

Macrostructure Analysis of Indonesia's National Songs: Searching for their Ideologies

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ABSTRACT

In Indonesian schools, national songs are taught to be sung in flag ceremonies. The ideological meanings are seldom discussed. This study investigates twelve Indonesia's compulsory national songs under the perspectives of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to reveal those ideologies. As there is a broad gap between the literal lyrics and the abstract ideology, this study applies macrostructure analysis (Van Dijk, 1980), which can bridge the gap. First, it analyses the microstructure, that is, the words, phrases, and sentences of each song, and, second, these are used as the building blocks to recognize the macrostructure. The findings reveal four main ideologies dealing with Indonesia's national identity and culture, national pride and patriotism, national sovereignty and independence, and a sense of national duty and responsibility. These ideologies have made the songs so iconic that they are still sung in public when Indonesia celebrates its independence to this day. Further studies are suggested to investigate why new Indonesian national songs are very few.

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1. Introduction

National or patriotic songs are special in that they are not merely popular songs. Many people can sing patriotic songs but it does not necessarily imply that these songs are equivalent to popular music. Their purposes, meanings, and sociocultural functions are fundamentally different (Awang, Lokman, Fathir, & Salleh, 2016). National songs are specifically composed to express the cultural, historical, and political identity of a nation (Mintargo, 2018). While pop songs deal with individual or personal experiences such as being in love or heart-broken, national songs address the communal or collective identity as a country (Hamzah & Johan, 2020). Their themes touch historical events, love and pride for the country, calling for unity, and the social values that the country promotes (Jepson, 2024; Mintargo, 2018).

The musical styles are mostly grand, formal and powerful as they are often played in ceremonies and celebrations with an orchestra (National Institute of Open Schooling, Class VIII, n.d.). Many of them are sung in march tempo (e.g., Williams, 2022), but many others are composed in slow, pop/rock, medium, grandeur or other tempi to evoke certain emotional effects (e.g. Liu, Liu, Wei, Li, Yuan, Wu, Wang, & Zhao, 2018). Their musical styles depend on the country's history, culture, and tradition (e.g., Hamzah & Johan, 2020). Although this study focused on the lyrics, the song tempo was also taken into consideration.

This study aims to reveal the ideologies embedded in national songs through the perspectives of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). In CDA, 'ideology' is regarded as a system of beliefs or values that control social practices, power relations and social structures. Part of these is how language is used. (van Dijk, 1998). Ideologies were often understood as abstract or hidden; however, CDA believes that

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ideologies as the basic frameworks that arrange the social cognition held by members of social groups are expressed through the circulating discourse in the society (van Dijk, 2001). Thus, discourse analysis should uncover or disclose the thinking behind the songs.

1.1 Literature Review

National or patriotic songs and national anthems have been researched from different aspects. Mintargo (2018) analyzed two Indonesian national songs, “*Bagimu Negeri*” (“For You My Country”, 1942) and “*Maju Tak Gentar*” (“Forward No Fear”, 1944), focusing on the function and meaning of the songs. However, both aspects were not supported by lyrical analysis because the conclusion seemed to be the writer’s own interpretation of the songs.

Surjowati (2021) analyzed “*Indonesia Raya*”, the national anthem, from the interpersonal aspect by applying the appraisal system by Martin and White (2005). She showed that W.R. Supratman, the composer, had well shared his feelings of joy, happiness, insecurity, admiration, pride and dignity about Indonesia through the song. While both her study and this study analyzed songs through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis, the data of this study are the national/patriotic songs which are less formal than the national anthem, which is clearly loaded with nationalism and patriotism spirit. Another difference is that this study looked into the representational metafunction instead of the interpersonal.

Miftasari, Budianto and Fasta (2025) applied CDA on a protest song “*Parung Panjang Pride*” composed by Istantos. *Parung Panjang* is in the Regency of Bogor, West Java, Indonesia, where trucks and heavy vehicles were mining sand and stones and had caused many accidents and environmental damages. Their study applied microstructure-macrostructure analysis and other methods like metaphor, interaction, music theory, social cognition, and social context on one song. This study, on the other hand, focused on the microstructure and macrostructure of twelve songs. Their data can be categorized as a social critic song, while the data of this study were compulsory national songs.

Macrostructure refers to the overall, global meaning or thematic structure of a text, which is the central theme or the overarching message of a text (Van Dijk, 1980). Macrostructure is a cognitive framework which helps both the text producer and receiver organize information in a text. The producer tries to communicate their thoughts, feelings and opinions, and, on the other end, the receiver tries to interpret what is being communicated. Thus, macrostructures reflect the ideological positions of the producer, and macrostructure analysis is expected to help the receiver to identify and explain the search for ideology.

Although macrostructure is abstract, it is actually built from the concrete microstructure of a text which is made up of the words, phrases, and sentences in the text as the building blocks for the macrostructure. Cohesion, coherence, thematic progression, lexical choices and syntactical patterns will help construct the macrostructure of a text (Van Dijk, 1980).

