

# **A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON THE JAKARTA POST'S NEWS ARTICLE: SOFTBANK'S RETRACTMENT ON INDONESIA NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENT**

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## ***Abstract***

This essay is a critical discourse analysis (CDA) on a news article entitled “SoftBank’s Masayoshi Son pulls out as investor for Indonesia’s new capital: Bloomberg” from thejakartapost.com. This study will utilize the three-dimensional CDA by Norman Fairclough. This research explores the textual, discursive, and sociolinguistic dimension as proposed by Norman Fairclough in his critical discourse analysis theory, as well as the social, political and cultural situation from the linguistic aspects in “SoftBank’s Masayoshi Son pulls out as investor for Indonesia’s new capital: Bloomberg” text. The findings of this research suggest that the Jakarta Post shaped the discourse by using a selection of diction that may influence their readers to how they react to the context. The news article itself however informs about the cancellation of SoftBank’s investment plan on the Indonesian capital relocation to East Kalimantan. The decision of the government has sparked a discourse debate in the society, and this research will provide an in detailed discourse analysis using Fairclough’s design.

***Keywords:*** *critical discourse analysis, investment, Indonesia new capital*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Humans utilize language to communicate their ideas, opinions, and thoughts to others, both orally and in writing. It's a set of random voice symbols that people use to communicate, interact, and identify themselves when they're working, interacting, or identifying themselves. Language exists in every aspect of life and it has a differently unique ways of influencing the society. In a sense, language is used to explain and maintain social interactions as well as to describe the world as we see it. In this regard, language can likewise be used to exercise power. Language provides a means of comprehending and altering underlying power structures. Language is also a unique and powerful tool for influencing a person's social, economic, and educational circumstances, as well

as the social, economic, and educational conditions of a society. Language has the power to decide an individual's or a group's ability to participate in society, as well as to shape identity. Language can be an effective tool of authority. Those who wield political power and control the media have the ability to shape society's language and conversation. While mouth to mouth communication is the most common form of it, the role of media in shaping those communication is also important. These forms of communications are done by journalist, the language used by journalists is sometimes referred to as the language of the press or the language of journalists, and it primarily serves as an informing language. A journalist uses language to communicate both subtle moods and profound concepts; they use language to communicate their own feelings to the readers. Only if they employ the appropriate language, which is made up of words, images, numbers, and rhythm, will they be able to communicate effectively. Popular journalism these days has shifted from paper text to its digital form, articles are written daily for people all over the world to read. This new kind of journalism is rising to be a major contributor to the discourse in the society as it is easy to access for anyone. In this time of age, critical discourse analysis is most important than ever. Discourse analysis is all about how the texts (in any form) in the media may affect the sociocultural practice. As a result, discourse analysis is understood not just as a form of speaking and writing, but also as a form of social practice. In this instance, discourse analysis becomes a tool capable of interacting directly and implicitly with people's lives in order to build communication in the midst of society and also to be used as a movement to achieve certain aims. People will be able to understand not only how the media delivered news, but also how and why the message is presented, thanks to critical discourse analysis. The Jakarta Post is an Indonesian English-language daily newspaper. At the prompting of Information Minister Ali Murtopo and politician Jusuf Wanandi, the Jakarta Post began as a collaboration between four Indonesian media outlets. Following the publication of the first issue on April 25, 1983, the publication spent several years with few advertisements and growing circulation. It began to take a more strident pro-democracy stance with a change of chief editors in 1991. The publication, which has a circulation of over 40,000, was one of the few Indonesian English-language dailies to survive the 1997 Asian financial crisis. The Jakarta Post is among the most popular news portal in Indonesia, and having written in English, the newspaper is primarily read by foreigners and educated Indonesians. According to statistics acquired by The Jakarta Post team from an AC Nielsen survey conducted in May 2014, the average readers of The Jakarta Post newspaper are in the top socio-economic position of

