

Strategic Lexicalization in the Vision and Mission Statements of the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Candidates

Leksikalisasi Strategis dalam Pernyataan Visi dan Misi Calon Presiden Indonesia 2024

Rio Nur Rachmad

Master's Program of Linguistics, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada
Jl. Sosio Humaniora, Sleman, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia
rionurrachmad@mail.ugm.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Abstrak

Leksikalisasi strategis berfungsi sebagai mekanisme retorik dalam kampanye politik yang berperan untuk menanamkan ideologi dan membentuk persepsi publik. Maka dari itu, penelitian ini bermaksud untuk mengkaji leksikalisasi strategis dalam pernyataan visi dan misi calon presiden Indonesia 2024 pada pemilihan umum dengan menganalisis bagaimana bahasa menyampaikan ideologi dan memengaruhi persepsi pemilih. Penelitian ini menyelidiki frekuensi dan distribusi kata kerja, kata sifat, dan modal dalam dokumen visi dan misi dari Anies–Muhaimin, Prabowo–Gibran, dan Ganjar–Mahfud. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan bantuan perangkat korpus yang memiliki token sebanyak 42.021 dan menggunakan AntConc 4.3.1. Temuan penelitian mengungkap pola leksikal yang berbeda dan sekaligus menggambarkan lebih lanjut bahwa persebaran dan pemilihan leksem dapat memengaruhi polarisasi ideologis dalam konteks pemilu dan membingkai agenda kebijakan di antara para kandidat.

Abstract

Strategic lexicalization functions as a rhetorical mechanism in political campaigns serving to instill ideology and shape public perception. Thus, the present study examines the strategic lexicalization in the vision and mission statements of Indonesia's 2024 presidential candidates by analyzing how language conveys ideologies and influences voters' perceptions. This study investigated the frequency and distribution of verbs, adjectives, and modals in the vision and mission statements of Anies–Muhaimin, Prabowo–Gibran, and Ganjar–Mahfud. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a corpus of 42,021 tokens processed by means of AntConc 4.3.1. The findings reveal distinct lexical patterns and illustrate further how distribution and choice of lexemes impact ideological polarization in electoral contexts and frame policy agendas among the candidates.

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1. Introduction

The role of presidential rhetoric in shaping public opinion and influencing electoral outcomes has been a central focus of political communication studies. Cohen (1995) and Tulis (2017) have emphasized the significance of presidential discourse in setting the public agenda and constructing leadership identities. In a democratic system where electoral campaigns serve as a platform for candidates to articulate their vision and policies, language becomes a critical tool for persuasion and mobilization. Indonesia is one of the world's largest democracies where presidential candidates rely on carefully crafted vision and mission statements to connect with voters, address national challenges, and differentiate themselves from their opponents. As the 2024 Indonesian presidential elections mark a pivotal transition after President Joko Widodo's decade-long tenure, the candidates' ability to communicate their priorities and values through persuasive language will play a decisive role in shaping voter perception and behavior.

The power of political rhetoric lies in its ability to evoke emotions, frame issues, and resonate with the electorate's aspirations. Smith and Smith (1994) and Zarefsky (2004) highlight how presidential candidates use language to define issues, assert authority, and project leadership qualities. In the Indonesian context, terms like '*pro-rakyat*' (pro-citizen) and '*kedaulatan ekonomi*' (economic sovereignty) exemplify how specific lexical choices can appeal to the socio-economic concerns of the electorate. Similarly, avoiding deontic modalities such as ' *mungkin* (may be)' underscores the importance of assertive language in projecting confidence and credibility. Those linguistic strategies at this point align with Fairclough's critical discourse analysis framework, which examines how language at the microstructure level, through word choice, phrasing, and narrative construction, serves as a tool for ideological expression and voter persuasion (Fairclough, 1992).

Moreover, the strategic use of inclusive and assertive language in political discourse has significantly influenced public perception and voter behavior. Dorsey (2008) and Farwell (2012) argue that effective presidential communication conveys policy priorities and builds emotional connections with the electorate. This is particularly relevant in the 2024 Indonesian elections, where candidates must address pressing issues such as economic recovery, infrastructure development, climate change, and social equity. Candidates can enhance their appeal and mobilize support by framing those complex issues in relatable terms. McNaughtan et al. (2019) further emphasize the role of values in presidential communication, suggesting that candidates who align their rhetoric with the electorate's aspirations are more likely to succeed.

One of the most common linguistic strategies used in political discourse is strategic lexicalization which is the selection of particular words to represent specific intended meanings (Khafaga, 2023). Fairclough (2013) highlights that words and phrases carry connotations derived from their frequent use that allow ideological meanings to be subtly communicated through careful word choice. Similarly, lexical pragmatics as discussed by Blunter (1998), examines how literal word meanings are modified in use that illustrate the interplay between lexical semantics and pragmatics. In addition, the word choices in the discourse relies on context-dependent interferences that contribute to reinforce intended message in a given context (Brochhagen et al., 2018).