There have been a number of theories and concepts in discourse analysis and text comprehension which are similar to macrostructures in disclosing meanings or messages behind texts. Some which have become classic are schema (Bartlett, 1932), mental models (Johnson-Laird, 1983), cohesion and coherence (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), frame (Goffman, 1974), cognitive models of discourse (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) and global coherence (Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978). In general, these theories have set the principles of cognitive processing of texts or mental representation resulting from the explicit information in the texts. Accordingly, Van Dijk’s macrostructure is adopted in this research due to its systematic approach to identify the global meaning of discourse from the local linguistic details. Macrostructure analysis offers an explicit mechanism for deriving the overarching propositional content of a text, and it suits well for analysing ideological texts such as patriotic songs in a way that it enables researchers to uncover the hierarchical organization of information and the implicit meanings at the global level.

Macrostructure analysis is an effective tool for identifying ideology because it focuses on the global meaning of a text, in this case, the gist of the song lyrics. The text is shaped by the thinking and believing position of the producer of the text, in this case, the song writer. By examining the topics, the framing and the emphasis within the macrostructure of the national songs, discourse analysts can uncover the ideologies embedded in these songs.

1.2 Significance of Analysing National Songs

Analysing the lyrics of national or patriotic songs is important for a number of reasons. First, they can show the historical contexts of the country's struggles and independence – an achievement which can build the citizens' pride. For example, the song “Marching through Georgia” (1865), by Henry Clay Work, commemorates General Sherman's March to the Sea in 1864, a victory to the Unionists during the American Civil War (Tome, 2021). The lyrics capture the rally from the point of view of a Union soldier, and the victorious narration has made the song iconic even centuries later. Second, as most national songs deal with the national symbols such as the flag, the coat of arms, and famous landmarks, the singers and listeners are reminded of the country's national identity and expected to be proud of it (Awang et al, 2016). The song, “*Bendera Merah Putih*” (Red and White Flag) from Indonesia, depicts the bright red and white flag flying on the clear blue sky, inviting the listeners to admire it. As the flag symbolizes the country, the admiration is surely extended to Indonesia. Third, as governments need to promote or foster certain social and political values to be acquired by the citizens, patriotic songs may indicate the country's current struggles such as maintaining unity (Awang et al, 2016), improving solidarity (Hamzah & Johan, 2020), and nurturing nationalism and loyalty (Hamzah, 2020; Jonathan, 2009). Thus, patriotic songs are not only popular songs endorsed by the government to be taught in schools and sung in flag ceremonies, but they are loaded with political messages and ideologies. This study attempts to reveal such embedded ideologies in national songs.

The twelve songs as the data of this research are categorized as compulsory because they are taught in elementary and high schools, and the students should sing these songs by heart during flag ceremonies and celebrations of national days. Outside schools, these songs are commonly played in public areas such as malls, supermarkets, and train stations, especially prior to and during the celebrations of the Independence Day, August 17.

1.3 Macrostructure and Ideology

Examining these songs presents a number of advantages. Besides knowing more deeply about Indonesia – its historical formation through the wars and independence, the national symbols and identities, and the pride in its beautiful landmarks, analysts can sense certain ideas, thinking, wishes, and emotions embedded in these songs. Such ideas are typically abstract and debatable as they are not literally stated but must be interpreted from many backgrounding and supporting elements, one of which is the lyrics (e.g. Awang et al, 2016; Jonathan, 2009). Within the perspectives of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), language – the lyrics of the songs in this context – is a powerful vehicle of ideology (Fairclough, 1989, 2014; van Dijk, 1998). However, there is a gap between the literal – the lyrics – and the abstract concept behind the literal – the ideology. This research applied Van Dijk's macrostructures to bridge the gap. According to Van Dijk (1980, p. v), macrostructures are “higher-level of semantic or conceptual structures that organize the ‘local’ microstructures of discourse, interaction, and their cognitive processing.” It deals with how a text is organized at a higher level to capture the overarching structure and meaning of the text. Macrostructure as the higher or global level of language tends to be abstract, but it is built from the explicit microstructures such as words, phrases, sentence structures, metaphors and the cohesion of these elements.

Among other CDA models of ideology, van Dijk's macrostructure analysis is seen as the effective tool for identifying ideology because it focuses on the global meaning of a text, in this case, the gist of the song lyrics based on the words and sentences, or the microstructure. The text is shaped by the thinking and believing position of the producer of the text, in this case, the song writer. By examining the topics, the framing and the emphasis within the macrostructure of the national songs, analysts can uncover how ideologies are embedded in these songs. Fairclough's (1989, 2001, 2014) three-dimensional analysis was seen more social or structuralist than semantic regarding song lyrics, Wodak's discourse-historical approach (Wodak & Reisgl, 2001) was seen too broad for the context of the songs, van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor and social action has assisted in the microstructure analysis, Chilton's (2014) spatial cognitive has helped the understanding of abstract relations of ideas, while Thompson's (1991) model was seen as a more philosophical than operational linguistic analysis to observe song lyrics.

