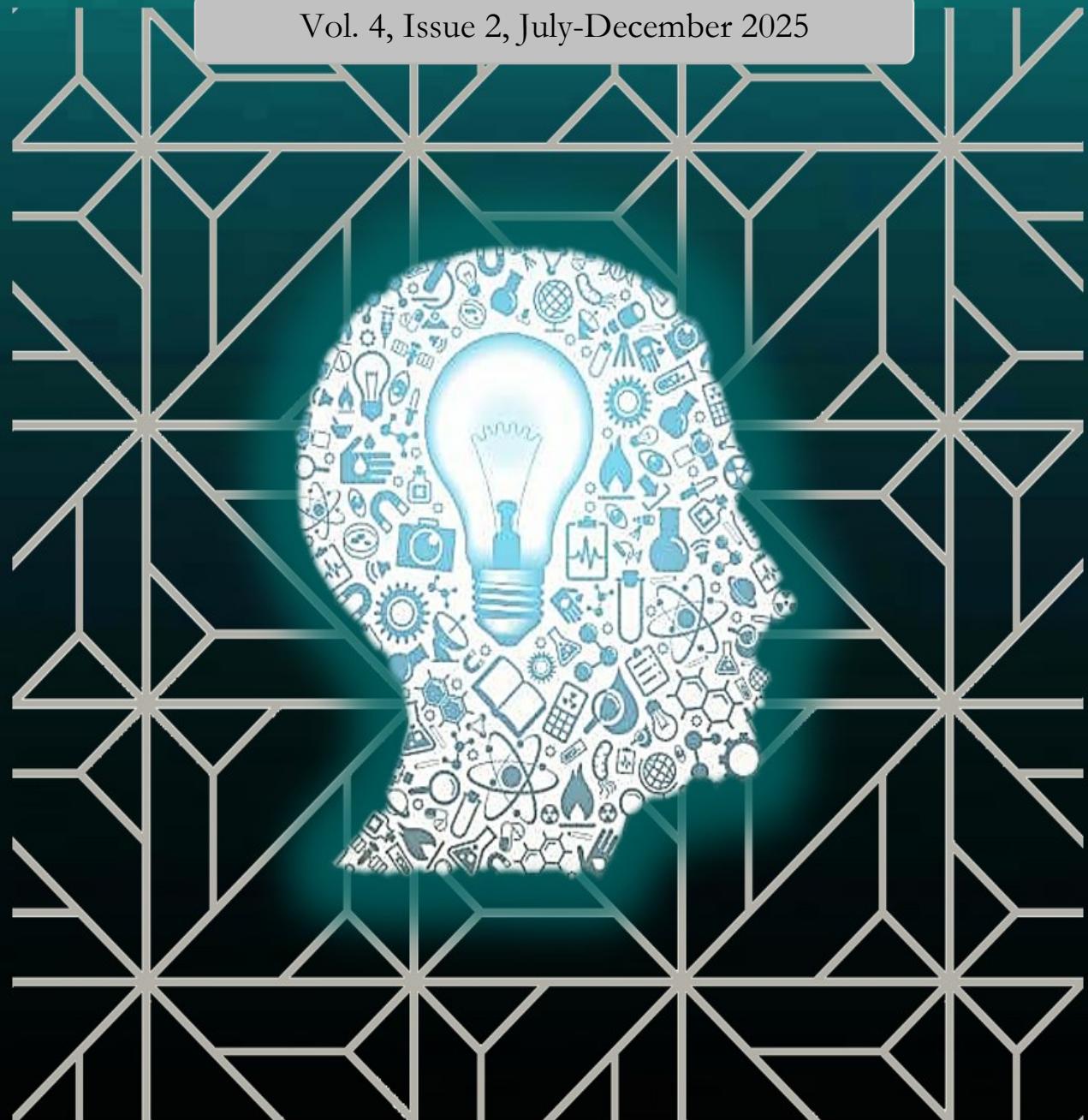


inspiration

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MAPPING POLITICAL IDEOLOGY IN SOCIAL MEDIA NARRATIVES: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF X (TWITTER) POSTS ON PRESIDENT PRABOWO USING VAN DIJK'S MODEL

