



## A Critical Discourse Analysis of Students' Comments on Social Media

Leony Sitorus<sup>1\*</sup>, Intan Cezya Sijabat<sup>2</sup>, Martha Patricia Purba<sup>3</sup>, Partohap Saut Raja Sihombing<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1-4</sup> HKBP Nommensen University, Indonesia

email: [leonysitorus9@gmail.com](mailto:leonysitorus9@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [intansijabat498@gmail.com](mailto:intansijabat498@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>, [marthapatriciapurba@gmail.com](mailto:marthapatriciapurba@gmail.com)<sup>3</sup>, [partohap.sihombing@uhnp.ac.id](mailto:partohap.sihombing@uhnp.ac.id)<sup>4</sup>

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### Abstract

*This study investigates how students' comments on social media have been conceptualized, analyzed, and theorized within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)-oriented scholarship. Employing a qualitative library research design grounded in an interpretivist-critical epistemology, the study systematically examines peer-reviewed literature to identify dominant analytical patterns, ideological tendencies, and methodological convergences in the analysis of student-related digital discourse. Rather than analyzing primary social media data, this research applies CDA as a meta-analytical framework to synthesize how power relations, identity construction, and social practices are discursively framed in existing studies. The findings reveal a consistent reconceptualization of students as active discursive agents whose online comments function as sites of ideological negotiation shaped by institutional, cultural, and technological forces. Recurrent ideological formations, including normalization of authority, resistance discourse, moral regulation, and identity positioning, are observed across diverse platforms and contexts. Methodologically, the literature demonstrates strong convergence around CDA principles, while simultaneously indicating limitations related to textual reductionism. This study contributes to digital discourse studies by offering an integrative theoretical mapping that clarifies how knowledge on students' social media discourse is constructed and stabilized within contemporary CDA scholarship...*

**Keywords:** *Critical Discourse Analysis, TikTok, Student Discourse, Power and Ideology, Social Media.*



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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of social media as a dominant infrastructure of global communication has fundamentally reshaped how meaning, identity, and power are negotiated in contemporary societies, particularly within digitally mediated publics populated by young people and students. Current developments in discourse studies increasingly recognize online interaction as a central locus of ideological production, where language practices are inseparable from social structures, cultural norms, and power relations embedded in late modern digital capitalism (Van Dijk, 2015). Within this context, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has evolved as a key analytical paradigm capable of interrogating how everyday digital texts, including user-generated comments, participate in the reproduction or contestation of dominance. Early internet linguistics already demonstrated that online communication is not a neutral extension of offline interaction, but a site where gendered, political, and institutional power is discursively negotiated through specific linguistic and interactional strategies (Herring, 2003). As social media platforms diversify in form and function, scholarly attention has shifted toward understanding how newer platforms reorganize discursive authority, visibility, and participation within algorithmically structured environments.

A growing body of empirical research has applied CDA to social media discourse in order to uncover the ideological dimensions of online interaction across diverse contexts. Studies examining Facebook interactions reveal how collaborative engagement and dissent are linguistically managed through stance-taking, alignment, and exclusion, reflecting broader educational and social hierarchies (Rambe, 2012). Media discourse research further demonstrates that CDA provides an integrative bridge between linguistic micro-analysis and macro-level social critique, allowing scholars to connect textual patterns with institutional power and sociopolitical contexts (Sari et al., 2018). More recent investigations extend this analytical lens to comment sections responding to feminist scholarship, online debates, and political events, illustrating how digital audiences mobilize language to affirm, negotiate, or resist dominant ideologies related to gender, nationalism, and morality (Parson, 2019; Afrasiab et al., 2025; Ikuelogbon et al., 2025). Research on racism and hate speech in YouTube and X further underscores that comment spaces operate as ideological battlegrounds where collective attitudes are

normalized through repetition, intertextuality, and affective alignment (Shafa, 2022). Together, these studies establish social media comments as analytically rich sites for examining power-laden discourse.