1.4 Purposes of Understanding the Ideologies behind National Songs

Revealing the ideologies in Indonesia's national songs can be useful for a great deal of purposes, not only for the citizens but also the non-citizens. For the Indonesian citizens, first, these songs remind them of the wars fought by the forebears of this country against the colonials. Indonesia's independence in 1945 was not given but should be earned through struggles and sacrifices. Second, knowing the ideologies can increase the critical awareness of being Indonesian, and thus can strengthen their sense of nationalism and patriotism because a high sense of patriotism can "reduce incidences of corruption" (Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, 2013, p. 11). Singing a national song is not only vocalizing the melody because the meaning lies in more than just its tune. Third, understanding the ideologies of national songs can enhance civic empowerment (Bukhari, Saeed, & Rasool, 2021) – where people are willing to actively participate in building the country, and thus support the national character-building (Alwi, Iqbal, & Nabihah, 2023). In essence, understanding the ideologies behind Indonesian national songs can shape Indonesians' sense of identity and prepare them to serve, build, defend, and sacrifice for the country.

For the non-citizens, knowing the ideologies of one country's patriotic songs can be cognitively and emphatically useful. First, they can understand the country's history, social values, and cultural priorities which are different from those of their own country. Second, they can engage more respectfully with the local norms and symbols, and thus can improve intercultural relations. Although introducing one country's national songs to non-citizens is often related to citizenship education programs (e.g., Ho, 2025), understanding another country's ideologies is not limited to soon-to-be citizens only but to all foreigners visiting or living in that country.

This research specifically analyses how the words, phrases, and sentences in the lyrics (the microstructures) of the selected national songs build the resulting main messages or ideas (the macrostructures) of the songs. The resulting mental representation from the macrostructures become the ideology/ideologies behind the songs.

2. Methods

Twelve Indonesian national songs categorized as compulsory and the most popular were selected as the data. They are compulsory because students at elementary schools up to high schools should learn to sing them by heart for the flag ceremonies. These songs are the most popular because they are always available in YouTube or Spotify albums, played in public places and sung in flag ceremonies. The twelve selected songs are alphabetically listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Indonesia's national songs (the data)

No	Title	Direct Translation	Year	Composer
1.	<i>Bagimu Negeri</i>	For You My Country	1942	Kusbini (1910-1990)
2.	<i>Bangun Pemudi Pemuda</i>	Rise, Girls and Boys	1947	Alfred Simanjuntak (1920-2014)
3.	<i>Bendera Merah Putih</i>	Red and White Flag	1947	Saridjah Niung/ Ibu Soed (1908-1993),
4.	<i>Berkibarlah Benderaku</i>	Fly My Flag	1947	Saridjah Niung/ Ibu Soed (1908-1993)
5.	<i>Dari Sabang Sampai Merauke</i>	From Sabang to Merauke	1961	R. Soerarjo M. (1915-1993)
6.	<i>Garuda Pancasila</i>	Pancasila Eagle	1956	Sudharnoto (1925-2000)
7.	<i>Hari Merdeka</i>	Independence Day	1946	Husein Mutahar (1916-2004)

8.	<i>Indonesia Pusaka</i>	Indonesia Heritage	1949	Ismail Marzuki (1914-1958)
9.	<i>Maju Tak Gentar</i>	Forward No Fear	1944	Cornel Simanjuntak (1921-1946)
10.	<i>Rayuan Pulau Kelapa</i>	Solace on Coconut Island	1944	Ismail Marzuki (1914-1958)
11.	<i>Sorak Sorak Bergembira</i>	Cheer Cheer Hooray	1945	Cornel Simanjuntak (1921-1946)
12.	<i>Tanah Airku</i>	My Homeland	1927	Saridjah Niung/ Ibu Soed (1908-1993)

Several phases were taken in the analysis process. First, at the microstructure level, the lyrics of each song were observed to find the content and meaningful words or phrases and specific structures and patterns. Second, at the macrostructure level, these words or phrases were connected to infer the central meaning, theme, or main message of the song. Third, the analysis was extended to crosscheck the macrostructures with the resulting mental representations, because national songs, consciously or unconsciously realized, have shaped how people think about their country, identity, and relationship to their country. In the end, the compilation of these analyses led to the conclusion of the ideology or ideologies embedded in each individual song and all the twelve selected songs.

3. Results and Discussion

Of the twelve most popular Indonesian national songs, the macrostructure and the mental representation analyses indicated that the unifying ideology was a celebration of Indonesia's independence, freedom and sovereignty, which was shaped by a deep emotional connection to the homeland. This ideology has fostered national pride, unity and a sense of identity, and reinforced individual and collective patriotism which has encouraged all Indonesians to love and respect their homeland.

This line of thinking can be well understood as these songs were composed around Indonesia's independence in 1945 (See Table 1.). These songs strengthened the formation of a new national identity after centuries of being colonized by foreign nations and to unite Indonesians who come from diverse ethnicities, languages, regions and religions across the archipelago. These songs ignited the spirit to build the new nation, get ready to defend and sacrifice for the homeland, and be proud of her. That these songs are still currently taught at school and sung in public shows that such spirit is still needed to instil nationalism and patriotism among the young generations.

