

Language of e-commerce: pragmatic strategies in Indonesian online marketplace advertisements

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ABSTRACT

Background: The expansion of Indonesian e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, and TikTok Shop demonstrates how digital marketplaces rely heavily on persuasive language and multimodal strategies. **Objective:** The purpose of this study is to analyze the pragmatic strategies, speech acts, and multimodal tactics that characterize Indonesian online marketplace advertisements. **Method:** Using a qualitative descriptive design, the research employed Levinson's pragmatic analysis, Searle's speech act theory, and Kress and van Leeuwen's multimodal discourse framework to examine a corpus of product titles, promotional captions, buyer-seller chats, and digital banners collected over three months. **Results:** The results reveal three major findings: first, pragmatic persuasion is dominated by urgency, scarcity, and politeness markers such as kinship terms and emojis; second, buyer-seller interactions are structured through assertives, commissives, and softened directives that balance persuasion with relational intimacy; and third, multimodal advertisements employ visual salience, color symbolism, and culturally resonant icons (e.g., Ramadan motifs) to reinforce linguistic persuasion. These findings suggest that Indonesian e-commerce communication combines global persuasive practices with local cultural adaptations. **Implication:** The implication of the study is that pragmatic and multimodal analyses can enrich understanding of digital persuasion, offering insights for both linguistic scholarship and practical digital marketing strategies. **Novelty:** The novelty of this study is to show the ways Indonesian e-commerce discourse integrates pragmatic persuasion and multimodal design with culturally embedded cues to optimize both transactional effectiveness and relational engagement in digital marketplaces.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The growth of e-commerce in Indonesia has transformed not only consumer behavior but also the language used in digital marketplaces. Indonesia is among the largest e-commerce markets in Southeast Asia, with an estimated transaction value of US\$62 billion in 2023 and projected to reach US\$95 billion by 2025 [1]. Platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, and TikTok Shop have become primary sites where sellers and buyers negotiate meaning, trust, and urgency through linguistic and visual cues. Advertisements are not merely commercial; they are linguistic artifacts that reflect cultural patterns, persuasive strategies, and technological affordances. Expressions like “*Buruan cek out, gratis ongkir hari ini!*” or the use of emojis 🚀🔥 to amplify urgency represent how digital sellers strategically craft their language to trigger consumer

action. This highlights the pressing need to investigate how language functions pragmatically in e-commerce, as it directly influences consumer decision-making.

Previous studies on e-commerce discourse have focused primarily on marketing strategies, consumer trust, or the effectiveness of visual design. For instance, Bronnikova and Golovko (2024) examined online advertising strategies in Southeast Asia [2], while Al-Subhi (2022) analyzed persuasion in digital marketing campaigns [3]. In the Indonesian context, research has often emphasized digital consumer behavior and online trust mechanisms [4]. However, there remains limited attention to the pragmatic strategies embedded in linguistic and multimodal texts within online marketplaces. While scholars such as Musembi et al (2025) discuss social media marketing broadly [5], few have systematically applied pragmatic analysis, speech act theory, or multimodal discourse frameworks to Indonesian marketplace advertisements. This gap underscores the novelty of the present study, which examines not only what is said, but also how it is said, why it is persuasive, and what pragmatic implications arise from the interplay of text, emoji, and visuals.

This study therefore addresses the following core questions: How do sellers in Indonesian online marketplaces employ pragmatic strategies to persuade consumers? What types of speech acts dominate buyer–seller interactions in digital chats? How do multimodal elements such as emojis, colors, and font styles reinforce or modify persuasive linguistic strategies? These questions guide the present research in analyzing marketplace texts and advertisements across Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, and TikTok Shop. By integrating pragmatic analysis, speech act theory, and multimodal discourse analysis, this study aims to uncover the mechanisms through which language shapes consumer perception and purchasing behavior. The objective is not merely descriptive, but explanatory: to demonstrate how digital linguistic practices in Indonesian e-commerce constitute a distinct form of persuasive discourse that reflects local culture, online etiquette, and commercial intention.