Indonesia, who play a significant role in a strategic position and high economic status / income. This is an information worth noting before proceeding into the analysis. The “society” in this analysis are therefore played by the higher up class people. The chosen article however, is “SoftBank’s Masayoshi Son pulls out as investor for Indonesia’s new capital: Bloomberg”. The building of the new capital city of Indonesia one of the hottest topics on news portals all across the archipelago. This specific article informs the withdrawal of SoftBank’s founder, Masayoshi Son as one of the investors in the project. This study utilizes the Norman Fairclough's (2003) three-dimensional critical discourse, which encompasses text, discursive practice, and sociocultural practice. The text dimension looks at cohesion, coherence, grammar, transparency, topic, modality, and lexical structures in the text itself. Second, the discourse practice seeks to understand the processes of text generation, diffusion, and usage. Third, sociocultural practice seeks to determine the social context that determines the emergence of a text (discourse), which comprises situational, institutional, and social levels.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The researcher employed Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional critical discourse analysis approach in this study. The researcher picked this method because it allows to explain the data's facts and qualities in a methodical manner. This perspective considers discourse as a mirror of social connections or as a source of power. The goal of a critical discourse analysis approach is to understand discourse as a type of social practice. A person's purpose in creating a discourse, including the intention of wielding power, is always present in social practice. The data of this research is in the form of written text taken from the Jakarta Post’s article entitled “SoftBank’s Masayoshi Son pulls out as investor for Indonesia’s new capital: Bloomberg”. The writer will handpick and analyze the most important bits of the article in the form of quotations to be analyzed using the three-dimensional critical discourse analysis.

## **FINDINGS & DISCUSSION**

This section will present the result of the study in a form of quotation from the article and an analysis of it using Fairclough’s three-dimensional figure critical discourse analysis. Therefore, the findings will be divided into 3 parts: the textual dimension, discursive practice, and sociocultural practice. Each section comprises of a brief context of the article and followed by an analysis of the described quotation.

## Textual Dimension

The Jakarta Post article “SoftBank’s Masayoshi Son pulls out as investor for Indonesia’s new capital: Bloomberg” informs about the withdrawal of SoftBank’s Masayoshi Son cancellation on the Indonesia new capital project. The dictions used in this article are mostly used to describe how major of a move the withdrawal is. For instance, the article introduced Masayoshi Son in the article by describing how much of a major figure he is. The analysis will be presented in a chronological manner according to the article structure. Below is a more detailed look of the analysis.

- 1) SoftBank Group **founder** Masayoshi Son will no longer be an investor
- 2) ...in Indonesia’s **\$34 billion** project to build the new capital in East Kalimantan...

Data 1 (founder) refers to Masayoshi Son as one of the major investors in the new capital project. The writer of this article used the word “founder” to distinguish Masayoshi Son as a major figure of the building of the new capital project in East Kalimantan. The rest of the sentence then reveals the main content of the article, informing that the SoftBank founder will no longer be one of the investors of the project. Data 2 (\$34 billion) emphasize the seriousness of the matter by using numbers. The project budget is of course not a small number considering that it is a project of building a new capital. The writer of the article included the exact number which describe what kind of a deal Masayoshi Son is pulling out from.

- 3) “There’s no more story on Masayoshi, **he’s out**,”
- 4) **according** to Coordinating Minister for Investment and Maritime Affairs Luhut Panjaitan in an interview on Wednesday.

Data 3 and 4 is a quotation from an important figure, Luhut Panjaitan. Data 3 is a straight quotation from an interview with the minister, being an article written in English, it is most likely that the statement from the coordinating minister for Investment and Maritime Affairs has been translated. In this case the diction used is rather short and conclusive, “he’s out”. It also emphasizes that the withdrawal of SoftBank’s Son is in its ultimate state, the talks are finished and there would be no more. Data 4 (according) shows the interviewee as the supporter of the discourse. The word “according” means the said things are as stated by the interviewee. And in this case, the interviewee is the coordinating minister for Investment and Maritime Affairs himself, Luhut Panjaitan. Being

an important figure at this matter, the existence of this statement quotation in the article supports the legitimacy of the news.

- 5) It wouldn't be the first time Son has **backpedaled** from **costly** government-led initiatives.
- 6) SoftBank and Saudi Arabia signed a memorandum of understanding in 2018 for a **\$200 billion** solar power development -- **far larger** than any **comparable project** at the time -- that ultimately stalled, Bloomberg wrote.
- 7) The Japanese **billionaire** is a major investor in well-known technology companies such as international marketplace.

