

Record of Communication and Language Patterns among Social Media Users in Social Media Spaces: Content and Critical Discourse Analysis on Facebook Posts by Inside Lombok

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Abstract

This study examines communication patterns and linguistic features used by social media users responding to three posts on the official Facebook account Inside Lombok, representing themes of public policy, local politics, and criminal law. Employing qualitative methods through content analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA), fifteen comments (five per theme) were coded according to communication patterns, language features, and sentiment. The findings indicate a predominance of negative sentiment in political and criminal topics, whereas public policy topics elicited more diverse responses, including constructive criticism and policy recommendations. The study contributes to the understanding of how local digital spaces function as arenas for contesting meaning, legitimacy, and public demands within digital political communication frameworks (Fairclough, 2021; van Dijk, 2020).

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1. INTRODUCTION

The transformation of public communication due to the rise of social media has positioned digital platforms as crucial spaces for shaping opinion and collective action. In the local context, media accounts such as Inside Lombok play dual roles: disseminating local information while serving as arenas of public debate. Analyzing public comments on selected posts reveals patterns of interaction, linguistic strategies, and sentiments that reflect power relations, expectations, and frustrations among citizens (Castells, 2020).

Within the framework of digital political communication, social media serves not only as a channel for news distribution but also as a 'discursive space' where the public negotiates meaning and voices criticism (Habermas, 2020). This is evident in how netizens from areas such as North Lombok respond to political, public policy, and criminal law issues through social media commentary. These responses often reflect underlying power relations between citizens, political actors, and law enforcement, as well as symbolic resistance to authority.

From a critical discourse analysis perspective, comments on social media can be interpreted as ideologically charged discourse rather than neutral linguistic expressions (Fairclough, 2021; van Dijk, 2021). Features such as sarcasm, metaphor, and code-switching serve as communicative strategies that express critique or social positioning. For instance, criticisms of governmental policy are often conveyed through humor or irony to mitigate conflict while maintaining protest messages.

In Lombok's context, online media such as Inside Lombok function as bridges connecting global issues with local realities. With over 167,000 active followers on Facebook, the account provides a representative record of public opinion in West Nusa Tenggara. This fact demonstrates

that social media-based content analysis can provide valuable insights into local aspirations, communication styles, and digital linguistic dynamics.

Furthermore, social media not only influences how citizens receive information but also shapes patterns of political and social participation. Recent research highlights that digital discourse significantly affects governmental legitimacy, particularly when public criticism gains widespread resonance (Mihailidis & Viotty, 2022; Syaefudin, 2023). Thus, analyzing communication and language patterns on Inside Lombok contributes to understanding digital political communication practices at the local level.

1.1.Literature Review

1.1.1 Communication Patterns

Recent studies in digital communication emphasize the dual role of social media in expanding participatory access while simultaneously contributing to information fragmentation and polarization (Boulianne, 2024). The critical discourse analysis approach enables the interpretation of social media comments as social practices imbued with ideology and power relations (Kopf, 2025). The concept of the digital public sphere also revisits Habermas's deliberative ideals, noting both their limitations and potentials for fostering inclusive communication (Friedland, 2023; Schlesinger, 2024).

In addition to these perspectives, social media platforms are increasingly seen as contested spaces where communicative practices reflect broader societal tensions and power asymmetries (Papacharissi, 2015). The affective dimension of digital discourse — the role of emotions in shaping communication patterns — has also gained prominence, with scholars arguing that emotional expression, particularly outrage and empathy, significantly influences user engagement and polarization (Lüders et al., 2022; Wodak, 2021).

Moreover, the algorithmic structuring of communication on platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok plays a decisive role in shaping what content is visible, thereby reinforcing echo chambers and filter bubbles (Pariser, 2011; Cinelli et al., 2021). These algorithmic dynamics, while enhancing personalization, often restrict exposure to diverse viewpoints, undermining the deliberative potential of online public spheres (Sunstein, 2018).

Finally, recent ethnographic and computational studies suggest that digital communication is increasingly hybrid — combining interpersonal, mass, and networked forms — which complicates traditional distinctions between public and private discourse (Baym, 2020; Chadwick, 2017). This hybridity requires new analytical frameworks to understand how individuals navigate overlapping communicative contexts and how meaning is negotiated within digitally-mediated interactions.

1.1.2 Language Patterns

Linguistic patterns in digital communication reveal how users construct meaning through word choice, rhetorical style, and sentence structure to express opinions, criticism, or emotions. Bansal et al. (2020) argue that online linguistic forms not only facilitate self-expression but also function as strategies for identity construction and ideological positioning. Phenomena such as code-switching, particularly prevalent in bilingual societies like Indonesia, highlight socio-cultural closeness and local identity, especially when local terms such as Sasak expressions appear in discourse.

