

AN ANALYSIS OF ILLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACTS IN TIKTOK LIVE SHOPPING: A CASE STUDY OF LOZY HIJAB

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Abstract: The rapid growth of TikTok Live Shopping has created an interactive commercial environment where language functions as both a persuasive and relational resource. While previous studies have examined illocutionary speech acts in live shopping, limited attention has been given to their role in building seller–consumer relationships. This study investigates illocutionary speech acts in TikTok Live Shopping and their contribution to interpersonal relationship development. Using a qualitative case study, 158 utterances from three Lozy Hijab live shopping sessions were analyzed using Searle’s taxonomy of illocutionary speech acts and Knapp and Vangelisti’s relational communication model. The findings show that directive and representative acts dominate the interactions, serving to encourage purchases, provide product information, engage audiences, and reduce consumer uncertainty. Expressive and commissive acts further support emotional rapport and consumer trust. The interactions are predominantly characterized by the intensifying stage, suggesting that live commerce emphasizes sustained seller–consumer engagement rather than formal relational commitment. By integrating speech act theory with interpersonal relationship theory, this study demonstrates how illocutionary acts function as both persuasive and relational resources in synchronous digital commerce.

Keywords: Digital Pragmatics, Illocutionary Speech Acts, relational communication strategies, Live Commerce

INTRODUCTION

The convergence of social media and e-commerce has transformed commercial communication by enabling persuasion, social interaction, and transactions to occur simultaneously. Live shopping exemplifies this development by allowing sellers and consumers to interact directly through real-time product promotion and purchasing activities. In this environment, language functions not only to provide product information but also to build trust, maintain engagement, and influence purchasing decisions.

TikTok Live Shopping has become a prominent live-commerce platform, particularly in Indonesia, where TikTok has more than 113 million active users (We Are Social, 2024). Its interactive features enable audiences to ask questions, seek product information, and make purchasing decisions in real time. These spontaneous and reciprocal interactions make TikTok Live Shopping a relevant context for pragmatic analysis.

From a pragmatic perspective, speakers use language to perform communicative actions whose intended meanings are shaped by context (Yule, 1996). Speech Act Theory provides a framework for examining these actions. Searle (1979) classifies illocutionary speech acts into representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative acts.

In live shopping, these acts may function to provide information, encourage purchases, express attitudes, and establish consumer confidence.

Previous studies demonstrated the importance of speech acts in digital communication. Jegede (2024) found speech act realization varies across digital platforms and communicative contexts. In TikTok Live Shopping, Husnan (2024) identified representative and directive acts as dominant strategies for providing product information and encouraging purchases. Similarly, Sihombing (2024) found representative acts dominated seller–buyer interactions, while other speech acts supported transactional communication and trust building. These findings confirm the relevance of Searle’s taxonomy for examining communicative intentions in digital contexts (Azka & Candria, 2024).

However, previous studies have largely focused on classifying speech acts and explaining their immediate persuasive functions, with limited attention to how these acts contribute to interpersonal relationship development during sustained commercial interactions. This relational dimension is particularly important in live shopping, where persuasion, trust, and relationship building occur simultaneously.

Knapp and Vangelisti’s relational development model provide a useful framework for addressing this dimension by explaining how interpersonal relationships develop through successive stages. Research in digital environments has shown that continuous interaction, self-disclosure, and reciprocal communication can facilitate relational development (Fox et al., 2013). However, this framework has been applied mainly to social rather than commercial interactions. Integrating it with Speech Act Theory therefore allows the analysis to explain both the communicative functions of individual utterances and their contribution to relational development.