Preliminary observations suggest that Indonesian online marketplace advertisements employ a blend of directives, assertives, and commissives framed within culturally embedded politeness strategies. The frequent use of softening expressions such as “*Boleh dicek ulasan dulu ya, kak 😊*” combines reassurance with implicit persuasion, indicating that pragmatics plays a central role in consumer engagement. Similarly, multimodal devices—bright colors, urgency markers like countdown timers, and expressive emojis—create a sense of scarcity and excitement that complements linguistic strategies. This study argues that the pragmatic and multimodal tactics in Indonesian e-commerce form an ecosystem of persuasive communication that is both context-specific and globally relevant. The implications extend beyond linguistics: understanding these strategies can inform digital marketing practices, enhance consumer literacy, and contribute to broader discussions on how language mediates commerce in the digital age.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics, as a branch of linguistics, examines how meaning is shaped by context rather than by linguistic form alone. Al-Subhi (2022) defines pragmatics as the study of language usage and its relation to context [3], while Septianasari et al (2021) frames it as an exploration of speaker meaning, contextual inference, and conversational implicature [4]. Some scholars emphasize the dynamic negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer [6], while others highlight pragmatic competence as a communicative skill [2]. The diversity of definitions suggests that pragmatics can be approached both as a cognitive process of inference and as a social practice shaped by cultural norms. This multiplicity is especially relevant for analyzing e-commerce discourse, where messages are concise, multimodal, and highly context-dependent. Thus, understanding pragmatics provides the foundation for interpreting how sellers design persuasive strategies, how buyers interpret them, and how context modifies intended meanings in digital marketplaces.

The main analytical tools of pragmatics include implicature, deixis, presupposition, politeness strategies, and context-based inference. The theory of conversational implicature highlights how speakers often imply more than they explicitly state, an essential mechanism in persuasive e-commerce messages such as “limited stock” or “best seller” [2]. Politeness theory explains how linguistic choices mitigate face-threatening acts, a feature evident in buyer–seller interactions where directives are softened with emojis or honorifics (e.g., “*ya kak*”) [7]. Deixis, including temporal and spatial markers, helps sellers contextualize urgency (e.g., “*today only*”). Presuppositions also shape expectations, such as assuming product authenticity without explicitly stating it. Recent scholarship expands these indicators to digital communication, noting how multimodal features reshape pragmatic strategies [8], [9], [10]. For this study, these categories guide the identification of persuasive tactics in online advertisements, highlighting how pragmatic devices structure meaning and consumer engagement in Indonesian e-commerce contexts.

2.2. Speech acts

Speech Act Theory provides another conceptual lens for analyzing language use. At its core, this theory posits that utterances are not merely descriptive but performative—they accomplish actions such as requesting, promising, or persuading [1]. There is difference between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, while these aspects are possible categorized into assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations [11]. Contemporary scholars debate the universality of these categories [12], with some emphasizing cultural specificity in how speech acts are realized [13]. In online marketplaces, speech acts take on distinctive forms, such as shortened directives (“*checkout now*”), assurances of quality (“*100% original*”), or commissive acts like promises of delivery speed. These digital adaptations suggest that speech acts evolve within technological environments, necessitating close attention to how Indonesian sellers and buyers enact social and commercial functions through linguistic exchanges.

The classification of speech acts into specific categories helps in systematically analyzing e-commerce communication. Assertives express belief in the truth of a proposition, such as “*produk asli*” or “*bestseller di Shopee*.” Directives are attempts to get the hearer to do something, exemplified by “*buruan checkout*” or “*klik sekarang*.” Commissives commit the speaker to a future action, such as promises of refunds or guaranteed delivery. Expressives convey psychological states, often embedded in buyer feedback (“*makasih banyak, barangnya bagus 😊*”). Declarations are rarer but may appear in institutional announcements like “*official store certified*.” Indicators of speech acts in digital contexts include linguistic markers (imperatives, modal verbs), visual enhancements (emojis, bold fonts), and contextual cues such as urgency counters or discounts. Studies such as Tasyarasita et al (2024) emphasize that online environments reshape the frequency and form of speech acts, making them essential tools for decoding persuasive strategies in e-commerce discourse [14].