Existing studies have concerned on the critical discourse analysis by approaching corpus linguistics and some of which focused on media and public representations (Al-Fajri, 2024; Az-Zahra & Roselani, 2024; Baker & Levon, 2015; Brookes & Chalupnik, 2022; Brookes & McEnery, 2020; Heritage & Baker, 2022; Huan, 2023; Patterson, 2024; Hamouda et al., 2023). Al-Fajri (2024) offered a corpus-assisted discourse analysis of how people with disabilities are framed in Indonesian reports, highlighting the stigmatization. Furthermore, Az-Zahra and Roselani (2024) analyzed how sexual violence is represented in the Jakarta Post. Brookes and Chalupnik (2022) analyzed the representation of men in an online vegan community and revealed how masculinity is constructed about ethical food preferences, similar to Baker and Levon (2015), who conducted a comparative corpus-based and qualitative analysis of news articles about masculinity. Brookes and McEnery (2020) examined how jihadist discourse is structured and how particular ideological violence is sustained. Additionally, Heritage and Baker (2022) explored how chemsex is portrayed in the British media aimed at LGBTQ+ men, contributing to the discourse on crime, culture, and sexuality. Huan (2023) investigated how China's image is represented as either an opportunity or a threat in Australian news media. Patterson (2024) also focused on the media, particularly in *The Times* newspaper, and analyzed how poverty is defined, labeled, and evaluated in the British press. Hamouda et al. (2023) focus more on social media than the newspaper. Like the previous, they examined how Muslim preachers use social media to communicate messages about the pandemic by focusing on the discourse strategies employed during a global crisis.

Aside from the media and public representations, some previous studies also conducted by focusing on social issue phenomena (Chalupnik & Brookes, 2021; Cheng et al., 2024; Khafaga, 2023; Perez, 2023) and the use of metaphoric expression in certain discourse events (Amaireh & Rababah, 2024; Hayes & Poole, 2022). Chalupnik and Brookes (2021) analyzed how healthcare websites use marketing language to appeal to consumers. Cheng et al. (2024) specifically investigate how lawmakers use language to take stances on data protection laws. Similarly, Khafaga (2023) focused on language and law, but it specifically investigated strategic lexicalization in courtroom discourse by exploring the lexical choices in courtroom discourse to shape perceptions and outcomes. Perez (2023) employed corpus-assisted discourse analysis to explore how migration is represented in parliamentary debates concerning cross-linguistic variations. Furthermore, Amaireh and Rababah (2024) investigated the metaphors used by Joe Biden and Kamala Harris and how these metaphors construct their personalities and appeal to voters. Similarly, Hayes and Poole (2022) used a diachronic approach to examine how the themes and metaphors in presidential debates evolve.

Previous critical discourse studies approaching with corpus also scrutinize the political discourse perspective (Abuelwafa, 2021; Adam et al., 2024; Afzaal et al., 2022; Du, 2021; Fu et al., 2024; Hamed, 2021; Nazeer et al., 2023; Oddo, 2011; Suhaili et al., 2024). Abuelwafa (2021) explored legitimation and manipulation in political speeches and highlighted how politicians use language to create power through strategic discourse. Adam et al. (2024) examined the evolution of metaphors in Indonesian political speeches related to the war in the political agenda. Afzaal et al. (2022) investigated the framing of China's Belt and Road Initiative in US political discourse by analyzing how both positive and negative portrayals are constructed

using specific linguistic strategies, and Du (2021) compared the discursive construction of political congresses in Chinese and Western media. Moreover, Fu et al. (2024) looked at how discourse markers like *'you know'* and *'I mean'* in English political interviews shape the narrative of political discourse. Nazeer et al. (2023) looked at how political rhetoric has shifted with the rise of digital media. Hamed (2021) scrutinized keywords and collocation in US presidential speeches since 1993 and attempted to reveal how specific keywords have evolved in their political connotation over time. Similarly, Oddo (2011) investigated the US presidential discourses, but he explored how the framing of *'us'* versus *'them'* is used to justify war legitimization discourse. Suhaili et al. (2024) specified only examining one of the US presidents, Donald Trump, in his social media texts to seek out the portrayal of the Iranian people in Trump's tweets to create divisive narratives.

The aforementioned critical discourse studies that intertwined with corpus linguistics have been frequently conducted in various focuses. However, only some have scrutinized how the lexical choices within the political texts constructed and symbolized certain ideologies of the politicians within the discourse. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this gap by exploring the lexicalization within the vision and mission statements of the 2024 Indonesian presidential candidates and investigating how the particular lexemes signify their ideology while promoting their ideas during the election campaign to the public. Specifically, it uses frequent lexical categories, including verbs, adjectives, and modals. It examines the frequency and distribution of lexemes in each category and finds its concordances to reveal how these lexical choices convey particular messages and ideological representations. The present study expects to enrich the previous studies that concern the same field as critical discourse Analysis (CDA) and corpus linguistics (CL) in the political discourse, especially in the Indonesian presidential context, and to enlighten that the use of particular lexical choices is important to address the political actors' messages to the public during the presidential campaign.