This study examines three TikTok Live Shopping sessions conducted by Lozy Hijab, an Indonesian modest fashion brand with an established social media presence. Previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of Lozy Hijab’s social media marketing in influencing purchasing decisions (Alviona et al., 2019) and its strong brand image in the Muslim fashion industry (Yuniar & Suryaningsih, 2023). The analysis applies Searle’s (1979) taxonomy to identify illocutionary speech acts and Knapp and Vangelisti’s model to interpret their relational functions. By integrating these frameworks, this study extends digital pragmatics beyond speech act classification and demonstrates how linguistic practices simultaneously perform persuasive and relational functions in live commerce.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine illocutionary speech acts and their relational functions in TikTok Live Shopping. This design enabled an in-depth analysis of language use within naturally occurring commercial interactions rather than seeking generalizable findings (Sugiyono, 2019). Lozy Hijab was selected as the research case because of its consistent live shopping activities, providing recurring opportunities to observe authentic seller–audience interactions.

The data were obtained through purposive sampling from three TikTok Live Shopping sessions conducted between 11 and 13 January 2025 during the brand’s regular broadcasting schedule (06.00–08.00, 11.00–13.00, and 21.00–22.00 WIB). The sessions were selected for their relevance and contextual richness in relation to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2019). The analysis focused exclusively on the host’s verbal utterances, including product descriptions, persuasive expressions, promotional statements, and responses to viewers’ comments. Non-verbal elements were excluded from the analysis.

Data were collected through non-participant observation and documentation. The researcher observed the sessions without participating in the interactions and recorded them using XRecorder. The recordings were transcribed verbatim and segmented into individual utterances as the units of analysis. After irrelevant utterances were excluded, the final dataset consisted of 158 verbal utterances.

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1992) interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The analysis involved two stages of coding. First, each utterance was classified according to Searle's (1979) taxonomy of representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech acts. Second, the relational function of each utterance was analyzed using Knapp and Vangelisti's (2013) relational communication framework, focusing on the communicative characteristics of initiating, experimenting, intensifying, integrating, and bonding.

Knapp and Vangelisti's (2013) model was used as an analytical framework rather than as a literal representation of interpersonal relationship development. Its relational stages were adapted to identify relational communication strategies within the one-to-many commercial context of TikTok Live Shopping. This integration enabled the study to examine how illocutionary speech acts function as both persuasive and relational resources in live commerce. To ensure analytical consistency, the researcher repeatedly compared the video recordings, transcripts, coding results, and theoretical definitions. Each utterance was examined against Searle's (1979) speech act categories and Knapp and Vangelisti's (2013) relational framework before the findings were organized into patterns concerning audience engagement, trust formation, and relational communication.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Types and Functions of Illocutionary Speech Acts

Speech Act Theory was initially developed from the philosophical view that utterances constitute actions performed through language rather than merely conveying information, a perspective first systematically articulated by Austin and later refined by Searle (Alston & Searle, 1970). According to Searle (1979), illocutionary speech acts are classified into five types: directive, expressive, commissive, representative, and declarative. These categories have been widely applied to analyze communicative intentions across various interactional settings, demonstrating that the realization of each speech act type is influenced by the communicative context in which it occurs (Taha, 2022). However, the findings of this study reveal only four types of illocutionary speech acts. The declarative type was not identified in the data.

Table 1. Types and Functions of Illocutionary Speech Acts

No	Speech Acts	Frequency	Percentage	Function
1	Directive	68	43.04%	Commanding, inviting, suggesting, allowing, inviting, and challenging
2	Representative	64	40.51%	Stating, convincing, boasting, complaining, and inferring
3	Expressive	15	9.49%	Thanking, congratulating, apologizing, and welcoming
4	Commissive	11	6.96%	Promising, swearing, and threatening

5	Declarative	0	0%	Defining, valling, awarding rank
Total		158	100.00%	

Directive speech acts were the most dominant type (43.04%), serving to command, invite, suggest, allow, and challenge the audience to actively participate. Representatives ranked second (40.51%), serving to state, convince, boast, complain, and infer information, thereby enhancing credibility and building audience trust. Expressive speech acts appeared less frequently (9.49%), including functions such as thanking, congratulating, apologizing, and welcoming, which contribute to strengthening emotional closeness between the host and the audience. Meanwhile, commissive were the least frequently used (6.96%), functioning to promise, swear, and threaten, which play a role in establishing commitment and reinforcing consumer trust. No declarative speech acts were identified, as the host does not possess the institutional authority required to alter the status or condition of entities through utterances.