2.3. Multimodal discourse

Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) extends beyond verbal text to include visual, spatial, and semiotic resources in communication. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define multimodality as the use of multiple semiotic modes—language, image, color, layout, and typography—to construct meaning. In digital environments, multimodality is intensified by interactivity, hyperlinks, and emoji use [15], [16]. Scholars debate whether multimodality is best approached through social semiotics (emphasizing meaning-making practices) or cognitive frameworks (focusing on processing multimodal input) [2], [5], [17], [18]. In e-commerce, multimodal features such as bright color schemes, bold fonts, flashing banners, and emoji symbols coalesce with linguistic messages to amplify urgency and desirability. Research by Musembi et al (2025) highlights the persuasive power of multimodal ensembles [5], while Cheema et al (2025) notes that consumers process visual-linguistic cues holistically rather than separately [19]. These perspectives highlight the relevance of MDA in analyzing how Indonesian online advertisements construct consumer appeal through both linguistic and non-linguistic means.

Key aspects of multimodal discourse include layout, color, typography, imagery, and symbol use. Layout refers to the arrangement of elements that guide attention, often prioritizing price tags or discount banners at the top of digital posters. Color carries cultural and emotional resonance—red and orange in Indonesian e-commerce signify urgency and affordability. Typography emphasizes hierarchy, with bold fonts highlighting discounted prices and smaller fonts providing product details [20]. Imagery includes photos of products, often enhanced with badges like “*Best Seller*” or “*Official Store*.” Symbols such as emojis add affective dimensions, conveying enthusiasm or urgency beyond text alone. Indicators of multimodal strategies include visual salience, contrast, repetition, and symbolic layering, all of which amplify persuasive effects. Scholars such as Njoku (2023) and Bronnikova and Golovko (2024) underline that multimodal analysis is crucial for understanding persuasion in digital advertising [2], [18]. Applying these categories allows the present study to capture how Indonesian marketplace ads orchestrate linguistic and visual modes into cohesive persuasive messages.

3. METHOD

The unit of analysis in this study comprises linguistic and visual texts embedded in Indonesian e-commerce platforms, including product descriptions, promotional captions, buyer–seller chats, and digital advertisement banners. These texts were selected because they represent authentic and context-specific interactions that reveal pragmatic strategies of persuasion. The material object is not limited to written language but also incorporates emojis, typography, and visual design elements that function as part of the communicative act. The corpus was constructed purposively to reflect a diverse range of genres within online marketplaces, specifically Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, and TikTok Shop. By focusing on multiple platforms, the study captures variation in persuasive strategies while ensuring representativeness. Table 1 summarizes the corpus data sources.

Table 1. Corpus data of research

No	Data Type	Example Corpus	Source
1	Product Titles	“Murah Meriah! Hijab Kekinian Cuma 9Rb 🌟”	Shopee.co.id
		“Best Seller! Xiaomi Redmi Note 13 Pro – Garansi Resmi”	Tokopedia.com
		“Buy 1 Get 1 Free! Vitamin C Serum Original”	Lazada.co.id
2	Product Descriptions	“Hijab instan berbahan adem, cocok untuk aktivitas harian. Stok terbatas, buruan checkout!”	Shopee.co.id
		“Smartphone RAM 8GB, ROM 128GB, free ongkir seluruh Indonesia, garansi resmi distributor”	Tokopedia.com
3	Social Media Ads (Captions)	“Buruan Checkout! Gratis Ongkir Cuma Hari Ini!”	@ShopeeID (Instagram)
		“Flash Sale Jam 12! Diskon sampai 70% 🔥 Jangan sampai kehabisan”	@Tokopedia (Instagram)
		“Big Ramadan Sale – Extra Voucher Rp50Rb untuk semua produk”	@lazadaph (Facebook)
4	Buyer–Seller Chats	Buyer: “Kak ready ya? Asli ori kan?” – Seller: “Ready kak, barang 100% original, bisa dicek ulasan ya 😊”	Shopee chat
		Buyer: “Kalau pesan sekarang, bisa sampai besok?” – Seller: “Bisa kak, kami pakai same-day delivery 🚚”	Tokopedia chat
		Buyer: “Ada diskon tambahan?” – Seller: “Ada kak, pakai voucher toko ya 🙌”	Lazada chat
5	Digital Banners / Visual Ads	Countdown banner: “Flash Sale 00:59:59 – Limited Stock”	Shopee app
		Poster: “Gratis Ongkir Xtra untuk semua kategori – 9.9 Super Sale”	Tokopedia app
		Visual ad: “Voucher Cashback 50% – Exclusive di TikTok Shop”	TikTok Shop

