

Political Influencers on Social Media: Language Used and Content of Communication Strategy of Indonesian Politicians' Twitter Accounts

GATUT PRIYOWIDODO*
Petra Christian University, Indonesia

NIK ADZRIEMAN ABD RAHMAN
University Utara Malaysia

JANDY E. LUIK
INRI INGGRIT INDRAYANI
IDO PRIJANA HADI
Petra Christian University, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Technology plays an essential role in all the worldwide media industries. Developments in the field of media have led to the existence of new mediums in communication. New mediums through mass media channels have given the public many options, including politicians, to share. This study examined how the language used by politicians and communication strategies through selected mediums influence society in the face of elections. This study focused on the messages conveyed through social media, namely Twitter. The study used a content analysis method that examined as many as six Twitter accounts of influential politicians in the community in Indonesia. The review period for selected Twitter accounts is from 10 September 2022 until 20 November 2022. The findings found that most Twitter account owners chose social and economic issues to write on Twitter accounts rather than political issues. This differs from the previous study's results; most researchers stated that most politicians prioritize politics-related issues. This difference may be due to differences in terms of cultural, economic background, and political trends. While the language used is more of a common language, i.e., informal, than formal or provocative. The choice of language, neither formal nor "Layman language," makes what is presented accessible for the community to understand from different backgrounds. This means that politicians are making social media a medium for dealing with issues related to political matters.

Keywords: *Communication strategy, political influencer, public channel, Twitter, politic language.*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of social media has grown significantly for mainstream media users seeking information and inspiration about public policy and social movements. In 2021, YouTube overtook Facebook as the second most popular social media network in the world regarding the frequency of general use and news consumption (Fischer et al., 2022; Nor et al., 2020; Satriadi et al., 2023). That means YouTube is no longer just an entertainment channel but has become a news channel (Soriano & Gaw, 2022; Lingam & Aripin, 2017; Jaffery et al., 2020). In the latest development, microblogging Twitter, which since July 22, 2023, has changed to X, has become more attractive as a news platform. Even with the change of the Twitter logo to X, this social media platform has become more widespread and multifunctional. This is also

why not only politicians, political parties, and even media companies are increasingly interested in distributing their news pieces through this platform.

Furthermore, the digital political communication and marketing strategy focusing on the individuality of the influencer/subject (Puigdemont) and the potential of the object (independence) and discourse propaganda, which allowed Puigdemont to eclipse the rest of the candidates – including Inés Arrimadas of Cs, the most voted in the case of study. However, two important things should not be separated: the critical message and the language used when communicating on social media. These new online influencers aim to attract as much attention as possible (Marshall & Redmond, 2016). In parallel, we are currently witnessing an irreversible process in which the traditional mass media are being substituted by networks of individual influencers (Gillin, 2009) who are consolidating their position as political opinion leaders. In this long-distance race, the omnipresence of the influencer/leader, the ideological polarisation, and the imposition of digital content on the agenda are all aspects of an information model that the media have been keen to reproduce.

Even the younger generation has relied heavily on social media, including YouTube, as the primary source of information. They seek new knowledge and build opinions by watching YouTube videos (Schmidt, Hölig, Merten, & Hasebrink, 2017). Based on the background of the audience from different ages, a politician should consider the critical message component to be conveyed and the appropriate use of language when delivering the message. The involvement of YouTube content creators and their videos in social and political issues becomes even more critical in this setting.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In Indonesia, Twitter accounts have been used as social media in the microblogging category and are growing rapidly. Basically, of the 17 types of social media platforms popular in Indonesia, Twitter falls under ranks 15th above Pinterest, which has 433 million monthly active users, Reddit has around 430 million monthly active users, and Quora has around 300 million monthly active users.

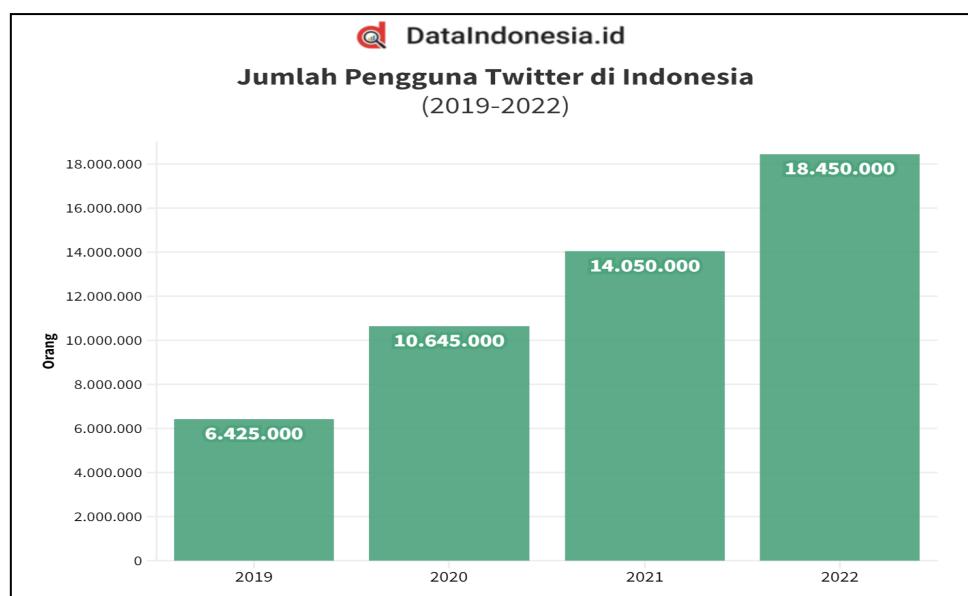


Figure 1: Twitter users in Indonesia in year 2019-2022 (Rizaty, 2022)

Based on the table above, Twitter users (before changing its name to X, since July 22 2023) in Indonesia, from 2019 to 2022 showed an increase in users by an average of 35%. This data supports the author, that Twitter is not only understood as social media but as a platform that politicians can potentially use to influence public opinion.

Furthermore, 17 social media platforms have at least 300 million active users in October 2022: Facebook has 2.934 billion monthly active users, YouTube’s potential advertising reach is 2.515 billion, WhatsApp has at least 2 billion monthly active users, Instagram’s potential advertising reach is 1.386 billion, WeChat has 1.299 billion monthly active users, TikTok has 1 billion monthly active users, Facebook Messenger’s potential advertising reach is 976 million, Telegram has 700 million monthly active users, Douyin (抖音) has 613 million(c) daily active users, Kuaishou (快手) has 587 million monthly active users, Sina Weibo (新浪微博) has 582 million monthly active users, Snapchat’s potential advertising reach is 576 million(a) QQ (腾讯QQ) has 569 million monthly active users. Twitter’s potential advertising reach is roughly 544 million. In Indonesia, politicians are increasingly trying to use social media when do campaigns in every part of the country. The number of people in Indonesia is high and long been known to be in the 4th position of the world and the third Asia. In fact, in Indonesia almost everyone has at least one social media account, considering the number of active social media users in the Asia Pacific region as of February 2022 by country (Statista, 2023). The number of active social media users in Indonesia reached 191 million people in January 2022. That number is up 12.35% compared to the previous year (Kemp, 2022).

