

## How does the government create 8% growth? A critical transitivity analysis of economic rhetoric in Indonesia

**ABSTRACT** - This study employs Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, integrated with Halliday's transitivity system from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), to examine the economic discourse produced by Indonesia's Minister of Finance. The analytical method operationalizes Fairclough's three-dimensional model—textual analysis, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice—through the systematic application of the SFL transitivity system as its principal grammatical tool. At the textual level, transitivity analysis maps the ideational function of language by classifying 768 clauses into six process types: material (31.0%), relational (27.1%), mental (19.1%), verbal (8.7%), existential (2.3%), and behavioral (2.0%), with the remainder comprising minor and elliptical clauses. An in-depth analysis of the three dominant process types reveals distinct ideological functions. Material processes construct the state as the primary economic actor capable of generating growth through deliberate intervention. Relational processes naturalize economic challenges as objective conditions necessitating state response, rather than as outcomes of contestable policy decisions. Mental processes assert epistemic authority while simultaneously constructing a form of epistemic nationalism that challenges the legitimacy of international financial institutions. By fully integrating Fairclough's three-dimensional framework with focused transitivity analysis, this study demonstrates how economic discourse during Indonesia's governmental transition encodes a developmental state ideology, naturalizes active state intervention, and asserts postcolonial epistemic sovereignty. The findings advance CDA methodology by providing a replicable model for the integrated linguistic analysis of economic policy discourse in transitional political contexts.

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## 1. Introduction

Economic discourse and political discourse intersect most visibly in ministerial policy speech, where technical expertise and political legitimation are simultaneously performed. The authority to define economic reality to name what the economy is, what it needs, and who can deliver it, is itself a form of political power, and the grammatical choices through which that authority is exercised are rarely examined with the scrutiny they deserve. This study addresses that gap by applying Fairclough's (1989, 1992, 1995, 2003) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), integrated with Halliday's (1994), Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) transitivity system, to a speech by Indonesia's Minister of Finance delivered during the 2024 governmental transition.

Despite a robust international body of CDA scholarship on economic discourse spanning budget rhetoric (Levin, 2016), financial crisis communication (KhosraviNik, 2010; Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018), and parliamentary economic speech (Mulderrig, 2012; Altamimi, 2023), ministerial economic discourse in Southeast Asian transitional contexts remains critically underexamined. Indonesian CDA scholarship has engaged productively with electoral and presidential rhetoric (Salsabila, 2024; Supatmiwati et al., 2025; Hariati & Purwarno, 2025) but has not subjected ministerial economic speech to three-dimensionally integrated CDA. This is the gap the present study fills.

The contribution is threefold: methodological, in demonstrating that full integration of Fairclough's three dimensions with focused transitivity analysis produces critical insights unavailable from either approach alone; empirical, in providing the first such analysis of Indonesian ministerial economic discourse; and theoretical, in elaborating epistemic nationalism, the grammatical assertion of indigenous economic knowledge against international institutional authority as a distinct postcolonial legitimation strategy. Two research questions guide the analysis: (RQ3) How does the integration of Fairclough's textual, discursive, and sociocultural dimensions reveal the hegemonic functions of economic rhetoric in transitional contexts? (RQ4) How does economic discourse construct and deploy epistemic nationalism as a postcolonial legitimation strategy?

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Fairclough's three-dimensional critical discourse analysis

Fairclough's (1989, 1992, 1995, 2003) three-dimensional model is the theoretical cornerstone of this study and warrants detailed explication. The model conceives of every discourse event as simultaneously operating across three analytically distinct but dialectically related dimensions: text, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice.

The first dimension, text, concerns the formal linguistic properties of a discourse instance, i.e., vocabulary, grammatical structures, cohesive devices, and textual organisation. Fairclough draws on Halliday's SFL to operationalise this dimension because SFL provides a principled, socially oriented grammar in which every linguistic choice is understood as meaningful. Analysis at this level does not stop at description but asks what ideological work particular grammatical choices perform. The transitivity system, belonging to the ideational meta function of SFL, is the primary analytical tool here: it classifies clauses according to process

type, participant roles, and circumstances, providing systematic, empirically grounded evidence of how experience is represented and agency is distributed.