This research employs a qualitative descriptive design with a discourse-analytic orientation. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables an in-depth exploration of linguistic phenomena that cannot be adequately captured by quantitative metrics alone. Descriptive research is suitable for examining naturally occurring texts in their authentic contexts, while discourse analysis allows for the interpretation of meaning across multiple semiotic modes. The design integrates three analytic frameworks: pragmatic analysis, speech act theory, and multimodal discourse analysis. Combining these frameworks provides a holistic account of persuasion in e-commerce discourse, as it connects language form, communicative function, and visual reinforcement. Similar approaches have been applied in digital discourse studies [21], [22], underscoring the value of triangulating linguistic and visual methods. Thus, this design is justified as both theoretically grounded and methodologically rigorous for uncovering pragmatic strategies in Indonesian online marketplaces.

The process of data collection followed three systematic stages. First, e-commerce product pages were observed to capture product titles, descriptions, and promotional captions. Screenshots and text extractions were stored in a structured database for later coding. Second, online interactions between sellers and buyers were documented, focusing on transactional chats that included inquiries about price, authenticity, or delivery. Ethical considerations were addressed by anonymizing usernames and excluding personal identifiers, following digital ethnography protocols [4], [23]. Third, promotional banners and visual ads were collected from official online campaigns, including flash sales, countdown timers, and seasonal promotions. Each entry was catalogued with metadata, such as platform, date, and format. To maintain reliability, a double-checking procedure was applied where two researchers independently reviewed the collected items before inclusion. This systematic process ensured that the dataset was both comprehensive and representative of pragmatic strategies across different communicative contexts in Indonesian online marketplaces.

Data analysis was conducted in three interrelated phases corresponding to the chosen analytic frameworks. First, pragmatic analysis identified implicatures, politeness strategies, and persuasive tactics in textual and chat-based data. Second, speech act analysis categorized utterances into assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations, enabling the classification of communicative intentions in buyer–seller interactions. Third, multimodal discourse analysis examined visual features—color, typography, layout, and emoji use. Coding was iterative, beginning with open coding to identify patterns, followed by axial coding to connect linguistic and visual strategies, and finally selective coding to synthesize dominant

themes. NVivo software assisted in managing and coding large volumes of qualitative data. Triangulation across methods enhanced credibility, while peer debriefing ensured interpretive validity. The analysis thus integrated pragmatic, functional, and multimodal dimensions to reveal how persuasive communication is systematically constructed in Indonesian e-commerce discourse.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Pragmatic strategies of persuasion in e-commerce texts

Indonesian e-commerce advertisements, derived from Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, and TikTok Shop identifies the pragmatic persuasion strategies. They include product titles, captions, and banners. Table 2 demonstrates how linguistic cues (imperatives, time-bound offers, and emotional appeals) are reinforced by emojis and visual emphasis. It highlights the multimodal interplay of words, emojis, and design to persuade consumers into immediate action.

