



Evaluative Meaning in Digital Discourse: A Corpus-Based Study of Xpose Uncensored YouTube Comments

Annisa Vadia Haya¹, Ruswan Dallyono²

^{1,2}Linguistik, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Jawa Barat

Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-05-06 Revised: 2026-05-28 Accepted: 2026-06-08 Keywords: <i>collocation;</i> <i>concordance;</i> <i>corpus linguistics;</i> <i>digital communication;</i> <i>evaluation;</i> <i>meaning;</i> <i>stance-taking</i> DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.10449 Corresponding Author: Ruswan Dallyono ruswan.dallyono@upi.edu Linguistic, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Jawa Barat	<i>Evaluative meaning in Indonesian YouTube discourse remains underexplored, especially from a corpus-linguistic perspective. The study analyzes evaluative patterns in YouTube comments using collocation and concordance analysis. This study is based on a processed corpus of online comments totaling 118,662 tokens, collected from a YouTube video entitled Xpose Uncensored from the Trans7 channel which covered the life of the pesantren (Islamic Boarding School). The mixed-methods study was used by implementing collocation and concordance analysis to identify evaluative meanings that appear throughout comment discourse. The result shows that evaluation was realized by three linguistic mechanisms, namely, action verbs that expressed support or demands, evaluative adjectives that indicated specific qualities, and imperative or condensed constructions that conveyed direct judgment. The most frequent explicitly evaluative category was negative and critical evaluation with 340 occurrences, surpassing appreciation and supportive expressions with 209 occurrences. In addition, 561 communicative and metapragmatic responses were identified. These responses indicated that evaluation in comments on pesantren students and the pesantren education system was frequently negotiated through clarification, justification, and stance-taking rather than expressed solely through explicit positive or negative polarity. The findings contribute to corpus-based evaluative discourse analysis by demonstrating how collocational patterns reflected negotiation and interactional positioning in Indonesian YouTube discourse.</i>

1. Introduction

Digital Connectivity has changed how people consume information and interact with each other in public space. As digital platforms become more and more integrated into everyday communication practices, billions of users are now able to interact online, express their opinions and contribute to public discourse (Social, W.A & Hootsuite, 2022). In this landscape, Indonesia shows up as one of the world's most active digital scenes, where people spend more time on social media compared with users in many other countries.

Internet use in Indonesia reached over 221 million users in 2024, that means close to 80 percent of the whole population (Kemp, 2024; Siregar, Apriliani, & Nurhasanah, 2025). Overall, these shifts emphasize how online interaction is getting more and more crucial, as a place where public opinion, and evaluative responses, are constantly being adjusted and negotiated, at the same time.

In this context, video-based platforms such as YouTube have become important sites of public communication and online participation, especially the comment section. It enables users to react not only to audiovisual content but also to negotiate meanings, express evaluations and engage in wider social conversations (Fahrezi, Pratama, & Pramudiyantoro, 2025). Through these interactions, audiences are increasingly shaping online discourse rather than simply consuming information, and that feels like a change. This dynamic, thus, shows that digital communication is participatory: public opinion is constructed and contested constantly in online spaces. Therefore, YouTube comments that contain such features are fertile ground for the study of the construction of evaluative meaning in digital communication, which contributes to the knowledge of linguistic practices, stance-taking and interactional patterns in the online environment presented (Fanani, Putri, & Fauziyah, 2025; Murthy & Sharma, 2019)

The communicative role was visible in the controversy surrounding Trans7's *Xpose Uncensored* which was heavily criticized for allegedly misrepresenting pesantren culture and Islamic religious figures. The media coverage received major response from religious figures and societal institutions, resulting in a public apology and the retraction of the programme by the broadcaster (ContentAsia, 2025; IRA, 2025). The topic triggered a social media backlash as individuals aired their views, commented on the programme and discussed its depiction of pesantren culture. Such internet discussion was not only individual responses but a reflection of greater societal and moral views of media depiction.

From a linguistic perspective, the significance of these online responses lies not only in the criticism they express, but also in how evaluative meaning is constructed through language use in digital interaction. Evaluative meaning is not always realised through explicit positive or negative expressions. Rather, judgements may emerge implicitly through recurring patterns of language use and collocational relations across discourse. From a corpus-linguistic perspective, evaluation is understood not as a fixed polarity label, but as meaning that develops through patterns of lexical association in context (2000).

Based on this framework, the present study adopts a corpus-linguistic approach to examine how evaluative meaning is constructed in YouTube comments related to the controversy. To investigate these patterns, the study uses collocation and KWIC-based concordance analysis to identify evaluative meanings in context. This approach allows the study of evaluation as a context-sensitive linguistic phenomenon rather than reducing it to sentiment polarity alone (Benamara, Taboada, & Mathieu, 2017).

Previous studies have show that online comments provide valuable linguistic data for looking at how audiences react to public issues in digital settings. Wu and Chen (2022) for instance, analysed YouTube comment threads and reported recurring patterns of audience response that were tied to subtitle quality, user requests, and emotional engagement. Similarly, Nasyaya et al (2023), , using a corpus assisted discourse approach , showed

Indonesian YouTube comments about Covid-19 vaccination were not only individual viewpoints either but also linked to broader social concerns, such as religion, politics, acceptance, and rejection. These studies suggest that online comment sections can reveal broader patterns of public reaction and social positioning in digital communication while also demonstrating the potential of corpus-based approaches for examining online discourse.