From the analyses it was found that each song may evoke one ideology or several ideologies as a way to make itself a complete message. For example, besides confirming the Indonesian flag as one element of the national identity, the song "*Bendera Merah Putih*" ("Red and White Flag") also elicits pride of and dedication to the country. To facilitate explanation, the content words and the English translated words or phrases are printed in bold.

<i>Bendera Merah Putih</i>	1	The Red and White Flag
<i>By Saridjah Niung (Ibu Soed), 1947</i>		Free Translation
<i>Bendera tanah airku</i>	2	The flag of my homeland
<i>Gagah dan jernih tampak warnamu</i>	3	Bold and clear , your colors shine
<i>Berkibarlah di langit yang biru</i>	4	Fly high in the blue sky
<i>Bendera Merah Putih</i>	5	Red and White Flag
<i>Bendera bangsaku</i>	6	The flag of my nation
<i>Bendera Merah Putih</i>	7	Red and White Flag

<i>Pelambang brani dan suci</i>	8	Symbol of bravery and purity
<i>Siap selalu kami berbakti</i>	9	Always ready, we dedicate ourselves
<i>Untuk bangsa dan Ibu Pertiwi</i>	10	For the nation and Motherland
<i>Bendera Merah Putih</i>	11	Red and White Flag
<i>Trimalah salamku</i>	12	Accept my salute

A nation's flag refers not only to itself as a piece of a rectangular cloth with a specific design and attached to a pole but also the nation it symbolizes. In lines 3, 4, and 8, *gagah* (bold), *jernih* (clear), *berkibarlah* (fly high), and *b[er]jani dan suci* (brave and pure) may refer to the flag itself and the nation it represents, indicating a sense of pride and tribute to the flag and the nation. Further, in line 9, there is a movement of focus from the flag to the collective singer as *kami* (inclusive "we") in "Always ready, we dedicate ourselves". This song thus invokes three ideologies, i.e., the national identity, a sense of pride of Indonesia and readiness to commit oneself to serve Indonesia.

After all the ideologies in the twelve songs were compiled and compared, four main ideologies are presented here. Table 2 lists the main ideology/ideologies that each song embodies.

Table 2. Four Main Ideologies in Indonesia's Twelve National Songs.

No	Title	Free Translation	Main Ideologies			
			national identity, culture, characters and values	pride and patriotism of Indonesia	national sovereignty and independence	national duty and responsibility
1.	<i>Bagimu Negeri</i>	For You My Country	•			•
2.	<i>Bangun Pemudi Pemudi</i>	Rise, Girls and Boys	•			•
3.	<i>Bendera Merah Putih</i>	Red and White Flag	•	•		•
4.	<i>Berkibarlah Benderaku</i>	Fly My Flag	•	•	•	
5.	<i>Dari Sabang Sampai Merauke</i>	From Sabang to Merauke	•			
6.	<i>Garuda Pancasila</i>	Pancasila Eagle	•			
7.	<i>Hari Merdeka</i>	Independence Day	•		•	
8.	<i>Indonesia Pusaka</i>	Indonesia Heritage	•	•		
9.	<i>Maju Tak Gentar</i>	Forward No Fear			•	•
10.	<i>Rayuan Pulau Kelapa</i>	Solace on Coconut Island	•	•		
11.	<i>Sorak Sorak Bergembira</i>	Cheer Cheer Hooray			•	
12.	<i>Tanah Airku</i>	My Homeland	•	•		
			10	5	4	4

3.1 Indonesians should uphold the national identity, culture, characters and values

As a newly independent country freeing herself from centuries of colonialization or preparing for its liberation, Indonesia needed patriotic songs which could shape and strengthen the new identity to unite the people. Firstly, such songs should develop one sense of belonging and pride of Indonesia through the national symbols and icons. Five national songs in the data have clearly articulated this purpose. They are "*Bendera Merah Putih*" (Red White Flag), "*Berkibarlah Benderaku*" (Fly My Flag), "*Garuda Pancasila*" (Pancasila Eagle) – the coat of arm, "*Dari Sabang Sampai Merauke*" (From Sabang to Merauke) – the geographical territory that represents the far Eastern and the Western points of Indonesia, and "*Hari Merdeka*" (The Independence Day).

Secondly, five other songs shaped the national identity through promoting more abstract elements of a nation-building effort, that is, the national culture, national character, and some patriotic values. These songs are “*Bagimu Negeri*” (For You My Country), “*Bangun Pemudi Pemuda*” (Rise, Girls and Boys), “*Indonesia Pusaka*” (Indonesia Heritage), “*Rayuan Pulau Kelapa*” (Solace on Coconut Island), and “*Tanah Airku*” (My Homeland). The expected national culture, character, and values involve being ready to serve Indonesia, willingness to work honestly and sincerely, having a firm and clear mind, and behaving with kindness. The song “*Bangun Pemudi Pemuda*” clearly encapsulates this thinking.