The second dimension, discourse practice, examines the institutional processes through which texts are produced, distributed, and consumed, attending to genre conventions, intertextual relations, and the conditions under which different audiences engage with and interpret texts. A ministerial speech delivered at an academic forum and simultaneously broadcast on national television inhabits specific production conditions (ministerial authority, technocratic legitimacy, political vulnerability during transition) that shape both what the text can mean and how its meanings are negotiated across different audiences.

The third dimension, sociocultural practice, situates discourse within the broader social, political, and economic formations that provide its conditions of possibility—the domain at which ideology, power, and hegemony become analytically central. This is the dimension through which textual patterns acquire their full critical significance: what appears as a grammatical preference becomes, at this level, a contribution to hegemonic struggle.

The relationship among these three dimensions is dialectical rather than hierarchical: textual features both reflect and shape discourse practices, which in turn both reflect and shape sociocultural formations. The analytical movement the present study performs is therefore integrative: transitivity findings established at the textual level are situated within the discourse practice context of their production and reception, and then read as contributions to the sociocultural processes of ideological reproduction and hegemonic construction identified at the third dimension. Only through this three-dimensional movement does transitivity analysis become genuinely critical rather than merely descriptive.

## 2.2. *The transitivity system: Analytical framework*

The transitivity system in Halliday's SFL (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) classifies clauses according to the type of process they encode, the participant roles associated with that process, and the circumstances of time, place, manner, cause, and accompaniment, in which it is situated.

Material processes involve doing and happening, with an Actor who brings about change directed at a Goal (e.g., *membangun* [to build], *menciptakan* [to create]). They allocate agency: determining who acts, who is acted upon, and who is absent from the represented scene. Mental processes involve consciousness: cognitive (knowing), affective (feeling), perceptive (seeing), and desiderative (wanting) subtypes, with a Senser and a Phenomenon. They establish epistemic authority by validating or delegitimising knowledge claims. Relational processes involve being and having, in either attributive mode (assigning a quality or Attribute to a Carrier) or identifying mode (establishing equivalence between a Token and a Value). They naturalise: presenting historically produced conditions as inherent states or essential qualities. Verbal processes involve communicating, managing intertextual relations through the framing of reported voices. Behavioral processes describe physiological and psychological activities intermediate between material and mental, anchoring abstract discourse in embodied experience. Existential processes assert the existence of entities, making ontological claims about what is acknowledged as real.

Circumstances, the adverbial elements of time, place, manner, cause, and role, extend process meaning in analytically significant ways. Temporal circumstances (“*di masa transisi ini*”, at this moment of transition) frame actions as historically urgent; spatial circumstances locate processes within nationalist or institutional territories; manner circumstances encode how forcefully, decisively, carefully governmental actions are performed. In economic discourse, circumstances often do the ideological work of urgency and necessity that processes alone cannot carry.

### 2.3. *Ideology, power, and hegemony in economic discourse*

The concept of ideology is central to CDA and requires substantive theoretical grounding before its application to economic discourse can be meaningfully pursued. In Fairclough's (1989, 2003) critical realist framework, ideology refers to “meaning in the service of power”: representations of reality that function to establish, maintain, or challenge relations of domination. Crucially, ideology does not operate through falsehood alone, it operates through the naturalisation of particular representations, making contingent arrangements appear as necessary, universal, or common-sensical. This is what distinguishes ideological from merely persuasive discourse: ideology succeeds not when it convinces but when it ceases to require convincing, when its representations become the background assumptions against which argument itself takes place.

Fairclough's account draws substantially on Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony, the achievement of dominance through consent rather than coercion. For Gramsci, hegemonic formations are never fully secured: they require constant discursive labour to reproduce the consent of subordinate groups by making dominant representations appear as the natural expression of shared interests. In economic discourse, this hegemonic labour involves making particular understandings of markets, states, and development appear as technical necessities as what the economy objectively requires rather than as political choices that serve specific interests. The language of economic policy is thus a primary site of hegemonic struggle: those who succeed in establishing their economic imaginary as common sense have achieved, at the epistemic level, a form of dominance that coercive power cannot easily match.

