

## The Representation of Ideology in Nadiem Makarim Case by Tech in Asia: An Appraisal and Critical Discourse Analysis Approach

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the representation of Nadiem Makarim in TikTok content published by Tech in Asia by employing Appraisal Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The research aims to identify the evaluative language used in the discourse and examine the ideological tendencies reflected in the media representation. The data consist of 109 clauses collected from opinion, interview, straight news, and hard news content related to the media-reported alleged corruption case involving Nadiem Makarim. A qualitative descriptive approach is employed in this study. The results show that engagement is the most dominant appraisal resource (71.5%), followed by attitude (20.2%) and graduation (8.3%). The frequent use of heteroglossic and monoglossic resources suggests that Tech in Asia constructs legitimacy through selected external voices, particularly from the technology and business sectors. The findings also indicate that Nadiem Makarim is predominantly represented as an innovator and entrepreneurial leader rather than being primarily associated with the legal allegations. From the perspective of Fairclough's social practice framework, the discourse appears to reflect values related to innovation, entrepreneurial leadership, legal certainty, and technological development. Overall, this study demonstrates how evaluative language contributes to the construction of meaning and representation within contemporary digital media discourse.

**Keywords** : Appraisal, Ideology, Nadiem Makarim Case, Tech in Asia

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### INTRODUCTION

Digital media have fundamentally transformed the way information is produced, circulated, and consumed, shifting communication from one-way dissemination to participatory and interactive practices. Rather than functioning solely as channels for information exchange, digital platforms enable users to actively create, distribute, and negotiate meanings within networked environments, thereby reshaping contemporary public discourse (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Van Dijck et al., 2018). This transformation has also expanded the role of social media beyond entertainment into a strategic space for public communication, where governments, organizations, and political actors increasingly use digital platforms to promote policies, shape public awareness, and engage with wider audiences (Dey & Tanty, 2022). At the same time, the engagement-driven architecture of social media encourages the circulation of concise, emotionally resonant, and highly shareable content, as platform algorithms prioritize messages that maximize user interaction (Di Marco et al., 2024). Consequently, digital

platforms have become influential discursive arenas in which public issues are not merely communicated but also interpreted, evaluated, and contested through language.

The public scrutiny surrounding Nadiem Makarim provides a compelling context for examining how digital media construct representations of prominent public figures. As a technology entrepreneur who later assumed a ministerial role, Nadiem occupies a unique position at the intersection of innovation, governance, and public accountability. Consequently, media coverage of his policies extends beyond reporting events to interpreting his leadership, credibility, and institutional responsibility. Digital media actively shape public figures through evaluative framing, identity construction, and discursive strategies that negotiate power and legitimacy rather than merely reflecting reality (Yu et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023; Ononiwu et al., 2025). Critical discourse studies further demonstrate that linguistic evaluation plays a central role in constructing public trust and legitimizing particular institutional perspectives (Imran, 2025; Zheng, 2025). These findings suggest that representations of Nadiem Makarim should be understood not as neutral descriptions but as discursive constructions that reflect broader ideological positions, making the Tech in Asia coverage a particularly relevant site for investigating how language evaluates and legitimizes leadership in the digital era.

Tech in Asia specializes in technology, digital innovation, startups, and entrepreneurship, unlike mainstream news organizations that cover politics across multiple sectors. This editorial orientation makes the platform particularly relevant for examining the representation of Nadiem Makarim, whose public identity spans both technology entrepreneurship and national policymaking. Rather than reporting solely from a political perspective, Tech in Asia positions technological innovation and digital transformation at the center of its coverage, potentially shaping how leadership, accountability, and policy are evaluated. Thus, Tech in Asia is chosen because this media provides an opportunity to explore how a specialized technology newsroom constructs ideological meanings that may differ from those found in mainstream political media.