Research on digital discourse has also increasingly moved beyond the view that online evaluation can be captured simply through positive or negative sentiment. For example, Yuliawati et al (2023) show that criticism in Indonesian online comments is often expressed in the form of negation, evaluative expressions and linguistic forms that convey judgment on public issues. Hoops (2024) then also shows that answers to controversial topics are closely connected with moral judgement and ideological stance in digital communication.

Attar and Abdo (2025) offer a more structured lens on appraisal, in their research on trial comments on YouTube, and they blend Appraisal Theory with sentiment analysis so it feels more organized than previously, or at least that's the impression. Their results suggest that moral judgement tends to be more dominant than affective appreciation in public responses. Similarly Lumintad et al. (2026), observe that the digital discourse about the POGO hearings is substantially dominated by skepticism, censure, and exasperation. Collectively, the previous studies imply that the assessment of digital discourse is not merely a matter of sentiment polarity, but is strongly associated with language choice and contextual meaning.

Despite these developments, relatively little attention has been given to the construction of evaluative meaning through collocational relations and concordance contexts in Indonesian-language YouTube discourse, especially in controversies surrounding media representation. Existing studies have tended to focus on thematic classification or general sentiment analysis, while less attention has been given to corpus-driven examinations of evaluative meaning in controversy-based digital discourse. As a result, how evaluation is linguistically constructed through contextual patterns in Indonesian YouTube comments remains underexplored from a corpus-linguistic perspective.

Against this background, the present study examines Indonesian-language YouTube comments responding to the controversy surrounding Xpose Uncensored. The analysis focuses on how evaluative meaning is constructed in users' responses through collocational patterns and concordance contexts, particularly in relation to discussions of pesantren representation in Indonesian media. Rather than treating evaluation as a static category, this study conceptualizes it as a meaning-making process, which is produced through language in use.

The study is framed by the following research questions: (1) How is evaluative meaning constructed in Indonesian YouTube comments related to controversy? (2) What collocational patterns surrounding the node "trans" are associated with evaluative tendencies in the discourse? (3) How do concordance contexts contribute to the interpretation of evaluative meaning in the comments? This study contributes to the corpus-based research on evaluative meaning by providing empirical data from Indonesian YouTube controversy discourse, a part that has been less studied in previous research. The findings specifically show how evaluative meaning is formed through regular collocational patterns and contextual uses in digital public discourse.

2. Method

This study uses a mixed-method design combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a corpus linguistics context. The examination is of evaluative meaning as realised through patterns of lexical distribution in authentic language use. In this way, evaluative meaning is not seen as an inherent feature of particular lexical items, but as a meaning tendency, constructed by the repeated interaction between the target lexeme and the collocates around it in the corpus (Hunston, 2010; Sinclair & Carter, 2004; Stubbs, 1995)

The data were all the comments and replies placed on a YouTube video named “Trans7 Akui Lalai dalam Tayangannya Soal Pondok Pesantren” aired by the CNN Indonesia channel on 14 October 2025. The video discussed the television programming Xpose Uncensored following the controversy and had over 1.1 million views at the time of data collection. Around 6,711 user comments were collected on 29 November 2025, which served as the research corpus (CNN Indonesia, 2025). After preprocessing and normalisation, the final corpus consisted of 118,662 tokens.

Data were collected using the YouTube Data API v3 combined with Python-based web scraping techniques. Both top-level comments and replies were extracted together with available metadata. Prior to analysis, the corpus underwent several preprocessing procedures, including UTF-8 encoding standardisation, tokenisation, and case normalisation. Minimal text cleaning was applied in order to preserve the linguistic characteristics of online interaction. Non-linguistic elements such as URLs, duplicated punctuation, emojis, and system-generated symbols were removed, while informal lexical forms and spelling variations were retained because they form part of evaluative expression in digital discourse. Standard Indonesian stopwords were removed selectively, except for discourse markers considered relevant to evaluative interpretation.

The quantitative stage of the analysis was conducted using AntConc 4.3.1 to generate frequency lists and collocational patterns. The node word “Trans” was selected because preliminary frequency analysis showed that it functioned as one of the most salient lexical references in the corpus and appeared consistently in evaluative discussions surrounding the controversy. In addition, the term frequently referred to the broadcaster associated with the disputed programme, making it analytically relevant for tracing evaluative tendencies in public responses. Other lexical candidates such as “pesantren,” “Xpose,” and “Trans7” were also considered during preliminary exploration; however, “Trans” produced broader and more consistent evaluative collocational patterns across the dataset.

Collocation analysis was conducted using a span of ± 5 words from the node word. To identify statistically meaningful lexical associations, the analysis employed logDice as the primary measure of collocational strength because of its relative stability across corpus sizes. Mutual Information (MI) score was also used as a complementary measure to identify strongly associated lexical items with lower frequency distribution. Collocational strength was interpreted based on the statistical association scores generated in AntConc. A minimum collocate frequency threshold of three occurrences was applied, together with a range threshold of one text, meaning that collocates had to occur in at least one independent comment context to be included in the analysis.

The qualitative stage involved Key Word in Context (KWIC)-based concordance analysis to interpret evaluative meaning in context. Quantitative findings from frequency and collocation analysis informed the selection of collocates and concordance lines for closer qualitative examination. Collocates identified quantitatively were subsequently examined through concordance analysis to interpret their evaluative functions in context, particularly in relation to judgement, criticism, support, and stance-taking in the comments. In this way, the analysis moved from statistical tendencies to contextual interpretation of evaluative discourse.