Directive Illocutionary Speech Acts

Directive speech acts are intended to prompt hearers to perform specific actions, such as requesting, commanding, suggesting, or inviting (Searle, 1979). They are common in interactive communication because they allow speakers to influence listeners' responses and actions (Lewis et al., 2024). In this study, directives were the most dominant category, occurring 68 times. They were mainly used to encourage viewers to interact with the live session and purchase products. However, these directives were often softened through persuasive expressions and personal address terms such as *ayo*, *coba*, *Kak*, and *Beb*. This suggests that directives in TikTok Live Shopping serve both transactional purposes and interpersonal functions by encouraging audience action while maintaining a friendly and engaging interaction.

Excerpt 1

“Di 1000 likes-nya baru nanti kita akan mulai diskonnya, Ayo, teman-teman semuanya likes-nya dulu kumpulin sampai dengan 1000 likes.”

This utterance occurred at the beginning of the live session when the host encouraged audience engagement before introducing product promotions. The phrase *“likes-nya dulu kumpulin sampai dengan 1000 likes”* functions as an implicit directive, reinforced by the invitation marker *“ayo.”* The conditional expression *“baru nanti kita akan mulai diskonnya”* links audience participation to a promotional reward, strengthening the directive through an incentive. Thus, the utterance functions as a directive speech act because it encourages viewers to perform a specific action (Searle, 1979). This finding supports Husnan (2024), who identified directives in request-based promotions on TikTok Shop Live, and Sihombing (2024), who highlighted the use of reward-oriented strategies to increase audience engagement.

Excerpt 2

“Tap layar dulu. Taptap layar dulu. Taptap layar. Klik emote nangis di bawah untuk aktifin voucher.”

This utterance occurred at the beginning of the live session when the host encouraged audience engagement. The expressions *“tap layar dulu”* and *“taptap layar”* directly prompt viewers to interact with the stream, while *“klik emote nangis di bawah untuk aktifin*

voucher” instructs them to perform a specific action in exchange for a promotional benefit. The repetition of “*tap*” reinforces the request for immediate action, while the voucher incentive combines instruction with reward. Thus, the utterance functions as a directive speech act because it is intended to elicit specific actions from the audience (Searle, 1979). This strategy illustrates how directives can simultaneously encourage platform engagement and support promotional purposes in live commerce. Similar patterns were identified by Husnan (2024), who found directive acts in request-based promotion on TikTok Shop Live, and Sihombing (2024), who highlighted the use of imperative forms and promotional rewards to sustain audience engagement

Representative Illocutionary Speech Acts

Representative speech acts commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition through acts such as stating, claiming, reporting, or describing (Searle, 1979). In this study, representatives occurred 64 times, making them the second most frequent category. They were mainly used to provide product information, including prices, materials, colors, and stock availability. However, statements such as “*Ini adalah warna terlaris*” and “*Hijab ini telah dikenakan oleh selebriti*” also serve persuasive purposes by emphasizing product popularity and social validation. Thus, representative speech acts in TikTok Live Shopping function not only to provide information but also to build credibility, trust, and positive product perceptions.

Excerpt 3

“Arabian dari harga Rp159.000 jadi berapa, Mimin? Rp119.000. Wow Simak baik-baik ya Kak.”

This utterance occurred when the host announced a price reduction from Rp159,000 to Rp119,000. The statement “*Arabian dari harga Rp159.000 jadi Rp119.000*” functions as a representative speech act because it presents factual information about the discounted price (Searle, 1979). The phrase “*Wow simak baik-baik ya Kak*” draws the audience’s attention, while the main illocutionary force remains representative. This finding supports Husnan (2024), who identified price and promotional information as common representative acts in TikTok Shop Live, and Sihombing (2024), who found that informative statements can also support audience engagement and consumer trust.

