

Discourse network on the revision of Indonesian information and electronic transaction law

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Abstract Freedom of speech is one of the pillars of democracy that is being problematised as new media technologies are increasingly used in people's lives. In Indonesia, this can be seen in the debate over the UU ITE, passed in 2008, one aspect of which regulates the dissemination of information, fake news, and the like in the digital public sphere. For its critics, several articles in the UU ITE threaten freedom of expression and are considered a factor in the democracy regression in Indonesia. Using the DNA method, this research investigates the discourse and actors involved in the debate and how the discourse network is shaped. There are two periods covered, namely October 2016 to December 2016 and February 2021 to June 2021, when the government issued an official explanation or further regulation of the ITE Law. From three prominent online media (Kompas.com, detik.com, and Tirto.id), 359 articles were obtained and then coded based on actors and discourses. Therefore, this research shows the discourse coalition on the issue of freedom of speech. This research shows that the second period of debate involved more actors and discourses and changed the discourse network. There are realignments of network coalition by the state apparatus to be more supportive towards the more democratic discourse, although it is not necessarily materialised in the policymaking decision.

Keywords: democracy; discourse network analysis; freedom of speech; social media

INTRODUCTION

This research aims to describe the discourse, actors, and discourse networks revealed during the debate on revising the *Undang-Undang Informasi dan Transaksi Elektronik* (ITE), or UU ITE for short (The Information and Electronic Transaction Law) that appeared in online media in Indonesia. The debate is divided into two phases; the first phase is the discourse that emerged when the UU ITE was revised in 2016, and the second phase is the discourse that emerged in 2021 in pushing for the second revision. As its name suggests, this law regulates broad issues on information and electronic transactions or information technology.

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However, UU ITE contains several articles covering issues related to freedom of speech that is considered ambiguous and multi-interpretive. Indeed, the law has been used to criminalise critical opinion against the government by labelling such criticism as hate crimes of defamation, leading to the illiberal democracy drift in Indonesia (Warburton & Aspinall, 2019). Consequently, UU ITE has been seen as one of the threats to civil liberties, which in turn contributes to the democratic regression in Indonesia (Gismar, 2021; Mujani & Liddle, 2021).

The development of new media technology, especially social media, can improve the quality of democracy and enrich democracy (Alatas, 2014), and overcome paradoxes in the unequal mass communication system (Sudibyo, 2019). Social media, which has a broad reach, speed, and efficiency, has played a role in strengthening the idea and practice of freedom. With social media, anyone has freedom of speech and expression (Papacharissi, 2004). Social media disseminates everyone's ideas and keeps everyone connected. Social media has the potential to encourage free speech and political participation, which are essential elements of democracy (Massaro & Norton, 2021).

Freedom of speech is a fundamental right that must be granted to all people in a democratic state (Marwadianto, 2020). So important is freedom of speech that democratic countries protect it with laws (Voorhoof & Cannie, 2010). Social media has become essential in some countries to subvert dictatorial power (Lynch et al., 2016; Richter et al., 2018). As a new public space, social media realises freedom of expression and opinion to encourage participatory democracy (Nasution, 2020). In Indonesia, social media has also become a public tool to voice protests and corrections to government policies (Gazali, 2014; Sahidin, 2015; Shah et al., 2015).

In a democratic system, each citizen has an equal voice that needs to be heard along with all others (Boyle, 2000). The democratic system allows for dissent, competition, and disagreement among individuals, groups, between individuals and groups, between individuals and the government, groups and the government, and among government institutions (Surbakti, 1992). If freedom of speech is hindered, democracy as a political system will be threatened. Freedom of speech is the primary and exclusive means of political action (Bruno, 2019). Freedom and independence of speech in a democracy are natural rights and should not be violated by the state (Pureklolon, 2020; Wattimena, 2007).

However, freedom of speech on social media also presents new challenges, resulting in endless arguments and debates (Ceron & Memoli, 2016), the phenomenon of social echo chambers (Justwan et al., 2018), and the spreading of hoaxes, fake news, and misinformation (Hossova, 2018; Mansur et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2018). Therefore, social media also presents challenges and dangers to democracy. The

merging of the private and the public has led to social media being envisioned as a communication space where people can speak at will and ignore the fundamentals of communication: respect and empathy for interlocutors without anticipating the impact of utterances or statements (Sudibyo, 2019). Without realising it, social media citizens spread hoaxes in the form of expressions of hatred towards certain groups that are different due to race, religion, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

In other words, this new media technology is like a double-edged knife, which has benefits and dangers for the democratic process in a society. All countries that experience this challenge must respond to it according to their respective social, political, legal, and cultural conditions. The complexities that arise in social media encourage many countries to make regulations governing the internet and social media. The regulations often silence freedom of speech (Chakim, 2020).

