

## **ANALYSIS GENDER AND LANGUAGE IN ONLINE COMMUNICATION (CASE STUDY: TIKTOK AND INSTAGRAM)**

**Amanda Meirandani<sup>1\*</sup>, Cici Ulmasitoh<sup>2</sup>, Lisa Aprilia<sup>3</sup>, Yasmin Elfa M<sup>4</sup>, Nargis<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup> Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang, Tangerang, Indonesia

Email: <sup>1</sup>amandameyranda21@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>ciciulma98@gmail.com,

<sup>3</sup>lisaaprilias400@gmail.com, <sup>4</sup>yasminmediena@gmail.com, <sup>5</sup>nargis@umt.ac.id

### **ARTICLE INFO**

#### **Article History:**

Received November 02, 2024

Revised November 16, 2024

Accepted January 10, 2025

Available online January 15, 2025

#### **Kata Kunci:**

Gender dan bahasa,  
Komunikasi daring,  
Interaksi media sosial

#### **Keywords:**

*Gender and language,  
Online communication,  
Social media  
interactions*

### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh gender terhadap penggunaan bahasa dalam komunikasi daring, dengan fokus pada TikTok dan Instagram. Menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, data dikumpulkan dari unggahan dan komentar untuk menganalisis variasi bahasa antara pria dan wanita, termasuk nada, gaya komunikasi, dan tujuan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa wanita cenderung menggunakan bahasa kolaboratif dan emosional untuk membangun hubungan, sedangkan pria lebih memilih ekspresi langsung dan ringkas untuk menarik perhatian. Faktor kontekstual, seperti dinamika platform, membentuk pola komunikasi ini, memungkinkan individu menantang norma gender tradisional. Penelitian ini menyoroti peran gender dalam membentuk interaksi digital dan pentingnya mendorong representasi yang inklusif dan beragam dalam lingkungan daring.

### **ABSTRACT**

*This study investigates the influence of gender on language use in online communication, focusing on TikTok and Instagram. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected from posts and comments to analyze male and female language variations in tone, communication style, and objectives. The findings reveal that women tend to use collaborative and emotional language, fostering connections, while men prefer direct and concise expressions to grab attention. Contextual factors, such as platform dynamics, shape these communication patterns, allowing individuals to challenge traditional gender norms. This study emphasizes the role of gender in shaping digital interactions and highlights the importance of fostering inclusive and diverse representation in online environments.*

## INTRODUCTION

People all throughout the world had the opportunity to demonstrate their individual verbal expressions, which resulted in the diversity of languages spoken. Therefore, a number of factors, including gender disparities, can lead to linguistic variations (Wardhaugh, 1992; Wahyuningsih, 2018). The definition of gender was the socially constructed roles of femininity and masculinity, Davis and Schroth (2020). The idea that men's and women's speech differs in form, theme, substance, purpose, and use is a result of the disparate roles that men and women play in society (Lakoff, 1973; Erickson-Schroth and Davis, 2021). Since then, it has been presumed that both men and women have a variety of viewpoints regarding what to think and what to do. Consequently, these variations could result in their interaction with the context. Speech characteristics of men and women vary in both digital and real-world interactions including those on TikTok, Instagram and other social media platforms.

The relationship between gender and language in the context of online communication has been the focus of increasing attention among researchers. With the widespread use of social media platforms, forums and instant messaging apps, scholars have sought to understand how gender affects the way people communicate in these virtual spaces. Previous research has shown that the style of language used can vary significantly between men and women. For example, women tend to use more collaborative and emotional language, while men more often opt for direct and assertive communication (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015). Understanding these differences is crucial to exploring the nuances of online interactions, especially in the context of identity formation and social dynamics that occur in digital environments.

In addition, the advent of online communication has introduced new variables that can complicate gender-related language patterns. The anonymity and distance offered by digital platforms allow individuals to express themselves in ways that may not match their real-world identities. This phenomenon raises questions about the extent to which authenticity of language is influenced by gender in online spaces, and how this can reinforce or challenge existing social stereotypes (Baker, 2020). Understanding the role of gender in online communication is thus crucial to gaining a broader picture of the social changes taking place and their implications for gender equality and representation in digital contexts.

Recent advances in computational linguistics and natural language processing have opened up new opportunities to analyze gender-influenced language in online communication. Researchers can now utilize sophisticated analytical tools to examine large datasets from social media and other online platforms, uncovering patterns and trends that were previously difficult to identify (Smith et al., 2023). This methodological shift not only increases the rigor of gender and language studies, but also provides deeper insights into the impact of online communication on gender dynamics. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, continued research in this area is critical to understanding how language shapes and is influenced by gender in this increasingly interconnected world.

