

**Representing Women's Readiness for Marriage on TikTok: A
Multimodal Discourse Analysis of @nmalicca**

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ABSTRACT

The growing emphasis on personal autonomy and individual preparedness has reshaped how women's readiness for marriage is discussed in contemporary digital culture. TikTok provides a multimodal communication space in which ideas about marriage are constructed through the interaction of language, on-screen text, audio, and visual expressions. This study examines how women's readiness for marriage is represented in TikTok content published by @nmalicca (Nashatra Malicca). It focuses on two videos addressing women's financial independence and the considerations involved in selecting a life partner. Employing a qualitative approach within a constructivist-interpretive paradigm, this study applies multimodal discourse analysis, drawing primarily on Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar framework. Data are collected through non-participant digital observation and documentation, including audiovisual recordings, screenshots, and verbal transcripts. The analysis identifies four semiotic modes: verbal language, on-screen text, audio, and visual-gestural elements. It then examines how these modes reinforce, complement, or contrast with one another in constructing representations of marital readiness. The visual analysis considers representational, interactive, and compositional meanings, while verbal and audio elements are interpreted according to their observable characteristics. By focusing on two videos from a single creator, this study aims to contribute to multimodal communication research by explaining how women's financial autonomy and partner-selection considerations are represented as dimensions of readiness for marriage in Indonesian digital culture.

Keywords: *women's readiness for marriage; TikTok; multimodal discourse analysis; women's autonomy*

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a social institution that extends beyond the personal relationship between two individuals, encompassing economic, psychological, cultural, and social dimensions. (Rambousková, 2025) In contemporary society, decisions about marriage are increasingly associated with individual preparedness to establish and maintain a sustainable family relationship. Readiness for marriage, therefore, cannot be understood solely in terms of reaching the legally prescribed age or expressing a desire to marry. It also involves the ability to consider the responsibilities, challenges, and long-term consequences of marital life. For women, discussions of marital readiness are particularly significant because marriage may intersect with financial independence, educational and career opportunities, the distribution of domestic responsibilities, and the protection of personal interests. Consequently, women's readiness for marriage constitutes an important subject of inquiry not only in family studies but also in the broader context of changing social values and digital communication practices.

Changing perspectives on marriage have emerged alongside broader transformations in social relations and individual expectations. Women increasingly encounter multiple considerations when determining whether to marry and whom to choose as a life partner, including educational attainment, employment, financial stability, compatibility of values, and expectations concerning future family life. These considerations do not necessarily indicate a rejection of marriage; rather, they may reflect a more complex process of evaluating personal circumstances before making a significant life decision. From this perspective, readiness for marriage can be understood as a multidimensional concept shaped by individual experiences, social norms, family expectations, and access to information. Digital media have become one of the spaces in which these considerations are discussed, negotiated, and communicated to broader audiences. Examining representations of marital readiness on social media is therefore important for understanding how contemporary ideas about women, marriage, and family life are constructed and circulated through digital communication. (Meidina, 2022)

The development of social media has expanded the spaces in which public discussions about personal experiences and social issues take place. Issues that were previously discussed primarily within families, educational institutions, conventional media, or face-to-face social interactions are now communicated through digital platforms. (Faizah, 2024) Within these spaces, marriage is discussed not only through formal advice and normative statements but also through personal narratives, opinions, everyday examples, and educational content. Representations of women's readiness for marriage may emerge through particular word choices, illustrative situations, emphases, and the combination of verbal and visual elements. Social media content can thus be understood not merely as a channel for distributing information but also as a communicative text through which meanings are produced and circulated. Investigating such content requires attention to how particular ideas are formulated and presented, while recognizing that media representations do not necessarily reflect the entirety of social reality.