In Indonesia, this issue was responded to by issuing the Electronic Information and Transaction Law (UU ITE) in 2008 to fill the legal vacuum in the Criminal Code (KUHP). The legal vacuum that regulates various dynamics on the internet gave birth to the idea of creating an Information and Technology Transaction Law to regulate transactions carried out electronically for legal certainty (Muldani, 2022; Supiyati, 2020). The UU ITE was sent to the Indonesian Parliament on 5 September 2005 and then passed as a law on 21 April 2008 (Setiawan & Arista, 2013)

The Information and Technology Transaction Law (UU ITE 2008) is the first law as a legislative product that expressly regulates the use of Information Technology and Electronic Transactions (Samudra, 2020; Setiawan, 2021; Setiawan & Arista, 2013; Syahriar, 2018). This law is expected to maintain digital space and provide a sense of security, justice, and legal certainty for users of information technology (Muldani, 2022; Rohmy et al., 2021).

Since its discussion in the Parliament and implementation after it was passed, the UU ITE has often been criticised because it threatens freedom of expression. The UU ITE is seen to contain some multi-interpretive and ambiguous articles (in Indonesian, such articles are called *pasal karet*, which means "elastic articles") that have the potential to limit freedom of speech, significantly Articles 27, 28, and 29. Therefore, it is argued that these articles are contradictory even with the Indonesian 1945 Constitution (Gunawan, 2020). These articles are considered to be used as a means of revenge, silencing criticism, and even becoming a political weapon (Permatasari & Wijaya, 2019). The UU ITE is undemocratic and threatens various kinds of citizen expression on social media (Nurlatifah, 2018).

In Article 27, paragraph 3, UU ITE stipulates that it is illegal to spread electronic information intentionally and/or electronic documents that insult or defame someone without their permission. Meanwhile, Article 28, paragraph (2) makes it illegal to intentionally spread

information that creates a sense of hate or hostility toward individuals or certain community groups based on their ethnicity, religion, race, or intergroup relationships (known as SARA in Indonesia, the acronym of *suku, agama, ras dan antar golongan*). The third controversial article that can be abused arbitrarily is Article 29 makes it illegal to send electronic information intentionally or electronic documents that contain threats of violence or fear to someone individually.

Shortly after it was passed, the UU ITE received various criticisms. In its implementation, the 2008 UU ITE experienced many problems, especially regarding freedom of speech and online opinion (Setiawan, 2021; Supiyati, 2020; Wulandari et al., 2020). The threat of criminalisation using the UU ITE has been voiced by various parties, specifically against the enactment of defamation articles and hate speech.

The three articles above are full of multiple interpretations, have no clear boundaries, and silence freedom of speech in democracy (Septiyan et al., 2020; Supiyati, 2020; Wulandari et al., 2020). In several defamation cases, many are motivated by revenge, silencing criticism, and online restrictions on freedom of expression. Southeast Asia, Freedom of Expression Network (SAFEnet) noted that since its enactment in 2008 until 2016, victims of the three articles of the UU ITE reached 185 cases.

Therefore, since the beginning of 2020, there has been a political debate and controversy on revising the law. Since its enactment in 2008 until 2020, the UU ITE has resulted in 700 cases (Amnesty International, 2021). Throughout 2021, Amnesty International Indonesia (AII) recorded 84 cases of violations of expression, with a total of 98 victims (*Amnesty Catat 84 Kasus Kriminalisasi Ekspresi Pakai UU ITE Selama 2021*, 2021). According to SAFEnet monitoring, public officials are the parties who use the law most against ordinary people they think are critical to them (Gerintya, 2018; Rasdianto, 2021). The increasing number of cases of violations of the UU ITE, especially regarding freedom of speech, has led to various debates to revise the UU ITE.

Various civil society groups have demanded that Articles 27, 28, and 29 be reviewed and revised (Febriansyah & Purwinarto, 2020; Sidik, 2013). This demand is challenged by other groups who consider the UU ITE clear and do not need to be revised. This discourse battle occurs in offline and online mass media and social media by actors (activists, government agencies, legislators, and academics) (Leifeld, 2020). Actors involved in this debate try to influence public policy by producing discourse so that a wider audience accepts the discourse.

Due to public pressure, especially from civil society, the House of Representatives and the Ministry of Communication and Information revised the UU ITE and passed it on 27 October 2016. President Joko Widodo signed the revised UU ITE on 25 November 2016. However, the problem is that the three controversial Articles that have been the subject of public outcry still need to be revised or revoked. In these

three articles, additional explanations state that these are changed from general offence (*delik umum*) to complain offence (*delik aduan*). According to Anggara Suwahju, Chairman of the Daily Board of the Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (ICJR), the norms and practices of these changes still have the potential to threaten freedom of expression and duplication of criminal acts. The articles are still to be elastic, multi-interpretative, and easily misused (Hidayat, 2016).