According to Yaseen and Amin (2017), they also found gender differences in terms of communication. They also found that there are several factors that affect the differences in communication between men and women. The first factor is the context of learning. During learning activities, students' language differences can be affected by the learning situation. Then, there is the student's mindset, communication situation, and language skills. Because they will adjust to these elements, the differences in students between male and female students have an impact on communication differences. Yilmaz and Varol (2010) in their study found that female students are more active than male students. The female students wanted to talk to strangers rather than men. Female students also try more new things than male students. And this also explains that, women and men are very different in communication. Male students are more likely to give minimal responses when communication is ongoing than women who respond more often when communicating.

Gender is also one of the keys to developing language and style. Men and women have different language styles and usage when it comes to communication. According to Merchant (2012), women usually have a different language style than men. In communicating with each other, women also seem to use more polite language than men. Men tend to use informal language and tend to show their power to intimidate others when they talk to men. Women tend to use good manners and language when they talk to men and women. That's because they always consider the impact of every word they use. This explains why gender differences are very influential in language and communication styles.

In the use of social media, men and women also have different styles and ways when they use social media. The use of male and female language varies and manifests itself in a variety of ways, such as the way they express their opinions on social media (Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter). The use of language is a phenomenon that describes the attitudes, natures, and ideas of language users, especially in terms of writing on social media platforms such as Facebook status updates, Instagram captions, and

Twitter tweets.

The media used in this study are Instagram and Tiktok. Indonesia is the 4th largest country to use Instagram after the United States, Brazil, and India, with a total of 56 million based on bisnis.com articles. Instagram is one of the social media that is often used by Indonesian people in communicating such as looking for information related to the latest news, providing information or expressing opinions and expressing what they want to convey. Not only Instagram is a social media application that is often used by Indonesia, Tiktok is higher in usage in Indonesia. According to CNBC Indonesia, Indonesia is the king of TikTok with the most users in the world, surpassing the United States and Russia. According to the latest data on TikTok ad reach, Indonesia is the country with the largest number of TikTok users worldwide, reaching 157.6 million. The language used in writing captions on Instagram and Tiktok in expressing something, has a different way so that a new form of language emerges to express something you want to convey. That's why every language used on Instagram can describe the reality of language happening in society.

Several studies have explored the relationship between language, gender, and communication, offering insights into various contexts. Marie Therese (2024) looked into how language patterns, communication styles, and digital interactions on platforms such as social media affect gender stereotypes, emphasizing the need of inclusive language practices and equitable representation. Salsabila et al. (2024) investigated gender roles in language and communication, employing linguistic frameworks to discover patterns that perpetuate gender stereotypes and emphasize disparities in male and female communication styles influenced by societal and cultural factors. Abdalgane et al. (2021) examined gendered language using sociolinguistic theories, concentrating on vocabulary choices that perpetuate biases and gender inequality caused by patriarchal behaviors. Building on these findings, the current research, "Analysis of Gender and Language in Online Communication: Case Study of TikTok and Instagram," uses a qualitative approach to investigate gender disparities in communication on social media. This study aims to analyze male and female language variations in TikTok and Instagram captions, enhancing the understanding of sociolinguistic gender differences and providing insights into commonly used language patterns on these platforms.

The purpose of this study is to explore and find out if there are gender differences in terms of communication during the use of social media, namely Instagram and Tiktok. This study seeks to look at the use of male and female languages in Instagram and Tiktok captions, so that it can increase understanding of gender language variations in sociolinguistic studies and provide knowledge about language variations that are often used by the public in the use of Instagram and Tiktok social media. Based on the issues raised, various circumstances, including gender and usage, cause each person to have a unique variety of languages. Therefore, from a sociolinguistic point of view, it is important to understand how male and female language variations are perceived in Instagram and TikTok texts

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This type of research uses a qualitative descriptive approach which is carried out This study examines how gender affects language use on social media, particularly Tik Tok and Instagram, using a qualitative descriptive methodology. Using purposive sampling, data is gathered directly from Instagram and Tik Tok posts and comments, focusing on public accounts that are recognized for actively participating in conversations on gender-related issues. Purposive sampling indicates that the data reflects a variety of gendered communication styles, including differences in tone, language, and interaction patterns across users (Flick, 2022). To find linguistic traits frequently linked to gender expression, such as assertiveness, emotive language, and politeness techniques, a selection of posts will be examined (Kapidzic & Herring, 2011). The analysis will focus on how these characteristics represent broader gender norms and expectations in digital communication contexts (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013). By directly analyzing social media interactions, this study aims to provide insights into the evolving nature of gendered language in online environments.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

