THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF CHILD MOLESTATION: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF TRANSITIVITY IN THE JAKARTA POST

[1]Harisa Dwi Oktira, [1]*T. Silvana Sinar, [1]Nurlela, [1]Rahmadyah Rangkuti
[1]English Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author Email: tengkusilvana@usu.ac.id

Article Info	Abstract
	This study employed Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis, focusing on the discursive construction of child molestation using the transitivity process. The research aimed to (1) describe transitivity patterns in child molestation news articles published by The Jakarta Post, (2) examine how these patterns constructed the discourse, and (3) explore why such construction occurred. A qualitative content analysis was used to analyze clauses from five selected news texts. The study found that the most dominant transitivity processes were verbal and material. Verbal processes appeared 57 times (43.8%), while material processes occurred 48 times (36.9%), showing only a 6.9% difference. Verbal process verbs included reported, told, accused, said, and announced, while material process verbs included molested, abused, and arrested. These findings indicate that the news writers constructed the narratives based on information from police, witnesses, and victims to outline the chronology of the molestation incidents. The reports often portrayed children as the affected participants, with perpetrators positioned as the main actors responsible for the events. Through analyzing these transitivity patterns, the researcher identified how socio-cultural ideologies were embedded in the discourse. The texts implied that minors are perceived as vulnerable and lacking full legal protection. Moreover, the narratives challenged the common perception that women are always the victims of sexual abuse, showing that children of both genders could be victims. The perpetrators were often figures with authority in schools and the psychological impact on the victims was highlighted throughout the texts.

INTRODUCTION

The lightning-fast advancement of communication technology has fundamentally transformed how individuals access and interact with information. In today's digital era, the dissemination of communication, which once required substantial time and infrastructure, now occurs almost instantaneously, enhancing accessibility to news and social commentary (Bell, 1995; Davies et al., 2016). One significant component of this transformation is the central role of language in media. Language, as a social construct, functions as an arbitrary system of verbal symbols used by members of a community to interact and communicate within their cultural frameworks (Evayani, 2019; Butt, 2022). In the context of media communication, language becomes a powerful vehicle through which ideologies, identities, and values are constructed and disseminated to mass audiences.

Media has an enormous influence on the public, shaping attitudes, perceptions, and even societal norms. As Maryandani (2016) noted, media not only reflects social values but also actively constructs them by continuously distributing information that influences collective discourse. This power is particularly significant in how the media reports sensitive and

socially significant issues such as sexual abuse. In the Indonesian context, sexual violence and abuse—especially against children—are among the most concerning social issues, often framed in ways that shape societal perception. Mass media, especially online news platforms like *The Jakarta Post*, plays a significant role in representing these crimes, influencing how perpetrators, victims, and the nature of abuse itself are perceived.

Despite growing public and academic interest in sexual abuse, research has often prioritized adult victims—typically focusing on violence against women, rape, and physical harassment—while child molestation remains relatively underexplored (Popović, 2018; Evayani, 2019; Omeklint, 2021; Pudjiastuti, 2022). This discrepancy is concerning given that child molestation has severe, long-lasting consequences for survivors, including psychological trauma, depression, insomnia, reproductive health risks, and behavioral impacts such as a propensity to reenact abuse. Furthermore, the victims, often under the age of 12, may lack the capacity or opportunity to articulate or report the abuse due to fear, confusion, or societal stigma. This lack of expression results in underreporting and often leads to inadequate media representation of the actual dynamics of the abuse.

In this context, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) emerges as a potent methodological tool to interrogate how language, particularly in the form of online news, represents acts of child molestation. One key component of CDA is the transitivity system, derived from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which examines how actions and participants are structured in language. Transitivity analysis is crucial in unveiling how responsibility is attributed, how agency is assigned or obscured, and how the social actors involved—both perpetrators and victims—are represented in text.