To support analytical reliability, concordance analysis was conducted through repeated coding and interpretive comparison across the dataset. Concordance categories were reviewed iteratively to maintain consistency in the interpretation of evaluative tendencies. The study also applied methodological triangulation by combining frequency analysis, collocation analysis, and contextual concordance interpretation within a single analytical framework (Creswell & Clark, 2017). All data analysed in this study were publicly accessible and used solely for academic purposes. User identities were anonymised, and the research followed general ethical principles for the use of publicly available online discourse data.

3. Result

The analysis identified recurring lexical patterns surrounding the node word “Trans” in the online comment corpus. These patterns reveal how public responses toward the controversy were organised through evaluative expressions, institutional references, and interactional positioning in the comments. The findings are presented in three stages: the distribution and classification of collocates, the statistical strength of lexical associations, and the contextual interpretation of evaluative meaning through concordance analysis.

Distribution and Classification of Collocates

The online comment corpus contained 118,662 tokens. The lexeme “Trans” was mentioned 1,223 times, and it was the sixth most frequent lexical item in the first frequency list generated before collocation analysis. This frequency shows that “Trans” is a salient lexical reference in the discussions of the controversy. Also, a range value of 1 shows that the lexeme is spread across the corpus and not restricted to isolated parts of the dataset.

The frequent occurrence of “Trans” further indicates its role as a central referential focus in the online comments. Across the corpus, the lexeme appears in various evaluative contexts related to criticism, support, clarification, and public responses toward the broadcaster and the programme. The patterns of concordance also show that “Trans” is frequently used in clause-initial and medial positions, suggesting that it is salient in the structure of many comments.

The analysis of collocations identified around fifty-five recurrent collocates of the node word “Trans”. The collocates were classified into lexical categories for the purpose of studying their grammatical functions and semantic inclinations in the corpus. This classification gives a general view of the prevalent lexical patterns around the node word in the online discourse. The table below shows the distribution of collocates across four lexical categories:

Table 1. Lexical Category Classification of Collocates

Lexical Category	Collocates
Verb	<i>lanjutkan, dukung, mendukung, hapus, membuka, menayangkan, ditayangkan, mengungkap, disampaikan, menyampaikan, bubarkan, boikot, tutup, minta, maju, setuju</i>
Noun	<i>chanel, cnn, pembawa, tayangan, tv, fakta, pihak, video, berita, trans, islam, anak, guru, ilmu, nabi, kelas, maaf, saya, anda</i>
Adjective	<i>bravo, bodohnya, bangkrut, semangat, salut, jaya, mantap, jujur, lalai, takut, benar, salah</i>
Adverb / Particle	<i>terlalu, terus, memang, sudah, kok, ngapain, dan, ada, bersama</i>

The collocational distribution of the lexeme “Trans” varies according to lexical categories. As Table 1 shows, verbs are the most frequent class of collocate in the corpus, especially those referring to institutional actions, public reactions and demands to the broadcaster. Several imperative forms are also recurrent, suggesting that many comments are constructed as direct reactions or evaluative demands.

Noun collocates primarily act as thematic references concerning broadcast content, credibility, religion and institutional actors. Adjectival collocates, on the other hand, are more directly involved in explicit evaluation, particularly with expressions related to criticism, approval and moral judgement. Some of the evaluative adjectives, especially *lalai*, have relatively strong associations with the node word in discussions of the controversy.

Adverbs and particles are less frequent, but nonetheless interactionally relevant. Pragmatic items such as “*kok*” and “*ngapain*” are often used in contexts in which scepticism or disagreement is expressed, and contribute to the stance taking functions of the comments. Overall, the distribution of collocates across lexical categories indicates that evaluative discourse in the corpus is realised through multiple linguistic resources rather than through evaluative adjectives alone.

While lexical classification helps identify the grammatical distribution of collocates surrounding the node word “Trans,” it does not fully explain their evaluative orientation in the corpus. Several collocates belonging to different lexical classes frequently occur in similar evaluative contexts, particularly in comments expressing criticism, support, clarification, and institutional reactions. For this reason, the collocates were further grouped into broader semantic categories in order to examine their dominant evaluative tendencies in the online discourse. The following table presents the semantic classification of collocates identified in the corpus.

Table 2. Semantic Categorization of Collocates

Semantic Category	Collocates	Linguistic Justification	Total FreqLR	Percentage
Appreciation and Support	<i>bravo, salut, mantap, jaya, semangat, lanjutkan, dukung, mendukung</i>	Realize expressions of approval, support, or positive evaluation toward the entity	209	11.33%
Criticism and Negative Evaluation	<i>bodohnya, bangkrut, bubarkan, boikot, hapus, tutup, salah, lalai</i>	Represent dysfunctional judgments, perceived failure, or demands for sanctions	340	18.43%
Institutional and Media Actions	<i>tayangan, ditayangkan, menayangkan, berita, video, cnn, tv, chanel</i>	Refer to practices of media production, dissemination, and institutional operations	231	12.52%