TikTok is particularly relevant to this discussion because of its multimodal communication characteristics. The platform enables creators to combine spoken narratives, on-screen text, background sounds or music, facial expressions, gestures, and visual composition within a single audiovisual message. These elements operate simultaneously and may contribute different layers of meaning that cannot be fully explained through verbal language alone. On-screen text, for example, may emphasize a particular statement, vocal intonation may reinforce the significance of certain words, and facial expressions or gestures may provide additional contextual cues. The relationship among these elements can shape how a message is presented and interpreted. Consequently, TikTok provides a relevant empirical setting for multimodal communication research, particularly for examining how women's readiness for marriage is represented through the interaction of different semiotic modes. (Muhammad, 2025)

One content creator relevant to this research is Nashatra Malicca, whose TikTok account is @nmalicca. The research proposal identifies two videos as the

primary objects of analysis: “Perempuan Perlu Punya Uang Sendiri” (“Women Need to Have Their Own Money”) and “Anak Lo Emang Gabisa Milih Siapa Bokapnya, Tapi Lo Bisa” (“Your Child Cannot Choose Their Father, but You Can”). These videos address different but related dimensions of women’s readiness for marriage. The first discusses women’s financial independence, particularly the importance of having personal economic resources rather than being entirely dependent on a partner. The second emphasizes considerations in selecting a life partner by connecting that decision with the potential consequences for future family life and children. Together, these videos provide an opportunity to examine how financial autonomy and partner selection are represented as relevant considerations before marriage. Nevertheless, the analysis focuses on the meanings constructed within the audiovisual content rather than evaluating the creator’s personal readiness for marriage or assuming a particular effect on viewers.

Financial independence represents an important dimension of discussions concerning women’s readiness for marriage because it relates to resource management, the ability to respond to uncertainty, and the capacity to consider one’s circumstances within marital life. In digital discourse, financial independence may be presented as a form of personal preparation, a means of self-protection, or an element of more autonomous decision-making.(Hariyanto, 2024) However, the meaning constructed by a video cannot be determined solely from its title or general topic. The verbal narrative, on-screen text, vocal intonation, gestures, and visual composition must be examined together to understand how financial independence is positioned within the representation of women preparing for marriage. Such an analysis also requires distinguishing between meanings explicitly expressed through language and meanings that emerge from the interaction among semiotic modes. This approach enables a more systematic examination of the content without treating a single video as representative of all women’s experiences or circumstances.

Partner selection constitutes another important dimension of women’s readiness for marriage.(Nur Hidayah, 2023) Choosing a life partner involves more than personal preference, as it may also require consideration of character, responsibility, shared values, and the potential consequences of a relationship for the family being established. On social media, these considerations may be communicated through direct narration, persuasive statements, or illustrations of the consequences associated with particular decisions. In the second video selected for this study, the relationship between partner choice and a child’s future provides a central issue for examining how responsibility and decision-making are represented. The purpose of the analysis is not to establish a universal standard for selecting an ideal partner but to understand how partner selection is framed within the audiovisual text. This perspective makes it possible to examine how personal responsibility and anticipated family consequences are constructed through digital communication.(Meidina, 2024)

To investigate the construction of meaning in TikTok content, this study employs Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA). This approach understands communication as a meaning-making process involving multiple semiotic modes rather than verbal language alone. Spoken language, on-screen text, audio, and visual-

gestural elements are examined as interconnected resources that may reinforce, complement, or contrast with one another. The study draws on the visual grammar framework developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), particularly its three dimensions of visual meaning: representational, interactive, and compositional meaning. Representational meaning concerns how participants, actions, and circumstances are depicted; interactive meaning addresses the relationships established between visual representations and viewers; and compositional meaning examines how visual elements are arranged to create an integrated message. This framework is applied primarily to the visual dimension, while verbal and audio elements are analyzed according to their observable characteristics and relationships with the other modes. The multimodal perspective therefore provides an analytical basis for examining how different semiotic resources collectively construct representations of women's readiness for marriage. (Mega Puspita, 2022)

Although marriage, women's autonomy, and social media have been discussed across various fields of scholarship, this study specifically examines the interaction of semiotic modes within two TikTok videos published by a single content creator. This focus is significant because an analysis based exclusively on verbal transcripts may overlook the contribution of on-screen text, vocal emphasis, facial expressions, gestures, and visual composition to the construction of meaning. Conversely, an analysis limited to visual elements may fail to explain how these elements interact with the verbal messages accompanying them. The research consequently addresses the representation of women's readiness for marriage through the relationship among verbal language, on-screen text, audio, and visual-gestural modes. (Solikhudin, 2024) Its intended contribution lies in providing a detailed account of meaning-making practices within digital content rather than claiming that the two videos represent all Indonesian women's perspectives or establish a direct influence on audience attitudes and behavior. (Nafisah, 2024)

