

Ideological Shifts in Representing *Gemblak*: A Faircloughian Critical Discourse Analysis of Media and Fictional Texts

Ida Yeni Rahmawati,^{1,2*} Anang Santoso,² Moch. Syahri,² Rina Susi Cahyawati,³ Makenna Ritenour⁴

¹Department of Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, Ponorogo – Indonesia; ²Department of Indonesian Language Education,

Faculty of Letters, Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang – Indonesia;

³Department of Physics Education, Faculty of Science and Technology, Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang, Semarang – Indonesia;

⁴Peace Corps, Washington D.C., United States

***Corresponding Author:**

Email: ida.yeni.2202119@students.um.ac.id - Jl. Budi Utomo No. 10 Ponorogo, Jawa Timur 63471, Indonesia

Abstract: Ideological change in the representation of *gemblak* is an important issue in social discourse studies. This research uses Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the representation of *gemblak* in mass media and the novel *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks* by Enang Rokajat Asura. The research objective is to reveal the language and ideology that shape the image of *gemblak*. The method used is qualitative with a discourse analysis approach. Data in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences were collected through interviews and document studies. The results show that Detik News portrays *gemblak* positively as a figure who deserves respect, teaches politeness, and is good at socializing. In contrast, the novel frames *gemblak* as a negative figure, leading to bad judgment from society. This difference reflects the dynamics of power and changing social values in shaping the meaning of *gemblak*. In conclusion, mass media and fiction have different ideological constructions in representing *gemblak* in the public sphere.

Keywords: critical discourse; *gemblak*; ideology; language

Abstrak: Perubahan ideologis dalam representasi *gemblak* merupakan isu penting dalam kajian wacana sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) Fairclough untuk mengkaji representasi *gemblak* di media massa dan novel *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks* karya Enang Rokajat Asura. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengungkap bahasa dan ideologi yang membentuk citra *gemblak*. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan analisis wacana. Data berupa kata, frasa, klausa, dan kalimat dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan studi dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Detik News menggambarkan *gemblak* secara positif—sebagai sosok yang patut dihormati, mengajarkan sopan santun, dan pandai bersosialisasi. Sebaliknya, novel tersebut membingkai *gemblak* sebagai sosok negatif, yang berujung pada penilaian buruk dari masyarakat. Perbedaan ini mencerminkan dinamika kekuasaan dan perubahan nilai-nilai sosial dalam membentuk makna *gemblak*. Kesimpulannya, media massa dan fiksi memiliki konstruksi ideologis yang berbeda dalam merepresentasikan *gemblak* di ranah publik.

Kata Kunci: wacana kritis; *gemblak*; ideologi; bahasa

A. Introduction

Critical discourse analysis is increasingly recognized and used as an approach or even a method in language research.¹ The unstoppable era of democracy makes it easier to convey all aspirations, not just opinions. This analysis does not merely analyze language.² In this case, language is used to connect with the context in terms of the specific goals and practices of the discourse. This is, of course, inseparable from hegemony, or the purpose of power, which is implicitly conveyed through discourse. The focus of this research is to describe the language of discourse and ideology in the novel *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks*³ by Enang Rokajat Asura, and mass media.

Discourse analysis in this case does not only see speech or writing as mere speech. Discourse is also considered an action. Discourse here is used as something that is used to persuade, influence, refute, or be persuasive. Then, discourse in this case is also interpreted as something that is expressed consciously, meaning that there is a deliberate factor that is carried out for a certain purpose.⁴ Discourse in this case is also seen as “symptoms,” or known by the term “symptoms,” of a bigger problem that is not just a mere phenomenon of text and utterances. In the application of critical discourse analysis, linguistic tools are used, such as Halliday's functional-systemic linguistic tool, Yoedo and Mustofa, which aims to describe the ownership of linguistic structures in a text.⁵

Ideology, according to Fairclough in Shaheen et al., is a meaning that serves power; more precisely, it is the construction of meaning that is useful in producing and transforming dominant relationships. In this case, ideology is

¹ Ke Liu and Fang Guo, “A Review on Critical Discourse Analysis,” *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 6, no. 5 (2016): 1076, <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0605.23>.

² Majid Amerian and Fateme Esmaili, “A Brief Overview of Critical Discourse Analysis in Relation to Gender Studies in English Language Textbooks,” *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 6, no. 5 (2015): 1033, <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0605.16>.

³ Eer Asura, *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks* (Jakarta: Mizan Publika, 2008).

⁴ Soe Marlar L. Win, “Using Folktales for Language Teaching,” *The English Teacher* 44, no. 2 (2015): 74–83, <https://meltajournals.com/index.php/TET/article/view/85>.

⁵ Yuli Christiana Yoedo and Ali Mustofa, “The Use of Indonesian Folklores to Develop Young Learners' Analytical and Critical Reasoning Skills,” *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching* 10, no. 2 (2022): 102, <https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v10i2.5001>.

also interpreted as an abstract system that functions as a social adhesive that binds society together by strengthening the coherence of the social order. Ideology can also be interpreted as a condition that can lead to uncertainty, which results in the creation of awareness of ideological existence.⁶

Critical discourse analysis, according to Norman Fairclough's view, focuses on media language, where the text structure in media discourse plays an important role in interpreting it contextually. The use of media language is essentially used to analyze hidden and obvious structures of domination, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language.⁷

In line with this, the characteristics of discourse analysis are divided into four categories according to Rahimi and Shariffar.⁸ These four characteristics define discourse as an act that is seen as influencing, debating, persuading, supporting, and showing how that expression is realized and controlled. The second characteristic is that the context of critical discourse analysis also considers the background, situation, and social conditions. The third aspect is history, and the fourth is the element of power in the analysis. In the Fairclough model, discourse analysis is divided into three dimensions, according to Santoso.⁹ These three dimensions include the text dimension, the discourse practice dimension, and the sociocultural practice dimension.