Table 2. Pragmatic persuasion strategies in e-commerce texts

No	Text Type	Example Corpus	Strategy
1	Product Title	“Hijab Kekinian Cuma 9Rb 🚨”	Price minimization + urgency
2	Caption Ad	“Buruan Checkout! Gratis Ongkir Hari Ini!”	Directive + time limitation
3	Chat	“Ready kak, boleh dicek ulasan ya 😊”	Politeness + reassurance
4	Banner	“Flash Sale 00:59:59”	Scarcity + countdown
5	Poster	“Big Ramadan Sale – Extra Voucher Rp50Rb”	Seasonal framing + incentive

Table 2 shows recurring patterns of urgency, scarcity, and affective appeal across platforms. Sellers frequently deploy temporal markers (“*hari ini*”, “*tinggal sedikit*”) and low-price framing (“*cuma 9Rb*”) to accelerate purchase decisions. Emojis such as 🚨🔥🛒 are strategically placed to visually intensify the message, making urgency more salient. Another striking pattern is the softening of imperatives through politeness markers like “*kak*” or “*boleh dicek dulu*”, which reduce the face-threatening nature of directives while still urging buyers to act. Visual elements—bold fonts, countdown timers, and seasonal colors (red/orange for sales, green for Ramadan)—further reinforce the linguistic strategies. Together, these data suggest that Indonesian e-commerce advertisements blend explicit directives with implicit social politeness, producing persuasive messages that feel urgent but not coercive. Such multimodal layering reflects a broader global trend in digital advertising but is distinctly localized through Indonesian address terms and culturally relevant symbols.

The prominence of urgency and scarcity strategies can be interpreted as a reflection of consumer psychology in digital commerce, particularly the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) effect. Studies such as Maharani et al (2024) confirm that countdown timers and limited-stock claims increase impulsive buying [24]. In the Indonesian context, politeness strategies—e.g., using “*kak*” as a kinship term—serve to soften commercial persuasion, aligning with local norms of respect and friendliness in interaction [25]. The frequent use of emojis signals not only affect but also a shift toward multimodal persuasion, where visuals and symbols carry as much persuasive weight as text [6]. These findings suggest that e-commerce sellers deliberately calibrate their pragmatic strategies to balance pressure with social warmth, creating advertisements that push urgency while maintaining relational harmony. Ultimately, this blend of directness and politeness illustrates how pragmatic persuasion in Indonesian e-commerce is both globalized and culturally embedded.

4.2. Speech acts in buyer–seller interaction

The representative buyer–seller interactions collected from Shopee, Tokopedia, and Lazada chats illustrates the patterns of assertives and commissives. Each excerpt is coded based on taxonomy of speech acts. Table 3 demonstrates the dominance of directives, commissives, and assertives, showing how transactional communication is structured pragmatically. The table shows that seller discourse frequently combines multiple speech acts to reinforce persuasion while maintaining politeness.

Table 3 reveals that assertives and commissives dominate seller utterances, while directives are often softened with politeness markers and emojis. Assertives typically appear in claims of authenticity or quality (“*100% original*”, “*bestseller*”), reinforcing credibility. Commissives occur when sellers promise actions (“*bisa same-day delivery*”, “*ada diskon tambahan*”), which strengthen buyer trust. Directives appear as instructions (“*silakan order*”, “*pakai voucher toko*”) but are frequently mitigated by the kinship term “*kak*” and smiling or thumbs-up emojis. This pattern aligns with previous findings that online sellers construct relational intimacy to reduce transactional distance [12], [14]. Unlike traditional advertising, these interactions are conversational, situational, and heavily reliant on speech acts that simultaneously perform reassurance, persuasion, and social bonding. The hybridization of functions within single utterances

highlights the efficiency required in fast-paced online negotiations, where trust and urgency must be balanced in minimal words.