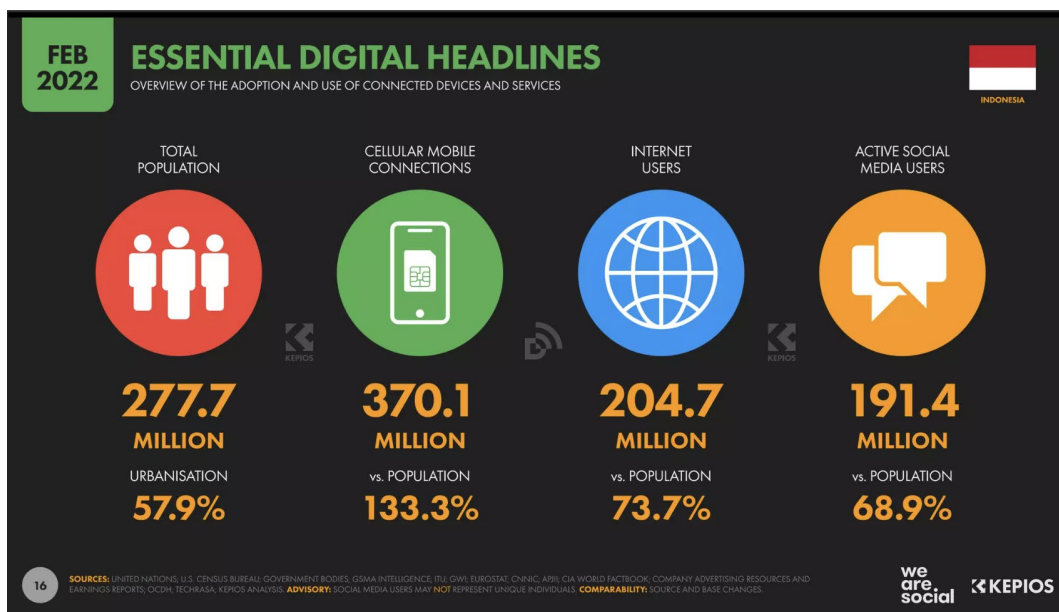


Figure 2: The number of active social media users in Indonesia (Kemp, 2022)

Politician must use this opportunity to make social media platforms as platforms to get closer to the community. The selection of news content written in social media accounts must be studied because the mistake of the focus in the content selection will have a destructive impact on the reputation of a politician who makes social media a platform to communicate with the public. Apart from the content of materials in social media, language selection must also be emphasized. Social media users are from various political, economic,

and social backgrounds, so the language must be acceptable and easily understood by followers. Language should focus more on layman's language and not too academic.

Research Questions and Research Objectives

i. Research Questions

RQ 1: How do politicians use social media language for their communication strategies to attract voters?

RQ 2: What are the key messages presented by politicians through their social media accounts?

ii. Research Objectives

1. To discover the social media language used by politicians for their communication strategies to attract voters.
2. To categorize the key messages presented by politicians through their social media accounts.

The finding of this study will fill the gaps in the prior literature, which has tended to employ samples with smaller amounts of data and has concentrated on circumstances such as single developing political parties or distinct social movements.

LITERATURE REVIEW OR RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Social Media Influencers and Opinion Leadership

Social media channels have given a new platform for their users to express their opinions on a particular topic. Through the simplicity of creating an account(s) and creating content in the new media, users can actively take part in a public conversation or set their self-presentation in the digital sphere (Luik, 2020). For instance, in the early days of social media discursive practices, the phenomenon of "*Cicak dan Buaya*" and "*Koin Untuk Prieta*" were discussed by researchers in Indonesia. The examples have shown the public's participation in a public discourse related to public services and private sector services. Another recent example of shaping opinion in the digital sphere, which remains fresh in our mind, is the polarisation of key messages during the recent presidential election in Indonesia. Specifically, during the second round of the election, only two remaining candidates competed for the potential voters' ballot decision. To put it in a more conceptual approach, "Connectivity, interactivity, self-communication, and other attributes of digital platforms are redefining and broadening the concept of opinion leaders in a technologically mediated field" (Casero-Ripollés, 2020, p. 171). Even though specific opinion leaders are not in the field, their opinion would shape the public's behavior, as shown in a study of social media 'non-political' influencers (Suuronen et al., 2021). Considering the dynamics experienced and presented in various analyses, we contend that social media profoundly impacts public opinion toward an issue or a specific discourse. More than that, some communicators actively involve themselves in this new avenue of communication.

Political influencers in the digital sphere are an emergent practice in the current political communication landscape. They generally utilise social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook to create a campaign or build public discourse. To date, several studies have highlighted this new breed of opinion leader in terms of how influence is exercised by more diverse actors (Casero-Ripollés, 2020). For instance, Pérez-Curiel and

Naharro (2019) studied how social media engagement has made a presidential candidate become a president and a political influencer. In a different setting, Pérez-Curiel (2020) also asserts that the unidirectional use of social media (i.e., Twitter) by political leaders/influencers shapes the digital political agenda and the digital political agenda of its media counterpart. Another study by Abdulmajeed and El-Ibiary (2020) has shown us that ten years after the political change in a country, political influencers keep involved in public discussion and debates through their Twitter account. However, the studied accounts show a unidirectional opinion strategy with a different agenda: “not yielding any clear and valuable content to the reader” versus “using evidence in defending human rights.”

Moreover, as we have mentioned above, political influencers come from various backgrounds and different content orientations. Casero-Ripollés (2021) identifies political actors, citizens, journalists, opinion makers, media (organisations), political parties, and political candidates as the most influential users based on the sample taken from Twitter. From the findings, besides ‘influential’ organisations, we can see that specific ‘individuals’ such as politicians, ordinary citizens, and journalists are also part of the collective that influences public opinion. Also, political influencers are also part of the digital media freelancer’s regime, in which a new breed of digital profession where various actors can take part in the content creation for various purposes, including politics (Mohamed, 2019). Similarly, we can learn more about these individuals in other studies such as “influencers who neither represent established professional news media nor political parties” (Fischer et al., 2022), “journalists as political influencers” (Peres-Neto, 2022), general “young people as political influencers on social media” (Penney, 2018), and “social media influencers” that talked about politics (Suuronen et al., 2021). In terms of the content, studies have shown that the contents’ agenda may vary from “partisan mockery,” “engaging education,” opinion and comments on daily issues, and voices on increasing violence and restrictions on free expression (Fischer et al., 2022; Peres-Neto, 2022).