Althusser's (1971) account of ideological state apparatuses extends this analysis by identifying the specific institutional mechanisms through which ideology is reproduced. For Althusser, state institutions, including governmental discourse events, interpellated subjects into particular ideological positions, calling them into existence as the kinds of subjects who recognise particular representations as natural and self-evident. A ministerial speech that addresses its audience as fellow members of a national economic project using the inclusive *kita* (we), positioning all as joint participants in the creation of growth performs precisely this interpolative function: it calls the audience into existence as members of a developmental state project whose success is in their collective interest.

Žižek's (1989) contribution to ideology theory adds a further dimension relevant to the present study. For Žižek, ideology functions not merely through what is explicitly said but through what goes without saying, the phantasmatic framework that structures what can be

thought and desired within a given discursive formation. In Indonesian economic discourse, this framework is the assumption of national developmental capacity: the unspoken premise that Indonesia can and should achieve 8% growth, that this is a matter of will and governance rather than structural constraint. This premise is never argued for in the speech; it is the horizon within which argument takes place. Transitivity analysis makes this phantasmatic framework visible: by revealing which processes are selected as possible and which participants are assigned as capable, it exposes the implicit ontology of economic possibility that structures the discourse.

Applied to the Indonesian context, these theoretical resources illuminate the specific character of economic legitimation during governmental transition. The new administration faces a hegemonic task: to establish its developmental state vision as common sense, as what Indonesia objectively needs, while delegitimising the approaches of its predecessors and positioning international institutional scepticism as itself ideologically motivated. This task is performed, as the analysis below demonstrates, primarily through the grammatical choices encoded in the speech's transitivity patterns.

#### *2.4. Economic discourse: From western scholarship to the Asian context*

The foundational contributions to economic discourse analysis emerged primarily from British and European CDA scholarship. Fairclough's (2000) analysis of New Labour's economic language demonstrated how nominalisations, technocratic vocabulary, and selective transitivity patterns encoded a “third way” ideological position, naturalising market logics within an apparently progressive framework. Mulderrig's (2012) corpus-based transitivity analysis of UK education and employment policy revealed how material processes systematically positioned the state as an accountable agent while displacing responsibility to individuals and market actors. Levin (2016) traced how budget rhetoric naturalises fiscal austerity through relational processes that present politically chosen cuts as objective economic necessities. Examining financial crisis discourse, KhosraviNik (2010) and Flowerdew and Richardson (2018) demonstrated how selective attribution and passivation assigned blame and distributed responsibility for economic failure, revealing that even apparently technical economic reporting is deeply invested with ideological work.

These studies collectively establish the methodological case for the present study: that economic discourse is a productive site for CDA, that transitivity analysis is among its most powerful tools, and that material, relational, and mental processes are the primary grammatical vehicles through which agency is constructed, conditions are naturalised, and knowledge claims are authorised.

Moving to Asian contexts, Zhou (2024, 2025) analyses transitivity in Chinese presidential and governmental discourse, finding that material process dominance encodes party-state developmental capacity, a pattern parallel to that identified here. Research on developmental state discourse across East and Southeast Asia reveals how governmental economic rhetoric consistently foregrounds state agency and naturalises interventionist policies, while positioning international economic prescriptions as externally imposed rather than universally valid (Hoang & Cha, 2024). Cabrejas-Peñuelas (2022) and Pineda and Gumban

(2025) extend transitivity analysis to parliamentary and interview contexts, establishing its applicability across institutional genres of political economic communication.

Within Indonesia, critical linguistic scholarship has engaged with electoral rhetoric (Salsabila, 2024; Supatmiwati et al., 2025), inaugural address (Hariati & Purwarno, 2025), and media coverage (Betari et al., 2025), but ministerial economic speech remains unexamined through systematic three-dimensional CDA. Supatmiwati et al. (2025) provides the most methodologically proximate contribution, applying transitivity analysis to Indonesian presidential candidates and demonstrating correlations between process type distributions and political strategy. However, it does not integrate Fairclough's discourse practice and sociocultural dimensions, limiting the analytical reach of its textual findings.