Table 3. Speech acts in buyer–seller interactions

No	Interaction Excerpt	Speech Act	Function
1	Buyer: “Kak ready ya?” – Seller: “Ready kak, silakan order.”	Assertive + Directive	Availability + invitation to act
2	Buyer: “Asli ori kan?” – Seller: “100% original, garansi resmi.”	Assertive	Claim of authenticity
3	Buyer: “Kalau pesan sekarang bisa sampai besok?” – Seller: “Bisa kak, same-day delivery 📦.”	Commissive	Promise of delivery
4	Buyer: “Ada diskon tambahan?” – Seller: “Ada kak, pakai voucher toko ya 👍.”	Commissive + Directive	Offer + instruction

The speech act patterns in buyer–seller chats suggest that Indonesian e-commerce communication embodies transactional pragmatics: every utterance must accomplish both a social and commercial function. Assertives serve as credibility markers, essential in a context where counterfeit goods are common. Commissives function as trust-building devices, ensuring buyers feel secure about delivery and authenticity. Directives, though necessary for sales, are moderated by politeness strategies to avoid face-threatening acts [26]. The frequent combination of commissives and directives—“*Ada kak, pakai voucher toko*”—demonstrates the blending of generosity and instruction, presenting persuasion as a helpful offer rather than pressure. This hybrid discourse resonates with Indonesian cultural norms of indirectness and relational harmony [4]. Overall, the results indicate that speech acts in e-commerce are not isolated moves but strategically layered functions, crafted to both close sales and maintain positive interpersonal rapport in the highly competitive online marketplace.

4.3. Visual-linguistic tactics in multimodal advertisements

The Indonesian e-commerce platforms also exemplify multimodal strategies. Table 3 illustrate how linguistic texts are visually reinforced through colors, layouts, fonts, and emojis. These examples demonstrate that persuasion is not solely verbal but orchestrated through a semiotic ensemble of language and design.

Table 3. Multimodal elements in e-commerce advertisements

No	Advertisement Type	Example Corpus	Visual-Linguistic Tactic
1	Banner	“Flash Sale 00:59:59”	Countdown timer + bold red font
2	Poster	“Gratis Ongkir Xtra – 9.9 Super Sale”	Large typography + orange theme
3	Product Title	“Vitamin C Serum Only Rp50K 🔥🔥”	Price highlight + emoji emphasis
4	Visual Ad	“Voucher Cashback 50% – Exclusive di TikTok Shop”	Contrasting colors + brand logo
5	Campaign Poster	“Big Ramadan Sale – Extra Voucher Rp50Rb”	Seasonal green palette + crescent moon symbol 🌙

Table 3 show that Indonesian e-commerce advertisements consistently rely on salience and contrast to capture consumer attention. Red and orange dominate as background colors in flash sale banners, signaling urgency and affordability, consistent with cross-cultural advertising studies [2]. Typography is hierarchically arranged: large, bold fonts display discounts and time limits, while smaller text provides product details. Emojis such as 🔥🔥📦 serve as affective amplifiers, embedding excitement and dynamism into the message. Seasonal ads employ culturally resonant visuals—green and crescent symbols during Ramadan—to align promotions with religious and social contexts. This synergy between text and visuals indicates a deliberate orchestration of multimodal cues: language creates propositional content, while visuals shape emotional framing and attentional focus. The prevalence of these tactics across platforms suggests that multimodal persuasion has become an industry standard in Indonesian digital marketing.

The multimodal findings can be interpreted through Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) social semiotic theory, which emphasizes that meaning is constructed across multiple modes simultaneously [27]. In Indonesian e-commerce, linguistic brevity is compensated by visual reinforcement: a phrase like “*Flash Sale*” gains urgency when coupled with a bold red timer. Emojis further bridge affect and instruction, softening imperatives and making promotions appear playful rather than aggressive. Seasonal campaigns,

such as Ramadan-themed sales, illustrate how multimodality encodes cultural relevance, situating global marketing strategies within local semiotic traditions [28]. This aligns with Musembi et al (2025), who argues that digital consumers process multimodal ensembles holistically, rather than separating text from visuals [5]. Therefore, Indonesian e-commerce persuasion relies not only on what is said but also on how it is designed, colored, and symbolized. The implication is clear: successful online advertising requires an integration of linguistic precision and visual appeal to maximize persuasive impact.