The novel, in this case, is a literary work that contains the experiences of people's lives that are packaged imaginatively.¹⁰ In this case, novels are also formed from various kinds of problems that are deliberately collaborated on

⁶ Uzma Shaheen, Naureen Mumtaz, and Kiran Khalid, "Exploring Gender Ideology in Fairy Tales - a Critical Discourse Analysis," *European Journal of Social Sciences* 7, no. 2 (2019): 28–42.

⁷ Renugah Ramanathan and Bee Hoon Tan, "Application of Critical Discourse Analysis in Media Discourse Studies," *3L: Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies* 21, no. 2 (2015): 57–68, <https://ejournal.ukm.my/3l/article/view/9183>; Qin Xie, "Critical Discourse Analysis of News Discourse," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 8, no. 4 (2018): 399, <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0804.06>.

⁸ Elahe Rahimi and Masoud Shariffar, "Critical Discourse Analysis and Its Implication in English Language Teaching: A Case Study of Political Text," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 5, no. 3 (2015): 504, <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0503.08>.

⁹ Anang Santoso, "Jejak Halliday dalam Linguistik Kritis dan Analisis Wacana Kritis," *Bahasa dan Seni* 36, no. 11 (2008): 1–14.

¹⁰ Ramanathan and Tan, "Application of Critical Discourse Analysis in Media Discourse Studies"; Liu and Guo, "A Review on Critical Discourse Analysis."

and created by the author as a form of representation of real life.¹¹ Discourse analysis, in this case, besides being able to retrieve data from the mass media, can also draw from the novel.

Discourse should be viewed simultaneously. Discourse dimensions, in this case, have three building elements.¹² These three elements are inseparable. The first of the three elements is that discourse is a language text in the form of spoken or written. Second, discourse is interpreted as a form of text production, and the second element is interpretation. The third element, discourse, also means sociocultural praxis, in which changes in society and cultural institutions determine form and meaning.¹³ Critical discourse analysis basically analyzes these three things.

To obtain data for analyzing discourse, it can be searched from various discourses contained in the mass media, both electronic and print media.¹⁴ However, it does not rule out the fact that data can be obtained from literary works in the form of novels. Based on these media, ideology can be conveyed explicitly through the words it uses. This shows that mass media and novels can be used as a medium for spreading the ideology of the rulers. Electronic media that usually convey news about rulers and powers are news.detik.com, antaranews.com, Kompas.com, and so on.¹⁵

¹¹ Romel Noverino, "Kajian Analisis Wacana Kritis Intertekstualitas (Interdiskursivitas) pada Terjemahan yang Menggunakan Bahasa Gaul," in *Prosiding PESAT (Psikologi, Ekonomi, Sastra, Arsitektur & Teknik Sipil) - Universitas Gunadarma - Depok - 20-21 Oktober 2015* (Depok: Universitas Gunadarma Depok, 2015), 108–16.

¹² Sangwa Utomo and Moses Pandin, "Changes in Foreign and Modern Culture in the 21st Century which Drivers Culture in East Java Seen from a Historical Perspective," *Preprints*, June 10, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202106.0281.v1>.

¹³ Kirana Mahdiah Sulaeman and Mustabsyrotul Ummah Mustofa, "Potret Paradigma Developmentalisme Baru Jokowi dalam Film Dokumenter 'Wadas Waras' (2021): Kajian Analisis Wacana Kritis Norman Fairclough," *JISIPOL: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik* 6, no. 2 (2022): 21–42, <https://ejournal.unibba.ac.id/index.php/jisipol/article/view/805>.

¹⁴ Siti Nur Shabrina, Zamzani, and Teguh Setiawan, "Analisis Teks Hoaks Seputar Informasi Bank: Kajian Bahasa Perspektif Analisis Wacana Kritis dan Linguistik Forensik," *Kembara: Journal of Scientific Language Literature and Teaching* 8, no. 2 (2022): 492–507, <https://doi.org/10.22219/kembara.v8i2.21478>.

¹⁵ Ni Putu Dewi Eka Yanti, Ida Bagus Putrayasa, and I Wayan Artika, "Analisis Wacana Kritis Teun A. Van Dijk pada Teks Pidato Klaim Kemenangan Pilpres 2019," *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran* 3, no. 3 (2019): 356–362, <https://ejournal.undiksha.ac.id/index.php/jipp/article/view/21846>.

Critical discourse analysis has previously been researched by Fraser¹⁶ a review of the book by Christina Sunardi.¹⁷ The results of his research convey that the role of the media in this case cannot be separated from ideological practices. The meaning is that the role of the media varies when presenting a report using certain constructions that can attract the interest of its readers. The media explains the various realities that appear with various characters, both in the selection of titles and in the target language used. Online media News.detik.com, in this case, is an internet-based news site that has been acquired by TransCrop under the auspices of Chairul Tanjung since August 3, 2011. This media piece writes about celebrity news on the website news.detik.com, presented in an up-to-date manner, packaged in a relaxed manner, and using short word choices that are easy for readers to understand. Furthermore, research has been conducted by Annisa et al.¹⁸ that conveys that the media, in this case, news.detik.com, can construct meaning in every news report. In this case, the media have a very wide scope to determine the direction of their views on all government policies. The media, in this case, is used as an important reference today. This aims to increase public literacy, so the contents are also expected to become accurate, objective, and educational reference content.