For example, *The Jakarta Post* often reports cases of child molestation using the passive voice, such as in the headline *"Child Molested in School Playground."* This structure foregrounds the victim while backgrounding or even omitting the perpetrator. While this linguistic choice might appear neutral or protective, it actually contributes to discursive constructions that reinforce the victim's passivity and may obscure the accountability of the perpetrator. Such narrative choices subtly shape the reader's understanding of events and can either reinforce or challenge societal norms regarding victimhood, power, and justice. Analyzing these choices through the lens of transitivity allows researchers to understand "who does what to whom" in news narratives (Teo in Ruddick, 2007). White (2006) further emphasizes that grammatical decisions—such as whether a person is depicted as an agent or a recipient of an action—can carry ideological implications. These implications affect how blame, sympathy, and credibility are distributed among the actors within the news discourse.

Moreover, transitivity provides insight into the broader ideological functions of media. Different countries, institutions, or news platforms with distinct interests and values often use language strategically to embed ideological stances into seemingly objective reporting. This occurs subtly through choices in verb types (e.g., material, verbal, relational processes), participant roles (e.g., actor, goal), and circumstantial elements (e.g., location, manner). In the case of child molestation, these linguistic choices shape how readers perceive the event's gravity, the child's vulnerability, and the perpetrator's culpability.

The significance of transitivity is not limited to academic theory. It has real-world implications for public awareness, survivor advocacy, and legal reform. Media reporting is often the public's primary source of information about child molestation, and the ways in which these stories are framed can either contribute to informed discourse or reinforce damaging myths and misconceptions (Babatsikos, 2010; Goldman & Grimbeek, 2015). Thus, analyzing media texts from a transitivity perspective can reveal how discourse structures shape societal responses to abuse, including public empathy, trust in institutions, and support for policy changes.

Despite its potential, few studies have applied transitivity analysis within CDA to investigate child molestation cases in online news. This oversight presents a critical research gap, especially in Indonesian media contexts where child sexual abuse remains a deeply sensitive yet underrepresented issue. Most existing studies rely on thematic or content analysis without delving into the linguistic mechanisms that construct meaning and ideology at the clause level. This study seeks to address this gap by analyzing the transitivity patterns used in *The Jakarta Post*'s reporting on child molestation, with a particular focus on school-based cases. By examining how perpetrators and victims are positioned through linguistic structures, this research uncovers the implicit ideologies and power relations embedded within the news text.

The novelty of this research lies in its integration of transitivity analysis within a critical discourse framework specifically applied to online news reports of child molestation in the Indonesian context. While previous research has explored sexual violence discourse, few have examined child molestation cases through transitivity structures in *The Jakarta Post*. This research not only deepens the understanding of how language functions ideologically in media reports but also encourages more critical consumption and production of news content surrounding child sexual abuse. By scrutinizing the subtle linguistic choices within online news, particularly those involving transitivity, the study empowers educators, journalists, and the public to question dominant narratives and advocate for more responsible and empathetic reporting.

RESEARCH METHOD
Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design that utilized critical discourse analysis (CDA) with a focus on the transitivity system derived from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) by Halliday. Qualitative research is characterized by its interpretive and naturalistic approach, wherein the researcher seeks to explore and understand social phenomena within their natural contexts (Lincoln & Denzin, 2005). In this context, the study did not aim to test hypotheses or quantify findings but to interpret how child molestation is discursively constructed in media texts—specifically, online news articles published by The Jakarta Post. Through an in-depth analysis of linguistic structures, particularly transitivity patterns, this research interprets the ways in which language represents agency, responsibility, and ideology in child molestation news reporting.

Research Object

The object of this research was the linguistic representation of child molestation cases in online news texts, specifically focusing on transitivity processes found in selected articles from The Jakarta Post. The study paid close attention to how perpetrators, victims, and actions are linguistically constructed through clause-level analysis. In particular, the research examined news articles that reported incidents of child molestation in school environments— settings where power relations and institutional authority often play a critical role. The representation of actors (such as teachers, religious instructors, or school staff) and the role of victims (children under the age of 12) were the main focus of the analysis to understand how discourse shapes societal perceptions of blame, victimhood, and justice.