Based on this discussion, the study aims to analyze the representation of women's readiness for marriage in TikTok content published by @nmaliccaa through multimodal discourse analysis. Specifically, it examines how women's readiness is represented in two videos addressing financial independence and considerations in selecting a life partner. It also investigates how verbal language, on-screen text, audio, and visual-gestural elements interact to construct these representations, including instances in which the modes reinforce, complement, or contrast with one another. By applying Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar framework, the study seeks to clarify how different semiotic resources contribute to meaning-making in TikTok content. The research is expected to contribute to scholarship on digital communication and multimodal discourse analysis by offering a more detailed understanding of how women's readiness for marriage is represented within contemporary Indonesian digital culture.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach within a constructivist-interpretive paradigm and uses multimodal discourse analysis as its principal

analytical method.(Creswell, 2017) The qualitative approach is appropriate because the research seeks to develop an in-depth understanding of how the meaning of women's readiness for marriage is constructed within audiovisual texts, rather than measuring the phenomenon numerically or producing statistical generalizations. The constructivist-interpretive paradigm views social meaning as constructed through communication and interpreted within particular social and cultural contexts. The data consist of two TikTok videos published by @nmalicca (Nashatra Malicca): "Perempuan Perlu Punya Uang Sendiri" and "Anak Lo Emang Gabisa Milih Siapa Bokapnya, Tapi Lo Bisa." The videos were selected through purposive sampling because their subject matter directly corresponds to the research focus: women's financial independence and considerations in choosing a life partner before marriage. Data were collected through non-participant digital observation and documentation of the selected videos. The documentation process included audiovisual recordings, screenshots, and transcripts of spoken narratives and on-screen text. The unit of analysis was the segment of each video, defined as a complete verbal utterance together with the accompanying text, audio, and visual-gestural elements occurring within the same time interval. This segmentation enabled the analysis to examine the relationship among semiotic modes within their immediate audiovisual context. Data analysis was conducted through four systematic stages. First, the researcher organized the audiovisual materials into segments and documented the semiotic elements present in each segment. Second, the researcher examined four modes of communication: the verbal mode, including word choice and narrative structure; on-screen text, including subtitles and written emphasis; audio, including intonation, vocal stress, tempo, and background sound; and the visual-gestural mode, including facial expressions, gaze, gestures, camera framing, shot distance, and visual background. Third, the visual elements were interpreted using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual grammar framework, particularly its representational, interactive, and compositional dimensions. Fourth, the researcher examined intermodal relationships to identify how the different modes reinforced, complemented, or contrasted with one another in constructing representations of women's readiness for marriage. The resulting interpretations were considered in relation to the relevant sociocultural context, particularly discussions of women's financial autonomy and partner selection. To maintain analytical precision, conclusions were restricted to representations supported by the audiovisual data. The study does not assess the creator's actual readiness for marriage, claim certainty about the creator's subjective intentions, or infer direct effects on the audience.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Financial Independence as a Representation of Women's Readiness for Marriage

Financial independence constitutes an important dimension of contemporary discussions concerning women's readiness for marriage.(Kim, 2016) Marriage involves not only emotional commitment but also economic responsibilities, resource management, and decisions concerning the organization of family life. In this context,

financial independence may be understood as a condition that enables women to participate more actively in decisions affecting their personal and family circumstances. The TikTok video entitled “Perempuan Perlu Punya Uang Sendiri” places women’s financial autonomy at the center of its discussion of preparation before marriage. Rather than treating financial matters as exclusively the responsibility of a future husband, the topic foregrounds the importance of women possessing personal economic resources. This representation provides a starting point for examining how financial autonomy is constructed as one dimension of premarital readiness within digital communication.

The emphasis on having personal financial resources can be interpreted in relation to the broader discussion of individualization in contemporary society. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) explain that individualization is associated with changing expectations concerning personal responsibility and the construction of individual life trajectories. Within this context, decisions about marriage increasingly intersect with considerations of education, employment, economic security, and personal aspirations. The representation of financial independence in the selected TikTok content can therefore be examined as part of a broader discourse in which women are encouraged to consider their individual circumstances before entering marriage. This interpretation does not imply that economic independence eliminates the interdependence inherent in family life. Instead, it highlights how the capacity to manage personal resources may be represented as relevant to making informed decisions about marriage.(Adira, 2024)