Despite these advances, the existing literature reveals notable conceptual and empirical limitations that constrain a comprehensive understanding of digital discourse communities. Much CDA research remains platform-centric but uneven, with sustained attention devoted to Facebook, Twitter/X, and YouTube, while TikTok is frequently marginalized or treated as peripheral despite its exponential growth and distinctive communicative affordances. Even studies that adopt Teun A. van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework tend to focus on institutional media texts or overtly political discourse, such as news coverage and election-related commentary, rather than everyday vernacular interactions produced by specific social groups (Van Dijk, 2015; Purwanti et al., 2025). Furthermore, students are often subsumed into broader categories such as "netizens" or "youth," obscuring their position as a distinct discourse community with particular ideological orientations, educational experiences, and forms of symbolic capital. This generalization limits the analytical sensitivity of CDA in capturing how power operates through student-specific linguistic practices in algorithm-driven spaces.

The absence of sustained scholarly engagement with student discourse on TikTok is especially problematic given the platform's centrality in shaping contemporary public opinion and political sensibilities among university populations. TikTok's algorithmic logic not only curates content visibility but also structures interactional hierarchies within comment sections, amplifying certain voices while marginalizing others in ways that differ fundamentally from older social media architectures. Prior CDA studies of online debates and hate comments demonstrate that algorithmically intensified circulation can normalize extreme positions and crystallize shared mental models within communities (Afrasiab et al., 2025; Ikuelogbon et al., 2025), yet the specific implications of these dynamics for student discourse remain underexplored. This gap carries both scientific and practical consequences, as students increasingly utilize TikTok comment spaces to articulate critiques of educational institutions, social inequality, and state authority, thereby participating in informal yet influential forms of digital civic engagement.

Addressing this lacuna requires repositioning TikTok not merely as an entertainment platform but as a consequential discursive arena where student identities, ideologies, and power relations are continuously negotiated. Drawing on insights from gender and power studies in online communication, which highlight how seemingly casual language can encode asymmetrical relations of dominance and resistance (Herring, 2003), this research situates student TikTok comments within broader socio-cognitive and ideological processes. By aligning with CDA traditions that emphasize the interplay between discourse, social cognition, and societal structures, the study responds to calls for more context-sensitive analyses of digital language practices that account for both platform-specific affordances and community-specific norms (Van Dijk, 2015; Sari et al., 2018).

The present study positions itself within the international CDA landscape by offering a focused examination of students' TikTok comments as a distinct site of ideological production in algorithmic environments. Its primary objective is to reveal how power, resistance, and social critique are discursively constructed through everyday student interactions that often appear humorous, trivial, or ephemeral at the surface level. The study contributes theoretically by extending socio-cognitive CDA to multimodal, short-form video platforms, and methodologically by foregrounding student-generated comments as legitimate analytical data for understanding contemporary digital activism and power relations. Through this approach, the research seeks to enrich critical discourse scholarship on social media while providing empirically grounded insights into the role of students as active agents in shaping digital public discourse.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative library research design grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as its principal theoretical and analytical framework. The epistemological orientation of this design is interpretivist-critical, positioning discourse as a socially situated practice through which power, ideology, and social relations are produced and negotiated. Rather than examining primary user-generated content, the study systematically interrogates scholarly literature on students' discourse in social media environments to reconstruct dominant analytical patterns, conceptual assumptions, and ideological tendencies embedded within prior research. CDA is employed not as an object-level analytic tool but as a meta-analytical lens to evaluate how previous studies conceptualize students as discursive

actors, how power relations are theorized in digital interaction, and how methodological choices shape interpretive outcomes. This design is justified by the need to consolidate fragmented empirical findings across platforms and contexts into a coherent theoretical synthesis, allowing for critical reflection on how knowledge about student discourse on social media has been constructed, legitimized, and normalized within the academic field.

The corpus of literature was defined through explicit and replicable inclusion parameters. Data sources consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles indexed in major international academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, with additional cross-checking through publisher platforms to ensure version accuracy. The search process employed controlled keyword combinations such as “critical discourse analysis,” “students,” “social media,” “digital discourse,” and “power,” applied consistently across databases. Inclusion criteria were limited to empirical or theoretical studies employing CDA or closely related critical linguistic approaches to analyze social media discourse involving students or youth as primary or identifiable subjects, published in English within a defined temporal range to capture contemporary digital dynamics. Exclusion criteria encompassed non-peer-reviewed publications, opinion pieces, studies lacking explicit methodological grounding, and research focusing solely on technical or computational aspects without discursive analysis. Article selection followed a multi-stage screening procedure involving title review, abstract evaluation, and full-text assessment to ensure conceptual relevance and methodological rigor. Data extraction focused on publication chronology, theoretical orientation, analytical frameworks, data sources, and principal findings, which were subsequently organized into thematic matrices to facilitate longitudinal and conceptual comparison. The analytical procedure consisted of critical thematic synthesis, whereby recurring patterns, conceptual tensions, and methodological convergences were identified and interpreted through a CDA-informed perspective, enabling the formulation of an integrative theoretical mapping of how student discourse on social media has been examined, framed, and problematized within the existing scholarly landscape.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Discursive Resistance and Collective Identity Construction in Students’ TikTok Comments**