**Tabel 1. Gender Communication Style Variations**

| Criteria            | Woman             | Man                     |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Communication Style | Collaborative     | Firm and direct         |
| Tone                | Warm and empathic | Direct and to the point |

|                                 |   |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Language Usage</b>           | Use lots of adjectives and emotional expressions  | Prefer short statements and avoid emotional language |
| <b>Example of Social Media</b>  | Share personal stories and reflections that invite interaction                                    | Focus on humor or shock value to grab attention      |
| <b>Communication Objectives</b> | Building relationships and support  | Attract attention quickly                            |
| <b>Approach</b>                 | Relational communication  | Competitive and individualistic approach             |
| <b>Sample Sentences</b>         | Wow, cerita kamu sangat menginspirasi! Terima kasih sudah berbagi. Semoga harimu menyenangkan! ❤️ | Keren👍   |

**Tabel 2. The Influence of Context on Language Use**

| <b>Aspect</b>                           | <b>Women</b>   | <b>Man</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>General Context</b>                  | Using more reflective and descriptive language                             | Trying more emotional language in certain contexts               |
| <b>Identity and Style Communication</b> | Creating deep narratives to enhance emotional connections                  | Challenging traditional gender norms by using emotional language |
| <b>Platform</b>                         | Instagram & TikTok: using captions or comments that support visual content | Instagram & TikTok: using short language and attract attention   |
| <b>Communication Objectives</b>         | Building emotional connection and reflection                               | Attract attention and fast interaction                           |
| <b>Examples of Language Style</b>       | Descriptive and in-depth captions  | Short and direct, often using humor                              |

**Tabel 3. Implications for Gender Representation**

| <b>Aspect</b>                             | <b>Explanation</b>   |
|---|--|
| <b>Differences in Communication Style</b> | Differences in language use reflect broader social norms and expectations.   |
| <b>Opportunity for Challenge</b>          | The digital landscape provides opportunities for individuals to challenge and redefine traditional gender roles.                             |
| <b>Inclusive Language</b>                 | Users can use more inclusive and flexible language to reflect a diversity of gender identities.  |
| <b>Self Expression</b>                    | Social media provides a space for greater self-expression, allowing users to express their identities more freely.                           |
| <b>Linguistic Variation</b>               | The importance of recognizing linguistic variation in sociolinguistic studies to understand the influence of gender in online communication. |
| <b>Evolution of Gender Representation</b> | Understanding how gender affects language use can provide insight into the evolution of gender representation in digital spaces.             |
| <b>Inclusive Online Environment</b>       | This knowledge is important for creating an online environment that respects and values other users.   |
| <b>The Importance of Further Research</b> | Further research is needed to address issues of gender equality and representation in online communication.                                  |

## **Discussion**

Analysis of gender and language in online communication, particularly on platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, shows significant differences in how individuals express themselves based on gender. This research explores the different communication styles and language patterns that emerge from gendered interactions in these digital environments.

### **Gender Communication Style Variations**

The results show that women tend to use a more collaborative communication style. In terms of tone, the language used is often warmer and more empathetic, with a higher use of adjectives and emotional expressions. For example, in Instagram captions, women often share personal stories or reflections that invite interaction and support from their followers. This creates a more connected and supportive atmosphere, in line with previous research showing that women are more likely to engage in relational communication (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015).

In contrast, men generally exhibit a more assertive and direct communication style. In terms of language, they prefer more concise statements and tend to avoid emotional language. This reflects an understanding that men are often educated to adopt a more competitive and individualistic approach to communication (Merchant, 2012). On TikTok, this can be seen in the tendency of male users to focus on humor or shock value, aiming to grab attention quickly rather than building deeper relationships.

### **The Influence of Context on Language Use**

The context of social media also plays an important role in shaping gendered language use. These platforms' anonymity and distance allow users to experiment with their identities and communication styles. For example, some male users may use more emotional language when engaging with content or communities that encourage vulnerability, thus challenging traditional gender norms. On the other hand, women sometimes use more assertive language in discussions about empowerment or social issues, reflecting evolving societal expectations regarding how women communicate.

