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Register analysis of women's fashion online shop sellers in live shopping sessions

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the language registers employed by women's clothing sellers during TikTok Live sessions, emphasizing the specific words and phrases to promote communication in a fast-paced sales environment. Through qualitative investigation of live-stream interactions, the study finds that nouns (41.86%) are predominantly used to provide detailed product descriptions, followed by verbs, adjectives, abbreviations, and compound words. Nouns convey information about stock availability, sizes, and materials. The study differentiates between lexical and contextual meanings, with lexical meanings (60.47%) taking precedence, providing precise definitions that improve intelligibility for potential purchasers. Lexical meanings enhance clarity and understanding for potential buyers, while contextual meanings, though less frequent, are vital for maintaining dynamic interaction with the audience. These findings highlight the sellers' strategic use of clear product descriptions and conversational language to boost audience engagement and drive sales. This study suggests that the language strategies used on TikTok Live Sessions are adaptable, effectively balancing product clarity with audience interaction to optimize the sales process.

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1. Introduction

Language usage can vary significantly across different communities, primarily due to the influence of social environments. Speakers are not confined to a single linguistic variety but adapt their language based on various social and situational factors. These factors include social status, education level, age, gender, the identity of the speaker and listener, the context of communication, the time and place of interaction, and the topic of discussion. These complex social and situational elements contribute to the emergence of diverse language variations.

Social media has transformed global connections, sharing, and interaction and emerged as a key component of contemporary communication. The lines between personal and professional contacts have blurred because platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok enable influencers, companies, and individuals to interact with audiences in real-time. The influence of social media on language, culture, and society profoundly introduces new linguistic forms, communication styles, and social norms. Social media has changed communication into a fast-paced, constantly evolving phenomenon that continues to affect how people interact with the outside world. TikTok is one of a globally popular social media platform known for its short-form videos, ranging from 15 seconds to 10 minutes. Launched in 2016 by the Chinese tech company ByteDance, TikTok has quickly become a cultural phenomenon, particularly among younger generations. Users of this platform can make and share videos in various genres, such as comedy, dance, lip-syncing, teaching, and more. TikTok offers many services for content creators to improve their work, including editing tools, filters, and a large music collection. With the help of TikTok Lives, a live-streaming feature, creators and their audiences can communicate in real-time, making for a more intimate and dynamic experience.

With the help of TikTok Live, users may broadcast in real-time, facilitating communication between consumers and content creators. Viewers can participate in a TikTok Live session by leaving comments, giving virtual gifts, or posing questions, which fosters a lively and unplanned dialogue atmosphere. Creators frequently use this tool to foster closer relationships with their followers, hold Q&A sessions, offer tutorials, or reveal behind-the-scenes photos and even live-stream selling.

TikTok for Shopping, also known as TikTok Shop, is a feature that enables e-commerce integration within the app, making it easier for users to discover and purchase products directly through TikTok. This functionality allows brands, influencers, and creators to showcase products in their videos, livestreams, and on their profiles with embedded shopping links or product tags. One of the most innovative aspects of TikTok Shopping is its seamless combination of entertainment and commerce.

TikTok Live Shopping has revolutionized the traditional boundaries of commerce, emerging as a powerful cultural phenomenon beyond simple product showcases. What began as a platform for marketing goods has evolved into a dynamic space where self-expression, shared experiences, and community building thrive. TikTok Live Shopping has created a virtual marketplace where cultural trends and personal identities are exchanged alongside products by transforming shopping into an interactive and engaging activity.

This cultural shift stems from TikTok's unique ability to blend entertainment with commerce. Through its vibrant short-form videos and interactive features, the platform has redefined shopping as entertainment, resonating with a wide audience—from millennials chasing trends to Gen Z users craving authentic and unique experiences. The growing influence of TikTok Live Shopping is further reflected in its presence across pop culture, from memes to traditional media, cementing its role in shaping modern cultural interactions and redefining the shopping experience.

Creators can showcase or review products in fun and creative ways on TikTok, making it easy for viewers to shop directly through the app. TikTok takes this step further by teaming up with brands to host “shoppable” live streams. During these live broadcasts, creators highlight products, often paired with exclusive deals or special promotions that viewers can snag in real-time.