The empirical data demonstrate that student comments on TikTok operate as structured discursive acts rather than incidental expressions of dissatisfaction, revealing patterned linguistic strategies that index power relations within higher education. Data 1 and Data 3, as visualized in Figure 1 and Figure 2, foreground evaluative lexicon such as “tidak masuk akal” and “tidak manusiawi” to delegitimize institutional narratives of care, a strategy consistent with CDA observations on evaluative framing in digital discourse (Van Dijk, 2015). These lexical choices function ideologically by reframing institutional authority as morally inconsistent, echoing how online actors challenge hegemonic self-representations in prior CDA studies (Cukier et al., 2009). Compared with earlier analyses of Facebook and news commentaries that emphasize formal critique, the TikTok comments display compressed yet semantically dense formulations, suggesting a platform-specific economy of resistance (Rambe, 2012). Conceptually, this finding reinforces the argument that brevity in digital discourse does not reduce ideological depth but instead intensifies symbolic confrontation.

A salient pattern across the data is the systematic construction of collective student identity through inclusive pronouns and categorical labels. Data 2, Data 8, and Data 9 repeatedly deploy “kita” and “mahasiswa” to erase individual specificity and foreground group membership, aligning with van Dijk’s notion of in-group polarization as a cognitive strategy in discourse production (Van Dijk, 2015). Similar identity-building mechanisms have been observed in studies of online political and social debates, where collective pronouns function to legitimize claims by invoking shared experience (Afrasiab et al., 2025). Unlike gendered or ethnic identity constructions emphasized in other digital CDA research (Herring, 2003; Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016), the identity articulated here is grounded in institutional positioning within the educational system. This suggests a conceptual expansion of CDA identity analysis toward institutional subjectivities rather than solely socio-demographic categories. The implication is that students emerge as a coherent ideological collective whose authority derives from shared structural constraints.

The discourse further reveals a persistent oppositional framing between students and institutional authority, most explicitly articulated in Data 4 and Data 6. These comments question policy legitimacy and decision-making processes, reflecting what Parson (2019) identifies as counter-discursive

engagement that destabilizes official narratives through interrogative and contrastive structures. In CDA terms, such questioning operates as a delegitimization strategy that challenges the moral and rational foundations of authority (Van Dijk, 2015). Comparable dynamics have been documented in analyses of media discourse surrounding governance and public policy, where marginalized groups reframe institutional rationales as self-serving (Purwanti et al., 2025). The TikTok comments extend this pattern into the educational domain, indicating that universities are discursively positioned alongside other dominant institutions subject to public scrutiny. This finding conceptually situates student discourse within broader traditions of digital civic resistance.



