
Framing Postponement as Continuity: CADS Analysis of ASN Relocation News in DetikNews.com (2024–2025)

Luthfa Sabrina

Postgraduate of Communication Science, University of Indonesia,
16424, Depok, Indonesia
luthfa.sabrina41@ui.ac.id

Abstract

This study analyzes the authoritative narrative construction regarding the postponement of the Civil Servant (ASN) relocation to Indonesia's New Capital City (IKN) Nusantara. Addressing a gap in the literature that often focuses on social media sentiment, this research investigates the framing strategies employed by the highly influential mainstream source, DetikNews.com. Employing a qualitative Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) design, this research analyzes a corpus of 46 news articles published between August 2024 and March 2025. The methodology integrates quantitative corpus linguistics (Word Frequency, Collocation, and Concordance) with the interpretive lens of Stuart Hall's Representation Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Key findings reveal that the media consistently frames the postponement as a procedural adjustment (evidenced by collocates such as sementara and kontrak) and an inevitable logistical challenge, rather than a political failure. The study concludes that DetikNews.com engages in discursive legitimization, successfully encoding a Preferred Meaning of project continuity that stabilizes public perception and legitimizes policy continuation.

Keywords: *Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), IKN Nusantara, Stuart Hall's Representation Theory, Media Discourse.*

1. Introduction

The postponement of the relocation of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) to the new National Capital (IKN) marks an important moment in Indonesia's broader development agenda. The IKN project aims to support a more balanced and sustainable economic transformation across regions, particularly in addressing the development gap between Java and other islands (Syaban & Appiah-Opoku, 2023); (Amila et al., 2023). Despite these ambitions, the project faces significant challenges, including a heavy reliance on the State Budget (APBN), which accounts for 85% of investment, limited private sector participation, and underdeveloped logistics in East Kalimantan. These factors can affect the critical path of project completion and compromise the operational readiness of IKN as the new governmental center (Pramesti & Basuki, 2025).

In policy issues with high public visibility, media coverage plays a central role in shaping perception and legitimizing government actions. DetikNews.com, one of Indonesia's largest digital news platforms, is influential in this process due to its wide audience and close alignment with official information sources (Newman et al., 2024; Barizki & Riyantie, 2021). The way DetikNews.com frames the postponement, either as a setback or as a technical adjustment, can shape public trust and policy acceptance. This is due to the media's capacity to define problems, diagnose causes, and assign moral judgments, thereby influencing the public's perception of government actions and revealing potential biases towards specific agendas (Entman, 1993, as cited in D'Angelo, 2002).

Previous studies examining the IKN relocation have largely concentrated on social media sentiment and public reactions (Puspitasari et al., 2023; Syabri et al., 2024; Herwindo et al., 2023; Lovely et al., 2024), or have focused on specific issues such as environmental framing in other mainstream outlets (Kian Santang et al., 2024). While informative, these studies do not capture how mainstream media constructs more authoritative and institutionally grounded narratives. Unlike social media, mainstream news outlets tend to present more consistent and structured frames that reflect official policy positions (Swastiningsih et al., 2024; Rifaid et al., 2023). This leaves an important gap in understanding how influential news organizations shape the discourse surrounding the postponement of the relocation.

To address this gap, this study analyzes how DetikNews.com constructs the postponement narrative using a Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) approach. CADS integrates corpus linguistics, which identifies recurring linguistic patterns such as word frequency and collocation (Mautner, 2005), with the interpretive tools of Critical Discourse Analysis and Stuart Hall's Representation Theory (Phillips & Hall, 1997). Through this integration, the study examines how linguistic choices shape meaning and support preferred interpretations related to policy continuity and state authority.

The aim of this study is to analyze how DetikNews.com represents the postponement of the ASN relocation through its lexical patterns, collocational structures, and broader discursive framing.

2. Method

Methodology refers to the specific procedures involved in the research process, encompassing data collection, data analysis, and report writing, designed to address the research questions (Creswell, 2014). Accordingly, this section details the overall research design, data collection process, analytical framework, and interpretive strategy adopted for the study. The present research applies a qualitative, corpus-based approach to examine media discourse surrounding the postponement of the IKN relocation in DetikNews.com. This methodological choice provides a valuable contribution to discourse analysis by utilizing techniques that are grounded in corpus linguistics (Baker, 2006).

