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UNVEILING POWER: A VAN DIJK DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PRABOWO'S PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION SPEECH

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Abstract

This study examines Prabowo Subianto's presidential inauguration speech through the lens of Teun A. van Dijk's Discourse Analysis approach. Utilizing Van Dijk's framework, which emphasizes the social and cognitive dimensions of language, the analysis explores how Prabowo constructs his image, communicates key political messages, and seeks to influence public opinion during the inaugural address. By examining the linguistic features, rhetorical strategies, and underlying ideologies present in the speech, this research uncovers the ways in which Prabowo uses discourse to shape perceptions of his leadership, promote national unity, and frame political issues. The findings reveal how the speech serves as an important tool for Prabowo to communicate his vision of Indonesia and to persuade the audience of his political agenda. This study contributes to a better understanding of the role of language in political discourse and highlights the power of discourse analysis in uncovering the nuanced interplay between language, power, and politics.

Keywords: Prabowo Subianto, Critical Discourse Analysis, Speech Inauguration, Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

Political discourse plays a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions, ideologies, and social structures. It serves as a tool for politicians to influence, persuade, and consolidate power. In the context of Indonesia, political speeches have been instrumental in defining national identity, addressing societal concerns, and establishing the legitimacy of leadership. This study analyzes the inauguration speech of Prabowo Subianto, a prominent political figure in Indonesia, using Teun A. van Dijk's framework for critical discourse analysis (CDA). Through this approach, the research aims to uncover the underlying ideologies, power dynamics, and rhetorical strategies embedded in the speech, situating them within the broader socio-political landscape of Indonesia (Entman, R., 2021).

Political speeches are not merely vehicles of communication; they are acts of power. Van Dijk (1993) emphasizes that discourse is a form of social practice deeply intertwined with power and ideology. Politicians use language not only to articulate policies but also to assert dominance, legitimize actions, and construct specific identities. In this context, analyzing the discourse of political figures like Prabowo Subianto offers valuable insights into the dynamics of power and ideology in Indonesia's political arena.

Prabowo's speech at his presidential inauguration serves as a rich text for analysis. As a moment of transition, a presidential inauguration speech is inherently laden with ideological and symbolic meaning. It reflects the speaker's vision, values, and intentions while seeking to unify and mobilize the audience. This study explores how Prabowo constructs his identity, asserts his authority, and aligns his leadership with national aspirations through his choice of words, themes, and rhetorical devices.

Teun A. van Dijk's CDA framework provides a comprehensive methodology for analyzing political discourse. Van Dijk (2008) conceptualizes discourse as a multidimensional phenomenon, consisting of textual, cognitive, and social dimensions. His approach integrates the analysis of linguistic structures, such as syntax and semantics, with broader contextual factors, such as societal power relations and historical conditions.

Van Dijk's model emphasizes the role of ideology in discourse. Ideologies, according to Van Dijk (1998), are socially shared beliefs that shape the perceptions and behaviors of groups. These ideologies are often implicit, embedded within language, and manifest in the discourse structures that speakers employ. By examining these structures, CDA reveals

how language perpetuates or challenges power inequalities and societal norms (Van Dijk, 2021;2023).

In this study, Van Dijk's framework is used to analyze the macrostructures and microstructures of Prabowo's speech. Macrostructures refer to the overarching themes and topics, while microstructures involve the finer linguistic and rhetorical details, such as word choice, metaphors, and sentence structures (Abid, R., Manan, S., & Rahman, A.,2023). Additionally, the analysis considers the sociocultural and political context in which the speech was delivered, acknowledging the interplay between discourse and its environment.

Indonesia's political landscape is characterized by diversity and complexity, shaped by its history, culture, and socio-political dynamics (Titley, G., 2022; Matamoros-Fernández, A., & Farkas, J.,2021). As a multiethnic and multi-religious nation, Indonesia grapples with challenges related to unity, development, and democracy. Political speeches often reflect these challenges, addressing themes of nationalism, progress, and inclusivity.

Prabowo Subianto, a former general and long-time political figure, has been a polarizing yet influential figure in Indonesian politics. His political rhetoric often emphasizes nationalism, economic sovereignty, and social justice. These themes resonate with his image as a strong and decisive leader, appealing to a segment of the Indonesian electorate that values stability and security. At the same time, Prabowo's speeches have been critiqued for their populist and militaristic undertones, which reflect his background and ideological leanings(Chilton, P., 2004; Bhatia, V. K., et al.,2023)

His presidential inauguration speech marks a significant moment in his political career. It is a declaration of his vision for the nation and an attempt to consolidate support from diverse segments of society (Gordon, M., & Rosenberg, P.,2022; Hart, C.,2023). The speech, therefore, serves as a microcosm of Indonesia's political discourse, reflecting the tensions, aspirations, and power dynamics that define the nation's governance.