To understand how media discourse constructs ideology, language must be viewed as a social practice embedded within institutional and socio-cultural contexts. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as developed by Fairclough (1995, 2013), provides a macro-level framework for examining how discourse reproduces power relations and ideological interests through the interaction between text, discursive practice, and broader social practice. However, identifying ideological structures alone is insufficient without examining how evaluation is linguistically realized within the text. Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) complements CDA by providing a systematic framework for analyzing evaluative meanings through the systems of Affect, Judgment, Appreciation, Engagement, and Graduation. These two approaches therefore work in a complementary manner: CDA explains the broader socio-political context, while Appraisal Theory reveals the linguistic resources through which ideology is expressed and negotiated. Previous studies consistently demonstrate that integrating Appraisal Theory into CDA enables researchers to uncover ideological positioning, institutional interests, and power relations embedded in political and media discourse (Pandanwangi et al., 2020; Cahyono et al., 2021; Kadhim & Faris, 2025). Appraisal system, particularly evaluative language and engagement, also explain how media position readers, negotiate competing viewpoints, and reveal ideological contestation in contemporary online discourse, including digital news and TikTok content (Van Poucke, 2023; Alshehri & Imran, 2025; Nanavaratorn, 2025).

Previous studies have established the value of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in examining how discourse constructs ideology and power across various media contexts. Rahmawati et al. (2025) analysed television advertising, Sari et al. (2025) explored ideology and power in digital media, Rahma

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et al. (2025) investigated ideological representation in TikTok content, Rubing and Sandaran (2023) examined ideological bias in newspaper reporting, and Abdulkadir (2023) analysed ideological positioning in political interviews. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that discourse functions as a medium through which institutions and social actors construct, negotiate, and reproduce ideological meanings. However, they primarily emphasize macro-level ideological interpretation within a single CDA framework, while giving less attention to the linguistic resources through which evaluation, alignment, and ideological positioning are realized in the text.

Building on these studies, the present research integrates Fairclough’s three-dimensional CDA with Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal Theory to connect macro-level ideological analysis with micro-level linguistic evaluation. In addition, this study shifts the analytical focus from political speeches, advertising, newspaper reports, and user-generated TikTok content to news videos produced by Tech in Asia Indonesia on TikTok concerning the Chromebook procurement case involving Nadiem Makarim. As a digital technology and business media outlet, Tech in Asia provides a distinctive context for examining how evaluative language constructs ideological positioning, represents institutional interests, and negotiates competing perspectives in reporting a contemporary public issue. By combining these analytical perspectives, this study aims to offer a more comprehensive understanding of how ideology is constructed through evaluative discourse in short-form digital news.

## METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to investigate how Nadiem Makarim was represented in Tech in Asia’s TikTok news coverage through the linguistic resources of Appraisal Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). A qualitative approach was selected because it facilitates an in-depth examination of evaluative language and its relationship to broader sociocultural contexts, allowing researchers to interpret meanings beyond numerical measurement (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Since the study examined naturally occurring discourse in digital media, it adopted document analysis as the primary research method.

The data comprised 109 clauses obtained from six TikTok videos published by the official Tech in Asia account discussing Nadiem Makarim in relation to the Chromebook procurement corruption case. The videos were selected through purposive sampling because they met predetermined inclusion criteria. First, the videos explicitly discussed Nadiem Makarim as the principal news actor. Second, they addressed the Chromebook procurement case during the period when the issue received significant public attention. Third, the videos contained substantial spoken narration, interview excerpts, captions, or written texts that provided sufficient evaluative language for appraisal analysis. Videos that merely delivered brief updates, duplicated previously published content, or lacked evaluative expressions were excluded. These six videos constituted the complete dataset that satisfied the research criteria and provided sufficient linguistic evidence to address the research objectives.

**Table 1.** Description of the Research Data

No.	Video Code	Genre	Date	Source	Total Clauses
1	OP	Opinion	09-01-2026	<a href="https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxqLpeRV/">https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxqLpeRV/</a>	30
2	IN	Interview-based News	15-04-2026	<a href="https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxq1WJV5/">https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxq1WJV5/</a>	25
3	SN	Straight News	21-04-2026	<a href="https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxqJgMhd/">https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxqJgMhd/</a>	10
4	HN	Hard News	12-05-2026	<a href="https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxqYBno9/">https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxqYBno9/</a>	8
5	IN	Interview-based News	14-05-2026	<a href="https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxqYG8Qd/">https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSxqYG8Qd/</a>	16
6	IN	Interview-based News	02-06-2026	<a href="https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSQEvaFQm/">https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSQEvaFQm/</a>	20

