

Framing of Terror Against the Press: Pan & Kosicki Model Analysis in Tempo's Coverage of The Delivery of a Pig's Head To The Tempo Office

Eni Widyaningsih*, Anisa Rahayu

Universitas Paramadina, Indonesia

Email: eni.widyaningsih@students.paramadina.ac.id*,

anisa.rahayu@students.paramadina.ac.id

KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Framing; Pan & Kosicki; freedom of the press; media terror; Time.	The incident of sending a pig's head to the Tempo editorial office in March 2025 became a form of terror that marked press freedom in Indonesia. This study analyzes how Tempo frames the event using Pan & Kosicki's framing analysis model. The research method uses a qualitative approach with discourse analysis techniques on Tempo's headlines related to the event. The results of the study show that Tempo builds a narrative with an emphasis on Tempo's victimization, neutrality in the presentation of information, and strengthening democratic values through professional and measurable language. The framing used tends to support the position of journalists as victims and rejects all forms of intimidation against freedom of expression, where freedom of expression and opinion is enshrined in Law Number 40 of 1999, which guarantees press freedom in articles 4, 5, 6, and 18 as human rights of citizens. Kebebasan pers has norms or principles that measure the extent to which a country or community gives freedom to the media or press to carry out its role independently without unauthorized interference or intimidation or even threats of violence from interested parties. Maintaining the media is the same as protecting the foundations of Indonesian democracy.

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INTRODUCTION

Media freedom is one of the fundamental aspects of democratic life. This has been clearly established in Law Number 40 of 1999 on the Press, which affirms that media freedom is a human right of every individual and a manifestation of the sovereignty of the people (Ananny, 2018). The media functions as a tool of social control, a source of information, and a bridge between the government and society (Adhiatma & Mahmudah, 2023; Harumike et al., 2021; I Prayoga & G E Liline, 2023; Ni Luh Putu Diah Desvi Arina et al., 2023). Therefore, the media plays a crucial role in ensuring that transparency, justice, and the rule of law in Indonesia remain within their proper corridors. Journalists must also provide a balanced space and time for news to each party proportionately (Indonesia, 2023).

However, press freedom often faces various forms of pressure. This pressure does not only manifest as legal and political limitations but also as physical and psychological threats that endanger the safety and independence of journalists (Tandoh Intuah, 2024). Such threats produce a frightening effect: a situation where journalists feel threatened and afraid to report on sensitive issues (Tandoh Intuah, 2024). Consequently, the press's role as a watchdog of the democratic process is at risk of being weakened, paralyzed, or blunted (Muller, 2021).

One clear example of a threat to press freedom occurred in March 2025, when a package containing a pig's head was sent to the Tempo editorial office (Wiratraman, 2025). The acts of

terror and intimidation experienced by journalists of the Tempo news magazine—including the sending of threatening symbols such as pig heads without ears and gifts containing dead rats with decapitated heads—constitute serious attacks on the pillars of democracy and the rule of law in Indonesia. This is not only a physical threat but also a symbolic terror aimed at intimidating journalists (Löfgren Nilsson & Örnebring, 2016). The incident triggered widespread reactions from the public, press organizations, human rights institutions, and law enforcement agencies. All parties strongly condemned the act and urged that the perpetrators be brought to justice immediately (Ashworth, 2019).

This incident highlights the importance that freedom of the press should not be confined to written declarations but must be guaranteed by concrete actions (AlAashry, 2022). Strong law enforcement, physical and mental protection for journalists, and increased solidarity among media outlets are crucial to preventing similar incidents in the future (Mesquita et al., 2025). In this way, the press can perform its duties independently in seeking, obtaining, and disseminating ideas and information without fear or hesitation, thereby protecting democracy and serving societal interests.

Mass media play an important role in shaping public views and understanding. Their task is not only to provide information but also to influence how the public interprets events. The way the media presents news—from the choice of titles, stories, and visual displays to the placement of issues on the front page—affects public interpretation and assessment. In this sense, the media is not merely a disseminator of facts but also an agent constructing social reality.

In the situation concerning the attack on the Tempo editorial board in March 2025, the media's function was especially important (VIGEVANI et al., 2024). Coverage of the package containing the pig's head was not only about reporting the crime but also about shaping public perception of the event. Does the public see it as a serious threat to press freedom? Or interpret it as a manifestation of a political dispute? Or merely consider it a separate criminal act? These interpretations are heavily influenced by how the media present and frame the news.