Discursive and Metapragmatic Response	<i>setuju, jujur, benar, memang, kok, ngapain</i>	Signal the speaker's stance toward other utterances or prior discourse	278	15.07%
Communicative Actions	<i>menyampaikan, disampaikan, mengungkapkan, minta, maaf</i>	Relate to practices of clarification, statement-making, or requests Function as markers of participants within discursive interaction	283	15.34%
General Social Actors	<i>pihak, anda, saya</i>	Refer to religious and educational domains invoked in the discourse Contribute to the cohesion and interactional organisation of evaluative discourse, although they do not express evaluation directly.	157	8.51%
Religious References	<i>islam, nabi, guru, ilmu, anak</i>		49	2.66%
Neutral and Functional Lexicon	<i>dan, ada, sudah, terus</i>		298	16.15%

The semantic categorization of collocates reveals that evaluation surrounding the node word “Trans” is distributed across several discourse functions rather than being concentrated in a single lexical category. As presented in Table 2, the category Criticism and Negative Evaluation constitutes the most frequent explicitly evaluative group in the corpus, exceeding expressions of Appreciation and Support. This indicates that public responses toward the controversy are more frequently articulated through criticism, dissatisfaction, and demands directed toward the broadcaster and programme.

Interactional and communicative categories are also very salient in the dataset. Collocates such as “minta”, “maaf”, “menyampaikan” and “mengungkap” occur frequently in contexts of clarification, explanation or public response, while forms such as “setuju”, “jujur”, “kok” and “ngapain” are common markers of agreement, scepticism or disagreement towards other comments and circulating claims. These patterns suggest that many comments are dialogical in function, positioning users in relation to statements and interpretations made earlier rather than expressing isolated evaluative judgements.

Institutional and media-related collocates also suggest that evaluation in the corpus is closely related to discussions of broadcasting practices, media responsibility and public communication. By contrast, references to religion, education and social actors show that

the controversy is often presented in broader moral and social terms, going beyond the media event itself.

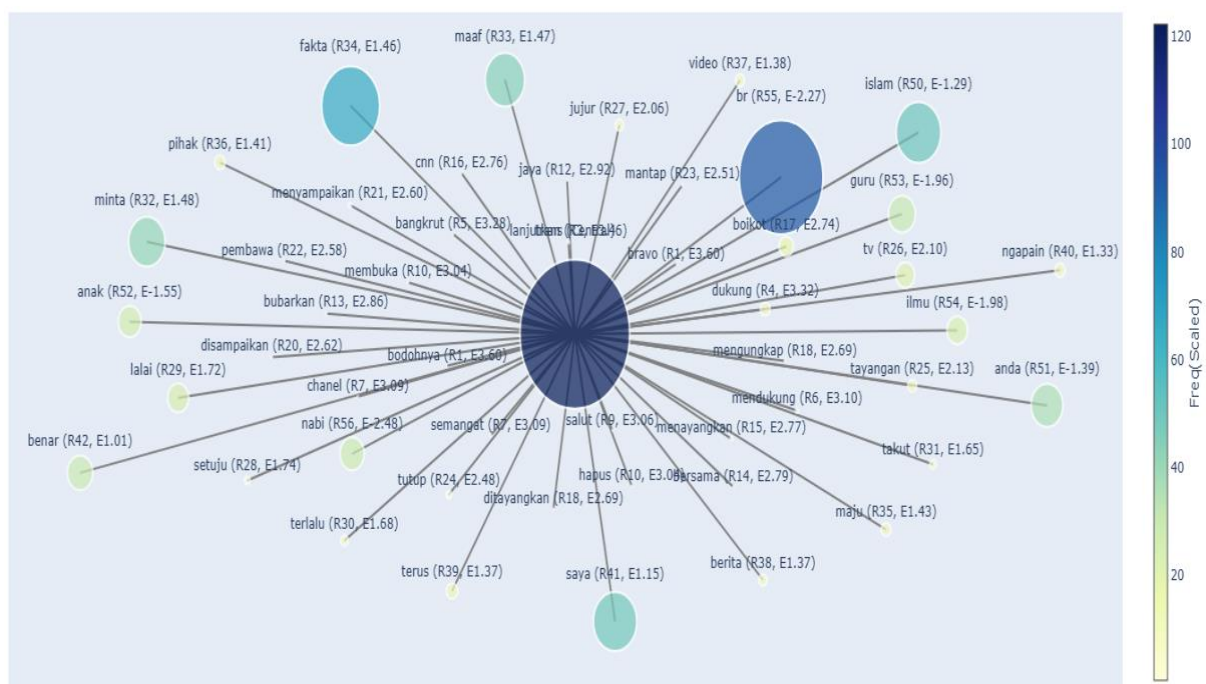
The category of Functional and Discourse-Organising Lexicon is also analytically relevant though its collocates do not express evaluation directly. Lexical items such as “dan”, “sudah” and “terus” contribute to cohesion and continuity of evaluative discourse by linking arguments, elaborating criticism and maintaining interactional flow across comments and responses. In this sense, these forms support the organisation and reinforcement of evaluative positioning within the online discussion.

Overall, the semantic distribution of collocates indicates that evaluation surrounding “Trans” is realised through a combination of explicit criticism, supportive alignment, communicative responses, institutional references, and interactional positioning. The results of this categorization provide a functional mapping of evaluative types in the corpus. The following analysis examines how these collocates are distributed in terms of association strength and frequency within the same dataset.

