



Analyzing The Use of Taboo Words by Tiktok Influencer

Rakhma Arum Diyanti, Universitas PGRI Madiun

Tryas Candra Kurniawan, Universitas PGRI Madiun

Rosita Ambarwati, Universitas PGRI Madiun

Rakhma_2102109041@mhs.unipma.ac.id

Tryas_2102109027@mhs.unipma.ac.id

Rosita@unipma.ac.id

Abstrak: Taboo words encompass not only negative and vulgar language, but also words with a positive and sacred connotation that are deemed inappropriate for utterance in any setting. Lately, taboo words are often linked to the era of digital technology, particularly when individuals share their views on events that impact individual and communal situations. The aim of this study is to identify the different categories of taboo language used by TikTok influencers, as outlined in Ronald Wardhaugh's theory. Specifically, these categories include: sex, animal references, religious terms, excretory language, bodily functions, death-related terms, references to mothers-in-law, and terms related to the left hand. The content video was analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach, in which the investigator described, analyzed, and discussed the data presented in narrative form. The findings revealed four types of prohibited language in the content videos: sex, animal-related terms, elimination, and physical process. It was observed that the most frequently used category in the videos was sex.

Kata Kunci: Taboo words, Tiktok, Influencer



INTRODUCTION

In every society, there exist certain terms that are forbidden or words deemed taboo. The utterance of a taboo word signifies a transgression against societal norms and rules. Such infractions can lead to penalties or punishments for the individual involved. It is important to recognize that what may be considered acceptable language in one society may be regarded as taboo in another. Therefore, it is essential to familiarize oneself with the linguistic norms and rules of a particular society before engaging in communication. Nevertheless, there are always individuals who are willing to defy these taboo rules in order to assert their freedom of speech and challenge the validity of such social constraints (Wardhaugh, 2006).

Taboo words encompass not only negative and vulgar language, but also words with a positive and sacred connotation that are deemed inappropriate for utterance in any setting. For instance the expression 'Oh My God' in the English language. While taboo words are generally frowned upon, certain domains like art and comedy allow for their frequent usage without causing discomfort to the audience. In the realm of comedy performances and musical compositions, taboo words are often employed without eliciting any form of unease among listeners (Affini, 2017). Furthermore, the term 'taboo' is more inclined to carry connotative significance rather than denotative meaning.

In all languages, taboo words are present and their usage is governed by strict rules, as deviating from these rules can result in punishment or public humiliation. Many individuals choose to never use such words, while others only use them in specific situations. According to Wardhaugh (2006:239), there are always individuals who are willing to break taboos, viewing them as irrational and unjust, as seen in movements advocating for free speech. Taboo words exist in every language and certain communities have specific taboo words related to God and individuals, such as Indian males refraining from using the names of their sisters and certain female relatives. These taboo words often pertain to topics such as sex, genital organs, excretion, holyspirit, and death. Additionally, taboo words can be defined by the type of word they are.

In modern times, the saying mentioned likely reflects the evolution of social networking platforms. Social media has grown so extensively that it's often abused. On one side, beneficial social media usage can assist individuals, whereas inappropriate use can lead to disaster. Many phrases should be avoided online, particularly on social media, as they violate social standards. Nonetheless, there are moments when these phrases become widely used among children or those active on social media.

Lately, taboo words are often linked to the era of digital technology, particularly when individuals share their views on events that impact individual and communal situations. Aitchison and Wardaugh (1987) stated that Taboo is 'the restriction or steering clear of actions in any community considered detrimental to its members as they might lead to feelings of anxiety, embarrassment, or shame'. This research applies Wardhaugh's theory to analyze types of taboo words, categorizing them into eight categories: sex, animal terms, religious terms, excretory terms, bodily functions, death-related terms, terms related to mothers-in-law, and terms associated with the use of the left hand.

Zulfa Rahman (2019) also mentioned that public figures, politicians, celebrities, and influencers extensively utilize social media for various purposes, including social advancement, political campaigning, product promotion, and entertainment. In today's age, taboo words can be incorporated into trending subjects on social media to boost interaction and connect with followers. Incorporating controversial terms into discussions about events or events that are attracting interest can boost the appeal of groups and attract

a broader audience, particularly on social media channels. This research aims to examine taboo words used by TikTok influencer that introduce fresh linguistic forms like hashtags and acronyms, along with features that encourage broad engagement like FYP.

METHODS

This research, is descriptive and qualitative, employed Wardhaugh (2006) theory to identify the various kinds of taboo words and the reasons behind their usage by TikTok Influencer. The aim of employing this research method is to address the following research questions: 1) What types of taboo words are utilized by TikTok Influencer? 2) What kind of taboo words used the most by TikTok Influencer? In this study, the researcher serves as the primary research instrument to investigate the use of taboo words by TikTok influencers. The researcher plays a crucial role, as they possess several advantages over other research tools, including intellectual intelligence, moral reasoning, and clear analytical thinking - capabilities that enable a deeper understanding of the social phenomena under examination.

Because social media platforms have extensive reach, the research focus is solely on some famous TikTok Influencer they are Stanley Hao, Febri Andini, Mbak Herry, Angelia Tisdella, and Agus Kotak. The cases examined were based on textual information. Therefore, the researchers employed methods of observation and analysis of existing literature for gathering data. The method of taking notes is also utilized to aid in the processing of data. In this research, the data was analyzed through four phases: (1) Identifying the taboo words used by TikTok Influencer, (2) Categorizing these taboo terms, (3) exploring the reasons behind the use of taboo words, (4) selecting relevant data and assessing the reasons behind the use of taboo words by TikTok Influencer.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following examples were obtained from five TikTok contents created by various influencers and classified according to Wardhaugh (2006) categorization of taboo words. The information was examined to determine the categorization of taboo words, how often they are used, and the reasons behind their use.