The reality and framing presented by mass media do not emerge spontaneously. Media news framing is controlled by the media itself based on various interests (News et al., 2024). The framing concept described by Pan & Kosicki is essential to understanding this phenomenon. Framing is the process of selecting certain elements of reality to highlight, emphasize, and place in a specific context, thereby creating unique meanings. The media can, for example, highlight threats to press freedom or downplay their impact by presenting them as ordinary criminal news. Communication media play a vital role in people's lives, with almost 80% of their waking time—or more than 18 hours a day—spent interacting with the media (Media et al., 2017). Therefore, word choices, narrative style, and emphasis significantly influence public perceptions.

Tempo, as one of the news outlets discussing this issue, has its own unique perspective and framing of the incident. Evaluating Tempo's reports can reveal whether they emphasize threats to journalists, link the incident to a broader political context, or focus on procedural legal elements. Their method of reporting influences not only how readers perceive the event but also the broader direction of public discourse.

Understanding how the media present this case is crucial. An analysis of framing can illuminate how social realities are formed, how certain interests might be obscured in news

reports, and how this shapes public views on threats to press freedom. Overall, critical awareness of the framing process helps the public move beyond passive consumption of information to become active readers who evaluate and interpret news more objectively, logically, and rationally.

This study applies a framing analysis model created by Pan & Kosicki to investigate how news is presented by the media. This model was selected because it provides a comprehensive analytical approach, noting that framing involves not only content but also how the news is structured to convey messages in a particular way to the public.

The urgency of this research lies in the critical need to understand the media's role in shaping public perception amid increasing threats to press freedom in Indonesia. As acts of intimidation against journalists become more frequent and symbolic, analyzing how a leading media outlet like *Tempo* constructs its narrative is essential to understanding the media's strategic response to such pressures and its implications for democratic resilience.

Previous studies on media framing have extensively covered various topics. For example, Bahar et al. (2019) applied Pan & Kosicki's model to analyze political news framing, while Munir et al. (2020) examined government public relations in combating hoaxes. However, research focusing specifically on the framing of symbolic terror against media institutions, particularly using Pan & Kosicki's comprehensive model, remains limited. This study fills that gap by offering a detailed analysis of how *Tempo* frames a direct act of intimidation against itself.

The novelty of this research lies in its specific application of Pan & Kosicki's framing model to a case in which the media institution is both the victim and the reporter. This dual position provides a unique context to examine how professional journalism standards are maintained when reporting threats to the media's own existence, providing new insights into media self-representation and crisis framing. This research aims to systematically analyze the framing strategies employed by *Tempo* in reporting the pig's head terror incident using Pan & Kosicki's model. The study benefits academic understanding of media framing mechanisms in crisis situations and offers practical insights for media practitioners on maintaining journalistic integrity under pressure. Moreover, the implications extend to media literacy efforts by demonstrating how framing analysis can help the public critically evaluate news content, especially on issues of press freedom and intimidation.

METHOD

This research was qualitative in nature, aiming to produce detailed and comprehensive results (Paramitha et al., 2022) by applying discourse analysis with Pan and Kosicki's framing model. Framing involves the way reporters construct narratives to organize and present information. This approach was chosen because it reveals how media regulate the delivery of events through language use, information structuring, and narrative tactics in news articles.

The primary data source was an article published by *Tempo* titled "Tempo Reports Pig Head Terror to the National Police Headquarters; What are the Rules for Preventing Journalistic Work?" which was released on March 22, 2025. This article was selected due to its focus on restrictions on journalistic work and symbolic violence against the media, making it relevant for analyzing the construction of meaning and ideology in news coverage.

Tempo Laporkan Teror Kepala Babi ke Mabes Polri: Bagaimana Aturan Hukum Penghalangan Kerja Jurnalistik?

Koordinator KKJ sebut teror kepala babi ke Tempo sebagai bentuk penghalangan kerja jurnalistik yang diatur Pasal 18 UU No 40 Tahun 1999 tentang Pers.

22 Maret 2025 | 14.17 WIB



Pemimpin Redaksi Tempo Setri Yusra didampingi Komite Keselamatan Jurnalis (KKJ) ditemui di lobi gedung Bareskrim Polri usai membuat laporan polisi ihwal teror kepala babi yang ditujukan kepada salah seorang jurnalis Tempo, Jumat, 21 Maret 2025. Tempo/Nandito Putra.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Syntactic Structure

In Tempo's report on the delivery of pig's heads to the Tempo editorial office, sentence structure has a crucial role in building the context of discourse. The headline uses the term "terror" which clearly reflects the presence of violent acts or serious threats to the institution. This choice of words is neutral; contains a heavy meaning and directly directs the reader's understanding that Tempo is in an attacking position. The lead section presents factual information that briefly covers the 5W+1H element. Quotes from sources such as the Tempo editorial team and police officers are used to increase confidence in information. There is no use of language that leads to bias, but rather a careful presentation based on the available facts, in addition to the preparation of it follows the norms of hard news journalism which aims to provide basic understanding to readers.