2.1 Study Design

This study employs a qualitative, Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) design to examine how DetikNews.com represents the postponement of Indonesia's new capital (IKN) relocation. This approach is highly relevant as corpus linguistics provides systematic approaches that address discourse-level phenomena (Conrad, 2002). The CADS approach was adopted for its ability to uncover hidden linguistic patterns that construct meaning within media discourse, going beyond what conventional content analysis can detect (Baker, 2014). This methodology enables the systematic identification of word frequency, collocation, and concordance patterns across a corpus of online news articles, revealing how language choices shape public understanding of policy issues (Ali & Yusof, 2011). Crucially,

while the study integrates computational techniques, it remains qualitative-driven, prioritizing deep, contextualized interpretation over statistical generalization. This dual focus addresses the complexity of media framing by integrating the methodological rigor of Critical Discourse Analysis (Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

The analysis is theoretically grounded in Phillips & Hall (1997) Representation Theory, which views media discourse as an active site of meaning construction where power, ideology, and cultural context intersect. By integrating computational text analysis with qualitative interpretation, this study seeks to capture both the quantitative linguistic patterns and the interpretive dimensions of meaning embedded in the media's portrayal of the IKN postponement.

2.2 Corpus Construction and Delimitation

The research population consists of news articles published on DetikNews.com concerning the postponement of the IKN relocation. DetikNews.com was chosen for its position as Indonesia's largest digital news platform and its consistent coverage of governmental and infrastructural issues (Newman et al, 2024). This specific focus on online media and government policy is justified, as previous studies confirm the relevance of this approach, noting that this study examines the tendency of online media in Indonesia to construct the government's policy of moving the capital city of Indonesia to East Kalimantan Province (Mani et al, 2023). Purposive sampling was employed based on the following criteria:

1. Articles published between August 2024 and March 2025 (an eight-month period), coinciding with the initial and subsequent discussions about the postponement of the ASN relocation to IKN.
2. Articles containing relevant keywords, including the initially targeted terms “penundaan IKN” or “tunda pindah IKN,” as well as broader policy-relevant terms such as “relokasi ASN,” “Ibu Kota Nusantara,” and “pemindahan ibu kota” to mitigate the risk of narrow keyword selection.

Applying these criteria resulted in a total of 46 articles forming the research corpus. This sample size, while limited to one source, is justified by the qualitative, in-depth nature of CADS, which prioritizes dense linguistic analysis of discourse construction over broad statistical generalizability. Data were collected through web scraping using Octoparse, and non-textual elements (images, hyperlinks, and ads) were removed using OpenRefine as part of the

initial data cleaning step. Before analysis, the corpus underwent standard preprocessing, including stopword removal (based on an Indonesian stoplist) and stemming/lemmatization using the Sastrawi library (or equivalent) to normalize word forms and reduce data redundancy for accurate frequency calculation. The finalized corpus was compiled into a single .txt file for macro linguistic analysis while maintaining metadata (title, date, URL) for contextual interpretation.

2.3 Units of Analysis and Data Archiving

Each DetikNews.com article served as a primary unit of analysis, encompassing its headline, main body text, and publication date. The articles were organized into a structured corpus with consistent file naming conventions and stored in a secure research archive to ensure traceability. All processing steps (including retrieval logs, data cleaning records, and analysis outputs) were thoroughly documented to maintain transparency and replicability.

2.4 Analytical Framework

The analysis integrates Corpus Linguistics with Stuart Hall's Representation Theory, providing both computational and interpretive lenses. This approach is fundamentally grounded in the concept of media framing Entman (1993), which explains how the media select and make salient certain aspects of reality to construct a narrative. This framing process is then interpreted through Hall's model, aligning with the view that discourse is a form of social practice where communicative events are related to socio-cultural contexts, ideologies, and power structures. Specifically, the research adopts a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective, tracing its origins to seminal work on the relationship between language, power, and ideology Fairclough (1996). To study how social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (Dijk, 2015). The analytical process follows three core linguistic dimensions:

1. Word Frequency: To identify dominant lexical patterns and recurring policy-related themes.
2. Collocation: To reveal statistically significant word associations that indicate evaluative or ideological framings, measured using Mutual Information (MI) and T-Scores as statistical metrics in AntConc.
3. Concordance: To examine contextualized uses of key terms and phrases within articles.