Another study, which is related to critical discourse analysis, however, obtained this data from novels. This research was conducted by Agustin explains that the discourse analysis of this text is carried out in three stages, namely the stages of text representation, discursive practice, and socio-cultural.¹⁹ At this stage of text representation, what is done is label the characters, and then an analysis of the meaning is seen based on the active sentences and conversations

¹⁶ Jennifer Fraser, "Indonesia. Stunning Males and Powerful Females: Gender and Tradition in East Javanese Dance by Christina Sunardi Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015. Pp. 218. Maps, Plates, Chart, Musical Figures, Notes, Bibliography, Index,," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 48, no. 2 (2017): 328–29, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246341700042X>.

¹⁷ Christina Sunardi, *Stunning Males and Powerful Females: Gender and Tradition in East Javanese Dance* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2015).

¹⁸ Arhetta Putri Annisa, Andini Dwi, and Harfi Azkal Azkiya, "Analisis Isi Penolakan Publik terhadap Tenaga Medis di Detik.Com," *JIMSI: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Ilmu Komunikasi* 1, no. 1 (2021): 32–41, <http://jurnal.utu.ac.id/JIMSI/article/view/3451/>.

¹⁹ Dewi Khofsoh Istianatul Agustin, "Analisis Wacana Kritis pada Novel Ksatria Pembela Kurawa Narasoma Karya Pitoyo Amrih," *Skriptorium* 2, no. 1 (2013): 61–76.

that are displayed, and is able to produce cohesive and coherent meanings. The second stage is discursive practice, in which the author looks at the background. The profession undertaken, the relationship between authors, editors, and publishers, and the power practices give rise to a more dominant group. Ideology, in this case, leads to the figure of a king who has power, and then he justifies any means to realize his desire to rule the country. Then, in the third stage, namely socio-cultural, looking at the political, media, and social systems in terms of the context of the situation, the text can be said and understood as an event.

The novelty of this research lies in two aspects, namely the aspect of the object of study and the aspect of the analysis approach. The object of research on the novel "*Gemblak*" has not been widely touched upon in academic studies, especially regarding the practice of *gemblak* being formed and interpreted in the realm of literature and digital mass media. Ideology, power relations, and the construction of meaning from both sources are interesting studies in critical discourse analysis. Thus, it is clear that this research not only adds to the treasury of literary science but can also be used to develop cross-media methodology in discourse and cultural studies.

The scientific reason behind this research is the existence of ideological differences that emerge both from the novel entitled "*Gemblak*" and the text of articles from various mass media, which can then influence public views. Some of these researchers have explored the relationship between language and media, in this case is very close, as according to Santoso, the mass media provide sources of linguistic data. The mass media are an important linguistic institution. The characteristics of media language are interesting to observe, both in terms of lingual features, active and passive forms, transitivity, and so on. The mass media are also a social institution where, behind the point of view that we understand, there is a complicated relationship.²⁰ Furthermore, since in this study what is discussed is from two different camps, namely the mass media and the novel, according to Ningsih et al., it is stated that the analysis of the novel that is most important here is ideology, which is used as the central concept.²¹

²⁰ Santoso, "Jejak Halliday dalam Linguistik Kritis dan Analisis Wacana Kritis."

²¹ Wahyu Ningsih, T. Silvana Sinar, and T. Thyryhaya Zein, "Analisis Ideologi pada Novel 'Ayat-Ayat Cinta 2': Analisis Wacana Kritis Model Van Dijk," *Medan Makna: Jurnal Ilmu Kebahasaan dan Kesastraan* 17, no. 2 (2019): 99–110, <https://doi.org/10.26499/mm.v17i2.2133>.

B. Method

This research uses descriptive and qualitative methods. This method is based on the presence of vocabulary both in writing and orally, based on visible actions.²² This method is used to describe the language and ideology contained in the novel "*Gemblak*" by Enang Rokajat Asura²³ and mass media, namely news.detik.com,²⁴ antaranews.com,²⁵ and liputan6.com.²⁶ While the analysis used is a critical discourse analysis of the Fairclough model, which is divided into three dimensions, these three dimensions are the textual dimension (microstructural), the discursive dimension (mesostructural), and the practical socio-cultural dimension (macrostructural).²⁷ Data collection techniques in this study were interviews and documentation analysis. The corpus here includes a corpus of media texts (mass media and novels) as well as a corpus of oral texts transcribed from interviews. The data source used comes from the novel "*Gemblak*" by Enang Rokajat Asura and the mass media, namely news.detik.com, antaranews.com, and liputan6.com. This novel was once controversial in the past, because of the description of the figure of *gemblak*, who is homosexual, and as if the practice was accepted in the context of local culture. This certainly became controversial to culture and religion, which eventually became a topic of discussion in various circles.

Then, the approach used is critical discourse analysis (CDA), which refers to the model that has been developed by Norman Fairclough. The data in this study are in the form of words and sentences that contain diction, metaphors, action processes, and coherence that display the thoughts of the novel and the

²² Miza Nina Adlini et al., "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (2022): 974–80, <https://doi.org/10.33487/edumaspul.v6i1.3394>.

²³ Asura, *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks*.

²⁴ Charoli Pebrianti, "Ini Cerita Miring Gemblak di Ponorogo," Detik News, January 13, 2018, <https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-timur/d-3813212/ini-cerita-miring-gemblak-di-ponorogo>; Charolin Pebrianti, "Tradisi Gemblak Erat dengan Kesenian Reog Ponorogo," Detik News, January 13, 2018, <https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-timur/d-3812813/tradisi-gemblak-erat-dengan-kesenian-reog-ponorogo>.

²⁵ Dewanto Samodro, "Reog Ponorogo (3-Habis) - Warok sebagai Karakter Masyarakat Ponorogo," Antara News, August 30, 2019, <https://www.antaranews.com/berita/1036722/reog-ponorogo-3-habis-warok-sebagai-karakter-masyarakat-ponorogo>.