### *2.5. Research gap and novelty*

Three specific gaps justify the present study. First, the object of analysis: ministerial economic speech, in which state technocrats most directly articulate policy visions and claim expert authority, has not been subjected to systematic three-dimensional CDA in Indonesia. Second, methodological integration: no existing Indonesian study applies transitivity analysis and Fairclough's full three-dimensional framework in genuine integration, leaving textual findings without the critical interpretive architecture that gives them analytical force. Third, the function of epistemic nationalism: no study has examined how mental process patterns in ministerial economic speech construct and deploy the assertion of indigenous economic knowledge against international institutional authority as a postcolonial legitimation strategy.

From these gaps, the novelty of the present study is precisely stated: it provides the first three-dimensionally integrated CDA analysis of ministerial economic discourse in Indonesia, with focused depth on the three dominant process types, producing both empirical findings on the grammar of developmental state legitimation and a replicable methodological framework for comparable analyses in postcolonial transitional contexts.

## **3. Method**

### *3.1. Research design*

This study employs a qualitative research design using Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA as the primary framework, with Halliday's SFL transitivity system operationalising the textual dimension. The integration is epistemologically principled: textual findings are not interpreted in isolation but are systematically articulated with discourse practice and sociocultural dimensions. The analytical focus is concentrated deep, specific analysis of the three dominant process types through closely examined textual examples rather than a broad survey of all six process types.

### *3.2. Data and source: Rationale for corpus selection*

The primary data is the verbatim transcript of a speech entitled "National Economic Transformation: Inclusive Growth Toward 8%," delivered by Indonesia's Minister of Finance,

Purbaya Yudhi Sadewa, at the Great Institute event on September 11, 2025 (Kompas TV, 2025). The speech runs for 37 minutes and 30 seconds and contains 3,509 words.

The selection of this speech is motivated by four considerations of representativeness and analytical significance. First, the speaker's institutional position: as Minister of Finance, Purbaya Yudhi Sadewa occupies the highest technocratic office for economic policy in Indonesia, giving his discourse both institutional authority and direct relevance to state economic legitimation. Second, the event's significance: the Great Institute forum is a high-profile academic platform, positioning the speech at the intersection of expert and public discourse, the precise genre context in which technical economic authority and political legitimation are most visibly combined. Third, the timing relative to transition: the speech was delivered in the early consolidation period of the post-2024 administration, when the discursive work of establishing a new economic hegemony, distinguishing the new administration's vision from its predecessor, asserting developmental state credentials, and challenging inherited representations, is at its most intense and ideologically revealing. Fourth, the distribution context: simultaneous broadcast on Kompas TV ensured that the speech circulated beyond the specialist forum to a mass national audience, making it a particularly significant site for the dissemination of economic ideology.

The video recording and auto-generated transcript were sourced from the official Kompas TV YouTube channel. The transcript was manually verified and corrected line-by-line against the audio-visual recording, with particular attention to informal diction, colloquial forms, and the conversationalised register characteristic of the speech.

### 3.3. *Data analysis method*

#### 3.3.1. *Textual analysis: Focused transitivity*

The verified transcript was unitised into 768 clauses following SFL conventions, including both ranking and embedded clauses. Each clause was coded for process type and participant roles, with SFL diagnostic tests applied at the Material/Relational and Mental/Verbal boundaries where ambiguity most frequently arises. Frequency counts established the overall distribution and identified the three dominant types. Analysis then shifted from quantification to depth: for each dominant type, representative clauses were selected for close grammatical analysis, examining participant configuration precisely, which actor occupies the Actor role, which Carrier receives which Attribute, which Sender claims which degree of certainty before interpreting ideological function. Counter-patterns and clauses that complicate the dominant interpretation are also examined to ensure analytical rigour.

#### 3.3.2. *Discourse practice analysis*

The speech is examined as a hybrid genre, formal economic policy lecture colonised by conversational features and its intertextual relations are traced: which voices are incorporated, in what form, and with what authorising or delegitimising framing. Conditions of production, distribution, and consumption are analysed as the institutional context within which textual patterns acquire their force.