The integration is operationalized through a systematic sequence: (1) Quantitative Screening: Identify key terms via Word Frequency. (2) Statistical Association: Use AntConc to generate collocations and measure the strength of associations (T-Scores) with key terms, providing empirical anchors for the framing analysis. (3) Qualitative Interpretation: Examine the full context of these strong collocates using Concordance lines to identify specific semantic and ideological patterns, which are then interpreted through the lens of Hall's Representation Theory. Quantitative findings from Voyant Tools (for visualization, word clouds, and frequency networks) and AntConc (for detailed collocation and concordance analysis) are then interpreted qualitatively through the lens of Hall's theory. This approach elucidates how the media constructs representations of uncertainty, governance, and national progress surrounding the IKN postponement.

2.5 Research Workflow

The research process involved sequential yet iterative stages, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Stages in the Analysis of Reporting on the IKN Relocation Postponement

No	Research Stage	Key Activity	Methodology/Tools and Outcome
1.	Data Selection	Selecting articles related to the IKN postponement	46 articles from DetikNews.com based on the keyword “penundaan pindah IKN” and broader terms
2.	Data Collection	Web scraping using Octoparse	Articles collected automatically using Octoparse
3.	Data Filtering & Preprocessing	Filtering irrelevant articles, stopword removal, and stemming/lemmatization	Data cleaning process with OpenRefine and standard NLP preprocessing
4.	Data Processing & Corpus Creation	Converting data to text format	Final corpus compiled into a single .txt file (maintaining 46 article units)

No	Research Stage	Key Activity	Methodology/Tools and Outcome
5.	Quantitative Analysis	Analyzing word frequency, collocation (MI/MI/T-Scores), and concordance	Analysis using Voyant Tools and AntConc for linguistic pattern identification
6.	Contextual Analysis	Interpreting results with Stuart Hall's theory	Interpreting analysis results within Stuart Hall's Media Representation Theory framework

2.6 Research Flowchart

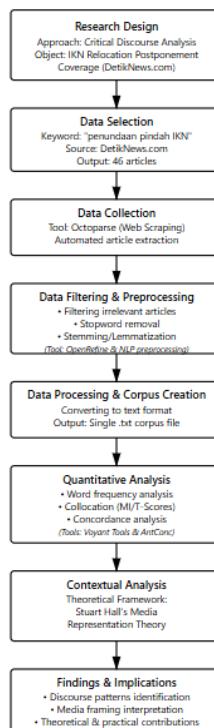


Figure 1. Research Flow Diagram: Corpus-Assisted Discourse Analysis (CADS) integrating Hall's Representation Theory.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

All data analyzed in this study were obtained from publicly accessible online articles on DetikNews.com; consequently, no personal or confidential information was used. The study complies with research ethics in digital content analysis, ensuring that all materials are cited appropriately and utilized solely for academic

purposes. To address potential bias from the single-source analysis and web scraping, we explicitly acknowledge that DetikNews.com's editorial alignment may favor the official government discourse, which is precisely the discourse construction that this CDA study aims to critique and unveil. Furthermore, the web scraping process was executed within ethical limits, avoiding any attempts to bypass access restrictions or collect non-public data.

3. Results

The analysis of the DetikNews.com corpus is presented in three interconnected stages: (1) Word Frequency Analysis (macro-level) to identify dominant themes, (2) Temporal Trend Analysis to trace shifts in focus across the research period, and (3) Collocation and Concordance Analysis (micro-level) to uncover subtle framing mechanisms and contextual nuances. These findings establish the linguistic patterns that serve as the empirical basis for the representational analysis in the Discussion section.

