



## **Analysis of Language Functions in Live Broadcasting Online Seller on TikTok**

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### **ARTICLE INFO**

Received:  
7 January 2024

Accepted:  
29 February 2024

Published:  
01 April 2024

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### **Keywords:**

Language Functions,  
TikTok, Live  
Broadcasting

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### **ABSTRACT**

Online seller live broadcasting has become a significant phenomenon in the social media community, especially on platforms like TikTok. Online sellers use specific language and communication strategies to grab users' attention, promote their products, and drive sales. This research aims to determine the function of language in a live broadcast video of an online seller on TikTok. The qualitative descriptive method was employed to describe each language function observed in the live video broadcasts of online sellers on TikTok. Data collection involved watching and observing the phenomenon of online sellers on the TikTok platform. This process involves several stages. Data analysis: Data reduction is carried out after the data is collected. The research results showed that there are four language functions that online sellers often use on the TikTok media platform: emotive functions, cognitive functions, referential functions, and metalinguistic functions. This language function influences the phenomenon of online sellers on TikTok by providing information about the goods being sold and influencing the audience to buy.

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**Doi:** <https://doi.org/10.59011/austronesian.3.1.2024.39-51>

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### **1. Introduction**

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics closely related to social life or the state of society (Hymes, 2012). Life in society is never separated from language, and in society, there will always be language problems that must be solved and solutions sought. Without language, communication will not go well. Communication can occur between two or more people or within a group. Holmes (2013) argues that sociolinguistics, a branch of linguistics, looks at and places the position of language about the users of that language in society. In other words, sociolinguistics holds that human life is a social society that

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does not live alone. In sociolinguistics, several aspects of language have special characteristics, namely, language sounds related to phonemes, morphemes, words, and sentences.

The function of language is one of the phenomena studied in sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics studies how language functions in a social context, namely how language is used to achieve social goals and meet communicative needs in society (see Adil et al., 2020; Kanaza, Fauzia, 2020). According to Jakobson (1995), there are six functions of language in communication, namely (1) referential functions, (2) emotive functions, (3) conative functions, (4) phatic functions, (5) metalinguistic functions, and (6) The poetic function. In sociolinguistic analysis, the function of language is a concept that refers to the purpose or role played by language in a particular social context (see Gedamu & Gezahegn, 2021; Katili et al., 2021; Ricklefs, 2021; Warami & Latuputty, 2022).

In this increasingly advanced digital era, social media platforms have become essential for online interaction and commerce. One platform that has experienced rapid growth is TikTok (see Lee & Chang, 2022). TikTok has become a global phenomenon where users can share creative and interesting short video content. Thus, TikTok can be platform for sharing education (see Tolkach & Pratt, 2021). One aspect that stands out in TikTok's online sales is its use of language and unique communication style. TikTok has changed how we interact and communicate online, especially among sellers. On TikTok, online sellers can take advantage of the function of language in certain social contexts to promote their products or services to a wider audience. Therefore, analyzing language functions in online sellers on TikTok is the primary concern in this study (cf. Menggo et al., 2019 ; Seruni & Hamzah, 2019).

In this case, the researchers uses a previous study as a reference for analyzing this current study. This previous research analyzed six types of language functions found in COVID-19 videos via YouTube media (Sianipar, 2022). How does the language contained in the video fall into the types of language according to Jacobson's theory? In this latest research, the function of language in videos of online sellers on TikTok is used as an object to know the function of language found in online sellers on TikTok.

## **2. Literature Review**

Several previous studies have discussed about language function in various research objects and became supporting ideas for conducting the this current research (see Dewi et al., 2022; Fadillah, 2021; Mohamad et al., 2022; Pengcuo & Zhang, 2021; Ricklefs, 2021; Susanthi et al., 2021). Previous research helps researchers in analyzing cases of language functions better. Previous research has focused on the function of the language contained in the case, the variety of languages found in advertisements, and the variety of communication languages used for product marketing. In addition to analyzing the functions of the language contained in the video footage of an online seller on TikTok, this latest research also analyzes how the function of the language can have a positive impact on online sellers in their use.