### 3.3.3. Sociocultural practice analysis

Findings are situated within Indonesia's post-2024 political-economic context, examining how the discourse responds to and reshapes understanding of state-market relations during transition. This dimension addresses RQ3 and RQ4 directly, reading transitivity patterns as contributions to hegemonic construction and epistemic legitimation.

### 3.4. Validity and reliability

Intra-coder reliability was assessed through re-analysis of a random 10% sample after a two-week interval, yielding a consistency rate of 94%. Discrepancies were resolved by returning to SFL diagnostic criteria. Validity was pursued through theoretical alignment with Fairclough's CDA and Halliday's SFL, textual grounding of all critical interpretations in specific grammatical evidence, systematic contextualisation within discourse practice and sociocultural dimensions, and reflexive awareness of researcher positioning.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. Textual analysis: Distribution of process types

The analysis identified 768 clauses in the speech. Table 1 presents the distribution of process types:

**Table 1**

Distribution of process types.

Process Type	Frequency	Percentage
Material	238	31.0%
Relational	208	27.1%
Mental	147	19.1%
Verbal	67	8.7%
Behavioral	15	2.0%
Existential	18	2.3%
Minor Clauses	45	5.9%
Elliptical	30	3.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>100%</b>

A clear dominance of material processes (238 instances, 31.0%) was found, followed by relational processes (208 instances, 27.1%) and mental processes (147 instances, 19.1%). Together, these three categories account for 77.2% of all clauses, indicating that this discourse is primarily constructed through representations of material action, the establishment of identity/attribution relations, and expressions of consciousness. From a critical perspective, this distribution itself is ideologically significant, privileging representations of governmental action (material), naturalizing economic states (relational), and asserting knowledge claims (mental).

## 4.2. Material processes: The grammar of state agency

### 4.2.1. Participant configuration and actor assignment

Of the 238 material process clauses, the analytically decisive feature is the systematic pattern of Actor assignment. The government, most frequently represented through the inclusive first-person plural *kita* (we) occupies the Actor role in the dominant majority of transitive material clauses, with economic targets, market flows, and structural conditions assigned as Goals.

The clause “*kita akan menciptakan pertumbuhan ekonomi 8%*” (we will create 8% economic growth) illustrates the pattern with particular clarity. The process *menciptakan* (to create) is strongly transitive: it presupposes an Actor exercising deliberate capacity upon a Goal, 8% economic growth, as if growth were a producible object. This representation forecloses the complexity through which growth is typically understood in orthodox economic discourse as the emergent outcome of productivity, investment, and structural conditions and substitutes a model of direct governmental manufacture. The Actor *kita* is a bounded, collective governmental subject with the capacity to bring this Goal into existence through will and action.

The pattern intensifies in “*kita paksa uangnya masuk*” (we force the money to enter). The material process *paksa* (to force) is coercive and unambiguously transitive: governmental agency is not facilitative but compulsive, directing capital flows as an exercise of sovereign authority. This construction encodes a strong developmental state ideology at the level of grammar: the state does not incentivise or create conditions, it forces.

### 4.2.2. Circumstantial elements and temporal urgency

Circumstantial elements in material process clauses contribute significantly to meaning by framing governmental action as temporally urgent and historically necessary. Temporal circumstances such as “*sekarang*” (now), “*di masa transisi ini*” (at this moment of transition), and “*dalam lima tahun ke depan*” (in the next five years) repeatedly accompany material process clauses, anchoring governmental action within a window of necessity. This is not simply background information: the temporal framing constructs a discourse of irreversibility and urgency, the action must happen now, in this transitional moment, or the opportunity will be lost. The grammatical combination of strong transitive material processes with temporal urgency creates what might be called a “necessity architecture”: state intervention is not merely possible but temporally compelled.

Manner circumstances, “*dengan tegas*” (firmly/decisively), “*langsung*” (directly), similarly encode the quality of governmental action, reinforcing the developmental state model in which decisiveness is itself a form of policy virtue.