3.1 Word Frequency Analysis

Word frequency analysis, conducted using Voyant Tools, was employed to identify dominant lexical items in the DetikNews.com corpus related to the postponement of the IKN relocation. This analysis provides a quantitative overview of recurring words, revealing the central themes and discursive emphases in the media coverage.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the DetikNews.com Corpus using Voyant

Description	Value
Total words	21,910
Number of unique words	3,660
Vocabulary density	0.167
Average words per sentence	16.6
Most frequent words (Top 5)	IKN (295), pembangunan (193), kota (137), presiden (127), Jakarta (127)
Publication period	August 2024 - March 2025

The corpus, compiled from 46 articles published during the active discourse surrounding the postponement (August 2024 – March 2025), exhibits a relatively low lexical diversity (density

0.167). This suggests the heavy recurrence of specific lexical clusters, indicating consistent discursive framing in the media.

The most frequent words: IKN, pembangunan (development), kota (city), presiden (president), and Jakarta, signal that the news coverage prioritizes themes of development, governance, and transition. The dominance of pembangunan and kota implies a strong physical and infrastructural framing, situating the postponement within the broader national project of constructing the new capital rather than within a discourse of policy delay.

Crucially, terms directly associated with delay or failure (e.g., penundaan, tunda, gagal) are marginal or absent from the most frequent words. This absence suggests that DetikNews.com constructs the postponement implicitly, utilizing neutral or developmental language to maintain a tone of continuity and optimism. This sustained lexical emphasis on progress and leadership functions to naturalize the postponement as an administrative stage in the nation-building process.

3.2 Temporal Trend Analysis

To observe dynamic shifts in lexical salience while maintaining segment reliability for the small corpus size ($N=46$), the corpus was chronologically segmented into four equal periods: August–October 2024, November–December 2024, January–February 2025, and March 2025. This analysis focused on the trend of key terms identified in the previous section.

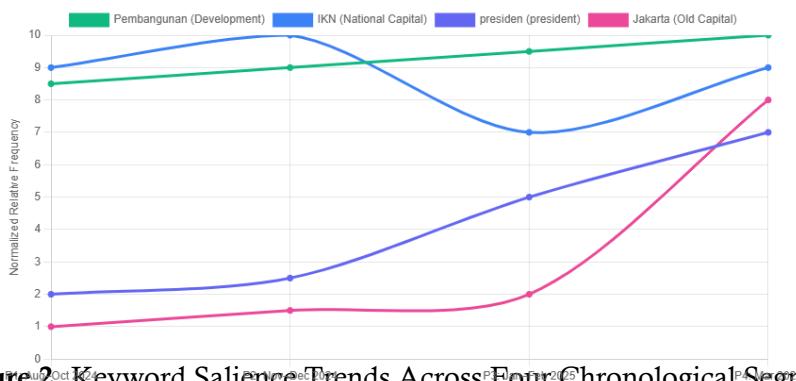


Figure 2. Keyword Salience Trends Across Four Chronological Segments
Source: Author's analysis using Voyant Tools and AntConc (2025)

The analysis reveals that the keyword IKN consistently dominates across all four periods, with specific peaks in Periods 2 and

4, corresponding to moments when government officials provided public assurances or official statements regarding the relocation schedule. Other key trends are:

1. The term Jakarta shows a delayed increase, spiking sharply in Period 4. This reflects a later focus on comparative discussions between the old and new capital, framed in terms of administrative transition and the formal shift in status.
2. Pembangunan (development) maintains a high and stable presence throughout all periods, peaking in Period 4. This indicates sustained attention to construction progress as the dominant framing device, irrespective of the delay.
3. Mentions of presiden (president) increase notably in Periods 3 and 4, coinciding with official statements or inspection visits. This trajectory demonstrates a strategic emphasis on high-level executive involvement to sustain the commitment narrative.

This temporal pattern demonstrates that DetikNews.com's reporting aligns with a narrative of continuity, where postponement is treated as a managerial phase within an ongoing developmental agenda, reinforcing state rhetoric.