To sum up, the advent of social media has opened opportunities for an emergent actor in public discourse, especially on political topics. As we use the term ‘political influencers’, this new type of actor has a significant role in setting the ‘general’ agenda of the public and mainstream media too, and the political influencers are not always politicians.

Political Influencer

Romero-Rodríguez and Aguaded (2017) explain that influencers can be defined as people who have the power to influence others through social or conventional media because of their knowledge, experience, credibility, and commitment. Citizens have ceased to be mere receivers of information to become prosumers, meaning that in addition to participating as spectators, they also produce their content. Furthermore, Giansante (2015) agreed that some politicians still see social media as information sources more than anything else, but on such sites. Giansante (2015) added that listening, responding, and updating the latest news is essential. Social networking sites contribute to political processes and democracy as they give citizens a voice and allow them to promote their actions (Enguix, 2017), thus creating connected multitudes (Rovira, 2017). Social media is a digital platform that facilitates users to communicate or share content in writing, photos, and videos. It is a digital platform that provides facilities for each user to engage in social activity. Social media is also a facility to socialise and is done in a network that allows humans to interact without being restricted to space and time.

Communication Strategy

Communication strategy is one of the essential components for a politician when conducting a campaign. In the absence of a sound system, it is feared that it will thwart the initial planning that has been done. Communication strategy is planning the delivery of messages through various elements of communication such as frequency, formalities, content, and communication channels so that the message is quickly received and understood and can change attitudes or behaviours by the purpose of communication. However, followed Pérez-Curiel (2020), communication strategy is effective planning in delivering messages so that they are easily understood by targeted audiences and can accept what has been conveyed so that they can change a person's attitude or behaviour. Meanwhile, according to Moss and Warnaby (1998) and Priyowidodo et al. (2021), communication strategy uses a combination of communication facets, including communication frequency, formalities, content, and channels.

Furthermore, Communication strategy combines communication planning and communication management to achieve a goal. The communication strategy must show how its operations must be carried out tactically to achieve this goal because the approach can differ depending on the situation and conditions. Communication strategies are closely related and related between the goals to be achieved and the consequences (problems) that must be considered, then plan how to achieve the product according to the expected results or, in other words, the goals to be completed. In the context of the relationship between politicians or political influencers influencing potential voters, they must choose the most appropriate communication strategy because strategy is a central vehicle for achieving competitive advantage. The strategy also motivates internal and external stakeholders who directly or indirectly bear the costs or benefits of their decisions (Moss & Warnaby, 1998). Therefore, the communication strategy in this digital era must be directed to promote ideas with tactics that adapt the advantages of using social media (Drahošová & Balco, 2017).

Agenda Setting Theory and Framing Theory

The researcher used Agenda Setting Theory and Media Framing Theory in this study. These two theories are related to each other. In the agenda-setting theory, the media have strengthened influence and created society's perceptions. However, the community is free to accept or reject based on their thoughts. Moreover, framing media is considered more focused on the issue that had been discussed. For instance, when the politician tried to raise an issue of the economy in their campaign series. From the first point, the issue discussed is the general issue related to the price of the food. So, the main issue raised in the campaign is how to control food prices in the future if they win the election soon. However, the function of Media Framing is how the politician focuses on a particular issue in detail. For instance, the politician will approach society in a rural area and show how they suffer from the high cost of living, including food prices increasing from time to time. The emotion will be touched when many people from remote areas lack food. In the agenda-setting theory, society might not be entirely influenced, but not in the media framing, where people readily accept and will change the direction of their minds.

Indonesia's Political System

Indonesia is a democratic country that adheres to a multi-party-political system. In the 2024 General Election, Indonesia had 18 political parties that qualified as election participants from 24 registered parties. The political parties involved are 1. PPP, 2. PKB, 3. PDI Perjuangan, 4. Nasdem Party, 5. Democratic Party, 6. PAN, 7. Gerindra Party 8. PSI 9. Golkar Party 10. Perindo (Partai Persatuan Indonesia) 11. PKN (Partai Kebangkitan Nusantara), 12. PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) 13. Gelora Indonesia Party 14. PBB (Partai Bulan Bintang) 15. Hanura Party 16. Ummat Party 17. Labour Party 18. Garuda Party. However, Six political parties were not verified by Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU) 1. Indonesian People's Swara Party, 2. Republicans, 3. Indonesian Republican Party, 4. Republican Party Satu 5. Prime Party 6. PKP Indonesia. In the digital era, many political parties adopt social media to articulate the public interest (Hakan,2022). Various social media used by political parties, for example, Instagram (Bast, 2021), tiktok (López Fernández, 2022), facebook (Muraoka et al., 2021) and also Twitter (Praet et al., 2021).

Proposition Development

Political Content by Politicians on Social Media

When communicating on social media, a politician will focus on some agenda or issue considered necessary. The three points focused on are social, political, and economical. Although the original purpose is to campaign, there needs to be a national issue that is considered very important to be used as a backup. Therefore, it cannot be denied that a politician will use political issues when communicating through social media.

Proposition One: Political content by a politician on social media is focused on political agendas and issue

The Language in Use on Social Media: From the Perspectives of Politician

When using social media, one of the most important things is the use of language. Acceptance of an issue through any medium is very important. The act of using language that is not appropriate to the context will cause what is written will not reach the target audience. Language is central to politics, so the political communication on social media revolves around agenda-setting techniques (Sajjad et al., 2017). So they added to achieve political objectives the political actors manipulate language accordingly, so to understand the hidden ideologies of politicians, it is essential to scrutinize the linguistic choices as they form the very nature off discourse. In this study, the language used by politicians on social media is more layman's language and not too academic or technical.

Proposition Two: The language used by politicians on social media is more layman's language and not too academic or technical.

METHODOLOGY

As this research aims to answer the two research questions, in which the first question is How do politicians use social media language for their communication strategies to attract voters? And the second question is, What are the key messages presented by politicians through their social media accounts? This study then used the interpretive paradigm with the qualitative content analysis method to analyse the content of politicians' Twitter accounts. Twitter was chosen in this study because Indonesian politicians have widely used this social media to distribute political messages to the public.