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Abstract

This study examines how political ideology and leadership are constructed and contested in X (formerly Twitter) posts about President Prabowo's international activities using Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis model. Drawing on a qualitative corpus of posts from the president's official account, news media, and citizen commentators, the research analyses macro structures (dominant themes), superstructures (narrative and evaluative schemas), and micro structures (lexical, stylistic, and visual features) related to foreign visits. Purposive sampling and close textual analysis reveal three macro themes: heroic diplomacy and strategic partnership, which dominate official and media posts, and contested leadership, which is prominent in citizen commentary. The findings show that institutional discourses normalise an image of energetic, globally engaged leadership, whereas citizen posts use irony, colloquial language, and satire to reframe the same events as objects of critique, questioning priorities, competence, and the link between international visibility and domestic legitimacy. The study concludes that X functions as a hybrid arena where political legitimacy is co-constructed by institutional actors and ordinary users in Indonesia's digital public sphere.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis; digital public sphere; Indonesian politics; political ideology; social media; Teun A. Van Dijk; X (Twitter).



Introduction

In the last decade, social media platforms have become key arenas where political actors, news organizations, and ordinary citizens construct and contest public meanings of leadership and governance. X (formerly Twitter) is particularly influential in Indonesia because it allows rapid circulation of brief yet highly charged messages, combining text, images, and interaction metrics such as likes, reposts, and quote tweets. Through these features, political information does not merely travel; it is framed, evaluated, and negotiated in real time by diverse users.

The visibility of President Prabowo's international activities on X illustrates how digital discourse can shape the public image of a national leader. Official posts, media coverage, and citizen commentary often present contrasting narratives about the same events, ranging from celebratory depictions of diplomatic success to ironic or critical evaluations of political performance. These competing representations do not stand in isolation; they reveal underlying ideological positions about power, legitimacy, and the role of Indonesia in the global arena.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a systematic way to examine how such meanings are constructed in language and other semiotic resources. Drawing on Teun A. van Dijk's model, this study focuses on macro structures (overall themes and topics), superstructures (schematic organization of the text), and micro structures (lexical choices, syntax, and rhetorical strategies) in selected X posts about President Prabowo's foreign visits. By comparing posts from news media accounts, the president's official account, and influential citizen accounts, the research aims to uncover how political ideology is reproduced, reinforced, or challenged in Indonesian social media discourse.

Although Critical Discourse Analysis and van Dijk's model have often been applied to traditional news texts, policy documents, and broadcast media, few studies examine how different actors on the same social media platform construct a single political figure. Existing Indonesian research usually isolates either institutional accounts or citizen discourse, without directly comparing how official, media, and lay voices frame the same diplomatic events. The multimodal and fast-paced nature of X where text, images, and interaction metrics intersect also remains underexplored within van Dijk's tri-level framework, especially for contemporary Indonesian leaders.

Addressing these gaps, this study analyses X posts about President Prabowo's foreign visits from the president's official account, news media, and citizen commentators. It integrates textual and visual elements into van Dijk's macro–super–micro model and is guided by one

question: How do posts from these different account types discursively construct and contest political ideology and leadership in relation to President Prabowo's international activities?

Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) emerged as an approach that links language to questions of power, ideology, and social inequality, moving beyond purely structural or formal linguistics. Scholars such as Fairclough and Wodak argue that discourse does not merely reflect reality but actively participates in constructing social relations, legitimizing certain interests while marginalizing others. Within this tradition, Teun A. van Dijk developed a socio-cognitive model that connects the structures of discourse with mental representations (such as schemas and ideologies) and with broader social structures, showing how dominance can be reproduced through everyday texts in subtle ways.

Van Dijk's model is organized around three interrelated dimensions: text, social cognition, and social context. At the textual level, he distinguishes macro structures (global themes or topics), superstructures (conventional schematic organization, such as headlines, leads, or narrative stages), and micro structures (local meanings, lexical choices, syntax, and rhetorical devices). These textual patterns are linked to shared mental models that groups hold about events, which are in turn rooted in social structures and power relations, especially in institutions such as the media and politics. This multi-layered framework makes it possible to examine how ideological polarization between "us" and "them", for instance is constructed through seemingly ordinary linguistic choices.