²⁶ Dian Kurniawan, "Sindiran di Balik Lakon Penari Jathil Reog Ponorogo," Liputan6, January 24, 2018, <https://www.liputan6.com/regional/read/3236121/sindiran-di-balik-lakon-penari-jathil-reog-ponorogo?page=2>.

²⁷ Manotar Tampubolon, *Metode Penelitian* (Padang: Global Eksekutif Teknologi, 2023), 42.

mass media. The analysis steps include the first step, identification of keywords, lexical analysis, grammatical analysis (transitive, modality, and sentence structure), the second step includes text production, text distribution, text interpretation, the third step includes analysis of socio-cultural practices, including socio-historical context, power and ideological relations, and social implications. Data was taken from several articles from the mass media and quotes from one novel. The validity of the data in this study was determined by source triangulation and technique triangulation. The credibility of the data is tested by checking the data from interviews and documentation analysis.

C. Results and Discussion

Three Dimensions of Discourse Analysis Result of the Text about *Gemblak*

Based on an in-depth analysis of the text contained in the novel "*Gemblak*" by Enang Rokajat Asura (ERA) and in news.detik.com, antaranews.com, and liputan6.com, a detailed description of discourse analysis and ideology can be found in the following discussion section.

Dimensions of Textual Practice

The analysis of this textual dimension is, in fact, more focused on the use of language contained in the novel "*Gemblak*" and in the media of news.detik.com, antaranews.com, and liputan6.com. Through this textual dimension, the ideology used both in the novel and in the newspaper can be known.

The use of text in the novel "*Gemblak*" by Enang Rokajat Asura contains colonial ideology. Where in the novel is described about injustice described, colonizing small people, etc. Then, from time to time, the ideology fades as time progresses. The ideology that people used to understand about the practice of "unification" was a colonial ideology; now that ideology has changed into a moderate ideology. This can be observed in the following quote:

ERA: "Why let young people be victims of the warok, and why are matchmakers allowed to hunt their prey?" Isn't letting all of that happen the same as allowing all of that to happen, which is the same as allowing unrighteousness to continue?"²⁸

²⁸ Asura, *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks*, 140.

Victim is a type of noun that has the meaning of people, animals, etc. that suffer (death, and so on) as a result of an incident, an evil act, and so on (KBBI). This data explains that *gemblak* was a sacrifice from *warok* in ancient times, in accordance with the ideology found in the novel "*Gemblak*" by Enang Rokajat Asura.

ERA: "That means, behind all that small, Mr. Lik. Again and again, we claim to be religious people, but do something that is contrary to our religion. Right, Mr. Lik?"²⁹

Small (*kecil*)—according to KBBI—is a type of adjective where the meaning of the word is unimportant, worthless, and so on.³⁰ Say "small" here, it is not a denotative meaning, which means small in shape or form, but rather shows that "we," in this case Sapto and Mr. Lik, are small people or people who do not have any power, which in the end creates thoughts of inferiority. Next, "small," the second, shows the figurative meaning that Sapto and Mr. Lik feel even smaller before God, which means that Sapto and Pak Lik here feel guilty when they claim to be religious people but do something that is clearly against religion.

ERA: "But of course it's even bigger what the waroks are doing, and we just let it happen. Apart from the problem of tradition, this is a clear violation, and oddly enough, we still let all this go on from generation to generation."³¹

The sentence structure shows that there was oppression and violations committed by *warok* against youths, in this case *gemblak*, which is known by the public in general, then reinforced by an explanatory sentence that states, "it's strange that we still let all this go on for generations."

The next data is from the mass media, news.detik.com, antaranews.com, and liputan6.com.. Along with the times, developments in information, religious teachings, and education have shifted ideology to the figures of "*gemblak* and *warok*". This ideological change, where the former "*warok*" figure was an evil figure and had a colonial ideology, was followed by a change in ideology towards a more moderate one. The data that can prove the change in ideology is as follows:

²⁹ Asura, 136.

³⁰ "Kecil," in *KBBI Online*, n.d., <https://kbbi.web.id/kecil>.

³¹ Asura, *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks*, 140.

“Meanwhile, Sudirman, who was also a *gemblak* in the 1970s, admitted he was even privileged when he became *gemblak*. He lives like a celebrity; all accessories, ranging from clothes, sandals, socks, and even haircuts, must be special.”³²

This data uses the term “privileged,” which comes from the word special, which is included in the type of adjective. Specialized here are the affixes *di-* and *-kan* (*digemblakkan*) to special words that express a causative meaning, which means to be more special, more than the others, or extraordinary.

“Even though in the old days it was difficult, yes, it's not like that with *gemblak*; everything has to be matching from top to bottom,” he explained.³³

Whereas in this data, there is word matching, which means in Indonesian it is suitable. The word suitable is a type of adjective whose meaning is equivalent, in accordance, compatible, and good (decent). This means that *gemblak* in the modern era is treated well, for example, by treating them as best as possible, starting from the top, which means clothes, down to the bottom, which means footwear (sandals or shoes) that match and are appropriate.

“Even when he was a *gemblak*, he received many lessons, ranging from dance to jathilan, politeness, and social values from the community. “In the past, school was difficult, so if the child becomes fat, it's good, even respectable,” concluded the art teacher at SMPN 1 Jetis Ponorogo.”³⁴

This data is waiting for the active sentence structure, which shows the subject as the actor. *Gemblak* is meant as an actor in this text. This data illustrates that *gemblak* has received many lessons, meaning that *gemblak* here are treated well and deserve access to education. Thus, his status as a *gemblak* becomes more respectable.