Irony, sarcasm, and humor often act as rhetorical devices for indirect critique. Sharma (2022) and Chiu et al. (2024) note that sarcasm serves as a counter-discourse combining irony and frustration while avoiding overt confrontation. However, aggressive language or hate speech also emerges in politically charged discussions (Matamoros-Fernández & Farkas, 2021; Ghenai, 2025), reflecting tensions between expressive freedom and ethical responsibility in digital spaces.

1.1.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) explores how language constructs and reproduces power, ideology, and inequality. Fairclough (1995, 2021) asserts that linguistic practices are inherently linked to social and political structures, and thus discourses in media reflect broader societal dynamics. Van Dijk (2006, 2020) complements this with a socio-cognitive perspective, arguing that ideologies are embedded in shared knowledge structures. Within digital environments, users interact based on collectively mediated understandings of politics, law, and governance.

Recent scholars extend CDA into multimodal digital discourse. Machin and Mayr (2021) highlight the integration of visual symbols, emojis, and textual elements that together form multimodal discourse. Ahmad and Rahman (2023) demonstrate how online interactions can act as resistance arenas where netizens employ irony or alternative narratives to challenge dominant ideologies.

1.1.4 Social Media as a Digital Public Sphere

Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram have evolved into vital spaces for interaction, information sharing, and identity negotiation. Boyd and Ellison (2020) define social media as networked systems enabling participatory content creation and relational connections. Castells (2020) characterizes this as a 'networked society,' where individuals generate and disseminate meaning horizontally rather than hierarchically. In local contexts such as Lombok, Inside Lombok mediates between national narratives and community-level issues, serving as a digital public sphere for deliberation (Habermas, 2020; Fuchs, 2021).

The participatory nature of social media allows for the reconfiguration of power relations in communication, granting users the agency to construct and perform identities, challenge dominant discourses, and engage in political expression (Jenkins et al., 2016; Carpentier, 2011).

Moreover, social media is deeply embedded in socio-cultural contexts, with local digital ecologies reflecting specific norms, values, and communicative traditions (Miller et al., 2016). In regions like Lombok, the hybridization of global platforms with local issues enables new forms of "global" communication, where users navigate both international trends and indigenous knowledge systems (Appadurai, 1996; Lim, 2013). Platforms such as Inside Lombok not only amplify local voices but also recontextualize national or global discourses through a community-specific lens.

Additionally, critical media scholars highlight that despite their participatory potential, social media platforms often reproduce structural inequalities. Access, visibility, and influence remain uneven, shaped by socio-economic status, digital literacy, and platform politics (van Dijck et al., 2018; Noble, 2018). These dynamics are particularly relevant in peripheral regions, where local media may lack institutional support but gain relevance through grassroots engagement and community trust.

Thus, communication patterns on social media are not merely technical or functional; they are deeply ideological and context-dependent, reflecting the intersection of technology, culture, and power.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative design with purposive sampling, selecting three Facebook posts (one per theme) from the Inside Lombok account and extracting five relevant comments from each post, totaling fifteen comments. The coding instrument includes variables such as Comment ID, Theme, Comment Excerpt, Communication Pattern, Language Pattern, Sentiment, and Analytical Notes.

From each post, five comments were selected that were considered the most representative and possessed high analytical value (a total of 15 comments). The selection was based on the clarity of opinions, the richness of linguistic expression, and their potential for critical analysis within a

social context. These variables were designed to reveal the discourse structure and the underlying social meanings behind the linguistic forms used by the users. The analysis process was conducted manually to maintain the researcher's interpretive sensitivity to the linguistic and social contexts of each comment.

Data were manually analyzed using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach to identify rhetorical strategies, ideological representations, and underlying social practices.