Previous research has applied van Dijk's CDA to a wide range of media texts, including printed news, online articles, and broadcast programmes. Studies in the Indonesian context have shown how macro, super, and micro structures can be used to reveal attempts to delegitimize political opponents, to naturalize controversial policies, or to frame social protests in a negative way. Other works demonstrate the usefulness of van Dijk's model for analyzing education discourse, religious texts, and cultural products, emphasizing its flexibility in uncovering implicit ideology across genres. However, many of these studies still focus on traditional mass media and do not systematically address newer digital environments where ordinary users participate in meaning-making alongside institutional actors.

Social media platforms, particularly X (formerly Twitter), have increasingly attracted attention in CDA because they host rapid, multimodal, and highly interactive forms of political communication. Research on political discourse in social media indicates that competing

narratives about leaders, policies, and events can be observed within the same platform, where official accounts, news outlets, and citizen voices respond to each other in real time. Yet empirical studies that use van Dijk's tri-level model to compare how different account types frame the same political figure remain relatively scarce, especially in the Indonesian setting. The discursive construction of President Prabowo's international activities on X thus represents a relevant and timely case for extending CDA into the digital public sphere, mapping how ideology and power are negotiated in overlapping institutional, media, and citizen narratives.

Methods

This study adopts a qualitative methodology to explore how political ideology is constructed and negotiated in X (Twitter) posts about President Prabowo's international activities. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the focus is on interpreting meanings, patterns, and discursive strategies rather than measuring variables or testing causal relationships. The analysis centres on language, images, and interactional features as socially situated practices that both reflect and shape public understandings of political leadership.

Research Design

Methodology in this study is shaped by the aim to understand how political ideology is articulated through language and images, rather than to measure attitudes numerically. Because the focus lies on interpretation of meaning, structure, and context in naturally occurring online texts, a qualitative design grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis is considered the most appropriate.

This research adopts a qualitative CDA approach using Teun A. van Dijk's model as the main analytical framework. The study centers on X posts related to President Prabowo's foreign visits and diplomatic activities, produced by three categories of accounts: the president's official account, news media accounts, and citizen or commentator accounts. The qualitative design allows detailed examination of how these different actors construct, reinforce, or challenge political ideology through macro structures (themes and topics), superstructures (schematic organization), and micro structures (lexis, syntax, rhetorical devices) within their posts. Rather than aiming for statistical generalization, the design seeks analytical depth, offering rich descriptions of discursive practices and their ideological implications in Indonesia's contemporary digital public sphere.

Data Source and Corpus

The data for this study are drawn from publicly accessible posts on X that discuss or depict President Prabowo's international visits and diplomatic engagements. The corpus includes posts written in Indonesian by three main types of accounts: the president's official account, verified news media accounts, and influential citizen or commentator accounts that respond to or evaluate his foreign activities. Focusing on these three categories makes it possible to observe how institutional, media, and lay voices interact on the same platform when constructing the image of a political leader. The temporal scope is limited to a specific period of the presidency, for example the first year in office, in order to capture recurring patterns rather than isolated events and to ensure that the discourses analyzed relate to a comparable political context. Within this period, posts that explicitly mention foreign visits, multilateral forums, or meetings with foreign leaders are identified through keyword and hashtag searches and then screened for relevance and richness of textual content.

Sampling Technique

In line with the qualitative orientation of the study, sampling is conducted using a purposive strategy. The researcher deliberately selects posts that are considered information-rich, namely those that provide clear textual descriptions, evaluative statements, or visually salient images related to President Prabowo's role in international affairs. Posts that only contain links or very short captions without meaningful framing are excluded, because they do not offer sufficient material for macro, super, and micro-structural analysis. From an initial pool of posts generated by searching relevant keywords, hashtags, and event dates, a manageable corpus of approximately thirty to forty posts is compiled, with a relatively balanced distribution across the three account types. Selection continues until thematic saturation is reached, meaning that additional posts no longer produce substantially new patterns in terms of global themes, schematic organization, or local lexical strategies. This approach is consistent with qualitative CDA studies that prioritize depth and interpretive richness over large sample sizes.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection involves systematically documenting both the textual and visual dimensions of each selected post. For every post, the full caption is transcribed into a corpus file, including relevant metadata such as the date and time of posting, the type of account, and

a brief description of the political event or visit in question. Screenshots of the complete post interface are stored to preserve the original layout, images, and interaction metrics, which may later help interpret the salience or circulation of particular narratives. Each post is assigned a unique code that links the textual transcription with its corresponding screenshot, making it easier to move back and forth between the corpus and the original context during analysis. Throughout this process, direct identifiers such as usernames are replaced with neutral labels (for example “Media 1”, “President Account”, or “Citizen A”), and any personal information that is not essential for the discourse analysis is omitted. These procedures ensure that the corpus remains traceable and well organized while respecting ethical considerations about anonymity in online research.