Using this syntactic approach, it can be concluded that Tempo has subtly described itself as the aggrieved party in the incident. The delivery of information is descriptive and tends to be neutral without a tone, but still shows sympathy for press institutions. This strategy further strengthens Tempo's image as a professional and responsible media, as well as supports the values of press freedom and maintains its neutrality as a media.

Script Structure

The news narrative is arranged chronologically:

- Discovery of packages at Tempo offices
- Reaction of journalists and editors

- c. Statement from the police
- d. Comments from independent institutions (LBH Press, Press Council)

In Tempo's report, the neatly arranged phonological flow shows a delivery style that focuses more on facts, opening up only to arouse emotions or muddy the atmosphere. Starting from when the incident occurred, where it was located, who was involved (Tempo), to how the security forces responded, everything is aimed at presenting concrete data based on events that actually happened and can be verified, this is different from the media that prefers to look for sensations that will usually deflect this kind of event to trigger conflicts between groups, or spread ideological allegations such as accusing perpetrators of a certain group without evidence clear. By presenting stories in chronological order and avoiding guesswork, Tempo demonstrates its commitment to honest journalism and efforts to prevent divisions in society. This is in line with the principle of delivery by Pan and Kosicki, where the storyline is designed to structure events logically so that the reader can understand the context without being affected by emotions or prejudices. This strategy also shows that the editorial team is very careful in maintaining the peace and good name of the media, by not using the news as a tool of provocation or a place to spread unproven assumptions.

3. Thematic Structure

The main theme of this report is "terror against press freedom." The emphasis is not only on incidents of threats or violence experienced by journalists, but also on the social and democratic impact that such actions cause. In this case, threats to journalists are seen as an attack on the public's right to obtain free and unaffected information. In accordance with the explanation given by Nanang Rustandi (2022), the press has the right to access, obtain, and convey ideas and news, while public involvement can be carried out through various activities that aim to strengthen press freedom and ensure the right to get the information needed. So it can be said that any form of attack on journalists is also a way to silence the voice of the people.

In the report mentioned, there is no sign of any distraction, this means that the media is not trying to divert the public's focus from important issues to other topics. This shows the commitment of the editorial team to stick to the core of the problem, namely the protection of press freedom. In addition, there is no indication of a political agenda in the news reports. News content is not directed to benefit one party, but is based on universal values: freedom, justice, and human rights. This approach reflects the role of the media as the "watchdog role" that has the responsibility to uphold public accountability.

TEMPO views the incident as more than just a criminal act, which for Tempo is a reflection of the issue of human rights and democratic freedoms. Even so, the approach taken remains reasonable, proportionate and upholds journalistic ethics, ensuring that the advocacy message disseminated is trusted and widely supported by the public and emphasizing the importance of support for journalism that is not affected by threats.

4. Retoris Structure

The language used in the news is very descriptive and neutral. Tempo does not use emotional or inflammatory terms such as "barbaric" or "cursed", but is still able to show the seriousness of the event through diction such as "terror", "threat", and "freedom of the press". In the rhetorical framework initiated by Pan and Kosicki (Erp, 2017), word choice, the use of terms, and verbal symbols play an important role in shaping the perception and strong meaning of a news. Regarding the news in Tempo about the "pig head terror" incident at the Tempo

editorial office, the style of language used shows an effort to create a reputation as a reliable, impartial and trusted media. Tempo's news writing style is not just a linguistic aesthetic, but also a rhetorical strategy to assert moral credibility and show professionalism in the world of journalism. This approach paves the way for persuasive messages that are more easily accepted by a wide audience, while maintaining readers' confidence in the integrity of the media.

CONCLUSION

This study found that Tempo framed the terror incident targeting its editorial office as a significant threat to press freedom in Indonesia. Using discourse analysis based on Pan and Kosicki's framing model, the research showed that Tempo deliberately shaped the narrative to support democratic principles while maintaining professional and neutral reporting. The article emphasized the gravity of the attack by using strong headlines and credible sources, presenting the chronology of events and the responses from legal institutions and the editorial team without speculative judgments. Throughout the report, Tempo highlighted the protection of journalists and the importance of freedom of opinion, using neutral language to reinforce its responsible stance. Overall, framing conveyed both resistance to media intimidation and a commitment to safeguarding democratic space, illustrating how media framing functions as a social and political act that influences public opinion on press freedom and legal justice. For future research, it would be valuable to investigate how audiences interpret such framing and whether it effectively fosters public support for press freedom and journalist protection in contexts of intimidation.

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