Excerpt 4

“Ini viscos rayon dia tuh kerudung yang udah dipakai para artis ya dipakai sama Bunda Lesti.”

This utterance occurred when the host described the product material and mentioned its use by celebrities, particularly Bunda Lesti. The phrase “*ini viscos rayon*” provides factual information about the material, while “*udah dipakai para-artis, dipakai sama Bunda Lesti*” presents celebrity usage as a credibility claim. Thus, the utterance functions primarily as a representative speech act because the host presents the information as true (Searle, 1979). Although it also has a persuasive effect through social proof, its main function is to provide information and establish product credibility. This finding supports Husnan (2024), who identified product descriptions and factual claims as common representative acts, and Sihombing (2024), who noted the use of endorsements and product popularity to strengthen credibility and audience engagement.

Expressive Illocutionary Speech Acts

Expressive speech acts reflect the speaker's psychological state or attitude, such as thanking, apologizing, congratulating, or expressing admiration (Searle, 1979). In this study, expressive acts occurred 15 times, making them less frequent than directive and representative acts. Expressions such as *"thank you for checking out"* and *"sorry, the sample is not available"* show appreciation and empathy toward the audience. Although not directly transactional, these acts help build rapport, strengthen trust, and maintain audience engagement during live shopping interactions.

Excerpt 5

"Thank you ya buat kakak-kakak yang sudah payment ya. Thank you banget."

This utterance occurred after several buyers completed their payments. The phrase *"Thank you ya buat kakak-kakak yang sudah payment"* functions as an expressive speech act because it conveys the host's gratitude toward the buyers (Searle, 1979). Although the expression may indirectly encourage other viewers to make purchases, its primary function is to show appreciation and maintain positive interaction. This finding supports Husnan (2024), who identified gratitude as a common expressive act in TikTok Shop Live, and Sihombing (2024), who noted that expressions of thanks help strengthen relational bonds and sustain audience engagement.

Excerpt 6

"Wow udah sold out ya, selamat buat yang dapetin warna black jet-nya."

This utterance occurred after the host announced that the *black jet* variant was sold out. The expression *"Wow udah sold out ya"* conveys surprise and enthusiasm, while *"selamat buat yang dapetin warna black jet-nya"* expresses congratulations to successful buyers. Both function as expressive speech acts because they reflect the host's emotional response and positive acknowledgment (Searle, 1979). Although the utterance may indirectly create urgency by highlighting the product's rapid sell-out, its primary function remains expressive. This finding supports Husnan (2024), who identified congratulations and praise as expressive acts that foster positive interaction, and Sihombing (2024), who found that expressions of excitement and congratulations help sustain audience engagement.

Commissive Illocutionary Speech Acts

Commissive speech acts commit the speaker to a future action, such as promising, offering, or assuring (Searle, 1979). In this study, commissive acts occurred 11 times, making them the least frequent category. They were mainly used to provide promises or assurances related to purchases, such as *"the item will be shipped immediately"* or *"you will get a bigger discount if you buy more."* Although less frequent, these acts help reduce consumer uncertainty, strengthen trust, and encourage purchasing decisions. Thus, commissive speech acts function as persuasive resources by providing reassurance and reinforcing the seller's commitment to consumers.

Excerpt 7

"Si Arabian berbahan viscos rayon dari harga normalnya Rp119.000. Aku bakal diskonin banget,"

This utterance occurred when the host presented the Arabian hijab and offered a discount. The phrase “*aku bakal diskonin banget*” functions as a commissive speech act because it commits the host to a future action, namely providing a discount (Searle, 1979). The preceding statement about the product material and original price functions as a representative act, while the promise of a discount carries the commissive force. This combination of product information and commitment strengthens the persuasive appeal of the offer. This finding supports Husnan (2024), who identified discount promises as common commissive acts in TikTok Shop Live, and Sihombing (2024), who highlighted the role of commissives in encouraging purchasing decisions and maintaining audience engagement.