Bangun Pemudi Pemuda
By Alfred Simanjuntak, 1947

Free Translation

<i>Bangun Pemudi Pemuda, Indonesia</i>	1 Rise, young men and women, Indonesia
<i>Lengan bajumu sing singkan untuk negara</i>	2 Roll up your sleeves for the country
<i>Masa yang akan datang kewajiban mulah</i>	3 The future is your responsibility
<i>Menjadi tanggungamu terhadap nusa</i>	4 It is your duty towards the homeland
<i>Menjadi tanggungamu terhadap nusa</i>	5 It is your duty towards the homeland
<i>Sudi tetap berusaha, jujur dan ikhlas</i>	6 Be willing to keep striving, honest and sincere
<i>Tak usah banyak bicara trus kerja keras</i>	7 No need to talk too much, just work hard
<i>Hati teguh dan lurus pikir tetap jernih</i>	8 With a firm heart and a clear mind
<i>Bertingkah laku halus, hai putra negeri</i>	9 Behave with kindness, oh sons of the nation
<i>Bertingkah laku halus, hai putra negeri</i>	10 Behave with kindness, oh sons of the nation

This song encouraged the then young generation of Indonesia to grow the desired national character as stated in lines 6-10: “willing to keep striving, honest and sincere”, less talk and work hard, “a firm heart and a clear mind”, and “behave with kindness”. The previous generation who had won the war against and liberated Indonesia from the colonials now passed the baton to the younger generation to build the now independent nation. This song is still relevant to Indonesia in her 80th anniversary as the ideology of building Indonesia with honesty, hard work, and kindness is still needed among the current social, political, and economic struggles.

Another national character and value stated in the national motto of “*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*” (Unity in Diversity) is reinforced by the song “*Dari Sabang Sampai Merauke*” (“From Sabang to Merauke”). Consisting of 17,508 islands (Antara News, 2024), and 1,300 ethnic groups sprawling across 84,276 villages throughout the archipelago (Jakarta Globe, 2016), Indonesia needs to maintain the unity and solidarity of her people who practice six religions to live daily in harmony. The depiction of the geographical connection of the islands is regarded to also mean the unity and solidarity of the inhabitants of those islands.

Dari Sabang Sampai Merauke
By R. Soerarjo, 1961

Free Translation

<i>Dari Sabang sampai Merauke</i>	1 From Sabang to Merauke
<i>Berjajar pulau-pulau</i>	2 Lined up islands
<i>Sambung-menyambung menjadi satu</i>	3 Connected together as one
<i>Itulah Indonesia</i>	4 That is Indonesia
<i>Indonesia tanah airku</i>	5 Indonesia, my homeland
<i>Aku berjanji padamu</i>	6 I pledge to you
<i>Menjunjung tanah airku</i>	7 To uphold my homeland
<i>Tanah airku, Indonesia</i>	8 My homeland, Indonesia

In line 2, “lined up islands” metaphorically put forward the thinking that the people living on those islands are also “connected together as one” (line 3) and become one Indonesia (line 4).

The ideology of maintaining unity and solidarity is also reflected in the song “*Maju Tak Gentar*” (“Forward No Fear”). As seen in the lyrics below, the word “*serentak*” (= all at once, together) are sung four times. This song wants to say that only by moving together as one, or keeping the unity as a nation, can the people win (line 14).

Maju Tak Gentar
By Cornel Simanjuntak, 1944

Direct Translation

<i>Maju tak gentar</i>	1 Move forward, unafraid
<i>Membela yang benar</i>	2 Defending what is right
<i>Maju tak gentar</i>	3 Move forward, unafraid
<i>Hak kita diserang</i>	4 Our rights are being attacked
<i>Maju serentak</i>	5 Move forward together
<i>Mengusir penyerang</i>	6 Drive out the attackers
<i>Maju serentak</i>	7 Move forward together
<i>Tentu kita menang</i>	8 Surely we will win
<i>Bergerak, bergerak</i>	9 Move, move
<i>Serentak, serentak</i>	10 Together, together
<i>Menerjam, menerjang, terjang</i>	11 Pounce, charge, strike
<i>Tak gentar, tak gentar</i>	12 Unfazed, unafraid
<i>Menyerang, menyerang</i>	13 Attack, attack
<i>Majulah, majulah, menang</i>	14 Move forward, move forward, win

Indeed, these patriotic songs are used to confirm, strengthen, and promote the national identity of the new Indonesia. The march tempo uplifts the spirit to uphold the new national identity, character, and values by levering up unity and solidarity, leaving behind the colonial years and getting ready to build Indonesia.

3.2 Indonesians should be proud of Indonesia and maintain patriotism as a lifelong commitment

Three songs build a deep feeling of pride and love of Indonesia and thus encourage the people to serve and sacrifice themselves for her. Interestingly, they are all in slow rhythm, sing praises of the beautiful nature, land, and beaches of Indonesia, and thus stir the emotion of both the singers and listeners. The song “*Rayuan Pulau Kelapa*” (Solace of Coconut Islands) below is sung in Andante or mid-slow tempo (76 BPM).