### 4.2.3. Counter-pattern: Passive and goalless material clauses

Not all material process clauses in the speech follow the dominant pattern of governmental Actor and economic Goal. A subset of material clauses employs passive constructions or intransitive processes in which the economy or market is positioned as Actor, notably in clauses describing positive developments in previous periods, such as references to

export growth or investment increases. This counter-pattern is analytically significant: it suggests a selective distribution of agency in which the government is positioned as Actor when the represented outcome is desired or claimed, while market processes or impersonal forces are positioned as Actor when the outcome is ambiguous or potentially attributable to prior administration. This selectivity, rather than undermining the dominant pattern, confirms its ideological character: agency is not distributed neutrally but in ways that maximise governmental credit and minimise governmental accountability. Fairclough (2003) identifies precisely this kind of selective transitivity as a primary mechanism of ideological representation.

### *4.3. Relational processes: The grammar of naturalisation*

#### *4.3.1. Attributive constructions and the erasure of causality*

Of the 208 relational process clauses, attributive constructions dominate, consistently assigning negative Attributes to economic conditions as their Carriers. The clause “*ekonomi susah*” (the economy is difficult) is paradigmatic: the Carrier (*ekonomi*) is assigned an Attribute (*susah*) through a copular or zero-copula relational process, transforming a historically produced condition into an essential quality of the economy itself.

Economic difficulty in Indonesia is the outcome of specific fiscal decisions, commodity price cycles, exchange rate dynamics, and accumulated policy choices. The clause “*ekonomi susah*” represents none of this causal complexity. It presents hardship as simply what the economy is an objective state rather than what particular actors made it through particular decisions. This is precisely the naturalisation function that Fairclough (2003, p. 145) identifies as central to relational process ideology: the presentation of “what are actually transient, historically specific, socially constructed relations as if they were permanent and natural.” In the context of governmental transition, the ideological payoff is clear: the new administration appears as responding to an objective condition it found rather than inheriting the consequences of contestable choices made by its predecessors.

#### *4.3.2. Relational-material sequencing as hegemonic narrative*

The most powerful ideological structure in the speech is the sequential combination of relational and material processes: a relational clause that establishes a problematic economic state is followed by a material clause positioning government as the agent capable of transforming it. The relational clause naturalises the problem; the material clause legitimises the intervention. Together they construct the “necessity narrative” of developmental state discourse, a grammar of crisis and response in which active governmental intervention appears not merely appropriate but logically compelled.

This sequential pattern is not incidental: it recurs throughout the speech at multiple scales, from adjacent clause pairs to the macro-argumentative structure of entire speech segments. At the sociocultural level, it encodes the Gramscian (1971) hegemonic project of the new administration: establishing developmental state intervention as the obvious, rational, and necessary response to economic conditions that are themselves presented as self-evidently requiring such response.

### 4.3.3. *Circumstantial and counter-pattern observations*

Circumstantial elements within relational clauses frequently encode temporal comparison “*sebelumnya*” (previously), “*dulu*” (formerly) that implicitly contrasts current economic difficulty with a past from which it is distinguished. These temporal circumstances perform delegitimising work on the predecessor administration without requiring explicit accusation: the economy is difficult, and the temporal framing implies it was not always so, or was made so, without naming the agent responsible.

A notable counter-pattern appears in relational clauses assigning positive attributes to Indonesian economic potential: “Indonesia kaya” (Indonesia is rich [in resources]), “*kita mampu*” (we are capable). These identifying and attributive constructions “naturalise national capacity” in the same grammatical register that “economic difficulty is naturalized” presenting capability as an essential quality of the national subject rather than as a contested assessment. This symmetry reveals the full ideological architecture of the relational process pattern: difficulty is naturalised as the starting condition; capability is naturalised as the inherent resource; intervention becomes the logical bridge between them.

## 4.4. *Mental processes: The grammar of epistemic nationalism*

### 4.4.1. *Cognitive certainty and the construction of authoritative knowledge*

The 147 mental process clauses divide analytically into two interrelated patterns: the assertion of the speaker's own cognitive certainty, and the attribution of ignorance or error to institutional others. Together they construct epistemic nationalism, the systematic claim that domestic economic knowledge is superior to international institutional prescriptions.