Excerpt 8

“Kalau gitu coba buat teman-teman 70 penonton ini kita mau bagi diskon lagi.”

This utterance occurred when the host promised an additional discount after the live session reached 70 viewers. The phrase “*kita mau bagi diskon lagi*” functions as a commissive speech act because it commits the host to providing a future benefit (Searle, 1979). The discount also serves as an incentive to maintain audience participation and engagement. This finding supports Husnan (2024), who identified promotional commitments linked to audience milestones in TikTok Shop Live, and Sihombing (2024), who highlighted the role of commissives in strengthening transactional interaction and audience loyalty.

Interpersonal Relationship Stages in TikTok Live Shopping

The analysis of relational communication draws on Knapp and Vangelisti’s (2013) escalating relationship model, which consists of five stages: initiating, experimenting, intensifying, integrating, and bonding. Relational communication develops through continuous exchanges that gradually establish social connections (Bahfiarti, 2012). However, because TikTok Live Shopping involves one-to-many commercial interactions rather than dyadic relationships, the model is used as an analytical lens to identify communicative characteristics associated with each stage rather than to assume actual relationship development. The findings show characteristics associated with four stages: initiating, experimenting, intensifying, and integrating. Intensifying was the most frequent, followed by experimenting, integrating, and initiating, while no characteristics of bonding were identified. These patterns indicate how the host uses relational communication to facilitate audience engagement within the specific context of live shopping.

Table 2. Frequency of Interpersonal relationship stages

No	Interpersonal relationship stages	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Initiating	3	1.90%
2.	Experimenting	32	20.25%
3.	Intensifying	118	74.68%
4.	Integrating	5	3.16%
5.	Bonding	0	0%
	Total	158	100.00%

This distribution indicates that the host predominantly employs communication strategies characterized by emotional engagement, audience involvement, and persuasive interaction. Rather than demonstrating the progression of interpersonal relationships in the literal sense proposed by Knapp and Vangelisti (2013), these findings suggest that the host adopts communicative features resembling the intermediate stages of relational development

to create immediacy, familiarity, and audience participation within a real-time commercial environment. The absence of bonding characteristics further reflects the transactional and situational nature of TikTok Live Shopping, where interactions are designed primarily to encourage engagement and purchasing decisions rather than to establish enduring interpersonal relationships.

Characteristics Associated with the Initiating Stage

Drawing on Knapp and Vangelisti's (2013) relational development framework, the initiating stage is used in this study as an analytical category to identify communicative patterns resembling initial audience engagement. In interpersonal communication, this stage involves creating first impressions through greetings, introductions, and socially appropriate opening expressions. Within TikTok Live Shopping, however, these communicative characteristics function primarily to welcome viewers, attract attention, and encourage participation at the beginning of the live session rather than to establish interpersonal relationships in the conventional dyadic sense. Although these characteristics appear relatively infrequently in the dataset, they remain important because they help create an inviting communication environment that encourages viewers to remain engaged with the live broadcast.

Excerpt 9

"Yang belum follow, follow dulu, Kak, biar COD cashback dan lain-lain semuanya aktif di akun kamu."

This utterance exhibits communicative characteristics associated with the initiating stage through the host's attempt to establish initial engagement with newly joined viewers. The informal address term *Kak* creates a friendly communication atmosphere, while the invitation *follow dulu* functions as an accessible opening request rather than a highly persuasive command. The subsequent explanation regarding cashback and COD activation provides introductory information intended to attract audience attention at the beginning of their participation in the live session. Rather than indicating the development of an interpersonal relationship as conceptualized by Knapp and Vangelisti (2013), this utterance illustrates how the host employs communication strategies resembling initiating-stage characteristics to establish an approachable and welcoming interaction with a broad audience.

Excerpt 10

"Halo. Assalamualaikum. Halo, Guys. Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh."