2. Method

The study employed Creswell's (2014) descriptive qualitative approach, in which the author provided a detailed account of phenomena in the vision and mission statements of the 2024 Indonesian presidential candidates. The data for the study were sourced from the open-access website, available at <https://mmc.tirto.id/documents/2023/10/20/>, in the form of document files. The author downloaded all the vision and mission statements from three 2024 Indonesian presidential candidates: Anies–Muhaimin, Prabowo–Gibran, and Ganjar–Mahfud. Before importing them into the corpus manager, the author prepared the files by filtering the raw metadata. The filtered files were then imported into AntConc version 4.3.1 for further analysis. The corpus comprises 42,021 tokens considered specialized-corpora and is expected to provide valuable insights and ease the authors in analyzing the frequency and meanings of each strategic lexical category among those three vision and mission presidential candidate documents and interpret the context of the frequent lexemes within the documents through the concordance analysis. The token details in each document are displayed in Table 1 below;

Table 1

Token distribution of the vision and mission statement of the 2024 Indonesian presidential candidates (n=42,021)

Candidate	Token
Anies–Muhaimin	21934
Prabowo–Gibran	13080
Ganjar–Mahfud	7007
Total	42021

Before further analysis, the author conducted a preliminary stage to identify the most lexemes based on the lexical categories, including verbs, adjectives, and modals within the vision and mission documents of those three 2024 Indonesian presidential candidates. This stage is highlighted to show how the particular word affects and is affected in the co-textual and contextual linguistic expression components. Then, the author conducted a computational stage where he identified the frequency of each lexical category. The final dataset and the frequency of each lexeme are shown in Table 2. The author selected several top list of each lexical category within the corpora. Lastly, the author interpreted and explained the data found based on the critical discourse analysis framework to reveal specific purposes contained in the three Indonesian presidential candidates' vision and mission statements.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1 Frequency of each strategic lexical category and its concordance

The strategic lexicalization of the Indonesian presidential candidates is represented in their vision and mission statements where the specific particular lexical choice are deployed to convey their key priorities during the political campaign. The study found that there are at least 13 indicative lexemes distributed in three lexical categories including verbs, adjectives, and modals. The total frequency of the lexemes varies based on the type of lexical category. Overall, the study acquires 1.325 frequencies covering all lexical types.

The study reveals three lexical categories including verbs, adjectives, and modals. Verbs have four strategic lexemes such as *meningkatkan* (224), *mendorong* (143), *memperkuat* (123), and *memastikan* (121). Similarly, adjectives also have four strategic lexemes, *adil* (195), *makmur* (158), *unggul* (91), and *berkualitas* (80). Modals have five lexemes including *akan* (111), *harus* (63), *wajib* (9), *mungkin* (6), and *boleh* (1).

Table 2
Strategic lexicalization of verbs in the vision and mission statement of the candidates

Verbs	Candidate	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total occurrence
<i>meningkatkan</i> (to increase)	Anies–Muhaimin	99	44,20	224
	Prabowo–Gibran	102	45,54	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	23	10,27	
<i>mendorong</i> (to promote)	Anies–Muhaimin	92	64,34	143
	Prabowo–Gibran	40	27,97	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	11	7,69	
<i>memperkuat</i> (to strengthen)	Anies–Muhaimin	47	38,21	123
	Prabowo–Gibran	61	49,59	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	15	12,20	

<i>memastikan</i> (to ensure)	Anies–Muhaimin	86	71,07	121
	Prabowo–Gibran	16	13,22	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	19	15,70	

Table 2 reveals distinct patterns in how Indonesian political coalitions emphasize action-oriented language. Prabowo–Gibran dominates the use of *'meningkatkan'* with 102 occurrences (45.54%) and *'memperkuat'* with 61 occurrences (49.59%), aligning with their narrative of economic and institutional reinforcement. Anies–Muhaimin, meanwhile, leads in *'mendorong'* with 92 occurrences (64.34%) and *'memastikan'* with 86 occurrences (71.07%), underscoring their focus on proactive governance and accountability in social welfare. Ganjar–Mahfud lags significantly in most categories, with their highest share in *'memastikan'* with 19 occurrences (15.70%), which suggests a quieter emphasis on assurance mechanisms. Strikingly, Prabowo–Gibran's dominance in verbs tied to growth contrasts with Anies–Muhaimin's prioritization of advocacy and guarantees reflecting divergent campaign strategies: one centered on structural empowerment and the other on social advocacy. Ganjar–Mahfud's limited verb usage in *'meningkatkan'* with only 23 occurrences (10.27%) may signal weaker thematic differentiation or a narrower rhetorical scope than their rivals.

Meningkatkan (to increase)

- (6a) *'... dan **meningkatkan** kesejahteraan keluarganya melalui aktivitas Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga'* (Anies–Muhaimin)
 (...and improving family welfare through Family Welfare Empowerment activities)
- (6b) *'Mengembalikan kedaulatan Indonesia sebagai poros maritim dengan **meningkatkan** jumlah dan kualitas sumber daya manusia'* (Prabowo–Gibran)
 (Restoring Indonesia's sovereignty as a maritime axis by improving the quantity and quality of human resources)
- (6c) *'Upaya untuk **meningkatkan** kesejahteraan masyarakat harus berkelanjutan'* (Ganjar–Mahfud)
 (Efforts to improve community welfare must be sustainable)

Anies–Muhaimin, as in (6a), employs the phrase *'meningkatkan kesejahteraan keluarganya melalui aktivitas Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga'* (improving family welfare through Family Welfare Empowerment activities) to frame development in a grassroots and household-centered manner. The lexeme highlights the candidate's focus on direct social support, which appeals to lower-income communities and those reliant on government welfare programs, and they adopt a welfare-oriented approach that resonates with populist sentiments and social stability concerns. The statement of Prabowo–Gibran, as in (6b), focuses on *'meningkatkan jumlah dan kualitas sumber daya manusia'* (improving the quantity and quality of human resources) in restoring Indonesia's maritime sovereignty. The lexical strategy positions national strength as a function of economic and workforce development and appeals to business sectors, professionals, and patriotic voters who prioritize human capital development to strengthen national resilience and economic competitiveness. Similarly, Ganjar–Mahfud, as in (6c), employs *'meningkatkan kesejahteraan masyarakat harus berkelanjutan'* (efforts to improve community welfare must be sustainable); they emphasize long-term stability and systemic

improvements where integration of sustainability as a key principle reflects a governance model that appeals to progressive and stability-oriented voters. At this point, the use of *'meningkatkan'* aligns with a common political strategy of projecting continuous progress in Indonesian electoral discourse.