Figure 1. Data 1

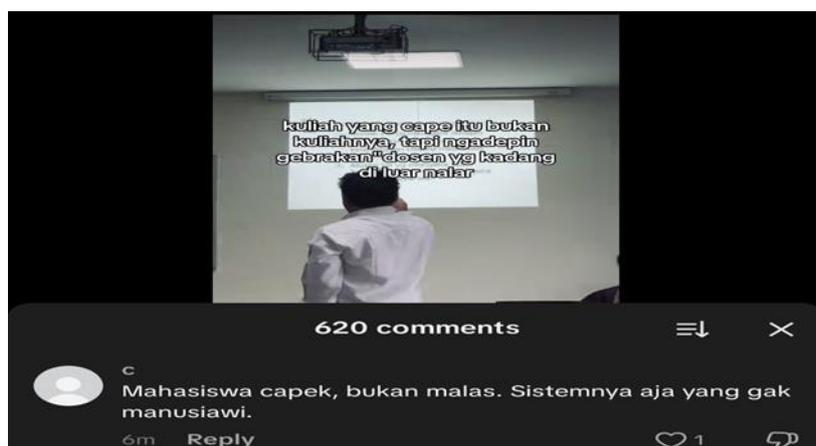


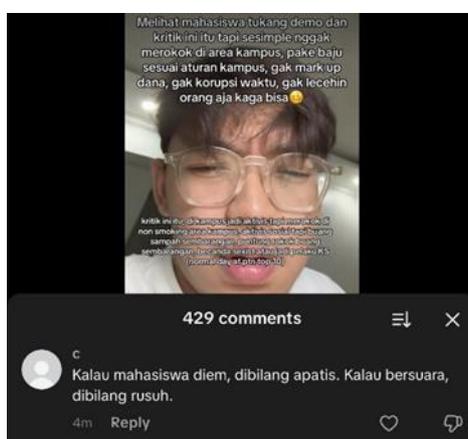
Figure 2. Data 3

Sarcasm and irony emerge as central discursive resources, particularly visible in Data 1 with the clown emoji highlighted in Figure 1. Such semiotic elements function as evaluative amplifiers that ridicule institutional claims while maintaining an informal communicative register, reflecting strategies identified in studies of online humor and power negotiation (Herring, 2003). Prior research on YouTube and X comments demonstrates that irony often serves as a protective mechanism that allows critique under conditions of asymmetrical power (Shafa, 2022; Ikuelogbon et al., 2025). In the present data, sarcasm does not dilute critique but sharpens ideological opposition by exposing perceived hypocrisy. This pattern suggests that digital vernacular should be treated as a legitimate analytical object in CDA rather than as noise or stylistic excess. Methodologically, it underscores the need for CDA frameworks sensitive to multimodal cues such as emoji.

The comments also reproduce a discourse of structural injustice, particularly regarding academic labor and well-being, as articulated in Data 3 and Data 7. These utterances reframe student fatigue as a systemic outcome rather than an individual failing, aligning with CDA findings on how marginalized actors shift blame from personal to institutional levels (Triana et al., 2020). Similar reframing strategies

appear in analyses of student life representations on university websites, where institutional discourse often obscures structural pressures (Svendsen & Svendsen, 2018). The contrast between official promotional narratives and student-generated counter-narratives reveals a discursive struggle over the meaning of “student welfare.” Conceptually, this supports the CDA assertion that discourse functions as a site where social responsibility is negotiated rather than assumed (Van Dijk, 2015). The implication is that student comments actively contest the moral economy of higher education.

Data 5 introduces spatial and socio-economic differentiation through references to “mahasiswa rantau,” expanding the discursive frame beyond generic student identity. This aligns with CDA studies showing how experiential markers are mobilized to claim epistemic authority in online discourse (Ng’ambi, 2010). By contrasting lived experience with abstract claims of privilege, the comment challenges dominant meritocratic narratives prevalent in educational discourse, a pattern also observed in media analyses of inequality (Cukier et al., 2009). Compared with studies focusing on racism or gender, this finding highlights classed and spatial dimensions of student discourse that remain underexplored (Shafa, 2022). Theoretically, it suggests the need to integrate intersectional perspectives into CDA of student digital discourse. Such integration would enrich conceptualizations of power beyond singular identity axes.



**Figure 3. Data 9**

The paradox of participation articulated in Data 9, illustrated in Figure 3, exposes contradictory expectations placed on students within institutional and societal discourse. Being labeled “apatis” when silent and “rusuh” when vocal reflects what Shirazi (2013) describes as conditional legitimacy of dissent in digital publics. This discursive double bind mirrors patterns identified in analyses of social movements, where participation is encouraged rhetorically but constrained normatively (Shirazi, 2013). Within van Dijk’s framework, this paradox illustrates how dominant groups regulate acceptable forms of discourse to maintain symbolic control (Van Dijk, 2015). The TikTok comments make this regulation visible by naming and critiquing it explicitly. Conceptually, this finding positions student discourse as reflexive, capable of articulating meta-critique of discursive constraints themselves.

Data 10 foregrounds meta-discursive awareness by commenting on the act of commenting itself, signaling heightened reflexivity among student users. Such reflexivity corresponds with findings from digital discourse studies that identify increasing awareness of discursive norms and sanctions in online spaces (Li et al., 2024). By labeling criticism as “realita,” the comment asserts experiential truth against accusations of exaggeration, a strategy consistent with CDA observations on truth-claim construction (Van Dijk, 2015). This mirrors patterns in studies of cyberbullying discourse, where participants negotiate legitimacy through appeals to lived reality (Haider et al., 2022). The presence of meta-commentary indicates that students not only resist content-wise but also contest evaluative frameworks governing digital speech. This expands the conceptual scope of CDA to include reflexive dimensions of online student discourse.