Data Collection Technique

The data for this study were collected through documentary analysis, which involved retrieving relevant online news articles from *The Jakarta Post* website. To ensure relevance and alignment with the study's objectives, the researcher employed purposive sampling in selecting the articles. The selected news articles met several specific criteria. First, the articles had to be published within the last three years, specifically from 2021 to 2023, to ensure that the data reflected recent cases and current media discourse. Second, the articles needed to

focus explicitly on cases of child molestation in Indonesia, with particular attention to incidents occurring within school environments, such as elementary schools or religious boarding schools (*pesantren*). Third, the articles were required to contain clausal constructions suitable for transitivity analysis, meaning they included clearly identifiable actors, processes, and goals that could be analyzed linguistically.

To identify and retrieve these articles, the researcher utilized targeted search keywords, including "child sexual abuse in Indonesia," "child molestation in Indonesia," and "child sexual abuse at school environment in Indonesia." These keywords helped narrow down the selection to texts that directly addressed the research focus. Once relevant articles were identified, they were downloaded, documented, and systematically organized for further analysis. Each article was then coded according to the presence of linguistic elements essential for transitivity analysis, forming the basis of the subsequent critical discourse investigation.

Data Analysis

The analytical method employed in this study was Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with transitivity analysis serving as the central linguistic tool. Transitivity, as outlined in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), is concerned with how language represents experiences of the world through various types of processes, participants involved in those processes, and circumstantial elements that provide additional contextual information. These processes include material, mental, verbal, relational, behavioral, and existential types. Participants in these processes are typically categorized as the Actor, Goal, Sayer, Senser, and other related roles, while circumstantial elements provide context such as time, place, cause, or manner.

In this study, each clause within the selected news articles was meticulously examined to uncover how language was used to position perpetrators and victims in the discourse. Attention was paid to whether perpetrators were portrayed as active agents or backgrounded subjects, and whether victims were objectified, passive, or depicted as having agency. The clause structures were also analyzed to determine whether they obscured or clarified responsibility and agency. Following this clause-level examination, the findings were grouped into thematic categories that reflected recurring discursive patterns in the media's portrayal of child molestation cases. The analysis also delved into how specific grammatical choices made by journalists and editors in *The Jakarta Post* could shape readers' perceptions, potentially reinforcing dominant ideologies or, conversely, challenging societal assumptions about child sexual abuse, justice, and the roles of perpetrators and victims.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Research Findings

The data in this study were analyzed at the clausal level, focusing specifically on how language constructs meaning through the transitivity system in online news reports. A total of 128 clauses were identified from five selected news texts published by The Jakarta Post, each dealing with child molestation cases within school environments. These clauses were chosen because they contained explicit transitivity processes, which are essential for understanding how actions, participants, and circumstances are represented linguistically. By analyzing each clause, the study sought to uncover how the media discursively frames both the perpetrators and the victims, as well as how agency and responsibility are attributed or obscured. The transitivity analysis served as a foundation for conducting a broader critical discourse analysis, enabling the researcher to explore the underlying ideologies and social meanings embedded in the news texts. Through this linguistic examination, it was possible to detect patterns that reflect the media's stance on child molestation, including whether the language used tends to foreground the crime, background the perpetrator, or elicit sympathy

for the victim. The findings of the transitivity processes are comprehensively presented in Table 1, offering insight into how grammatical structures play a pivotal role in shaping public perception and discourse surrounding sensitive issues such as child sexual abuse.

Table 1
The Distribution of Transitivity Process

News Text	The Headline News	Types of Process						The Amount of Clauses
		Ver	Mat	Rel	Ment	Behav	Exist	
1	Head of Banten Islamic boarding school arrested for allegedly molesting students.	10	7	3	7	0	0	27
2	Islamic school owner in Central Java arrested for allegedly molesting student.	7	8	1	0	0	0	16
3	Man arrested for alleged child molestation in North Jakarta	16	8	4	0	0	1	29
4	Police arrest teacher accused of raping 12 students in West Java	10	10	1	2	0	0	23
5	Surabaya court sentences ex-principal to 'light' 10 months for child sexual abuse.	14	15	4	2	0	0	35
The total of process (%)		57 (43.8%)	48 (36.9%)	13 (10%)	11 (8.46%)	0	1 (0.76%)	**130**

Table 1 presents the distribution of six types of transitivity processes identified from five selected online news articles. These processes include Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioral, Verbal, and Existential. Each type reflects how the clause represents action (material), cognition and emotion (mental), identification or attribution (relational), observable behaviors (behavioral), spoken communication (verbal), and states of being or existence (existential). In the context of transitivity, these processes are crucial in shaping how the media linguistically constructs actions, actors, and events within child molestation cases.