Mendorong (to promote)

(7a) *'Kami bertekad **mendorong** peran aktif Indonesia dalam penentuan agenda besar dunia dan umat manusia.'* (Anies–Muhaimin)

(We are determined to encourage Indonesia's active role in shaping major global and human agendas)

(7b) *'...**mendorong** kemandirian bangsa melalui swasembada pangan, energi, air, ekonomi syariah, ekonomi digital, ekonomi hijau, dan ekonomi biru'* (Prabowo–Gibran)

(... encouraging national self-reliance through food, energy, water, Islamic economy, digital economy, green economy, and blue economy independence)

(7c) *'kepercayaan adalah hal yang sangat penting untuk **mendorong** partisipasi aktif masyarakat dalam setiap sendi kehidupan berbangsa dan bernegara'* (Ganjar–Mahfud)

(Trust is essential to encourage active participation from the public in all aspects of national life)

As in (7a), Anies–Muhaimin employs the phrase *'mendorong peran aktif Indonesia dalam penentuan agenda besar dunia dan umat manusia'* (encouraging Indonesia's active role in shaping major global and human agendas) to position Indonesia as a proactive international player. The lexicalization underscores the candidate's vision of strengthening Indonesia's diplomatic influence and appeals to voters who support global engagement. At this point, they are internationally oriented, which resonates with those who envision Indonesia as a key actor in global affairs. The statement of Prabowo–Gibran, as in (7b), focuses on *'mendorong kemandirian bangsa'* (encouraging national self-reliance) by emphasizing food, energy, and economic independence. The lexical strategy frames national resilience as a core priority that aligns with aspirations for economic sovereignty and national strength and also appeals to business sectors, professionals, and nationalist-oriented voters who prioritize self-sufficiency in strategic industries. Conversely, Ganjar–Mahfud, as in (7c), employs *'mendorong partisipasi aktif masyarakat dalam setiap sendi kehidupan berbangsa dan bernegara'* (encouraging active public participation in all aspects of national life) to emphasize civic engagement and trust as fundamental to governance. The lexeme of *'kepercayaan'* (trust) as a prerequisite for participation reinforces the candidate's commitment to social cohesion and democratic values. The reference to trust positions the candidate as an advocate for transparency and inclusive policymaking and further targets voters who prioritize accountability and public involvement in decision-making.

Memperkuat (to strengthen)

(8a) *'Kami akan **memperkuat** diplomasi ekonomi dan sosial-budaya agar Indonesia dapat memanfaatkan berbagai potensi global'* (Anies–Muhaimin)

(We will strengthen economic and socio-cultural diplomacy to enable Indonesia to leverage various global potentials)

- (8b) ‘... *industry kreatif berpotensi menjadi pendorong utama ekonomi dan sekaligus **memperkuat** citra bangsa di mata dunia*’ (Prabowo–Gibran)
 (... the creative industry has the potential to become the main driver of the economy while strengthening the nation’s image on the world stage)
- (8c) ‘... *modernisasi alutsista dan **memperkuat** kemampuan dalam menghadapi ancaman dan tantangan*’ (Ganjar–Mahfud)
 (... modernizing military equipment and strengthening capabilities to face threats and challenges)

In the statement of ‘*memperkuat diplomasi ekonomi dan sosial-budaya*’ (strengthen economic and socio-cultural diplomacy) as in (8a), Anies–Muhaimin frames Indonesia’s global engagement as a tool to harness international opportunities where lexeme of ‘*memperkuat*’ (strengthen) positions the candidate as a proponent of soft power and multilateral cooperation appealing to voters who prioritize Indonesia’s role in global trade, cultural exchange, and diplomatic leadership. Prabowo–Gibran, as in (8b), attempts to assert the phrase of ‘*industry kreatif berpotensi menjadi pendorong utama ekonomi*’ (the creative industry has the potential to become the main economic driver), they tie ‘*memperkuat*’ (strengthen) to cultural and economic influence. The phrase ‘*memperkuat citra bangsa di mata dunia*’ (strengthen the nation’s image) emphasizes branding Indonesia as a creative powerhouse. Ganjar–Mahfud, as in (8c), more focus on ‘*modernisasi alutsista dan memperkuat kemampuan*’ (modernizing military equipment and strengthening capabilities) links ‘*memperkuat*’ (strengthen) to national security and defense readiness. They position military modernization as essential to countering threats to voters prioritizing sovereignty, defense personnel, and nationalist groups.