Discourse Practice Dimensions

In discourse practice, the stages of interpreting the relationship between text and context are related. This analysis is done by looking at the use of prior knowledge, both in the use of language and in situations. This interpreting process is done by looking for meaning and relationships contained in the text

³² Kurniawan, “Sindiran di Balik Lakon Penari Jathil Reog Ponorogo”; Pebrianti, “Ini Cerita Miring Gemblak di Ponorogo”; Putu Intan, “Cerita Mantan Gemblak Sempat Dibully Karena Menari Reog,” *Detik Travel*, November 14, 2022, <https://travel.detik.com/travel-news/d-6405407/cerita-mantan-gemblak-empat-dibully-karena-menari-reog>.

³³ Pebrianti, “Ini Cerita Miring Gemblak di Ponorogo.”

³⁴ Pebrianti, “Tradisi Gemblak Erat dengan Kesenian Reog Ponorogo.”

and context. The result of the interpretation of the figures of *gemblak* and *warok* in the novel "*Gemblak*" and online mass media is as follows:

ERA: "Why let young people be victims of the warok, and why are matchmakers allowed to hunt their prey?" Isn't letting all that happen the same as letting all that happen mean the same as letting the untruth continue?"³⁵

ERA: "That means, behind all that, we are small, Mr. Lik. It feels even smaller: we claim to be religious people, but we are doing something that is clearly against our religion. *Ya kan, Pak Lik?*"³⁶

ERA: "But of course it's even bigger what the waroks are doing, and we just let it happen. Apart from the problem of tradition, this is a clear violation, and it's strange that we still let all this go on for generations."³⁷

From the narrative, it is clear that in the novel "*Gemblak*," the role of *gemblak* is very disadvantaged. *Gemblak* is a young man who becomes a victim of *warok*. *Gemblak* in this novel is narrated like a warok "servant" messenger. *Gemblak* is like someone who is low and does not have any power. In this novel, *warok* is described as a figure who violates religious norms. In this case, the community understands this upbringing, but the community seems to close its eyes, and it has been going on for generations.

ERA: "Families that are lacking in our village certainly are not just my family. Also, there are a lot of handsome young people here."³⁸

ERA: "I'm the only victim, Grandfather. My sister should not feel it," Sapto emphasized. Grandmother Legong nodded, indicating that she understood the way of thinking of her foster child.³⁹

From the narrative, it is clearly illustrated that this *gemblak* is a handsome young man taken from an economically disadvantaged family.

ERA: "Yes, Mr. I'm not comfortable here anymore. I don't want to be invited like that. It's disgusting.... Better to just die," Prapto complained. His gaze wandered far away, penetrating the emptiness of the distant limits."⁴⁰

ERA: "So far, Prapto only knows that the hairy Wiseso, and his lust for exploding when he's alone, have a gut weapon, namely in the form of a whip that can emit sparks when it hits its target."⁴¹

³⁵ Asura, *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks*, 136.

³⁶ Asura, 136.

³⁷ Asura, 140.

³⁸ Asura, 137.

³⁹ Asura, 157.

⁴⁰ Asura, 174.

⁴¹ Asura, 175.

ERA: "Second, under any pretext, the practice of herding cannot be justified. Just disband that *sinoman* organization. That same-sex union is damned!"⁴²

Based on the narrative, it strengthens *warok's* character as a ruler. *Gemblak* figures in this case not only get coercive treatment and injustice due to poor economic conditions, but also immoral treatment. *Gemblak* is treated as the fulfillment of *warok's* desires. In this case, *Gemblak* is a handsome young man, and *warok* is a strong male figure. *Gemblak* seems to be a figure who has to obey and satisfy *warok's* lust. If *gemblak* doesn't comply with *warok's* wishes, then *warok* may get angry at any time and take even more sadistic actions using his gut weapon.

ERA: "On another occasion, Wiseso's mind changed with a new understanding. When he thought back to the fact that Sapto is an ex-gemblak, a jongos, lustful, and a child of the devil who had dared to take his daughter away and even then dared to marry her to the magistrate's guardian, pride and heartache again controlled his thoughts and feelings."⁴³

ERA: "The bastard's body that has robbed so many young people like you, who are deliberately kept away from your world, the world of children, only to satisfy his lust. You understand what I'm saying?"⁴⁴

ERA: "Not giving up, honey! But upholding justice is something we can do. Not planning justice that we cannot uphold. Is not demanding justice from others."⁴⁵

The narrative reinforces the description of *gemblak* as a colonized person due to Wiseso's statement that Sapto was a former *gemblak*, a servant, a satiator, and a child of the devil. *Gemblak* is considered only a gratification of *warok's* lust. Meanwhile, in the mutual statement here, the former *gemblak* (Sapto) has started to dare to rebel against *warok*, and Sapto wants to uphold justice.

Based on the analytical description of the *Gemblak* novel, it is clear that the figure of *gemblak* in the past was considered a negative figure, a servant figure, a servant, or just a mere lust gratifier. *Gemblak*, in the past, was a handsome young man who came from an underprivileged family. Thus, like it or not, *gemblak* here wants to serve all of *warok's* needs, both daily needs and even sexual needs, where in the end, homosexual practices occur, as stated in the title of the novel, "*Gemblak*".

⁴² Asura, 182.

⁴³ Asura, 183.

⁴⁴ Asura, 186.

⁴⁵ Asura, 241.

The practice of oppression and injustice in this novel is seen from the narrative that appears: Sapto, the former *gemblak*, wants to uphold justice and prevent oppression in the past for the future of the youth in the village. At that time, it was as if *gemblak* only had the right to serve *warok*; there were no other activities such as taking education, studying religion, and so on. *Gemblak* was only told to serve *warok* if he wanted his life and that of his family to be fulfilled. In this case, *warok* (Wiseso) will be furious if the *gemblak* does not serve properly according to his wishes. Thus, it can be concluded that the existence of the figure of *gemblak* at that time had an unfavorable connotation. According to encyclopedia sources, the meaning of the word “*gemblak*” in the past was a handsome man who wanted to live with a *warok* for two years. *Gemblak* here proposes using cattle or cultivated rice fields. The dowry that was used to propose to *gemblak* was given to the *gemblak* family, who then lived together with the *warok*. *Warok*, in this case, is a figure of *Kanuragan* processor who, to achieve supernatural powers, must “fast women” or not have intercourse with women. *Warok* eventually had a relationship with a boy aged 11–15 called *gemblak*.