This study aims to achieve the following objectives 1) To identify the key themes and ideologies in Prabowo's presidential inauguration speech, 2) To analyze the rhetorical and linguistic strategies employed in the speech using Van Dijk's CDA framework, and 3) To explore how the speech reflects and reproduces power relations and societal ideologies in the Indonesian context.

This study contributes to the understanding of political discourse in Indonesia by offering a critical analysis of a key political text. It sheds light on the interplay between

language, power, and ideology in shaping public perceptions and political realities. By applying Van Dijk's framework, the research provides a nuanced perspective on how political figures like Prabowo use discourse to navigate complex socio-political terrains.

Furthermore, this study adds to the growing body of literature on critical discourse analysis, demonstrating the applicability of Van Dijk's model in diverse contexts. It underscores the importance of examining political texts as sites of power struggle and ideological negotiation, offering insights that are relevant not only to Indonesia but also to the broader field of political communication.

METHODS

The research methodology employed in this study is designed to critically analyze Prabowo Subianto's presidential inauguration speech using Teun A. van Dijk's framework for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This section outlines the research design, data collection, and analytical methods that guide the study.

Research design

This research adopts a qualitative approach, emphasizing the in-depth examination of language and its role in constructing power and ideology. CDA is used as the primary methodological framework because it provides a comprehensive toolkit for exploring the relationships between language, power, and society (see Van Leeuwen, T.,2008; Richardson, J. E. 2021). The study is framed within Van Dijk's discourse-cognition-society triangle, which integrates three dimensions of analysis:

1. Textual Analysis: Examines the linguistic features of the speech, including vocabulary, syntax, and rhetorical devices.
2. Cognitive Analysis: Explores how the speech constructs mental models or representations of power, authority, and identity for the audience.
3. Social Context Analysis: Investigates how the speech reflects and influences broader societal and political structures in Indonesia.

Data Collection

The primary data for this study is the full transcript of Prabowo Subianto's presidential inauguration speech, delivered during his swearing-in ceremony. The transcript was sourced from official government archives and verified with publicly available video recordings of the speech. Additionally, secondary sources such as news articles, academic

studies, and official statements were consulted to contextualize the speech within Indonesia's political landscape. These sources provide insights into the historical, cultural, and political context that shape the discourse.

Data Analysis

Van Dijk's CDA framework provides the analytical lens for this study (see Wodak, R., & Meyer, M, 2009; Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R.,2022). The speech was analyzed at two levels:

1. Macrostructure Analysis:
    - Focuses on the overall themes and topics of the speech.
    - Identifies dominant ideologies, such as nationalism, unity, and economic sovereignty.
    - Examines how these themes are organized to construct a coherent and persuasive narrative.
2. Microstructure Analysis:
    - Investigates specific linguistic features, including:
    - Lexical Choices: Words and phrases that convey ideological meaning (e.g., "the people," "unity," "progress").
    - Syntax: Sentence structures that emphasize authority or inclusivity.
    - Rhetorical Devices: Metaphors, repetition, and parallelism that enhance the speech's emotional and persuasive appeal.
3. Contextual Analysis:
    - Situates the speech within its socio-political context.
    - Explores how the speech interacts with Indonesia's historical narratives, cultural diversity, and political challenges.
    - Considers the audience's reception and the broader implications for Indonesian politics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The text of the speech by the President of Indonesia, Mr. Prabowo Subianto, can be accessed via the following link https://www.setneg.go.id/baca/index/pidato_presiden_prabowo_subianto_pada_sidang_paripurna_mpr_ri_dalam_rangka_pelantikan_presiden_dan_wakil_presiden_ri_terpilih_per

iode 2024 2029 . This link serves as an alternative to read President Prabowo Subianto's speech, as the text is too lengthy to be included in this journal.