Therefore, the public debates and controversy on this law remain heated. In response, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, asked that the controversial articles be revised (Sahara, 2021). Nevertheless, public expectation faded when the government issued the guidelines for implementing the UU ITE for three articles, articles 27, 28, and 29, instead of significant changes or even revoking those Articles. The guidelines is a Joint Decree (SKB) signed by the Minister of Communication and Information Technology, the Attorney General, and the National Police Chief on 23 June 2021 (Luxiana, 2021; Ramadhani et al., 2022; Yahya, 2021b). Hopes for a revision of the UU ITE faded even further when in two years, 2021 and 2022, the UU ITE Revision was included in the priority National Legislation Program (Prolegnas) but was never discussed in the Parliament (Anggrainy, 2022; Ramadhan, 2021). According to Damar Juniarto, Executive Director of SafeNet, "The revision of the UU ITE is like the story of Godot waiting for God that will never come" (Yahya, 2021a). Amidst the uncertainty of the UU ITE revision, cases and victims of the "*pasal karet*" continue to increase yearly until 2020, as seen in Figure 1. In 2021, legal cases using these articles have declined. This is understandable as Indonesia, like many other countries, is still under the COVID-19 pandemic. That makes the government and individuals who feel offended by what they consider fake news, defamation, and such things more concerned with survival efforts and overcoming the COVID-19 crisis than bringing the cases to court (See Figure 1).

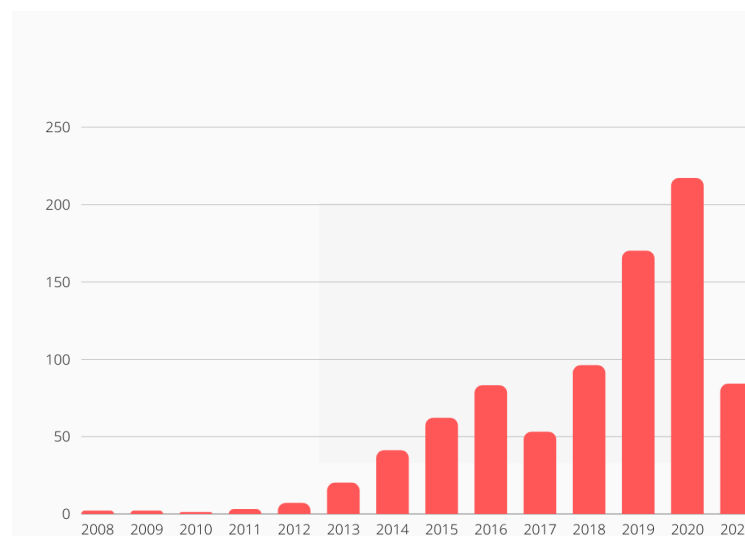


Figure 1. Number of Cases related to UU ITE from 2008-2021

Source: processed and compiled from various sources by the authors (2022)

Research on UU ITE is generally divided into three major categories. First, the impact of UU ITE on democracy: regarding freedom of speech and expression (Jaelani & Luthviati, 2021; Mawaza & Khalil, 2020; Rahmawati et al., 2021; Syahriar, 2018), the spread of hoaxes and hate speech on social media social (Meyliza & Wiwoho, 2022; Mufid & Hariandja, 2019; Pakpahan, 2021; Zulfan, Lestari AKA, 2020). Second, research on juridical reviews containing explanations and applications of the UU ITE (Anindyajati, 2021; Kurniawan et al., 2020; Lubis et al., 2022; Lumenta, 2020; Ramadhani et al., 2022; Supiyati, 2020; Winarno, 2011). Third, the positive benefits of UU ITE are in providing legal certainty and eradicating cybercrime on the internet (Gani & Gani, 2019; Kadek & Bagiastra, 2021; Rohmy et al., 2021).

The controversy of the UU ITE as a discourse battle is represented in the media by involving many actors (civil society, government, Parliament, academics, and even individuals). Both sides of actors who support and reject the revision of the UU ITE strive to have their discourse accepted by the public and accommodated into the policy (Fergie et al., 2019; Hajer, 2010; Leifeld & Haunss, 2012a). Therefore, this research aims to investigate the network of actors (people and organisations) involved in the UU ITE revision discourse, what discourses are put forward by these actors, both pro and con, and analyse the most dominant discourse in this battle. Therefore, the Discourses Network Analysis (DNA) method is applied in this research to uncover the actors, the discourses, and the network between the two. It is also combined with Discourse Coalition Framework perspectives developed by Maarten A. Hajer to understand the debates and discourse battles of the actors. Actors try various ways to build a dominant discourse so that the public accepts it and becomes a policy (Hajer et al., 2020).

Discourse contains ideas, arguments, and concepts produced and reproduced by actors (Hajer, 2010; Hajer et al., 2020; Hajer & Versteeg, 2005; Leifeld, 2017). Hajer (2020) argues that discourse has several characteristics. First, discourse concerns the meaning of an event or phenomenon, so discourse is not related to objective reality but rather the meaning of objective reality. Second, discourse limits through concepts, ideas, and categories. Discourse directs and limits perspectives. Third, discourse is produced and reproduced through various social life practices (Eriyanto, 2022; Hajer, 2010; Hajer & Versteeg, 2005; Leifeld, 2017).