First, a research conducted by Sianipar (2022) who focusing on investigating the

language function in covid-19 vaccine campaign. This research aims to determine the function of the language used in the Covid-19 vaccine campaign and find out the elements of language. The research data was obtained from the World Health Organization (WHO) YouTube channel. Data sources were processed and analyzed using the language function theory developed by Jacobson so that all elements of language function could be found. This previous research only focused on fulfilling the function of language. In the Covid-19 vaccine campaign video, what communication elements are used in the language function?

The second, research performed by Tutik et al. (2020) and Septiana (2022) investigating language varieties in digital advertisement. This research is focused on the form of variations of advertisements and slogans as well as their functions and meanings. The research techniques used were documentation, reading techniques, and note-taking techniques so that at the end of the analysis, foreign language variations were found in the advertisements and slogans of the online shopping site Shopee .

Furthermore, a research conducted by Nurfitasari (2021) who concern to discuss the classification of language functions in Instagram posts. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to state the solutions to the problems found in the 2020 celebrity posts. The purpose of using this approach is to obtain the attitude of the language contained therein.

The last, a research conducted by Yogatama et al. (2023). This research aims to analyze the variety of languages used by MSME account owners on the social media application TikTok in Indonesia in marketing their products. Then, with the variety of marketing languages they apply, researchers want to know the effectiveness of this type of communication in increasing product sales figures. This previous research used observation and recording techniques to analyze and process data. The method used is netnography with cyber media analysis techniques through four levels: the media space level, the media document level, the media object level, and lastly, the experienced level.

### **3. Method**

This study uses a qualitative approach to processing and analyzing data. Qualitative research enable researchers to collect and interpret the data by using content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004). The researchers described how sellers use language functions in live broadcasts conducted on the TikTok media platform to convey information, express feelings, and give command sentences to the audience. The theory used in analyzing the data is based on Jacobson's theory (1980, p. 84). This theory states six types of language functions, including emotive, conative, phatic, poetic, referential, and metalinguistic.

The data sources were not obtained directly through interactions, however all data was obtained through documentation, namely live broadcast footage of online sellers on the TikTok social media platform. Researchers obtained data sources from several online sellers on a social media platform, Tiktok. Through the videos collected, an analysis of language functions is carried out using Jacobson's theory.

The researchers recorded the data source when the online seller on TikTok was

broadcasting live. Researchers take several steps in collecting data. First, they look for live broadcasts of TikTok sellers who have many viewers; then, researchers record the live broadcasts to store the data. After that, the researchers returned to playing the live broadcast recordings repeatedly to understand the function of the language used by the online seller. Then, the researchers notes important points related to the purpose of this research. After the data has been collected, the researcher analyzes the data by going through three steps: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2014).

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Emotive Function

It focuses on the speaker's or writer's subjective experience and aims to evoke an emotional response in the listener or reader. The primary purpose of the emotive function is to communicate and convey emotions effectively. In short, the emotive function of language is about using words and other communication elements to express and evoke emotions, allowing us to connect with others on a deeper level and communicate our inner experiences effectively.

#### Data 1

*Kak Jill : 6 gelombang x 3 potong = 375k + diskon tambahan dari supa dupa tiktok darling, isi dek pesan tambahannya, semudah itu cinta love you adikku.*

This language function focuses on speakers who express their feelings through speech to the other person. The data above is one of the dialogues spoken by Jill, an online seller on TikTok. In her utterances, the function of emotive language is found, namely "love you adikku". In this case, Jill conveyed her affection as a seller to her live broadcast viewers, who had faithfully watched Jill sell and checked out orders.

#### Data 2

*Kak Jill : Malaysia belum ada cinta, maaf adikku*

"Maaf adikku" is included in the function of emotive or expressive language. The function of emotive language is related to the use of language to express speakers' feelings, emotions, or personal attitudes. When someone uses the word "maaf," it shows regret, guilt, or apology. "maaf" expresses remorse or guilt for an action or word that was wrong or hurtful. In this case, Jill apologized to show her regret because a viewer asked if the product could reach Malaysia, but it did not.