The title “Perempuan Perlu Punya Uang Sendiri” establishes a direct relationship between women and the possession of personal financial resources. Linguistically, the expression presents financial ownership as a matter worthy of attention rather than as a peripheral issue in discussions of marriage. The phrase “perlu” communicates necessity or importance, while “uang sendiri” foregrounds personal possession and individual access to economic resources. These linguistic choices provide an analytical basis for examining how financial autonomy is framed within the video. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the title must be distinguished from the interpretation of the complete verbal narrative. A rigorous analysis should examine the specific statements that explain why women need personal money and how those statements connect financial resources with readiness for marriage.(Shams-Ghahfarokhi, 2026) The title establishes the topic, but the full narrative determines the range and qualifications of the meanings expressed.

From a representational perspective, financial independence may function as an attribute associated with a woman who is prepared to make decisions about her future. Hall (1997) conceptualizes representation as a process through which meaning is produced by language and systems of signs. Applied to the present study, this perspective directs attention to how the selected video constructs a relationship between women, financial resources, and premarital preparation. The relevant question is not whether the creator’s representation corresponds to every woman’s actual circumstances, but how the audiovisual text makes financial independence meaningful. This distinction is essential because representation is not a transparent

reflection of social reality. Rather, it selects, emphasizes, and organizes particular aspects of an issue, making some considerations more visible within a specific communicative context.(Rizky, 2025)

Financial independence also has implications for how women's agency is represented. Agency refers here to the capacity to make decisions and act in relation to one's circumstances, rather than simply to the possession of money.(Aliyyatussholihah, 2026) Personal financial resources may be presented as one condition that expands the range of choices available to women, including decisions about employment, personal needs, and participation in household arrangements. In discussions of women's empowerment, Gill (2007) and Banet-Weiser (2018) provide relevant contexts for considering how autonomy and empowerment are articulated in contemporary media cultures. However, the presence of empowerment-oriented language does not automatically establish that a message challenges all existing gender inequalities. The analysis should therefore determine whether financial independence is represented as a practical resource, an individual responsibility, a form of protection, or a combination of these meanings, depending on the evidence in the video.

The verbal mode is particularly important in examining how financial independence is explained and justified. In multimodal discourse analysis, spoken language is treated as a semiotic resource through which a creator names particular conditions, establishes relationships between ideas, and directs attention toward specific concerns. The analysis should therefore examine the precise wording of the video's narrative, including its use of statements, explanations, examples, and forms of emphasis. If the narrative explicitly associates personal money with the ability to face uncertainty, that relationship may support an interpretation of financial independence as a form of preparation or protection. If it instead emphasizes personal choice or self-determination, the analysis may identify a stronger focus on autonomy. These interpretations should be grounded in the recorded utterances rather than inferred solely from the video's title.(Sholikhah, 2026)

On-screen text provides another important resource for constructing the meaning of financial independence. The research proposal identifies subtitles and textual emphasis, including the use of capital letters, as relevant features of the selected content. Such textual arrangements can influence which expressions become visually prominent during the delivery of the verbal message. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) explain that visual meaning is influenced by the placement, salience, and organization of elements within a composition. In this case, subtitles may make the verbal message more accessible while also directing viewers' attention toward particular words or propositions.(Jain, 2026) Where capitalization or other forms of emphasis occur, the analysis should identify the exact expression being highlighted and explain its relationship to the accompanying speech. It should not assume that every textual emphasis necessarily signals the same rhetorical function.

The audio mode may further contribute to the presentation of financial independence through vocal intonation, stress, tempo, pauses, and background music. These features can shape the communicative force of a statement without

changing its literal wording. Van Leeuwen (1999) provides a useful conceptual basis for examining sound as a resource in meaning-making. For the selected video, the analysis should determine whether vocal emphasis reinforces a particular statement, whether the speaking tempo affects the perceived urgency of the message, and whether background sound supports or contrasts with the verbal content. Such interpretations require repeated listening to the recording. If a particular audio feature is absent or too subtle to establish a reliable interpretation, it should not be assigned a meaning merely to complete the analytical framework.