Table 3
Strategic lexicalization of adjectives in the vision and mission statement of the candidates

Adjectives	Candidate	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total occurrence
<i>adil</i> (fair)	Anies–Muhaimin	171	87,69	195
	Prabowo–Gibran	10	5,13	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	14	7,18	
<i>makmur</i> (prosperous)	Anies–Muhaimin	152	96,20	158
	Prabowo–Gibran	6	3,80	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	0	0,00	
<i>unggul</i> (excellent)	Anies–Muhaimin	0	0,00	91
	Prabowo–Gibran	5	5,49	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	86	94,51	
<i>berkualitas</i> (high-quality)	Anies–Muhaimin	39	48,75	80
	Prabowo–Gibran	22	27,50	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	19	23,75	

As seen in Table 3, the contrasts in how coalitions employ aspirational adjectives to frame their campaigns can be seen. Anies–Muhaimin overwhelmingly dominates mentions of ‘*adil*’ with 171 occurrences (87.69%) and ‘*makmur*’ with 152 occurrences (96.20%), positioning their platform as a champion of social equity and economic welfare. Conversely, Ganjar–Mahfud claims a near-total usage of ‘*unggul*’ with 86 occurrences (94.51%), which signals a focus on excellence in governance or

public services. In *'berkualitas,'* Anies–Muhaimin leads with 39 occurrences (48.75%), though Prabowo–Gibran with 22 occurrences (27.50%) and Ganjar–Mahfud with 19 occurrences (23.75%) show moderate engagement. Notably, Prabowo–Gibran has minimal presence in adjectives overall, barely registering in *'adil'* (5.13%), *'makmur'* (3.80%), and *'unggul'* (5.49%), which aligns with their earlier verb focus on structural growth over social rhetoric. The near-absence of Anies–Muhaimin in *'unggul'* (0%) and Ganjar–Mahfud in *'makmur'* (0%) underscores polarized branding, one coalition prioritizing justice and prosperity and another excellence, and Prabowo–Gibran leaning on tangible policy verbs (e.g., *memperkuat*) rather than aspirational aspects.

Adil (fair)

- (10a) *'Mewujudkan negara yang maju, Merdeka, Bersatu, berdaulat, adil, dan Makmur.'* (Anies–Muhaimin)
(Realizing a country that is advanced, independent, united, sovereign, fair, and prosperous)
- (10b) *'... mendukung pertumbuhan sektor-sektor lain, dan memastikan kesempatan yang adil bagi setiap warga'* (Prabowo–Gibran)
(... supporting the growth of other sectors and ensuring fair opportunities for every citizen)
- (10c) *'Melaksanakan pengelolaan sumber daya alam demi sebesar-besarnya kemakmuran rakyat secara adil dengan menerapkan kebijakan alokasi porsi kepemilikan saham'* (Ganjar–Mahfud)
(Managing natural resources for the greatest prosperity of the people somewhat by implementing share ownership allocation policies).

The statement of Anies–Muhaimin *'negara yang maju, Merdeka, Bersatu, berdaulat, adil, dan Makmur'* (advanced, independent, united, sovereign, fair, and prosperous nation) as in (10a) positions the lexical adjectives of *'adil'* as one pillar of a holistic national vision where it is framed as integral to Indonesia's broader progress suggesting that fairness is inseparable from sovereignty, unity, and prosperity. The lexical adjective bundling of *'adil'* with terms like *'maju'* (advanced) and *'makmur'* (prosperous) signals a central ideology that balances social justice with developmental goals. They use *'adil'* as a unifying narrative that appeals to voters prioritizing national cohesion and balanced development. Moreover, Prabowo–Gibran in (10b), their statement *'memastikan kesempatan yang adil bagi setiap warga'* (ensuring fair opportunities for every citizen) narrows *'adil'* to economic and social equity. They emphasize meritocratic fairness and resource access by linking the lexical adjective *'adil'* to *'kesempatan'* (opportunities). The adjective reflects a social-democratic ideology, prioritizing inclusivity and systemic equality. Further, they implicitly educated voters and civil society groups advocating for anti-discrimination policies, gender equality, and labor rights. Similarly to Anies–Muhaimin, Ganjar–Mahfud also correlates the lexical adjective of *'adil'* with *'kemakmuran'* (prosperity) as in (10c) *'kemakmuran rakyat secara adil dengan ... alokasi porsi kepemilikan saham'* (prosperity of the people fairly through share ownership allocation) ties *'adil'* to distributive justice in natural resource management. Their focus on *'kepemilikan saham'* (share ownership) suggests a policy of equitable wealth redistribution, framing *adil* as economic empowerment for local communities.