This subsection explains the analysis of Mr. Prabowo Subianto's speech as the elected President of Indonesia for the 2024-2029 term. This analysis will use Van Dijk's analytical framework. The explanation is as follows

1. Key Themes and Ideologies in Prabowo's Presidential Inauguration Speech

a. **Unity and Inclusivity**: A recurring theme is national unity, emphasizing the importance of collaboration across political, ethnic, and religious divides. Prabowo calls for an inclusive approach to governance, prioritizing the welfare of all Indonesians, including those who did not support him.
b. **Patriotism and Historical Reflection**: Prabowo invokes Indonesia's history of struggle and sacrifice, acknowledging past leaders and emphasizing the role of common people ("wong cilik") in achieving independence.
c. **Self-Reliance (Swasembada)**: The speech highlights the vision of self-sufficiency in food, energy, and resources, positioning Indonesia as a resilient and independent nation amid global uncertainties.
d. **Social Justice and Equity**: He acknowledges persistent issues like poverty, corruption, and inequality, pledging to address them with targeted interventions and systemic reforms.
e. **Democracy with Indonesian Characteristics**: He advocates for a "unique democracy" rooted in Indonesia's cultural and historical context, rejecting divisiveness and promoting a harmonious and respectful democratic ethos.
f. **Anti-Colonialism and International Solidarity**: He reiterates Indonesia's commitment to being a voice for the oppressed globally, reflecting the nation's anti-imperialist stance.
g. **Gratitude and Continuity**: Prabowo acknowledges the contributions of previous presidents, positioning his leadership as a continuation of their legacies.

2. Rhetorical and Linguistic Strategies

Using Van Dijk's framework, which focuses on discourse as a tool for reproducing power and ideologies, the following strategies are notable:

a. **Positive Self-Presentation and Collective Identity**:

Prabowo aligns himself with the nation's historical and moral values, presenting himself as a leader who respects Indonesia's foundational ideologies (e.g., Pancasila). In addition, the use of inclusive pronouns like "kita" (we) fosters a collective identity and solidarity.

b. **Contrast and Polarization**:

Positive depiction of "wong cilik" and the hardworking masses contrasts with criticisms of corrupt elites and unpatriotic businesses. Contrasts between the challenges faced and the nation's potential create a narrative of resilience and optimism.

c. **Historical Narratives**:

References to Indonesia's anti-colonial struggles and founding leaders evoke a sense of pride and moral obligation to uphold their sacrifices. Recollection of colonial injustices (e.g., "Honden en Inlander Verboden") emphasizes the moral foundation of anti-oppression stances.

d. **Metaphors and Analogies**:

Metaphors like "burung unta" (ostrich) critique avoidance of reality, urging proactive problem-solving. Additionally, references to "head of a fish" metaphorically address leadership responsibility in curbing corruption.

e. **Strategic Repetition**:

Repeated phrases like "Saudara-saudara sekalian" serve to engage and emphasize key points and frequent use of "berani" (courage) reinforces the call for bold action and accountability.

f. **Appeal to Emotions and Morality**:

Highlighting poverty and inequality elicits empathy and moral urgency. The vision of "wong cilik iso gemuyu" (common people being able to smile) serves as an emotional anchor.

g. **Legitimization of Authority**:

Acknowledging predecessors' achievements legitimizes Prabowo's own mandate as a continuation of national progress. The oath-taking segment emphasizes his divine accountability and commitment to the constitution.

3. Power Relations and Societal Ideologies in the Indonesian Context

a. **Reflection of Pancasila Values**:

The speech aligns with Indonesia's state philosophy, emphasizing unity, democracy, and social justice. It integrates religious references (e.g., invoking Allah SWT) with secular governance principles, resonating with Indonesia's pluralistic but deeply religious society.

b. **Power and Leadership Ethos**:

Prabowo positions himself as a servant-leader accountable to the people ("kedaulatan itu adalah kedaulatan rakyat") and rejects elitist governance practices. Criticism of internal corruption highlights a challenge to entrenched power dynamics, with promises of systemic reforms (Fairclough, N.,2021).

c. **Socioeconomic Ideologies**:

Emphasis on self-reliance in food and energy production reflects a nationalist economic ideology, prioritizing sovereignty over reliance on global markets. The call to address poverty and ensure equitable distribution of resources underlines a redistributive justice approach.

d. **Global Positioning**:

The principle of "bebas aktif" (free and active foreign policy) underscores Indonesia's non-aligned stance, reflecting a balancing act in global power relations. Advocacy for Palestine and rejection of colonialism reinforce Indonesia's identity as a moral and principled actor in international affairs .

e. **Reproduction of Historical Narratives**:

The acknowledgment of past struggles and sacrifices serves to consolidate national identity and legitimize contemporary governance priorities.

CONCLUSION

Prabowo's speech encapsulates a vision of unity, resilience, and equity rooted in Indonesia's cultural and historical context. Through rhetorical strategies such as inclusivity, historical references, and emotional appeals, he positions himself as a leader dedicated to national progress and social justice. Using Van Dijk's CDA framework, the speech reflects and seeks to reshape power dynamics by advocating for systemic reform, anti-corruption,

and the empowerment of marginalized groups while reinforcing Indonesia's ideological foundations in Pancasila.

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