Association Strength and Collocate Frequency

In this section, the distributional strength of collocates identified in the previous semantic categorization is discussed. While the earlier analysis classified collocates into functional and evaluative categories, this section examines how strongly those lexical items are associated with the node word “trans” in terms of statistical co-occurrence patterns. Two measures are employed in this analysis, namely Effect value and scaled frequency.

Effect value indicates the strength of association between a collocate and the node word “trans” relative to its expected distribution in the corpus, while scaled frequency reflects the normalised occurrence of each collocate across the dataset. Together, these measures allow a distinction between general high-frequency lexical items and collocates that are strongly and specifically associated with evaluative meaning around the node. Figure 1 presents a network-based visualization of this relationship generated using Python 3.14 and Google Colab.



In Figure 1, each node represents a collocate. Node size reflects scaled frequency, meaning that more frequent words appear larger after corpus normalisation. The network structure encodes association strength, where Effect value determines the degree of connection between each collocate and the node word “trans”. More central and closely connected collocates (in terms of network structure) are associated with Higher Effect values, which mean stronger association with the node.

The results show that the collocates with high Effect values are not necessarily the most frequent items. Lexical items such as “bravo” and “bodohnya” show a strong association strength despite being relatively low in frequency, thus they are highly specific to evaluative contexts surrounding “trans”. These items tend to occur in emotionally charged evaluative environments, expressing either praise or criticism.

Words that occur frequently in the corpus such as “minta”, “maaf”, “fakta”, and “berita” have less association strength; they are not associated with the node word but they are general discourse elements to support explanation, clarification, and argumentation that are often used in the text.

Medium Effect values collocating with “boikot”, “bubarkan” and “menayangkan” reflect stable associative patterns of institutional critique and media-related discourse. These items signal consistent evaluative framing of broadcasting practices and institutional responsibility.

Finally, low or near-zero Effect value collocates like *dan*, *ada* and *anda* are general discourse elements not specifically associated with the node word. Their role is primarily grammatical and conversational, rather than evaluative.

In summary, the relationship between Effect value and scaled frequency indicates that the evaluative meaning in the corpus is not simply a function of frequency but emerges from patterns of lexical association. This provides evidence for the view that evaluation is structurally embedded in the distributional relationships between the node and its collocates. These distributional patterns form the basis for interpreting how evaluative meaning is structured in relation to the node word, which is further examined through concordance analysis in the following section.

KWIC-Based Analysis of Evaluative Meaning

After classifying the collocates according to lexical class and semantic category, and assessing the strength of association using Effect values and scaled frequency (Freq Scaled), the next step is to examine the evaluative patterns as they are realized in actual usage through Key Word in Context (KWIC) analysis. This approach enables the identification of how evaluation is implicitly constructed through sentence structures and lexical interactions surrounding the lexeme “trans”.

Positive evaluation through supportive and affirming language

Positive evaluative terms in the lexical environment of the node “trans” are: “*lanjutkan, dukung, mendukung, semangat, mantap*”. The Effect values for these collocates are consistently relatively high, suggesting that their co-occurrence with ‘trans’ is systematic and recurrent rather than incidental. Table 3 shows selected concordance examples from the KWIC data to exemplify the concrete realisation of these favourably evaluating collocates. These examples illustrate the collocates in actual contexts of use, and reveal consistent relationship patterns with the node “trans.”

Table 3. Selected KWIC Examples of Positive Evaluative Collocates

Left Context	Kolokat	Right Context
Menurut ku Trans 7 sdh benar,	lanjutkan	perjuangan mu Trans 7
Jangan gentar trans7	lanjutkan	emang banyak yg kepanasan dgn ...
Ga perlu minta maaf itu fakta	lanjutkan	Trans 7!!!
	Lanjutkan	trans,bongkar kebenaran yg....
Saya	mendukung	trans 7 karena berani mengungkap ..
Sya pribadi	mendukung	Trans7,krna seabodoh2 sya dan sebesar
	Mendukung	trans 7. Karena membicarakan fakta!!!!
Saya sangat	mendukung	tentang berita trans 7 .. saya Islam tapi..
	Semangat	trans 7, telah berani membuka fakta
..... emas 2045 di tangan gen Z,	semangat	dan maju terus untuk trans 7
..... cuma perkara nama doang	Semangat	terus buat trans 7, dulu
....TRANS 7 tetap	semangat,	Trans 7 GK salah kenapa harus minta..
	Semangat	trans7 Onok opo yoo....rame 2
	Mantap	tran 7 sampekan kebenaran walupun ...
Trans 7	mantap	itu fakta mencerdaskan kehidupan
Trans 7 semakin	mantap	
	Mantap	lanjutkan Trans 7
	Dukung	Trans 7 Saya mendukung trans 7 , knp..
		trans 7 Saya nggak pernah lihat
	Dukung	tayangan
Gue	dukung	trans 7 Jgn cari masalah sama santri.....
Manusia Waras pasti	dukung	Trans7.

The concordance data demonstrate that positive evaluation around the node word “trans” is realized through a number of recurrent lexico-grammatical patterns which are recurrent consistently in the corpus.

First, imperative constructions such as (“lanjutkan” + “Trans7”) are often found in contexts of encouragement and endorsement. Directive support is often introduced with justificatory clauses such as “menurutku Trans7 sudah benar” and “ga perlu minta maaf,” which imply that directive support is usually anchored in perceived legitimacy or factual justification. The imperative verb is used to project continued action as in “lanjutkan perjuanganmu Trans7” and “lanjutkan Trans7 bongkar kebenaran.” This implies that evaluation is expressed not only as approval but also as a call for sustained institutional action.