Discourse is produced, reproduced, changed, and constructed by actors. Actors have a particular way of how reality is constructed. The discourse can describe the actors involved in an event (Eriyanto, 2022; Eriyanto & Ali, 2020; Fisher et al., 2013). Each discourse in various media can form a series of connected networks. Media discourse texts can also provide an overview of the network of actors involved in an event or a public issue.

Furthermore, actors influence public policy by producing discourse so that a wider audience accepts the discourse (Eriyanto, 2022; Eriyanto

& Ali, 2020; Fergie et al., 2019; Fisher et al., 2013; Hajer, 2010). Each actor provides arguments to convince the public that their argument is the more valid. Such political debates will lead to understanding the policymaking behaviour and influence of the political process. Indeed, according to Hajer (2010), it is the process of discourse competition between actors and its discourse formation and the coalition that will lead to the making of public policy.

Actors make these efforts by making knowledge-based legitimacy claims when they propose their discourse. The legitimisation process also occurs through the media. The media helps provide communication channels and arenas for the battle of ideas and deliberation. The media create a space where a policy is accepted or rejected (Eriyanto & Ali, 2020; Fergie et al., 2019; Hajer, 2010).

The success of discourse (i.e., when one discourse becomes dominant) is often not because it is the best but because of the success of the actors in packaging and constructing messages to be accepted by the public as the dominant discourse. The result of this dominant discourse is the institutionalisation of the discourse. It happens when a particular discourse is reinforced in public policy (Eriyanto, 2022; Hajer, 2010; Leifeld, 2013). Therefore, DNA has widely been used to study government policies. Philip Leifeld, an expert in political science and public policy who proposed this method, has conducted many studies using DNA to study various government policies in various countries. For example, he investigated the reconceptualisation of public policy in Germany's pension fund advocacy coalition (Leifeld, 2017) and the software invention patents rights in the European Parliament (Leifeld & Haunss, 2012a, 2012b). On the issue of the policy around climate change, Leifeld and his colleague conducted ideological mapping on the issue of climate change in the United States Congress (Fisher et al., 2013), while Ghinoi & Steiner (2020) conducted a similar approach to climate change debate in Italy

In the context of Indonesia, not only does this research contributes to the discussion of policymaking, but this will also contribute to the discussion on the state of Indonesia's democracy, which is considered by some to be regressing or even becoming illiberal (Mujani & Liddle, 2021; Warburton & Aspinall, 2019). This is why this research deals with the issue of the freedom of speech, frequently considered one of the bedrock of a democratic system in Indonesia. Moreover, the broader context is the proliferation of communication technologies that are increasingly influential and used in everyday life, including in public life and public policy making. Moreover, by using DNA, this study can present the empirical and exact wording of the terminologies used by the actors in the debate.

In addition, this study presents an empirical study of actor networks and discourse in the political debate on freedom of speech with the subject of the UU ITE debate. In Indonesia, DNA has been used to map and understand the discourse about various issues, but there needs

to be more research on the debate around the UU ITE Law. Indeed, the DNA framework has been applied in the Indonesian public debate that developed about the handling of Covid-19 (Eriyanto & Ali, 2020), the counter-terrorism issue (Amin & Wahyunengseh, 2022), the policy on cigarette advertising (Murti & Nur Ratriyana, 2022), the policy on tourism and sustainable environment (Hastjarjo et al., 2021), the banning of Islamist organisation of Hizbut Thahrir Indonesia (HTI) (Syakura, 2021), and the policy of rural electrification (Wibisono et al., 2023).

Furthermore, by applying DNA in two periods of debate on the UU ITE, this research can show the discourse coalitions formed in each period and the dynamics that occur over time. In other words, this research will show the stability of both actor and discourse coalitions, indicating the consolidation and political realignment of the actors involved in the debate. This shows the dynamics of the debate in policy making on the UU ITE, which reflects what democracy is from the actors (government, House of Representatives, CSOs, and other parties).

METHODOLOGY

This study uses the DNA approach, which is a method used to map the network of discourse and actors (individuals, groups, or organisations), agreements, and discourse conflicts between actors (Leifeld, 2017). As the unit analysis of DNA research is statements, or discourse, from actors, the corpus of this study is obtained from three prominent Indonesian online media, i.e., Kompas.com, Detik.com, and Tirto.id. The keywords used for searching the articles are "revisi UU ITE" and "revisi Undang-undang ITE." The search is conducted in two periods; the result is shown in Table 1. The first period is from 27 October 2016 to 30 December 2016, after the first revision of the UU ITE was passed and 102 articles were found. The second period, from 15 February 2021 to 30 June 2021, was after President Joko Widodo started to revise the UU ITE for the second time. In this period, 257 articles were found (See table 1).

