

Discourse Practice of Nationalism in Anies Baswedan's Sermon at the UII Campus Mosque: A Meso Dimensional Analysis of Norman Fairclough

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the discourse practice of nationalism in Anies Rasyid Baswedan's sermon at the UII Albab Mosque of Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII) during Ramadan 2025 using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis approach at the meso dimension or discourse practice level. The study focuses on the processes of production, distribution, and consumption of discourse as discursive practices that construct nationalism within academic and religious public spaces. The research data consist of sermon transcripts, video documentation, event context, and audience responses analyzed qualitatively through descriptive methods. The findings reveal that Anies Baswedan's sermon was produced through his identity as an intellectual-political figure who utilized the campus mosque as a space of moral and intellectual legitimacy. The discourse was distributed through digital media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and online media, expanding the reach of nationalist ideas to broader audiences, particularly young generation and academics. The consumption of discourse indicates that student audiences perceived the sermon not merely as a religious lecture, but also as a socio-political reflection on education, democracy, and Indonesia future issue. Therefore, the discourse practice in Anies Baswedan's sermon constructs an inclusive form of nationalism centered on education, social justice, and youth participation.

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Meso Dimension, Nationalism, Anies Baswedan, Discourse Practice.*



A. INTRODUCTION

Political sermons delivered in religious spaces have become an increasingly prominent form of public communication in contemporary Indonesian democracy. Haryatmoko (2017) explains that critical discourse analysis views public communication as a site where ideology, power, and social interests are continuously negotiated through language. Similarly, Fairclough (1992) emphasizes that discourse contributes to broader processes of social change because language practices are closely related to institutional power and ideological transformation. Sermons are no longer understood merely as a medium for religious preaching, but also as arena for ideological production, moral legitimacy, and reproduction of national narratives. In this context, political figures often utilize religious spaces to establish emotional proximity with society while simultaneously delivering socio-political discourses relevant to national conditions.

Anies Rasyid Baswedan is one of the Indonesian political figures who actively employs academic and religious spaces as mediums of public communication. In

many of his speeches and sermons, Anies frequently associates issues of education, democracy, social justice, and youth generation participation with the broader discourses of nationalism. His sermon at the Ulil Albab Mosque of Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII) during Ramadan 2025 is particularly significant because it took place within an academic religious environment that possesses both intellectual and moral legitimacy.

Campus mosque in the contemporary era no longer function solely as places of worship. Budianto (2021) explains that religious public spaces in Indonesia increasingly function as arenas where religious authority, political discourse, and social legitimacy intersect within democracy society. They also serve as discursive spaces where religion, intellectualism, and socio-political issues intersect. The presence of public figures in campus mosques creates a distinct communication practice compared to ordinary religious sermons because the audience mainly consists of students, academics, and educated groups. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) emphasize that discourse practices in late modern societies are increasingly shaped by institutional hybridity, where religious, political, and educational discourses intersect within public spaces. Therefore, Anies Baswedan's sermon at the Ulil Albab Mosque can be understood as a discourse practice that both produces and reproduces nationalist ideas within the academic public sphere.

Previous studies on political speeches and sermons have generally focused on the micro dimension of discourse, such as diction, metaphor, rhetorical style, and linguistic strategies. Yusuf (2023) for instance examined language strategies in Indonesia political speeches, while Setiawan (2020) emphasized the relationship between language and ideology in political communication. However, studies specifically discussing the production, distribution, and consumption of nationalist discourse within academic religious spaces remain limited. This gap provides an opportunity for further exploration through Norman Fairclough's meso dimensional approach.

According to Fairclough (2010), the meso dimension or discourse practice focuses on how texts are produced, distributed, and consumed within institutional and media contexts. This approach is essential because texts do not stand independently but are always influenced by social relations, institutions, media, and audiences. Therefore, this study does not merely examine Anies Baswedan's sermon as a text, but also investigates how the sermon was produced through the campus mosque environment, distributed through digital media, and interpreted by audiences, particularly university students.

This study aims to analyze the discourse practice of nationalism in Anies Baswedan's sermon at the Ulil Albab Mosque of UII using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis within the meso dimension. The study focuses on three main aspects: the production, distribution, and consumption of nationalist discourse within an academic religious setting.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis

Norman Fairclough (1995; 2010) divides Critical Discourse Analysis into three dimensions: text (micro), discourse practice (meso), and sociocultural practice (macro). The micro dimension focuses on linguistic structures such as diction, grammar, and metaphor. The macro dimension highlights ideology, power relations, and broader sociocultural contexts. Meanwhile, the meso dimension emphasizes the processes of text production, distribution, and consumption.

In the meso dimension, texts are understood as products of institutional and social practices. Jorgensen and Philips (2002) explain that discourse analysis should examine how meanings are socially constructed and reproduced through institutional communication practices. Production involves the speaker's background, institutional setting, and communicative intentions. Distribution concerns how texts are disseminated through media and communications channels. Consumption refers to how audiences receive, interpret, and reproduce meanings from texts.