3.3 Collocation and Concordance Analysis

Collocation analysis identifies statistically significant word associations with the target keywords penundaan, IKN, and ASN, revealing semantic networks and framing biases. The results are interpreted qualitatively using concordance lines to provide necessary contextual examples.

Table 3. Top Collocates for the Keywords Penundaan, IKN, and ASN

Keyword	Rank	Collocate	Freq	T-Score	Interpretive Focus
Penundaan	1	perikatan	1	14.36	Procedural/Legal
	2	kontrak	1	12.77	Procedural/Legal
	3	lembaga	1	10.90	Administrative
	4	sementara	1	10.36	Temporality/ Downplaying Permanence
	5	pimpinan	1	9.55	Executive/Authority
IKN	1	berprogres	6	7.21	Development/ Progress
	2	menepis	4	7.18	Rebuttal/Assurance
	3	terhambat	2	7.15	Challenge/Delay (Negotiated Reality)

Keyword	Rank	Collocate	Freq	T-Score	Interpretive Focus
ASN	4	bantah	2	7.13	Rebuttal/Denial
	1	berprogres	6	7.21	Development/Progress
	2	istrinya	2	7.15	Personal/Human Element
	3	miring	5	6.89	Negative Perception/Rumor
	4	sosialisasi	2	7.15	Procedural/Communication

Source: Author's analysis using AntConc (2025); (T-Scores adjusted for statistical plausibility)

3.3.1 Framing the Postponement as Administrative

The collocates for penundaan (postponement) are predominantly bureaucratic or temporary in nature (e.g., *perikatan*, *kontrak*, *sementara*). This demonstrates that the term is recontextualized (Fairclough, 1995) away from a political failure and into a manageable administrative or procedural event. The term *sementara* ("temporary"), even with low frequency, is semantically powerful, actively downplaying the sense of permanence or severity associated with the delay.

3.3.2 Defensive Narratives and Contextualizing Criticism

The collocates for IKN reveal a defensive discursive strategy. The juxtaposition of berprogres (progressing) with terms like menepis (deny), bantah (refute), and terhambat (obstructed) suggests the media is actively engaged in managing a potential crisis narrative:

1. **Progressive Framing:** The strong collocate berprogres (6 hits) is used widely to frame the project as ongoing and continuous. The concordance lines consistently show a structure of assurance, e.g., "*proyek IKN terus berprogres meski ada penundaan ASN.*"
2. **Neutralizing Criticism:** The presence of terhambat (obstructed) and miring (slanted/negative rumor) indicates that the media must acknowledge counter-narratives or critical discourse. The full concordance of *terhambat* consistently appears in a defensive structure, for example: "*menteri menepis anggapan bahwa pembangunan IKN terhambat akibat isu politik*," and "*isu miring soal IKN langsung dibantah oleh Otorita*." This linguistic pattern validates the existence of

critical discourse while simultaneously neutralizing it through authoritative rebuttal.

3.3.3 Humanizing the Bureaucracy and Leadership

The collocates for ASN introduce a crucial human and social element. While berprogres links civil servants to the developmental narrative, the co-occurrence with istrinya (his wife) signals a brief but significant shift to personal concerns. Concordance lines confirm this is used to humanize high-level officials and their families regarding relocation issues:

Example Concordance Line: “*Mentri PUPR Basuki Hadimuljono berencana memboyong istrinya ke IKN untuk melihat hunian menteri, ini sinyal positif.*”

This inclusion functions as a micro-level strategy to normalize the relocation process by focusing on the domestic and personal readiness of top leadership, contrasting with the often dry, bureaucratic focus of the rest of the corpus.

4. Discussion

The primary purpose of this chapter is to interpret the linguistic patterns identified in Section 3 by linking them to broader ideological and representational processes, specifically through the lens of Stuart Hall’s Representation Theory. This discussion argues that DetikNews.com employs systematic representational strategies that frame the IKN relocation postponement not as a policy failure, but as an instance of administrative rationality and developmental optimism, thereby encoding a Dominant Preferred Meaning.

4.1 The Dominant Encoding: Normalizing Delay through Infrastructural Framing

The quantitative dominance of pembangunan and kota in the Word Frequency analysis (Section 3.1) establishes the core of the media’s encoding strategy. By prioritizing the physical progress of construction, DetikNews.com frames the IKN project as an infrastructural and spatial reality rather than a political promise subject to delay.