Furthermore, along with the times, this ideology continues to grow. People are getting smarter in accepting all behavior or while based on data from news.detik.com and antaranews.com, it is described in the following data.

“So far, what the public understands is that *gemblak* is identical in a negative direction, namely, the homosexual tradition. There is a handsome boy who has lived with the *warok* community for two years. Meanwhile, the parents of the children who are bullied receive wages in the form of cultivated fields or an ox.”⁴⁶

“*Warok*, who usually had a lot of wealth, was finally able to buy *gemblakan*, even though it was expensive. Because the *gemblakan* has a contract for one to two years with a dowry of one cow aged 2.5 years or the cultivated rice field for the *gemblak*’s parents, this is official because there is a proposal and there is an agreement.”⁴⁷

Based on these data, it is described that there was a practice of shepherding in the past, where *gemblak* in the past was identical in a negative direction, namely the homosexual tradition, where the figure of *gemblak* was

⁴⁶ Samdro, “Reog Ponorogo (3-Habis) - Warok Sebagai Karakter Masyarakat Ponorogo.”

⁴⁷ Pebrianti, “Ini Cerita Miring Gemblak di Ponorogo.”

also likened to a human who was bought and sold or could be mortgaged with a cow or cultivated fields.

“Meanwhile, Sudirman, who was also a *gemblak* in the 1970s, admitted he was even privileged when he became *gemblak*. He lives like a celebrity; all accessories, ranging from clothes, sandals, socks, and even haircuts, must be special.”⁴⁸

“Though in the old days it was difficult, isn’t it so with *gemblak*, everything should match from top to bottom?” he explained.⁴⁹

“Even when he was a *gemblak*, he received many lessons, ranging from dance to jathilan, politeness, and social values from the community.” “In the past, school was difficult, so if the child becomes fat, it’s actually good, even respectable,” concluded the art teacher at SMPN 1 Jetis Ponorogo.⁵⁰

This data also explains that as time progresses, the figure of *gemblak* gets different treatment, of course, better treatment. This form of good treatment, for example, began with paying attention to the clothes, sandals, or shoes that were used to match. Furthermore, the figure of *gemblak* has also begun to be allowed to go to school; in the old days, school was something that was expensive, but when becoming a *gemblak*, it became a way to be able to pursue education for the less fortunate. Thus, the impression of *gemblak* is increasingly positive, and when someone becomes a *gemblak*, it is an honor.

The Social-practical Dimension

Social practice in discourse analysis is seen as causing an interrelated relationship between events that are detached from reality and social structure.⁵¹ At this stage, what is done is to give ownership of the linguistic aspects of the vocabulary of the political text at the “descriptive” stage. Then, the next stage is interpreting the relationship between the text and the context of the situation, as well as inter-textual interpretation at the “interpretation” stage, as described below:

⁴⁸ Kurniawan, “Sindiran di Balik Lakon Penari Jathil Reog Ponorogo”; Pebrianti, “Ini Cerita Miring Gemblak di Ponorogo.”

⁴⁹ Pebrianti, “Ini Cerita Miring Gemblak di Ponorogo.”

⁵⁰ Pebrianti, “Tradisi Gemblak Erat dengan Kesenian Reog Ponorogo.”

⁵¹ Genta Maghvira, “Analisis Wacana Kritis pada Pemberitaan Tempo.co Tentang Kematian Taruna STIP JAKARTA,” *Jurnal The Messenger* 9, no. 2 (2017): 120–30, <https://doi.org/10.26623/themessenger.v9i2.463>.

ERA: "Second, under any pretext, the practice of herding cannot be justified. Just disband that sinoman organization. That same-sex union is damned!"⁵²

This data is obtained from the novel *Gemblak* by Enang Rokajat Asura.

"Even when he was a *gemblak*, he received many lessons, ranging from dance to jathilan, politeness, and social values, from the community. "In the past, school was difficult, so if the child becomes fat, it's good, even respectable," concluded the art teacher at SMPN 1 Jetis Ponorogo.

While this data is obtained from news.detik.com.⁵³

Situationally, regarding the two statements above, it shows that there has been a change in statements where, in the past, being a *gemblak* was not justified because it led to cursed same-sex associations, which certainly violated religious and social norms. Meanwhile, the second statement shows that there is a change in the meaning of *gemblak* to be more positive. *Gemblak*, which previously did not receive an education, can now access education properly and is even facilitated from top to bottom, meaning from clothes to proper footwear.

Institutionally, the ERA statement in the novel "*Gemblak*", conveys to the reader that the figure of *gemblak* is a bad figure. In the past, *gemblak* was a figure who was traded for a cow or a rice field by his parents. *Gemblak* in the novel is also described as experiencing immoral acts, such as wanting to serve *warok*'s lust, and then homosexual acts occur. *Gemblak*'s statement in the novel is also clarified by the phrase, "I don't want to be invited to do that. It's disgusting.... It's better to just die." *Gemblak* at that time also could not access education, let alone know about religious norms. On the other hand, the reports from news.detik.com in 2018 and antaranews.com in 2019 stated that the title for *gemblak* had changed. In the two newspapers, it was explained that the figure of *gemblak* was now more respectable. *Gemblak* here are treated specially, getting quite good facilities, ranging from clothes to proper footwear. Even in terms of education, it was facilitated, and thus *warok*'s attitude became more moderate. This means that *warok* can humanize other humans; the meaning here is *gemblak*.