Data were collected using the observation method with note-taking techniques as proposed by Sudaryanto (2015). The selected videos were downloaded from the official TikTok account and transcribed verbatim, including spoken narration, interview quotations, captions, and written texts displayed on the screen. The transcripts were repeatedly reviewed while comparing them with the original videos to ensure transcription accuracy and contextual consistency. Subsequently, the transcripts were segmented into individual clauses because the clause constitutes the basic unit of analysis in Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005). Each clause was assigned a code according to its sequence number and news genre, such as Opinion (OP); Interview (IN); Straight News (SN); and Hard News (HN), to facilitate systematic organization, retrieval, and analysis.

The data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data condensation stage, all clauses were examined to identify linguistic expressions realizing evaluative meanings. Each clause was then coded according to the three appraisal subsystems (Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation) based on the analytical framework developed by Martin and White (2005). In the data display stage, the coded clauses were organized into analytical tables showing the appraisal category, linguistic realization, contextual interpretation, and frequency of occurrence. This organization facilitated comparison across the six videos and enabled the identification of recurring evaluative patterns.

Furthermore, the appraisal findings were subsequently interpreted using Fairclough’s (2013) dimension of social practice to operationalize Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The interpretation proceeded through three analytical steps. First, recurring appraisal patterns were identified to determine dominant evaluations toward Nadiem Makarim. Second, these linguistic patterns were interpreted in relation to the institutional context of Tech in Asia as a technology-oriented digital news platform and the situational context surrounding the Chromebook procurement controversy. Finally, the findings were related to broader societal and ideological contexts to explain how evaluative language contributed to constructing and reproducing particular representations of Nadiem Makarim in digital news discourse.

This study used publicly accessible videos published on the official Tech in Asia TikTok account. Since the research analyzed publicly available media content and did not involve human participants, informed consent and institutional ethical approval were not required. Nevertheless, the study-maintained research integrity by faithfully transcribing the original content, preserving its contextual meaning, and acknowledging all data sources appropriately.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Appraisal Analysis

The analysis was conducted on 109 appraised clauses selected from the speech transcript. Clauses categorized as neutral or non-appraised were excluded, since they do not contain clear evaluative meaning. Each clause was coded by assigning one dominant appraisal system based on the most salient evaluative function within the clause. The coding follows Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal Theory, consisting of three main systems: attitude, graduation, and engagement.

**Table 2.** Frequency of Appraisal System Found in Nadiem Makarim Case by Tech in Asia

Appraisal System	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage	
Attitude	Affect	Pos.	2	1.8%
		Neg.	3	2.8%

Appraisal System	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage	
	Judgement	Pos.	2	1.8%
		Neg.	4	3.7%
	Appreciation	Pos.	4	3.7%
		Neg.	7	6.4%
	Total	22	20.2%	
Graduation	Force	7	6.4%	
	Focus	2	1.8%	
	Total	9	8.3%	
Engagement	Monogloss	43	39.4%	
	Heterogloss	35	32.1%	
	Total	78	71.5%	
Total	Total	109	100%	

## 1. Attitude

### a. Affect

*Data [074-SN] It was really amazing. They all flew in from everywhere around the world...*

This clause represents positive affect because it explicitly expresses emotion through the speaker’s personal feeling. The lexical item “*amazing*” encodes admiration and emotional appreciation toward the former Google executives who came to testify. The adverb “*really*” intensifies the emotional expression and makes the statement sound spontaneous and sincere. Within appraisal theory, affect concerns emotional reactions, and this utterance clearly shows happiness mixed with gratitude and amazement. The emotional positioning humanizes the legal issue by shifting attention away from institutional conflict toward interpersonal loyalty and support. It allows viewers to experience the testimony not merely as courtroom evidence but as a meaningful emotional moment.