Second, stance constructions such as (“mendukung” + “Trans7”) consistently appear in self-positioning statements (e.g. “saya mendukung Trans7”, “saya pribadi mendukung Trans7”). These structures indicate that positive evaluation is strongly anchored in explicit identity marking (“saya”, “gue”, “manusia waras”), which reinforces the subjective and affiliative nature of support. The repetition of stance verbs across different personal pronouns shows that endorsement is distributed across varied speaker identities, not limited to a single discourse group.

Third, evaluative predicates such as (“mantap” + “Trans7”) and (“semangat” + “Trans7”) are typically realised in short and highly condensed utterances (e.g. “mantap Trans7”, “semangat terus Trans7”). These forms function as immediate affective reactions rather than elaborated arguments. Their syntactic simplicity suggests that evaluation is routinised and does not require extended justification within the interactional context.

Overall, the KWIC data demonstrate that positive evaluation around the node “trans” is not expressed through a single linguistic strategy, but through a layered system of directive encouragement, identity-based stance marking, and condensed affective appraisal. These patterns indicate that evaluative meaning in the corpus is distributed across interactional positioning, grammatical structure, and lexical intensification.

Negative evaluation through sanctioning and corrective language

The node “trans” displays a reasonably consistent pattern of judgement with negative evaluative collocates such as “bangkrut, boikot, bubarkan, tutup, hapus, lalai, and salah. These items appear across multiple concordance lines and are commonly used in contexts expressing criticism or rejection toward the broadcaster. Table 4 presents selected KWIC examples illustrating the use of these collocates in actual comment data.

Table 4. Selected KWIC Examples of Negative Evaluative Collocate

Left Context	Collocate	Right Context
Tidak cukup cuma maaf	tutup	trans 7 tv yg tidak beretika
.....aku malu punya trans 7 lebih baik	tutup	sendiri dari pada lanjut siaran
Cuman minta maaf mn akhlak km	tutup	tr7
	Tutup	saja tlvisi trans7 krna bisa
		memecah belah umat emang
penghianat orangtua dan bangsa	tutup	trans 7 bubarkan saja canel
Tetap	boikot	trans7, kebanyakan acara enggak.....
Ambrukkan saja tran 7..	boikot	trans 7
seluruh pesantren d indonesia	boikot	trans 7
Wkwkwkwkwkwkwkwkwkwkw	boikot	trans7 jangan kan santri,yang
	Bubarkan	Trans 7 kalian adalah pki gaya baru
Boikot dan	bubarkan	trans 7.karena bukan cuma sekali ...
Runtut smuanya dan	bubarkan	trans7
..... trans7 dari media indonesia..	bubarkan	trans7.. Auto unsubscribe
....mereka di reformasi kalau perlu di	bubarkan.	
Trans7 bukan	lalai	tapi sengaja membuat sindiran....
Menurutku tdk	lalai	itu cuma alasan trans 7, ada....
Itu bukan	lalai	soalnya sudah sampai penayangan ..
Sampah Bukan	lalai.	Tapi di sengaja. Kalau lalai mana ...
Trans7 itu bukan	lalai	tapi sdh terencanakan
Santri SE Indonesia	hapus	saluran Trans7 dari tv,boikot ...
.....akan ttp ada... Yg benar itu,	hapus	trans7 dari channel tv nasional...
	Hapus	Chanel Trans 7 !! Trans 7 = TV PKI !!
...Trans mart, boikot Bank Mega,, biar	bangkrut	buat trans7 berani gak kupas pwi...
....boikot saja program trans7 biar	bangkrut	
	Bangkrut	kamu sekarang Trans7 Pikirin dulu..
...trans media yang berujung bakal	bangkrut..	inilah alasan untuk memutar baliK..

The concordance data show that negative evaluation surrounding the node word “trans” is realised through several recurring lexico-grammatical patterns. The first pattern involves directive constructions such as (“boikot” + “Trans7”), (“tutup” + “Trans7”), and (“bubarkan” + “Trans7”), where evaluative meaning is expressed through action verbs used to call for or propose sanctions against the broadcaster. These forms systematically situate “Trans7” as the target of directive censure.

Pattern two is in the form of attributive construction, where the evaluative predicate such as “lalai” and “salah” is directly attributed to the node word, for example “Trans7 lalai” and “Trans7 salah”. These constructions act as explicit judgments of performance or behavior. The third pattern is moral and affective expressions such as “aku malu punya Trans7” and “penghianat orangtua dan bangsa”. In these cases, evaluation is expressed through identity-based and emotionally loaded language that frames the broadcaster in moral terms.

The fourth pattern involves corrective or oppositional constructions such as “itu bukan lalai” and “tidak lalai itu cuma alasan”. These structures show that negative evaluation is also negotiated through disagreement and reinterpretation of claims. Across the data, these patterns indicate that negative evaluation is realised through a combination of directive verbs, evaluative attribution, moral labelling, and corrective negation, which together form the main grammatical resources for expressing criticism in the corpus.