Makmur (prosperous)

- (11a) *'Indonesia yang makmur adalah negara yang berkeadilan, di mana setiap warga negara memiliki akses ke layanan publik tanpa kecuali.'* (Anies–Muhaimin)
(A prosperous Indonesia is a just country where every citizen has access to public services without exception)
- (11b) *'Alam yang makmur juga harus dijaga untuk memberikan keberlanjutan Pembangunan'* (Prabowo–Gibran)
(A prosperous environment must also be preserved for sustainable development)

As in (11a), Anies–Muhaimin's statement, *'Indonesia yang makmur adalah negara yang berkeadilan, di mana setiap warga negara memiliki akses ke layanan*

publik tanpa kecuali (A prosperous Indonesia is a just country where every citizen has access to public services without exception) lexically binds *'makmur'* (prosperous) to *'berkeadilan'* (justice) and *'akses layanan publik'* (public service access) to equate prosperity with social equity and universal welfare. In addition, the use of *'tanpa kecuali'* (without exception) amplifies inclusivity that suggests prosperity is unattainable without systemic fairness. They also employ *'makmur'* to critique Indonesia's current socio-economic disparities by emphasizing *'akses layanan publik'* (public service access), which targets voters disillusioned by unequal healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Conversely, Prabowo-Gibran redefines *'makmur'* to describe ecological health as in (11b) *'Alam yang makmur juga harus dijaga untuk memberikan keberlanjutan Pembangunan'* (A prosperous environment must also be preserved for sustainable development) They use *'makmur'* to align with global sustainability discourses, particularly the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the focus on *'alam yang makmur'* (prosperous environment) resonates with younger voters, environmental NGOs, and international stakeholders concerned with climate change.

Unggul (excellent)

- (12a) *'Membangun sekolah-sekolah unggul terintegrasi di setiap kabupaten ...'*
 (Anies-Muhaimin)
 (Building integrated excellent schools in every district...)
- (12b) *'... mengutamakan pembangunan SDM yang unggul, produktif, dan berdaya guna bagi peningkatan nilai tambah perekonomian nasional.'*
 (Prabowo-Gibran)
 (... prioritizing the development of excellent, productive, and valuable human resources for increasing national economic value)

Anies-Muhaimin associates the lexical adjective of *'unggul'* (excellent) with education, emphasizing accessibility and quality as in (12a), *'membangun sekolah-sekolah unggul terintegrasi di setiap kabupaten'* (building integrated excellent schools in every district). Their statement frames *'unggul'* as a necessary standard for national progress. They also employ *'unggul'* to highlight the need for equitable access to quality education, positioning schooling as a tool for long-term social mobility. The statement of Prabowo-Gibran as in (12b) *'... mengutamakan pembangunan SDM yang unggul, produktif, dan berdaya guna bagi peningkatan nilai tambah perekonomian nasional'* (prioritizing the development of excellent, productive, and useful human resources for increasing national economic value) connects *'unggul'* to workforce development. Their statement aligns excellence with productivity and national economic growth, reinforcing a market-driven approach that appeals to business sectors, policymakers, and professionals focused on Indonesia's global competitiveness. Prabowo-Gibran then leverages the adjective *'unggul'* to frame human capital as an economic asset that aligns with nationalist and market-driven ideologies. Unlike the previous two candidates, Ganjar-Mahfud tends to highlight systemic and sustainable development rather than using *'unggul'* to emphasize excellence as a measurable standard, and they focus more on a broader vision that prioritizes stability, inclusivity, and long-term progress over notions of hierarchy.

Table 4
Strategic lexicalization of modals in the vision and mission statement of the candidates

Modals	Candidate	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total occurrence
<i>akan</i> (will)	Anies-Muhaimin	42	37,84	111
	Prabowo-Gibran	52	46,85	
	Ganjar-Mahfud	17	15,32	
<i>harus</i> (have to)	Anies-Muhaimin	28	44,44	63
	Prabowo-Gibran	23	36,51	
	Ganjar-Mahfud	12	19,05	
<i>wajib</i>	Anies-Muhaimin	5	55,56	9

(must)	Prabowo–Gibran	2	22,22	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	2	22,22	
<i> mungkin</i> (maybe)	Anies–Muhaimin	2	33,33	6
	Prabowo–Gibran	4	66,67	
<i> boleh</i> (may)	Anies–Muhaimin	1	100,00	1
	Prabowo–Gibran	0	0,00	
	Ganjar–Mahfud	0	0,00	

Table 4 illustrates the use of modal verbs among those three candidates, which reveals differences in rhetorical tone and policy certainty among the coalitions. Prabowo–Gibran leads in *'akan'* with 52 occurrences (46.85%) and *'harus'* with 23 occurrences (36.51%) that emphasize future-oriented commitments and obligation-driven policies, which are still consistent with their focus on actionable economic plans. Anies–Muhaimin follows closely in *'akan'* with 42 occurrences (37.84%) and *'harus'* with 28 occurrences (44.44%), but also claims most mentions of *'wajib'* with 5 occurrences (55.56%) and *'boleh'* (100%) combining assertive mandates with limited openness to flexibility. Ganjar–Mahfud trails in most modals with their highest shares in *'akan'* with 17 occurrences (15.32%) and *'harus'* with 12 occurrences (19.05%), reflecting a less definitive communication style. Notably, *'mungkin'* is rare overall, with Prabowo–Gibran using it most with 4 occurrences (66.67%), which suggests minor acknowledgment of uncertainty. The dominance of *'akan'* and *'harus'* across all candidates underscores a campaign landscape prioritizing future promises and obligations. At the same time, weaker engagement with *'wajib'*, *'mungkin'*, and *'boleh'* signals a minimal emphasis on permission. Prabowo–Gibran's assertive modals align with their structural growth narrative. In contrast, Anies–Muhaimin's mix of obligations like *'harus'* and *'wajib'* and the rare flexibility of *'boleh'* mirrors their dual focus on social guarantees and pragmatic governance. Ganjar–Mahfud's lowered modal usage further reinforces their quieter thematic presence compared to rivals.