Table 1. Number of Articles

Period	Online Media			Total Number of Articles
	Kompas.com	Detik.com	Tirto.id	
Period 1	33	52	17	102
Period 2	67	159	31	257

Source: Authors' data collection (2022)

The next step is identifying which articles contained actors and their statements about the UU ITE revision. Articles that did not contain actors and their statements are not included in the analysis process. Since the unit analysis of DNA is the actors and the statements, not the number of articles, although the actors and the statements appeared in more than one article, that would be counted as one. Therefore, the following

step is to check the similarity of actor statements simultaneously in Kompas.com, Detik.com, and Tirto.id. If the same statement of an actor appears in two or three media, only one statement from one media is used, while those from the other media are deleted. On the other hand, a news article could also contain more than one actor or statement. From this sequential process, there are 182 relevant articles were found.

Following the procedure suggested by Leifeld (2017), the next stage is the identification of discourses (concepts) and actors. The statements are categorised or grouped based on discourses (concepts) and actors. It is identified that there are nine discourses (concepts), i.e.: (1) revision of the ITE, (2) "*pasal karet*"/ multi-interpretation article, (3) revoke the UU ITE altogether, (3) the government is not serious about revising the UU ITE, (4) government regulations (e.g., the police action, three ministries joint decree), (5) criminalising and silencing freedom of speech, (6) tool to legitimise government interests, (7) tool to sue each other, (8) to be civilised in social media, and (9) necessary law to protect the society. Meanwhile, actors are grouped into 15 actors, i.e.: (1) CSOs, (2) the Government, (3) The House of Representatives, (4) Lawyers, (5) the Ministry of Communications and Information, (6) NGOs, (7) The National Commission on Human Rights, (8) the victims, (9) academics, (10) journalists, (11) observers, (12) suers (person or groups who use UU ITE to bring legal complaints to other parties), (13) students, (14) the Police, and (15) the prosecutors.

The data coding process was done manually with the DNA Analyzer version 3.0.7. After mapping through the DNA Analyzer, the actors and the discourse network is visualised using VISON software. In addition to network visualisation, VISON is the centrality information of the network. Centrality measures the degree of dominance of actors and concepts. Three centrality measures are used: degree centrality, betweenness centrality, and closeness centrality. Degree centrality indicates how popular an actor or discourse (concept) is in the network, measured by the number of relationships (links/edges) an actor has with other actors and discourses.

Meanwhile, closeness centrality shows how close an actor or discourse is to other actors and discourses, indicating how easy or difficult an actor reaches other actors in the network. Lastly, betweenness centrality shows the position of actors and discourses as a link between other actors and discourses in the network. In other words, actors or discourses with betweenness centrality connect with other actors and discourses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First Period: When it all started

Since the enactment of the UU ITE in 2008, this law has immediately caused controversy because it contains *pasal karet* and multiple interpretations, significantly Articles 27, 28, and 29. Eight years later, in the era of President Joko Widodo's leadership, this law was revised into

UU ITE 2016 due to pressure from many corners. However, the debate continues because the revision is considered insubstantial. The network of discourse debates and actors in the first period of this research is visualised in Figure 2. In the figure, the actors are shown by round or circle marks, while the square marks represent concepts or discourses. The line connecting the two shows the relationship between actors and discourse. If the line connecting the two is green, then it shows that the actor supports the discourse. Conversely, the red line indicates that the actor is against the discourse. Meanwhile, the blue line indicates a difference of opinion between supporting and rejecting the parties in that particular category of actors.

Meanwhile, Table 2 and Table 3 show the degree centrality, closeness centrality, and betweenness centrality of the discourses and the actors, respectively, in Period 1 and Period 2. In the first period, the discourse that has a degree of centrality (popularity) is the discourse of "being civilised in social media," followed by the discourse of "a necessary law to protect society." Meanwhile, the actors with the highest degree of centrality are NGOs and the Ministry of Communication and Information. Meanwhile, the closest relationship between discourse and actors (closeness centrality) is the discourse of "being civilised in social media" and the actor of the Ministry of Communication and Information. The discourse and actors that can connect (betweenness centrality) between the pros and cons are the discourse of "being civilised on social media." This discourse is supported by many actors involved in the debate, except for NGO groups. Meanwhile, the actor that can connect the debate is the Ministry of Communication and Information.