Visual-gestural elements also contribute to how financial independence is communicated. The research proposal characterizes the selected videos as talking-head content, making the creator's visible presence, gaze, facial expressions, and framing relevant analytical dimensions. Direct gaze toward the camera can be examined as a visual resource that establishes an apparent relationship between the speaker and the viewer. Close framing may create a sense of social proximity, although its specific communicative function depends on the context in which it appears. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) concept of interactive meaning provides an appropriate framework for examining these relationships. At the same time, the researcher should avoid treating a particular expression or gesture as conclusive evidence of an internal psychological state. The analysis concerns observable visual features and their possible communicative functions, not the creator's unobservable intentions.(Aliyyatussholihah, 2026)

Taken together, the financial-independence video offers an opportunity to examine how a particular economic consideration becomes part of the representation of premarital readiness. Its meaning should be interpreted through the interaction of verbal statements, on-screen text, audio, and visual-gestural elements rather than through any single feature in isolation. This approach makes it possible to distinguish the explicit proposition that women should possess personal financial resources from the additional meanings produced by textual emphasis, vocal delivery, and visual presentation. The discussion should ultimately explain how these semiotic resources organize financial independence as a consideration in women's preparation for marriage. Such an interpretation remains specific to the selected content and does not establish that financial independence is a universal prerequisite for marriage or that the video produces a particular effect on its audience.(Anjani, 2026)

Partner Selection and the Anticipation of Family Consequences

Partner selection constitutes a second dimension of premarital readiness represented in the TikTok content examined in this study.(Sussman, 1953) The video entitled "Anak Lo Emang Gabisa Milih Siapa Bokapnya, Tapi Lo Bisa" directs attention toward the relationship between individual choice and the anticipated consequences of family formation. Its title contrasts a circumstance that a child cannot determine—the identity of their father—with a decision presented as available to the adult: choosing a life partner. This contrast establishes a basis for discussing responsibility in partner selection. Within the scope of this study, the analytical task is to examine how the video constructs that relationship through its verbal and audiovisual

features, rather than to determine whether a particular partner-selection decision is objectively correct or universally appropriate.

The wording of the title creates a contrast between limited control over circumstances of birth and a degree of agency in choosing a partner. The informal expression “lo” establishes a direct and conversational mode of address, while the contrastive structure places emphasis on the distinction between what cannot be chosen and what can be influenced by personal decision-making. This linguistic construction may be interpreted as encouraging reflection on the significance of partner selection before establishing a family. However, the interpretation must be tested against the complete narrative, since the title alone cannot establish every aspect of the video’s argument. The analysis should identify how the subsequent statements develop the contrast, what reasons are offered, and how the relationship between partner choice and future family circumstances is explained.(Bejanyan, 2014)

The video’s emphasis on choice can be discussed in relation to the broader concept of individual agency.(Vignoli, 2018) In contemporary accounts of personal decision-making, individuals are often represented as having responsibility for evaluating available options and considering the consequences of their actions. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) provide a useful framework for understanding how individualization changes the relationship between personal decisions and established social expectations. In the context of marriage, this perspective draws attention to the ways in which partner selection may be framed as an important personal decision rather than solely as an outcome of family arrangements or social conventions. Nevertheless, agency should not be interpreted as complete freedom from structural constraints. Economic circumstances, family expectations, cultural norms, and unequal social relationships may shape the options available to individuals. The video’s representation should therefore be examined without assuming that every person possesses the same degree of choice.

The relationship between partner selection and future children provides an additional dimension of the video’s subject matter. By connecting an adult’s choice of partner with the child’s future circumstances, the title establishes a relationship between present decisions and anticipated family consequences. This framing invites analysis of how responsibility is extended beyond the individual to include other people who may be affected by the formation of a family. The video can thus be examined for the way it represents the temporal dimension of decision-making: a choice made before marriage may be presented as having implications for relationships and responsibilities that develop afterward. The specific nature of those implications, however, must be established from the verbal content rather than assumed from the title. The analysis should distinguish between consequences explicitly discussed in the video and consequences inferred by the researcher.(Schwartz, 2013)

The verbal mode is central to understanding how the video develops its argument about partner selection. The researcher should examine the terms used to describe choosing a partner, the reasons provided for considering that choice

carefully, and the relationships established between adult decisions and children's circumstances. The analysis should also attend to how the narrative addresses its intended interlocutor through informal language, direct statements, or rhetorical contrasts. These features may contribute to the construction of a conversational but emphatic message.(Shackelford, 1997) However, informality should not automatically be equated with persuasion, and direct address should not be treated as proof that every viewer is positioned in the same way. Their functions must be interpreted in relation to the complete sequence of statements and the other semiotic modes present in the video.