*Data [056-IN] ...every foreign investor breathing into a paper bag.*

This expression reflects negative affect, especially anxiety and fear. The metaphor “*breathing into a paper bag*” strongly evokes panic, stress, and nervousness. Rather than directly saying investors are worried, the speaker chooses a vivid emotional image that dramatizes their psychological state. In appraisal terms, this belongs to affect because it encodes emotional response to uncertainty in Indonesia’s investment climate. The phrase intensifies concern over the legal case by portraying the reaction as physically overwhelming. It transforms economic anxiety into something visible and relatable, making abstract investor concerns feel immediate and human. The use of this emotional metaphor is especially effective in digital journalism because it increases audience immersion. It frames the broader issue of investment instability through embodied emotion rather than statistics or policy language.

### b. Judgement

*Data [106-HN] ...how a completely innocent man can be sentenced to four years in prison*

This clause illustrates judgement, specifically social sanction regarding justice and morality. The phrase “*completely innocent*” evaluates Ibrahim Arief’s character in moral terms and positions him as undeserving of punishment. Unlike affect, which expresses feeling, judgement evaluates people’s behavior, ethics, or personal qualities. The statement implicitly criticizes the legal outcome while positively assessing the individual being discussed. By using “*completely*”, the speaker reinforces certainty and leaves little room for ambiguity regarding innocence. This evaluative judgment

contributes to a broader narrative questioning legal legitimacy. It encourages audiences to assess the court decision morally rather than merely legally. Through this wording, the speaker constructs a contrast between innocence and punishment, which can trigger public concern over fairness in judicial institutions.

### c. Appreciation

*Data [052-IN] His answer paints a chilling scene for what's at stake.*

This clause is an example of appreciation because it evaluates a situation rather than a person. The phrase “*a chilling scene*” appraises the seriousness and dramatic quality of the issue being discussed. Appreciation in appraisal theory refers to evaluation of things, events, or phenomena. Here, the speaker assesses the broader consequences of the case as alarming and emotionally heavy. The adjective “*chilling*” suggests danger, uncertainty, and dramatic significance.

This appreciation helps frame the legal issue as larger than an individual trial. It encourages the audience to interpret the event as socially consequential and potentially threatening to the broader economic environment. In journalistic storytelling, this evaluative description adds narrative tension and emotional depth. It transforms the interview response into a dramatic social commentary. Consequently, the audience perceives the case not simply as legal news but as an event with serious national implications.

*Data [093-HN] It's a colourful legal landscape...*

This expression also reflects appreciation because it evaluates the legal environment as a phenomenon. The adjective “*colourful*” functions metaphorically to characterize the legal landscape as unusual, complex, and perhaps contradictory. Rather than describing legal procedure literally, it offers an interpretive assessment of the system's character. This appreciation creates a nuanced evaluative stance. The wording sounds indirect and stylistically expressive, which is effective for social media journalism. It communicates criticism while maintaining rhetorical sophistication. The audience is encouraged to interpret the legal context as unpredictable and layered. As a result, the phrase contributes to constructing a broader evaluative image of Indonesia's legal climate within the tech sector.

## 2. Graduation

### a. Force

*Data [062-IN] There will be a very deep, very sudden ice age.*

This clause demonstrates ‘force’ through intensification. The repeated use of “*very*” amplifies the severity of “*deep*” and “*sudden*”. Graduation: force works by increasing or decreasing intensity. Here, the speaker heightens the sense of economic crisis using metaphorical imagery of an ice age. This intensification makes the warning more dramatic and persuasive. Rather than saying conditions may worsen, the expression creates a powerful emotional and visual image of collapse. In TikTok discourse, strong intensifiers are effective because they create immediacy and memorability. The phrase therefore strengthens audience perception of urgency surrounding Indonesia's investment climate.

*Data [096-HN] The “Tech Winter” in Indonesia just got significantly colder.*

The phrase “*significantly colder*” is another realization of force because it scales intensity upward. The adverb “*significantly*” amplifies the metaphorical description of “*colder*” to indicate worsening conditions in the tech ecosystem. This wording emphasizes escalation. The Indonesian tech winter is

not merely continuing but becoming more severe. The use of force here sharpens the impact of the message and encourages the audience to perceive the situation as deteriorating rapidly. It contributes to a strong rhetorical framing of economic uncertainty.