Data Analysis

The analysis follows van Dijk’s three-level model and is conducted in several interrelated passes rather than as a strictly linear sequence. In the first pass, the researcher engages in a holistic reading of each post to identify its global topic or macro structure, asking what central issue or evaluative stance is being foregrounded, such as diplomatic success, leadership competence, international recognition, or ironic critique. The macro themes that emerge from this reading are then compared across account types to see whether, for example, official posts predominantly highlight achievement and national prestige, whereas citizen posts may emphasize controversy or skepticism. In the second pass, attention shifts to the superstructure or schematic organization of the texts, examining how posts are arranged into narrative segments, contrasts, or argumentative moves. This includes noting whether posts open with contextual background before presenting an evaluative claim, whether they juxtapose different actors to invite comparison, or whether they employ punchline-like endings typical of humorous or “julid” commentary.

In the third pass, the focus narrows to micro structures, encompassing local meanings, lexical choices, grammatical patterns, and rhetorical devices. Here the researcher analyses the use of evaluative adjectives, metaphors, pronouns, and modality markers that signal certainty, doubt, or obligation, as well as stylistic features such as repetition, parallelism, hyperbole, or rhetorical questions. In the case of citizen commentary, special attention is given to colloquialisms, sarcasm, and emoji use, all of which can reveal subtle alignment or resistance towards political authority. Visual elements in attached images such as camera angle, composition, captions inside the image, or highlighted colors are interpreted alongside the

written text as part of the overall micro-structural meaning, especially when they reinforce or complicate the verbal message. Throughout these stages, analytic memos are used to record emerging interpretations, and codes are refined through constant comparison across posts until stable categories of ideological representation are established.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Ensuring trustworthiness in a qualitative CDA study requires careful attention to credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is sought by comparing discourses from different account types on similar events, which functions as a form of source triangulation and allows the researcher to check whether interpretations are consistent across varying perspectives. Dependability is strengthened by maintaining a detailed audit trail that documents decisions about sampling, coding, and category development, so that the analytic process can be followed and, in principle, replicated by other researchers. Confirmability is supported through reflexive journaling, in which the researcher acknowledges personal assumptions regarding Indonesian politics, social media culture, and the figure of President Prabowo, and reflects on how these assumptions might influence the reading of the data.

Ethical considerations are addressed by restricting the corpus to posts that are publicly accessible and by anonymizing account identities in all research outputs. Although public posts on social media are technically open to observation, there remains a responsibility to minimize potential harm to users whose content is analyzed. For this reason, the study avoids including highly sensitive personal information and, where necessary, paraphrases particularly identifiable excerpts while preserving their discursive features. Prior approval from the relevant institutional review body is obtained before data collection, and data are stored securely in password-protected files. These measures ensure that the study respects the privacy and dignity of social media users while still allowing a rigorous investigation of how ideology and power are articulated in digital political discourse.

Results

Macro-level Themes: Dominant Narratives

The macro-structural analysis of the corpus indicates that three dominant themes organize the representation of President Prabowo's international activities on X: *heroic diplomacy*, *strategic partnership*, and *contested leadership*. Posts from the president's official account most strongly realize the theme of heroic diplomacy. They emphasize honor,

responsibility, and national service by foregrounding expressions such as “I had the honor to speak as the third speaker” and by repeatedly linking the president’s presence at international forums to Indonesia’s commitment to justice, inclusion, and the interests of developing countries. In this way, foreign visits are framed as a form of sacrifice and dedication rather than personal promotion, encouraging readers to interpret each trip as evidence of statesmanlike leadership.