Across the dataset, TikTok emerges as a discursive environment that amplifies counter-hegemonic narratives through algorithmic visibility and interactional density. Prior CDA research on Facebook and news platforms emphasizes sustained argumentative exchanges, whereas TikTok comments rely on rapid circulation and resonance to achieve discursive impact (Rambe, 2012; Sharma

et al., 2024). This difference suggests that platform architecture shapes not only form but also the political efficacy of discourse. The findings resonate with analyses of social media's role in mobilizing collective sentiment within constrained communicative spaces (Shirazi, 2013). Conceptually, TikTok can be understood as facilitating micro-acts of resistance that accumulate symbolic power through repetition and visibility. This reframing challenges assumptions that meaningful political discourse requires extended textual argumentation.

Taken together, the analysis demonstrates that students' TikTok comments constitute a coherent field of ideological practice characterized by resistance, identity construction, and reflexive critique. The patterns observed align with and extend existing CDA scholarship by foregrounding students as an active epistemic community rather than passive recipients of institutional discourse (Budiyanto & Ridho, 2024). Compared with studies centered on hate speech or polarization, this research highlights everyday critique as a significant mode of digital political engagement (Afrasiab et al., 2025). Theoretically, the findings reinforce van Dijk's proposition that power operates through discourse at cognitive and social levels simultaneously (Van Dijk, 2015). The implication is that student-generated digital discourse should be treated as a critical site for understanding contemporary transformations of authority within higher education and digital culture.

### **Reconfiguring Students as Discursive Actors in Social Media Scholarship**

The synthesized literature demonstrates that students have been increasingly conceptualized as active discursive agents within social media environments rather than passive recipients of digital content, reflecting a paradigmatic shift in Critical Discourse Analysis toward agency-centered interpretations of online interaction (Van Dijk, 2015). Early foundational work on online communication established that power relations are embedded in linguistic choices and interactional norms, a premise that later studies extend to student populations navigating institutional and social hierarchies (Herring, 2003). Within this trajectory, research consistently frames students as reflexive actors who mobilize discourse to negotiate authority, legitimacy, and identity in mediated contexts (Ng'ambi, 2010). Comparative analyses across platforms indicate that student discourse is shaped by both technological affordances and broader ideological formations, producing patterned forms of critique and alignment (Rambe, 2012). This body of work collectively situates student discourse as a critical site where educational, cultural, and political meanings are continuously reconstructed.

Across the reviewed studies, a dominant analytical pattern concerns the construction of collective identity through discursive alignment, particularly via pronoun use, evaluative framing, and shared narrative repertoires (Triana et al., 2020). Research on Facebook, YouTube, and other platforms reveals that students frequently invoke collective subject positions to legitimize critique and normalize dissent within peer communities (Shafa, 2022). Such findings resonate with broader CDA insights that emphasize the role of in-group cohesion in sustaining counter-hegemonic discourse (Van Dijk, 2015). When compared with analyses of non-student populations, student discourse appears more explicitly tied to institutional experience, positioning universities as salient sites of power negotiation (Svendsen & Svendsen, 2018). Conceptually, this suggests that student identity in digital discourse is relationally produced through continuous reference to institutional structures rather than solely through demographic markers.

Another recurring theme in the literature is the discursive articulation of resistance, which is often expressed through irony, humor, and indirect critique rather than overt confrontation (Parson, 2019). Studies examining responses to academic, feminist, or policy-related content show that students strategically deploy sarcasm and evaluative ambiguity to challenge dominant narratives while maintaining peer solidarity (Afrasiab et al., 2025). This strategy aligns with CDA findings that indirectness can function as an effective means of ideological contestation under conditions of asymmetrical power (Herring, 2003). In contrast to hate speech-focused research that foregrounds antagonistic polarization, student-centered studies highlight resistance as dialogic and reflexive rather than purely oppositional (Ikuelogbon et al., 2025). The implication is that resistance in student discourse often operates through subtle recontextualization rather than explicit rejection.