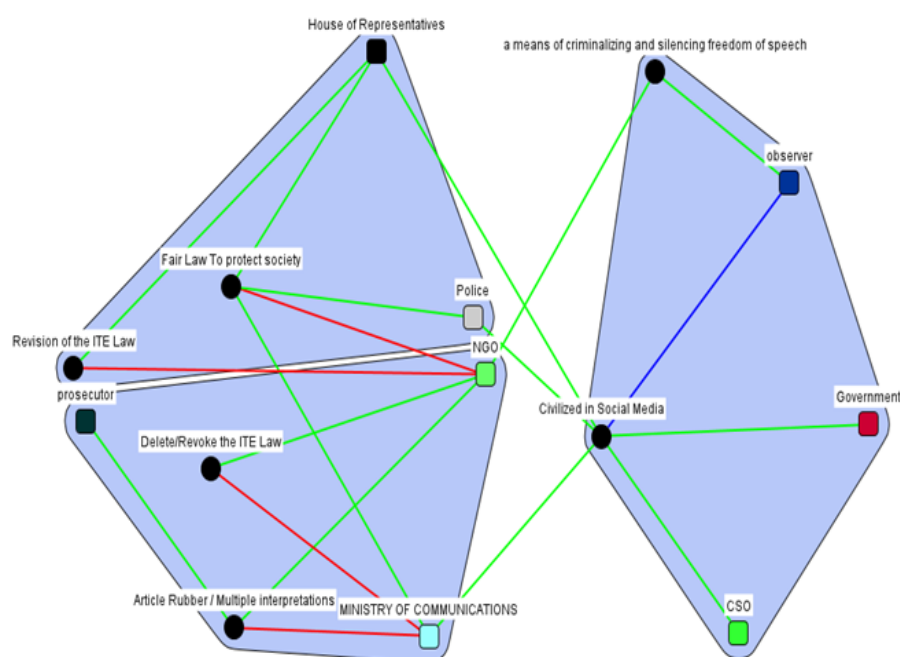


Figure 2. Network of Actors and Discourses on the revision of UU ITE, first period (27 October-30 December 2016).
Source: Authors' analysis (2022)

As shown in Figure 2, the actors who support the revision are the state apparatus, namely the government (President and ministers), the Ministry of Communication and Information, the House of Representatives, the Police, and organisations such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). Meanwhile, those who disagree are mainly civil society, represented by NGO groups, who think the revision is insignificant. In revising the UU ITE, the government increased its authority through Articles 40 and 43.

Table 2. The Centrality of Discourses

Discourse (Concept)	Period 1			Period 2		
	Betweenness	Closeness	Degree	Betweenness	Closeness	Degree
" <i>Pasal karet</i> " / multi-interpretation	11,48	7,349	7,89	0,71	4,101	3,191
To be civilised in social media	29,23	9,353	15,78	0,418	3,94	2,128
Revoke the UU ITE	1,05	6,859	5,26	3,417	4,466	5,319
Necessary law to protect the society	8,93	7,914	10,52	1,092	4,101	3,191
Gov't regulations				1,387	4,276	4,255
Tool to sue each other				2,7	4,27	4,25
Revision of the UU ITE	1,74	6,85	5,26	23,528	6,08	11,70
The government is not serious.				3,116	4,46	5,31
Criminalising and silencing	3,19	6,85	5,26	"21.586	5.74	10.63

Source: Authors' analysis (2022)

In the first period, six discourses emerged, namely (1) revision of the ITE Law, (2) "*pasal karet*" / multi-interpretation articles, (3) revoke the UU ITE altogether, (4) criminalising and silencing freedom of speech, (5) to be civilised in social media, and (6) necessary law to protect the society. Actors who support the revision emphasise that the UU ITE will enable the growth of civility in social media space. They argue that the revision will protect the digital space from hate speech, defamation, fake news, and hoaxes. Therefore, another discourse proposed by supporters of the revision is that the UU ITE is "the necessary law to protect society."

Regarding the discourse of "*pasal karet*," supporting actors believe that the opportunity for multiple interpretations of controversial articles has been removed, primarily because of the change from *delik umum* (general offences, which can be used arbitrarily by the authorities) to *delik aduan* (complaint offences). It appears that the discourse coalition formed by the supporters is relatively solid.

In this "*pasal karet*" discourse, NGO actors who oppose the revision insist that the revision is insignificant and does not touch the substance of safeguarding freedom of speech. Moreover, the revision results

increase the government's authority to control the digital space. The discourse they support, therefore, is to repeal these articles. Furthermore, they do not support the discourse of "the necessary law to protect the society," instead believing that the UU ITE will become a tool "for criminalising and silencing freedom of speech." Of the several discourses supported by NGO actors, only this "criminalising and silencing freedom of speech" discourse received support from other actors, namely "social observers/commentators." It shows the weakness of the discourse coalition of opponents of the revision of the UU ITE compared to the discourse coalition of supporters.

Table 3. The Centrality of Actors

Actors	Period 1			Period 2		
	Betweenness	Closeness	Degree	Betweenness	Closeness	Degree
CSOs	0	6,05	2,63	0,393	4,16	2,08
Government	0	6,05	2,63	4,096	4,53	5,20
House Of Rep.	6,23	7,34	7,89	19,411	6,08	9,57
Lawyer				1,241	4,46	3,19
The Ministry of Comm. & Info	16,55	8,57	10,52	3,213	4,27	4,25
NGOs	16,17	7,91	13,15	6,678	5,15	6,38
Komnas HAM				0,322	4,27	2,12
Victims				0,45	3,94	2,12
Academics				3,924	4,901	5,31
Journalists				1,1	4,46	3,19
Suers				0,322	4,276	2,12
Students				0	3,65	1,06
The Police	1,46	6,85	5,26			
Observers	3,92	6,85	5,26	1,01	4,101	3,19
The prosecutors	0	5,14	2,63			

Source: Authors' analysis (2022)