The theme of strategic partnership appears most prominently in posts from news media accounts. These posts highlight meetings with foreign leaders, joint statements, and collaborative projects, frequently referencing cooperation, solidarity, and shared agendas between Indonesia and partner states. By focusing on outcomes such as strengthened relations, investment opportunities, or multilateral initiatives, the media framing presents diplomacy as a practical and productive activity that yields tangible benefits.



Figure 1. Official post by @prabowo regarding the state visit to the United States.



Figure 2. Yearly review of presidential travels by @NarasiNewsroom.

In contrast, citizen and commentator accounts predominantly realize the macro theme of contested leadership. Here, the same diplomatic events are re-contextualized through irony, comparison, and evaluative commentary that draw attention to perceived gaps between image and reality. For example, international meetings may be juxtaposed with domestic issues, or the composure of one political figure may be contrasted with another's alleged inexperience, inviting readers to question whether foreign trips genuinely serve the public interest. Through this theme, users position themselves as critical observers who resist the naturalization of official narratives and expose the political and generational tensions underlying elite diplomacy.

Figure 1 visually exemplifies heroic diplomacy: the caption stresses honour and commitment at the UN General Assembly, while the accompanying photos show formal greetings and interactions. Figure 2 illustrates strategic partnership and intensive diplomatic mobility, condensing a year of trips into the phrase “setahun giatnya presiden Prabowo keliling dunia”, which simultaneously suggests industriousness and invites readers to notice the sheer frequency of travel. These figures anchor the thematic claims in concrete examples and help readers see how macro themes are realised in actual posts.

Superstructural Patterns: Schemas of Reporting and Commentary

At the level of superstructure, the posts exhibit distinct schematic patterns that correspond to the roles and institutional positions of the account holders. The president's official posts typically follow a narrative schema with three main stages: situating the event, describing the key diplomatic act, and articulating a normative conclusion. They usually begin by stating the location and occasion (“After a brief visit to Japan, I arrived in the United States to attend the 80th UN General Assembly”), then move to a description of speeches, bilateral meetings, or Indonesia's contribution, and finally close with a statement about commitment to developing countries, South–South solidarity, or global governance reform. This schema presents diplomatic activity as coherent and purposeful, encouraging readers to regard each trip as part of a larger national mission.

News media posts compress this narrative into a more compact report schema. They often present a background clause or sentence followed by a headline-like evaluation in either the caption or the image text. In the Narasi tweet, for instance, a brief textual explanation about frequent foreign trips is accompanied by a bold visual slogan summarizing “a year of being busy travelling around the world”. The schematic condensation allows the media to appear

informative while still framing the event through selective emphasis, such as focusing on the accumulation of visits rather than the details of any single diplomatic achievement.

← Posting



Preciosa Kanti 
@PreciosaKanti

Ikuti

*AHY dipilih untuk berdialog & melepas
kepulangan Perdana Menteri Tiongkok.
*Mas Didiet, mendapangi Presiden
dengan sangat luwes dalam pergaulan
international, menerima Presiden
Perancis.

Tak banyak kata, pak Prabowo seakan
mempersilahkan publik membandingkan
& menilai: apakah Gibran dengan segala
kapabilitinya .. mampu berhadapan
dengan para tamu negara?

(ya masa iya, tamu negara di kasih susu
kotak & skin care 😊)

.

.

Kabarnya,
Anak muda bermata sendu ‘kriyep
kriyep’ tersebut, memilih ‘seakan’ SIBUK
ke IKN.

Memantau & memberi penyuluhan para
PSKkah? 😊

(julid)



Figure 3. Public commentary from @PreciosaKanti regarding diplomatic representation.

Citizen and commentator accounts display a markedly different superstructure that can be described as evaluative commentary or satirical schema. These posts often open by referencing an official appointment or diplomatic protocol, thereby acknowledging the dominant narrative, and then pivot towards comparison and personal evaluation. In the tweet by the commentator, the text lists the roles of a minister and the president in welcoming foreign

leaders, before inviting readers to compare them with another political figure and ultimately ending with a humorous or “julid” punchline about priorities and activities. This schema destabilizes the official storyline by inserting an alternative evaluative frame that of gossip, mockery, or everyday common sense into what would otherwise remain a formal diplomatic narrative.