Sampling

The researchers chose six Indonesian politicians' Twitter accounts, which have a minimum of 500 thousand followers. They were selected by purposive sampling from 40 Twitter accounts, each of which has more than 100 thousand followers. The six politicians consist of two politicians from the Indonesia Democratic Party of Struggle representing the ruling party and one account from a Gerindra Party politician. The other three Twitter accounts come from politicians from the Democratic Party (one account), and Prosperous Justice Party (two accounts). These two parties, since the administration of President Joko Widodo for two terms (2014-2019, 2019-2024), have always positioned themselves as the opposition political party. The tweets data was downloaded from six Twitter accounts that were published over a period of two months, from 10 September to 20 November 2022. The data was downloaded using N Capture and a total of 17,151 annotation text tweets were extracted to understand the contextual information of the tweets. The data was analysed on qualitative software tool NVivo 14. Table 1 displays the number of text annotations for each account.

Table 1: Sample of Twitter accounts

No	Account Twitter	References/text annotation	Total Number of Follower	Date of Twitter Launch	Affiliation of Political Party
1	Mardani Ali Sera (@MardaniAliSera) ~ Twitter	2405	503K	March, 2010	PKS
2	Hidayat Nur Wahid (@hnurwahid) ~ Twitter	3379	1.5 M	October 2009	PKS
3	Ganjar Pranowo (@ganjarpranowo) ~ Twitter	2644	3M	January, 2010	PDI-P
4	Budiman Sudjatmiko (IG~ masbud_sudjatmiko) (@budimandjatmiko) ~ Twitter	3413	928K	August 2010	PDI-P
5	FADLI ZON (YouTube~ Fadli Zon Official) (@fadlizon) ~ Twitter	3056	1.8M	October 2009	Gerindra
6	Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono (AHY) (@AgusYudhoyono) ~ Twitter	2254	575K	September 2012	Demokrat

Coding and Coder

The extracted data were analyzed by the software tool to identify several parameters. These parameters are total tweets, frequencies, languages, and issues; they are helpful for understanding interaction and communication between politicians and the public through social media. Next, the selected data were grouped into two main categories: language used (Language) and key message (Content) to explain the communication strategy used by each of the politician's Twitter accounts. The researchers then continued to manually code (or tag) the data using Nvivo 14 to produce the supported findings of each main category. Later, these codes were expanded into a few subcategories to help identify the strategies used for each category, or in this case, theme. Table 2 presents the major themes extracted under the communication strategy theme.

Table 2: Themes identified for communication strategy main theme.

No	Themes Identified	Amount of themes
1	<i>Language</i>	
	Provocative	98
	Leisure	342
	Formal	131
2	<i>Content</i>	
	Social	274
	Politic	205
	Economic	108

After doing manual coding and building the dominant themes, the researchers continued by testing the validity of the data. Data credibility test or data triangulation was carried out in two steps. First, the researchers did it when the data analysis process took place. Second, confirmation or data check is carried out after the data analysis process is complete. The credibility test used theories and experts who have scientific quality in that field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presented the data analysis of this study, which is based on data collection by using content analysis. The data was collected from six Indonesian politicians' Twitter accounts, which have a minimum of 500 thousand followers. They were selected by purposive sampling from a total of 40 Twitter accounts; each of the accounts has more than 100 thousand followers. The data was collected from September 10 to November 20. The first objective of this study is to discover the social media language used by politicians for their communication strategies to attract voters, and the second objective is to categorise the key messages presented by politicians through their social media accounts. The main contribution of this study, which might be the first study conducted that attempts to discover the language used and the key message concerned by the politician during communication with the public via social media.

Research Finding One: Social Media Language Used by Politicians

Based on the data analysis, the language characters can be divided into two themes: formal and informal. Informal language approaches can be divided into two sub-themes: layman's terms and provocatively. Figures 3 and 4 maps the research finding from the content data analysis. All of the six politicians use both languages, formal and informal. Under the informal language, most informants choose leisure or layman language instead of provocative language.