When it comes to communication, TikTok Lives is all about adaptability. Depending on who's watching and what's being shared, creators switch between casual, chatty tones and more polished, informative styles. This flexibility makes TikTok Lives a unique space where creators can connect with their audience, address feedback instantly, and adjust their message to match the vibe of their content or the products they're promoting. This adaptability in tone and style is rooted in the concept of register, which refers to the variations in language used depending on the audience, purpose, and social context.

Kim, J., & Kim, J. (2021) explored how formal and informal language styles impact consumer engagement in social media marketing. They found that informal, conversational language is more effective for building a sense of connection and trust with audiences, especially in platforms designed for casual interaction. Formal speech styles, however, are better suited for conveying authority and professionalism in contexts where expertise is prioritized. This study underscores the importance of selecting an appropriate speech style to align with the audience's expectations and the campaign's goals.

This study explores the various linguistic registers used during live broadcasts on TikTok, examining how creators adapt their language to suit different contexts, audiences, and purposes. It highlights the informal and interactive nature of TikTok lives, showcasing features such as slang, emojis, and casual speech that reflect broader social and cultural trends, particularly among younger users. By analyzing these linguistic variations, the article contributes to understanding digital communication and its evolving forms, offering insights valuable to linguists and media studies scholars alike.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method with a sociolinguistic approach to explore the linguistic forms of register words used by online shop sellers during TikTok Live sessions. According to Moleong (1990:2), qualitative research is focused on non-numerical data and does not involve statistical calculations. The research aims to describe the meanings of these register words in the context of online shopping.

Data were collected by observing and documenting buyer-seller interactions and comments from 15 women's fashion shops on TikTok, specifically focusing on the most viewed live sessions. The register words and phrases used in these sessions were documented for data analysis. The data analysis followed several steps. First, the collected words and phrases were categorized based on their linguistic forms, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, abbreviations, and compound words.

Next, each register item was analyzed for its specific contextual usage during live interactions, identifying the pragmatic functions these terms served in real-time communication. Larson's (1984) theory of meaning was then applied to distinguish between lexical meanings (standard dictionary definitions) and contextual meanings inferred from the terms' situational use.

Finally, common linguistic patterns were identified and thematically coded to reveal sellers' strategies to engage their audience. These strategies included frequently using imperative verbs and other linguistic techniques designed to create urgency, build trust, and excite potential buyers. This multi-step analytical framework comprehensively understood TikTok Shop Live interactions' linguistic and pragmatic dynamics.

Table 1. Analysis of Registers Used in Live TikTok Selling Sessions

No	Linguistics Form	Register Word	Σ Data	%	Type of Meaning		
					Lexical	Contextual	
1. Word							
a.	Noun	Stock	18	41,86 %	V		
		<i>Estimasi</i>				V	
		Review					V
		Testimony					V
		Payment					V
		Look					V
		Premium					V
		<i>Bahan</i>					V
		Sample					V
		Top					V
		Bundle					V
		Refund					V
		Unisex					V
		Promo					V
		Piece(s)					V
		<i>Kakak</i>			V		
		Size			V		
		Etalase			V		
<hr/>							
b.	Verb	Spill	4	9,30 %	V		
		Keep				V	
		Order					V
		Restock					V
<hr/>							
c.	Adjective	<i>Sayang</i>	7	16,28%		V	
		Ready					V
		<i>Cakep</i>					V
		Inner					V
		Outer					V
		Available					V
		Trusted					V
<hr/>							
d.	Abbreviation	CO	8	18,60%	V		
		<i>LD</i>					V
		<i>LP</i>					V
		<i>TB</i>					V
		<i>BB</i>					V
		PO					V
		TF					V
		COD					V
<hr/>							
e.	Compound	Checkout	5	11,63%		V	
		Flash Sale					V
		Cashback					V
		All size					V
		Best Seller					V
<hr/>							
2. Phrase							
a.	Noun Phrase	<i>Keranjang Kuning</i>	1	2,33%	V		
<hr/>							
		Σ Data	43		26	17	
		Percentage		100%	60,47%	39,53%	

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Research Findings

In this register analysis, the language used by women's clothing sellers on TikTok during live streams is categorized into two main linguistic forms: words and phrases. Words are further divided into nouns, verbs, adjectives, abbreviations, and compound words, while phrases are limited to noun phrases. Beyond categorizing these linguistic forms, the study also examines their meanings, which are classified into lexical and contextual meanings. The analysis highlights sellers' linguistic elements and their communicative functions, revealing both inherent meanings and those shaped by the selling environment's context. The following table presents an analysis of specific registers frequently used by sellers during live TikTok sessions, highlighting their lexical and contextual meanings and their application in e-commerce communication.