Second Period: More Discourses, More Actors

After the revision in 2016, legal cases using the UU ITE continued to increase. The increase in legal cases, most dubious, indicates a decline in democracy in Indonesia (Mujani & Liddle, 2021; Warburton & Aspinall, 2019). Therefore, civil society continues questioning the UU ITE and the increase in legal cases. President Joko Widodo issued public statements to push for a more acceptable revision in response to this pressure. For example, at the Armed Forces commanders meeting at the State Palace on 15 February 2021, he asked the House of Representatives to jointly revise the UU ITE if the UU ITE could not provide a sense of justice for the people of Indonesia (Hakim, 2021). Next, President Widodo also sent a letter to the DPR to discuss changes to the UU ITE and encouraged the process of changes or revisions to be prioritised. Because the process of a public policy, let alone an important one such as freedom of speech,

involves many actors and discourses (Hajer, 2013; Hajer & Versteeg, 2005; Leifeld, 2017), there is a massive public debate that is also reflected in mass media coverage.

It is the second period covered by this research. Figure 3 shows the network of actors and discourses on the UU ITE. Compared to the first period, the number of actors involved in this discourse battle has increased, most notably The National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HM), victims (victims who are involved in legal cases based on ITE Law), users (people or groups who use UU ITE to charge other parties), and college students. The number of distinct discourses has also increased, e.g., the discourse that UU ITE is used by ordinary citizens, public figures, organisations, and government institutions to report alleged violations of UU ITE, especially in defamation and fake news. Another new discourse that is coming up is about whether the government and the state are serious about making revisions to maintain a democratic climate or if it is just a lip-service effort to reduce criticism.

Table 3 shows that the House of Representatives plays a vital role in the UU ITE debate. The House of Representatives has the highest degree of centrality, betweenness centrality, and closeness centrality compared to other actors. Discourses with three high centralities are "the discourse on the revision of the UU ITE" and "the means for criminalising and silencing criticism," indicating a solid discourse coalition on both.

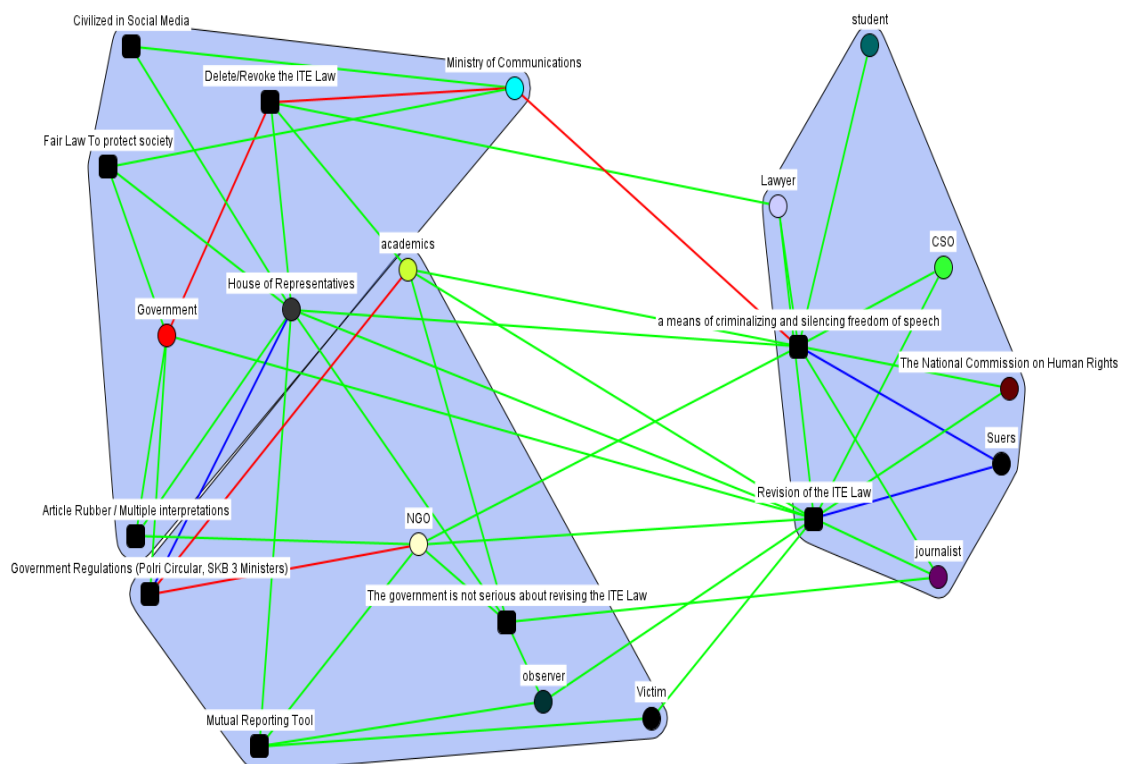


Figure 3. Network of Actors and Discourses on revising UU ITE, the second period (15 February - 30 June 2021).