From the analysis, a total of 130 transitivity processes were identified across the five news texts. Among these, the verbal process emerged as the most frequently used, appearing 57 times and accounting for 43.8% of the total. This indicates that reporting speech—quotations from police, victims, or institutional representatives—is a central strategy used in conveying information in child molestation news. Following closely, the material process appeared 48 times (36.9%), showing that actions and events were also prominently reported. The relational process was recorded 13 times (10%), and mental processes occurred 11 times (8.46%), indicating moderate use of clauses that describe feelings or perceptions. The existential process, which typically describes the presence or occurrence of something, appeared only once (0.76%), while behavioral processes were entirely absent from the data set.

These findings reflect how *The Jakarta Post* constructs narratives of child molestation through a focus on speech acts and reported events. The dominance of verbal and material processes shows an emphasis on quoting authorities and describing actions rather than delving into psychological states or existential framing. For instance, in the first analyzed news text titled *"Head of Banten Islamic boarding school arrested for allegedly molesting students,"* the narrative structure primarily employs material and verbal processes to present the suspect's actions and authorities' statements. This reinforces the media's role in shaping public perception through specific grammatical and discursive strategies.

According to Adj. Comr. Indra Deradinata, head of the Serang Police's detective and criminal unit	*JM*	*Was arrested*	*On Wednesday*	*Four alleged victims*	*Spoke out*	*Against him*
Goal		*material*	*Cir: Time*	*Sayer*	*Proc: verbal*	*Verbiage*

The data depicted the transitivity process of material and verbal process. The material process from the clause is shown by the words "*was arrested*". Meanwhile, the verbal process could be known by the word *"spoke out"*. The clause above tried to convey the arresting of perpetrator after the victims spoke out about his action in molesting them. Based on the information of the clause above, the process of arresting the perpetrator occurs on Wednesday. Furthermore, from the clause we know that the head of Serang Police's detective was as the informant who conveys the occurrences of arresting the perpetrator.

Furthermore, the news text 2 was about *Islamic school owner in Central Java arrested for allegedly molesting student*. Here are the data that constructed the transitivity process as follow:

The police	have named	a 44-year-old man	who owns	a pesantren (Islamic boarding school) in Banyumas, Central Java	A suspect for sexually abusing an 11 year old student.
actor	Proc:material	goal	Proc:relational	Cir:location	Cir: cause

The text 2 demonstrats the material process and relational process. The verb *"have named"* includes of the material process because the police had an action to get the name of perpetrator. The police have identified the perpetrator as the owner of a pesantren (Islamic boarding school) in Banyumas, Central Java. Furthermore, the clause portrayed the reason why the police suspected the name because of his action in abusing sexually the 11 year old student. In news text 3, the news was about *"Man arrested for alleged child molestation in North* Jakarta*"*.

The Pademangan Police in North Jakarta	announced	they	arrested	A 19 year old man	On Friday	For allegedly molesting at least six boys
Sayer	Proc: verbal	Actor	Proc:material	Goal	Cir: time	Cir: cause

The text 3 shows the transitivity process of verbal and material. The verbal process from the clause could be shown by the word *"announced"*. Meanwhile, the process of material is demonstrated by the word *"arrested"*. The clause portrayed the announcement of police (sayer) that they have arrested a 19 year old man. The process of arresting was held on Friday. Furthermore, there is a reason why the police arrested a 19 year old man because he has molested the six boys. And the next, news text 4 was about *Police arrest teacher accused of raping 12 students in West* Java. The following are the data that constructed to the transitivity process:

Police in West Java	Have arrested	A teacher	accused	Of raping at least 12 children	Over the last five years
Actor	Proc:material	Receiver	Proc:verbal	Verbiage	Cir:duration

An official		said		Wednesday	
Sayer		Proc:verbal		Cir:time	

The clause above demonstrates the transitivity process; material and verbal process. The material process is shown by the verb *"have arrested"*. Meanwhile, for the verbal process could be seen by the word *"accused"* and *"said"*. From the transitivity process, it found that police in West Java have arrested and accused the perpetrator because he raped at least 12 children. The perpetrator also allegedly has done his action for over the last five years. The information regarding to the occurrences of child molestation was delivered by an officer (the police) on Wednesday. And the last news text was about *Surabaya court sentences ex-principal to 'light' 10 months for child sexual abuse.*

The Surabaya District Court	Has sentenced			Ali Shodiqin, the former junior high school principal of the Surabaya State University Labschool (Labschool Unesa) in the East Java capital,
Actor	Proc:material			Goal

It	Found	Him	Guilty	of sexually abusing six students
	Proc: material	Carrier	Attribute	Attributor

From the data of the clause above, there is a transitivity process of material. The material process from the clause could be seen by the verbs *"has sentenced"* and *"found"*. The clause delivered the occurrences of child molestation which the perpetrator named *"Ali Shodiqin"* has been got a sentence by the Surabaya District Court. It is also known that he was the former junior high school principal of the Surabaya State University Labschool (Labschool Unesa) in the East Java capital. Ali Shodiqin (perpetrator) got a sentence because of his guilty in abusing sexually the six students.

Furthermore, from the data analysis and the finding of transitivity process, the researcher obtained the ideology from the Jakarta Online news regarding to the child molestation case. There are two prominent processes that have found in online news such as verbal process and material process. The type of verbal process in transitivity was the most prominent in reporting the news. It is because the writer tried to reveal the chronological of molestation cases based on the evidence or information from the victims, victim's family member and the police. Based on the finding above, it is the similar to the slogan of the Jakarta Post *"Always Bold. Always Independent"* which means the online news always has acourage to report the factual news and never have the intervention towards the other people in delivering their news.

Moreover, there is a lot of the verbal action such as *reported, told, said, claimed, etc.* that referred to the information toward the cases. By knowing the result of each process, the hidden ideologies of the news text in the Jakarta Post could be constructed as below:

Table 2
The Ideology of the Jakarta Post

The Participants	Verbs/Action
Victims	were afraid to speak, did not want to tell, potentially traumatized, reported, refused to study the Qur'an,
Perpetrator	Identified, owns a Pesantren or school, abuse, had molested, assault,
Law Enforcement	Arrested, said, claimed, was sentenced,

Table 2 illustrates three central figures in the discourse surrounding child molestation cases reported in the news: the victims (children), the perpetrators, and law enforcement. These figures not only serve as participants in the events but also reflect deeper ideological positions embedded in the texts. The depiction of children as victims reveals an underlying ideology that they are legally and socially vulnerable. Children are shown as having limited access to legal protection and often rely on their parents or guardians to report molestation cases. Rather than directly approaching law enforcement, children tend to disclose incidents of abuse to family members, who then act on their behalf. This reflects the societal view that children are dependent and in need of adult intervention to access justice. The family, therefore, becomes a crucial intermediary in seeking legal redress, and the act of reporting by parents is portrayed as an important step in helping children obtain justice.

The portrayal of perpetrators emphasizes their positions of authority and power within educational institutions. The news texts frequently describe the perpetrators not only as teachers but also as principals or owners of schools and religious boarding schools (*pesantren*). This framing implies that the authority and influence held by these individuals enabled the acts of molestation, suggesting a link between power and abuse. The discourse constructs the perpetrators as figures who misuse their trusted roles to exploit vulnerable students, highlighting the dangers of unchecked institutional authority.