**b. Focus**

*Data [061-IN] Indonesia's investment climate will remain somewhat tropical, or very soon*

This phrase shows focus, specifically softening category boundaries. The modifier “*somewhat*” makes the category less precise. Rather than fully tropical, the investment climate is described as partially or conditionally tropical. This soft categorization introduces ambiguity and interpretive flexibility. It reflects uncertainty about the future investment climate while maintaining metaphorical imagery. The audience is encouraged to imagine the condition as unstable and transitional rather than fixed.

*Data [075-SN] Two separate answers for one simple question*

This clause represents sharpening focus. The adjective “*simple*” narrows and defines the question as direct and singular. It frames the issue as focused and easy to understand, despite the broader complexity of the case. This strategy is rhetorically useful because it makes complicated legal discourse accessible to TikTok audiences. By presenting it as *one simple question*, the speaker reduces complexity and guides viewers toward a clear interpretive entry point. It enhances clarity while structuring audience attention.

**3. Engagement**

**a. Monogloss**

*Data [077-SN] Only time will tell*

*Data [080-HN] What's happening?*

Two examples above are monoglossic. Data [077-SN] presents information without referencing another viewpoint. It is stated as a standalone proposition with no attribution or dialogic expansion. The expression creates authority and closure. It positions uncertainty as an accepted reality and invites viewers to wait for future developments. Because no alternative voice is introduced, the statement sounds definitive and self-contained.

The Data [080-HN] also functions as monogloss because it introduces the topic directly without citing external perspectives. It serves as a framing device that guides audience interpretation. In TikTok journalism, such monoglossic framing is effective for structuring narrative flow. It establishes focus immediately and creates curiosity. The audience is positioned to receive the explanation that follows as relevant and authoritative.

**b. Heterogloss**

*Data [103-HN] Scott Beuamont “There was no connection at all...”*

The clause above is heteroglossic because it introduces an external voice through quotation. The meaning is attributed to Scott Beaumont rather than asserted by the narrator directly. This attribution increases credibility by incorporating testimony from a relevant actor. It opens dialogic space by allowing another perspective to enter the discourse. In journalism, heterogloss helps construct objectivity while presenting competing voices within the narrative.

*Data [058-IN] Nadiem Makarim “I think it could be quite devastating...”*

The data above also represents heterogloss because the speaker's opinion is explicitly quoted and marked with *"I think"*. The proposition is framed as a personal perspective rather than an absolute fact. This dialogic strategy allows the content creator to present evaluation while maintaining journalistic distance. By attributing the statement to Nadiem Makarim, the narrator includes evaluative meaning without fully owning the claim. This strengthens credibility and expands interpretive space for the audience.

### Representation of Nadiem Makarim and Emerging Evaluative Patterns

At the level of social practice, Tech in Asia's TikTok content tends to represent Nadiem Makarim primarily as a credible technology innovator rather than solely as a public official implicated in a corruption case. This representation is reflected in the predominance of positive appreciation and judgment, together with the extensive use of heteroglossic resources that foreground external voices and contextual explanations. Rather than advancing a definitive ideological position, these evaluative patterns may be interpreted as emphasizing innovation, professional credibility, and due process while reducing the prominence of immediate moral condemnation associated with the corruption allegations.

Data [055-IN] *"watching the face of Indonesian innovation face his biggest disruption yet: a corruption trial"*

Data [070-SN] *"There was no connection at all"*

Data [071-SN] *"There was never any agreement like this"*

The example of [055-IN] shows the expression positions of Nadiem as *"the face of Indonesian innovation."* This positive appreciation foregrounds his symbolic role within Indonesia's digital transformation before introducing his legal predicament. As a result, audiences are encouraged to interpret him primarily through the lens of innovation and entrepreneurship rather than criminality. A similar pattern appears in the coverage of testimonies delivered by former Google executives. Statements on examples [070-SN] and [071-SN] provide external voices that challenge the prosecution's allegations and support Nadiem's position. Through heteroglossic strategies, Tech in Asia introduces authoritative actors from the global technology sector whose testimonies enhance the credibility of alternative interpretations of the case. Consequently, the discourse creates a narrative in which Nadiem appears as a figure whose innocence is supported by influential and knowledgeable actors rather than as an individual solely defined by criminal accusations. Furthermore, many negative evaluations found in the data are directed not at Nadiem himself but at the broader legal and economic implications surrounding the case.