A total of 43 instances of register use were identified, including 18 nouns, 4 verbs, 7 adjectives, 8 abbreviations, 5 compound words, and 1 noun phrase. Nouns were the most frequently used, reflecting the need for sellers to provide specific details about products, such as stock availability, samples, and payment methods. Additionally, the meanings of the registers were analyzed, with 26 instances classified as lexical and 16 as contextual. Lexical meanings were more common, as they offer clear and straightforward definitions of products, aiding potential buyers in understanding the items being sold. Based on the Table1, 18 (41,86%) data of nouns, 4 (9,30%) of verbs, 7 (16,28%) of adjectives, 8 (18,60%) of abbreviations, 5 (11,63%) of compounds, and 1 (2,33%) of noun phrases were identified. Nouns were the most frequently used word class in the speech of sellers during their live TikTok sessions. This is because nouns are essential for mentioning product details, such as the quantity of stock, product samples, payment methods, and other key aspects directly related to the items being sold. They serve to identify and describe what is being offered, including the product's name, materials, and available sizes, ensuring clear and effective communication with potential buyers.

3.2. Discussion

In this register analysis, the writers categorize the language used by women's clothing sellers on TikTok during live streams into two main linguistic forms: words and phrases. The category of words encompasses various forms, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, abbreviations, and compound words, while the phrases are restricted to noun phrases.

Beyond merely classifying these registers by their linguistic form, the authors also explore their associated meanings, which they divide into two categories: lexical meaning and contextual meaning. This analysis highlights the different linguistic elements used by sellers. It sheds light on how these elements function in communication, revealing both their inherent meanings and the meanings shaped by their context in the selling environment.

The analysis of the findings reveals how various registers are used in the context of live TikTok selling sessions, reflecting both lexical and contextual meanings depending on the specific term and its application. Nouns register, such as "stock," "estimate," "*bahan*," "premium," "sample," "top,"

“promo,” “piece,” and “refund,” align with their lexical meanings. These terms are utilized to describe product details, quality, pricing, and logistics in a manner consistent with their dictionary definitions. For example, “*bahan*” describes the product’s material, while “refund” refers to the repayment process for unsatisfactory purchases.

However, other registers demonstrate contextual shifts in meaning to suit the dynamics of online selling. Words like “review,” “testimoni,” “bundle,” “payment,” “look,” “*kakak*,” “size,” and “spill” acquire new connotations unique to the e-commerce setting. For instance, “review” refers to showcasing a product rather than a formal evaluation, and “spill” indicates revealing a product’s price. Similarly, the term “*kakak*”, typically used to address an older sibling, becomes a polite term sellers use to address buyers.

These findings underscore the dynamic nature of language in digital commerce, where sellers adapt registers to create clarity, politeness, and engagement while addressing practical needs in their interactions with buyers. The registers serve as tools to facilitate effective communication and promote their products in a fast-paced, visually driven selling environment.

In the verb category, terms like “keep,” “order,” and “*Sayang*” demonstrate contextual adaptations that align with the unique dynamics of online selling. The analysis highlights how “keep” means reserving a product for a buyer, shifting from its typical definition of retaining possession. Similarly, “*sayang*”, a term of endearment, is repurposed as a polite and friendly way to address potential buyers, fostering rapport. Meanwhile, “order” refers to the purchased process or items, aligning with its contextual meaning. In contrast, “restock” retains its lexical meaning, describing the action of refilling supplies. These nuanced language illustrates how sellers leverage registers to enhance engagement, clarify processes, and create a welcoming environment for buyers.