The literature further indicates that methodological choices significantly shape how student discourse is interpreted and theorized. Studies employing micro-level linguistic analysis tend to foreground lexical and syntactic features, whereas those adopting macro-oriented CDA emphasize institutional ideologies and socio-political structures (Sari et al., 2018). This divergence produces

varying representations of students either as linguistically creative agents or as structurally constrained actors, revealing a tension within the field regarding analytical emphasis. Integrative approaches that bridge textual, cognitive, and social dimensions appear more capable of capturing the complexity of student discourse practices (Van Dijk, 2015). Consequently, the synthesis suggests that fragmented methodological orientations risk producing partial understandings of student agency in digital environments.

From a comparative perspective, research situated in educational contexts often intersects with broader analyses of social movements and civic participation on social media (Shirazi, 2013). These studies demonstrate that student discourse frequently mirrors activist rhetorics, framing educational issues as extensions of wider struggles over justice, inclusion, and representation. When contrasted with discourse analyses of technology or media users more generally, student discourse is marked by a heightened moral vocabulary linked to notions of fairness and institutional responsibility (Cukier et al., 2009). This pattern underscores the role of higher education as a symbolic arena where societal values are contested. Theoretically, it reinforces the CDA premise that discourse both reflects and reproduces social struggles embedded in institutional contexts.

**Table 1. Thematic Patterns in CDA-Based Studies on Students' Social Media Discourse**

<b>Analytical Focus</b>	<b>Dominant Discursive Features</b>
Collective Identity	Pronouns, shared narratives, alignment strategies
Resistance Strategies	Irony, humor, evaluative framing
Institutional Critique	Delegitimization of authority, moral evaluation
Methodological Orientation	Micro–macro integration, CDA models

Source: Triana et al. (2020); Ng'ambi (2010); Parson (2019); Afrasiab et al. (2025); Svendsen & Svendsen (2018); Shafa (2022); Van Dijk (2015); Sari et al. (2018)

The table illustrates that despite contextual variation, the literature converges on a limited set of discursive patterns through which student agency is theorized. This convergence suggests an emergent consensus that student discourse is inherently relational, defined by its engagement with institutional and ideological structures (Van Dijk, 2015). At the same time, the recurrence of similar analytical categories raises questions about conceptual saturation and the potential reproduction of taken-for-granted assumptions (Sari et al., 2018). By repeatedly foregrounding resistance and identity, studies may inadvertently obscure other dimensions such as ambivalence or compliance. This observation points to the need for reflexive meta-analysis that interrogates not only findings but also the frameworks that produce them.

Longitudinally, the literature reveals an increasing sensitivity to platform-specific dynamics in shaping student discourse. Earlier studies focusing on Facebook emphasize extended interaction and collaborative meaning-making, whereas more recent research accounts for algorithmic visibility and rapid circulation in shaping discursive impact (Rambe, 2012; Sharma et al., 2024). This temporal shift reflects broader transformations in social media ecology, where speed and affect increasingly mediate discursive authority. Student discourse is thus situated at the intersection of institutional critique and platform governance. Conceptually, this highlights the necessity of contextualizing CDA within evolving technological infrastructures.

The reviewed studies also demonstrate an expansion of thematic focus beyond traditional educational concerns toward emerging issues such as artificial intelligence, cyberbullying, and digital ethics. Analyses of student responses to AI-related debates show how technological anxieties are articulated through familiar discourses of institutional accountability and power imbalance (Li et al., 2024). Similarly, research on cyberbullying reveals how students negotiate norms of civility and harm within peer-dominated spaces (Haider et al., 2022). These developments indicate that student discourse functions as a barometer for broader socio-technical transformations. Theoretically, they extend CDA's relevance to contemporary digital challenges affecting higher education.

Collectively, this sub-bahasan demonstrates that existing scholarship constructs students as ideologically engaged actors whose social media discourse operates at the nexus of institutional power,

technological mediation, and collective identity. While this body of work has successfully foregrounded student agency, it also exhibits tendencies toward thematic repetition and methodological compartmentalization (Van Dijk, 2015). The synthesis suggests that future research would benefit from more explicit reflexivity regarding how CDA frameworks themselves shape representations of student discourse. Such reflexivity is essential for advancing a more nuanced and theoretically generative understanding of students in digital spaces.