Rayuan Pulau Kelapa
By Ismail Marzuki, 1944

Free Translation

<i>Tanah airku Indonesia</i>	1 My homeland, Indonesia
<i>Negeri elok amat kucinta</i>	2 A beautiful country that I love so much
<i>Tanah tumpah darahku yang mulia</i>	3 The land where my blood was spilled, a noble land
<i>Yang kupuja sepanjang masa</i>	4 Which I will honor forever
<i>Tanah airku aman dan makmur</i>	5 My homeland is safe and prosperous
<i>Pulau kelapa yang amat subur</i>	6 The coconut islands, so fertile
<i>Pulau melati pujaan bangsa</i>	7 The jasmine islands, beloved by nations
<i>Sejak dulu kala</i>	8 Since ancient times
<i>Melambai-lambai, nyiur di pantai</i>	9 The coconut palms waving on the shore
<i>Berbisik-bisik, Raja Kelana</i>	10 Whispering, the Wandering King
<i>Memuja pulau, nan indah permai</i>	11 Praising the island, so beautiful and serene
<i>Tanah airku, Indonesia</i>	12 My homeland, Indonesia

This song is full with praises about the nature, the homeland, and the islands – *elok* (beautiful), *mulia* (noble), *aman dan makmur* ((safe and prosperous), *amat subur* (very fertile), *indah permai* (beautiful and serene) in lines 2, 3, 5, 6, and 11. People and other nations adore this nation as shown from the expressions *amat kucinta* (I love so much, line 2), *kupuja sepanjang masa* (I will honor forever, line 4), *pujaan bangsa sejak dulu kala* (beloved by nations since ancient times, lines 7, 8), and *memuja pulau* (praising the island, line 11).

The song “*Tanah Airku*” (My Homeland) is even slower in Largo (44-48 BPM). The lyrics invoke pride and appreciation to the humble homeland referred through the words *kampung dan rumah* (village and home, line 9), which is plain and humble compared to other beautiful nations. This song

expresses a lifelong emotional connection to Indonesia through the words “*tidak kulupakan, terkenang selama hidupku*” (I will never forget, will remember throughout my life, lines 1 and 2).

Tanah Airku
By Saridjah Niung (Ibu Soed), 1927

Free Translation

<i>Tanah airku tidak kulupakan</i>	1 My homeland, I will never forget
<i>Kan terkenang selama hidupku</i>	2 I will remember it throughout my life
<i>Biarpun saya pergi jauh</i>	3 Even though I go far away
<i>Tidak kan hilang dari kalbu</i>	4 It will never fade from my heart
<i>Tanahku yang kucintai</i>	5 My beloved land
<i>Engkau kuhargai</i>	6 I cherish you
<i>Walaupun banyak negeri kujalani</i>	7 Although I have traveled to many countries
<i>Yang masyur permai dikata orang</i>	8 Famous and beautiful as people say
<i>Tetapi kampung dan rumahku</i>	9 But my village and home
<i>Di sanalah kurasa senang</i>	10 That is where I feel happy
<i>Tanahku tak kulupakan</i>	11 I will never forget my land
<i>Engkau kubanggakan</i>	12 I am proud of you

There are two opposition constructions which even specify how special Indonesia is to the singer. Lines 3-4 and 7-10 use adverb clauses of contrast with markers “Even though” or “Although”. This is meant to emphasize loyalty, love and the eternal bond between Indonesia and her people. The first contrast is related to distance by saying that “even though I go far away, I always remember my homeland.” (lines 3-6). The second contrast deals with quality and image. “Famous and beautiful countries” (line 8) is compared to “*kampung dan rumahku*” (village and home, line 9). This song inspires the listeners that despite imperfect conditions of their homeland they still remember and appreciate Indonesia.

One of the most popular patriotic songs is “*Indonesia Pusaka*” (Indonesia Heritage), composed by Ismail Marzuki in 1949. It expresses love and devotion to Indonesia while celebrating the beauty, heritage, and significance of this homeland. Lines 2-4 exhibit the immemorial glory of Indonesia in the words “an eternal and glorious heritage”, “honored”, and “since ancient times”. Praises are expressed in the third stanza in lines 9-12 on how “truly beautiful” Indonesia is, “no comparison” to other nations in the world as it has beautifully created by God.

Indonesia Pusaka
By Ismail Marzuki, 1949

Free Translation

<i>Indonesia tanah air beta</i>	1 Indonesia, my homeland
<i>Pusaka abadi nan jaya</i>	2 An eternal and glorious heritage
<i>Indonesia sejak dulu kala</i>	3 Indonesia, since ancient times
<i>Tetap dipuja-puja bangsa</i>	4 Always honored by nations
<i>Di sana tempat lahir beta</i>	5 There is the place where I was born
<i>Dibuai dibesarkan Bunda</i>	6 Rocked and raised by Mother
<i>Tempat berlindung di hari tua</i>	7 A place to seek refuge in old age
<i>Tempat akhir menutup mata</i>	8 The place where I will close my eyes forever
<i>Sungguh indah tanah air beta</i>	9 Truly beautiful is my homeland
<i>Tiada bandingnya di dunia</i>	10 There is no comparison in the world
<i>Karya indah Tuhan Maha Kuasa</i>	11 The beautiful creation of Almighty God
<i>Bagi bangsa yang memujanya</i>	12 For the nation that honors it
<i>Indonesia Ibu Pertiwi</i>	13 Indonesia, Motherland
<i>Kau kuperlakukan kau kukasih</i>	14 I praise and love you
<i>Tenagaku bahkan pun jiwaku</i>	15 My strength and even my soul
<i>Kepadamu rela kuberi</i>	16 To you, I willingly give