Meanwhile, the role of law enforcement is depicted with both cooperative and critical undertones. The police are shown as responsive and active in investigating cases once they are reported by the victims' families. However, the justice system is also portrayed as lacking in fairness and effectiveness. Although the perpetrators are often arrested and charged under Articles 80 and 82 of the 2002 Child Protection Law—which allows for a maximum sentence of 15 years—the actual sentencing can fall short of expectations. In one highlighted case, despite the gravity of the offense, the perpetrator received only a 10-month prison sentence.

This leniency raises concerns about the adequacy of the legal system in delivering justice for child victims and reinforces public perception that the law does not always serve or protect the most vulnerable. The representation of these three figures—victims, perpetrators, and law enforcement—reveals how news media construct narratives that reflect societal ideologies about vulnerability, power, and justice. Through language and framing, the texts highlight systemic weaknesses while also acknowledging the protective role of families and the complex responsibilities of legal institutions.

Discussion

The study at hand critically explores how *The Jakarta Post* online news constructs child molestation cases using linguistic resources, particularly through transitivity analysis as a component of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This approach aims not only to reveal the grammatical structures employed in representing the events but also to uncover the ideologies embedded within media narratives. Two major concerns emerge in this investigation: the application of transitivity processes in the news texts and the ideological positions constructed around child molestation cases, particularly in educational settings like schools and *pesantren*. Five online news articles were analyzed, and the study identified all six transitivity processes as described in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL): material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential. SFL views language not merely as a tool for communication but as a resource for constructing meaning and negotiating social reality. The transitivity system, in particular, is concerned with how processes (actions, perceptions, relations) and participants (actors, goals, sensers, etc.) are configured within a clause, shaping how reality is portrayed in language.

In analyzing *The Jakarta Post*'s reporting on child molestation, it was found that verbal processes were the most dominant. This aligns with the primary function of news media—to report, convey, and narrate events, particularly through quotations and statements from witnesses, law enforcement, victims' families, and sometimes the accused. The verbal process, as noted by Sinar (2021), serves to express speech and communication acts. It is a crucial linguistic feature that enables the media to present facts, testimonies, and reactions, thereby fulfilling its informative role. In the context of child molestation cases, the heavy reliance on verbal processes suggests an attempt by journalists to emphasize the voices of authorities or victims' families rather than the children themselves—reflecting societal assumptions about children's limited agency.

From the transitivity analysis, several ideological positions emerge, revealing how the media frames the child molestation issue. One key ideology present in the news is the inherent vulnerability of children, particularly in legal and protective contexts. Children are portrayed as individuals without legal standing or sufficient capacity to seek justice on their own. Consequently, the role of parents and family is highlighted as essential in reporting and addressing the cases. Parents are represented not just as caretakers but as legal surrogates who must navigate the system on behalf of their children (Popović, 2018; Pudjiastuti, 2019). This portrayal reinforces a protective model of childhood that sees children as dependent and in need of adult intervention.

Another important ideological construction centers around the power of the perpetrator. In most of the analyzed news articles, the perpetrator holds an influential position within the institution where the abuse occurred—often as a school principal, senior teacher, or religious leader in a *pesantren*. The abuse of power is implied through the use of material processes that describe the actions performed by these figures in positions of trust. The portrayal of the perpetrator in such positions suggests a systemic vulnerability of institutional environments, where power imbalances go unchecked, and students feel powerless to speak out. The silence of victims is not only a result of fear but is also embedded in hierarchical relationships within these educational settings, where questioning authority is culturally discouraged.

The third ideological position concerns law enforcement and the justice system. While the media often portrays police as cooperative in responding to reports, there is also an underlying critique of institutional deficiencies. Despite legal mechanisms being in place—specifically referencing Articles 80 and 82 of the 2002 Child Protection Law—actual punishments for perpetrators often appear lenient or inconsistent with the gravity of the crime. One case analyzed in the study showed a perpetrator receiving only a 10-month prison sentence despite being convicted of molesting multiple students. This outcome casts doubt on the efficacy and fairness of the legal system and raises questions about the broader societal commitment to protecting children and upholding justice.