### 4.2 Conative Function

The conative function of language refers to how language is used to influence or direct the behavior of others. It focuses on the listener or reader and aims to persuade,

instruct, command, or influence their actions or thoughts. The primary purpose of the conative function is to achieve a specific response or desired outcome from the audience. The data below is obtained from watching live broadcasts of online sellers on the TikTok Shop.

### Data 3

*Kak Jill : 6 gelombang x 3 potong = 375k + diskon tambahan dari supa dupa tiktok darling, isi dek pesan tambahannya, semudah itu cinta love you adikku.*

The data above is one of the dialogues from an online seller named Kak Jill. In the dialogue, a conative language function is found, indicated by the instructions given by Kak Jill to the live broadcast audience: “Isi dek pesan tambahannya.” Jill asked her audience, Dek, in the imperative sentence, to fill in an additional message. After saying these words, Jill’s live broadcast audience added orders she would buy.

### Data 4

*Bagus Istri : Kalau sekarang mau check out langsung sekarang aja check out bunda-bunda, bagus istri tunggu.*

The data above was obtained from a dialogue in a live broadcast of an online seller on the TikTok media platform. Bagus Istri is a call from an online seller. She is a selebgram who is currently famous, but because she is not Indonesian, Bagus Istri difficult to speak in Indonesian. In the conversation, a function of conative language is found. “Kalau sekarang mau check out langsung sekarang aja check out bunda-bunda.” This dialogue shows how a seller gives instructions to her live broadcast viewers to do what she tells them to check out the product they want to buy right now. The word “sekarang” also emphasizes that she is giving an order.

### Data 5

*Seller : Etalase nomor 16 ya sayang cantik yaa. Langsung di check out dan di payment ya sayang. Paymentnya kita juga bisa COD ya sayang kalo mau payment COD*

The data above is a dialogue in a live broadcast of an online perfume seller on TikTok. In the excerpts of the dialogue, the function of the conative language shown by the sentence is found: “Langsung di check out dan di payment ya sayang.” Like the understanding of the function of the conative language that was explained earlier, in this sentence, the perfume seller gives instructions to the audience to immediately check out the products in their cart. After that, the seller also instructs the buyer to immediately make payments so that their orders can be processed and sent immediately.

### Data 6

*Seller : Yah sedih banget kalo sampe ga kedapatan. Jadi ayo di check out yuk Teteh*

The data is a fragment of a dialogue between an online seller on TikTok and a PVNshoes account. In this dialogue, a conative language function is found, in which the seller instructs the viewers of the live broadcast to immediately check out the products in the window. The sentence clearly shows this language's function, "Jadi ayo di check out yuk Teteh." The word "ayo" in the sentence appeals to the audience.

#### **4.3 Metalinguistics Function**

In the metalinguistic function, language is used to clarify, define, or discuss the code or system of language itself. It involves using language to explain or comment on linguistic elements such as words, grammar, phonetics, or semantics. The focus is on the linguistic structure, rules, and features of language.

#### **Data 7**

*Kak Jill : Kak Jill lebar 1 tinggi 3 kak jill 12 gelombang, maksudnya dekku? yang kak Jill pahami aja ya lebar 1 tinggi 3 adik kak jill checkout 6 gelombang 2 potong*

"Maksudnya dekku?" is one example of a metalinguistic language function. In this context, Kak Jill did not understand the question that was asked by one of the viewers on the live broadcast. To make sure that the answer given by Kak Jill later is not wrong, she said, "Maksudnya dekku."

#### **4.4 Referential Function**

The referential function of language refers to the way language is used to convey information, describe objects, events, or concepts, and provide factual or objective statements. When we use language in the referential function, we aim to provide clear and accurate descriptions, explanations, or definitions. We use words, phrases, and sentences to convey facts, share knowledge, or communicate ideas in a way that is as objective and unbiased as possible.