Flow Chart of Research Methodology

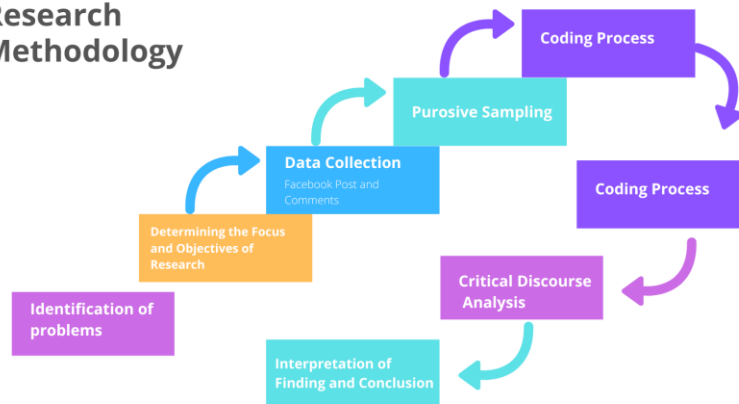


Figure 1 Flow Chart of Research Methodology

According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research focuses on understanding the meaning behind social phenomena through interpretation rather than measurement. This approach enables researchers to uncover how digital citizens construct discourse that reflects social relationships, ideologies, and emotional expressions. The CDA framework draws from Fairclough's (1995) model and van Dijk's (1998) socio-cognitive approach, emphasizing the interplay between language, cognition, and social structure.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The fifteen coded comments were categorized according to three main themes: public policy, news title: *Majukan Pelayanan Publik, Iqbal Minta ASN Jangan Kejar Sertifikat*, where the authors are giving ID comments (K-PUB), local politics, news title: *PPPK Paruh Waktu di NTB Akan digaji Sesuai UMP*, with ID Comment (P-LOK), and criminal law, news title: *Video Report, Warga Pemepek Protes Pemilihan Kadus*, ID Comments (HKRM). The sentiment analysis revealed distinct emotional and ideological tendencies within each theme. Public policy discussions exhibited mixed sentiments—combining appreciation, skepticism, and constructive suggestions. Political topics elicited strong negative emotions and distrust toward institutional legitimacy. Criminal law issues generated the highest emotional intensity and skepticism toward law enforcement credibility.

No	ID Comments	Theme	Contents of Comment Isi (Short Quotes)	Communications Pattern	Language Pattern	Sentiments	Notes
1	K-PUB-1	Public Policy	"Omon omon doing"	Brief criticism	Sarcastic, informal	Negative	Undermines the governor's statement
2	K-PUB-2	Public Policy	<i>Salam dri sy yg dungu birokrasi...</i>	Question-criticism	Rhetorical, mixed formal	Mixed	Sharp criticism delivered through a

			<i>sekedar tanya</i>		- informal		provocative question
3	K-PUB-3	Public Policy	<i>Sangat bagus. ini adalah motifasi... Janji2 para pejabat kepada rakyat</i>	Appreciation + Skepticism	Semi-formal	Mixed	Expresses appreciation but skeptical about realization
4	K-PUB-4	Public Policy	<i>Pak gubernur... tolong diperhatikan. .. guru PAUD... disetarakan</i>	Constructive suggestion	Formal and lengthy	Positive	Concrete request related to PAUD teachers' welfare
5	K-PUB-5	Public Policy	<i>Saya setuju banget sama miq Gub... ASN jauh dari harapan masyarakat</i>	Support + Criticism	Semi-formal	mixed	Supports the message but criticizes its implementation
6	P-LOK-1	Local Politic	<i>Lapor, calon kadus yang dipilih pansel dan ditolak oleh warga... demo besar-besaran</i>	Report/Protest	Semi-formal, descriptive	Negative	Report of rejection and demonstration
7	P-LOK-2	Politik Lokal	<i>90% warga menolak anak mantan Kadus jadi Kadus kbs hasil pilihan pansel</i>	Suspicion/Protest	Emotional-rhetorical	Negative	Legitimacy issue Regarding appointment
8	P-LOK-3	Politik Lokal	<i>Pansel di pilkadus kadang kadang hanya formalitas saja</i>	Institutional criticism	Sarcastic	Negative	Implies dishonesty in the process
9	P-LOK-4	Politik Lokal	<i>Salfok dengan teriakan "ndeq arak ilaqn"</i>	Light/reactive comment	Local-informal	Neutral	Light remark amid the heated issue

10	P-LOK-5	Politik Lokal	<i>Kades yang punya aturan semau maunya dalam pengangkatan kadus</i>	Direct criticism	Informal	Negative	Accusation against the village head
11	H-KRM-1	Hukum & Kriminal	<i>yang punya aturan semau maunya dalam pengangkatan kadus</i>	Off-topic (wrong theme)	Informal	Negative	Irrelevant comment to the murder post
12	H-KRM-2	Hukum & Kriminal	<i>Rekontruksiny gk sah klau msih transparan... polisi gk tegas sama tersangka</i>	Strong law criticism	Emotional-informal	Negative	Doubts the legitimacy
13	H-KRM-3	Hukum & Kriminal	<i>Rekontruksiny gk sah... (duplikat)</i>	Strong law criticism (duplicate)	Emotional-informal	Negative	Duplicate comment reinforcing public sentiment
14	H-KRM-4	Hukum & Kriminal	<i>Geram tulen masyarakat lombok... mun aparat melakukan kesalahn...</i>	Expression of anger/social protest	Local + Emotional	Negative	Highly emotional tone and accusation
15	H-KRM-5	Hukum & Kriminal	<i>Giliran kasus yg ini gk ad versi penyidik, cuma ad 1 versi... Logika saja gk mungkin dia sendiri</i>	Analytical suspicion	Semi-formal	Negative	Shows distrust toward the official