The speaker's epistemic position is established through cognitive mental processes assigning high-certainty states to himself as Senser. Clauses such as “*saya yakin*” (I am certain) and “*saya percaya*” (I am convinced) construct the speaker not as a cautious technocrat hedging projection, which would be the conventional epistemic register of institutional economic address, but as a figure of unqualified cognitive authority. The Phenomenon of these certainty processes is consistently governmental capacity and the achievability of economic targets: to be certain is to know that 8% growth is achievable, and to know this is to possess a form of knowledge that grounds the entire policy agenda. The grammar thus forges a direct link between epistemic authority and policy legitimacy.

Perceptive mental processes “*kita melihat*” (we see) intensify this effect by framing interpretive analytical claims as simple observations. To see economic potential is grammatically different from believing or arguing for it: perception is direct, unmediated, and not subject to the contestation that cognitive processes invite. By selecting perceptive rather than cognitive mental processes for its most contested economic claims, the discourse naturalises interpretation as observation, positioning the speaker's analysis as transparent access to economic reality rather than as one contestable reading among others.

### 4.4.2 *Negative attribution and the delegitimation of international institutions*

The epistemic nationalism of the discourse is most explicitly realised through negative mental process attribution to external actors. Clauses such as “*mereka enggak pintar-pintar amat*” (they are not so smart), “*mereka enggak tahu*” (they do not know), and “IMF suka keliru” (the IMF often errs) assign to international institutions a Phenomenon of ignorance or error rather than knowledge. These are mental process clauses in which the Senser, the international institution, is characterised by cognitive deficiency: the failure to know, the tendency toward error.

The ideological work of these constructions is substantial and responds directly to RQ4. The IMF's epistemic authority rests on the assumption that it possesses universal economic knowledge applicable across contexts, the foundational premise of neoliberal economic governance as described by Fairclough (2006). By attributing error to the IMF as Senser, the discourse challenges that foundational premise: if the IMF often errs, its prescriptions for Indonesia carry no presumptive authority. The grammar inverts the standard epistemic hierarchy of postcolonial economic discourse, in which international institutional expertise is presumed authoritative and domestic governmental claims must justify themselves against it and substitutes a reversed hierarchy in which domestic knowledge is grounded and reliable while international knowledge is generic and frequently misapplied. This reversal, accomplished through the grammar of mental process attribution, is what the present study identifies as epistemic nationalism: not a rhetorical claim but a grammatical construction of knowledge relations.

Connecting this to the theoretical framework of Section 2.3: the Žižekian (1989) fantasmatic framework that goes without saying in this discourse is precisely the assumed superiority of domestic developmental knowledge. It is never argued for; it is the horizon within which the negative attribution to the IMF makes sense, and which the negative attribution simultaneously reinforces.

#### 4.4.3. Counter-pattern: Acknowledging international relevance

One partial counter-pattern deserves attention: the speech contains several instances in which international data or comparisons are cited as supporting evidence for domestic claims — references to comparative growth rates in neighbouring economies, or to global investment trends. These citations momentarily position international knowledge as useful rather than errant. However, close analysis of the participant configuration reveals that in these instances, international data is always positioned as Phenomenon as the object of the domestic Senser's analysis rather than as the source of epistemic authority. The speaker sees, reads, or uses international data; the data does not tell or instruct the speaker. Even in apparently accommodating moments, the grammar preserves the epistemic hierarchy established by the dominant pattern: domestic knowledge processes the world's information; it does not receive prescriptions from it.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Hegemonic functions of transitivity in transitional context

The textual findings of section 4 acquire their full critical significance through the discourse practice and sociocultural dimensions of Fairclough's framework. At the level of discourse practice, the speech's conversationalised genre, formal economic policy content delivered through informal personal address, colloquial vocabulary, and humour, functions to construct speaker authenticity and accessibility while preserving technical authority. This genre hybridity is the condition under which the transitivity patterns are delivered and received: the coercive material process “*kita paksa*” (we force) is softened by the informal register in which it appears; the negative cognitive attribution to the IMF is performed through the colloquial “*suka keliru*” (tends to err) rather than formal institutional critique. The conversationalised genre makes the ideological work of the transitivity patterns less visible, naturalising it as accessible, friendly communication rather than as exercises of institutional power. This is precisely what Fairclough (1995) calls the ideological function of conversationalisation: the accessible mask makes persuasion less visible and thereby more effective.