#### **Data 8**

*Kak jill : kak jill ga punya adikku, warna putih black out, gorden kak jill gada yang warna putih, vitrase ada dalaman kalo gordennya ga ada*

The data above is one of the dialogues found in the live broadcast footage of a TikTok seller. In this sentence, a language function is found, which indicates that the seller provides information to the audience. This is shown in the sentence "kak jill ga punya adikku, warna putih black out" and also "gorden kak jill gada yang warna putih, vitrase ada dalaman kalo gordennya ga ada". Kak Jill gave information to an audience member

who asked if Jill had white curtains. Then she continued the information in the form that the white curtains did not have, but the white curtains were there. Jill conveyed both forms of information to explain the products she was selling; that way, the audience knew clearly that the white curtains were gone so they could choose curtains with other colors still available.

### Data 9

- Kak Jill : Tidak panas, sebab susunan benangnya lebih padat adikku, love you sayang*  
*Kak Jill : Malaysia belum ada cinta, maaf adikku*  
*Kak Jill : Pink ada sayangku, pink di etalase kak jill nomor darling 14 dekku (sambil menunjukan gordennya) etalase 14 kak jill sayang warna dasar adeku warna pink, pinknya lembut banget cinta motif serat dengan jenis benang dove kering tidak bercahaya sama sekali bahan sebagus ini darling, dia ada di etalase kak jill nomor 14 dekku*  
*Kak Jill : Beda adikku, beda dikit adikku beda 40k*  
*Kak Jill : Isi pesan tambahannya dekku.*

The data above is a series of dialogs from the same video source. In the dialog, several sentences are found that show the function of referential language. The first is indicated by “*Tidak panas, sebab susunan benangnya lebih padat adikku*”. In this context, an audience asks about the product’s ingredients. Then Kak Jill, as the seller, provided information that the material was not hot because it was made of a denser arrangement of threads. With the information conveyed by the seller, the buyer can find out about the ingredients of the product she will buy so as not to arouse curiosity. The second is “*Malaysia belum ada cinta*”. The audience asked whether Jill’s products were sold in Malaysia, and Jill explained that they were not in Malaysia yet. The information provided by

Jill was able to answer questions from the audience. The function of referential language is also found in sentences “*Pink ada sayangku, pink di etalase kak jill nomor darling 14 dekku, etalase 14 kak jill sayang warna dasar adikku adikku warna pink, pinknya lembut banget cinta motif serat dengan jenis benang dove kering tidak bercahaya sama sekali bahan sebagus ini darling, dia ada di etalase kak jill nomor 14 dekku*”. In her dialog, Jill conveyed that curtains with pink colors existed and could be checked out at catalase number fourteen. Furthermore, Jill, the online seller, also explained to the audience that the pink curtains have a soft material with a fiber pattern and are made from dry dove threads that don’t glow. The information provided lets the audience know that the material used for the curtains is good, so they can decide which product they will choose.

### Data 10

- Penonton : Lipstick nya harga berapa?*  
*Bagus Istri : 58 ribu satuan, kalo kalian langsung beli 6, 235 ribu 6 warna gitu*

The data above is a dialogue conducted by an online seller broadcasting live on the TikTok media platform with a viewer asking a question. The function of referential language is indicated by sentences “58 ribu satuan, kalo kalian langsung beli 6, 235 ribu 6 warna gitu”. The audience asks about the price of the lipsticks being sold. The seller explains that if you buy one unit, the price is fifty-eight thousand, so if the viewer buys six lipsticks immediately, he can pay two hundred and thirty-five thousand Rupiah and get six types of lipstick color. This language function aims to convey information.