Micro-structural Features: Lexis, Style, and Visual Semiosis

Micro-structural analysis uncovers systematic differences in lexical selection, grammatical patterns, rhetorical devices, and visual elements across the three account types. In the president’s posts, the lexicon is characterised by formal and positive expressions such as “kehormatan”, “komitmen”, “memperjuangkan kepentingan negara-negara berkembang”, “memperkuat solidaritas Selatan-Selatan”, and “mendorong reformasi tata kelola global yang lebih adil dan inklusif”. These choices foreground dignity, responsibility, and alignment with progressive global norms, constructing an image of a leader who is principled and future-oriented. The consistent use of first-person singular pronouns (“saya tiba”, “saya mendapat kehormatan”) personalises the narrative while simultaneously reinforcing the authority of the speaker as the legitimate representative of the nation.

In terms of grammatical and rhetorical features, the official posts favour declarative sentences with high modality, expressing certainty and confidence rather than tentativeness. Clauses are often linked in additive or causal relations that highlight continuity between Indonesia’s commitments and its concrete actions abroad. The associated images contribute to this micro-structure by showing the president in controlled, highly ceremonial settings descending the aircraft stairs, shaking hands with other leaders, engaging with crowds which visually enact the textual claims about active participation and respected status. Through this coupling of lexis and imagery, the posts project a consistent, elevated tone that leaves little room for overt criticism within the text.

Media posts, by contrast, condense evaluation into compact lexical bundles and typographic design. The Narasi image’s phrase “setahun giatnya presiden Prabowo keliling dunia” exemplifies how a single clause can carry both positive and potentially critical connotations. The adjective “giat” suggests diligence and energy, whereas the focus on “keliling dunia” can prompt readers to wonder about costs, priorities, or domestic implications. The bold font, central placement of the phrase, and use of an airplane motif visually reinforce the idea of constant movement, turning the president’s mobility into the central semiotic

resource. This ambiguity at the micro-level allows the media to maintain plausible deniability appearing simply descriptive while still enabling more critical readings.

Citizen commentary exhibits yet another micro-structural profile, characterized by colloquial lexis, code-switching, irony, and the strategic use of punctuation and emoji. In the commentator's tweet, phrases like "ya masa iya", the playful description of a young politician's demeanor, and the final label "(julid)" all signal an intimate, conversational tone rather than a formal political discussion. Rhetorical questions invite the audience to join the writer in evaluating the adequacy of political figures, while hyperbolic or humorous scenarios function to dramatize perceived incompetence or misplaced priorities. The inclusion of multiple screenshots of news headlines in the same tweet further intensifies the contrast, visually juxtaposing official representations with the writer's sarcastic overlay. Through these micro-choices, the post positions the author as a knowledgeable insider who has the right to judge, and positions the audience as co-participants in a shared, critical reading of elite diplomacy.

This section presents the main findings of the critical discourse analysis of X (Twitter) posts about President Prabowo's international activities. The overall ideological patterns identified at the macro, super, and micro structural levels are first summarized in Table 1 to provide an overview before being elaborated in greater detail in the following subsections.

Table 1. Results of the study.

Indicators	Official account	News media	Citizen posts	Implication
Macro structure: Heroic diplomacy	Dominant theme of strategic partnership	Frequently highlighted in headlines	Sometimes acknowledged, often ironized	Image of energetic international leadership is normalised.
Macro structure: Contested leadership	Rarely appears	Minimally acknowledged	Strongly emphasized through critique and satire	Citizen narratives function as counter-hegemonic discourse.
Superstructure: Narrative schema	Success-oriented visit narratives	Event-reporting schema	Satirical or problem-oriented schema	Different schemas encode competing evaluations of the same events.
Micro structure: Lexis and style	Formal, diplomatic vocabulary	Neutral to mildly evaluative	Colloquial, ironic, and humorous language	Lexical choices construct ideological polarization between "us" and "them".