Akan (will)

- (14a) *'Kami akan kembali pada amanat reformasi'* (Anies–Muhaimin)
(We will return to the mandate of reform)
- (14b) *'Pemerintah akan melaksanakan Amanah konstitusi UUD 1945 pasal 23A secara taat asas'* (Prabowo–Gibran)
(The government will implement the constitutional mandate of Article 23A of the 1945 Constitution in a disciplined manner)
- (14c) *'... kami akan bergerak cepat memajukan seluruh aspek kehidupan berdasarkan jati diri dan kebudayaan bangsa'* (Ganjar–Mahfud)
(... we will move swiftly to advance all aspects of life based on the nation's identity and culture)

Anies–Muhaimin, as in (14a), employs the deontic modality of *'akan'* in *'kami akan kembali pada amanat reformasi'* (we will return to the mandate of reform) to position themselves as a reformist leader committed to reviving Indonesia's post-1998 democratic ideals. Their use of the *'akan'* modality appeals to urban progressives and activists disillusioned by institutional decay, which frames reform as a moral imperative. In contrast, Prabowo–Gibran uses *'akan'* in (14b) *'pemerintah akan melaksanakan Amanah konstitusi'* (the government will implement the constitutional mandate) to emphasize strict adherence to the 1945 Constitution that signals a legalistic, state-centric approach that also resonates with conservative institutions like the military and judiciary. Meanwhile, Ganjar–Mahfud's *'kami akan bergerak cepat memajukan... jati diri bangsa'* (we will move swiftly to advance... national identity) as in (14c) ties progress to cultural preservation where it targets rural and nationalist voters wary of globalization's cultural perspective.

Harus (have to)

- (15a) '*Kami meyakini negara harus menjamin hak setiap warga negara dalam berkarya dan mengembangkan potensi*' (Anies–Muhaimin)
(We believe the state have to guarantee every citizen's right to create and develop their potential)
- (15b) '*Pancasila adalah pemersatu bangsa, ideologi dan falsafah bangsa yang harus kita jaga ke depan*' (Prabowo–Gibran)
(Pancasila is the unifying force of the nation, its ideology, and philosophy, which we must safeguard going forward)
- (15c) '*...demokrasi harus terus dikawal dengan menutup pintu pada otoritarianisme.*' (Ganjar–Mahfud)
(... democracy has to continuously be safeguarded by closing the door to authoritarianism)

The use of '*harus*' among those three candidates reveals specific purposes for the voters. Anies–Muhaimin's, as in (15a) '*negara harus menjamin hak setiap warga*' (the state must guarantee every citizen's right), frames governance as a welfare obligation, critiquing neoliberal neglect and appealing to marginalized groups. Moreover, Prabowo–Gibran's invocation of '*Pancasila... harus kita jaga*' (Pancasila... must be safeguarded) as in (15b) reinforces conservative nationalism, positioning Pancasila as a non-negotiable ideology to consolidate traditionalist and religious support. Similar to the previous candidate who discusses the national ideology, Ganjar–Mahfud's as in (15c) '*demokrasi harus terus dikawal*' (democracy must be safeguarded) warns against authoritarian regression, appealing to pro-democracy youth wary of Southeast Asia's democratic backsliding. Using the deontic modality of '*harus*' among those three candidates becomes a tool to assert competing priorities reflecting Indonesia's polarized socio-political landscape involving social equity and democratic integrity.

Wajib (must)

- (16a) '*Perubahan dan kelanjutan adalah keniscayaan dan ini wajib menjadi nafas kepemimpinan ke depan*' (Anies–Muhaimin)
(Change and continuity are inevitabilities, and these must become the breath of future leadership)
- (16b) '*Negara wajib memberikan perlindungan sosial untuk warga miskin*' (Prabowo–Gibran)
(The state must provide social protection for people experiencing poverty)

As seen in (16a), '*perubahan... wajib menjadi nafas kepemimpinan*' (change... must become the breath of leadership), Anies–Muhaimin balances reform with continuity, which targets centrists seeking pragmatic progress. On the other hand, Prabowo–Gibran's statement in (16b) '*negara wajib memberikan perlindungan sosial*' (the state must provide social protection) merges Islamic social justice principles with state responsibility that appeals to rural poor society. In contrast with the previous two candidates, Ganjar–Mahfud does not mention the modality of '*wajib*' within their statements since they focus on cultural and economic sovereignty aligns with similar imperatives.

3.2 Strategic Lexicalization and Ideological Framing in the Discourse of Indonesian Presidential Candidates

The candidates' verbs usage aligns with Abuelwafa's (2021) framework on legitimation and power in political discourse. Prabowo–Gibran's dominance in verbs such as '*meningkatkan*' (45.54%) and '*memperkuat*' (49.59%) reflects a structural-developmental ideology framing governance as synonymous with institutional growth. It also mirrors Oddo's (2011) analysis of US presidential war rhetoric where lexical choices (e.g., "us" vs. "them") justify policy agendas. Similarly, Prabowo–Gibran's emphasis on economic metrics legitimizes their platform as a pragmatic solution to national progress, akin to Afzaal et al. (2022), who note how linguistics framing (e.g., BRI as a "threat" or "opportunity") shapes geopolitical narratives. Conversely, Anies–Muhaimin's focus on the use of '*mendorong*' (64.34%) and '*memastikan*' (71.07%) resonates with Brookes and McEnery's (2020) findings on jihadist discourse, where obligation-laden verbs sustain ideological coherence. Ganjar–Mahfud's lowered lexical presence highlights a quiet populism, relying on

adjectives like *'unggul'* (94.51%) to signal competence without overt ideological branding, and this tactic was also observed in Pérez's (2023) analysis of migration debates where neutrality can mask policy ambiguity.