The on-screen text can reinforce the organization of the partner-selection message by making selected expressions visible alongside the spoken narrative. Where subtitles reproduce the verbal statements, they may support the accessibility and continuity of the message. Where textual emphasis is used, it may direct attention toward a particular contrast or proposition. Under Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual grammar, the prominence of a textual element can be examined in relation to its position and salience within the frame. In the selected video, the researcher should document which words or statements receive visual emphasis and whether this emphasis corresponds to the central distinction established in the verbal narrative. The interpretation should remain tied to the observed text and frame rather than assuming that subtitles merely duplicate speech without contributing to the organization of meaning.(Van Bavel, 2021)

The audio mode is also relevant because discussions of partner selection may involve statements that carry particular degrees of emphasis or urgency. Intonation, pauses, vocal stress, and speaking tempo can affect how a verbal proposition is presented. Background music, where present, may contribute to the overall communicative atmosphere. Van Leeuwen's (1999) work on speech, music, and sound provides a conceptual basis for examining these elements as semiotic resources. Nevertheless, the analysis should not infer emotional states or rhetorical intentions solely from the presence of music or a particular vocal pattern. It should describe the observable audio feature, identify the statement with which it occurs, and explain how the feature relates to the message.(Smock, 2000) If the audio reinforces the verbal contrast between limited and available choice, that interpretation should be supported by the relevant segment and its documented characteristics.

The visual-gestural mode can further shape how the partner-selection message is presented to viewers. The creator's gaze, facial expressions, posture, gestures, and position within the frame may contribute to the interpersonal dimension of the video. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) concept of interactive meaning enables the researcher to examine how direct gaze and social distance organize the relationship between the represented speaker and the viewer. In a talking-head format, these visual features may be especially relevant because the speaker's face and delivery occupy a central position in the audiovisual text. Yet the significance of each feature must be determined from its actual appearance in the video. The researcher should avoid attributing a definitive psychological meaning to

a facial expression or assuming that direct gaze necessarily produces agreement or acceptance among viewers.(Fredrickson, 1990)

A multimodal interpretation of partner selection requires attention to how the different resources work together. The verbal narrative may establish a contrast between circumstances that cannot be controlled and choices that remain available, while subtitles may make the contrast visually salient. Audio may emphasize a key statement, and the creator's gaze or framing may contribute to the interpersonal presentation of the message. These possibilities should be examined at the level of individual segments before the researcher draws conclusions about the video as a whole. The relationship among modes may be reinforcing when multiple resources emphasize the same proposition, complementary when one mode adds information not fully expressed by another, or contrastive when the modes produce different or potentially competing meanings. Identifying these relationships allows the analysis to move beyond a summary of the topic toward an explanation of how the audiovisual text constructs its message.(Kogan, 2025)

The partner-selection video consequently provides a basis for examining how responsibility and anticipated family consequences are represented in digital discussions of premarital readiness. Its central topic connects an adult's capacity to choose a partner with considerations concerning the family that may subsequently emerge from that choice. The analytical contribution lies in identifying how this connection is formulated through language and organized through audiovisual resources.(Fredrickson, 1990) This interpretation should not be expanded into a universal claim that every family outcome can be predicted from partner selection or that women alone bear responsibility for the future well-being of children. Rather, the study examines the specific representation available in the selected content and considers how its communicative structure makes partner selection meaningful as a dimension of readiness for marriage.

Multimodal Meaning-Making and the Representation of Premarital Readiness

The two selected TikTok videos can be examined as multimodal texts in which meaning emerges through the interaction of different semiotic resources. Kress (2010) argues that communication involves the use of socially available modes through which people represent and interpret meaning. From this perspective, the videos cannot be adequately understood as verbal statements accompanied by merely decorative visual elements. Spoken language, on-screen text, audio, and visual-gestural features contribute to the organization of the message in different ways. The central analytical question is therefore how these resources work together to represent women's readiness for marriage. This approach is particularly appropriate for short-form audiovisual content, in which several modes are presented simultaneously and may influence the emphasis, accessibility, and interpersonal character of the communication.(Onanuga, 2017)