Ambivalent evaluation through factuality and rational positioning

Some collocates such as “maaf, minta, jujur, benar, fakta, and setuju” have relatively high frequencies in the area of the node “Trans”, but only moderate Effect values. This pattern implies that these words do not operate as triggers of harsh appraisal, but as indicators of position negotiation in the discourse. That is, these collocates tend to occur in situations that are neither wholly positive nor wholly negative toward the media entity, but are located at an intermediate location, allowing speakers to control evaluative distance.

Table 5. Selected KWIC Examples of Ambivalent Collocates

Left context	Collocate	right context
Ngapain trans 7 harus minta	maaf ??	kan fakta yg di beritain.....
Ngapain trans 7 minta	maaf?	kan pada dasarnya kritikan ini
.....ngapain trans minta	maaf	kan sudah benar informasi
.....kalian ga usah minta	maaf,	kan yg kalian sajikan di tv itu
Trans 7 bukan lalai tpi	jujur	dan kritis dalam melihat fenomena....
.....pasti kita tau kalau konten trans 7 itu	jujur	kenapa harus minta maaf
Kalau	jujur	kenapa minta maaf
Bukan pelecehan tapi bicara	fakta	trans 7 bahkan kasus
.....masih ngelak aja, itu	fakta	trans 7 berbicara fakta sesuai
Katanya beriman tp kok alergi	fakta	trans 7 disusupi wahabi garis
komentar di video ini masih banyak	setuju	dengan konten trans 7, mereka
yang		
sekrng wahabi pada keluar, sama liberal	setuju	dengan trans7 saya berharap yg...
.....di tonton , tapi ga mikir kualitasnya..	setuju	dengan trans7, gak usah lebay
Kalau emang	setuju	sama trans 7 kalian demo juga lah.....

The results of the KWIC analysis show that the ambivalent collocations of the node “Trans” are usually expressed by means of reflective and mitigative constructs. In reflective constructions, speakers offer the processes of reassessment or stance rationalisation by inserting collocates like “jujur, benar, and fakta” in explanatory or justificatory sentences. These patterns are very often found in causal or argumentative frameworks in which the evaluation is not stated directly but mediated by claims to objectivity or logical reasoning.

Some collocates, “maaf, minta, jujur, benar, fakta, and setuju” have relatively high frequencies in the vicinity of the node “Trans” but only moderate Effect values. On a distributional level, this pattern indicates that these collocates do not serve as triggers of extreme evaluation, but instead as indicators of stance-negotiation. In other words, they are likely to be used in circumstances that do not totally endorse or reject the media entity, but are intermediate, allowing speakers to control evaluative distance.

Mitigative constructions are also recurrent in the data. Reflective and mitigative collocates are frequently found together with negation, rhetorical questions and modal expressions that qualify or postpone explicit judgement. “Setuju”, for example, often implies partial or conditional agreement rather than full endorsement, while “maaf” and “minta” often function as discourse markers that introduce clarification, justification or reconsideration. In many instances, evaluation is realised through relatively restrained linguistic strategies rather than overtly confrontational language.

The concordance lines further show that factual and justificatory expressions are regularly used to legitimise evaluative positions. Constructions such as “kan fakta”, “Trans7 jujur”, and “sudah benar” frame evaluation as reasonable or self-evident, whereas rhetorical questions such as “ngapain Trans7 harus minta maaf?” weaken the legitimacy of criticism directed toward the media entity. Through these constructions, evaluation is commonly mediated through argumentative positioning rather than direct emotional expression.

Taken together, these patterns indicate that evaluation around the node “trans” is not always organised through a clear positive–negative opposition. Instead, many comments realise evaluation through reflective, factual, and negotiated positioning. This allows users to express criticism, agreement, or scepticism in relatively indirect ways while maintaining an appearance of rationality or objectivity.

4. Discussion

The findings presented in the previous section show that evaluative meaning around the node “trans” is distributed across recurring collocational patterns and becomes clearer when examined through concordance context. Building on these results, the discussion section interprets how such patterns construct public evaluation in YouTube comments, how lexical and pragmatic choices shape evaluative intensity, and how the findings contribute to corpus-based studies of digital discourse.

Evaluative Meaning as Collocationally Constructed

The findings of this study demonstrate that evaluative meaning around the node “trans” is not an inherent property of the lexeme itself, but emerges from recurring collocational environments in the corpus. Evaluation is therefore better understood as a distributional effect of repeated lexical co-selection in authentic discourse. This supports corpus-based perspectives on evaluative meaning which argue that evaluation develops through phraseological patterning and recurrent co-occurrence rather than through isolated lexical meaning alone (Coffin & O’Halloran, 2006; Hunston, 2010).

The study also shows that frequency alone is insufficient to explain evaluative force. Some collocates become evaluatively salient only when examined in concordance context. In this regard, the combination of collocation analysis and KWIC examination is important because it allows evaluative meaning to be interpreted through recurrent patterns-in-context rather than through isolated lexical frequency. Our results hence add support to the findings of Wu and Chen (2022), Chen and Chang (2024) who suggest that comments on

video-sharing platforms can be useful corpora to monitor audience response and public evaluation in digital environments.

More importantly, the results show that frequency alone is insufficient to capture evaluative force. Collocational strength and contextual realisation in KWIC lines jointly determine how evaluation is interpreted. This reinforces the methodological value of combining collocation analysis with concordance-based interpretation in capturing evaluative meaning in digital discourse.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to corpus linguistics by demonstrating how evaluative meaning can be systematically mapped through node-centred distributional analysis in large-scale Indonesian digital corpora. It contributes to earlier work in showing the importance of discourse-driven lexical clustering for the development of evaluative interpretation, particularly in socially contentious online environments.