At the macro level, the findings show that the official presidential account consistently highlights themes of diplomatic success, strategic partnership, and national pride, while news media accounts foreground more event-oriented and informational topics, and citizen accounts introduce alternative themes such as controversy, scepticism, and socio-economic grievance,

thereby constructing competing ideological narratives about the same international activities. At the level of superstructure, the official account tends to employ a linear success-story schema, news media largely follow conventional news-report organization, and citizen posts often take fragmented, dialogic, or satirical forms such as threads, memes, and quote-tweets that interrupt and recontextualize institutional narratives. On the micro level, these differences are reinforced through lexical choices, syntax, and rhetorical devices: the official account uses formal diplomatic vocabulary and inclusive pronouns to naturalize alignment between leader, state, and people; news media rely on relatively neutral lexis yet still legitimize institutional power through framing choices; and citizen posts draw on colloquial language, irony, hyperbole, and intertextual references to express support, doubt, or overt criticism, showing how everyday linguistic practices participate in reproducing or contesting political ideology on social media.

Discussion

The results indicate that X (formerly Twitter) operates as a key discursive space where different social actors struggle to define the meaning of President Prabowo's international activities for the Indonesian public. From the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, this confirms the idea that media discourse is never a neutral reflection of events but a site where power and ideology are continuously produced and contested. The three macro themes identified heroic diplomacy, strategic partnership, and contested leadership show how competing narratives can co-exist around the same diplomatic occasions, offering audiences divergent interpretive paths. In van Dijk's socio cognitive terms, these narratives contribute to the formation of different mental models about who the president is, what his foreign visits signify, and how Indonesia's role in the world should be understood.

A central implication of the findings is that official and media discourses tend to converge in reinforcing a dominant ideological image of the president as an energetic, globally engaged statesman. The official posts present foreign visits as honorable duties that prove Indonesia's commitment to global justice and cooperation, while news media summarizes the same activities through headlines and visuals that foreground intensity and productivity. This convergence suggests a shared alignment with an ideology of developmentalist nationalism, in which international visibility and active participation in global forums are taken as indicators of national progress and leadership quality. By repeating this framing across multiple events and

posts, these actors help naturalize the view that extensive travel and diplomatic engagement are inherently beneficial and largely beyond question.

However, the presence of citizen and commentator posts complicates this apparent consensus. Their use of satirical superstructures, colloquial language, and rhetorical questions reveals an undercurrent of scepticism towards the same performances of diplomacy. Instead of accepting international trips as self-evident signs of good governance, these users raise issues such as generational competence, political privilege, and mismatched priorities between international spectacle and domestic concerns. This re framing illustrates how ordinary users can appropriate elite events as raw material for critique, showing that the discursive construction of leadership is vulnerable to ironic reinterpretation once it enters the participatory environment of social media. In this sense, citizen posts function as counter hegemonic discourses that challenge the implicit assumption that visibility abroad automatically translates into legitimacy at home.

The superstructural differences documented in the results are particularly important for understanding how authority is negotiated. The president's posts rely on a linear, coherent narrative schema that mirrors traditional news reporting, thereby borrowing the authority of institutional genres and presenting the speaker as a responsible narrator of national affairs. Media posts compress this schema into shorter, headline driven structures that still project journalistic objectivity while subtly steering interpretation. Citizen commentary, by contrast, disrupts this narrative coherence through punchline-oriented schemas more typical of gossip, standup comedy, or everyday conversation. By placing political elites within these alternative textual frames, commentators symbolically "bring them down" from the elevated sphere of statecraft into the realm of ordinary social judgment. This shift in superstructure is not merely stylistic; it redistributes symbolic power by allowing non elite speakers to act as evaluators of official performances.

At the micro structural level, the contrast between formal, high register vocabulary in official posts and the informal, sometimes mocking lexicon in citizen commentary further illustrates the struggle over ideological positioning. The official lexis of "honor", "commitment", and "solidarity" constructs a dignified persona aligned with universal values, framing diplomacy as moral duty. Citizen commentary counters this by using humor, exaggeration, and slang to highlight perceived inconsistencies, such as the gap between polished international appearances and messy domestic realities. The strategic use of emoji and interjections performs affective stances amusement, disbelief, irritation that invite followers to

share a critical attitude. Visual elements work in parallel: ceremonial photographs of handshakes and speeches promote a vision of orderly, controlled leadership, while montage style screenshots in commentary posts visually overload the viewer and foreground the contrast between multiple narratives. Together, these micro choices show how small linguistic and semiotic details accumulate into larger ideological effects.