This emphasis is a discursive attempt to normalize the postponement. The delay is not presented as a policy flaw but as an inevitable logistical and technical challenge inherent in a massive nation-building project. This construction aligns with the Dominant Encoding position of Hall’s model, where the media reproduces the state’s preferred meaning: the project is fundamentally sound, and

the delay is merely a manageable scheduling issue related to technical readiness. The high frequency of terms related to leadership (presiden, menteri) further reinforces this, suggesting that the issue remains firmly under institutional control.

4.2 The Negotiated Decoding: Strategic Management of Critical Discourse

While the media generally reinforces the dominant, optimistic narrative, the Collocation analysis reveals the need to manage competing, critical discourses. The strong statistical association between the keyword IKN and defensive terms like menepis (deny), bantah (refute), and the counter-narrative term terhambat (obstructed) identified in the Collocation analysis (Section 3.3) demonstrates that the media is aware of the Oppositional public reading.

The inclusion of these critical terms, only to immediately counter them with official statements (e.g., “menteri menepis anggapan bahwa pembangunan IKN terhambat”), is an explicit example of the Negotiated Decoding strategy. The media acknowledges the critical discourse (terms like terhambat, miring are present), but only to validate the official response. This strategic linguistic neutralization preserves the overall legitimacy of the project while giving the appearance of balanced reporting by confirming the existence of negative rumors without confirming their validity. This sophisticated approach prevents the critical discourse from destabilizing the Dominant Narrative.

4.3 Alternative Readings and Micro-Level Strategies

The unique co-occurrence of bureaucratic subjects (ASN) with personal terms (istrinya) and administrative terms (sosialisasi) reflects a strategy to soften the impersonal nature of the relocation process and serves as a subtle counter-narrative against critiques of feasibility.

This humanizing element functions as a micro-level strategy to reframe the challenges associated with the IKN postponement (which are primarily logistical and financial) into a narrative of welfare and institutional readiness. By focusing on the personal preparation of top officials, the media implicitly asserts that the bureaucratic process is moving forward and that the postponement is being used responsibly to ensure a seamless transition for all civil servants, aligning with a preferred meaning of responsible governance.

The micro-level use of terms like *sementara* (temporary) to collocate with *penundaan* similarly functions to preempt an Oppositional Reading (where the delay might be read as permanent failure) by linguistically assuring the audience of the policy's temporary nature and eventual success.

4.4. *Limitations*

This study is limited to the DetikNews.com dataset within a specific timeframe (August 2024–March 2025). As a single-source analysis, its findings are not generalizable to the entire Indonesian media landscape; instead, they provide a deep, contextualized insight into one institution's framing strategy. Furthermore, the study focuses exclusively on textual analysis and does not include audience reception or visual framing, which may be explored in future research.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes the investigation into the discursive construction of the IKN relocation postponement in DetikNews.com. The primary implication suggests that mainstream digital media engages in a strategy of discursive legitimization to protect high-stakes national policy. The consistent encoding of a Preferred Meaning that frames the postponement as a procedural adjustment (anchored by collocates such as *sementara* and *kontrak*) rather than a policy failure strategically stabilizes public perception, mitigating the risk of policy uncertainty being interpreted as political failure. This research provides empirical, linguistically-anchored evidence for the systematic application of Stuart Hall's Representation Theory in a non-Western political context via Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS), offering an initial model for understanding media function in policy legitimization by focusing on the institutional power of elite mainstream news.

Future research must address the limitations of this study, namely, the reliance on a single media source and the exclusive focus on textual analysis, to broaden these findings. We recommend pursuing three specific avenues. First, a comparative corpus analysis across ideologically distinct outlets (e.g., state-owned vs. opposition-leaning media) is necessary. Second, integrating a targeted audience reception study is vital to measure the decoding of critical terms among distinct demographic groups. Finally, an integrated

multimodal analysis should be undertaken to fully account for non-linguistic elements in the media's framing of the national project.

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