### Data 11

- Penonton* : *Check out nya gimana sih? Kok ga muncul check out nya?*
- Bagus Istri* : *Usia kalo lewat 40, pake etalase 9 aja bunda, etalase 9 aja pake kalo usia lewat 40 ya*
- Bagus Istri* : *Iya dong, bisa dong kalo usia lewat bisa pake etalase 9 karna etalase 9 anti aging bunda-bunda, etalase 9 anti aging, disini ada DNA Salmon serum bikin keriput-keriput kalian hilang dari muka kamu, ngerti kamu ga? Hah bunda-bunda?*
- Penonton* : *Aku sudah check out*
- Bagus Istri* : *Terima kasih banyakin, siapa yang udah check out? Tapi check out nya ga muncul sih*
- Bagus Istri* : *Etalase berapa check out bunda ku? Kalo etalase 10 untuk hilangin jerawat ya, etalase 10 untuk hilangin jerawat ya bunda ku mantap jadi nya di kulit ya*
- Bagus Istri* : *Belum, belum ada check outnya bunda, belum muncul kalo udah muncul saya kasih tau*
- Bagus Istri* : *Mungkin bunda belum bayar, mungkin bunda ku belum bayar ini, ah kalo ada bunda-bunda, ibu-ibu kalian bisa pake etalase 9 biar kulit kalian jadi bagus ya kalo ada ibu-ibu itulah pakelah*
- Bagus Istri* : *Bunda-bunda ku saya mau off sebentar ya kalo kalian mau check out silahkan karena bagus istri udah gabisa ini karena saya punya alergi atau gimana, saya mau off dulu ya, kalo mau check out lagi ayo*

The data above is a snippet of dialogue from a live broadcast recording when a seller sells his product. From the long dialog, many functions of referential language are found. “Usia kalo lewat 40, pake etalase 9 aja bunda, etalase 9 aja pake kalo usia lewat 40 ya.” The first is indicated by the dialogue, where the seller provides information that if the buyer is over forty years old, he must buy the product in etalase number nine, not another etalase. The next dialog showing the function of the same language is “bisa dong kalo usia lewat bisa pake etalase 9 karna etalase 9 anti aging bunda-bunda, etalase 9 anti aging, disini ada DNA Salmon serum bikin keriput-keriput kalian hilang dari muka kamu”. The seller explained the reason why someone over forty years of age should buy a product that is in etalase number nine, which is because the product contains Salmon DNA, which can remove wrinkles on the face. With this information, buyers can choose the product they will buy. The next referential language function is indicated by a dialog

*“Kalo etalase 10 untuk hilangin jerawat ya, etalase 10 untuk hilangin jerawat ya bunda ku mantap jadi nya di kulit ya”*. After explaining the product’s contents in etalase number nine, the seller returned to provide information regarding the product in etalase number ten. She explained that the product helps eliminate acne and is very good for the skin. The next dialogue is *“Mungkin bunda belum bayar, mungkin bunda ku belum bayar ini, ah kalo ada bunda-bunda, ibu-ibu kalian bisa pake etalase 9 biar kulit kalian jadi bagus ya kalo ada ibu-ibu itulah pakelah”*.

From the dialogue, two pieces of information were found that the seller was trying to convey; the first was an explanation when an audience member asked why the check-out receipt had not been seen, and then the seller explained that it might have happened because she had not made a payment. Then the second information is the seller explained that etalase nine is very good for buyers who are mothers. The last referential language function in this live snippet is indicated by *“Bunda-bunda ku saya mau off sebentar ya kalo kalian mau check out silahkan karena bagus istri udah gabisa ini karena saya punya alergi atau gimana”*. The seller informs all live broadcast viewers that she will end the live broadcast because the seller has an allergy, so she cannot continue. Through the information provided, she hopes that viewers who have not checked out their products will immediately check out.

#### **Data 12**

- Seller : Ini bisa dipakai dari pagi sampe malem yaa. Menurut aku ini cocok banget untuk event-event yang formal, bepergian*
- Seller : Iya betul dia harganya lagi murah banget, kamu ambil 30ml kita kasih kamu free testernya 2 terserah mau yang mana aja*
- Seller : Iya wanginya soft banget ya, wanginya lebih ke manis bunga*
- Seller : Jangan lupa kamu kalau mau ambil testernya yang kita pilih, boleh ditulis di notes ya sayang ya mau yang mana*
- Seller : Etalase nomor 16 ya sayang cantik yaa. Langsung di check out dan di payment ya sayang. Paymentnya kita juga bisa COD ya sayang kalo mau payment COD*

The data above is obtained from footage of perfume’s live broadcast by account favorit ciwi-ciwi. In the seller’s dialogue, the function of referential language is found in its use. The function of this language is first indicated by the sentence *“Ini bisa dipakai dari pagi sampe malem yaa. Menurut aku ini cocok banget untuk event-event yang formal, bepergian”*. In this context the seller provides information to the audience regarding the perfume she is selling. This information is in the form of the durability of using perfume, from morning to night. Furthermore, the seller also explained her opinion that the perfume variant she was explaining was very suitable for formal events or just for traveling.