At the sociocultural level, these patterns function within Indonesia's governmental transition as contributions to hegemonic construction in the Gramscian (1971) sense. The new administration faces the task of establishing its developmental state vision as common sense making interventionism appear as the obviously correct response to objective economic conditions. The transitivity architecture of the speech serves this project in an integrated way: material processes naturalise state capacity as the self-evident solution; relational processes naturalise economic difficulty as the self-evident problem; mental processes naturalise the speaker's knowledge as the self-evident authority. The result is a discourse in which active governmental intervention appears logically compelled, achieved not through explicit argument but through the accumulated force of grammatical choices that Althusser (1971) would recognise as interpellating the audience into the subject position of a developmental national project.

### *5.2. Epistemic nationalism as postcolonial legitimation strategy*

The mental process patterns identified in Section 4.4 constitute a coherent postcolonial legitimation strategy operating at the epistemic level. The historical context is essential: Indonesia's relationship with the IMF following the 1997–98 crisis involved structural adjustment prescriptions with deeply contested consequences, generating a reservoir of institutional scepticism about international economic authority that the present discourse draws upon and amplifies. When the Minister of Finance says “the IMF often errs,” this is not a technical disagreement about forecasting accuracy: it is a postcolonial claim about epistemic sovereignty, the right of Indonesian governmental discourse to define Indonesian economic reality on its own terms and through its own analytical framework.

Grammatically, this claim is realised through the consistent pattern of domestic certainty (cognitive mental processes with the speaker as a certain *Senser*) and international deficiency (cognitive mental processes with international institutions as ignorant or errant *Senser*). The domestic subject knows; the international institution errs. This grammatical asymmetry constructs the legitimation strategy: if the authority to define economic reality belongs to domestic knowledge rather than international prescription, then developmental state policies that

diverge from IMF recommendations are not departures from authoritative guidance but expressions of superior local knowledge. Epistemic nationalism, constructed through grammar, becomes the foundation on which policy autonomy rests.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study has demonstrated that the integration of Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA framework with focused transitivity analysis reveals the ideological architecture of economic discourse in ways that neither framework alone can achieve. Analysis of 768 clauses drawn from Indonesia's Minister of Finance identifies a systematic transitivity pattern wherein material processes construct the state as the primary producer of economic outcomes, relational processes naturalize economic difficulty as an objective condition necessitating governmental response, and mental processes assert domestic epistemic authority while delegitimizing international institutional knowledge, with circumstantial elements of time and manner amplifying these patterns by encoding urgency and decisiveness. Three principal contributions follow from this analysis: methodologically, the study establishes a replicable model for three-dimensionally integrated transitivity analysis of economic discourse, demonstrating that full integration of Fairclough's three dimensions transforms descriptive grammatical observation into genuine ideological critique; empirically, it provides the first systematic CDA of Indonesian ministerial economic speech, elucidating the grammatical mechanisms through which developmental state ideology is encoded and naturalized during political transition; and theoretically, it elaborates epistemic nationalism as a distinct postcolonial legitimation strategy—realized not through rhetorical assertion but through the grammar of mental process attribution—offering an analytically tractable concept for comparative study across postcolonial economic discourse contexts. The study's limitations point toward productive avenues for future research, including longitudinal comparative study across the governmental transition period to determine whether observed patterns consolidate or shift, the integration of CDA with audience reception research to examine how conversationalized genres secure consent across specialist and popular audiences, and the further development of Indonesian-specific SFL diagnostics to strengthen language-particular coding reliability. At stake in studies such as this is something larger than methodological refinement: in democratic societies, the language of economic governance shapes what citizens believe is possible, necessary, and just, and to read that language critically is not merely an academic exercise but a precondition of informed democratic participation.

## **Declaration on the use of AI**

This paper was written with limited assistance from artificial intelligence (AI) tools for language improvement, grammar checking, and text refinement. The authors reviewed and edited all content and took full responsibility for the final manuscript.

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