This utterance also demonstrates communicative characteristics associated with the initiating stage. The repeated greetings combine formal and informal expressions to welcome viewers entering the live session and establish an inclusive interactional atmosphere. Such greetings function as conventional opening expressions that signal friendliness, politeness, and openness toward the audience. Within the context of TikTok Live Shopping, these greetings primarily serve to capture viewers' attention and encourage their continued participation rather than to initiate relational communication strategies. Therefore, this utterance is interpreted as reflecting communicative features comparable to the initiating stage while remaining situated within a one-to-many commercial interaction.

Communicative Characteristics Associated with the Experimenting Stage

The experimenting stage, according to Knapp and Vangelisti (2013), involves communication through which individuals exchange general information and explore potential interaction. In the present study, this stage is not interpreted literally as relational communication strategies. Instead, it serves as an analytical framework for identifying communicative patterns in which the host encourages audience participation, introduces relevant information, and observes audience responses during the live shopping session. The findings indicate that these communicative characteristics occur 32 times, suggesting that the host frequently employs interactional strategies aimed at stimulating viewer participation before deeper engagement is established.

Excerpt 11

“Di 1000 likes-nya baru nanti kita akan mulai diskonnya, Ayo, teman-teman semuanya likes-nya dulu kumpulin sampai dengan 1000 likes.”

This utterance exhibits communicative characteristics associated with the experimenting stage by encouraging viewers to participate through a clearly defined interactional activity. The host introduces a participation target of 1,000 likes before activating the discount, inviting the audience to engage collectively with the live session. The conditional relationship between audience participation and promotional rewards demonstrates how the host assesses and stimulates viewer responsiveness. Rather than representing interpersonal exploration between individuals, the interaction reflects an engagement-oriented communication strategy characteristic of live commerce environments. Consequently, this utterance is interpreted through the communicative characteristics of the experimenting stage because it emphasizes audience participation and interaction without implying the literal progression of interpersonal relationships.

Excerpt 12

“Ready stock siap kirim. Ready stock siap kirim.”

This utterance similarly demonstrates communicative characteristics associated with the experimenting stage by presenting concise product information intended to maintain audience attention and stimulate purchasing interest. The repeated statement regarding stock availability provides relevant transactional information while simultaneously encouraging viewers to consider immediate purchase opportunities. Instead of functioning as personal information exchange between individuals, the utterance represents an interactional strategy through which the host introduces meaningful information and monitors audience engagement. Accordingly, it reflects communicative characteristics comparable to the experimenting stage within the commercial context of TikTok Live Shopping.

Communicative Characteristics Associated with the Intensifying Stage

Within Knapp and Vangelisti's (2013) relational development model, the intensifying stage is characterized by increasing familiarity, emotional involvement, and more expressive communication between interacting individuals. Because TikTok Live Shopping represents a one-to-many commercial interaction rather than a dyadic interpersonal relationship, this study does not interpret these characteristics as evidence of actual relationship development between the host and individual viewers. Instead, the concept is employed to identify communicative features that resemble intensifying-stage characteristics, particularly those

intended to enhance emotional engagement, immediacy, and audience participation.

The analysis reveals that communicative characteristics associated with the intensifying stage occur most frequently in the dataset. This finding suggests that the host consistently adopts communication strategies emphasizing enthusiasm, urgency, and personalized audience engagement to sustain interaction throughout the live shopping session. Such strategies primarily serve persuasive and engagement-oriented purposes within a commercial environment.

Excerpt 13

“Ayo, stoknya udah tinggal satu lagi. 5 detik lagi selesai!”

This utterance exhibits communicative characteristics associated with the intensifying stage through its combination of enthusiastic invitation and urgency. The expression *Ayo* encourages immediate audience participation, while the statements regarding limited stock and the five-second countdown create psychological urgency that motivates viewers to respond quickly. Rather than indicating increasing interpersonal intimacy between the host and individual viewers, these communicative features function as persuasive strategies designed to strengthen audience involvement during real-time interaction. The host employs emotionally engaging language to maintain viewers' attention and encourage immediate purchasing decisions. Therefore, this utterance is interpreted through the communicative characteristics of the intensifying stage because it demonstrates heightened interactional engagement within a live commerce setting rather than literal relational communication strategies.