5. DISCUSSION

The analysis of pragmatic persuasion strategies in Indonesian e-commerce texts highlights important implications for both consumers and digital marketing practices. Functionally, urgency markers (*"buruan checkout,"* countdown timers, and discount emphasis) accelerate decision-making and stimulate impulse buying, aligning with findings by Sumarlam et al (2024) that scarcity enhances purchase intention [26]. The use of politeness markers and kinship terms (*"kak"*) ensures that persuasion is softened, reducing resistance to commercial pressure. However, dysfunction arises when such strategies blur ethical boundaries by creating artificial urgency or exaggerating product scarcity [29]. From a consumer literacy perspective, the findings imply a need for education on recognizing persuasive cues to avoid manipulation. For digital marketers, these results underline the effectiveness of pragmatic framing in increasing conversion rates. Overall, the implication is twofold: while pragmatic persuasion enhances efficiency in e-commerce, it simultaneously raises concerns about consumer vulnerability and the balance between persuasion and manipulation.

The underlying structure in pragmatic persuasion lies in the psychology of persuasion and socio-cultural communication norms. Scarcity and urgency cues function because of consumers' cognitive biases toward loss aversion [30]. In Indonesia, where collectivist values and politeness norms shape interaction, persuasive directives are modified with relationally warm expressions (*"boleh dicek dulu ya kak"*). This softening strategy reflects a culturally embedded adaptation of global e-commerce marketing. The multimodal dimension—use of emojis and color symbolism—operates within the same structural logic, reinforcing urgency while embedding affective warmth. Thus, the effectiveness of pragmatic strategies in e-commerce is not accidental but the result of a layered structure: cognitive biases (FOMO, loss aversion), socio-pragmatic norms (politeness, relational harmony), and semiotic reinforcement (visual salience). Together, these create a persuasive ecosystem that ensures buyers not only perceive urgency but also experience it in socially acceptable, emotionally engaging ways.

The results of speech act analysis reveal that buyer–seller interactions are dominated by assertives, commissives, and softened directives. The implication of this finding is that commercial transactions in Indonesian e-commerce are inseparable from relational strategies. Functionally, commissives such as *"bisa same-day delivery"* establish trust and reduce uncertainty, echoing research by Natrio and Lestari (2024) on trust-building through commitments in digital interaction [12]. Assertives provide credibility (*"100% original"*), addressing widespread concerns about counterfeit goods. Directives, framed with politeness markers and emojis, demonstrate how persuasion can coexist with relational intimacy [13]. The functional implication is that speech acts serve a dual role: accomplishing the immediate commercial goal of selling while simultaneously maintaining social rapport. The dysfunction, however, emerges when promises (commissives) are not fulfilled, leading to trust erosion. These findings imply that pragmatic literacy is critical for both sellers, to maintain credibility, and buyers, to critically evaluate claims during online interactions.

The structural explanation for speech acts in buyer–seller interaction rests on the convergence of transactional necessity and socio-cultural norms of communication. Sellers must perform assertives to guarantee product quality and commissives to promise delivery, as these are prerequisites for trust in digital markets where face-to-face interaction is absent. Yet the Indonesian cultural orientation toward indirectness and politeness necessitates that even directives be softened with kinship terms and emojis. This convergence creates hybrid utterances—simultaneously directive and relational—reflecting what Tasyarasita et al (2024) describe as "relational pragmatics" in online commerce [14]. The correlation is clear: the more competitive and uncertain the digital market, the greater the reliance on commissives and assertives to reduce buyer skepticism. Conversely, the stronger the cultural expectation of politeness, the more sellers adapt directives into socially acceptable forms. Therefore, Result B demonstrates how buyer–seller speech acts are structurally anchored in both commercial necessity and cultural communicative traditions.