Furthermore, socially, based on the contents of the novel "*Gemblak*" by Enang Rukajat Asura, this can encourage public understanding of the figures of

⁵² Asura, *Gemblak: Tragedi Cinta Budak Homoseks*, 182.

⁵³ Pebrianti, "Tradisi *Gemblak* Erat dengan Kesenian Reog Ponorogo."

gemblak and *warok*, who commit immoral acts, namely homosexuality. In addition, at that time, there was a sale and purchase, or pawning, of young boys with a cow or rice fields cultivated by their parents because of poverty and a lack of understanding of education or religion. This is a manifestation of colonial ideology. Meanwhile, the news coverage on news.detik.com and antaranews.com contradicts the content contained in the novel "*Gemblak*". The two newspapers reported on an ideological change from what was originally a colonial ideology to a moderate ideology. The existence of the figure of *gemblak* in the reporting of the two newspapers is more positive. Modern society has led to the understanding that being a *gemblak* figure is honorable. In this case, *gemblak*'s figure is privileged, from clothing to footwear, and attention is paid to it as well as possible. In addition, regarding education, this is also a facility obtained by *gemblak*.

Pros and Cons of "*Gemblak*" from Various Points of View

In this section, the results of interviews with the author of the novel "*Gemblak*," namely Enang Rokajat Asura, become important. According to Enang Rukajat Asura (ERA), the author's intent and purpose in creating this article, the existence of a *gemblak* who satisfies the desires of a *warok* with the reason to keep his *Kanuragan* knowledge from being sluggish is justified from a *Kanuragan*'s point of view. However, when the issue is viewed from a cultural and religious point of view, it is clearly unjustifiable. As far as the author's understanding goes, having sex with someone of the same sex cannot be justified. In religious teachings, this is a disgraceful act, and it is clear that this act is not justified. That problem is offered by the author in the novel "*Gemblak*". Based on the author's explanation, it is reinforced by the results of research Silaswati⁵⁴ which states that the depiction of the homosexual phenomenon in a number of Indonesian novels has a relationship with trends that occur in reality. This is in accordance with the view that literature is a form of reflection of the reality that exists in society, so it can be said that the emergence of the homosexual phenomenon in the novel is a reflection of the existing reality.

⁵⁴ Diana Silaswati, "Analisis Wacana Kritis dalam Pengkajian Wacana," *Metamorfosis: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Indonesia dan Pengajarannya* 12, no. 1 (2019): 1-10, <https://doi.org/10.55222/metamorfosis.v12i1.124>.

In the course of subsequent history, the practice of herding did not exist. *Gemblak* is only a symbol that is an inseparable part of the existence of *warok* and Reyog Ponorogo. At the time the author did research on this matter, several former *waroks* had even become village heads. Based on this statement, it is in line with the results of research Ika⁵⁵ stating that the role of *warok* has decreased from a basic message that is really needed by the community to a role that is symbolic in nature. *Warok*, in this case, is more of a symbolic leader.

Warok is only a symbol without being followed by the substance of its role. Nowadays, war has become a political commodity.

Asri et al.,⁵⁶ also confirmed from the results of his research that the large amount of money that *warok* had to incur to contract *gemblak* proved the ability and wealth of a person so that it placed him in the upper class. This was done to show social class, bearing in mind that at that time the price of calves and land in this case, the rent was still very expensive. From an emic perspective, *warok's* deviant behavior can be classified as common. This is because the behavior of asking for *gemblak* was carried out consciously and accepted by the community at that time. This grazing tradition is a form of hegemonic practice among the upper class. Thus, based on the author's point of view and the results of Krismawati et al.'s research, they are interconnected, where only people in power and the upper class are able to contract *gemblak*, or in this case, *warok*.⁵⁷

ERA also said that the narrative is now continuing to develop after *gemblak* has become a symbol and not *gemblak* in the true sense, as happened in the period before 1960, after the official ban by the government. This is reinforced by the results of research Sofiani and Sombo stating that the *gemblakan* tradition is no longer being carried out because the community is

⁵⁵ Ika Nurhayani, "Humans and Animal Welfare in the Adventures of the Mouse-Deer: An Ecological Discourse Analysis," *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 11, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2316412>.

⁵⁶ Yasnur Asri and Yenni Hayati, "The Portrait of LGBT in Modern Indonesia Novels," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Language, Literature, and Education (ICLLE 2018)*, vol. 263 (Paris: Atlantis Press, 2018), 524–31, <https://doi.org/10.2991/iclle-18.2018.88>.

⁵⁷ Nia Ulfia Krismawati, Wanto Wanto, and Nunuk Suryani, "Eksistensi Warok dan Gemblak di Tengah Masyarakat Muslim Ponorogo Tahun 1960-1980," *Religió: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 8, no. 1 (2018): 116–38, <https://doi.org/10.15642/religio.v8i1.747>.

familiar with formal education and religious knowledge, which is marked by the many Islamic boarding schools such as Gontor, Mayak, and so on. *Gemblak* as a symbol, of course, cannot be separated from the existence of Reyog Ponorogo art.⁵⁸ The narrative that the figure of *gemblak* is seen as positive for introducing this art is, of course, not wrong. However, this ideology should also be accompanied by education about past shepherding traditions. This means that the general public will know about the process of change from the Reyog Art tradition (which includes *gemblak*, *Kanuragan*, and *warok*) to what it is today. The author also says that he doesn't know now whether a *warok* still needs *Kanuragan* knowledge or not. As time goes by, is a *gemblak* still taken from a boy who is slender, handsome, and from an economically disadvantaged background, or can anyone become a *gemblak*? Is the process of looking for *gemblak* candidates still using Assistance Matchmaker or not? Like it or not, this little bit of problem has to be published so that it will give birth to a complete narrative.