Data 5 and 6 of the analysis again described Masayoshi Son as a major figure. Data 5 revealed that Masayoshi Son's withdrawal from the Indonesia new capital project is not the first big one he did. The diction used (backpedaled) means to reverse one's previous action or opinion. It is used to describe that the step that Masayoshi Son took is a big one. Data 6 also do the same thing by emphasizing the size of the project using big numbers (\$200 billion) and comparison (far larger than any comparable project). Data 7 then is a straight description of who Masayoshi Son is, a billionaire.

The textual dimension analysis of this article revealed that the use of dictions in this article tries to emphasize the seriousness of the matter. It is done by describing the main actor of the discourse, Masayoshi Son, as a major financial figure in the world and his involvement in the new capital project in Indonesia. Then the numbers of the deal also play a big part in shaping the notion of the bold step taken by Masayoshi.

### **Discursive Practice**

The interpretation of discourse processing, which encompasses features of production, dissemination, and use of text, is done in the dimension analysis. This section looks at how journalists create text. As a result of this discourse analysis, readers can learn not just how the news text's substance is produced, but also how the message is delivered. Jakarta Post is an English-language daily newspaper published in Indonesia. PT Bina Media Tenggara, based in Jakarta, is the owner of the newspaper.

Under the auspices of Information Minister Ali Moertopo and politician Jusuf Wanandi, the Jakarta Post began as a collaboration between four Indonesian media groups. The Jakarta Post was published for several years with little advertising and increasing circulation after its first publication on April 25, 1983. The newspaper began to take a pro-democracy stance once the editor-in-chief changed in 1991. The Jakarta Post is an English-language Indonesian daily that weathered the Asian financial crisis of 1997, with a circulation of 40,000 copies and 41,049 subscribers in December 1998. Being written in English and mostly specialize in economy and political matters, the Jakarta Post is mostly read by foreigners and “educated” Indonesian. According to statistics acquired by The Jakarta Post team from an AC Nielsen survey conducted in May 2014, the average readers of The Jakarta Post newspaper are in the top socio-economic position of Indonesia, who play a significant role in a strategic position and high economic status / income, making the Jakarta Post as the newspaper for the “higher-ups”. The Jakarta Post was the first Indonesian newspaper to go abroad in 1994, as part of an initiative called "Go International." Thousands of clients across the world may access the newspaper 24 hours a day thanks to three worldwide companies providing database services from three separate locations around the world. The Jakarta Post's objective to provide Indonesian viewpoints to national and worldwide concerns, despite Western ideas that dominate the world's information flow, is exemplified through the 'Go International' project. As the "Indonesian Journal of the Present," the Jakarta Post is dedicated to being present. This publication accepts the task of offering up-to-date news, entertainment, and viewpoints to the global community on a regular basis. Bringing the mission of being the perspective of Indonesian to the international community, the Jakarta Post vowed to a credible representation of the nation. The article used in this research is in line with the mission of the newspaper as it informs the news as it is while also being a representation of Indonesia in the international world.

### **Sociocultural Practice**

The third dimension is a macro-level analysis or the sociocultural practice based on the belief that the social context, which exists outside of the media, influences how discourse is conducted. The editorial room or journalist is not a sterile area or empty space, but is influenced by the media's external circumstances. Socio-cultural practices examine three factors: economics, politics (particularly in relation to questions of power and ideology), and culture (particularly in

relation to values and identities), all of which influence media institutions and discourse. The discussion of socio-cultural practices is divided into three categories: situational, institutional, and social. The situational level is linked to production and the situation's context. The influence of institutions both internally and internationally is connected to the institutional level. Furthermore, the social level is linked to macro conditions such as the political system, economic system, and cultural system of society as a whole.

### **Situational Level**

The relocation of Indonesia's capital has been in talks since President Joko Widodo announced it back in 2019. Government offices will be relocated to East Kalimantan province, alleviating the strain on Java's capital as it confronts environmental issues, that is the dream for now. As a megaproject, the government would obviously need investors to help fund the work. A number of possible investors has been listed and Masayoshi Son's SoftBank is amongst one of them, at least until they decided to pull out from the project in March. Many have been speculating to why the Japanese company pulls out their investment plan, experts have expressed that one of the main reasons of the cancellation is the financial and profit uncertainty in the project. As a non-commercial project, it is deemed to be not that profitable. As the government work to seek more investors, media has been covering on this matter.