These patterns have broader implications for understanding political communication in contemporary Indonesia. On the one hand, the continued dominance of official and media frames in the corpus indicates that institutional actors still possess significant agenda setting power; they can decide which events are highlighted and how they are initially presented. On the other hand, the capacity of citizen commentators to recontextualize these events, sometimes generating high engagement through humour and critique, suggests that legitimacy is increasingly negotiated in a hybrid communicative environment. Political leaders can no longer rely solely on top-down messaging; their actions are immediately subject to bottom-up reinterpretation, which can either reinforce or erode their desired public image.

From a theoretical perspective, the study enriches van Dijk's model by showing how macro, super, and micro structures interact in a fast moving, multimodal platform. The findings indicate that macro themes alone are insufficient for capturing ideological struggle; one must also attend to how these themes are schematized and stylistically realized in brief, highly shareable posts. Superstructures in social media often blend news like reporting with conversational or humorous patterns, creating hybrid genres that blur boundaries between journalism, political communication, and entertainment. Micro structures extend beyond verbal language to include layout, colour, and platform specific features such as engagement metrics, all of which influence how audiences read and evaluate a post. Incorporating these multimodal aspects into van Dijk's tri level framework helps adapt CDA to the realities of digital discourse.

For practice, the analysis suggests several implications for political communicators and media practitioners. Political actors who rely exclusively on formal, celebratory discourse may succeed in projecting authority but risk appearing detached from the concerns and affective styles of ordinary users. Conversely, commentators who use irony and humor can quickly mobilize sceptical publics but may also contribute to a climate of cynicism that makes constructive debate more difficult. Media organizations occupy an ambivalent position: by compressing complex events into catchy visuals and phrases, they can either reinforce official frames or subtly open space for ambivalent readings. Understanding these tensions can help all

actors think more critically about the ethical and democratic consequences of their discursive choices on social media.

Conclusion

This study set out to explore how political ideology and leadership are constructed, reinforced, and contested in X posts about President Prabowo's international activities, using Teun A. van Dijk's model of Critical Discourse Analysis as the analytical framework. The analysis of macro, super, and micro structures across posts from the president's official account, news media, and citizen commentators demonstrates that social media discourse is a key site where competing narratives about diplomatic performance and national identity are negotiated in contemporary Indonesia.

At the macro level, three dominant themes were identified: heroic diplomacy, strategic partnership, and contested leadership, each associated with different types of accounts and ideological positions. Official and media posts tended to converge on portraying foreign visits as evidence of responsible, energetic statecraft that advances Indonesia's interests and prestige, thereby normalizing an image of globally engaged leadership. In contrast, citizen commentary reframed similar events through skeptical and often humorous lenses, questioning priorities, highlighting generational dynamics, and exposing tensions between international spectacle and domestic expectations, thus functioning as a counter hegemonic discourse.

Superstructural and micro structural patterns further revealed how authority and resistance are enacted in everyday digital communication. Narrative and report like schemas in official and media posts borrowed the legitimacy of institutional genres, while commentary posts employed satirical or conversational schemas that symbolically shifted elites into the realm of ordinary social judgment. Formal, high register lexis and ceremonial imagery in official discourse contrasted sharply with colloquial expressions, rhetorical questions, and playful visual montages in citizen posts, showing how small linguistic and semiotic choices accumulate into broader ideological effects. These findings confirm CDA's claim that discourse is a crucial mechanism through which power relations are reproduced or challenged, and illustrate how van Dijk's tri level model can be productively adapted to multimodal, high velocity social media contexts.

Taken together, the study suggests that political legitimacy in Indonesia's digital public sphere is increasingly co constructed by institutional actors, media organizations, and ordinary users who share, reframe, and contest narratives about leadership on platforms like X. While

official and media accounts still hold structural advantages in visibility and agenda setting, citizen commentators possess significant symbolic power to reinterpret diplomatic performances and to influence how they are understood by broader audiences. Future research could expand this analysis by comparing different political figures, examining other platforms such as Instagram or TikTok, or incorporating audience reception studies to investigate how users actually interpret and respond to competing discourses. Such work would deepen understanding of the complex interplay between discourse, power, and ideology in an era where political communication is increasingly mediated by networked, participatory technologies.

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