Data [056-IN] *"every foreign investor breathing into a paper bag"*

Data [062-IN] *"a very deep, very sudden ice age"*

Data [096-HN] *"the Tech Winter in Indonesia just got significantly colder"*

Some examples of data above construct a sense of anxiety regarding Indonesia's investment climate and technology sector. Through these evaluations, the focus shifts from individual wrongdoing to concerns about economic stability, investor confidence, and the future of innovation in Indonesia. These evaluative patterns appear to align with a discourse that privileges innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment as important elements of national development. Rather than conclusively demonstrating a neoliberal ideology, the findings suggest a tendency to frame

technological progress as a central public value. These ideological orientations position technological innovation, entrepreneurship, and global investment as essential drivers of national development. Within this framework, successful technology leaders are viewed as valuable agents of progress whose contributions extend beyond business and into broader social transformation. This ideological tendency becomes evident in the way the case is framed. The discourse repeatedly emphasizes the potential consequences of the trial for Indonesia's investment climate and technological ecosystem.

Data [056-IN] *"every foreign investor breathing into a paper bag."*

For instance, the data [056-IN] above, shows the metaphor shifts attention toward investor anxiety, while references to *"investment climate," "ice age,"* and *"Tech Winter"* construct the legal proceedings as a threat to economic growth and technological development. Such framing encourages audiences to perceive the case not merely as a legal matter but as an event with significant implications for Indonesia's future competitiveness in the global digital economy.

Moreover, the repeated inclusion of testimonies from Google executives, venture capital actors, and technology stakeholders reinforces a worldview in which innovation and investment are closely interconnected. Through this perspective, legal actions involving prominent technology figures are interpreted in relation to their potential impact on entrepreneurship, business confidence, and economic modernization. Consequently, the discourse appears to position legal certainty as closely connected to innovation and technological development, suggesting an institutional preference rather than demonstrating a fixed ideological stance.

### Social Values

The discourse appears to emphasize several interconnected social values that are considered important within contemporary digital society, namely innovation, fairness, and legal certainty. Nadiem Makarim is consistently associated with technological advancement, educational reform, and entrepreneurial success, positioning innovation as a crucial driver of national progress. At the same time, discussions concerning the presence of military personnel in a civilian courtroom, questions about judicial independence, and controversial legal decisions emphasize the importance of fairness and transparency within legal institutions. Furthermore, the recurrent use of expressions such as *"criminalization," "legal uncertainty,"* and *"Tech Winter"* highlights concerns about the potential impact of unpredictable legal processes on investment confidence and technological development. Consequently, the discourse extends beyond Nadiem's individual case and can be interpreted as extending the discussion regarding the sustainability, competitiveness, and future growth of Indonesia's digital economy.

The predominance of engagement resources (71.5%) suggests that the discourse relies extensively on dialogic positioning rather than direct authorial evaluation. Within Appraisal Theory, engagement resources enable speakers and writers to acknowledge, negotiate, or attribute alternative viewpoints. The high proportion of engagement therefore indicates that legitimacy is constructed primarily through the incorporation of multiple external voices, such as technology executives, legal experts, and industry actors, instead of relying solely on explicit evaluative statements by the narrator. According to Fairclough (1995), discourse is not merely a reflection of social reality but a social practice that actively shapes, maintains, and transforms ideological structures and power relations. From this perspective, the way events are represented in the media is never neutral because linguistic choices are influenced by institutional interests and broader social contexts. The findings of this study support Fairclough's view by showing that Tech in Asia does more than report the legal proceedings involving Nadiem Makarim. Through its evaluative language, the platform constructs a particular understanding

of the relationship between innovation, law, and economic development. This is evident in the portrayal of Nadiem as *“the face of Indonesian innovation”* and in the repeated emphasis on the potential impact of the case on Indonesia’s investment climate.