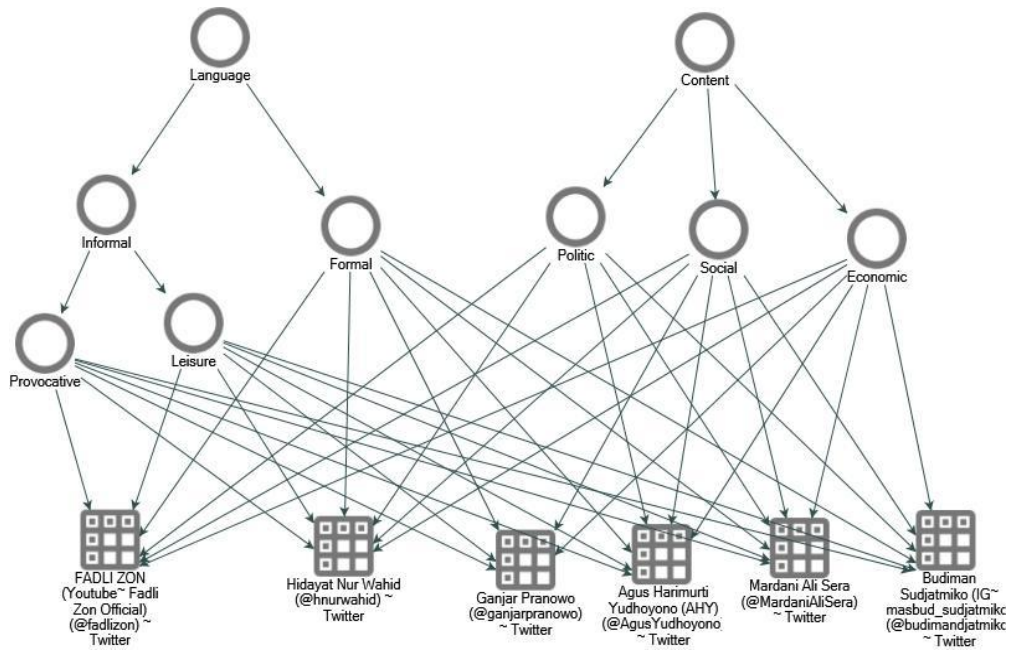


Figure 3: Language used and content in communication strategy

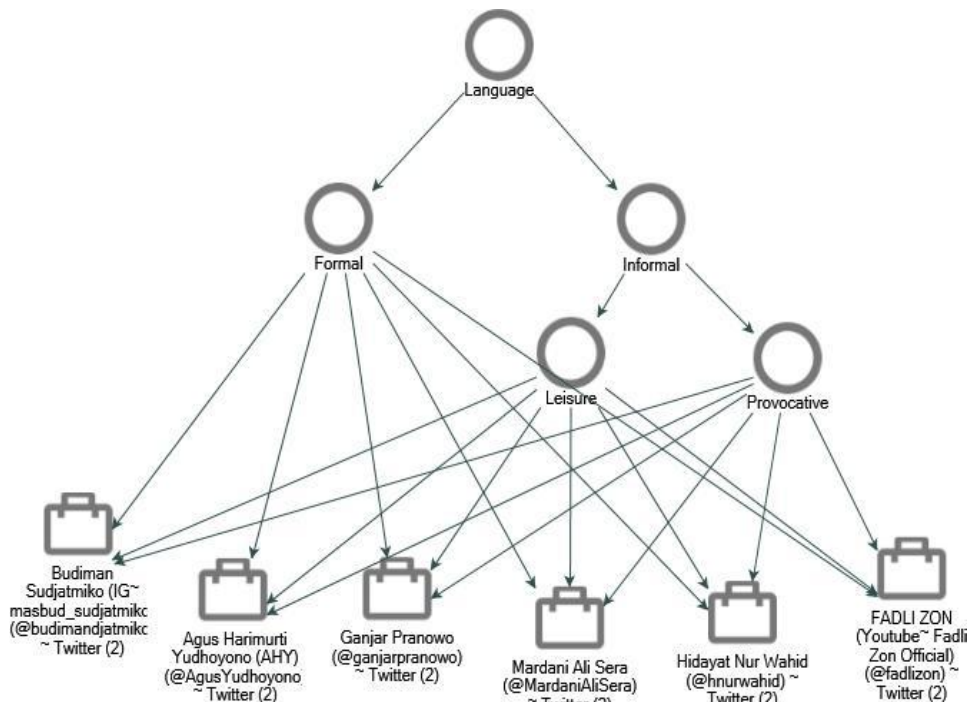


Figure 4: Visualisation of language used in communication strategy

Formal Language

Formal language is indeed used in conveying meaning. Although communication is done through social media, sometimes, the issue included in social media is considered legal and should not use as the standard language. For example, informant (Agus Yudhoyono) wrote on Twitter:

"Yesterday, I inaugurated the entire DPC management structure from 38 districts/cities throughout East Java in Batu City. This is the fifth DPC simultaneous inauguration, previously I inaugurated all DPCs in Central Java, DIY, Banten, and DKI Jakarta. God willing, it will continue to other provinces".
Twitter continues its bias against Palestinian content even with the new CEO, Elon Musk.

This category also mentions by informant (Fadlizon) wrote two statements:

Information ministers from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation were in Istanbul to discuss tackling Islamophobia and disinformation. And Türkiye's Communications Director Fahrettin Altun called on the international community to declare Islamophobia a crime against humanity...

Twitter has suspended the account of Palestine Online for no reason except hiding and silencing the Palestinian narrative, which exposes Israel's occupation of Palestine.

Informal Language

Informal speech is more relaxed and easier to understand. It is used when corresponding verbally or in writing with friends or relatives. It is used in some commercial correspondence as well as in private emails and text messages. Compared to formal language, informal language has a more intimate tone. Informal language comprises two type such as Layman language and provocative.

Layman Language

Layman language is a language that is easy to understand and commonly used in society. Most people like to use this type of language, for example informant (Agus Yudhojono) wrote on Twitter:

Sambel Cumi & Sambel Skipjack is really good, this is guaranteed to be addicted. Buy it directly here, okay...

This follows by informant (Budiman Djatmiko) who wrote two statements on Twitter:

Be cool my dear brothers... the missile that crashed in Poland belonged to Ukraine. Who wants to watch the World Cup, keep going. Don't be disallowed. Who wants to travel2 to Capadoccia-Turkiye, monggo...

Including language (works of human imagination) that are quantum measurable, fractally arranged & can be recorded digitally. Language is a concrete real imagination dr the process of human consciousness...

Provocative

Provocation is the action of a person or individual that causes others to be angry, or emotional, and others so it will become a highly complex problem. In this study, a few informants used informal language and emphasized provocativeness. For example informant (Fadlizon):

It's a hoax & slander. The decision of the Deliberations of the Syuro VII Assembly unequivocally states that @PKSejahtera remain outside the government (opposition) until 2024. In addition, the MCC is currently building communication in small teams to resolve the axis of change with Nasdem and the Democrats.

Followed by informant (Agus Yudhojono):

This is a hoax and slander. The decision of the VII Syuro Council deliberation firmly stated that @PKSejahtera will remain outside the (opposition) government until 2024. Apart from that, PKS is currently intensely building communication in a small team to complete the axis of change with Nasdem and Democrats.

The account owner informant (Mardani Alisera) Twitt two captions:

Good direction. Tp buzzer who has been supporting Mr. @jokowi is actually the one that divides the political parties. Sy personally praised Golkar who always focused on technocracy and PDIP who was strong in discipline, PKB who was pliable, Nasdem who dared to take risks. Let there be healthy competition...

Good move. But the buzzer that has been supporting Pak @jokowi has actually divided political parties. I personally praise Golkar for always focusing on technocracy and PDI-P which is strong in discipline, PKB is flexible, Nasdem is willing to take risks. Let there be healthy competition...

Tweets posted by PDI Perjuangan politicians, which are also provocative statements, tend to be expressed constructively. Indonesia now and in the future must be built collaboratively involving all elements of the nation's strength. As written by the account owner informant (Ganjar Pranowo) in these four tweets:

One of the things that makes many countries in the world amazed by Indonesia is how our country is able to process differences into harmony.

One of the things that has amazed many countries in the world about Indonesia is how our country is able to work the differences into harmony.

The more massive development we do, alhamdulillah, it has a positive impact on farmers. What used to be harvested only 2 times can now be 3 times.

The massive construction of the reservoirs that we are doing, thank God, has a positive impact on farmers. They usually harvest only 2 times a year now it can be 3 times.

The statements “many countries are amazed” and “the massive construction of the reservoirs” can be read as an exemplary achievement of President Jokowi’s administration. When it comes to the issue of the next presidential election (2024), the studied accounts formally expressed the hope that the future presidential election will be carried out by competing in a healthy manner. For example, the account owner informant (Mardani Alisera) writes:

It's nice to see the leaders come together. Good after this there is a visit between Pak SBY & Bu Mega. Kt bs still compete when the same ones sit together. The competition is to build the nation. Kt pray for all healthy blessings always the leaders of the nation...

Happy to see the leaders unite. It’s good that after this there is a meeting between Mr. SBY & Mrs. Mega. Although we are in competition, we can dine at the same table. We are in competition, and we want to build the nation. We pray that everyone is healthy, blessings to the nation’s leaders...