### **Institutional Level**

The article of this research has at least two major actors, the SoftBank owner Masayoshi Son and the coordinating minister for Investment and Maritime Affairs Luhut Panjaitan. Masayoshi Son is the main actor of the discourse being the one who pulls out the investor while minister Luhut Panjaitan is the only resource people in the article. The Jakarta Post however has built a reputation as a credible news portal, and this article is proved to be one.

### **Social Level**

The capital relocation of Indonesia is of course not a small matter, it involves a country with over 200 million people living in it. There are already debates on this matter on the society as it is a controversial move by the government for obvious reason. This recent passage of a bill establishing a new capital city in Indonesia has sparked outrage over a variety of problems, including the name, a hasty parliamentary process, and concerns about the state budget and

corruption. The cost of this first phase of development is also included in the State Budget for 2021. Meanwhile, the total cost of constructing the new capital will exceed \$30 billion. The National Capital City will cost Rp 466.98 trillion to build, according to the 2020-2024 RPJM document obtained by CNBC Indonesia. The State Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBN), the private sector, and Government and Business Entity Cooperation are among these monies (KPBU). The APBN will only provide about 19 percent of the funding for this project's construction, with the remaining 81 percent being provided by private investors. Most people that go against the idea is worried about the budget and the environmental effects that it will cause in Borneo Island as one of the biggest green spots on the globe. Academics are also scrutinizing the capital relocation scheme more closely. As of Tuesday, an online petition started by a partnership of 45 academic institutions and civil society organizations had gathered nearly 25,000 public signatures. The petition requested Jokowi to halt the initiative for the time being, suggesting that the government should instead spend its resources on pandemic preparedness. One of the petition's 45 signatories, senior Muslim scholar Azyumardi Azra, said he was skeptical that the Jokowi administration would be able to relocate the capital before the President's second term ends, and that he feared it would become a "burden" for future leaders.

Masayoshi Son was among one of the possible investors until he pulled out from the project, and the studied article reflected just that as one of the biggest concerns of the capital relocation. Finding investors is one of the biggest challenges for the government at the moment. Not only SoftBank as one of the possible investors who already declared that they will no longer continue talks, other two investor consortiums are planning to follow in the step.

## **CONCLUSION**

This critical discourse analysis has revealed many key points that shaped the discourse in the article. First, the textual dimensional section of the analysis found that in the article "SoftBank's Masayoshi Son pulls out as investor for Indonesia's new capital: Bloomberg" used dictions to describe the seriousness of the matter and how big of a step that SoftBank has taken by pulling out their investment plan on the capital relocation. Second, the discursive practice is an analysis of the features of production, dissemination, and use of text, and how it is done in the dimension analysis. This section looks at how journalists create text. As a result of this discourse analysis, readers can learn not just how the news text's substance is produced, but also how the



message is delivered. This section of the analysis has managed to find that as one of the leading English daily newspapers in Indonesia, the Jakarta Post produced a credible news comprises of trustworthy information. This article specifically informed about the biggest concern of the capital relocation: investments. The Jakarta Post produced the discourse to be very convincing that what the investor did was a big move from a big plan. It is also revealed that readers may speculate the reason to why SoftBank cancelled their plan. One of the most possible reasons is the uncertainty of the financial and profit concerns. Lastly, the sociocultural practice revealed how the society understood the discourse. Most opposers of the plan are concerned about the finances and the environmental consequences, as Borneo Island is one of the world's largest green places. Academics are also taking a closer look at the capital relocation plan. An online petition initiated by a group of 45 academic institutions and civil society organizations had nearly 25,000 signatures as of Tuesday. The petition asked Jokowi to put the effort on hold for the time being, urging the government to focus its resources on pandemic preparedness instead. Masayoshi Son was one of the potential investors until he pulled out, and the analyzed article represented this as one of the major concerns about the capital movement. Finding investors is currently one of the government's most difficult tasks. Not only has SoftBank, as one of the potential investors, stated that they will no longer pursue discussions, two other investor consortiums are preparing to follow suit.

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