The verbal mode provides the primary propositional content through which the two videos introduce their respective themes. The first foregrounds the importance of women having their own money, while the second emphasizes the

relationship between partner choice and the circumstances of future family life.(Aytaç-Demirçivi, 2025) These thematic distinctions establish two analytical dimensions of premarital readiness: financial autonomy and the consideration of a life partner. The verbal content is important because it identifies the conditions, actions, and relationships explicitly addressed by the creator. Nevertheless, a verbal transcript cannot capture the complete communicative event. The same sentence may be presented with different textual emphasis, vocal delivery, or visual framing, potentially producing differences in prominence and interpersonal positioning. A multimodal analysis must therefore treat the transcript as one layer of the data rather than as a complete substitute for the audiovisual recording.

On-screen text provides a second mode through which the verbal message can be organized and emphasized. Subtitles may make spoken content more accessible, while additional textual emphasis may direct attention toward selected terms or propositions. The research proposal identifies the use of subtitles and capital-letter emphasis as relevant features of the selected content. These features can be examined through the visual grammar framework, particularly its attention to salience and compositional organization (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The analytical task is to identify what appears on the screen, where it appears, and how its presentation relates to the accompanying speech. If a particular phrase is highlighted, the researcher should consider whether the emphasis reinforces the main verbal proposition or distinguishes it from surrounding information. This interpretation must be supported by documented examples rather than generalized to all subtitles or all uses of capital letters.

The audio mode contributes another layer of meaning through vocal delivery and background sound. Intonation, vocal stress, tempo, pauses, and music may influence the presentation of the verbal message. As van Leeuwen (1999) demonstrates in his discussion of speech, music, and sound, audio is capable of functioning as a meaningful semiotic resource rather than as a neutral accompaniment. In the present study, audio should be examined in relation to particular statements and the visual-textual elements that occur at the same time. A marked vocal emphasis, for example, may reinforce the importance of a proposition, whereas a mismatch between the tone of the audio and the verbal content may produce a contrasting effect. Such interpretations require direct examination of the recordings. Where no clear or analytically significant audio feature can be identified, the researcher should acknowledge its limited contribution rather than assign it an unsupported meaning.(Nielsen, 2022)

The visual-gestural mode is especially relevant to the talking-head format described in the research proposal. In this format, the visible speaker, facial expressions, gaze, posture, framing, and background form part of the communicative arrangement. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) interactive dimension provide a framework for examining the relationship between the represented speaker and the viewer, particularly through gaze, social distance, and visual perspective. Their compositional dimension can also help explain how the speaker and textual elements are positioned within the frame. However, the analytical value of these categories

depends on the features actually present in the recordings. The researcher should not force a complex narrative interpretation onto a relatively simple visual arrangement. Instead, the analysis should explain how the observable visual features contribute to the presentation of the message and how their functions relate to the verbal, textual, and audio modes.(Ang, 2023)

Representational meaning is useful for examining how the two videos construct the conceptual attributes associated with readiness for marriage. In the financial-independence video, the verbal theme concerns women's possession of personal financial resources. In the partner-selection video, the theme concerns the distinction between circumstances that cannot be chosen and the choice of a life partner. These topics can be understood as different conceptual representations rather than necessarily as visual narratives involving multiple actions or participants. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework enable the researcher to examine how people, attributes, and relationships are represented, but the framework should be applied with sensitivity to the structure of the particular content. If the video primarily presents a speaker addressing the camera, the main conceptual attributes may be communicated through language and subtitles, while the visual mode contributes to the presentation of the speaker. This distinction prevents the researcher from treating all meaning as if it were carried equally by every mode.(Peng, 2019)

Interactive meaning concerns the relationship established between the represented speaker and the viewer. In the selected videos, direct gaze and close framing are identified in the proposal as relevant visual characteristics for analysis. These features can be examined in terms of how they position the viewer in relation to the speaker and the subject under discussion. Direct gaze may establish an apparent visual connection, while close framing may reduce perceived social distance within the viewing experience. Nevertheless, these features should be interpreted as elements of communicative design rather than evidence of actual audience responses.(Fahmi, 2024) A viewer may accept, reject, question, or ignore a message regardless of the visual relationship constructed by the video. The analysis can explain how the content addresses its viewers, but it cannot establish the viewers' interpretations or emotional reactions without additional audience data.(Nordström, 2024)

Compositional meaning provides a further means of explaining how visual and textual elements are arranged to create a coherent presentation. In short-form video, composition may involve the placement of the speaker within the frame, the position of subtitles, the relationship between text and the speaker's face, and the prominence of particular visual elements. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) emphasize that the arrangement and salience of elements contribute to the organization of visual meaning. Applied to the present study, this framework directs attention to the ways in which the verbal message becomes visually organized. However, the analysis should remain proportionate to the content's visual complexity. If the composition is relatively stable across a video, the discussion may appropriately focus on the

persistent arrangement of the speaker and subtitles rather than suggesting major visual transitions that the data do not demonstrate.

