is the way they took because they cannot solve this problem internally in the KPK. It shows the powerlessness of the dismissed KPK



employees in keeping their position as KPK employees. There also found other strategies: classification and specification in the form of individualization and collectivization. The Jakarta Post used a classification strategy to represent the dismissed KPK employees based on KPK's decision classification. In this case, The Jakarta Post has a tendency either to the leaders KPK or the dismissed KPK employees. The use of individualization indicates that The Jakarta Post represent some of the dismissed KPK employees to emphasize the important information and then quote their statement. It is in line with the use of collectivization to represent them as a collective group that The Jakarta Post quotes their statements.

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