Capres are people who are ready to behave as statesmen. Without any Constitutional Court ruling or verdict, a Capres is moved by his conscience. Still serving as a minister and president should be contrary to the attitude of statesmen. The minister's mandate is heavy.

A presidential candidate is a person who is ready to behave as a statesman. Without a Constitutional Court decision or any decision [from a certain body], a presidential candidate is driven by his conscience. Still serving as minister and doing the candidacy should be contrary to the attitude of a statesman. A ministerial mandate is a heavy one...

Similarly, the informant (Agus Yudhoyono) hopes that the 2024 Presidential Election will change and he wrote:

This morning after the exercise, I read the results of the survey in R&D @hariankompas. Alhamdulillah, @PDemokrat electability rose again from 11.6% to 14%. Solidifying PD in the top 3 position. I read it, this is a manifestation of people's hope for change and improvement.

Followed by informant (fadli zon) said:

Twice expressing his support for Prabowo, Fadli Zon showed off photos with President Jokowi.

Informant (Budiman Sudjatmiko) also mentioned on his Twitter and said:

The most enduring is change.. HRS is ready to face changing times, poles and global supremacy.

In an election battle, you will find both politicians and Political #Manusia on the ballot paper (you just have to look at it you choose for your future, posterity, your sister-sister niece-niece). But not statesmen. They exist as the *tauladan* of the nation...

The results of the study found that it was in line with the literature from previous studies that people preferred to speak informally rather than formally. The use of informal language, users do not feel pressure when writing something on social media. This align with the statement by by (Sajjad et al., 2017). Farhat Sajjad, Mehwish Malghnai and Durdana Khosa (2018) with Mehwish Malghnai and Durdana Khosa (2018) have explained that as language is central to politics, so the political communication that is done on social media primarily revolves around agenda setting techniques. However, formal language is still used according to the appropriateness of the time and topic to be discussed.

Research Finding Two: Key Messages Presented by Politicians Through Their Social Media Accounts

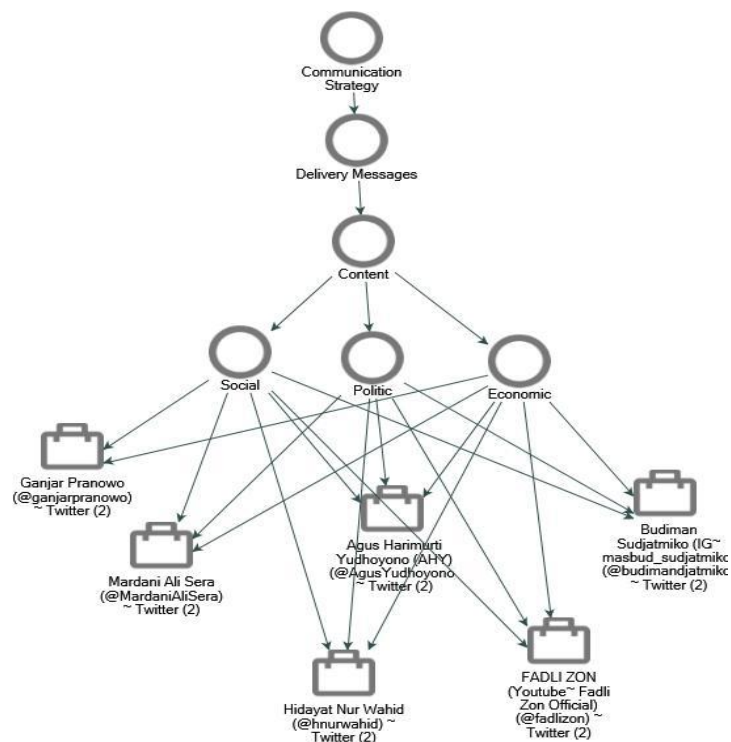


Figure 5: Visualisation of social media content in communication strategy

Based on the data analysis, figure 5 shows that key messages presented by politicians fall into three categories political, economic and social category. Figure 3 provides a mapping of the research finding from content data analysis. Based on the mapping result below, key messages by the politician are most from the aspect of social and economic first and second by the political issue.

Economy

Economic issues are issues that are considered necessary in society. Therefore, this issue is often raised by politicians when discussing it with the public. For example, below are a few statements from Informant (Ganjar Pranowo):

The governor continues to boost investment in his region. Evidently, since his leadership, Central Java's investment has increased compared to the previous Head of Central Java @DPMPTSP Ratna Kawuri: based on his official record, investment realization has increased every year.

This is one of our ways to raise the class of UMKM in Central Java. Not only the government and UMKM actors are moving, but universities and banks also support according to their respective capacities.

Followed by Informant (Budiman Sudjatmiko) wrote:

In 2011, 1 influential figure met me, "Mas nyalon governor yes", I replied, "Thank you. If I were a good governor, only 8 million people would be happy. *Tapi* if my @UUDesa promise is paid off, 130 million people will be happily ever after". @UUDesa that time was not finished.."

Social

Social issues are issues that are often related to the problems that often plague society. Such issues need to be considered by the politician. Social media can be considered a platform for the community to interact. For example, one of the informants (Agus Yudhoyono) informs that:

Thank you, friends Demokrat Kalbar who always cares & is quick to help others. Hopefully, the assistance provided can be helpful for the victims. My greetings to the residents of Ketapang, hopefully, the flood will recede soon all of them are in good health.

Followed by informant (Budiman Djatmiko) wrote:

Ah it seems that I have to chat in ni mas but much very, again indecisive for ad art bumdes with big village finances are currently afraid of misuse of rules, Do not have legal ability...

Politics

Lastly, political issues should be discussed as this is the main agenda of a politician about society. Although political issues were prioritized in past studies, the findings found that two issues, namely economic and social issues, are considered more important. For example, informant (Fadlizon) explains:

Habib Rizieq's latest statement regarding the new novum of the massacre of 6 FPI Warriors at KM 50. The Chief of Police is urged to reveal the existence of CCTV that was allegedly omitted by the Sambo mob...

This also align with statement by informant (MardaniAliSera) said:

Efektivitas pemerintahan bisa terganggu. Tidak etis jika memanfaatkan program kementerian untuk tujuan elektoral.

In a leadership, it always takes a friend who always accompanies. ... Please pray that we will always be united, bringing Democrats forward .. may the Democrats continue to climb and fight alongside the people...

And also the statement from an informant (Budimansujadmiko) said:

If someone has never been recorded consolidating a lot of people u/ ideas with tp suddenly diligently consolidating a lot of people u/ (choosing) himself (without What but lastly Who), he's a politician...

The study's results differed from previous studies in that most stated that a politician would choose a political issue when interacting with the public. In this study, it is considered counterintuitive when the political issue is the last issue choose by the informant.