The relationship among the four modes can be classified as reinforcing, complementary, or contrastive. A reinforcing relationship occurs when two or more modes emphasize a similar proposition; for example, a verbal statement may be accompanied by a subtitle that highlights the same key phrase. A complementary relationship occurs when one mode contributes information or context that is not fully expressed through another mode. A contrastive relationship occurs when the modes present different emphases or produce a tension between the verbal proposition and its audiovisual presentation. These categories are analytical tools for describing relationships rather than predetermined outcomes. The researcher must establish which relationship is present in each segment through close examination of the recorded data. A single video may contain several different intermodal relationships, and no one category should be assumed to characterize the entire content without sufficient evidence.(Lin, 2017)

The multimodal comparison of the two videos provides a way to identify both shared and distinct aspects of the representation of premarital readiness. Both videos address decisions relevant to women's lives before or in connection with marriage, but they foreground different subject matters. The first focuses on financial independence, while the second concerns partner selection and anticipated family consequences. The analysis can therefore compare how these themes are articulated verbally, emphasized through on-screen text, supported or qualified by audio, and presented through visual-gestural resources. Such a comparison should not assume that the two videos communicate identical ideas simply because they belong to the same creator's account. Instead, it should identify the specific similarities and differences demonstrated by the data. This approach allows the researcher to develop an integrated interpretation while preserving the distinctive communicative structure of each video.

Overall, multimodal discourse analysis offers a systematic means of examining how readiness for marriage is represented through the coordinated use of different semiotic resources.(Parkin, 2021) The two selected videos provide a focused case through which financial autonomy and partner-selection considerations can be analyzed as dimensions of premarital readiness. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual grammar supports the analysis of representational, interactive, and compositional meaning, while the broader multimodal approach enables the researcher to examine the relationship of visual features to verbal language, on-screen text, and audio. The value of this approach lies in its attention to the construction of meaning rather than in assumptions about the creator's intentions or the audience's reactions. Accordingly, the study contributes to the examination of digital representations of women and marriage by showing how the audiovisual form itself becomes an important site for articulating ideas about personal autonomy, partner selection, and preparation for family life.(Barton, 2025)

CONCLUSION

This study examines the representation of women's readiness for marriage in two TikTok videos published by @nmaliccaa, focusing on financial independence and considerations in selecting a life partner. Through a multimodal discourse analysis framework, the study approaches these videos as integrated audiovisual texts in which verbal language, on-screen text, audio, and visual-gestural elements may contribute to the construction of meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual grammar provides an analytical framework for examining representational, interactive, and compositional meaning, particularly in relation to the presentation of the speaker, textual emphasis, gaze, framing, and visual arrangement. The study's central contribution is its focus on how different semiotic resources work together to represent premarital readiness, rather than treating the verbal narrative as the sole source of meaning. Financial autonomy and partner selection are examined as distinct but related themes through which readiness for marriage is discussed within contemporary digital communication. The study also provides a focused contribution to research on digital communication and multimodal representation by demonstrating the analytical relevance of examining short-form video content through the interaction of multiple semiotic modes. Its scope, however, is limited to two videos from a single TikTok account and does not support generalizations about all Indonesian women, all representations of marriage on social media, or the direct effects of digital content on audience behavior. The final interpretation should therefore remain grounded in the documented audiovisual evidence, including specific verbal extracts, time-coded segments, and visual examples. Future research could extend this approach by comparing content from different creators, examining a broader range of themes related to marital readiness, or investigating how audiences interpret representations of women, financial autonomy, and partner selection. Such extensions would help clarify the diversity of digital discourses about marriage while preserving the distinction between the meanings represented in media texts and the ways those meanings are received in social contexts.

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