Table 1. Types Of Taboo

Types of Taboo	Words	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Sex	Jancok	5	47%
	Cok	9	
	Kontol	1	
	Tol	1	
Animal Word	Asu	1	9%
	Kirik	1	
	Bajingan	1	
Religious Term		-	0%
Excretion	Gathel	7	35%
	Taek	1	
	Tel	4	
Bodily Functions	Goblok	1	9%
	Raimu	1	
	Ndasmu	1	
Death		-	0%

Mother in Law	-	0%
Use Left Hand Term	-	-
Total	34	100%

Table 1 shows the total count of taboo words identified in 5 TikTok influencer posts. Among the 8 types of taboo words identified, those related to sexuality had the highest proportion, accounting for 31%. This prominent type is followed by animal words (23%), excretion (23%), and bodily function (23%). The following explanation analyzes each category of taboo words used in the video content.

a. Sex

From five TikTok's content the researchers found four word related to sexual activities, including: *jancok*, *cok*, *kontol*, and *tol*. The words 'jancok' and 'cok' has the meaning of having sexual relations before marriage and are often spoken as a curse word or an expression of anger. Meanwhile, the words 'kuontol' and 'tol' are male genitalia and are often used as an expression of anger as well, for example, the word 'cok' used as an expression of anger by Angelia Tisdella in her video "*Emang dalam hubungan iku gak pasti 100% berhasil, tapi cok nek ngelarani iku mikir-mikir cok*". This sentence means that A relationship cannot be guaranteed to be 100% successful, but if you want to hurt someone you should think.

b. Animal Word

In these content videos, the researchers found 3 taboo words that considered into animal category which are *asu*, *kirik*, and *bajingan*. The words 'asu' and 'kirik' means dog and puppy, meanwhile 'bajingan' means squirrel. The literal meanings of these three words refer to specific types of animals, and they are generally considered inappropriate when used incorrectly, for example in the sentence "*raimu asu ngono lo*" the word 'asu' is used in video content created by Agus Kotak and conveyed in an inappropriate context as an expletive.

c. Excretion

This classification of the forbidden language encompasses terms that pertain to bodily functions or waste elimination. Three specific types of bathroom-related words identified by researchers in the movie were expletives like *gathel*, *taek*, and *tel*. Both word 'gathel' and 'tel' means dirt such as fluid from male or female genitals. Then the word 'taek' from Angelia Tisdella's video that said "*Sek klarifikasi kelakuanmu koyok taek ngene kon iku metune tekok lubang sing ndi*" has a literal meaning of feces that are produced through the human digestive process. The word 'taek' has been categorized by researchers as part of the excretion group due to its connection with bodily waste expelled in the toilet.

d. Bodily Function

The researcher discovered three terms that fell under the category of taboo words. According to the data, these words are related to body parts that are not used appropriately, they are: *goblok*, *raimu*, and *ndasmu*. These words are used to express anger by describing parts of the body that are not functioning properly or are not in good condition.

CONCLUSION

So the conclusion this research reveals that the spread of taboo words used by TikTok's influencer is not evenly distributed. Out of 13 examples of such words, only 4 categories of taboo words proposed by Wardhaugh (1987) were identified. In this study, researchers also found that taboo words in today's digital age are not only used to make negative statements in specific situations. Taboo words can increase popularity and become a business opportunity for certain businessmen and influencers.

TikTok offers a platform where individuals can freely express themselves and assert their identities. Consequently, the urge to convey a spectrum of emotions becomes a significant motivator. The appropriate use of strong language is pivotal in communication, as it can foster positive outcomes and build solidarity. Taboo terms, whether in direct conversations or online contexts, need to be carefully managed to ensure their proper application. Not every word is suitable for expressing thoughts and emotions. Regarding linguistic etiquette, some words can be expressed directly, while others require more tactful approaches or avoidance altogether. Words with potent, emotional, or potentially offensive connotations should be substituted with more considerate alternatives.

REFERENCES

- Wardhaugh, R. (2006). *An Introduction To Sociolinguistics* (5th Ed). Malden, Mass., USA: Blackwell Pub.
- Wardhaugh, Ronald. 1986. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Aitchison, J., & Wardhaugh, R. (1987). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. In *The British Journal of Sociology* (Vol. 38, Issue 3). <https://doi.org/10.2307/590702>
- Atmawati, D. (2016). Penggunaan Bahasa Pada Media Sosial (the Use of Language in Social Media). *International Seminar Prasasti III: Current Research In Linguistics*, 212–217.
- Seargeant, P., & Tagg, C. (2014). The language of social media: Identity and community on the internet. *The Language of Social Media: Identity and Community on the Internet, November*, 1–260. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137029317>
- Cahyani, P. D., & Setiawan, T. (2019). *Swearing Words on Yowis Ben Movie by Fajar Nugros and Bayu Skak*. 297(Icille 2018), 282–287. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icille-18.2019.58>
- Gao, C. (2013). A sociolinguistic study of English Taboo language. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(12), 2310–2314. <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.3.12.2310-2314>