Excerpt 14

“Arabian dari harga Rp159.000 jadi berapa, mimin? Rp119.000. Wow! Simak baik-baik ya, Kak!”

This utterance likewise exhibits communicative characteristics associated with the intensifying stage. The exclamation *Wow!* and the familiar address term *Kak* create a more engaging and enthusiastic interactional tone, while the directive *Simak baik-baik ya, Kak!* actively directs viewers' attention toward the promotional information. The announcement of the price reduction is presented in an expressive and dramatized manner that enhances audience engagement beyond the mere delivery of factual information. Although these communicative features resemble those associated with increasing relational involvement, within TikTok Live Shopping they primarily function to reinforce persuasive communication and sustain viewer participation. Accordingly, this utterance is interpreted as displaying communicative characteristics comparable to the intensifying stage rather than demonstrating actual progression toward interpersonal integration intimacy.

Communicative Characteristics Associated with the Integrating Stage

In Knapp and Vangelisti's (2013) framework, the integrating stage is characterized by the emergence of shared identity, collective orientation, and stronger relational alignment between individuals. In the present study, however, this concept is employed as an analytical perspective rather than as evidence that interpersonal integration occurs between the host and individual audience members. Instead, the analysis focuses on communicative characteristics that resemble integrating-stage features, particularly the use of inclusive language and collective references that foster a sense of shared participation within the live shopping environment. Compared with intensifying stage, communicative characteristics associated with integrating appear relatively infrequently. Nevertheless, they illustrate how

the host occasionally constructs a sense of collective involvement among viewers by emphasizing shared interests and common participation during promotional activities.

Excerpt 15

“Buat 61 penonton yang masih mau diskon, jangan ke mana-mana!”

This utterance exhibits communicative characteristics associated with the integrating stage through its explicit reference to the audience as a collective group. By addressing *61 penonton* collectively and emphasizing their shared interest in obtaining discounts, the host frames viewers as participants in a common promotional activity rather than as isolated

individuals. Within the commercial context of TikTok Live Shopping, this collective orientation functions to strengthen audience participation and maintain engagement throughout the live session. Rather than indicating the formation of interpersonal integration in the original sense proposed by Knapp and Vangelisti (2013), the utterance reflects communication strategies that encourage viewers to perceive themselves as members of a shared interactive community during the broadcast.

Excerpt 16

“Kalau gitu, coba buat teman-teman 70 penonton ini kita mau bagi diskon lagi.”

This utterance also demonstrates communicative characteristics associated with the integrating stage through the use of inclusive expressions such as *teman-teman* and the pronoun *kita*. These linguistic choices create an impression of collective participation by positioning the host and viewers within the same interactional framework centered on the promotional activity. The inclusive language does not necessarily indicate the emergence of interpersonal integration between the host and individual viewers. Instead, it functions strategically to cultivate a temporary sense of togetherness that encourages continued audience engagement during the live shopping session. Consequently, this utterance is interpreted as exhibiting communicative features comparable to the integrating stage while remaining consistent with the one-to-many and commercially oriented nature of TikTok Live Shopping interactions.

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal four types of illocutionary speech acts in Lozy Hijab’s TikTok Live Shopping: directives (43.04%), representatives (40.51%), expressives (9.49%), and commissives (6.96%), while declaratives were absent. The analysis also identified communicative characteristics associated with four stages of Knapp and Vangelisti’s (2013) relational development model: initiating, experimenting, intensifying, and integrating. These stages are interpreted as relational communication strategies that support audience engagement rather than as evidence of actual interpersonal relationship development.