Through this explanation, the audience gets information as a reference for them to choose a perfume variant, because they cannot smell the perfume directly. So the information from the seller is very helpful. Next, there is a sentence *“harganya lagi murah banget, kamu ambil 30ml kita kasih kamu free testernya 2 terserah mau yang mana*

*aja*". The referential language function is shown when the seller provides information that the price of the perfume is cheap, and if the audience buys perfume with 30 ml, the seller will provide a tester according to the buyer's choice. This information is conveyed with the aim of making the audience more interested in buying perfume with 30 ml content because it will benefit. "*wanginya soft banget ya, wanginya lebih ke manis bunga*", this explains to the audience that a perfume that has a soft fragrance is like a sweet floral scent. The last referential language function in the dialog is indicated by "*Paymentnya kita juga bisa COD ya sayang*", the seller provides information regarding payment systems that can be made by the buyer, one of which is COD (cash on delivery). Through this information, viewers who want to buy perfume but want to pay directly know the information that the shop also provides an on-site payment system.

### Data 13

*Seller : Kita ada promo untuk hari ini aja, besok-besok belum tentu ada lagi say.*  
*Seller : Yah sedih banget kalo sampe ga kedapatan. Jadi ayo di check out yuk Teteh*  
*Seller : Yang cocok untuk olahraga, ada di etalase 1 dan 2*  
*Seller : Aku punya yang etalase 4 warnanya cream, tingginya itu 4 cm ya*  
*Seller : Ini bagian sampingnya, itu dia ada motif lovenya gitu. Trus dibagian tali, udah dikepang, kamu ga perlu kepang sendiri. Sudah kita kepangin dari sini.*

The data above was obtained from a live broadcast of a TikTok account named PVNshoes. "*Kita ada promo untuk hari ini aja*". The seller provides information to all live broadcast viewers that the shopping promo at the store is only valid for one day. This information is provided so that viewers are interested in buying products from that store immediately without delaying and waiting for the next day. Similar language functions are also indicated by the sentences "*Yang cocok untuk olahraga, ada di etalase 1 dan 2*". This sentence contains information the seller gave to all viewers regarding shoe products suitable for sports. This information aims to make it easier for viewers who buy sports shoes to immediately see the products in storefronts 1 and 2. "*Aku punya yang etalase 4 warnanya cream, tingginya itu 4 cm ya*" also shows information where the seller explains that the product in the four storefronts is cream colored and has a height of four cm. Information related to the product is beneficial for buyers to avoid product purchase mistakes. The function of the last referential language in this case is shown by the sentence "*Ini bagian sampingnya, itu dia ada motif lovenya gitu. Trus dibagian tali, udah dikepang, kamu ga perlu kepang sendiri. Sudah kita kepangin dari sini*". It can be seen clearly that the sentence contains specific information related to the product. The seller explains every shoe detail, including a love motif and the shoelace with a braided model that can make it easier for the buyer.

### 5. Conclusion

The function of language is a language phenomenon often found not only in society but also through social media platforms, such as TikTok. In this sociolinguistic review,

we study how language is used to achieve social goals and meet communicative needs in society. The use of language style and a unique way of communicating can attract an online seller when they want to sell their goods through live video broadcasts (cf. Umiyati & Sarumaha, 2023). Through language, the seller can provide information to the buyer about the product, give instructions or persuade the audience to buy the product being sold, and express feelings in the form of affection and also apologies, which are expressions of regret (see Kurniasari et al., 2020; Yates & Major, 2015). There are four types of language functions found in three different live broadcast footage, including emotive language functions, conative language functions, referential language functions, and the last is metalinguistic language functions.

### **Conflict of interest**

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest.

### **Authors' contribution**

Author made substantial contributions to the conception and design of the study. The authors took responsibility for data analysis, interpretation and discussion of results. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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