In the second stanza, this song projects a life-long loyalty to Indonesia because this is the place where the people are born (line 5), educated (line 6), later sheltered in old age (line 7), and die (“close my eyes forever”, line 8). This song suggests that wherever Indonesians live or work during their productive years, in the end they will return to Indonesia. This song is closed with an expression of devotion and patriotism by willingness to sacrifice for Indonesia. Lines 15 and 16 proclaim that the singer will give his or her strength and soul to Indonesia.

These three songs have radiated pride towards Indonesia the homeland. Although the style, tempo, and lyrics are slow and emotional, they still send patriotic values that Indonesians should love and be proud of Indonesia until the end of their life.

3.3 Indonesians should stand guard the national sovereignty and independence

While previously the songs of pride and adoration are in slow rhythm, three songs which promote sovereignty and independence are composed in march tempo. According to Herbert & Kertz-Welzel (2016), the steady, rhythmic beat takes after military marches, reminding that many independence struggles are related to wars, and the nation’s sovereignty should be maintained in like fashion: the strength, unity and discipline of the military.

The first song with this ideology is “*Hari Merdeka*” (The Independence Day). The lyrics are celebratory, rhythmic, and triumphant like soldiers marching after winning a war.

<i>Hari Merdeka</i>	
By H. Mutahar, 1946	
Free Translation	
<i>Tujuh belas Agustus tahun empat lima</i>	1 Seventeenth of August, in the year '45
<i>Itulah hari kemerdekaan kita</i>	2 That is the day of our independence
<i>Hari merdeka nusa dan bangsa</i>	3 The day of freedom for the nation and people
<i>Hari lahirnya bangsa Indonesia</i>	4 The birth of the Indonesian nation
<i>Merdeka</i>	5 Freedom
<i>Sekali merdeka tetap merdeka</i>	6 Once free, always free
<i>Selama hayat masih di kandung badan</i>	7 As long as life remains in the body
<i>Kita tetap sedia tetap setia</i>	8 We remain ready and loyal
<i>Mempertahankan Indonesia</i>	9 To defend Indonesia
<i>Kita tetap sedia tetap setia</i>	10 We remain ready and loyal
<i>Membela negara kita</i>	11 To defend our country

While the first half of the song elicits the Independence Day, the second half declares a sacred vow to maintain the sovereignty and independence of Indonesia. “*Sekali merdeka tetap merdeka*” (Once free, always free, line 6). Lines 8 and 10 repeat the firm commitment to be ready and loyal to defend Indonesia, “*Kita tetap sedia tetap setia*” (We remain ready and loyal, lines 8, 10).

The second song is *Berkibarlah Benderaku*, composed by Saridjah Niung, popularly called Ibu Soed, in 1947. The Indonesian flag is not only the red and white cloth hoisted on a pole, but also the symbol and the national identity of Indonesians. The flag flying high forever in bold red and white refers to the sovereignty of Indonesia as an independent and confident nation. Attacking the flag means attacking the nation, and thus all Indonesians will unite to defend this sovereign nation. Line 5 challenges that any threat of lowering the flag – suggesting an attack on Indonesia –, will face the unified front of Indonesians who defend the flag, meaning defending Indonesia (line 6).

<i>Berkibarlah Benderaku</i>	
By Saridjah Niung (Ibu Soed), 1947	
Free Translation	
<i>Berkibarlah Benderaku</i>	1 Fly, my flag
<i>Lambang suci gagah perwira</i>	2 A sacred symbol of bravery and valor
<i>Di seluruh pantai Indonesia</i>	3 Along the coasts of Indonesia
<i>Kau tetap pujaan bangsa</i>	4 You remain the beloved of the nation
<i>Siapa berani menurunkan engkau</i>	5 Who dares to lower you
<i>Serentak rakyatmu membela</i>	6 Your people will unite to defend you
<i>Sang Merah Putih yang perwira</i>	7 The brave Red and White flag
<i>Berkibarlah selama-lamanya</i>	8 Fly forever

<i>Kami rakyat Indonesia</i>	9	We, the people of Indonesia
<i>Bersedia setiap masa</i>	10	Ready at all times
<i>Mencurahkan segenap tenaga</i>	11	To pour all our strength
<i>Supaya kau tetap cemerlang</i>	12	So that you remain shining
<i>Tak goyang jiwaku menahan rintangan</i>	13	My soul is unwavering in facing challenges
<i>Tak gentar rakyatmu berkorban</i>	14	Your people are unafraid to sacrifice
<i>Sang Merah Putih yang perwira</i>	15	The brave Red and White flag
<i>Berkibarlah selama-lamanya</i>	16	Fly forever

This song expresses a deep sense of patriotism and pride for the Indonesian flag, *Sang Merah Putih*, and reflects the people's unwavering dedication to their country, promising to defend and uphold the flag and nation forever.