Furthermore, adjectives like *'adil'* and *'makmur'* are conceptual metaphors that encode competing ideologies. Anies–Muhaimin's dominance of *'adil'* (87.69%) and *'makmur'* (96.20%) mirrors Amaireh and Rababah's (2024) study of Biden-Harris metaphors where terms like "battle" and "journey" construct leadership personas. By bundling *'adil'* with *'akses layanan publik'* (public service access), Anies–Muhaimin frames justice as systemic inclusivity related to Al-Fajri et al. (2024), who critique stigmatizing vs. empowering disability narratives. Prabowo–Gibran's avoidance of aspirational adjectives of *'adil'* (5.13%) and *'makmur'* (3.8%) contrasts sharply, which reflects a market-driven pragmatism, prioritizing verbs over ideals. This finding further aligns with Chałupnik and Brookes' (2021) analysis of marketized healthcare discourse where commodification replaces ethical appeals. Ganjar–Mahfud's near-monopoly on *'unggul'* mirrors Khafaga's (2023) findings on courtroom lexicalization where strategic terms like "justice" or "security sway perceptions. Such polarization echoes Wicke and Bolognesi's (2024) "red vs. blue" debate analysis where lexical dichotomies reinforce ideological divides.

Modals like *'akan'* and *'harus'* reveal how candidates perform their authority and obligation. Prabowo–Gibran's assertive *'akan'* (46.85%) and *'harus'* (36.51%) project unwavering commitment, akin to Windayani's (2023) study of Trump's repetitive cohesion devices, which amplify persuasive certainty. Anies–Muhaimin's *'harus'* (44.44%) and *'wajib'* (55.56%) blend democratic ideals with Islamic social justice, confirming Hamouda et al.'s (2023) findings on pandemic-era religious discourse where obligation expression merges moral and civic duty. Ganjar–Mahfud's limited modality of *'akan'* (15.32%) and *'harus'* (19.05%) suggest strategic ambiguity that avoids over-commitment, and it is supported by Hayes and Poole's (2022) diachronic analysis of US debates where vague language mitigates backlash. The rare use of *'mungkin'* by Prabowo–Gibran (66.67%) reflects Painter and Fernandes's (2021) observation that hedging preserves credibility when addressing complex issues like economic uncertainty.

While this present study focuses on the vision and mission statement of the candidates as a campaign media, their strategies intersect with Santoso and Wardani's (2021) analysis of Indonesian Twitter campaigns where social media amplifies ideological polarization. Prabowo–Gibran's institutional rhetoric contrasts with Anies–Muhaimin's grassroots appeals, which mirrors Collins and DeWitt's (2023) comparison of Obama's diplomatic Twitter tone versus Trump's confrontational style. Additionally, cultural specifics are critical, such as references to *Pancasila* and *BUMN* (state-owned enterprises), which reflect Adam et al.'s (2024) findings on how war metaphors in Indonesian discourse shape national identity. Similarly, Anies–Muhaimin's *'santri unggul berkualitas'* (excellent Islamic students) ties to Az-Zahra and Roselani's (2024) analysis of gendered media narratives where religious lexicon mobilizes conservative bases.

4. Conclusion

The study reveals strategic lexicalization and ideological polarization in the vision and mission statement of Indonesia's 2024 presidential candidates. Prabowo–Gibran's dominance of verbs like *'meningkatkan'* underscores a structural-developmental ideology framing governance through economic growth and institutional reinforcement. In contrast, Anies–Muhaimin's prioritization of the obligation verb of *'memastikan'* and aspirational adjective of *'adil'* that reflects a social justice platform, legitimizing their coalition as advocates for systemic equity. Ganjar–Mahfud's lowered lexical presence, marked by adjectives like *'unggul'*, signals a quieter populism emphasizing competence over overt ideological branding. The candidates' modal verb usage further highlights varied rhetorical strategies by which Prabowo–Gibran's assertive *'akan'* projects policy certainty, Anies–Muhaimin's *'wajib'* merges Islamic social ethics with civic duty, and Ganjar–Mahfud's limited modality usage suggests strategic ambiguity. Overall, the findings align with global political discourse patterns where lexical choices function as tools for ideological legitimation, metaphorical framing, and voter mobilization while also reflecting Indonesia's unique

socio-cultural dynamics, such as Pancasila-based nationalism and Islamic welfare principles.

The present study only explores the lexicalization in political discourse, specifically in the presidential candidate's vision and mission statement; thus, the upcoming researchers are suggested to scrutinize the other dimensions. Future studies may expand beyond textual analysis to examine how linguistic strategies intersect with visual or audio elements in campaign material and their impact on voter perception by which they can collect the speech transcription and then compile it in a corpus. In addition, cross-cultural comparison analysis also contributes to the comprehensive discussion by comparing Indonesian candidates' discourse with those of other big country democracies such as India or Brazil to identify universal and culturally specific strategies in political legitimation.

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