Tabel 1: Coding of the Data

The results indicate three major communication patterns. First, discussions of public policy reflect active engagement and civic aspirations, where citizens not only critique but also propose alternative solutions. Second, local political discourse reveals structural distrust toward bureaucratic mechanisms, illustrating the role of digital media in enabling micro-level resistance and horizontal accountability (Boulianne, 2024). Third, the criminal law theme demonstrates heightened emotional expression and distrust toward legal institutions, echoing patterns of symbolic resistance and discursive activism found in other studies (Frontiers, 2025; Reuters, 2025).

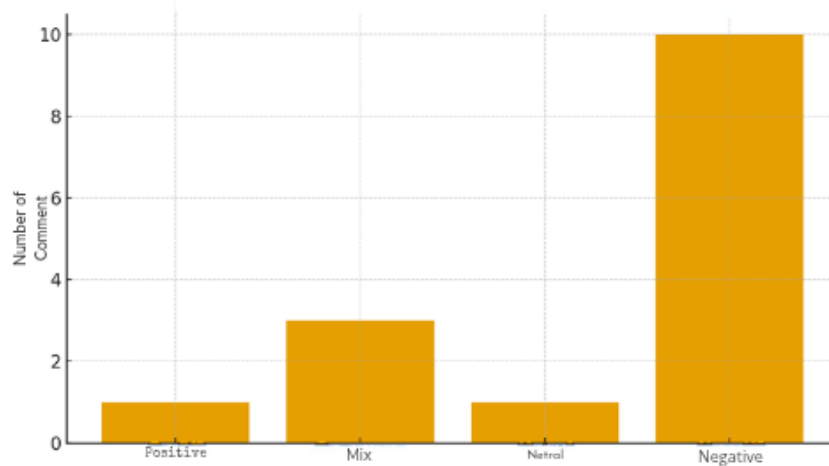


Figure 2. Distribution of Sentiments

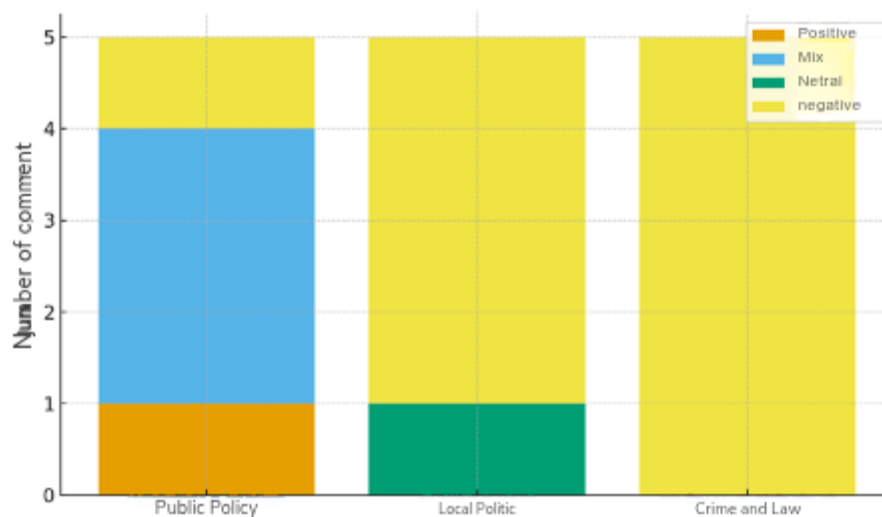


Figure 3. Sentiments Distribution per theme

These findings support prior studies emphasizing the ambivalence of digital deliberation, where rational argumentation coexists with emotional expression (Friedland, 2023; Schlesinger, 2024). Although the Facebook comment section provides an avenue for civic participation, linguistic styles dominated by sarcasm and emotive rhetoric challenge the realization of Habermas's ideal deliberative conditions. In this sense, Inside Lombok's discourse represents both empowerment and fragmentation within the digital public sphere.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study reveals that the communication and linguistic patterns of Inside Lombok's Facebook users illustrate how citizens negotiate meaning, power, and identity within local digital spaces. Netizens' expressions of disappointment, demands, and aspirations form a collective record of civic sentiment in the region. To enhance the quality of public discourse, this study recommends that:

- Local governments and media institutions improve transparency and interactive dialogue to align with citizens' expectations.
- Local media should provide moderated spaces for evidence-based discussion to reduce polarization and misinformation.

- c) Future research should adopt larger datasets and mixed-method designs to examine generalizability and comparative regional discourse patterns.

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