The third song which promotes Indonesia's sovereignty and independence is also the war-theme, march-tempo “*Sorak Sorak Bergembira*” (Cheer Cheer Hooray). It is a joyous, celebratory, cheerful, and proud tune as soldiers march down after winning a war. Line 3 confirms that Indonesia is free, lines 4 and 5 repeat the independent Indonesia, and line 8 maintains that the independence should be “*untuk selama-lamanya*” (forever, for all eternity).

Sorak Sorak Bergembira
By Cornel Simanjuntak, 1945

Free Translation

<i>Sorak sorak bergembira</i>	1	Cheer and rejoice
<i>Bergembira semua</i>	2	Everyone be joyful
<i>Sudah bebas negeri kita</i>	3	Our nation is now free
<i>Indonesia merdeka</i>	4	Independent Indonesia
<i>Indonesia merdeka</i>	5	Independent Indonesia
<i>Republik indonesia</i>	6	The Republic of Indonesia
<i>Itulah hak milik kita</i>	7	That is our rightful possession
<i>Untuk selama-lamanya</i>	8	For all eternity

The three songs above have not only cast an aura of celebrating Indonesia's freedom through the independence wars, but also reminded the people that they have to keep guard of the sovereignty for eternity. The march tempo has added the sense of militaristic strength and uniformity to defend Indonesia.

3.4 Each Indonesian should possess a sense of national duty and responsibility to serve Indonesia

Now that Indonesia is free from colonialization, the patriotic songs are intended to arouse the sense of duty and responsibility in the heart and mind of the people to build Indonesia. While all national songs in the data suggest such consciousness, three songs literally declare it. Besides “*Bangun Pemudi Pemuda*”, and “*Maju Tak Gentar*”, which have been discussed earlier, the song “*Bagimu Negeri*” (To You Our Nation) has become the embodiment of the solemn pledge of the citizens to serve Indonesia.

Bagimu Negeri
By Kusbini, 1942

Free Translation

<i>Padamu Negeri, kami berjanji</i>	1	To you, our nation, we pledge
<i>Padamu Negeri, kami berbakti</i>	2	To you, our nation, we dedicate ourselves
<i>Padamu Negeri, kami mengabdi</i>	3	To you, our nation, we devote ourselves
<i>Bagimu Negeri, jiwa raga kami</i>	4	For you, our nation, we give our soul and body

The phrase “*Padamu, Negeri*” (To You, My Country) is repeated three times to emphasize loyalty and direct address to Indonesia as a sacred entity to which the people pledge. Each phrase is followed with a collective “we” (*kami*), and a solemn verb. These trio solemn verbs suggest a series of escalating commitments in the first three lines, which are,

berjanji (to pledge) → *berbakti* (to dedicate oneself) → *mengabdi* (to devote oneself).

At the end, the song is closed with a total pledge of sacrifice of “*jiwa raga kami*” (our body and soul, line 4) for Indonesia.

The portrayal of Indonesians as morally obligated to contribute to Indonesia’s development is a reproduction of ideologies which depict certain roles and expectations as natural, selfless service to the nation (van Dijk, 1998). The national or patriotic songs in this study have successfully projected such sense and belief.

4. Conclusion

This study has shown how the ideologies embedded in national songs can be uncovered through closely examining the words, phrases, and sentences of the songs (the microstructures) and connecting them to reconstruct the main messages (the macrostructures) that the composers sent to the listeners. The four main ideologies disclosed from the twelve national songs are confirming Indonesia’s national identity and culture, expressing national pride and patriotism, maintaining national sovereignty and independence, and fostering a sense of national duty and responsibility. These ideologies, however, were not packed in one song only. Rather, they were the results of a mosaic of values from these top twelve national songs. Together they have built the sense and roles of being Indonesians: love your country, keep it stand, and take part in building the nation.

This study has achieved its aim of revealing the ideological contents of Indonesia’s most popular national songs from the microstructures to the macrostructures of the songs. This method is expected to encourage teachers and students to study national songs not only for the melody but also the meanings and messages (the macrostructures) they convey. Although triangulation was not conducted in this study, the macrostructures, mental representation and ideologies resulted from the analysis were closely constructed from the microstructures of the songs.

From a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective, future research could examine how the ideologies within these songs align with broader socio-political discourse of Indonesia. As the majority of Indonesia’s patriotic songs were composed before 1960, important questions were raised about whether the older ideological frameworks and their reproduction persisted in modern educational and cultural contexts. Future studies could also explore why post-1960 national song production is very few, and whether the pre-1960 ideological values still shape the current nationalist discourse. Comparative CDA studies across time periods and various discourses can also reveal how nationalism is discursively maintained or reimagined.

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