The cumulative synthesis of CDA-oriented scholarship ultimately reconfigures students not merely as participants in digital interaction but as historically and ideologically situated discursive actors whose communicative practices both reflect and contest dominant social structures. This reconceptualization aligns with Van Dijk's view of discourse as a site where cognition, power, and social context intersect, thereby positioning student comments as meaningful loci of ideological struggle rather than peripheral digital expressions (Van Dijk, 2015). Studies examining student engagement in online discussions further reinforce this position by demonstrating that discursive participation is inseparable from cognitive positioning, social networking dynamics, and institutional framing (Sharma et al., 2024). From this perspective, student discourse on social media functions simultaneously as an enactment of agency and as a reproduction of structural constraints imposed by educational, technological, and sociopolitical systems. Consequently, the literature collectively advances a critical understanding of students as reflexive discursive subjects whose online comments constitute analytically significant data for examining power relations in contemporary digital cultures (Ng'ambi, 2010).

### **Ideological Patterns and Methodological Convergences in CDA-Oriented Literature**

The meta-analytical synthesis reveals that ideological analysis remains the central axis around which CDA-oriented studies of student social media discourse are organized. Across diverse contexts, scholars consistently interpret student utterances as sites where dominant ideologies are contested, negotiated, or rearticulated (Van Dijk, 2015). This orientation reflects CDA's critical epistemology, which treats discourse as inseparable from power relations embedded in social structures (Cukier et al., 2009). Within student-focused research, ideology is most often operationalized through themes of marginalization, legitimacy, and voice, positioning students as challengers of institutional authority (Svendsen & Svendsen, 2018). Such consistency underscores the strength of CDA as a unifying analytical lens while simultaneously raising questions about analytical flexibility.

A prominent ideological pattern identified in the literature concerns the moralization of institutional practices through student discourse. Studies examining educational and media texts show that students frequently evaluate institutional actions using ethical vocabularies centered on fairness, care, and responsibility (Triana et al., 2020). This moral framing aligns with broader CDA findings that ethical evaluation functions as a key mechanism for delegitimizing power (Van Dijk, 2015). When compared with analyses of political or ethnic discourse, student-centered studies exhibit a more implicit moral register grounded in everyday experience rather than explicit ideological slogans (Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016). The implication is that student discourse contributes to ideological critique through normalization of moral expectations rather than overt politicization.

Methodologically, the literature demonstrates a convergence around qualitative interpretive analysis, with CDA serving as both framework and heuristic. While some studies integrate quantitative techniques such as topic modeling or social network analysis, these are typically subordinated to qualitative interpretation of meaning and power (Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016; Sharma et al., 2024). This convergence suggests a disciplinary preference for depth over breadth in understanding student discourse. At the same time, reliance on similar methodological repertoires risks reinforcing dominant interpretive narratives about students as uniformly resistant or critical (Sari et al., 2018). The meta-analysis thus highlights a tension between methodological coherence and interpretive diversity.

Comparative examination of platform-specific studies indicates that ideological expressions vary according to communicative affordances. Research on YouTube and X emphasizes polarization and antagonism, whereas Facebook- and education-oriented platforms foreground deliberation and community-building (Shafa, 2022; Ikuelogbon et al., 2025). Student discourse traverses these modes, often combining critique with appeals to solidarity and shared experience (Ng'ambi, 2010). This hybridity complicates binary distinctions between conflictual and collaborative discourse in CDA

typologies. Conceptually, it suggests that student discourse occupies a liminal ideological space shaped by both institutional constraints and peer norms.

The literature also reflects growing attention to intersectional dimensions of student discourse, albeit unevenly developed. While gender and ethnicity receive substantial analytical focus in some studies, other axes such as class, migration status, or technological literacy remain under-theorized (Herring, 2003; Mavoia et al., 2017). This unevenness indicates that ideological critique in student discourse is often filtered through dominant analytical categories rather than emergent empirical concerns. By comparison, research on social movements demonstrates greater sensitivity to intersectional positioning (Shirazi, 2013). The implication is that CDA scholarship on students would benefit from broader intersectional integration.