2. Nationalism in Public Discourse

Nationalism in political communications is understood as a construction of collective identity developed through language, symbols, and social narratives. Anderson (2006) conceptualized nationalism as an imagined community formed through shared consciousness as a nation. Anderson (2006) also conceptualized nationalism formed through shared consciousness as a nation. In public discourse, nationalism is often associated with education, historical struggles, democracy, and youth aspirations.

Public sermons delivered by political figures frequently function as tools for constructing nationalism because they connect religious values with national narratives. Nugroho (2022) states that contemporary nationalism in Indonesia increasingly develops through public communication, digital interaction, and collective narratives concerning democracy and social justice. In Indonesia, nationalism is not solely understood as loyalty to the state but also as a commitment to social justice, educational equality, and human development.

3. Campus Mosques as Discursive Spaces

Campus mosques have broader functions than merely serving as places of worship. They operate as arena for intellectual discussions, student identity formation, and socio-political discourse. The presence of public figures in campus mosques often provides moral legitimacy to the ideas being conveyed.

From the perspective of discourse practice, campus mosques can be understood as social institutions facilitating the production and reproduction of ideology. Habermas (1989) argues that public opinion and social consciousness are negotiated through communication practices. Therefore, Anies Baswedan's sermon at the Ulil Albab Mosque in a space possessing both religious and intellectual authority.

C. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis within the meso dimension. The approach was chosen to analyze how nationalist discourse in Anies Baswedan's sermon was produced, distributed, and consumed within an academic religious context. The primary data source consists of a 37 minutes video recording of Anies Baswedan's sermon at the Ulil Albab Mosque during Ramadan 2025. The research data include sermon transcripts, video documentation, institutional contexts, digital media distribution, and audience responses.

Data collection techniques involved observation and note taking methods. The researcher transcribed the sermon using digital transcription software named Transkrip.id and manually verified the transcript for accuracy. In discourse oriented qualitative studies, textual verification is important to maintain contextual meaning and interpretive validity (Gee, 2014). Furthermore, the researcher observed the distribution of the sermon through digital media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and online news websites to examine the reproduction of discourse within virtual public spaces. Eriyanto (2011) notes that media texts should not be interpreted merely as neutral information because they contain ideological constructions influenced by social and institutional contexts.

The unit of analysis in this study consists of discourse practices encompassing:

1. Discourse production, including institutional background, speaker identity, and sociopolitical context.
2. Discourse distribution through digital media platforms.
3. Discourse consumption involving audience interpretation and reception.

Data analysis was conducted in several stages. First, the researcher identified the production context of the sermon based on Anies Baswedan's social position and the institutional background of the event. Second, the researcher interpreted audience consumption based on audience characteristics and public response to the sermon. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing transcripts, video documentation, and digital media contexts. The findings are presented descriptively according to Norman Fairclough's meso-dimensional framework.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Production of Nationalist Discourse in Anies Baswedan's Sermon

In terms of discourse production, Anies Baswedan's sermon was influenced by his social identity and institutional position as an academic, former Minister of Education and Culture, former Governor of DKI Jakarta, and national political figure. These identities established intellectual and moral legitimacy in delivering nationalist narratives within public spaces.

The selection of the Ulil Albab Mosque as the sermon venue also carries discursive significance. UII, as one of Indonesia's oldest Islamic universities is associated with Islamic intellectual traditions and national values. Consequently, the

campus mosque became a strategic location for discussing education, democracy, and nation's future.

During the production process, Anies Baswedan constructed his image not merely as a politician, but as an intellectual figure closely connected to students and educational institutions. This strategy appeared through references to historical narratives, educational inequality, and moral appeals directed toward young generations.

The production of discourse was also shaped by Indonesia's sociopolitical context following the 2024 presidential election which remained marked by political polarization. In such circumstances, Anies Baswedan presented a more inclusive nationalist discourse emphasizing education and social justice rather than practical political conflicts. Thus, the discourse production process demonstrates efforts to construct moral legitimacy through academic religious communication.

2. Distribution of Discourse through Digital Media

The distribution of discourse in Anies Baswedan's sermon extended beyond the audiences physically present at the Ulil Albab Mosque. The sermon was disseminated through digital platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and online media outlets.

From Fairclough's perspective (2010), media distribution influences the formation and reproduction of social meanings. Digital media allow sermons to be segmented into emotionally appealing and socially relevant excerpts, which are then redistributed by social media users. Kress (2010) explains that contemporary digital communication is multimodal in nature because meanings are reproduced not only through verbal language but also through visuals, video fragments, and symbolic representations. Rahman (2024) further argues that digital religious discourse in Indonesia increasingly contributes to the construction of political legitimacy and public trust within online communication environments. Section discussing education, youth aspirations, and the promise of independence became the most frequently shared because of their emotional resonance. Baker (2018) explains that repeated discourse patterns in public communication often indicate dominant ideological themes reproduced within society.