DISCUSSION

The language used and the content contained in social media are two things that become one unit. The accuracy of the choice of words and the content of the selected topic correlates with the public's response. Content must be attractive (a) to generate interest, desire, and action was originally a marketing concept (Mumtaz, 2019). But now, it has been adopted near all economic, business, social, and political activities (Priyowidodo et al., 2019). Politicians in the digital media age must improvise in taking care of constituents and potential voters (Zhuravskaya et al., 2020). Various social media platforms must be optimized as winning instruments in the five-year political contestation of presidential/vice presidential, legislative, and regional elections (Priyowidodo et al., 2019; Kruikemeier et al., 2018). By posting essential issues on their Twitter accounts, politicians realized that influencing potential Indonesian voters takes work. In addition to the need for the right communication strategy, the choice of what social media platform to use must also be relevant to conditions in the field. According to data from the (KPU, 2023). General Election Commission (2022), the number of voters in the 2024 General Election will be more than 190 million votes. 56.7% live in urban areas, and 43.3% live in rural areas.

Nowadays, most potential voters live more in urban areas; the Twitter platform is relevant to Indonesia's geographical conditions. That fact is also in line with the character of Twitter users based in urban communities. Based on Twitter user data in Indonesia (2022), the number reaches 18.45 million. They are divided into age ranges of 16–24 years (42%), 23–34 years (36%), 35–44 years (18%), 45–54 years (3%), and 55–64 years (1%), where the composition of males (53%) and females (47%). Therefore, Twitter and other social media are beneficial for marketing their political ideas, but they can also be optimized to reach potential voters who have internet access (Tapsell, 2021). The data has explained that most Twitter users are 16-24 years old (42%) and belong to novice voters. This means that if their political choices successfully influence this age group, it will undoubtedly significantly affect the percentage of votes obtained from the Presidential-Vice Presidential candidates carried by their political parties. With limited time and opportunity, politicians from opposition political

parties deliberately play the dominant political issue with provocative language choices. The number of responses and the length of time the topic is discussed is essential to measure public interest in each theme uploaded. This output is different from the tweet by politicians who support the government. They tend to play around with the economic issues, which are directly related to the empowerment of citizens. Furthermore, the choice of informal languages, such as layman language that reflects the preferred orientation of the presidential-vice presidential candidate in the future, must be supported through high public trust. If infrastructure and economic development seem successful, trust in the government is maintained. They are confident that whoever the PDI *Perjuangan* political party carries the candidate will be supported. This finding also in line with the theory of agenda setting and framing, which is that the politician will use Twitter to bring about the national agenda to society and continue to focus on a more focused form of discussion in the community. The mechanisms that make these two theories successful are from using appropriate language.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a political campaign through social media is a series of organised, strategized efforts used to achieve a goal. In a successful social media campaign on politics, the political agenda is not necessarily to be highlighted as the main agenda. The different approaches need to be strategies to put another agenda, such as the social and economic agenda, in talking about political issues. The political issue will not stand alone and needs to be related to other fundamental problems. More action needs to be taken to attract more followers who will follow what we are trying to convey. If we only focus on political issues, only those groups who love the issue will follow us but, if we include economic and social issues, the target group will become broader. However, from the language aspect, the followers of social media accounts comprise community groups of all ages and different academic backgrounds. Therefore, the selection of languages should be more layman language and not academic. A more layman language and informal contexts will make our writing closer and easier for followers to understand.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This completion of this article was supported by Program Kompetisi Kampus Merdeka (PKKM) of The Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education Indonesia. Also, the Department of Communication Science, Petra Christian University, Surabaya as one of the recipients of this grant acknowledges the support of Dr Nik Adzrieman Abd Rahman from the Kuala Lumpur Campus of Universiti Utara Malaysia.

BIODATA

Associate Professor Gatut Priowidodo, Ph.D is a senior lecturer at the Department of Communication Science, Petra Christian University, Surabaya. His main interests include phenomenography studies, political communication, netnography studies and organisational communication. Email: gatpri@petra.ac.id

Associate Professor Dr Nik Adzrieman Abd Rahman is a senior lecturer in University Utara Malaysia based in Kuala Lumpur Campus. He specializes in the study of Media Studies and Communication. Email: adzrieman@uum.edu.my

Jandy E. Luik, Ph.D. is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Science, Petra Christian University, Indonesia. He publishes mainly on media and communication studies, and new media and digital culture. Email: jandyluik@petra.ac.id
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2521-012X>

Dr. Inri Inggrit Indrayani is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Science at Petra Christian University. Her publications focus on Strategic Communication, Political Public Relations and Organisational Communication. Email: inri.inggrit@petra.ac.id

Dr. Ido Prijana Hadi is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Science at Petra Christian University. His publications focus on social media and journalism, qualitative research and radio studies. Email: ido@petra.ac.id

REFERENCES

- Abdulmajeed, M., & El-Ibiary, R. (2020). Analyzing the communicative strategies of Egyptian political influencers: Content and discourse analyses of Twitter accounts. *Communication and Society*, 33(2), 295–311.
- Bast, J. (2021). Politicians, parties, and government representatives on Instagram: A review of research approaches, usage patterns, and effects. *Review of Communication Research*, 9, 193–246. <https://doi.org/10.12840/ISSN.2255-4165.032>
- Casero-Ripollés, A. (2020). Introduction. Political influencers in the digital public sphere. *Communication and Society*, 33(2), 171–173. <https://doi.org/mhj9>
- Casero-Ripollés, A. (2021). Influencers in the political conversation on Twitter: Identifying digital authority with big data. *Sustainability*, 13(5), 2851. <https://doi.org/gr4k69>
- Drahošová, M., & Balco, P. (2017). The analysis of advantages and disadvantages of social media in the European Union. *Procedia Computer Science*, 109, 1005–1009. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2017.05.446>
- Enguix, B. (2017). Protest, market and identity in the LGTB pride celebrations in Spain. *Convergencia*, 24(73), 165–186.
- Fischer, T. S., Kolo, C., & Mothes, C. (2022). Political influencers on YouTube: Business strategies and content characteristics. *Media and Communication*, 10(1), 259–271. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i1.4767>
- Giansante, G. (2015). *Online communication tools. Online political communication: How to use the web to build consensus and boost participation*. Springer.
- Gillin, P. (2009). *Secrets of social media marketing: How to use online conversations and consumer communities to turbo-charge your business*. Quill Driver Books.
- Hakan, I. R. A. K. (2022). The social media use by political parties in the times of crisis: The case of the COVID-19 pandemic period. *Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 10(2), 615–634.
- Jaffery, N. S. N., Annuar, S. N. S., & Raj, J. A. T. (2020). The influence of YouTube advertising on the attitude towards fruits and vegetable consumption among university students in Malaysia. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 36(3), 353–372. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2020-3603-22>
- Kemp, S. (2022, February 15). Digital 2022: Indonesia. *Data Reportal*. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-indonesia>
- Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU). (2023, July 2). DPT pemilu 2024 dalam negeri dan luar negeri, 204,8 juta pemilih. <https://www.kpu.go.id/berita/baca/11702/dpt-pemilu-2024-nasional-2048-juta-pemilih>
- Kruikemeier, S., Gattermann, K., & Vliegenthart, R. (2018). Understanding the dynamics of politicians' visibility in traditional and social media. *Information Society*, 34(4), 215–228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01972243.2018.1463334>
- Lingam, R. A., & Aripin, N. (2017). Comments on fire! classifying flaming comments on YouTube videos in Malaysia. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 33(4), 104–118. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2017-3304-07>
- López Fernández, V. (2022). New media in political campaigns. The case of Madrid regional elections in 2021 on TikTok. *Universitas-XXI, Revista de Ciencias Sociales y Humanas*, 36, 221–241.
- Luik, J. (2020). *Media baru: Sebuah pengantar* [Introduction to New Media]. Kencana Prenada Media: Jakarta.