**Table 2. Methodological and Ideological Convergences in CDA Studies on Student Discourse**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Observed Convergence</b>
Ideological Focus	Power, legitimacy, resistance
Methodological Approach	Qualitative CDA dominance
Platform Sensitivity	Affordance-driven variation
Intersectional Scope	Gender/ethnicity emphasis

Source: Van Dijk (2015); Svendsen & Svendsen (2018); Sari et al. (2018); Rambe (2012); Sharma et al. (2024); Shafa (2022); Herring (2003); Mavoia et al. (2017)

The table demonstrates that despite contextual diversity, CDA studies exhibit strong methodological and ideological clustering. This clustering facilitates cumulative knowledge-building but also risks stabilizing certain interpretive frames as normative (Van Dijk, 2015). The recurrence of similar analytical moves suggests that CDA functions not only as an analytical tool but also as a discursive formation that shapes scholarly practice (Sari et al., 2018). Recognizing this reflexively is crucial for advancing methodological innovation. The implication is that meta-analytical CDA can reveal power relations within academic knowledge production itself.

The reviewed literature further indicates that student discourse is increasingly linked to broader technological and societal transformations. Analyses of debates on artificial intelligence, digital surveillance, and cyberbullying show that students articulate concerns that extend beyond campus boundaries (Li et al., 2024; Haider et al., 2022). These concerns are framed through familiar discourses of institutional trust and accountability, demonstrating ideological continuity across issue domains. Compared with earlier studies focused narrowly on educational interaction, recent work positions students as participants in global digital debates (Afrasiab et al., 2025). This expansion underscores the evolving scope of student discourse as a subject of CDA inquiry.

From a theoretical standpoint, the synthesis affirms the enduring relevance of van Dijk's triadic model in structuring interpretations of student discourse. Micro-level textual analysis, meso-level social cognition, and macro-level power structures remain central explanatory dimensions across studies (Van Dijk, 2015). However, the literature also reveals selective emphasis, with many studies privileging macro-ideological critique over cognitive mediation (Purwanti et al., 2025). This imbalance suggests an opportunity for more integrated applications of CDA theory. Conceptually, such integration could enhance understanding of how students internalize and reproduce ideological positions.

The cumulative findings indicate that CDA-oriented research has successfully established students' social media discourse as a legitimate object of critical inquiry. At the same time, the meta-analysis exposes tendencies toward conceptual closure, where resistance and critique become expected rather than interrogated outcomes (Cukier et al., 2009). By synthesizing these patterns, the present study contributes a reflexive mapping of the field that foregrounds both its achievements and limitations. This mapping provides a foundation for rethinking how student discourse is theorized, analyzed, and contextualized within evolving digital ecologies.

The reviewed literature reveals that ideological critique and methodological convergence are mutually reinforcing rather than analytically separable within CDA-oriented studies of student-related social media discourse. The consistent application of critical linguistic frameworks demonstrates how ideological formations such as neoliberal subjectivity, securitization, and moral regulation become normalized through recurring discursive patterns across platforms and sociopolitical contexts (Cukier

et al., 2009). Methodological convergence around CDA principles enables these studies to transcend platform-specific phenomena and articulate broader critiques of how digital communication mediates power relations involving students and youth (Afrasiab et al., 2025). At the same time, this convergence exposes epistemological limits, particularly the tendency to privilege textual analysis over multimodal or algorithmic dimensions of social media interaction, which warrants further theoretical expansion. Nonetheless, the integrative patterns identified across the literature affirm CDA's continued relevance as a critical meta-framework for interrogating how student discourse is discursively constructed, ideologically mobilized, and methodologically stabilized within contemporary social media scholarship (Sari et al., 2018).

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that students' comments on social media, as theorized within CDA-oriented scholarship, constitute a critical discursive arena where power relations, ideological positioning, and social identities are continuously negotiated. The synthesis of existing literature reveals that students are increasingly conceptualized as active discursive agents whose online expressions simultaneously reproduce and challenge dominant institutional, cultural, and political structures. Ideological patterns such as normalization of authority, resistance through counter-discourse, moral regulation, and identity construction recur consistently across platforms and sociopolitical contexts, indicating structural commonalities in digital discourse practices. Methodologically, the convergence around critical linguistic frameworks underscores the robustness of CDA as a meta-analytical approach, while also exposing epistemological limitations related to textual bias and underexplored multimodal dimensions. Collectively, these findings affirm that CDA-based library research offers a theoretically rigorous pathway for consolidating fragmented empirical insights and advancing a more reflexive understanding of how student discourse on social media is produced, interpreted, and legitimized within contemporary academic knowledge production.

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