Patterns of Public Evaluation in YouTube Comments

The findings suggest that YouTube comments are a site of public evaluation where stance is constantly built, negotiated and reformed. The distribution of positive, negative and ambivalent patterns around the node "trans" shows that evaluation is not only an expression of individual opinion but also part of a larger discursive practice of public positioning.

Negative and corrective patterns are consistent with previous findings that judgement-oriented evaluations are prevalent in digital comment spaces (Fraser, Taboada, & Cavasso, 2021; Khristianto, 2020). The ambivalent category is of theoretical significance in that it shows that evaluative meaning in digital discourse cannot always be satisfactorily explained by binary polarity models of positive versus negative evaluation. Rather, users often construct stance through factualisation, justification, partial agreement and evidential positioning. In this sense, ambivalence functions not as the absence of evaluation but as a pragmatic strategy for managing alignment, disagreement and public legitimacy in online interaction.

This finding suggests that evaluative meaning in digital discourse is often negotiated through intermediate and context-sensitive positioning rather than through fully explicit judgement. In the Indonesian context, the findings further support previous studies showing that YouTube comments can reveal patterned evaluative discourse in Indonesian digital communication. Meanwhile, the present paper provides a more detailed corpus-based account of how evaluation converges on a particular node and how it develops through recurrent lexical associations (Nasyaya et al., 2023; Yuliawati et al., 2023).

Lexical and Pragmatic Selection in Digital Evaluation

The research shows that the evaluation around the node "trans" is constructed through a mixture of lexical choice and pragmatic approach. Action verbs result in interpretations of support, rejection or demand; evaluative adjectives give traits to the discussed entity; the use of imperative forms and short formulations makes judgements seem more urgent and powerful. So this indicates that comments are not simply about giving opinions. They do discursive things too, including approving, condemning, blaming, correcting, or affirming. The results confirm the notion that online comments are venues for active stance-taking in which users position themselves with respect to the problem and other users' viewpoints (Inwood & Zappavigna, 2021; Parini & Fetzer, 2019).

Furthermore, the research points to the existence of covert evaluative strategies, where evaluation is communicated through claims of factuality, neutrality or rationality, in line with appraisal theory's idea that evaluation may be indirectly encoded through lexical framing rather than explicit affect (Coffin & O'Halloran, 2006). The variation in evaluative intensity shows that stance-taking is intricately related to the negotiation of interpersonal alignment in digital

interaction, where users adeptly modulate their evaluative force based on the wish for agreement, justification or opposition.

Methodological and Theoretical Implications

The study shows the usefulness of a combination of collocation analysis and KWIC analysis to capture both the distributional patterns of the lexical items and their contextual meaning. This combined approach accounts for evaluative meaning in a more nuanced way than sentiment-based or category-based annotation methods. Theoretically, the findings contribute to stance and appraisal theory by showing that evaluative meaning in digital discourse is not only categorical but also distributionally structured and contextually negotiated. Based on the findings, this study proposes a model of evaluative meaning construction in digital discourse in which evaluation emerges through the interaction of (1) lexical clustering, (2) pragmatic stance-taking, and (3) contextual alignment strategies.

Broader implications The findings have broader implications for understanding digital communication and public discourse in Indonesia. They show that evaluative practices in online media are shaped by interactive, negotiated and fact-oriented language use, reflecting a culturally situated form of public reasoning and contestation. This contributes to an understanding of how media events are linguistically constructed and evaluated in contemporary Indonesian digital culture.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings, YouTube comments can be seen as a discursive arena where the public assessment is produced using repetitive linguistic devices. The collocational analysis indicates that evaluative meaning is not an inherent property of the target lexeme, but rather stems from the consistent lexical relations in which the target lexeme occurs in the corpus. In this dataset, evaluation is mostly built through three mechanisms: action verbs that convey support, rejection, or demand; evaluative adjectives that ascribe specific traits; and imperative or compact formulations that render judgement as if direct and performative. This way, comments are not just the expression of thoughts, but also conduct discursive activities, such as endorsing, judging, blaming or affirming.

These results further reveal that assessment in digital discourse does not work only through explicit polarity but also through language tactics that allow speakers to control the intensity, position and degree of involvement in the judgement. Some comments evaluate by direct imperatives and corrections, while others negotiate evaluation by claims to factuality, honesty, and logic. This variety implies that the construction of public judgement in digital discourse is a composite of lexical choice, syntactic structure and pragmatic approach, each of which enables varying levels of explicitness in stance-taking. On the whole, the findings highlight the usefulness of corpus linguistics to understand how assessment is built, boosted and negotiated in digital communication.

The study has multiple limitations which restrict its findings. The data are limited to comments of only one video and only one lexeme as the entry point of analysis, hence the results mainly represent the netizen appraisal inside a particular debate environment. The study results show evaluative patterns which exist beyond digital commentary discourse. The study does not include time-based changes which prevents researchers from tracking any shifts in assessment patterns throughout different periods. Future research could enlarge the dataset to include multiple films, topics, or social media platforms, and could include longitudinal or cross-platform analysis, so as to provide a more complete picture of evaluative dynamics in digital communication.

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