From his statement, it is clear that the ideology of the author is to make the narrative in the novel "*Gemblak*" consistent. This means that the author's point of view and the story narration he makes are actually the results of his research in real terms, which are then set forth in a novel. The author also strengthens his statement that when there is a change in ideology about *warok* and *gemblak* circulating in newspapers, it needs to be accompanied by complete and accurate information.

Meanwhile, the results of observations and interviews with the community in Ponorogo were taken on May 1, 2022, with a total of 34 respondents. In general, the answer is that the figure of *gemblak* is a handsome boy who is proposed to by *warok* by using an animal in the form of a cow or cultivating a rice field. *Gemblak*, according to most of the respondents, was a handsome boy who was proposed to by *warok* as a mere bedmate, only having bedmates and not having sexual relations. *Gemblak* here is likened to his assistant, who prepares all the *warok*'s needs. This is in line with the results of research Boellstorff⁵⁹ which

⁵⁸ Yulia Sofiani and Sugianti Somba, "Unraveling Marie Antoinette: A Critical Discourse Film Analysis," *Deiksis* 16, no. 3 (2024): 331–42, <https://doi.org/10.30998/deiksis.v16i3.23247>.

⁵⁹ Tom Boellstorff, "Against State Straightism: Five Principles for Including LGBT Indonesians," *E-International Relations*, 2016, <https://www.e-ir.info/2016/03/21/against-state-straightism-five-principles-for-including-lgbt-indonesians/>.

states that *gemblak* has a very important role in *warok*'s social life. *Gemblak*, as a loyal companion, prepares all the needs needed by *warok*, just like *warok*'s wife, because of her role as a substitute for a woman in *warok*'s life. Respondents also said that perhaps what *gemblak* and *warok* had done were homosexual acts, but the two of them had never identified themselves as homosexuals. *gemblak* just does his job professionally.

Respondents also said that *warok* is a character who is not evil; physically, he is scary and looks scary because of his bulging eyes, but actually, *warok* is a male knight and officer figure who has noble character, has authority, has very high *Kanuragan*, is respected, likes to help with his *Kanuragan* knowledge, and is flawless.

From the statements of the public in general, it is increasingly clear that there has been a shift in ideological understanding of the figures of *warok* and *gemblak*. Based on the results of observations, interviews, and document analysis, there is a change in the meaning of the *gemblak* and *warok* figures. This change is seen in the current era, where the public agrees with the statements made on news.detik.com and antaranews.com. Where people think that the figure of *warok* is a figure who is not evil, *warok* is a figure of a knight who is an officer, has noble character, has authority, has very high *Kanuragan*, is a respected figure, likes to help with his knowledge of *Kanuragan*, and is flawless. Meanwhile, the figure of *gemblak* is a handsome male figure who is proposed to by *warok* with a cow or working in a rice field to be his assistant. Based on these data, it is clear that the change in ideology, where previously the ideology that developed against the *warok* figure was a character who had a colonialist ideology, is now changing, and the community understands that *warok*'s ideology is now more moderate.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis of the novel "*Gemblak*" by Enang Rukajat Asura and two mass media, news.detik.com and antaranews.com, it can be concluded that the text used in the two mass media is not just a news text but a text that is argumentative and descriptive of the characters *gemblak* and *warok* from time to time. Media news.detik.com has a vision and mission as a mass media that is able to provide news quickly and reliably, and is able to

provide integrated services on political, economic, and social issues. Thus, it means that news.detik.com media is more dominant in reporting about *gemblak* and *warok* on political, economic, and social issues. This can be seen clearly in the news narrative written on news.detik.com, which leads the public to understand that without the power of the *warok*, the *gemblak* will not be able to live well. With *warok* contracting *gemblak* for two years with a cow or cultivating a rice field, the family will be able to live well. Meanwhile, the mass media site Antaranews.com has a vision and mission, namely to develop Indonesian journalism that educates, enlightens, and empowers within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, as well as providing information and communication products and services that are accurate, reliable, and profitable in the multimedia field. This can be seen from the content of the news written in the media on Antaranews.com, which not only conveys information but also educates and enlightens its readers.

Furthermore, this can be seen from the news on Antaranews.com, which is more complete in explaining the history of *warok*. Meanwhile, from the novel "*Gemblak*" by ERA, it can be concluded that, through the story narrative in the novel, ERA intends to tell the history of *gemblak* and *warok* in the past. The *warok* character is a figure who has a colonial-like character who likes to colonize the weak unfairly, and even at the end of the story, this *warok* character finally dies against his seniors in the *Kanuragan* college because the seniors intend to remind him that what *warok* is doing is wrong and should not be done by a *warok*. However, what power anger has given the *warok*, the war ensued, and finally, death was inevitable. Thus, the colonial hegemony practiced by *warok* has gradually disappeared, and now the moderate ideology promoted by *warok* figures has become more humane, tolerant, and, of course, avoids deviating.

This study makes a significant contribution to broader research in critical discourse analysis and media studies by showing how representations of local cultural figures such as *gemblak* and *warok* are constructed and negotiated in mass media narratives and fiction. Specifically, this study highlights that the media not only function as a neutral news provider but also as an agent that shapes arguments and descriptions about the subject, even potentially directing public understanding of a socio-economic issue such as *gemblak*'s dependence

on *warok* through a work contract. Furthermore, by comparing this representation with the narrative in the novel, this study opens up space for intertextual studies on how media discourse can interact with fictional representations, especially in the context of historical retelling and ideological change from colonialist to more humane and tolerant. This contributes to a richer understanding of the role of media in influencing social perceptions and how fiction can be a tool to reflect and shift dominant narratives in society.[s]

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