Source: Authors' analysis (2022)

Figure 3 also shows that in this second period, several discourse coalitions were formed from supporters and opponents of the revision of the UU ITE. This discourse coalition was not formed in the first period, except for a thin coalition between NGOs and observers in "criminalising and silencing freedom of speech." In the second period, the discourses of "revision of the UU ITE" and "tools for criminalising and silencing freedom of speech" were supported by almost all actors involved in the debate, including the government and the House of Representatives. In contrast, these two actors did not support these two discourses in the first period. In other words, their approved discourse positions were realigned from the first period to the second period.

In addition, in the first period, the government and the House of Representatives did not support the discourse on the UU ITE containing "*pasal karet* and multiple interpretations." However, in this second period, the government and the House of Representatives changed to support the discourse on the UU ITE containing "*pasal karet* and multiple interpretations," which must be revised immediately to create "necessary laws to protect society" and "a civility on social media." Another discourse coalition legitimising the revision process is the discourse of UU ITE being used as a "reporting and counter-reporting tool"—a discourse supported by victims, observers, the House of Representatives, and NGOs. The only actors who oppose the revision are the "suers," who often use UU ITE to report someone to the Police.

The coalition of actors becomes fragmented regarding whether the revisions to the UU ITE are minor or "total revision or complete revocation" of articles considered ambiguous and multi-interpretative. The coalition of discourse that supports the discourse of total revision or even repeal of the *pasal karet* is NGOs, academics, and lawyers. The discourse coalition that opposes the repeal of the UU ITE comes from the government and the Ministry of Communication and Information.

Although there seems to be a change in the discourse position of the government and the House of Representatives in some discourses, there are doubts from some actors so that a new discourse coalition has emerged, namely, "the government is not serious about revising the UU ITE." This coalition consists of NGOs, academics, observers, journalists, and even some members of the House of Representatives who encourage the government to send a draft revision of the UU ITE sooner. The suspicion that the government was not serious was further strengthened when the government issued a joint decree of the Minister of Communication and Information Technology, the Attorney General, and the Head of the Indonesian National Police which contained more or less technical instructions on how not to violate the three articles of the UU ITE.

Implications

The analysis of the public debate on UU ITE shows that in the public policy debate, the government or politicians can agree on a discourse but not necessarily realise it in the form of a policy. In the case of the UU ITE, the policy taken by the government is even contrary to the public discourse the government itself supports because politicians can use the UU ITE against their political opponents (Ardito, 2022).

In addition, DNA theoretically assumes that discourse not only reflects existing power relations and social structures but also perpetuates these relations. In the context of the debate on the revision of the ITE Law, one can see the domination of discourse on the state vis a vis civil society, which is also reflected later in the policies taken which are considered detrimental to the rights of citizens, and even reduce democratic values in Indonesia. Thus the notion that new media technology will bring about a more democratic social structure is not always correct because policymaking is based more on political interests.

Another issue implied from the DNA analysis of the debate on the revision of the UU ITE is the importance of building a real coalition. Real coalitions will form a more robust advocacy process to influence policymaking without neglecting the benefits of discourse coalitions reflected and appearing in the mass media. Moreover, the issue of the UU ITE is crucial regarding the condition of the democratic system in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This research describes the discourse, actors, and discourse networks revealed during the debate on revising the UU ITE. The debate is divided into two phases; the first phase is the discourse that emerged when the UU ITE was revised in 2016, and the second phase is the discourse that emerged in 2021 for the second revision. This research shows that the second period of debate involved more actors and discourses (concepts) presented in the digital media public sphere. The new actors that emerged in the public debate, such as victims, suers, and lawyers, can be understood as a result of the implementation of the UU ITE revision in the first period, which brought so many legal cases. They presented new discourses, rejected existing discourses, or supported existing discourses to form discourse coalitions with other actors.

Indeed, the second period of debate on the UU ITE also shows differences in the pattern of discourse coalitions. In the first period, there was a thin discourse coalition between NGOs and social observers on "criminalising and silencing freedom of speech." In the second period, however, almost all actors—including the government and the House of Representatives—supported this discourse, as well as the discourse promoting the "revision of the UU ITE." In other words, there was a realignment of discourse from the state apparatus in response to the impacts of the UU ITE, which was considered to decline the democratic climate in Indonesia, among others. However, political dynamics and the

tug-of-war of vested interest prevented a more substantial revision of the UU ITE. It can be seen that despite being part of a discourse coalition supporting significant changes to the UU ITE, it does not have much influence on policymaking to maintain the democratic climate in Indonesia.

Further research on the issue of freedom of speech and its relationship with the law in Indonesia could be directed in at least two directions. First, an empirical study is needed on whether real coalition networks are formed on this issue and whether these networks are congruent with discourse networks. In this case, lessons can be drawn on developing a more coordinated discourse, thus enabling more substantial pressure from, for example, the network of critics of the UU ITE in its efforts to prevent democracy regression in Indonesia. Secondly, it can also be studied how similar actors debate other public policies, thus indicating a process of consolidation of both discourse networks and coordination networks.

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