In addition, the nature of each platform influences language variation. On Instagram, where visual content is crucial, captions often serve as an additional narrative to the image. This results in a more reflective and descriptive language style among female users, who tend to create captions that enhance the emotional connection of their posts. TikTok's fast-paced and dynamic content encourages the use of short, simple, and engaging language to maximize audience engagement, so the focus of communication is more on attracting attention and interaction rather than conveying in-depth or complex messages.

### **Implications for Gender Representation**

Differences in language use between genders on social media have broader implications for gender representation and identity formation. This research suggests that while traditional gender roles continue to influence communication styles, the digital landscape offers opportunities for individuals to challenge and redefine these roles. As users navigate their identities online, they can use more inclusive and flexible language to reflect an understanding of the diversity of gender identities, as well as provide space for greater self-expression.

Furthermore, these findings emphasize the importance of recognizing linguistic variation in the context of sociolinguistic studies. Understanding how gender affects language use in online communication can provide valuable insights into the evolutionary nature of gender representation in digital spaces. This knowledge is crucial to fostering an inclusive online environment that respects fellow users.

In summary, the analysis of gender and language in online communication on platforms such as TikTok and Instagram reveals distinct patterns that reflect broader societal norms and expectations. By examining these differences, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how language serves as a tool for expressing and negotiating gender identity in the digital age. Continued research in this area is essential to address issues of gender equality and representation in online communication.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant influence of gender on language use in online communication, particularly on platforms like TikTok and Instagram, revealing distinct patterns in communication styles, tone, and language preferences. Women generally use collaborative, emotional,

and descriptive language to build connections, while men prefer direct, concise, and attention-grabbing expressions. The digital context allows users to challenge traditional gender norms, fostering opportunities for self-expression and inclusive representation. These findings underscore the importance of sociolinguistic research in understanding gendered language dynamics in digital spaces and their implications for gender equality and representation.

## REFERENCES

- Abdalgane, M., Abdalla, M., & Mohammed, A. (2021). Gendered Language: A Study of Sociolinguistic Theories and Approaches. In *Asian ESP Journal* | (Vol. 17, Issue 1).  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359962365>
- Amin, M. Y. M. (2017). Communication strategies and gender differences: A case study. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL*, 4(3)
- Baker, P. (2020). Gender and Language in Online Spaces: A Study of Social Media Communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 39(2), 123-145.
- Eckert, P., & McConnell-Ginet, S. (2013). *Language and gender*. Cambridge University Press.
- Erickson-Schroth, L., & Davis, B. (2021). *Gender: What everyone needs to know*. New York, NY, Oxford University Press
- Flick, U. (2022). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research design*.
- Herring, S. C., & Kapidzic, S. (2015). Gender, Internet Communication, and Social Media: A Review of the Literature. In *The Handbook of Gender, Sex, and Media* (pp. 109-125). Wiley.
- Kapidzic, S., & Herring, S. C. (2011). Gender, communication, and self-presentation in teen chatrooms revisited: Have patterns changed?. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(1), 39-59.
- Merchant, K. (2012). How men and women differ: Gender differences in communication styles, influence tactics, and leadership styles.
- Salsabila, I. N., Umam, A. F., Nurjanah, A., Ayu, A., Lestari, D., & Wahyuningsih, O. (2024). The Role Of Gender In Language And Com-munication: A Linguistic Perspective. *Journal Eduvest*, 4(1), 260–269. <http://eduvest.greenvest.co.id>
- Smith, A., Jones, R., & Taylor, L. (2023). Analyzing Gendered Language in Online Communication: New Approaches and Methodologies. *Language Resources and Evaluation*, 57(1), 45-67.
- Therese, M. (2024). *International Journal of English Language and Communication Studies Language And Gender in Online Communications*. <https://doi.org/10.56201/ijelcs.v9.no1.2024.pg88.94>
- Varol, B., & Yilmaz, S. (2010). Similarities and differences between female and male learners: Inside and outside class autonomous language learning activities. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 3, 237-244.
- Wahyuningsih, S. (2018). Men and women differences in using language: A case study of students at stain kodus. *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature and Culture*, 31(1), 79–90.
- Wardhaugh, Ronald. (1992). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (2nd edition). London: Blackwell
- <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/tech/20241029104846-37-583838/indonesia-nomor-1-dunia-warga-ri-sudah-kecanduan-tiktok>
- <https://teknologi.bisnis.com/read/20190629/84/939306/daftar-pengguna-instagram-terbanyak-di-dunia-indonesia-di-urutan-berapa>