- Marshall, D., & Redmond, S. (2016). *A companion to celebrity*. John Wiley and Sons.
- Mohamed, S. (2019). Instagram and political storytelling among Malaysian politicians during the 14th general election. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 35(3), 353–371. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2019-3503-21>
- Moss, D., & Warnaby, G. (1998). Communication strategy? Strategy communication? Integrating different perspectives. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 4(3), 131–140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/135272698345807>
- Mumtaz, R. (2019). Awareness and perspectives of social media as a new strategic marketing approach in minor industries; notion grounded on AIDA model. *Journal of Content, Community and Communication*, 10(5), 213–224.
- Muraoka, T., Montgomery, J., Lucas, C., & Tavits, M. (2021). Love and anger in global party politics: Facebook reactions to political party posts in 79 democracies. *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*, 1, 1–38. <https://doi.org/gn5scf>
- Nor, N. H. M., Firdaus, A., & Kaur, S. (2020). Rise of the 5th estate: How online public discourse on najib razak's 1mdb scandal foreshadowed pakatan harapan's win in the 14th general election. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 36(2), 179–195. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2020-3602-11>
- Penney, J. (2018). Young people as political influencers on social media. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Social Media & Society*, SMSociety '18, pp. 355–359. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3217804.3217944>
- Peres-Neto, L. (2022). Journalist-Twitterers as political influencers in Brazil: Narratives and disputes towards a new intermediary model. *Media and Communication*, 10(3), 28–38. <https://doi.org/10.17645/MAC.V10I3.5363>
- Pérez-Curiel, C. (2020). Political influencers/leaders on Twitter. An analysis of the Spanish digital and media agendas in the context of the catalan elections of 21 December 2017. *Kome*, 8(2), 88–108. <https://doi.org/10.17646/KOME.75672.46>
- Pérez-Curiel, C., & Naharro, P. L. (2019). Political influencers. A study of Donald Trump's personal brand on Twitter and its impact on the media and users. *Communication and Society*, 32(1), 57–75. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.32.37815>
- Praet, S., Martens, D., & Van Aelst, P. (2021). Patterns of democracy? Social network analysis of parliamentary Twitter networks in 12 countries. *Online Social Networks and Media*, 24, 100154. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.osnem.2021.100154>
- Priyowidodo, G., Indrayani, I. I., Sari, Y. D., & Gunawan, S. (2019). Digital media technology as an instrument for promotion and political marketing in the era of industrial revolution 4.0. *ACM International Conference Proceeding Series*, 327–331. <https://doi.org/gpz6zg>
- Priyowidodo, G., Wijayanti, C., & Nurvidyarni, T. (2021). Digital-based media organization communication strategy: An ethnomethodology study. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi dan Media*, 25(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.31445/jskm.2021.3272>
- Priyowidodo, G., Inggrit, I. I., Sari, Y. D., & Gunawan, S. (2019). Locality values within determination of regional head selection in Indonesian democratic party of struggle. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 6(6), 262–269. <https://repository.petra.ac.id/18607/>
- Rizaty, M. A. (2022, August 10). Pengguna Twitter di Indonesia capai 18,45 juta pada 2022. *DataIndonesia.id*. <https://dataindonesia.id/internet/detail/pengguna-twitter-di-indonesia-capai-1845-juta-pada-2022>

- Romero-Rodríguez, L. M., & Aguaded, I. (2017). Consumo informativo y competencias digitales de estudiantes de periodismo de Colombia, Perú y Venezuela [Information consumption and digital skills of journalism students in Colombia, Peru and Venezuela]. *Convergencia*, 23(70), 35–57.
- Rovira, G. (2017). *Activismo en red y multitudes conectadas. Comunicación y acción en la era de Internet* [Networked activism and connected crowds. Communication and action in the Internet age]. Icaria Editorial.
- Sajjad, F., Malghnai, M., & Khosa, D. (2017). Language, social media and political identity (re)presentation: A new theoretical framework for the analysis of social media political discourse. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/mhkc>
- Satriadi, Y., Yusuf, S., & Hasan, A. S. (2023). The influence of media exposure on voters' behavior during the Sumbawa 2020 local election (PILKADA). *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 39(1), 425–440. <https://doi.org/mhkd>
- Schmidt, J. H., Hölig, S., Merten, L., & Hasebrink, U. (2017). Nachrichtennutzung und Meinungsbildung in Zeiten sozialer Medien [news usage and opinion formation in times of social media]. *Informatik-Spektrum*, 40(4), 358–361. <https://doi.org/ghd52b>
- Soriano, C. R. R., & Gaw, F. (2022). Platforms, alternative influence, and networked political brokerage on YouTube. *Convergence*, 28(3), 781–803. <https://doi.org/mhkf>
- Suuronen, A., Reinikainen, H., Borchers, N. S., & Strandberg, K. (2021). When social media influencers go political: An exploratory analysis on the emergence of political topics among finnish influencers. *Javnost - The Public*, 29(3), 301-317. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2021.1983367>
- Tapsell, R. (2021). Social media and elections in Southeast Asia: The emergence of subversive, underground campaigning. *Asian Studies Review*, 45(1), 117–134. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2020.1841093>
- Zhuravskaya, E., Petrova, M., & Enikolopov, R. (2020). Political effects of the internet and social media. *Annual Review of Economics*, 12, 415–438.