The use of abbreviations in TikTok live-selling sessions demonstrates how sellers simplify communication while maintaining clarity and efficiency. Registers like TB (*Tinggi Badan*), BB (*Berat Badan*), LD (*Lingkar Dada*), and LP (*Lingkar Pinggang*) are employed to convey specific body measurements, helping buyers select appropriately sized products. For instance, TB refers to height, while BB, LD, and LP relate to body weight, chest size, and waist circumference. These abbreviations ensure concise and effective communication during live interactions. Similarly, terms like PO (Pre-order) and CO (Checkout) streamline the transaction process. PO denotes ordering a product before it becomes available, while CO signifies the final step of confirming an order and payment. Payment methods are also abbreviated for simplicity: TF (Transfer) refers to fund transfers, and COD (Cash on Delivery) describes payments made upon receiving the product. These abbreviations align with their lexical meanings, underscoring their practical usage in the buying and selling context. This linguistic efficiency enhances the overall experience for both sellers and buyers, making transactions smooth and engaging.

The compound words such as Flash Sale, Cashback, Allsize, and Best Seller play a significant role in TikTok live-selling sessions, reflecting their lexical meanings and contributing to effective communication. Flash Sale refers to discounts available for a limited time, urging buyers to act quickly, while Cashback indicates a partial refund given to customers after a purchase. Both terms align with their general definitions and are used to highlight promotional strategies that enhance

customer engagement. Additionally, All size denotes clothing designed to fit individuals of various sizes, simplifying the sizing process for buyers. Similarly, Best Seller identifies the most popular or frequently purchased products, showcasing items that have garnered significant customer interest. These compound words are essential in creating a dynamic and efficient sales environment, ensuring buyers understand promotional opportunities and product features effortlessly.

The noun phrase *Keranjang Kuning* (Yellow Basket) carries a contextual meaning in TikTok's live-selling environment, referring to the on-screen catalog displaying a list of products available for purchase. This term is derived from the yellow basket symbol visible during live sessions, where sellers encourage buyers to browse the catalog. For example, sellers might say, "*Langsung cek aja kak keranjang kuningnya*" ("Just check the yellow basket, sis!") to direct buyers to the product listings. The phrase is a practical and recognizable reference, facilitating seamless interaction between sellers and buyers during live shopping events.

The use of lexical meaning is frequently used. TikTok host sellers frequently use the terms with Lexical meanings during live sessions because they provide clear, direct definitions of products, making it easier for potential buyers to understand what is being sold. This straightforward communication helps to convey essential details about the product features, benefits, and uses quickly, which is crucial in a fast-paced sales environment. Clarity and simplicity can enhance customer confidence and encourage purchases.

In conclusion, the analysis of registers used in TikTok's live-selling environment highlights the dynamic interplay between lexical and contextual meanings, reflecting the unique linguistic adaptations within this digital marketplace. These registers, ranging from abbreviations and compound words to noun phrases, demonstrate how sellers and buyers create a shared communicative framework tailored to the platform's interactive and fast-paced nature. The findings underscore the importance of understanding these terms in their contextual usage, as they enhance clarity, efficiency, and engagement during live transactions. This linguistic innovation not only streamlines the buying and selling process but also fosters a sense of familiarity and connection among participants, ultimately contributing to the vibrant culture of TikTok commerce.

4. Conclusion

The analysis of linguistic registers used by women's fashion sellers during TikTok Live sessions reveals a dynamic and context-specific use of language. Most of the language used consists of nouns (40.48%) to convey product details, while other forms like verbs, adjectives, abbreviations, and compound words are also significant. Nouns are crucial for clarifying products, helping potential buyers quickly understand what is being offered. The analysis clearly distinguishes between lexical (61.90%) and contextual meanings (38.10%), with the predominant lexical meanings. Lexical meanings are often employed to ensure clarity and precision in communication, allowing sellers to efficiently describe products, materials, sizes, and other key features. Although less frequent, contextual meanings are still important for adapting communication to the live sales environment, where the interaction is fast-paced and spontaneous. Overall, using registers in online live selling sessions demonstrates how sellers tailor their language for effective communication, blending clear product descriptions with

more informal or engaging terms to maintain a connection with their audience. Combining lexical precision and contextual adaptability facilitates smooth buyer-seller interactions, ultimately supporting the selling process.

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