Digital distribution also transformed patterns of public communication. Sermons initially delivered within physical religious spaces became virtual public content accessible across geographical boundaries and time. This demonstrates that social media function not only as information channels but also as arena for ideological reproduction. Foucault (1980) emphasizes that discourse operates through networks of power and knowledge that shape how social realities are understood and reproduced in society. In addition, contemporary political communication increasingly relies on digital platforms to circulate nationalist narratives and influence public opinion in virtual spaces (Ariyanto, 2022).

Wodak and Meyer (2016) explain that digital media accelerate the circulation of political discourse and shape public opinion on a massive scale. In this study, the

distribution of Anies Baswedan's sermon through digital media strengthened his image as an intellectual nationalist figure associated with educational issues and youth empowerment.

Moreover, digital distribution illustrates how contemporary political communication no longer relies entirely on mainstream media. Political figures can directly engage with audiences through social media platforms. Consequently, the distribution of nationalist discourse in this sermon reflects the close relationship between religious spaces, digital media, and modern political communication.

3. Consumption of Discourse by Audiences

At the consumption level, the sermon audiences primarily consisted of university students, academics, and the general public attending Ramadan activities at the Ulil Albab Mosque. Students became the primary target of narratives concerning education, social change, and future of Indonesia.

The audiences consumed the sermon not merely as a religious lecture, but also as a socio-political reflection on Indonesia's current condition. Narratives portraying education as a means of social mobility and youth as agents of change were interpreted as motivational messages as well as critiques of educational inequality and uneven development. Rosida (2019) argues that education plays a central role in shaping national consciousness and collective identity in the era of globalization. In the context of Indonesian public discourse, educational narratives are frequently connected to broader ideas of nationalism and character formation (Zulfikar, 2025).

Discourse consumption was also influenced by the audience academic backgrounds. The intellectual environment of the university facilitated acceptance of critical discussions regarding democracy, social justice, and nationalism. Rogers (2011) states that educational institutions often become strategic locations for the circulation and legitimization of critical discourse in society. On social media platforms, audience responses indicate that the sermon was understood as a form of communication balancing religious and nationalist values. Many users shared quotations from the sermon considered inspirational, particularly regarding education and civilization. Pratiwi (2021) explains that nationalist discourse in public communication is often reinforced through repetition and collective circulation within media spaces. Similar findings were also identified by Yusuf (2023) who states that political speeches in Indonesia frequently employ ideological discourse strategies to construct emotional engagement and collective identity among audiences. Therefore, audiences functioned not only as recipients of discourse but also as active agents reproducing and redistributing nationalist narratives through digital media.

4. Nationalist Discourse Practice in Academic-Religious Spaces

Based on the meso dimensional analysis, Anies Baswedan's sermon at the Ulil Albab Mosque demonstrates that nationalism was constructed through discourse practices involving campus institution, digital media, and student audiences. Nationalism in this sermon was not built solely through state symbols, but through

narratives of education, social justice, and youth participation. Lakoff and Johnson (2017) explain that discourse and metaphor shape how societies conceptualize abstract realities such as justice, nationhood, and collective identity.

The campus mosque served as a strategic arena because it combined religious and intellectual legitimacy. Within this context, nationalism was constructed as a moral value aligned with Islamic teachings and national educational ideals. Digital media subsequently expanded the reach of these narratives beyond campus environments into broader virtual public spaces.

According to Fairclough (2010), discourse practices are always connected to institutional relations and power structures. Weiss and Wodak (2003) further argue that critical discourse analysis is inherently interdisciplinary because discourse cannot be separated from historical, political, and sociocultural contexts. Likewise, Wodak and Meyer (2016) emphasize that discourse studies should investigate the relationship between language, ideology, and social practice within institutional settings. In this study, Anies Baswedan utilized his symbolic position as an intellectual-political figure to construct an inclusive nationalist image through academic and digital spaces. Therefore, the discourse practice in this sermon demonstrates how language, institutions, and media interact in shaping public social consciousness. This finding is also consistent with Van Dijk's (1993; 2008) argument that discourse is closely connected to ideology, social cognition, and power relations within public communication.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on findings analyzed using Norman Fairclough's meso dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis, it can be concluded that Anies Baswedan's sermon at the Ulil Albab Mosque represents a complex practice of nationalist discourse involving production, distribution, and consumption processes. In terms of production, the sermon was influenced by Anies Baswedan's identity as an intellectual-political figure utilizing the campus mosque to establish moral and academic legitimacy for nationalist ideas. In terms of distribution, digital media played a crucial role in expanding the dissemination of discourse through YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and online media platforms. In terms of consumption, audiences particularly university students interpreted the sermon not merely as religious preaching but also as socio-political reflections concerning education, democracy, and Indonesia's future. This study demonstrates that nationalism in Anies Baswedan's sermon was constructed inclusively through narratives of education, social justice, and youth participation. Furthermore, the study highlights the significant role of academic religious spaces and digital media in shaping contemporary national consciousness.

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