Directive speech acts were the most frequent, reflecting the action-oriented nature of live shopping. Consistent with Searle (1979), directives encouraged viewers to like, comment, follow, and purchase products. This finding supports Husnan (2024) and Sihombing (2024), who also identified directives as a major strategy in TikTok Shop interactions. However, the directives in this study were often softened through expressions such as *Kak* and *Beb* and combined with incentives such as vouchers and discounts. This suggests that directives serve both transactional and interactional purposes.

Representative speech acts were also frequent, particularly in product descriptions, prices, stock availability, and material specifications. Besides providing information, these acts helped establish product credibility and reduce consumer uncertainty. This supports Husnan's (2024) finding that representatives strengthen seller credibility through informative communication. In live shopping, such information also performs a persuasive function because consumers cannot directly examine products before purchasing them.

Although less frequent, expressive and commissive acts supported the interaction in different ways. Expressive, including gratitude, congratulations, and enthusiasm, helped create a positive atmosphere and maintain audience engagement. Commissives, particularly promises of discounts and promotional benefits, provided reassurance and encouraged purchasing decisions. Their relatively low frequency suggests that the interaction focused more on immediate engagement and persuasion than on future commitments.

The absence of declarative acts is consistent with Searle's (1979) classification, as declaratives generally require institutional authority to change a social or institutional status. Such authority is not present in the host–audience interaction of TikTok Live Shopping. From a relational perspective, characteristics of the intensifying stage were the most frequent. These included enthusiasm, personalization, immediacy, and active audience involvement. Characteristics associated with experimenting and integrating were also evident through invitations to participate and inclusive expressions such as *teman-teman* and *kita*. These strategies created a temporary sense of collective participation. This interpretation is consistent with Fox et al. (2013), who suggest that digitally mediated communication may display characteristics of relational development without necessarily reproducing conventional interpersonal relationships.

No characteristics associated with the bonding stage were identified. This absence reflects the situational, goal-oriented, and commercial nature of live shopping interactions. Thus, the relational patterns identified through Knapp and Vangelisti's (2013) framework function primarily as temporary interactional strategies for maintaining engagement rather than establishing enduring interpersonal relationships.

Overall, illocutionary speech acts in TikTok Live Shopping perform both transactional and relational functions. They encourage audience participation and purchasing decisions while also creating immediacy, engagement, and temporary social connection. This supports Jegede's (2024) view that speech acts remain performative in digitally mediated communication. By integrating Searle's speech act theory with Knapp and Vangelisti's relational framework, the study demonstrates how persuasive and relational functions intersect in live commerce without assuming that seller–audience interactions replicate conventional interpersonal relationship development.

CONCLUSION

This study examined illocutionary speech acts and their relational functions in Lozy Hijab's TikTok Live Shopping by integrating Searle's (1979) Speech Act Theory with Knapp and Vangelisti's relational development framework. The findings show that directive and representative speech acts dominate the interactions. Directives primarily encourage purchasing and audience participation, while representatives provide product information and reduce consumer uncertainty. Expressive and commissive acts, although less frequent, support emotional rapport, trust, and positive interaction. These findings demonstrate that speech acts in live shopping function as both persuasive and relational resources.

From a relational perspective, the interactions were predominantly characterized by features associated with the intensifying stage, followed by experimenting, integrating, and initiating, while bonding was absent. This suggests that relational communication in live shopping emphasizes sustained engagement rather than formal interpersonal commitment. Thus, Knapp and Vangelisti's framework can provide an analytical perspective for understanding relational features in digital commerce without assuming conventional interpersonal relationship development.

Theoretically, this study contributes to digital pragmatics by showing how speech acts simultaneously support persuasion, trust, and audience engagement in synchronous digital commerce. Practically, the findings suggest that live shopping hosts can combine informative statements, persuasive directives, emotional expressions, and commitments to strengthen consumer engagement and trust.

This study is limited to three TikTok Live Shopping sessions from a single brand and focuses only on the host's verbal utterances. Future studies could examine multiple brands and industries and incorporate audience responses, non-verbal communication, and multimodal features to provide a broader understanding of interaction in live commerce.

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