The multimodal strategies identified in advertisements carry significant implications for digital persuasion. Functionally, visual salience—through bold fonts, countdown timers, and bright red/orange colors—captures consumer attention quickly in a saturated media environment. Emojis and culturally resonant symbols (e.g., 🌙 during Ramadan campaigns) provide affective framing, enhancing relatability and emotional engagement. This aligns with Bronnikova & Golovko (2024), who emphasizes the persuasive power of multimodal ensembles [2]. The implication is that Indonesian e-commerce does not rely solely on textual persuasion but integrates linguistic and visual cues into cohesive messages that resonate emotionally

and culturally. A potential dysfunction arises when multimodal overload produces “persuasion fatigue,” leading to consumer desensitization. Nevertheless, the broader implication is that successful online advertising in Indonesia depends on the integration of multimodal tactics that not only capture attention but also embed promotions within local cultural frameworks, ensuring both efficiency and cultural resonance in digital persuasion.

The structural reason of multimodal advertisements is the semiotic logic of multimodality: consumers process meaning holistically, combining text, visuals, and symbols simultaneously. Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2020) social semiotic theory explains that persuasive impact increases when modes reinforce one another—e.g., urgency in the phrase “*Flash Sale*” is intensified by a red countdown timer [27]. The reliance on emojis reflects both platform affordances and cultural semiotics, as emojis function as universal affective markers while also aligning with local norms of playfulness in communication. Seasonal campaigns (e.g., Ramadan) demonstrate how global marketing templates are locally recontextualized through religious and cultural symbols. This correlation shows that multimodal persuasion is not merely aesthetic but structurally embedded in cultural and cognitive processing. Indonesian e-commerce advertisements succeed because they integrate universal semiotic strategies (salience, contrast, affect) with culturally specific elements, producing persuasive messages that are simultaneously global in form and local in meaning.

6. CONCLUSION

This study highlights that Indonesian e-commerce advertisements employ a distinctive blend of pragmatic strategies, speech acts, and multimodal tactics to persuade consumers effectively. The key lesson learned is that persuasion in digital commerce is never purely linguistic but is instead an orchestrated practice involving urgency cues, relational politeness, and visual salience. By combining Levinson’s pragmatic analysis, Searle’s speech act theory, and Kress and van Leeuwen’s multimodal discourse framework, the research offers a comprehensive lens for analyzing online persuasive discourse. The strength of this study lies in its ability to demonstrate how global marketing strategies—such as scarcity and countdown timers—are localized through culturally specific markers like kinship terms (“*kak*”) and Ramadan symbols. The scholarly contribution is twofold: first, it renews perspectives on pragmatics by situating it in a digital, commerce-driven context; and second, it enriches the study of online communication by integrating verbal and visual elements into a unified analytical model.

Despite these contributions, this study is not without limitations. The corpus was restricted to a three-month collection period and focused on four dominant platforms, which may not fully capture the evolving diversity of Indonesian e-commerce discourse. Buyer–seller interactions were also limited to text-based chats, leaving unexplored the pragmatic dynamics of voice messages or video-based sales streams that are increasingly popular. Furthermore, the analysis primarily emphasized persuasion, without considering other functions such as conflict management or customer complaint resolution. These limitations suggest the need for future research that expands the dataset temporally and across platforms, incorporates multimodal interactions beyond text, and examines broader communicative functions. Longitudinal and comparative studies could also explore how pragmatic strategies shift across cultural contexts or market segments. Such extensions would provide a more holistic understanding of digital persuasion, ensuring that insights remain relevant as online commerce practices continue to evolve rapidly.

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Fitriya Dessi Wulandari: conceptualization (lead), pragmatic analysis (lead), writing – original draft (lead), writing – review and editing (lead).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

INFORMED CONSENT

We have obtained informed consent from all individuals included in this study.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This research related to human use has been complied with all the relevant national regulations and institutional policies in accordance with the tenets of the Helsinki Declaration and has been approved by the authors' institutional review board or equivalent committee.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Data availability is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

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