The social practice dimension becomes more visible when the appraisal findings are connected to the broader institutional and societal context. Appraisal analysis identifies how attitudes, evaluations, intensifications, and external voices are strategically employed, while Fairclough’s framework explains how these linguistic patterns contribute to ideological meaning. The recurrent positive evaluations of innovation, the reliance on supportive testimonies, and the negative appraisal of legal uncertainty collectively reveal an ideological orientation that privileges technological progress, entrepreneurship, and investor confidence. These patterns are consistent with Tech in Asia’s editorial orientation as a technology-focused media outlet, although this study does not compare its discourse with that of other news organizations. Consequently, the trial is framed not only as a judicial issue but also as a matter with significant implications for the digital economy, innovation ecosystem, and Indonesia’s attractiveness to global investors.

Furthermore, the emergence of this discourse can be understood through the situational and social context surrounding the media-reported case involving allegations of corruption against Nadiem Makarim. The TikTok coverage was published at a time when public discussions concerning legal certainty, regulatory stability, and Indonesia’s digital economy were particularly prominent. These contextual factors help explain why the issue attracted considerable public attention and resonated with Tech in Asia’s audience. In this regard, Appraisal Theory serves as an analytical bridge for examining how evaluative meanings are connected to Fairclough’s social practice dimension by revealing how institutional interests and broader social concerns are expressed through discourse. Rather than demonstrating a fixed ideological position, the linguistic patterns identified in this study suggest a tendency to frame innovation, entrepreneurial leadership, legal certainty, and technological development as interconnected public values. These findings should therefore be understood as reflecting the discourse constructed in the analyzed TikTok content rather than representing the overall editorial ideology of Tech in Asia.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the representation of Nadiem Makarim in Tech in Asia’s TikTok content by integrating Appraisal Theory and Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis. The findings showed that engagement was the most dominant appraisal resource, accounting for 71.5% of all occurrences, followed by attitude (20.2%) and graduation (8.3%). The predominance of engagement suggests that the discourse relies extensively on multiple voices, perspectives, and attributed sources to construct credibility and negotiate legitimacy. Through heteroglossic resources, including statements from Google executives, legal experts, and industry actors, Tech in Asia presents the media-reported case as a contested public issue rather than solely through direct authorial evaluation. Meanwhile, the attitude system tends to portray Nadiem Makarim positively in relation to innovation and entrepreneurship, whereas negative evaluations are primarily directed toward legal uncertainty, judicial procedures, and their perceived implications for Indonesia’s investment climate. Graduation resources further reinforce these evaluations through intensified expressions and metaphors such as Tech Winter, criminalization, and ice age.

From the perspective of Fairclough’s social practice, these evaluative patterns suggest a discursive tendency to emphasize innovation, entrepreneurial leadership, legal certainty, and technological

development as important public values. Rather than demonstrating a fixed editorial ideology, the appraisal findings indicate how linguistic choices may reflect broader institutional priorities and socio-economic concerns within the analyzed TikTok content. As a technology-oriented media platform, Tech in Asia appears to frame the media-reported case not only as a legal issue but also as one with potential implications for startups, investors, and Indonesia's digital economy. Consequently, Nadiem Makarim is represented primarily in relation to his role as a technology innovator whose legal case is associated with wider discussions of governance, innovation, and economic development. These findings are consistent with Fairclough's (1995) view that discourse functions as a social practice through which media representations contribute to the construction of particular social meanings.

This study has several limitations. First, the analysis was limited to six TikTok videos published by a single technology-focused media outlet; therefore, the findings should not be generalized to Tech in Asia's overall editorial position or to media coverage more broadly. Second, the study focused primarily on verbal appraisal resources and did not systematically analyze visual, auditory, and other multimodal features that are integral to TikTok communication. Finally, because no comparison was made with other news organizations, the ideological interpretations presented in this study should be understood as reflecting patterns within the selected dataset rather than as definitive evidence of broader media ideology. Future studies may address these limitations by incorporating multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis and comparative analyses across multiple digital news platforms.

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