The findings reflect what Nasir (2022) and Nurfaeni & Mulatsih (2017) argue—that while the media plays a critical role in raising awareness, the systemic and societal responses to child molestation often fall short. The reporting does not always investigate the motivations of the perpetrators or the broader social and institutional conditions that allow such abuse to occur. Instead, the focus tends to remain on the incidents themselves, rather than engaging with preventive strategies or long-term solutions. This lack of depth in addressing causation is echoed in Narindrani's (2021) observation that sexual exploitation of children is becoming alarmingly normalized in some communities. The fundamental questions—why these cases persist and what drives the perpetrators—are often left unexamined. The ideological framing in news media, therefore, plays a double role: while it exposes the occurrence of abuse, it may inadvertently depoliticize the issue by not fully interrogating the structures of power and cultural silence that sustain it.

Media narratives, as Talbot (2007) and Xie (2018) suggest, are never neutral. They are often prepared from ideological standpoints that reflect dominant values, beliefs, and power relations in society. In the reporting of child molestation, the discourses of power, gender, and sexuality intersect in complex ways. In cultures where male authority in educational or religious institutions is rarely questioned, the representation of male perpetrators in such roles can either challenge or reinforce gender hierarchies. Media texts thus contribute to constructing not only the event but also its moral, legal, and cultural implications.

This study highlights the importance of online news as a medium for both informing and shaping public consciousness. As Wahyudin (2016) and Tian (2018) emphasize, online media plays a vital role in documenting real-life cases of abuse and giving them visibility. However, the findings also suggest that the voices of child victims are often mediated by adults—whether parents, police, or journalists—rather than being presented directly. This reflects the larger issue of children's limited discursive agency in legal and media narratives. Many children do not have the courage or capacity to speak out, and their trauma is often understood only through the words of others. The psychological effects of child molestation are profound and long-lasting. Beyond the immediate legal implications, the emotional and mental toll on victims may impair their well-being and ability to function throughout life. These long-term consequences are rarely addressed in news reports, yet they are critical to understanding the full impact of the abuse. The media's role in portraying these outcomes is vital in pushing for more comprehensive policies and support systems for survivors.

This study underscores the need to critically assess how language—particularly through transitivity—constructs ideologies in media texts about child molestation. The research reveals that *The Jakarta Post* constructs narratives that frame children as vulnerable, perpetrators as powerful figures within trusted institutions, and law enforcement as cooperative yet limited. It also reveals a gap in addressing the motivations behind such acts and the systemic issues that perpetuate them. By applying a critical discourse lens, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how media language can both reveal and obscure the realities of child sexual abuse, urging more responsible, empathetic, and transparent reporting.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding and discussion, the researcher can conclude the research as follow: The transitivity could be as an element to find out the ideology of the online news. There were six types of transitivity that has found in the Jakarta Post online news; those were material, verbal, mental, relational, and existential process. From five news text in the Jakarta Post, it obtained that the verbal process was the prominent process. The frequency of verbal process in online news was 57 with the percentage 43.8%. As the function of transitivity, it conveyed the meaning of the writer in writing the online news. Based on the result of prominent process, it showed that the writer of online wrote the news based on the actual cases that occurred by the children. The online news mostly displayed some statements or information that has given by the victims, police and the victim's family.

The discursive construction from the five online news texts in the Jakarta Post, showed that the news text 1 tended to portray the suspect of child molestation as a perpetrator toward the students. Furthermore, the news text showed that the students (victims) lacked the courage to report their incidents immediately to the police or their families although finally one of them has courage to report the occurrences to the police. Meanwhile, the news text 2, news text 3, and news text 4 tended to depict the role of parents was very essential to disclose the occurrences of molestation towards the children. And the last news text (news text 5) tended to disclose the next step of law enforcement (the judge) in punishing the perpetrator of child molestation. The news text depicted that the punishment for the perpetrator wasn't fair enough as compared to the prosecutor's demand. By knowing the result of each transitivity process, the hidden ideologies of the news text in the Jakarta Post could be found that the children (victims) have a limitation towards the legal and protection. And the victims have powerless position to disclose their occurrences. Furthermore, it was known that the perpetrator had the power position at school. And the last, the law enforcement has a deficiency in justice because the judge gave the shorter sentenced toward the perpetrator.

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